

Thoughts Evoked By The Census Of Moscow

By

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THOUGHTS EVOKED BY THE CENSUS OF MOSCOW. [1884-1885.]

And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise--LUKE iii. 10. 11.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?--MATT. vi. 19-25.

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.--

MATT. vi. 31-34.

For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.--MATT. xix. 24; MARK x. 25; LUKE xviii. 25.

CHAPTER I.

I had lived all my life out of town. When, in 1881, I went to live in Moscow, the poverty of the town greatly surprised me. I am familiar with poverty in the country; but city poverty was new and incomprehensible to me. In Moscow it was impossible to pass along the street without encountering beggars, and especially beggars who are unlike those in the country. These beggars do not go about with their pouches in the name of Christ, as country beggars are accustomed to do, but these beggars are without the pouch and the name of Christ. The Moscow beggars carry no pouches, and do not ask for alms. Generally, when they meet or pass you, they merely try to catch your eye; and, according to your look, they beg or refrain from it. I know one such beggar who belongs to the gentry. The old man walks slowly along, bending forward every time he sets his foot down. When he meets you, he rests on one foot and makes you a kind of salute. If you stop, he pulls off his hat with its cockade, and bows and begs: if you do not halt, he pretends that that is merely his way of walking, and he passes on, bending forward in like manner on the other foot. He is a real Moscow beggar, a cultivated man. At first I did not know why the Moscow beggars do not ask alms directly; afterwards I came to understand why they do not beg, but still I did not understand their position.

Once, as I was passing through Afanasievskaya Lane, I saw a policeman putting a ragged peasant, all swollen with dropsy, into a cab. I inquired: "What is that for?"

The policeman answered: "For asking alms."

"Is that forbidden?"

"Of course it is forbidden," replied the policeman.

The sufferer from dropsy was driven off. I took another cab, and followed him. I wanted to know whether it was true that begging alms was prohibited and how it was prohibited. I could in no wise understand how one man could be forbidden to ask alms of any other man; and besides, I did not believe that it was prohibited, when Moscow is full of beggars. I went to the station-house whither the beggar had been taken. At a table in the station-house sat a man with a sword and a pistol. I inquired:

"For what was this peasant arrested?"

The man with the sword and pistol gazed sternly at me, and said:

"What business is it of yours?"

But feeling conscious that it was necessary to offer me some explanation, he added:

"The authorities have ordered that all such persons are to be arrested; of course it had to be done."

I went out. The policeman who had brought the beggar was seated on the window-sill in the ante-chamber, staring gloomily at a note-book. I asked him:

"Is it true that the poor are forbidden to ask alms in Christ's name?"

The policeman came to himself, stared at me, then did not exactly frown, but apparently fell into a doze again, and said, as he sat on the window-sill:-

"The authorities have so ordered, which shows that it is necessary," and betook himself once more to his note-book. I went out on the porch, to the cab.

"Well, how did it turn out? Have they arrested him?" asked the cabman. The man was evidently interested in this affair also.

"Yes," I answered. The cabman shook his head. "Why is it forbidden here in Moscow to ask alms in Christ's name?" I inquired.

"Who knows?" said the cabman.

"How is this?" said I, "he is Christ's poor, and he is taken to the station-house."

"A stop has been put to that now, it is not allowed," said the cab-driver.

On several occasions afterwards, I saw policemen conducting beggars to the station house, and then to the Yusupoff house of correction. Once I encountered on the Myasnitzkaya a company of these beggars, about thirty in number. In front of them and behind them marched policemen. I inquired: "What for?"--"For asking alms."

It turned out that all these beggars, several of whom you meet with in every street in Moscow, and who stand in files near every church during services, and especially during funeral services, are forbidden to ask alms.

But why are some of them caught and locked up somewhere, while others are left alone?

This I could not understand. Either there are among them legal and illegal beggars, or there are so many of them that it is impossible to apprehend them all; or do others assemble afresh when some are removed?

There are many varieties of beggars in Moscow: there are some who live by this profession; there are also genuine poor people, who have chanced upon Moscow in some manner or other, and who are really in want.

Among these poor people, there are many simple, common peasants, and women in their peasant costume. I often met such people. Some of them have fallen ill here, and on leaving the hospital they can neither support themselves here, nor get away from Moscow. Some of them, moreover, have indulged in dissipation (such was probably the case of the dropsical man); some have not been ill, but are people who have been burnt out of their houses, or old people, or women with children; some, too, were perfectly healthy and able to work. These perfectly healthy peasants who were engaged in begging, particularly interested me. These healthy, peasant beggars, who were fit for work, also interested me, because, from the date of my arrival in Moscow, I had been in the habit of going to the Sparrow Hills with two peasants, and sawing wood there for the sake of exercise. These two peasants were just as poor as those whom I encountered on the streets. One was Piotr, a soldier from Kaluga; the other Semyon, a peasant from Vladimir. They possessed nothing except the wages of their body and hands. And with these hands they earned, by dint of very hard labor, from forty to forty-five kopeks a day, out of which each of them was laying by savings, the Kaluga man for a fur coat, the Vladimir man in order to get enough to return to his village. Therefore, on meeting precisely such men in the streets, I took an especial interest in them.

Why did these men toil, while those others begged?

On encountering a peasant of this stamp, I usually asked him how he had come to that situation. Once I met a peasant with some gray in his beard, but healthy. He begs. I ask him who is he, whence comes he? He says that he came from Kaluga to get work. At first he found employment chopping up old wood for use in stoves. He and his comrade finished all the chopping

which one householder had; then they sought other work, but found none; his comrade had parted from him, and for two weeks he himself had been struggling along; he had spent all his money, he had no saw, and no axe, and no money to buy anything. I gave him money for a saw, and told him of a place where he could find work. I had already made arrangements with Piotr and Semyon, that they should take an assistant, and they looked up a mate for him.

"See that you come. There is a great deal of work there."

"I will come; why should I not come? Do you suppose I like to beg? I can work."

The peasant declares that he will come, and it seems to me that he is not deceiving me, and that he intends to come.

On the following day I go to my peasants, and inquire whether that man has arrived. He has not been there; and in this way several men deceived me. And those also deceived me who said that they only required money for a ticket in order to return home, and who chanced upon me again in the street a week later. Many of these I recognized, and they recognized me, and sometimes, having forgotten me, they repeated the same trick on me; and others, on catching sight of me, beat a retreat. Thus I perceived, that in the ranks of this class also deceivers existed. But these cheats were very pitiable creatures: all of them were but half-clad, poverty-stricken, gaunt, sickly men; they were the very people who really freeze to death, or hang themselves, as we learn from the newspapers.

CHAPTER II.

When I mentioned this poverty of the town to inhabitants of the town, they always said to me: "Oh, all that you have seen is nothing. You ought to see the Khitroff market-place, and the lodging-houses for the night there. There you would see a regular 'golden company.'" {1} One jester told me that this was no longer a company, but a GOLDEN REGIMENT: so greatly had their numbers increased. The jester was right, but he would have been still more accurate if he had said that these people now form in Moscow neither a company nor a regiment, but an entire army, almost fifty thousand in number, I think. [The old inhabitants, when they spoke to me about the poverty in town, always referred to it with a certain satisfaction, as though pluming themselves over me, because they knew it. I remember that when I was in London, the old inhabitants there also rather boasted when they spoke of the poverty of London. The case is the same with us.] {2}

And I wanted to have a sight of this poverty of which I had been told. Several times I set out in the direction of the Khitroff market-place, but on every occasion I began to feel uncomfortable and ashamed. "Why am I going to gaze on the sufferings of people whom I cannot help?" said one voice. "No, if you live here, and see all the charms of city life, go and view this also," said another voice. In December three years ago, therefore, on a cold and windy day, I betook myself to that centre of poverty, the Khitroff market-place. This was at four o'clock in the afternoon of a week-day. As I passed through the Solyanka, I already began to see more and more people in old garments which had not originally belonged to them, and in still stranger foot-gear, people with a peculiar, unhealthy hue of countenance, and especially with a singular indifference to every thing around them, which was peculiar to them all. A man in the strangest of all possible attire, which was utterly unlike any thing else, walked along with perfect unconcern, evidently without a thought of the appearance which he must present to the eyes of others. All these people were making their way towards a single point. Without inquiring the way, with which I was not acquainted, I followed them, and came out on the Khitroff market-place. On the market-place, women both old and young, of the same description, in tattered cloaks and jackets of various shapes, in ragged shoes and overshoes, and equally unconcerned, notwithstanding the hideousness of their attire, sat, bargained for something, strolled about, and scolded. There were not many people in the market itself. Evidently market-hours were over, and the majority of the people were ascending the rise beyond the market and through the place, all still proceeding in one direction. I

followed them. The farther I advanced, the greater in numbers were the people of this sort who flowed together on one road. Passing through the market-place and proceeding along the street, I overtook two women; one was old, the other young. Both wore something ragged and gray. As they walked they were discussing some matter. After every necessary word, they uttered one or two unnecessary ones, of the most improper character. They were not intoxicated, but merely troubled about something; and neither the men who met them, nor those who walked in front of them and behind them, paid any attention to the language which was so strange to me. In these quarters, evidently, people always talked so. Ascending the rise, we reached a large house on a corner. The greater part of the people who were walking along with me halted at this house. They stood all over the sidewalk of this house, and sat on the curbstone, and even the snow in the street was thronged with the same kind of people. On the right side of the entrance door were the women, on the left the men. I walked past the women, past the men (there were several hundred of them in all) and halted where the line came to an end. The house before which these people were waiting was the Lyapinsky free lodging-house for the night. The throng of people consisted of night lodgers, who were waiting to be let in. At five o'clock in the afternoon, the house is opened, and the people permitted to enter. Hither had come nearly all the people whom I had passed on my way.

I halted where the line of men ended. Those nearest me began to stare at me, and attracted my attention to them by their glances. The fragments of garments which covered these bodies were of the most varied sorts. But the expression of all the glances directed towards me by these people was identical. In all eyes the question was expressed: "Why have you, a man from another world, halted here beside us? Who are you? Are you a self-satisfied rich man who wants to enjoy our wretchedness, to get rid of his tedium, and to torment us still more? or are you that thing which does not and can not exist,--a man who pities us?" This query was on every face. You glance about, encounter some one's eye, and turn away. I wished to talk with some one of them, but for a long time I could not make up my mind to it. But our glances had drawn us together already while our tongues remained silent. Greatly as our lives had separated us, after the interchange of two or three glances we felt that we were both men, and we ceased to fear each other. The nearest of all to me was a peasant with a swollen face and a red beard, in a tattered caftan, and patched overshoes on his bare feet. And the weather was eight degrees below zero. {3} For the third or fourth time I encountered his eyes, and I felt so near to him that I was no longer ashamed to accost him, but ashamed not to say something to him. I inquired where he came from? he answered readily, and we began to talk; others approached. He was from Smolensk, and had come to seek

employment that he might earn his bread and taxes. "There is no work," said he: "the soldiers have taken it all away. So now I am loafing about; as true as I believe in God, I have had nothing to eat for two days." He spoke modestly, with an effort at a smile. A sbiten^{4}-seller, an old soldier, stood near by. I called him up. He poured out his sbiten. The peasant took a boiling-hot glassful in his hands, and as he tried before drinking not to let any of the heat escape in vain, and warmed his hands over it, he related his adventures to me. These adventures, or the histories of them, are almost always identical: the man has been a laborer, then he has changed his residence, then his purse containing his money and ticket has been stolen from him in the night lodging-house; now it is impossible to get away from Moscow. He told me that he kept himself warm by day in the dram-shops; that he nourished himself on the bits of bread in these drinking places, when they were given to him; and when he was driven out of them, he came hither to the Lyapinsky house for a free lodging. He was only waiting for the police to make their rounds, when, as he had no passport, he would be taken to jail, and then despatched by stages to his place of settlement. "They say that the inspection will be made on Friday," said he, "then they will arrest me. If I can only get along until Friday." (The jail, and the journey by stages, represent the Promised Land to him.)

As he told his story, three men from among the throng corroborated his statements, and said that they were in the same predicament. A gaunt, pale, long-nosed youth, with merely a shirt on the upper portion of his body, and that torn on the shoulders, and a cap without a visor, forced his way sidelong through the crowd. He shivered violently and incessantly, but tried to smile disdainfully at the peasants' remarks, thinking by this means to adopt the proper tone with me, and he stared at me. I offered him some sbiten; he also, on taking the glass, warmed his hands over it; but no sooner had he begun to speak, than he was thrust aside by a big, black, hook-nosed individual, in a chintz shirt and waistcoat, without a hat. The hook-nosed man asked for some sbiten also. Then came a tall old man, with a mass of beard, clad in a great-coat girded with a rope, and in bast shoes, who was drunk. Then a small man with a swollen face and tearful eyes, in a brown nankeen round-jacket, with his bare knees protruding from the holes in his summer trousers, and knocking together with cold. He shivered so that he could not hold his glass, and spilled it over himself. The men began to reproach him. He only smiled in a woe-begone way, and went on shivering. Then came a crooked monster in rags, with pattens on his bare feet; then some sort of an officer; then something in the ecclesiastical line; then something strange and nose-less,--all hungry and cold, beseeching and submissive, thronged round me, and pressed close to the sbiten. They drank up all the sbiten. One asked for money, and I gave it. Then another

asked, then a third, and the whole crowd besieged me. Confusion and a press resulted. The porter of the adjoining house shouted to the crowd to clear the sidewalk in front of his house, and the crowd submissively obeyed his orders. Some managers stepped out of the throng, and took me under their protection, and wanted to lead me forth out of the press; but the crowd, which had at first been scattered over the sidewalk, now became disorderly, and hustled me. All stared at me and begged; and each face was more pitiful and suffering and humble than the last. I distributed all that I had with me. I had not much money, something like twenty rubles; and in company with the crowd, I entered the Lyapinsky lodging-house. This house is huge. It consists of four sections. In the upper stories are the men's quarters; in the lower, the women's. I first entered the women's place; a vast room all occupied with bunks, resembling the third-class bunks on the railway. These bunks were arranged in two rows, one above the other. The women, strange, tattered creatures, both old and young, wearing nothing over their dresses, entered and took their places, some below and some above. Some of the old ones crossed themselves, and uttered a petition for the founder of this refuge; some laughed and scolded. I went upstairs. There the men had installed themselves; among them I espied one of those to whom I had given money. [On catching sight of him, I all at once felt terribly abashed, and I made haste to leave the room. And it was with a sense of absolute crime that I quitted that house and returned home. At home I entered over the carpeted stairs into the ante-room, whose floor was covered with cloth; and having removed my fur coat, I sat down to a dinner of five courses, waited on by two lackeys in dress-coats, white neckties, and white gloves.

Thirty years ago I witnessed in Paris a man's head cut off by the guillotine in the presence of thousands of spectators. I knew that the man was a horrible criminal. I was acquainted with all the arguments which people have been devising for so many centuries, in order to justify this sort of deed. I knew that they had done this expressly, deliberately. But at the moment when head and body were severed, and fell into the trough, I groaned, and apprehended, not with my mind, but with my heart and my whole being, that all the arguments which I had heard anent the death-penalty were arrant nonsense; that, no matter how many people might assemble in order to perpetrate a murder, no matter what they might call themselves, murder is murder, the vilest sin in the world, and that that crime had been committed before my very eyes. By my presence and non-interference, I had lent my approval to that crime, and had taken part in it. So now, at the sight of this hunger, cold, and degradation of thousands of persons, I understood not with my mind, but with my heart and my whole being, that the existence of tens of thousands of such people in Moscow,

while I and other thousands dined on fillets and sturgeon, and covered my horses and my floors with cloth and rugs,--no matter what the wise ones of this world might say to me about its being a necessity,--was a crime, not perpetrated a single time, but one which was incessantly being perpetrated over and over again, and that I, in my luxury, was not only an accessory, but a direct accomplice in the matter. The difference for me between these two impressions was this, that I might have shouted to the assassins who stood around the guillotine, and perpetrated the murder, that they were committing a crime, and have tried with all my might to prevent the murder. But while so doing I should have known that my action would not prevent the murder. But here I might not only have given sbiten and the money which I had with me, but the coat from my back, and every thing that was in my house. But this I had not done; and therefore I felt, I feel, and shall never cease to feel, myself an accomplice in this constantly repeated crime, so long as I have superfluous food and any one else has none at all, so long as I have two garments while any one else has not even one.] {5}

CHAPTER III.

That very evening, on my return from the Lyapinsky house, I related my impressions to a friend. The friend, an inhabitant of the city, began to tell me, not without satisfaction, that this was the most natural phenomenon of town life possible, that I only saw something extraordinary in it because of my provincialism, that it had always been so, and always would be so, and that such must be and is the inevitable condition of civilization. In London it is even worse. Of course there is nothing wrong about it, and it is impossible to be displeased with it. I began to reply to my friend, but with so much heat and ill-temper, that my wife ran in from the adjoining room to inquire what had happened. It appears that, without being conscious of it myself, I had been shouting, with tears in my voice, and flourishing my hands at my friend. I shouted: "It's impossible to live thus, impossible to live thus, impossible!" They made me feel ashamed of my unnecessary warmth; they told me that I could not talk quietly about any thing, that I got disagreeably excited; and they proved to me, especially, that the existence of such unfortunates could not possibly furnish any excuse for imbittering the lives of those about me.

I felt that this was perfectly just, and held my peace; but in the depths of my soul I was conscious that I was in the right, and I could not regain my composure.

And the life of the city, which had, even before this, been so strange and repellent to me, now disgusted me to such a degree, that all the pleasures of a life of luxury, which had hitherto appeared to me as pleasures, become tortures to me. And try as I would, to discover in my own soul any justification whatever for our life, I could not, without irritation, behold either my own or other people's drawing-rooms, nor our tables spread in the lordly style, nor our equipages and horses, nor shops, theatres, and assemblies. I could not behold alongside these the hungry, cold, and down-trodden inhabitants of the Lyapinsky house. And I could not rid myself of the thought that these two things were bound up together, that the one arose from the other. I remember, that, as this feeling of my own guilt presented itself to me at the first blush, so it persisted in me, but to this feeling a second was speedily added which overshadowed it.

When I mentioned my impressions of the Lyapinsky house to my nearest friends and acquaintances, they all gave me the same answer as the first friend at whom I had begun to shout; but, in addition to this, they expressed

their approbation of my kindness of heart and my sensibility, and gave me to understand that this sight had so especially worked upon me because I, Lyof Nikolaevitch, was very kind and good. And I willingly believed this. And before I had time to look about me, instead of the feeling of self-reproach and regret, which I had at first experienced, there came a sense of satisfaction with my own kindness, and a desire to exhibit it to people.

"It really must be," I said to myself, "that I am not especially responsible for this by the luxury of my life, but that it is the indispensable conditions of existence that are to blame. In truth, a change in my mode of life cannot rectify the evil which I have seen: by altering my manner of life, I shall only make myself and those about me unhappy, and the other miseries will remain the same as ever. And therefore my problem lies not in a change of my own life, as it had first seemed to me, but in aiding, so far as in me lies, in the amelioration of the situation of those unfortunate beings who have called forth my compassion. The whole point lies here,--that I am a very kind, amiable man, and that I wish to do good to my neighbors." And I began to think out a plan of beneficent activity, in which I might exhibit my benevolence. I must confess, however, that while devising this plan of beneficent activity, I felt all the time, in the depths of my soul, that that was not the thing; but, as often happens, activity of judgment and imagination drowned that voice of conscience within me. At that juncture, the census came up. This struck me as a means for instituting that benevolence in which I proposed to exhibit my charitable disposition. I knew of many charitable institutions and societies which were in existence in Moscow, but all their activity seemed to me both wrongly directed and insignificant in comparison with what I intended to do. And I devised the following scheme: to arouse the sympathy of the wealthy for the poverty of the city, to collect money, to get people together who were desirous of assisting in this matter, and to visit all the refuges of poverty in company with the census, and, in addition to the work of the census, to enter into communion with the unfortunate, to learn the particulars of their necessities, and to assist them with money, with work, by sending them away from Moscow, by placing their children in school, and the old people in hospitals and asylums. And not only that, I thought, but these people who undertake this can be formed into a permanent society, which, by dividing the quarters of Moscow among its members, will be able to see to it that this poverty and beggary shall not be bred; they will incessantly annihilate it at its very inception; then they will fulfil their duty, not so much by healing as by a course of hygiene for the wretchedness of the city. I fancied that there would be no more simply needy, not to mention abjectly poor persons, in the town, and that all of us wealthy individuals would thereafter be able to sit in our drawing-rooms, and eat our five-course dinners, and ride in our carriages to theatres and

assemblies, and be no longer annoyed with such sights as I had seen at the Lyapinsky house.

Having concocted this plan, I wrote an article on the subject; and before sending it to the printer, I went to some acquaintances, from whom I hoped for sympathy. I said the same thing to every one whom I met that day (and I applied chiefly to the rich), and nearly the same that I afterwards printed in my memoir; proposed to take advantage of the census to inquire into the wretchedness of Moscow, and to succor it, both by deeds and money, and to do it in such a manner that there should be no poor people in Moscow, and so that we rich ones might be able, with a quiet conscience, to enjoy the blessings of life to which we were accustomed. All listened to me attentively and seriously, but nevertheless the same identical thing happened with every one of them without exception. No sooner did my hearers comprehend the question, than they seemed to feel awkward and somewhat mortified. They seemed to be ashamed, and principally on my account, because I was talking nonsense, and nonsense which it was impossible to openly characterize as such. Some external cause appeared to compel my hearers to be forbearing with this nonsense of mine.

"Ah, yes! of course. That would be very good," they said to me. "It is a self-understood thing that it is impossible not to sympathize with this. Yes, your idea is a capital one. I have thought of that myself, but . . . we are so indifferent, as a rule, that you can hardly count on much success . . . however, so far as I am concerned, I am, of course, ready to assist."

They all said something of this sort to me. They all agreed, but agreed, so it seemed to me, not in consequence of my convictions, and not in consequence of their own wish, but as the result of some outward cause, which did not permit them not to agree. I had already noticed this, and, since not one of them stated the sum which he was willing to contribute, I was obliged to fix it myself, and to ask: "So I may count on you for three hundred, or two hundred, or one hundred, or twenty-five rubles?" And not one of them gave me any money. I mention this because, when people give money for that which they themselves desire, they generally make haste to give it. For a box to see Sarah Bernhardt, they will instantly place the money in your hand, to clinch the bargain. Here, however, out of all those who agreed to contribute, and who expressed their sympathy, not one of them proposed to give me the money on the spot, but they merely assented in silence to the sum which I suggested. In the last house which I visited on that day, in the evening, I accidentally came upon a large company. The mistress of the house had busied herself with charity for several years. Numerous carriages stood at the door, several lackeys in rich liveries were

sitting in the ante-chamber. In the vast drawing-room, around two tables and lamps, sat ladies and young girls, in costly garments, dressing small dolls; and there were several young men there also, hovering about the ladies. The dolls prepared by these ladies were to be drawn in a lottery for the poor.

The sight of this drawing-room, and of the people assembled in it, struck me very unpleasantly. Not to mention the fact that the property of the persons there congregated amounted to many millions, not to mention the fact that the mere income from the capital here expended on dresses, laces, bronzes, brooches, carriages, horses, liveries, and lackeys, was a hundred-fold greater than all that these ladies could earn; not to mention the outlay, the trip hither of all these ladies and gentlemen; the gloves, linen, extra time, the candles, the tea, the sugar, and the cakes had cost the hostess a hundred times more than what they were engaged in making here. I saw all this, and therefore I could understand, that precisely here I should find no sympathy with my mission: but I had come in order to make my proposition, and, difficult as this was for me, I said what I intended. (I said very nearly the same thing that is contained in my printed article.)

Out of all the persons there present, one individual offered me money, saying that she did not feel equal to going among the poor herself on account of her sensibility, but that she would give money; how much money she would give, and when, she did not say. Another individual and a young man offered their services in going about among the poor, but I did not avail myself of their offer. The principal person to whom I appealed, told me that it would be impossible to do much because means were lacking. Means were lacking because all the rich people in Moscow were already on the lists, and all of them were asked for all that they could possibly give; because on all these benefactors rank, medals, and other dignities were bestowed; because in order to secure financial success, some new dignities must be secured from the authorities, and that this was the only practical means, but this was extremely difficult.

On my return home that night, I lay down to sleep not only with a presentment that my idea would come to nothing, but with shame and a consciousness that all day long I had been engaged in a very repulsive and disgraceful business. But I did not give up this undertaking. In the first place, the matter had been begun, and false shame would have prevented my abandoning it; in the second place, not only the success of this scheme, but the very fact that I was busying myself with it, afforded me the possibility of continuing to live in the conditions under which I was then living; failure entailed upon me the necessity of renouncing my present

existence and of seeking new paths of life. And this I unconsciously dreaded, and I could not believe the inward voice, and I went on with what I had begun.

Having sent my article to the printer, I read the proof of it to the City Council (Dum). I read it, stumbling, and blushing even to tears, I felt so awkward. And I saw that it was equally awkward for all my hearers. In answer to my question at the conclusion of my reading, as to whether the superintendents of the census would accept my proposition to retain their places with the object of becoming mediators between society and the needy, an awkward silence ensued. Then two orators made speeches. These speeches in some measure corrected the awkwardness of my proposal; sympathy for me was expressed, but the impracticability of my proposition, which all had approved, was demonstrated. Everybody breathed more freely. But when, still desirous of gaining my object, I afterwards asked the superintendents separately: Were they willing, while taking the census, to inquire into the needs of the poor, and to retain their posts, in order to serve as go-betweens between the poor and the rich? they all grew uneasy again. They seemed to say to me with their glances: "Why, we have just condoned your folly out of respect to you, and here you are beginning it again!" Such was the expression of their faces, but they assured me in words that they agreed; and two of them said in the very same words, as though they had entered into a compact together: "We consider ourselves MORALLY BOUND to do this." The same impression was produced by my communication to the student-census-takers, when I said to them, that while taking our statistics, we should follow up, in addition to the objects of the census, the object of benevolence. When we discussed this, I observed that they were ashamed to look the kind-hearted man, who was talking nonsense, in the eye. My article produced the same impression on the editor of the newspaper, when I handed it to him; on my son, on my wife, on the most widely different persons. All felt awkward, for some reason or other; but all regarded it as indispensable to applaud the idea itself, and all, immediately after this expression of approbation, began to express their doubts as to its success, and began for some reason (and all of them, too, without exception) to condemn the indifference and coldness of our society and of every one, apparently, except themselves.

In the depths of my own soul, I still continued to feel that all this was not at all what was needed, and that nothing would come of it; but the article was printed, and I prepared to take part in the census; I had contrived the matter, and now it was already carrying me a way with it.

CHAPTER IV.

At my request, there had been assigned to me for the census, a portion of the Khamovnitchesky quarter, at the Smolensk market, along the Prototchny cross-street, between Beregovoy Passage and Nikolsky Alley. In this quarter are situated the houses generally called the Rzhanoff Houses, or the Rzhanoff fortress. These houses once belonged to a merchant named Rzhanoff, but now belong to the Zimins. I had long before heard of this place as a haunt of the most terrible poverty and vice, and I had accordingly requested the directors of the census to assign me to this quarter. My desire was granted.

On receiving the instructions of the City Council, I went alone, a few days previous to the beginning of the census, to reconnoitre my section. I found the Rzhanoff fortress at once, from the plan with which I had been furnished.

I approached from Nikolsky Alley. Nikolsky Alley ends on the left in a gloomy house, without any gates on that side; I divined from its appearance that this was the Rzhanoff fortress.

Passing down Nikolsky Street, I overtook some lads of from ten to fourteen years of age, clad in little caftans and great-coats, who were sliding down hill, some on their feet, and some on one skate, along the icy slope beside this house. The boys were ragged, and, like all city lads, bold and impudent. I stopped to watch them. A ragged old woman, with yellow, pendent cheeks, came round the corner. She was going to town, to the Smolensk market, and she groaned terribly at every step, like a foundered horse. As she came alongside me, she halted and drew a hoarse sigh. In any other locality, this old woman would have asked money of me, but here she merely addressed me.

"Look there," said she, pointing at the boys who were sliding, "all they do is to play their pranks! They'll turn out just such Rzhanoff fellows as their fathers."

One of the boys clad in a great-coat and a visorless cap, heard her words and halted: "What are you scolding about?" he shouted to the old woman. "You're an old Rzhanoff nanny-goat yourself!"

I asked the boy:

"And do you live here?"

"Yes, and so does she. She stole boot-legs," shouted the boy; and raising his foot in front, he slid away.

The old woman burst forth into injurious words, interrupted by a cough. At that moment, an old man, all clad in rags, and as white as snow, came down the hill in the middle of the street, flourishing his hands [in one of them he held a bundle with one little kalatch and baranki" {6}]. This old man bore the appearance of a person who had just strengthened himself with a dram. He had evidently heard the old woman's insulting words, and he took her part.

"I'll give it to you, you imps, that I will!" he screamed at the boys, seeming to direct his course towards them, and taking a circuit round me, he stepped on to the sidewalk. This old man creates surprise on the Arbata by his great age, his weakness, and his indigence. Here he was a cheery laboring-man returning from his daily toil.

I followed the old man. He turned the corner to the left, into Prototchny Alley, and passing by the whole length of the house and the gate, he disappeared through the door of the tavern.

Two gates and several doors open on Prototchny Alley: those belonging to a tavern, a dram-shop, and several eating and other shops. This is the Rzhanoff fortress itself. Every thing here is gray, dirty, and malodorous--both buildings and locality, and court-yards and people. The majority of the people whom I met here were ragged and half-clad. Some were passing through, others were running from door to door. Two were haggling over some rags. I made the circuit of the entire building from Prototchny Alley and Beregovoy Passage, and returning I halted at the gate of one of these houses. I wished to enter, and see what was going on inside, but I felt that it would be awkward. What should I say when I was asked what I wanted there? I hesitated, but went in nevertheless. As soon as I entered the courtyard, I became conscious of a disgusting odor. The yard was frightfully dirty. I turned a corner, and at the same instant I heard to my left and overhead, on the wooden balcony, the tramp of footsteps of people running, at first along the planks of the balcony, and then on the steps of the staircase. There emerged, first a gaunt woman, with her sleeves rolled up, in a faded pink gown, and little boots on her stockingless feet. After her came a tattered man in a red shirt and very full trousers, like a petticoat, and with overshoes. The man caught the woman at the bottom of the steps.

"You shall not escape," he said laughing.

"See here, you cock-eyed devil," began the woman, evidently flattered by this pursuit; but catching sight of me, she shrieked viciously, "What do you want?"

As I wanted nothing, I became confused and beat a retreat. There was nothing remarkable about the place; but this incident, after what I had witnessed on the other side of the yard, the cursing old woman, the jolly old man, and the lads sliding, suddenly presented the business which I had concocted from a totally different point of view. I then comprehended for the first time, that all these unfortunates to whom I was desirous of playing the part of benefactor, besides the time, when, suffering from cold and hunger, they awaited admission into the house, had still other time, which they employed to some other purpose, that there were four and twenty hours in every day, that there was a whole life of which I had never thought, up to that moment. Here, for the first time, I understood, that all those people, in addition to their desire to shelter themselves from the cold and to obtain a good meal, must still, in some way, live out those four and twenty hours each day, which they must pass as well as everybody else. I comprehended that these people must lose their tempers, and get bored, show courage, and grieve and be merry. Strange as this may seem, when put into words, I understood clearly for the first time, that the business which I had undertaken could not consist alone in feeding and clothing thousands of people, as one would feed and drive under cover a thousand sheep, but that it must consist in doing good to them.

And then I understood that each one of those thousand people was exactly such a man,--with precisely the same past, with the same passions, temptations, failings, with the same thoughts, the same perplexities,--exactly such a man as myself, and then the thing that I had undertaken suddenly presented itself to me as so difficult that I felt my powerlessness; but the thing had been begun, and I went on with it.

CHAPTER V.

On the first appointed day, the student enumerators arrived in the morning, and I, the benefactor, joined them at twelve o'clock. I could not go earlier, because I had risen at ten o'clock, then I had drunk my coffee and smoked, while waiting on digestion. At twelve o'clock I reached the gates of the Rzhanoff house. A policeman pointed out to me the tavern with a side entrance on Beregovoy Passage, where the census-takers had ordered every one who asked for them to be directed. I entered the tavern. It was very dark, ill-smelling, and dirty. Directly opposite the entrance was the counter, on the left was a room with tables, covered with soiled cloths, on the right a large apartment with pillars, and the same sort of little tables at the windows and along the walls. Here and there at the tables sat men both ragged and decently clad, like laboring-men or petty tradesmen, and a few women drinking tea. The tavern was very filthy, but it was instantly apparent that it had a good trade.

There was a business-like expression on the face of the clerk behind the counter, and a clever readiness about the waiters. No sooner had I entered, than one waiter prepared to remove my coat and bring me whatever I should order. It was evident that they had been trained to brisk and accurate service. I inquired for the enumerators.

"Vanya!" shouted a small man, dressed in German fashion, who was engaged in placing something in a cupboard behind the counter; this was the landlord of the tavern, a Kaluga peasant, Ivan Fedotitch, who hired one-half of the Zimins' houses and sublet them to lodgers. The waiter, a thin, hooked-nosed young fellow of eighteen, with a yellow complexion, hastened up.

"Conduct this gentleman to the census-takers; they went into the main building over the well." The young fellow threw down his napkin, and donned a coat over his white jacket and white trousers, and a cap with a large visor, and, tripping quickly along with his white feet, he led me through the swinging door in the rear. In the dirty, malodorous kitchen, in the out-building, we encountered an old woman who was carefully carrying some very bad-smelling tripe, wrapped in a rag, off somewhere. From the out-building we descended into a sloping court-yard, all encumbered with small wooden buildings on lower stories of stone. The odor in this whole yard was extremely powerful. The centre of this odor was an out-house, round which people were thronging whenever I passed it. It merely

indicated the spot, but was not altogether used itself. It was impossible, when passing through the yard, not to take note of this spot; one always felt oppressed when one entered the penetrating atmosphere which was emitted by this foul smell.

The waiter, carefully guarding his white trousers, led me cautiously past this place of frozen and unfrozen uncleanness to one of the buildings. The people who were passing through the yard and along the balconies all stopped to stare at me. It was evident that a respectably dressed man was a curiosity in these localities.

The young man asked a woman "whether she had seen the census-takers?" And three men simultaneously answered his question: some said that they were over the well, but others said that they had been there, but had come out and gone to Nikita Ivanovitch. An old man dressed only in his shirt, who was wandering about the centre of the yard, said that they were in No. 30. The young man decided that this was the most probable report, and conducted me to No. 30 through the basement entrance, and darkness and bad smells, different from that which existed outside. We went down-stairs, and proceeded along the earthen floor of a dark corridor. As we were passing along the corridor, a door flew open abruptly, and an old drunken man, in his shirt, probably not of the peasant class, thrust himself out. A washerwoman, wringing her soapy hands, was pursuing and hustling the old man with piercing screams. Vanya, my guide, pushed the old man aside, and reproved him.

"It's not proper to make such a row," said me, "and you an officer, too!" and we went on to the door of No. 30.

Vanya gave it a little pull. The door gave way with a smack, opened, and we smelled soapy steam, and a sharp odor of spoilt food and tobacco, and we entered into total darkness. The windows were on the opposite side; but the corridors ran to right and left between board partitions, and small doors opened, at various angles, into the rooms made of uneven whitewashed boards. In a dark room, on the left, a woman could be seen washing in a tub. An old woman was peeping from one of these small doors on the right. Through another open door we could see a red-faced, hairy peasant, in bast shoes, sitting on his wooden bunk; his hands rested on his knees, and he was swinging his feet, shod in bast shoes, and gazing gloomily at them.

At the end of the corridor was a little door leading to the apartment where the census-takers were. This was the chamber of the mistress of the whole of No. 30; she rented the entire apartment from Ivan Feodovitch, and let it

out again to lodgers and as night-quarters. In her tiny room, under the tinsel images, sat the student census-taker with his charts; and, in his quality of investigator, he had just thoroughly interrogated a peasant wearing a shirt and a vest. This latter was a friend of the landlady, and had been answering questions for her. The landlady herself, an elderly woman, was there also, and two of her curious tenants. When I entered, the room was already packed full. I pushed my way to the table. I exchanged greetings with the student, and he proceeded with his inquiries. And I began to look about me, and to interrogate the inhabitants of these quarters for my own purpose.

It turned out, that in this first set of lodgings, I found not a single person upon whom I could pour out my benevolence. The landlady, in spite of the fact that the poverty, smallness and dirt of these quarters struck me after the palatial house in which I dwell, lived in comfort, compared with many of the poor inhabitants of the city, and in comparison with the poverty in the country, with which I was thoroughly familiar, she lived luxuriously. She had a feather-bed, a quilted coverlet, a samovar, a fur cloak, and a dresser with crockery. The landlady's friend had the same comfortable appearance. He had a watch and a chain. Her lodgers were not so well off, but there was not one of them who was in need of immediate assistance: the woman who was washing linen in a tub, and who had been abandoned by her husband and had children, an aged widow without any means of livelihood, as she said, and that peasant in bast shoes, who told me that he had nothing to eat that day. But on questioning them, it appeared that none of these people were in special want, and that, in order to help them, it would be necessary to become well acquainted with them.

When I proposed to the woman whose husband had abandoned her, to place her children in an asylum, she became confused, fell into thought, thanked me effusively, but evidently did not wish to do so; she would have preferred pecuniary assistance. The eldest girl helped her in her washing, and the younger took care of the little boy. The old woman begged earnestly to be taken to the hospital, but on examining her nook I found that the old woman was not particularly poor. She had a chest full of effects, a teapot with a tin spout, two cups, and caramel boxes filled with tea and sugar. She knitted stockings and gloves, and received monthly aid from some benevolent lady. And it was evident that what the peasant needed was not so much food as drink, and that whatever might be given him would find its way to the dram-shop. In these quarters, therefore, there were none of the sort of people whom I could render happy by a present of money. But there were poor people who appeared to me to be of a doubtful character. I noted down the old woman, the woman with the children, and the peasant, and

decided that they must be seen to; but later on, as I was occupied with the peculiarly unfortunate whom I expected to find in this house, I made up my mind that there must be some order in the aid which we should bestow; first came the most wretched, and then this kind. But in the next quarters, and in the next after that, it was the same story, all the people had to be narrowly investigated before they could be helped. But unfortunates of the sort whom a gift of money would convert from unfortunate into fortunate people, there were none. Mortifying as it is to me to avow this, I began to get disenchanted, because I did not find among these people any thing of the sort which I had expected. I had expected to find peculiar people here; but, after making the round of all the apartments, I was convinced that the inhabitants of these houses were not peculiar people at all, but precisely such persons as those among whom I lived. As there are among us, just so among them; there were here those who were more or less good, more or less stupid, happy and unhappy. The unhappy were exactly such unhappy beings as exist among us, that is, unhappy people whose unhappiness lies not in their external conditions, but in themselves, a sort of unhappiness which it is impossible to right by any sort of bank-note whatever.

CHAPTER VI.

The inhabitants of these houses constitute the lower class of the city, which numbers in Moscow, probably, one hundred thousand. There, in that house, are representatives of every description of this class. There are petty employers, and master-artisans, bootmakers, brush-makers, cabinet-makers, turners, shoemakers, tailors, blacksmiths; there are cab-drivers, young women living alone, and female pedlers, laundresses, old-clothes dealers, money-lenders, day-laborers, and people without any definite employment; and also beggars and dissolute women.

Here were many of the very people whom I had seen at the entrance to the Lyapinsky house; but here these people were scattered about among the working-people. And moreover, I had seen these people at their most unfortunate time, when they had eaten and drunk up every thing, and when, cold, hungry, and driven forth from the taverns, they were awaiting admission into the free night lodging-house, and thence into the promised prison for despatch to their places of residence, like heavenly manna; but here I beheld them and a majority of workers, and at a time, when by one means or another, they had procured three or five kopeks for a lodging for the night, and sometimes a ruble for food and drink.

And strange as the statement may seem, I here experienced nothing resembling that sensation which I had felt in the Lyapinsky house; but, on the contrary, during the first round, both I and the students experienced an almost agreeable feeling,—yes, but why do I say "almost agreeable"? This is not true; the feeling called forth by intercourse with these people, strange as it may sound, was a distinctly agreeable one.

Our first impression was, that the greater part of the dwellers here were working people and very good people at that.

We found more than half the inhabitants at work: laundresses bending over their tubs, cabinet-makers at their lathes, cobblers on their benches. The narrow rooms were full of people, and cheerful and energetic labor was in progress. There was an odor of toilsome sweat and leather at the cobbler's, of shavings at the cabinet-maker's; songs were often to be heard, and glimpses could be had of brawny arms with sleeves roiled high, quickly and skilfully making their accustomed movements. Everywhere we were received cheerfully and politely: hardly anywhere did our intrusion into the everyday life of these people call forth that ambition, and desire to exhibit their

importance and to put us down, which the appearance of the enumerators in the quarters of well-to-do people evoked. It not only did not arouse this, but, on the contrary, they answered all other questions properly, and without attributing any special significance to them. Our questions merely served them as a subject of mirth and jesting as to how such and such a one was to be set down in the list, when he was to be reckoned as two, and when two were to be reckoned as one, and so forth.

We found many of them at dinner, or tea; and on every occasion to our greeting: "bread and salt," or "tea and sugar," they replied: "we beg that you will partake," and even stepped aside to make room for us. Instead of the den with a constantly changing population, which we had expected to find here, it turned out, that there were a great many apartments in the house where people had been living for a long time. One cabinet-maker with his men, and a boot-maker with his journeymen, had lived there for ten years. The boot-maker's quarters were very dirty and confined, but all the people at work were very cheerful. I tried to enter into conversation with one of the workmen, being desirous of inquiring into the wretchedness of his situation and his debt to his master, but the man did not understand me and spoke of his master and his life from the best point of view.

In one apartment lived an old man and his old woman. They peddled apples. Their little chamber was warm, clean, and full of goods. On the floor were spread straw mats: they had got them at the apple-warehouse. They had chests, a cupboard, a samovar, and crockery. In the corner there were numerous images, and two lamps were burning before them; on the wall hung fur coats covered with sheets. The old woman, who had star-shaped wrinkles, and who was polite and talkative, evidently delighted in her quiet, comfortable, existence.

Ivan Fedotitch, the landlord of the tavern and of these quarters, left his establishment and came with us. He jested in a friendly manner with many of the landlords of apartments, addressing them all by their Christian names and patronymics, and he gave us brief sketches of them. All were ordinary people, like everybody else,-- Martin Semyonovitches, Piotr Piotrovitches, Marya Ivanovnas,--people who did not consider themselves unhappy, but who regarded themselves, and who actually were, just like the rest of mankind.

We had been prepared to witness nothing except what was terrible. And, all of a sudden, there was presented to us, not only nothing that was terrible, but what was good,--things which involuntarily compelled our respect. And there were so many of these good people, that the tattered, corrupt, idle

people whom we came across now and then among them, did not destroy the principal impression.

This was not so much of a surprise to the students as to me. They simply went to fulfil a useful task, as they thought, in the interests of science, and, at the same time, they made their own chance observations; but I was a benefactor, I went for the purpose of aiding the unfortunate, the corrupt, vicious people, whom I supposed that I should meet with in this house. And, behold, instead of unfortunate, corrupt, and vicious people, I saw that the majority were laborious, industrious, peaceable, satisfied, contented, cheerful, polite, and very good folk indeed.

I felt particularly conscious of this when, in these quarters, I encountered that same crying want which I had undertaken to alleviate.

When I encountered this want, I always found that it had already been relieved, that the assistance which I had intended to render had already been given. This assistance had been rendered before my advent, and rendered by whom? By the very unfortunate, depraved creatures whom I had undertaken to reclaim, and rendered in such a manner as I could not compass.

In one basement lay a solitary old man, ill with the typhus fever. There was no one with the old man. A widow and her little daughter, strangers to him, but his neighbors round the corner, looked after him, gave him tea and purchased medicine for him out of their own means. In another lodging lay a woman in puerperal fever. A woman who lived by vice was rocking the baby, and giving her her bottle; and for two days, she had been unremitting in her attention. The baby girl, on being left an orphan, was adopted into the family of a tailor, who had three children of his own. So there remained those unfortunate idle people, officials, clerks, lackeys out of place, beggars, drunkards, dissolute women, and children, who cannot be helped on the spot with money, but whom it is necessary to know thoroughly, to be planned and arranged for. I had simply sought unfortunate people, the unfortunates of poverty, those who could be helped by sharing with them our superfluity, and, as it seemed to me, through some signal ill-luck, none such were to be found; but I hit upon unfortunates to whom I should be obliged to devote my time and care.

CHAPTER VII.

The unfortunates whom I noted down, divided themselves, according to my ideas, into three sections, namely: people who had lost their former advantageous position, and who were awaiting a return to it (there were people of this sort from both the lower and the higher class); next, dissolute women, of whom there are a great many in these houses; and a third division, children. More than all the rest, I found and noted down people of the first division, who had forfeited their former advantageous position, and who hoped to regain it. Of such persons, especially from the governmental and official world, there are a very great number in these houses. In almost all the lodgings which we entered, with the landlord, Ivan Fedotitch, he said to us: "Here you need not write down the lodger's card yourself; there is a man here who can do it, if he only happens not to be intoxicated to-day."

And Ivan Fedotitch called by name and patronymic this man, who was always one of those persons who had fallen from a lofty position. At Ivan Fedotitch's call, there crawled forth from some dark corner, a former wealthy member of the noble or official class, generally intoxicated and always undressed. If he was not drunk, he always readily acceded to the task proposed to him, nodded significantly, frowned, set down his remarks in learned phraseology, held the card neatly printed on red paper in his dirty, trembling hands, and glanced round at his fellow-lodgers with pride and contempt, as though now triumphing in his education over those who had so often humiliated him. He evidently enjoyed intercourse with that world in which cards are printed on red paper, and with that world of which he had once formed a part. Nearly always, in answer to my inquiries about his life, the man began, not only willingly, but eagerly, to relate the story of the misfortunes which he had undergone,--which he had learned by rote like a prayer,--and particularly of his former position, in which he ought still to be by right of his education.

A great many such people were scattered over all the corners of the Rzhanoff house. But one lodging was densely occupied by them alone-- both men and women. After we had already entered, Ivan Fedotitch said to us: "Now, here are some of the nobility." The lodging was perfectly crammed; nearly all of the people, forty in number, were at home. More demoralized countenances, unhappy, aged, and swollen, young, pallid, and distracted, were not to be seen in the whole building. I conversed with several of them. The story was nearly identical in all cases, only in various stages of development. Every one of them had been rich, or his father, his brother or

his uncle was still wealthy, or his father or he himself had had a very fine position. Then misfortune had overtaken him, the blame for which rested either on envious people, or on his own kind-heartedness, or some special chance, and so he had lost every thing, and had been forced to condescend to these surroundings to which he was not accustomed, and which were hateful to him--among lice, rags, among drunkards and corrupt persons, and to nourish himself on bread and liver, and to extend his hand in beggary. All the thoughts, desires, memories of these people were directed exclusively to the past. The present appeared to them something unreal, repulsive, and not worthy of attention. Not one of them had any present. They had only memories of the past, and expectations from the future, which might be realized at any moment, and for the realization of which only a very little was required; but this little they did not possess, it was nowhere to be obtained, and this had been ruining their whole future life in vain, in the case of one man, for a year, of a second for five years, and of a third for thirty years. All one needed was merely to dress respectably, so that he could present himself to a certain personage, who was well-disposed towards him another only needed to be able to dress, pay off his debts, and get to Orel; a third required to redeem a small property which was mortgaged, for the continuation of a law-suit, which must be decided in his favor, and then all would be well once more. They all declare that they merely require something external, in order to stand once more in the position which they regard as natural and happy in their own case.

Had my mind not been obscured by my pride as a benefactor, a glance at their faces, both old and young, which were mostly weak and sensitive, but amiable, would have given me to understand that their misfortunes were irreparable by any external means, that they could not be happy in any position whatever, if their views of life were to remain unchanged, that they were in no wise remarkable people, in remarkably unfortunate circumstances, but that they were the same people who surround us on all sides, and just like ourselves. I remember that intercourse with this sort of unfortunates was peculiarly difficult for me. I now understand why this was so; in them I beheld myself, as in a mirror. If I had reflected on my own life and on the life of the people in our circle, I should have seen that no real difference existed between them.

If those about me dwell in spacious quarters, and in their own houses on the Sivtzev Vrazhok and on the Dimitrovka, and not in the Rzhanoff house, and still eat and drink dainties, and not liver and herrings with bread, that does not prevent them from being exactly as unhappy. They are just as dissatisfied with their own positions, they mourn over the past, and pine for better things, and the improved position for which they long is precisely the

same as that which the inhabitants of the Rzhanoff house long for; that is to say, one in which they may do as little work as possible themselves, and derive the utmost advantage from the labors of others. The difference is merely one of degrees and time. If I had reflected at that time, I should have understood this; but I did not reflect, and I questioned these people, and wrote them down, supposing, that, having learned all the particulars of their various conditions and necessities, I could aid them LATER ON. I did not understand that such a man can only be helped by changing his views of the world. But in order to change the views of another, one must needs have better views himself, and live in conformity with them; but mine were precisely the same as theirs, and I lived in accordance with those views, which must undergo a change, in order that these people might cease to be unhappy.

I did not see that these people were unhappy, not because they had not, so to speak, nourishing food, but because their stomachs had been spoiled, and because their appetites demanded not nourishing but irritating viands; and I did not perceive that, in order to help them, it was not necessary to give them food, but that it was necessary to heal their disordered stomachs. Although I am anticipating by so doing, I will mention here, that, out of all these persons whom I noted down, I really did not help a single one, in spite of the fact that for some of them, that was done which they desired, and that which, apparently, might have raised them. Three of their number were particularly well known to me. All three, after repeated rises and falls, are now in precisely the same situation in which they were three years ago.

CHAPTER VIII.

The second class of unfortunates whom I also expected to assist later on, were the dissolute women; there were a very great many of them, of all sorts, in the Rzhanoff house--from those who were young and who resembled women, to old ones, who were frightful and horrible, and who had lost every semblance of humanity. The hope of being of assistance to these women, which I had not at first entertained, occurred to me later. This was in the middle of our rounds. We had already worked out several mechanical tricks of procedure.

When we entered a new establishment, we immediately questioned the landlady of the apartment; one of us sat down, clearing some sort of a place for himself where he could write, and another penetrated the corners, and questioned each man in all the nooks of the apartment separately, and reported the facts to the one who did the writing.

On entering a set of rooms in the basement, a student went to hunt up the landlady, while I began to interrogate all who remained in the place. The apartment was thus arranged: in the centre was a room six arshins square, {7} and a small oven. From the oven radiated four partitions, forming four tiny compartments. In the first, the entrance slip, which had four bunks, there were two persons--an old man and a woman. Immediately adjoining this, was a rather long slip of a room; in it was the landlord, a young fellow, dressed in a sleeveless gray woollen jacket, a good-looking, very pale citizen. {8} On the left of the first corner, was a third tiny chamber; there was one person asleep there, probably a drunken peasant, and a woman in a pink blouse which was loose in front and close-fitting behind. The fourth chamber was behind the partition; the entrance to it was from the landlord's compartment.

The student went into the landlord's room, and I remained in the entrance compartment, and questioned the old man and woman. The old man had been a master-printer, but now had no means of livelihood. The woman was the wife of a cook. I went to the third compartment, and questioned the woman in the blouse about the sleeping man. She said that he was a visitor. I asked the woman who she was. She replied that she was a Moscow peasant. "What is your business?" She burst into a laugh, and did not answer me. "What do you live on?" I repeated, thinking that she had not understood my question. "I sit in the taverns," she said. I did not comprehend, and again I inquired: "What is your means of livelihood?" She

made no reply and laughed. Women's voices in the fourth compartment which we had not yet entered, joined in the laugh. The landlord emerged from his cabin and stepped up to us. He had evidently heard my questions and the woman's replies. He cast a stern glance at the woman and turned to me: "She is a prostitute," said he, apparently pleased that he knew the word in use in the language of the authorities, and that he could pronounce it correctly. And having said this, with a respectful and barely perceptible smile of satisfaction addressed to me, he turned to the woman. And no sooner had he turned to her, than his whole face altered. He said, in a peculiar, scornful, hasty tone, such as is employed towards dogs: "What do you jabber in that careless way for? 'I sit in the taverns.' You do sit in the taverns, and that means, to talk business, that you are a prostitute," and again he uttered the word. "She does not know the name for herself." This tone offended me. "It is not our place to abuse her," said I. "If all of us lived according to the laws of God, there would be none of these women."

"That's the very point," said the landlord, with an awkward smile.

"Therefore, we should not reproach but pity them. Are they to blame?"

I do not recollect just what I said, but I do remember that I was vexed by the scornful tone of the landlord of these quarters which were filled with women, whom he called prostitutes, and that I felt compassion for this woman, and that I gave expression to both feelings. No sooner had I spoken thus, than the boards of the bed in the next compartment, whence the laugh had proceeded, began to creak, and above the partition, which did not reach to the ceiling, there appeared a woman's curly and dishevelled head, with small, swollen eyes, and a shining, red face, followed by a second, and then by a third. They were evidently standing on their beds, and all three were craning their necks, and holding their breath with strained attention, and gazing silently at us.

A troubled pause ensued. The student, who had been smiling up to this time, became serious; the landlord grew confused and dropped his eyes. All the women held their breath, stared at me, and waited. I was more embarrassed than any of them. I had not, in the least, anticipated that a chance remark would produce such an effect. Like Ezekiel's field of death, strewn with dead men's bones, there was a quiver at the touch of the spirit, and the dead bones stirred. I had uttered an unpremeditated word of love and sympathy, and this word had acted on all as though they had only been waiting for this very remark, in order that they might cease to be corpses and might live. They all stared at me, and waited for what would come next. They waited for me to utter those words, and to perform those actions by

reason of which these bones might draw together, clothe themselves with flesh, and spring into life. But I felt that I had no such words, no such actions, by means of which I could continue what I had begun; I was conscious, in the depths of my soul, that I had lied [that I was just like them], {9} and there was nothing further for me to say; and I began to inscribe on the cards the names and callings of all the persons in this set of apartments.

This incident led me into a fresh dilemma, to the thought of how these unfortunates also might be helped. In my self-delusion, I fancied that this would be very easy. I said to myself: "Here, we will make a note of all these women also, and LATER ON when we [I did not specify to myself who "we" were] write every thing out, we will attend to these persons too." I imagined that we, the very ones who have brought and have been bringing these women to this condition for several generations, would take thought some fine day and reform all this. But, in the mean time, if I had only recalled my conversation with the disreputable woman who had been rocking the baby of the fever-stricken patient, I might have comprehended the full extent of the folly of such a supposition.

When we saw this woman with the baby, we thought that it was her child. To the question, "Who was she?" she had replied in a straightforward way that she was unmarried. She did not say--a prostitute. Only the master of the apartment made use of that frightful word. The supposition that she had a child suggested to me the idea of removing her from her position. I inquired:

"Is this your child?"

"No, it belongs to that woman yonder."

"Why are you taking care of it?"

"Because she asked me; she is dying."

Although my supposition proved to be erroneous, I continued my conversation with her in the same spirit. I began to question her as to who she was, and how she had come to such a state. She related her history very readily and simply. She was a Moscow myeshchanka, the daughter of a factory hand. She had been left an orphan, and had been adopted by an aunt. From her aunt's she had begun to frequent the taverns. The aunt was now dead. When I asked her whether she did not wish to alter her mode of life, my question, evidently, did not even arouse her interest. How

can one take an interest in the proposition of a man, in regard to something absolutely impossible? She laughed, and said: "And who would take me in with my yellow ticket?"

"Well, but if a place could be found somewhere as cook?" said I.

This thought occurred to me because she was a stout, ruddy woman, with a kindly, round, and rather stupid face. Cooks are often like that. My words evidently did not please her. She repeated:

"A cook--but I don't know how to make bread," said she, and she laughed. She said that she did not know how; but I saw from the expression of her countenance that she did not wish to become a cook, that she regarded the position and calling of a cook as low.

This woman, who in the simplest possible manner was sacrificing every thing that she had for the sick woman, like the widow in the Gospels, at the same time, like many of her companions, regarded the position of a person who works as low and deserving of scorn. She had been brought up to live not by work, but by this life which was considered the natural one for her by those about her. In that lay her misfortune. And she fell in with this misfortune and clung to her position. This led her to frequent the taverns. Which of us--man or woman--will correct her false view of life? Where among us are the people to be found who are convinced that every laborious life is more worthy of respect than an idle life,--who are convinced of this, and who live in conformity with this belief, and who in conformity with this conviction value and respect people? If I had thought of this, I might have understood that neither I, nor any other person among my acquaintances, could heal this complaint.

I might have understood that these amazed and affected heads thrust over the partition indicated only surprise at the sympathy expressed for them, but not in the least a hope of reclamation from their dissolute life. They do not perceive the immorality of their life. They see that they are despised and cursed, but for what they are thus despised they cannot comprehend. Their life, from childhood, has been spent among just such women, who, as they very well know, always have existed, and are indispensable to society, and so indispensable that there are governmental officials to attend to their legal existence. Moreover, they know that they have power over men, and can bring them into subjection, and rule them often more than other women. They see that their position in society is recognized by women and men and the authorities, in spite of their continual curses, and therefore, they cannot understand why they should reform.

In the course of one of the tours, one of the students told me that in a certain lodging, there was a woman who was bargaining for her thirteen-year-old daughter. Being desirous of rescuing this girl, I made a trip to that lodging expressly. Mother and daughter were living in the greatest poverty. The mother, a small, dark-complexioned, dissolute woman of forty, was not only homely, but repulsively homely. The daughter was equally disagreeable. To all my pointed questions about their life, the mother responded curtly, suspiciously, and in a hostile way, evidently feeling that I was an enemy, with evil intentions; the daughter made no reply, did not look at her mother, and evidently trusted the latter fully. They inspired me with no sincere pity, but rather with disgust. But I made up my mind that the daughter must be rescued, and that I would interest ladies who pitied the sad condition of these women, and send them hither. But if I had reflected on the mother's long life in the past, of how she had given birth to, nursed and reared this daughter in her situation, assuredly without the slightest assistance from outsiders, and with heavy sacrifices--if I had reflected on the view of life which this woman had formed, I should have understood that there was, decidedly, nothing bad or immoral in the mother's act: she had done and was doing for her daughter all that she could, that is to say, what she considered the best for herself. This daughter could be forcibly removed from her mother; but it would be impossible to convince the mother that she was doing wrong, in selling her daughter. If any one was to be saved, then it must be this woman-- the mother ought to have been saved; [and that long before, from that view of life which is approved by every one, according to which a woman may live unmarried, that is, without bearing children and without work, and simply for the satisfaction of the passions. If I had thought of this, I should have understood that the majority of the ladies whom I intended to send thither for the salvation of that little girl, not only live without bearing children and without working, and serving only passion, but that they deliberately rear their daughters for the same life; one mother takes her daughter to the taverns, another takes hers to balls. But both mothers hold the same view of the world, namely, that a woman must satisfy man's passions, and that for this she must be fed, dressed, and cared for. Then how are our ladies to reform this woman and her daughter? {10}]

CHAPTER IX.

Still more remarkable were my relations to the children. In my role of benefactor, I turned my attention to the children also, being desirous to save these innocent beings from perishing in that lair of vice, and noting them down in order to attend to them AFTERWARDS.

Among the children, I was especially struck with a twelve-year-old lad named Serozha. I was heartily sorry for this bold, intelligent lad, who had lived with a cobbler, and who had been left without a shelter because his master had been put in jail, and I wanted to do good to him.

I will here relate the upshot of my benevolence in his case, because my experience with this child is best adapted to show my false position in the role of benefactor. I took the boy home with me and put him in the kitchen. It was impossible, was it not, to take a child who had lived in a den of iniquity in among my own children? And I considered myself very kind and good, because he was a care, not to me, but to the servants in the kitchen, and because not I but the cook fed him, and because I gave him some cast-off clothing to wear. The boy staid a week. During that week I said a few words to him as I passed on two occasions and in the course of my strolls, I went to a shoemaker of my acquaintance, and proposed that he should take the lad as an apprentice. A peasant who was visiting me, invited him to go to the country, into his family, as a laborer; the boy refused, and at the end of the week he disappeared. I went to the Rzhanoff house to inquire after him. He had returned there, but was not at home when I went thither. For two days already, he had been going to the Priesnensky ponds, where he had hired himself out at thirty kopeks a day in some procession of savages in costume, who led about elephants. Something was being presented to the public there. I went a second time, but he was so ungrateful that he evidently avoided me. Had I then reflected on the life of that boy and on my own, I should have understood that this boy was spoiled because he had discovered the possibility of a merry life without labor, and that he had grown unused to work. And I, with the object of benefiting and reclaiming him, had taken him to my house, where he saw--what? My children,--both older and younger than himself, and of the same age,--who not only never did any work for themselves, but who made work for others by every means in their power, who soiled and spoiled every thing about them, who ate rich, dainty, and sweet viands, broke china, and flung to the dogs food which would have been a tidbit to this lad. If I had rescued him from the abyss, and had taken him to that nice place, then he must acquire those views

which prevailed in the life of that nice place; but by these views, he understood that in that fine place he must so live that he should not toil, but eat and drink luxuriously, and lead a joyous life. It is true that he did not know that my children bore heavy burdens in the acquisition of the declensions of Latin and Greek grammar, and that he could not have understood the object of these labors. But it is impossible not to see that if he had understood this, the influence of my children's example on him would have been even stronger. He would then have comprehended that my children were being educated in this manner, so that, while doing no work now, they might be in a position hereafter, also profiting by their diplomas, to work as little as possible, and to enjoy the pleasures of life to as great an extent as possible. He did understand this, and he would not go with the peasant to tend cattle, and to eat potatoes and kvas with him, but he went to the zoological garden in the costume of a savage, to lead the elephant at thirty kopeks a day.

I might have understood how clumsy I was, when I was rearing my children in the most utter idleness and luxury, to reform other people and their children, who were perishing from idleness in what I called the den of the Rzhanoff house, where, nevertheless, three- fourths of the people toil for themselves and for others. But I understood nothing of this.

There were a great many children in the Rzhanoff house, who were in the same pitiable plight; there were the children of dissolute women, there were orphans, there were children who had been picked up in the streets by beggars. They were all very wretched. But my experience with Serozha showed me that I, living the life I did, was not in a position to help them.

While Serozha was living with us, I noticed in myself an effort to hide our life from him, in particular the life of our children. I felt that all my efforts to direct him towards a good, industrious life, were counteracted by the examples of our lives and by that of our children. It is very easy to take a child away from a disreputable woman, or from a beggar. It is very easy, when one has the money, to wash, clean and dress him in neat clothing, to support him, and even to teach him various sciences; but it is not only difficult for us, who do not earn our own bread, but quite the reverse, to teach him to work for his bread, but it is impossible, because we, by our example, and even by those material and valueless improvements of his life, inculcate the contrary. A puppy can be taken, tended, fed, and taught to fetch and carry, and one may take pleasure in him: but it is not enough to tend a man, to feed and teach him Greek; we must teach the man how to live,--that is, to take as little as possible from others, and to give as much as possible; and we cannot help teaching him to do the contrary, if we take him

into our houses, or into an institution founded for this purpose.

CHAPTER X.

This feeling of compassion for people, and of disgust with myself, which I had experienced in the Lyapinsky house, I experienced no longer. I was completely absorbed in the desire to carry out the scheme which I had concocted,--to do good to those people whom I should meet here. And, strange to say, it would appear, that, to do good--to give money to the needy--is a very good deed, and one that should dispose me to love for the people, but it turned out the reverse: this act produced in me ill-will and an inclination to condemn people. But during our first evening tour, a scene occurred exactly like that in the Lyapinsky house, and it called forth a wholly different sentiment.

It began by my finding in one set of apartments an unfortunate individual, of precisely the sort who require immediate aid. I found a hungry woman who had had nothing to eat for two days.

It came about thus: in one very large and almost empty night- lodging, I asked an old woman whether there were many poor people who had nothing to eat? The old woman reflected, and then told me of two; and then, as though she had just recollected, "Why, here is one of them," said she, glancing at one of the occupied bunks. "I think that woman has had no food."

"Really? Who is she?"

"She was a dissolute woman: no one wants any thing to do with her now, so she has no way of getting any thing. The landlady has had compassion on her, but now she means to turn her out . . . Agafya, hey there, Agafya!" cried the woman.

We approached, and something rose up in the bunk. It was a woman haggard and dishevelled, whose hair was half gray, and who was as thin as a skeleton, dressed in a ragged and dirty chemise, and with particularly brilliant and staring eyes. She looked past us with her staring eyes, clutched at her jacket with one thin hand, in order to cover her bony breast which was disclosed by her tattered chemise, and oppressed, she cried, "What is it? what is it?" I asked her about her means of livelihood. For a long time she did not understand, and said, "I don't know myself; they persecute me." I asked her,--it puts me to shame, my hand refuses to write it,--I asked her whether it was true that she had nothing to eat? She

answered in the same hurried, feverish tone, staring at me the while,--"No, I had nothing yesterday, and I have had nothing to-day."

The sight of this woman touched me, but not at all as had been the case in the Lyapinsky house; there, my pity for these people made me instantly feel ashamed of myself: but here, I rejoiced because I had at last found what I had been seeking,--a hungry person.

I gave her a ruble, and I recollect being very glad that others saw it. The old woman, on seeing this, immediately begged money of me also. It afforded me such pleasure to give, that, without finding out whether it was necessary to give or not, I gave something to the old woman too. The old woman accompanied me to the door, and the people standing in the corridor heard her blessing me. Probably the questions which I had put with regard to poverty, had aroused expectation, and several persons followed us. In the corridor also, they began to ask me for money. Among those who begged were some drunken men, who aroused an unpleasant feeling in me; but, having once given to the old woman, I had no might to refuse these people, and I began to give. As long as I continued to give, people kept coming up; and excitement ran through all the lodgings. People made their appearance on the stairs and galleries, and followed me. As I emerged into the courtyard, a little boy ran swiftly down one of the staircases thrusting the people aside. He did not see me, and exclaimed hastily: "He gave Agashka a ruble!" When he reached the ground, the boy joined the crowd which was following me. I went out into the street: various descriptions of people followed me, and asked for money. I distributed all my small change, and entered an open shop with the request that the shopkeeper would change a ten-ruble bill for me. And then the same thing happened as at the Lyapinsky house. A terrible confusion ensued. Old women, noblemen, peasants, and children crowded into the shop with outstretched hands; I gave, and interrogated some of them as to their lives, and took notes. The shopkeeper, turning up the furred points of the collar of his coat, sat like a stuffed creature, glancing at the crowd occasionally, and then fixing his eyes beyond them again. He evidently, like every one else, felt that this was foolish, but he could not say so.

The poverty and beggary in the Lyapinsky house had horrified me, and I felt myself guilty of it; I felt the desire and the possibility of improvement. But now, precisely the same scene produced on me an entirely different effect; I experienced, in the first place, a malevolent feeling towards many of those who were besieging me; and in the second place, uneasiness as to what the shopkeepers and porters would think of me.

On my return home that day, I was troubled in my soul. I felt that what I had done was foolish and immoral. But, as is always the result of inward confusion, I talked a great deal about the plan which I had undertaken, as though I entertained not the slightest doubt of my success.

On the following day, I went to such of the people whom I had inscribed on my list, as seemed to me the most wretched of all, and those who, as it seemed to me, would be the easiest to help. As I have already said, I did not help any of these people. It proved to be more difficult to help them than I had thought. And either because I did not know how, or because it was impossible, I merely imitated these people, and did not help any one. I visited the Rzhanoff house several times before the final tour, and on every occasion the very same thing occurred: I was beset by a throng of beggars in whose mass I was completely lost. I felt the impossibility of doing any thing, because there were too many of them, and because I felt ill-disposed towards them because there were so many of them; and in addition to this, each one separately did not incline me in his favor. I was conscious that every one of them was telling me an untruth, or less than the whole truth, and that he saw in me merely a purse from which money might be drawn. And it very frequently seemed to me, that the very money which they squeezed out of me, rendered their condition worse instead of improving it. The oftener I went to that house, the more I entered into intercourse with the people there, the more apparent became to me the impossibility of doing any thing; but still I did not give up any scheme until the last night tour.

The remembrance of that last tour is particularly mortifying to me. On other occasions I had gone thither alone, but twenty of us went there on this occasion. At seven o'clock, all who wished to take part in this final night round, began to assemble at my house. Nearly all of them were strangers to me,--students, one officer, and two of my society acquaintances, who, uttering the usual, "C'est tres interessant!" had asked me to include them in the number of the census-takers.

My worldly acquaintances had dressed up especially for this, in some sort of hunting-jacket, and tall, travelling boots, in a costume in which they rode and went hunting, and which, in their opinion, was appropriate for an excursion to a night-lodging-house. They took with them special note-books and remarkable pencils. They were in that peculiarly excited state of mind in which men set off on a hunt, to a duel, or to the wars. The most apparent thing about them was their folly and the falseness of our position, but all the rest of us were in the same false position. Before we set out, we held a consultation, after the fashion of a council of war, as to how we should begin, how divide our party, and so on.

This consultation was exactly such as takes place in councils, assemblages, committees; that is to say, each person spoke, not because he had any thing to say or to ask, but because each one cudgelled his brain for something that he could say, so that he might not fall short of the rest. But, among all these discussions, no one alluded to that beneficence of which I had so often spoken to them all. Mortifying as this was to me, I felt that it was indispensable that I should once more remind them of benevolence, that is, of the point, that we were to observe and take notes of all those in destitute circumstances whom we should encounter in the course of our rounds. I had always felt ashamed to speak of this; but now, in the midst of all our excited preparations for our expedition, I could hardly utter the words. All listened to me, as it seemed to me, with sorrow, and, at the same time, all agreed in words; but it was evident that they all knew that it was folly, and that nothing would come of it, and all immediately began again to talk about something else. This went on until the time arrived for us to set out, and we started.

We reached the tavern, roused the waiters, and began to sort our papers. When we were informed that the people had heard about this round, and were leaving their quarters, we asked the landlord to lock the gates; and we went ourselves into the yard to reason with the fleeing people, assuring them that no one would demand their tickets. I remember the strange and painful impression produced on me by these alarmed night-lodgers: ragged, half-dressed, they all seemed tall to me by the light of the lantern and the gloom of the court-yard. Frightened and terrifying in their alarm, they stood in a group around the foul-smelling out-house, and listened to our assurances, but they did not believe us, and were evidently prepared for any thing, like hunted wild beasts, provided only that they could escape from us. Gentlemen in divers shapes--as policemen, both city and rural, and as examining judges, and judges--hunt them all their lives, in town and country, on the highway and in the streets, and in the taverns, and in night-lodging houses; and now, all of a sudden, these gentlemen had come and locked the gates, merely in order to count them: it was as difficult for them to believe this, as for hares to believe that dogs have come, not to chase but to count them. But the gates were locked, and the startled lodgers returned: and we, breaking up into groups, entered also. With me were the two society men and two students. In front of us, in the dark, went Vanya, in his coat and white trousers, with a lantern, and we followed. We went to quarters with which I was familiar. I knew all the establishments, and some of the people; but the majority of the people were new, and the spectacle was new, and more dreadful than the one which I had witnessed in the Lyapinsky house. All the lodgings were full, all the bunks were occupied,

not by one person only, but often by two. The sight was terrible in that narrow space into which the people were huddled, and men and women were mixed together. All the women who were not dead drunk slept with men; and women with two children did the same. The sight was terrible, on account of the poverty, dirt, rags, and terror of the people. And it was chiefly dreadful on account of the vast numbers of people who were in this situation. One lodging, and then a second like it, and a third, and a tenth, and a twentieth, and still there was no end to them. And everywhere there was the same foul odor, the same close atmosphere, the same crowding, the same mingling of the sexes, the same men and women intoxicated to stupidity, and the same terror, submission and guilt on all faces; and again I was overwhelmed with shame and pain, as in the Lyapinsky house, and I understood that what I had undertaken was abominable and foolish and therefore impracticable. And I no longer took notes of anybody, and I asked no questions, knowing that nothing would come of this.

I was deeply pained. In the Lyapinsky house I had been like a man who has seen a fearful wound, by chance, on the body of another man. He is sorry for the other man, he is ashamed that he has not pitied the man before, and he can still rise to the succor of the sufferer. But now I was like a physician, who has come with his medicine to the sick man, has uncovered his sore, and examined it, and who must confess to himself that every thing that he has done has been in vain, and that his remedy is good for nothing.

CHAPTER XI.

This visit dealt the final blow to my self-delusion. It now appeared indisputable to me, that what I had undertaken was not only foolish but loathsome.

But, in spite of the fact that I was aware of this, it seemed to me that I could not abandon the whole thing on the spot. It seemed to me that I was bound to carry out this enterprise, in the first place, because by my article, by my visits and promises, I had aroused the expectations of the poor; in the second, because by my article also, and by my talk, I had aroused the sympathies of benevolent persons, many of whom had promised me their co-operation both in personal labor and in money. And I expected that both sets of people would turn to me for an answer to this.

What happened to me, so far as the appeal of the needy to me is concerned, was as follows: By letter and personal application I received more than a hundred; these applications were all from the wealthy-poor, if I may so express myself. I went to see some of them, and some of them received no answer. Nowhere did I succeed in doing any thing. All applications to me were from persons who had once occupied privileged positions (I thus designate those in which people receive more from others than they give), who had lost them, and who wished to occupy them again. To one, two hundred rubles were indispensable, in order that he might prop up a failing business, and complete the education of his children which had been begun; another wanted a photographic outfit; a third wanted his debts paid, and respectable clothing purchased for him; a fourth needed a piano, in order to perfect himself and support his family by giving lessons. But the majority did not stipulate for any given sum of money, and simply asked for assistance; and when I came to examine into what was required, it turned out that their demands grew in proportion to the aid, and that there was not and could not be any way of satisfying them. I repeat, that it is very possible that this arose from the fact that I did not understand how; but I did not help any one, although I sometimes endeavored to do so.

A very strange and unexpected thing happened to me as regards the co-operation of the benevolently disposed. Out of all the persons who had promised me financial aid, and who had even stated the number of rubles, not a single one handed to me for distribution among the poor one solitary ruble. But according to the pledges which had been given me, I could reckon on about three thousand rubles; and out of all these people, not one

remembered our former discussions, or gave me a single kopek. Only the students gave the money which had been assigned to them for their work on the census, twelve rubles, I think. So my whole scheme, which was to have been expressed by tens of thousands of rubles contributed by the wealthy, for hundreds and thousands of poor people who were to be rescued from poverty and vice, dwindled down to this, that I gave away, haphazard, a few scores of rubles to those people who asked me for them, and that there remained in my hands twelve rubies contributed by the students, and twenty-five sent to me by the City Council for my labor as a superintendent, and I absolutely did not know to whom to give them.

The whole matter came to an end. And then, before my departure for the country, on the Sunday before carnival, I went to the Rzhanoff house in the morning, in order to get rid of those thirty-seven rubles before I should leave Moscow, and to distribute them to the poor. I made the round of the quarters with which I was familiar, and in them found only one sick man, to whom I gave five rubles. There was no one else there to give any to. Of course many began to beg of me. But as I had not known them at first, so I did not know them now, and I made up my mind to take counsel with Ivan Fedotitch, the landlord of the tavern, as to the persons upon whom it would be proper to bestow the remaining thirty-two rubies.

It was the first day of the carnival. Everybody was dressed up, and everybody was full-fed, and many were already intoxicated. In the courtyard, close to the house, stood an old man, a rag-picker, in a tattered smock and bast shoes, sorting over the booty in his basket, tossing out leather, iron, and other stuff in piles, and breaking into a merry song, with a fine, powerful voice. I entered into conversation with him. He was seventy years old, he was alone in the world, and supported himself by his calling of a rag-picker; and not only did he utter no complaints, but he said that he had plenty to eat and drink. I inquired of him as to especially needy persons. He flew into a rage, and said plainly that there were no needy people, except drunkards and lazy men; but, on learning my object, he asked me for a five-kopek piece to buy a drink, and ran off to the tavern. I too entered the tavern to see Ivan Fedotitch, and commission him to distribute the money which I had left. The tavern was full; gayly-dressed, intoxicated girls were flitting in and out; all the tables were occupied; there were already a great many drunken people, and in the small room the harmonium was being played, and two persons were dancing. Out of respect to me, Ivan Fedotitch ordered that the dance should be stopped, and seated himself with me at a vacant table. I said to him, that, as he knew his tenants, would not he point out to me the most needy among them; that I had been entrusted with the distribution of a little money, and, therefore, would he indicate the proper

persons? Good-natured Ivan Fedotitch (he died a year later), although he was pressed with business, broke away from it for a time, in order to serve me. He meditated, and was evidently undecided. An elderly waiter heard us, and joined the conference.

They began to discuss the claims of persons, some of whom I knew, but still they could not come to any agreement. "The Paramonovna," suggested the waiter. "Yes, that would do. Sometimes she has nothing to eat. Yes, but then she tipples."--"Well, what of that? That makes no difference."--"Well, Sidoron Ivanovitch has children. He would do." But Ivan Fedotitch had his doubts about Sidoron Ivanovitch also. "Akulina shall have some. There, now, give something to the blind." To this I responded. I saw him at once. He was a blind old man of eighty years, without kith or kin. It seemed as though no condition could be more painful, and I went immediately to see him. He was lying on a feather-bed, on a high bedstead, drunk; and, as he did not see me, he was scolding his comparatively youthful female companion in a frightful bass voice, and in the very worst kind of language. They also summoned an armless boy and his mother. I saw that Ivan Fedotitch was in great straits, on account of his conscientiousness, for me knew that whatever was given would immediately pass to his tavern. But I had to get rid of my thirty-two rubles, so I insisted; and in one way and another, and half wrongfully to boot, we assigned and distributed them. Those who received them were mostly well dressed, and we had not far to go to find them, as they were there in the tavern. The armless boy appeared in wrinkled boots, and a red shirt and vest. With this my charitable career came to an end, and I went off to the country; irritated at others, as is always the case, because I myself had done a stupid and a bad thing. My benevolence had ended in nothing, and it ceased altogether, but the current of thoughts and feelings which it had called up with me not only did not come to an end, but the inward work went on with redoubled force.

CHAPTER XII.

What was its nature?

I had lived in the country, and there I was connected with the rustic poor. Not out of humility, which is worse than pride, but for the sake of telling the truth, which is indispensable for the understanding of the whole course of my thoughts and sentiments, I will say that in the country I did very little for the poor, but the demands which were made upon me were so modest that even this little was of use to the people, and formed around me an atmosphere of affection and union with the people, in which it was possible to soothe the gnawing sensation of remorse at the independence of my life. On going to the city, I had hoped to be able to live in the same manner. But here I encountered want of an entirely different sort. City want was both less real, and more exacting and cruel, than country poverty. But the principal point was, that there was so much of it in one spot, that it produced on me a frightful impression. The impression which I experienced in the Lyapinsky house had, at the very first, made me conscious of the deformity of my own life. This feeling was genuine and very powerful. But, notwithstanding its genuineness and power, I was, at that time, so weak that I feared the alteration in my life to which this feeling commended me, and I resorted to a compromise. I believed what everybody told me, and everybody has said, ever since the world was made,--that there is nothing evil in wealth and luxury, that they are given by God, that one may continue to live as a rich man, and yet help the needy. I believed this, and I tried to do it. I wrote an essay, in which I summoned all rich people to my assistance. The rich people all acknowledged themselves morally bound to agree with me, but evidently they either did not wish to do any thing, or they could not do any thing or give any thing to the poor. I began to visit the poor, and I beheld what I had not in the least expected. On the one hand, I beheld in those dens, as I called them, people whom it was not conceivable that I should help, because they were working people, accustomed to labor and privation, and therefore standing much higher and having a much firmer foothold in life than myself; on the other hand, I saw unfortunate people whom I could not aid because they were exactly like myself. The majority of the unfortunates whom I saw were unhappy only because they had lost the capacity, desire, and habit of earning their own bread; that is to say, their unhappiness consisted in the fact that they were precisely such persons as myself.

I found no unfortunates who were sick, hungry, or cold, to whom I could

render immediate assistance, with the solitary exception of hungry Agafya. And I became convinced, that, on account of my remoteness from the lives of those people whom I desired to help, it would be almost impossible to find any such unfortunates, because all actual wants had already been supplied by the very people among whom these unfortunates live; and, most of all, I was convinced that money cannot effect any change in the life led by these unhappy people.

I was convinced of all this, but out of false shame at abandoning what I had once undertaken, because of my self-delusion as a benefactor, I went on with this matter for a tolerably long time,-- and would have gone on with it until it came to nothing of itself,-- so that it was with the greatest difficulty that, with the help of Ivan Fedotitch, I got rid, after a fashion, as well as I could, in the tavern of the Rzhanoff house, of the thirty-seven rubles which I did not regard as belonging to me.

Of course I might have gone on with this business, and have made out of it a semblance of benevolence; by urging the people who had promised me money, I might have collected more, I might have distributed this money, and consoled myself with my charity; but I perceived, on the one hand, that we rich people neither wish nor are able to share a portion of our a superfluity with the poor (we have so many wants of our own), and that money should not be given to any one, if the object really be to do good and not to give money itself at haphazard, as I had done in the Rzhanoff tavern. And I gave up the whole thing, and went off to the country with despair in my heart.

In the country I tried to write an essay about all this that I had experienced, and to tell why my undertaking had not succeeded. I wanted to justify myself against the reproaches which had been made to me on the score of my article on the census; I wanted to convict society of its indifference, and to state the causes in which this city poverty has its birth, and the necessity of combating it, and the means of doing so which I saw.

I began this essay at once, and it seemed to me that in it I was saying a very great deal that was important. But toil as I would over it, and in spite of the abundance of materials, in spite of the superfluity of them even, I could not get through that essay; and so I did not finish it until the present year, because of the irritation under the influence of which I wrote, because I had not gone through all that was requisite in order to bear myself properly in relation to this essay, because I did not simply and clearly acknowledge the cause of all this,--a very simple cause, which had its root in myself.

In the domain of morals, one very remarkable and too little noted phenomenon presents itself.

If I tell a man who knows nothing about it, what I know about geology, astronomy, history, physics, and mathematics, that man receives entirely new information, and he never says to me: "Well, what is there new in that? Everybody knows that, and I have known it this long while." But tell that same man the most lofty truth, expressed in the clearest, most concise manner, as it has never before been expressed, and every ordinary individual, especially one who takes no particular interest in moral questions, or, even more, one to whom the moral truth stated by you is displeasing, will infallibly say to you: "Well, who does not know that? That was known and said long ago." It really seems to him that this has been said long ago and in just this way. Only those to whom moral truths are dear and important know how important and precious they are, and with what prolonged labor the elucidation, the simplification, of moral truths, their transit from the state of a misty, indefinitely recognized supposition, and desire, from indistinct, incoherent expressions, to a firm and definite expression, unavoidably demanding corresponding concessions, are attained.

We have all become accustomed to think that moral instruction is a most absurd and tiresome thing, in which there can be nothing new or interesting; and yet all human life, together with all the varied and complicated activities, apparently independent, of morality, both governmental and scientific, and artistic and commercial, has no other aim than the greater and greater elucidation, confirmation, simplification, and accessibility of moral truth.

I remember that I was once walking along the street in Moscow, and in front of me I saw a man come out and gaze attentively at the stones of the sidewalk, after which he selected one stone, seated himself on it, and began to plane (as it seemed to me) or to rub it with the greatest diligence and force. "What is he doing to the sidewalk?" I said to myself. On going close to him, I saw what the man was doing. He was a young fellow from a meat-shop; he was whetting his knife on the stone of the pavement. He was not thinking at all of the stones when he scrutinized them, still less was he thinking of them when he was accomplishing his task: he was whetting his knife. He was obliged to whet his knife so that he could cut the meat; but to me it seemed as though he were doing something to the stones of the sidewalk. Just so it appears as though humanity were occupied with commerce, conventions, wars, sciences, arts; but only one business is of importance to it, and with only one business is it occupied: it is elucidating

to itself those moral laws by which it lives. The moral laws are already in existence; humanity is only elucidating them, and this elucidation seems unimportant and imperceptible for any one who has no need of moral laws, who does not wish to live by them. But this elucidation of the moral law is not only weighty, but the only real business of all humanity. This elucidation is imperceptible just as the difference between the dull and the sharp knife is imperceptible. The knife is a knife all the same, and for a person who is not obliged to cut any thing with this knife, the difference between the dull and the sharp one is imperceptible. For the man who has come to an understanding that his whole life depends on the greater or less degree of sharpness in the knife,--for such a man, every whetting of it is weighty, and that man knows that the knife is a knife only when it is sharp, when it cuts that which needs cutting.

This is what happened to me, when I began to write my essay. It seemed to me that I knew all about it, that I understood every thing connected with those questions which had produced on me the impressions of the Lyapinsky house, and the census; but when I attempted to take account of them and to demonstrate them, it turned out that the knife would not cut, and that it must be whetted. And it is only now, after the lapse of three years, that I have felt that my knife is sufficiently sharp, so that I can cut what I choose. I have learned very little that is new. My thoughts are all exactly the same, but they were duller then, and they all scattered and would not unite on any thing; there was no edge to them; they would not concentrate on one point, on the simplest and clearest decision, as they have now concentrated themselves.

CHAPTER XIII.

I remember that during the entire period of my unsuccessful efforts at helping the inhabitants of the city, I presented to myself the aspect of a man who should attempt to drag another man out of a swamp while he himself was standing on the same unstable ground. Every attempt of mine had made me conscious of the untrustworthy character of the soil on which I stood. I felt that I was in the swamp myself, but this consciousness did not cause me to look more narrowly at my own feet, in order to learn upon what I was standing; I kept on seeking some external means, outside myself, of helping the existing evil.

I then felt that my life was bad, and that it was impossible to live in that manner. But from the fact that my life was bad, and that it was impossible to live in that manner, I did not draw the very simple and clear deduction that it was necessary to amend my life and to live better, but I knew the terrible deduction that in order to live well myself, I must needs reform the lives of others; and so I began to reform the lives of others. I lived in the city, and I wished to reform the lives of those who lived in the city; but I soon became convinced that this I could not by any possibility accomplish, and I began to meditate on the inherent characteristics of city life and city poverty.

"What are city life and city poverty? Why, when I am living in the city, cannot I help the city poor?"

I asked myself. I answered myself that I could not do any thing for them, in the first place, because there were too many of them here in one spot; in the second place, because all the poor people here were entirely different from the country poor. Why were there so many of them here? and in what did their peculiarity, as opposed to the country poor, consist? There was one and the same answer to both questions. There were a great many of them here, because here all those people who have no means of subsistence in the country collect around the rich; and their peculiarity lies in this, that they are not people who have come from the country to support themselves in the city (if there are any city paupers, those who have been born here, and whose fathers and grandfathers were born here, then those fathers and grandfathers came hither for the purpose of earning their livelihood). What is the meaning of this: TO EARN ONE'S LIVELIHOOD IN THE CITY? In the words "to earn one's livelihood in the city," there is something strange, resembling a jest, when you reflect on their significance. How is it that

people go from the country,--that is to say, from the places where there are forests, meadows, grain, and cattle, where all the wealth of the earth lies,--to earn their livelihood in a place where there are neither trees, nor grass, nor even land, and only stones and dust? What is the significance of the words "to earn a livelihood in the city," which are in such constant use, both by those who earn the livelihood, and by those who furnish it, as though it were something perfectly clear and comprehensible?

I recall the hundreds and thousands of city people, both those who live well and the needy, with whom I have conversed on the reason why they came hither: and all without exception said, that they had come from the country to earn their living; that in Moscow, where people neither sow nor reap,-- that in Moscow there is plenty of every thing, and that, therefore, it is only in Moscow that they can earn the money which they require in the country for bread and a cottage and a horse, and articles of prime necessity. But assuredly, in the country lies the source of all riches; there only is real wealth,-- bread, and forests, and horses, and every thing. And why, above all, take away from the country that which dwellers in the country need,-- flour, oats, horses, and cattle?

Hundreds of times did I discuss this matter with peasants living in town; and from my discussions with them, and from my observations, it has been made apparent to me, that the congregation of country people in the city is partly indispensable because they cannot otherwise support themselves, partly voluntary, and that they are attracted to the city by the temptations of the city.

It is true, that the position of the peasant is such that, for the satisfaction of his demands made on him in the country, he cannot extricate himself otherwise than by selling the grain and the cattle which he knows will be indispensable to him; and he is forced, whether he will or no, to go to the city in order there to win back his bread. But it is also true, that the luxury of city life, and the comparative ease with which money is there to be earned, attract him thither; and under the pretext of gaining his living in the town, he betakes himself thither in order that he may have lighter work, better food, and drink tea three times a day, and dress well, and even lead a drunken and dissolute life. The cause of both is identical,--the transfer of the riches of the producers into the hands of non-producers, and the accumulation of wealth in the cities. And, in point of fact, when autumn has come, all wealth is collected in the country. And instantly there arise demands for taxes, recruits, the temptations of vodka, weddings, festivals; petty pedlers make their rounds through the villages, and all sorts of other temptations crop up; and by this road, or, if not, by some other, wealth of

the most varied description--vegetables, calves, cows, horses, pigs, chickens, eggs, butter, hemp, flax, rye, oats, buckwheat, pease, hempseed, and flaxseed--all passes into the hands of strangers, is carried off to the towns, and thence to the capitals. The countryman is obliged to surrender all this to satisfy the demands that are made upon him, and temptations; and, having parted with his wealth, he is left with an insufficiency, and he is forced to go whither his wealth has been carried and there he tries, in part, to obtain the money which he requires for his first needs in the country, and in part, being himself led away by the blandishments of the city, he enjoys, in company with others, the wealth that has there accumulated.

Everywhere, throughout the whole of Russia,--yes, and not in Russia alone, I think, but throughout the whole world,-- the same thing goes on. The wealth of the rustic producers passes into the hands of traders, landed proprietors, officials, and factory-owners; and the people who receive this wealth wish to enjoy it. But it is only in the city that they can derive full enjoyment from this wealth. In the country, in the first place, it is difficult to satisfy all the requirements of rich people, on account of the sparseness of the population; banks, shops, hotels, every sort of artisan, and all sorts of social diversions, do not exist there. In the second place, one of the chief pleasures procured by wealth-- vanity, the desire to astonish and outshine other people--is difficult to satisfy in the country; and this, again, on account of the lack of inhabitants. In the country, there is no one to appreciate elegance, no one to be astonished. Whatever adornments in the way of pictures and bronzes the dweller in the country may procure for his house, whatever equipages and toilets he may provide, there is no one to see them and envy them, and the peasants cannot judge of them. [And, in the third place, luxury is even disagreeable and dangerous in the country for the man possessed of a conscience and fear. It is an awkward and delicate matter, in the country, to have baths of milk, or to feed your puppies on it, when directly beside you there are children who have no milk; it is an awkward and delicate matter to build pavilions and gardens in the midst of people who live in cots banked up with dung, which they have no means of warming. In the country there is no one to keep the stupid peasants in order, and in their lack of cultivation they might disarrange all this.] {11}

And accordingly rich people congregate, and join themselves to other rich people with similar requirements, in the city, where the gratification of every luxurious taste is carefully protected by a numerous police force. Well-rooted inhabitants of the city of this sort, are the governmental officials; every description of artisan and professional man has sprung up around them, and with them the wealthy join their forces. All that a rich man has to do there is to take a fancy to a thing, and he can get it. It is also more agreeable for a rich man to live there, because there he can gratify his

vanity; there is some one with whom he can vie in luxury; there is some one to astonish, and there is some one to outshine. But the principal reason why it is more comfortable in the city for a rich man is that formerly, in the country, his luxury made him awkward and uneasy; while now, on the contrary, it would be awkward for him not to live luxuriously, not to live like all his peers around him. That which seemed dreadful and awkward in the country, here appears to be just as it should be. [Rich people congregate in the city; and there, under the protection of the authorities, they calmly demand every thing that is brought thither from the country. And the countryman is, in some measure, compelled to go thither, where this uninterrupted festival of the wealthy which demands all that is taken from him is in progress, in order to feed upon the crumbs which fall from the tables of the rich; and partly, also, because, when he beholds the care-free, luxurious life, approved and protected by everybody, he himself becomes desirous of regulating his life in such a way as to work as little as possible, and to make as much use as possible of the labors of others.

And so he betakes himself to the city, and finds employment about the wealthy, endeavoring, by every means in his power, to entice from them that which he is in need of, and conforming to all those conditions which the wealthy impose upon him, he assists in the gratification of all their whims; he serves the rich man in the bath and in the inn, and as cab-driver and prostitute, and he makes for him equipages, toys, and fashions; and he gradually learns from the rich man to live in the same manner as the latter, not by labor, but by divers tricks, getting away from others the wealth which they have heaped together; and he becomes corrupt, and goes to destruction. And this colony, demoralized by city wealth, constitutes that city pauperism which I desired to aid and could not.

All that is necessary, in fact, is for us to reflect on the condition of these inhabitants of the country, who have removed to the city in order to earn their bread or their taxes,--when they behold, everywhere around them, thousands squandered madly, and hundreds won by the easiest possible means; when they themselves are forced by heavy toil to earn kopeks,--and we shall be amazed that all these people should remain working people, and that they do not all of them take to an easier method of getting gain,--by trading, peddling, acting as middlemen, begging, vice, rascality, and even robbery. Why, we, the participants in that never-ceasing orgy which goes on in town, can become so accustomed to our life, that it seems to us perfectly natural to dwell alone in five huge apartments, heated by a quantity of beech logs sufficient to cook the food for and to warm twenty families; to drive half a verst with two trotters and two men- servants; to cover the polished wood floor with rugs; and to spend, I will not say, on a ball, five or

ten thousand rubles, and twenty-five thousand on a Christmas-tree. But a man who is in need of ten rubles to buy bread for his family, or whose last sheep has been seized for a tax-debt of seven rubles, and who cannot raise those rubles by hard labor, cannot grow accustomed to this. We think that all this appears natural to poor people there are even some ingenuous persons who say in all seriousness, that the poor are very grateful to us for supporting them by this luxury.] {12}

But poor people are not devoid of human understanding simply because they are poor, and they judge precisely as we do. As the first thought that occurs to us on hearing that such and such a man has gambled away or squandered ten or twenty thousand rubles, is: "What a foolish and worthless fellow he is to uselessly squander so much money! and what a good use I could have made of that money in a building which I have long been in need of, for the improvement of my estate, and so forth!"--just so do the poor judge when they behold the wealth which they need, not for caprices, but for the satisfaction of their actual necessities, of which they are frequently deprived, flung madly away before their eyes. We make a very great mistake when we think that the poor can judge thus, reason thus, and look on indifferently at the luxury which surrounds them.

They never have acknowledged, and they never will acknowledge, that it can be just for some people to live always in idleness, and for other people to fast and toil incessantly; but at first they are amazed and insulted by this; then they scrutinize it more attentively, and, seeing that these arrangements are recognized as legitimate, they endeavor to free themselves from toil, and to take part in the idleness. Some succeed in this, and they become just such carousers themselves; others gradually prepare themselves for this state; others still fail, and do not attain their goal, and, having lost the habit of work, they fill up the disorderly houses and the night-lodging houses.

Two years ago, we took from the country a peasant boy to wait on table. For some reason, he did not get on well with the footman, and he was sent away: he entered the service of a merchant, won the favor of his master, and now he goes about with a vest and a watch-chain, and dandified boots. In his place, we took another peasant, a married man: he became a drunkard, and lost money. We took a third: he took to drink, and, having drank up every thing he had, he suffered for a long while from poverty in the night-lodging house. An old man, the cook, took to drink and fell sick. Last year a footman who had formerly been a hard drinker, but who had refrained from liquor for five years in the country, while living in Moscow without his wife who encouraged him, took to drink again, and ruined his whole life. A young lad from our village lives with my brother as a table-

servant. His grandfather, a blind old man, came to me during my sojourn in the country, and asked me to remind this grandson that he was to send ten rubies for the taxes, otherwise it would be necessary for him to sell his cow. "He keeps saying, I must dress decently," said the old man: "well, he has had some shoes made, and that's all right; but what does he want to set up a watch for?" said the grandfather, expressing in these words the most senseless supposition that it was possible to originate. The supposition really was senseless, if we take into consideration that the old man throughout Lent had eaten no butter, and that he had no split wood because he could not possibly pay one ruble and twenty kopeks for it; but it turned out that the old man's senseless jest was an actual fact. The young fellow came to see me in a fine black coat, and shoes for which he had paid eight rubles. He had recently borrowed ten rubles from my brother, and had spent them on these shoes. And my children, who have known the lad from childhood, told me that he really considers it indispensable to fit himself out with a watch. He is a very good boy, but he thinks that people will laugh at him so long as he has no watch; and a watch is necessary. During the present year, a chambermaid, a girl of eighteen, entered into a connection with the coachman in our house. She was discharged. An old woman, the nurse, with whom I spoke in regard to the unfortunate girl, reminded me of a girl whom I had forgotten. She too, ten years ago, during a brief stay of ours in Moscow, had become connected with a footman. She too had been discharged, and she had ended in a disorderly house, and had died in the hospital before reaching the age of twenty. It is only necessary to glance about one, to be struck with terror at the pest which we disseminate directly by our luxurious life among the people whom we afterwards wish to help, not to mention the factories and establishments which serve our luxurious tastes.

[And thus, having penetrated into the peculiar character of city poverty, which I was unable to remedy, I perceived that its prime cause is this, that I take absolute necessaries from the dwellers in the country, and carry them all to the city. The second cause is this, that by making use here, in the city, of what I have collected in the country, I tempt and lead astray, by my senseless luxury, those country people who come hither because of me, in order in some way to get back what they have been deprived of in the country.] {13}

CHAPTER XIV.

I reached the same conclusion from a totally different point. On recalling all my relations with the city poor during that time, I saw that one of the reasons why I could not help the city poor was, that the poor were disingenuous and untruthful with me. They all looked upon me, not as a man, but as means. I could not get near them, and I thought that perhaps I did not understand how to do it; but without uprightness, no help was possible. How can one help a man who does not disclose his whole condition? At first I blamed them for this (it is so natural to blame some one else); but a remark from an observing man named Siutaeff, who was visiting me at the time, explained this matter to me, and showed me where the cause of my want of success lay. I remember that Siutaeff's remark struck me very forcibly at the time; but I only understood its full significance later on. It was at the height of my self-delusion. I was sitting with my sister, and Siutaeff was there also at her house; and my sister was questioning me about my undertaking. I told her about it, and, as always happens when you have no faith in your course, I talked to her with great enthusiasm and warmth, and at great length, of what I had done, and of what might possibly come of it. I told her every thing,--how we were going to keep track of pauperism in Moscow, how we were going to keep an eye on the orphans and old people, how we were going to send away all country people who had grown poor here, how we were going to smooth the pathway to reform for the depraved; how, if only the matter could be managed, there would not be a man left in Moscow, who could not obtain assistance. My sister sympathized with me, and we discussed it. In the middle of our conversation, I glanced at Siutaeff. As I was acquainted with his Christian life, and with the significance which he attached to charity, I expected his sympathy, and spoke so that he understood this; I talked to my sister, but directed my remarks more at him. He sat immovable in his dark tanned sheepskin jacket,--which he wore, like all peasants, both out of doors and in the house,--and as though he did not hear us, but were thinking of his own affairs. His small eyes did not twinkle, and seemed to be turned inwards. Having finished what I had to say, I turned to him with a query as to what he thought of it.

"It's all a foolish business," said he.

"Why?"

"Your whole society is foolish, and nothing good can come out of it," he

repeated with conviction.

"Why not? Why is it a stupid business to help thousands, at any rate hundreds, of unfortunate beings? Is it a bad thing, according to the Gospel, to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry?"

"I know, I know, but that is not what you are doing. Is it necessary to render assistance in that way? You are walking along, and a man asks you for twenty kopeks. You give them to him. Is that alms? Do you give spiritual alms,--teach him. But what is it that you have given? It was only for the sake of getting rid of him."

"No; and, besides, that is not what we are talking about. We want to know about this need, and then to help by both money and deeds; and to find work."

"You can do nothing with those people in that way."

"So they are to be allowed to die of hunger and cold?"

"Why should they die? Are there many of them there?"

"What, many of them?" said I, thinking that he looked at the matter so lightly because he was not aware how vast was the number of these people.

"Why, do you know," said I, "I believe that there are twenty thousand of these cold and hungry people in Moscow. And how about Petersburg and the other cities?"

He smiled.

"Twenty thousand! And how many households are there in Russia alone, do you think? Are there a million?"

"Well, what then?"

"What then?" and his eyes flashed, and he grew animated. "Come, let us divide them among ourselves. I am not rich, I will take two persons on the spot. There is the lad whom you took into your kitchen; I invited him to come to my house, and he did not come. Were there ten times as many, let us divide them among us. Do you take some, and I will take some. We will work together. He will see how I work, and he will learn. He will see how I live, and we will sit down at the same table together, and he will hear my

words and yours. This charity society of yours is nonsense."

These simple words impressed me. I could not but admit their justice; but it seemed to me at that time, that, in spite of their truth, still that which I had planned might possibly prove of service. But the further I carried this business, the more I associated with the poor, the more frequently did this remark recur to my mind, and the greater was the significance which it acquired for me.

I arrive in a costly fur coat, or with my horses; or the man who lacks shoes sees my two-thousand-ruble apartments. He sees how, a little while ago, I gave five rubles without begrudging them, merely because I took a whim to do so. He surely knows that if I give away rubles in that manner, it is only because I have hoarded up so many of them, that I have a great many superfluous ones, which I not only have not given away, but which I have easily taken from other people. [What else could he see in me but one of those persons who have got possession of what belongs to him? And what other feeling can he cherish towards me, than a desire to obtain from me as many of those rubles, which have been stolen from him and from others, as possible? I wish to get close to him, and I complain that he is not frank; and here I am, afraid to sit down on his bed for fear of getting lice, or catching something infectious; and I am afraid to admit him to my room, and he, coming to me naked, waits, generally in the vestibule, or, if very fortunate, in the ante-chamber. And yet I declare that he is to blame because I cannot enter into intimate relations with him, and because he is not frank.

Let the sternest man try the experiment of eating a dinner of five courses in the midst of people who have had very little or nothing but black bread to eat. Not a man will have the spirit to eat, and to watch how the hungry lick their chops around him. Hence, then, in order to eat daintily amid the famishing, the first indispensable requisite is to hide from them, in order that they may not see it. This is the very thing, and the first thing, that we do.

And I took a simpler view of our life, and perceived that an approach to the poor is not difficult to us through accidental causes, but that we deliberately arrange our lives in such a fashion so that this approach may be rendered difficult.

Not only this; but, on taking a survey of our life, of the life of the wealthy, I saw that every thing which is considered desirable in that life consists in, or is inseparably bound up with, the idea of getting as far away from the poor as possible. In fact, all the efforts of our well-endowed life, beginning with

our food, dress, houses, our cleanliness, and even down to our education,-- every thing has for its chief object, the separation of ourselves from the poor. In procuring this seclusion of ourselves by impassable barriers, we spend, to put it mildly, nine-tenths of our wealth. The first thing that a man who was grown wealthy does is to stop eating out of one bowl, and he sets up crockery, and fits himself out with a kitchen and servants. And he feeds his servants high, too, so that their mouths may not water over his dainty viands; and he eats alone; and as eating in solitude is wearisome, he plans how he may improve his food and deck his table; and the very manner of taking his food (dinner) becomes a matter for pride and vain glory with him, and his manner of taking his food becomes for him a means of sequestering himself from other men. A rich man cannot think of such a thing as inviting a poor man to his table. A man must know how to conduct ladies to table, how to bow, to sit down, to eat, to rinse out the mouth; and only rich people know all these things. The same thing occurs in the matter of clothing. If a rich man were to wear ordinary clothing, simply for the purpose of protecting his body from the cold,--a short jacket, a coat, felt and leather boots, an under-jacket, trousers, shirt,--he would require but very little, and he would not be unable, when he had two coats, to give one of them to a man who had none. But the rich man begins by procuring for himself clothing which consists entirely of separate pieces, and which is fit only for separate occasions, and which is, therefore, unsuited to the poor man. He has frock-coats, vests, pea-jackets, lacquered boots, cloaks, shoes with French heels, garments that are chopped up into bits to conform with the fashion, hunting-coats, travelling-coats, and so on, which can only be used under conditions of existence far removed from poverty. And his clothing also furnishes him with a means of keeping at a distance from the poor. The same is the case, and even more clearly, with his dwelling. In order that one may live alone in ten rooms, it is indispensable that those who live ten in one room should not see it. The richer a man is, the more difficult is he of access; the more porters there are between him and people who are not rich, the more impossible is it to conduct a poor man over rugs, and seat him in a satin chair.

The case is the same with the means of locomotion. The peasant driving in a cart, or a sledge, must be a very ill-tempered man when he will not give a pedestrian a lift; and there is both room for this and a possibility of doing it. But the richer the equipage, the farther is a man from all possibility of giving a seat to any person whatsoever. It is even said plainly, that the most stylish equipages are those meant to hold only one person.

It is precisely the same thing with the manner of life which is expressed by the word cleanliness.

Cleanliness! Who is there that does not know people, especially women, who reckon this cleanliness in themselves as a great virtue? and who is not acquainted with the devices of this cleanliness, which know no bounds, when it can command the labor of others? Which of the people who have become rich has not experienced in his own case, with what difficulty he carefully trained himself to this cleanliness, which only confirms the proverb, "Little white hands love other people's work"?

To-day cleanliness consists in changing your shirt once a day; to-morrow, in changing it twice a day. To-day it means washing the face, and neck, and hands daily; to-morrow, the feet; and day after to-morrow, washing the whole body every day, and, in addition and in particular, a rubbing-down. To-day the table-cloth is to serve for two days, to-morrow there must be one each day, then two a day. To-day the footman's hands must be clean; to-morrow he must wear gloves, and in his clean gloves he must present a letter on a clean salver. And there are no limits to this cleanliness, which is useless to everybody, and objectless, except for the purpose of separating oneself from others, and of rendering impossible all intercourse with them, when this cleanliness is attained by the labors of others.

Moreover, when I studied the subject, I became convinced that even that which is commonly called education is the very same thing.

The tongue does not deceive; it calls by its real name that which men understand under this name. What the people call culture is fashionable clothing, political conversation, clean hands,--a certain sort of cleanliness. Of such a man, it is said, in contradistinction to others, that he is an educated man. In a little higher circle, what they call education means the same thing as with the people; only to the conditions of education are added playing on the pianoforte, a knowledge of French, the writing of Russian without orthographical errors, and a still greater degree of external cleanliness. In a still more elevated sphere, education means all this with the addition of the English language, and a diploma from the highest educational institution. But education is precisely the same thing in the first, the second, and the third case. Education consists of those forms and acquirements which are calculated to separate a man from his fellows. And its object is identical with that of cleanliness,--to seclude us from the herd of poor, in order that they, the poor, may not see how we feast. But it is impossible to hide ourselves, and they do see us.

And accordingly I have become convinced that the cause of the inability of us rich people to help the poor of the city lies in the impossibility of our

establishing intercourse with them; and that this impossibility of intercourse is caused by ourselves, by the whole course of our lives, by all the uses which we make of our wealth. I have become convinced that between us, the rich and the poor, there rises a wall, reared by ourselves out of that very cleanliness and education, and constructed of our wealth; and that in order to be in a condition to help the poor, we must needs, first of all, destroy this wall; and that in order to do this, confrontation after Siutaeff's method should be rendered possible, and the poor distributed among us. And from another starting-point also I came to the same conclusion to which the current of my discussions as to the causes of the poverty in towns had led me: the cause was our wealth.] {14}

CHAPTER XV.

I began to examine the matter from a third and wholly personal point of view. Among the phenomena which particularly impressed me, during the period of my charitable activity, there was yet another, and a very strange one, for which I could for a long time find no explanation. It was this: every time that I chanced, either on the street or in the house, to give some small coin to a poor man, without saying any thing to him, I saw, or thought that I saw, contentment and gratitude on the countenance of the poor man, and I myself experienced in this form of benevolence an agreeable sensation. I saw that I had done what the man wished and expected from me. But if I stopped the poor man, and sympathetically questioned him about his former and his present life, I felt that it was no longer possible to give three or twenty kopeks, and I began to fumble in my purse for money, in doubt as to how much I ought to give, and I always gave more; and I always noticed that the poor man left me dissatisfied. But if I entered into still closer intercourse with the poor man, then my doubts as to how much to give increased also; and, no matter how much I gave, the poor man grew ever more sullen and discontented. As a general rule, it always turned out thus, that if I gave, after conversation with a poor man, three rubles or even more, I almost always beheld gloom, displeasure, and even ill-will, on the countenance of the poor man; and I have even known it to happen, that, having received ten rubles, he went off without so much as saying "Thank you," exactly as though I had insulted him.

And thereupon I felt awkward and ashamed, and almost guilty. But if I followed up a poor man for weeks and months and years, and assisted him, and explained my views to him, and associated with him, our relations became a torment, and I perceived that the man despised me. And I felt that he was in the right.

If I go out into the street, and he, standing in that street, begs of me among the number of the other passers-by, people who walk and ride past him, and I give him money, I then am to him a passer-by, and a good, kind passer-by, who bestows on him that thread from which a shirt is made for the naked man; he expects nothing more than the thread, and if I give it he thanks me sincerely. But if I stop him, and talk with him as man with man, I thereby show him that I desire to be something more than a mere passer-by. If, as often happens, he weeps while relating to me his woes, then he sees in me no longer a passer-by, but that which I desire that he should see: a good man. But if I am a good man, my goodness cannot pause at a twenty-kopek

piece, nor at ten rubles, nor at ten thousand; it is impossible to be a little bit of a good man. Let us suppose that I have given him a great deal, that I have fitted him out, dressed him, set him on his feet so that he can live without outside assistance; but for some reason or other, though misfortune or his own weakness or vices, he is again without that coat, that linen, and that money which I have given him; he is again cold and hungry, and he has come again to me, - how can I refuse him? [For if the cause of my action consisted in the attainment of a definite, material end, on giving him so many rubles or such and such a coat I might be at ease after having bestowed them. But the cause of my action is not this: the cause is, that I want to be a good man, that is to say, I want to see myself in every other man. Every man understands goodness thus, and in no other manner.] {15} And therefore, if he should drink away every thing that you had given him twenty times, and if he should again be cold and hungry, you cannot do otherwise than give him more, if you are a good man; you can never cease giving to him, if you have more than he has. And if you draw back, you will thereby show that every thing that you have done, you have done not because you are a good man, but because you wished to appear a good man in his sight, and in the sight of men.

And thus in the case with the men from whom I chanced to recede, to whom I ceased to give, and, by this action, denied good, I experienced a torturing sense of shame.

What sort of shame was this? This shame I had experienced in the Lyapinsky house, and both before and after that in the country, when I happened to give money or any thing else to the poor, and in my expeditions among the city poor.

A mortifying incident that occurred to me not long ago vividly reminded me of that shame, and led me to an explanation of that shame which I had felt when bestowing money on the poor.

[This happened in the country. I wanted twenty kopeks to give to a poor pilgrim; I sent my son to borrow them from some one; he brought the pilgrim a twenty-kopek piece, and told me that he had borrowed it from the cook. A few days afterwards some more pilgrims arrived, and again I was in want of a twenty-kopek piece. I had a ruble; I recollected that I was in debt to the cook, and I went to the kitchen, hoping to get some more small change from the cook. I said: "I borrowed a twenty-kopek piece from you, so here is a ruble." I had not finished speaking, when the cook called in his wife from another room: "Take it, Parasha," said he. I, supposing that she understood what I wanted, handed her the ruble. I must state that the cook

had only lived with me a week, and, though I had seen his wife, I had never spoken to her. I was just on the point of saying to her that she was to give me some small coins, when she bent swiftly down to my hand, and tried to kiss it, evidently imagining that I had given her the ruble. I muttered something, and quitted the kitchen. I was ashamed, ashamed to the verge of torture, as I had not been for a long time. I shrank together; I was conscious that I was making grimaces, and I groaned with shame as I fled from the kitchen. This utterly unexpected, and, as it seemed to me, utterly undeserved shame, made a special impression on me, because it was a long time since I had been mortified, and because I, as an old man, had so lived, it seemed to me, that I had not merited this shame. I was forcibly struck by this. I told the members of my household about it, I told my acquaintances, and they all agreed that they should have felt the same. And I began to reflect: why had this caused me such shame? To this, something which had happened to me in Moscow furnished me with an answer.

I meditated on that incident, and the shame which I had experienced in the presence of the cook's wife was explained to me, and all those sensations of mortification which I had undergone during the course of my Moscow benevolence, and which I now feel incessantly when I have occasion to give any one any thing except that petty alms to the poor and to pilgrims, which I have become accustomed to bestow, and which I consider a deed not of charity but of courtesy. If a man asks you for a light, you must strike a match for him, if you have one. If a man asks for three or for twenty kopeks, or even for several rubles, you must give them if you have them. This is an act of courtesy and not of charity.] {16}

This was the case in question: I have already mentioned the two peasants with whom I was in the habit of sawing wood three years ago. One Saturday evening at dusk, I was returning to the city in their company. They were going to their employer to receive their wages. As we were crossing the Dragomilovsky bridge, we met an old man. He asked alms, and I gave him twenty kopeks. I gave, and reflected on the good effect which my charity would have on Semyon, with whom I had been conversing on religious topics. Semyon, the Vladimir peasant, who had a wife and two children in Moscow, halted also, pulled round the skirt of his kaftan, and got out his purse, and from this slender purse he extracted, after some fumbling, three kopeks, handed it to the old man, and asked for two kopeks in change. The old man exhibited in his hand two three-kopek pieces and one kopek. Semyon looked at them, was about to take the kopek, but thought better of it, pulled off his hat, crossed himself, and walked on, leaving the old man the three-kopek piece.

I was fully acquainted with Semyon's financial condition. He had no property at home at all. The money which he had laid by on the day when he gave three kopeks amounted to six rubles and fifty kopeks. Accordingly, six rubles and twenty kopeks was the sum of his savings. My reserve fund was in the neighborhood of six hundred thousand. I had a wife and children, Semyon had a wife and children. He was younger than I, and his children were fewer in number than mine; but his children were small, and two of mine were of an age to work, so that our position, with the exception of the savings, was on an equality; mine was somewhat the more favorable, if any thing. He gave three kopeks, I gave twenty. What did he really give, and what did I really give? What ought I to have given, in order to do what Semyon had done? he had six hundred kopeks; out of this he gave one, and afterwards two. I had six hundred thousand rubles. In order to give what Semyon had given, I should have been obliged to give three thousand rubles, and ask for two thousand in change, and then leave the two thousand with the old man, cross myself, and go my way, calmly conversing about life in the factories, and the cost of liver in the Smolensk market.

I thought of this at the time; but it was only long afterwards that I was in a condition to draw from this incident that deduction which inevitably results from it. This deduction is so uncommon and so singular, apparently, that, in spite of its mathematical infallibility, one requires time to grow used to it. It does seem as though there must be some mistake, but mistake there is none. There is merely the fearful mist of error in which we live.

[This deduction, when I arrived at it, and when I recognized its undoubted truth, furnished me with an explanation of my shame in the presence of the cook's wife, and of all the poor people to whom I had given and to whom I still give money.

What, in point of fact, is that money which I give to the poor, and which the cook's wife thought I was giving to her? In the majority of cases, it is that portion of my substance which it is impossible even to express in figures to Semyon and the cook's wife,--it is generally one millionth part or about that. I give so little that the bestowal of any money is not and cannot be a deprivation to me; it is only a pleasure in which I amuse myself when the whim seizes me. And it was thus that the cook's wife understood it. If I give to a man who steps in from the street one ruble or twenty kopeks, why should not I give her a ruble also? In the opinion of the cook's wife, such a bestowal of money is precisely the same as the flinging of honey-cakes to the people by gentlemen; it furnishes the people who have a great deal of superfluous cash with amusement. I was mortified because the mistake made by the cook's wife demonstrated to me distinctly the view which she,

and all people who are not rich, must take of me: "He is flinging away his folly, i.e., his unearned money."

As a matter of fact, what is my money, and whence did it come into my possession? A portion of it I accumulated from the land which I received from my father. A peasant sold his last sheep or cow in order to give the money to me. Another portion of my money is the money which I have received for my writings, for my books. If my books are hurtful, I only lead astray those who purchase them, and the money which I receive for them is ill-earned money; but if my books are useful to people, then the issue is still more disastrous. I do not give them to people: I say, "Give me seventeen rubles, and I will give them to you." And as the peasant sells his last sheep, in this case the poor student or teacher, or any other poor man, deprives himself of necessaries in order to give me this money. And so I have accumulated a great deal of money in that way, and what do I do with it? I take that money to the city, and bestow it on the poor, only when they fulfil my caprices, and come hither to the city to clean my sidewalk, lamps, and shoes; to work for me in factories. And in return for this money, I force from them every thing that I can; that is to say, I try to give them as little as possible, and to receive as much as possible from them. And all at once I begin, quite unexpectedly, to bestow this money as a simple gift, on these same poor persons, not on all, but on those to whom I take a fancy. Why should not every poor person expect that it is quite possible that the luck may fall to him of being one of those with whom I shall amuse myself by distributing my superfluous money? And so all look upon me as the cook's wife did.

And I had gone so far astray that this taking of thousands from the poor with one hand, and this flinging of kopeks with the other, to those to whom the whim moved me to give, I called good. No wonder that I felt ashamed.]
{17}

Yes, before doing good it was needful for me to stand outside of evil, in such conditions that I might cease to do evil. But my whole life is evil. I may give away a hundred thousand rubles, and still I shall not be in a position to do good because I shall still have five hundred thousand left. Only when I have nothing shall I be in a position to do the least particle of good, even as much as the prostitute did which she nursed the sick women and her child for three days. And that seemed so little to me! And I dared to think of good myself! That which, on the first occasion, told me, at the sight of the cold and hungry in the Lyapinsky house, that I was to blame for this, and that to live as I live is impossible, and impossible, and impossible,--that alone was true.

What, then, was I to do?

CHAPTER XVI.

It was hard for me to come to this confession, but when I had come to it I was shocked at the error in which I had been living. I stood up to my ears in the mud, and yet I wanted to drag others out of this mud.

What is it that I wish in reality? I wish to do good to others. I wish to do it so that other people may not be cold and hungry, so that others may live as it is natural for people to live.

[I wish this, and I see that in consequence of the violence, extortions, and various tricks in which I take part, people who toil are deprived of necessaries, and people who do not toil, in whose ranks I also belong, enjoy in superabundance the toil of other people.

I see that this enjoyment of the labors of others is so arranged, that the more rascally and complicated the trickery which is employed by the man himself, or which has been employed by the person from whom he obtained his inheritance, the more does he enjoy of the labors of others, and the less does he contribute of his own labor.

First come the Shtiglitzys, Dervizys, Morozovys, the Demidoffs, the Yusapoffs; then great bankers, merchants, officials, landed proprietors, among whom I also belong; then the poor--very small traders, dramshop-keepers, usurers, district judges, overseers, teachers, sacristans, clerks; then house-porters, lackeys, coachmen, watch-carriers, cab-drivers, peddlers; and last of all, the laboring classes--factory-hands and peasants, whose numbers bear the relation to the first named of ten to one. I see that the life of nine-tenths of the working classes demands, by reason of its nature, application and toil, as does every natural life; but that, in consequence of the sharp practices which take from these people what is indispensable, and place them in such oppressive conditions, this life becomes more difficult every year, and more filled with deprivations; but our life, the life of the non-laboring classes, thanks to the co-operation of the arts and sciences which are directed to this object, becomes more filled with superfluities, more attractive and careful, with every year. I see, that, in our day, the life of the working-man, and, in particular, the life of old men, of women, and of children of the working population, is perishing directly from their food, which is utterly inadequate to their fatiguing labor; and that this life of theirs is not free from care as to its very first requirements; and that, alongside of this, the life of the non-laboring classes, to which I belong, is filled more and more, every

year, with superfluities and luxury, and becomes more and more free from anxiety, and has finally reached such a point of freedom from care, in the case of its fortunate members, of whom I am one, as was only dreamed of in olden times in fairy-tales,--the state of the owner of the purse with the inexhaustible ruble, that is, a condition in which a man is not only utterly released from the law of labor, but in which he possesses the possibility of enjoying, without toil, all the blessings of life, and of transferring to his children, or to any one whom he may see fit, this purse with the inexhaustible ruble.

I see that the products of the people's toil are more and more transformed from the mass of the working classes to those who do not work; that the pyramid of the social edifice seems to be reconstructed in such fashion that the foundation stones are carried to the apex, and the swiftness of this transfer is increasing in a sort of geometrical ratio. I see that the result of this is something like that which would take place in an ant-heap if the community of ants were to lose their sense of the common law, if some ants were to begin to draw the products of labor from the bottom to the top of the heap, and should constantly contract the foundations and broaden the apex, and should thereby also force the remaining ants to betake themselves from the bottom to the summit.

I see that the ideal of the Fortunatus' purse has made its way among the people, in the place of the ideal of a toilsome life. Rich people, myself among the number, get possession of the inexhaustible ruble by various devices, and for the purpose of enjoying it we go to the city, to the place where nothing is produced and where every thing is swallowed up.

The industrious poor man, who is robbed in order that the rich may possess this inexhaustible ruble, yearns for the city in his train; and there he also takes to sharp practices, and either acquires for himself a position in which he can work little and receive much, thereby rendering still more oppressive the situation of the laboring classes, or, not having attained to such a position, he goes to ruin, and falls into the ranks of those cold and hungry inhabitants of the night-lodging houses, which are being swelled with such remarkable rapidity.

I belong to the class of those people, who, by divers tricks, take from the toiling masses the necessaries of life, and who have acquired for themselves these inexhaustible rubles, and who lead these unfortunates astray. I desire to aid people, and therefore it is clear that, first of all, I must cease to rob them as I am doing. But I, by the most complicated, and cunning, and evil practices, which have been heaped up for centuries, have acquired for

myself the position of an owner of the inexhaustible ruble, that is to say, one in which, never working myself, I can make hundreds and thousands of people toil for me--which also I do; and I imagine that I pity people, and I wish to assist them. I sit on a man's neck, I weigh him down, and I demand that he shall carry me; and without descending from his shoulders I assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him, and that I desire to ameliorate his condition by all possible means, only not by getting off of him.

Surely this is simple enough. If I want to help the poor, that is, to make the poor no longer poor, I must not produce poor people. And I give, at my own selection, to poor men who have gone astray from the path of life, a ruble, or ten rubles, or a hundred; and I grasp hundreds from people who have not yet left the path, and thereby I render them poor also, and demoralize them to boot.

This is very simple; but it was horribly hard for me to understand this fully without compromises and reservations, which might serve to justify my position; but it sufficed for me to confess my guilt, and every thing which had before seemed to me strange and complicated, and lacking in cleanness, became perfectly comprehensible and simple. But the chief point was, that my way of life, arising from this interpretation, became simple, clear and pleasant, instead of perplexed, inexplicable and full of torture as before.] {18}

Who am I, that I should desire to help others? I desire to help people; and I, rising at twelve o'clock after a game of vint {19} with four candles, weak, exhausted, demanding the aid of hundreds of people,--I go to the aid of whom? Of people who rise at five o'clock, who sleep on planks, who nourish themselves on bread and cabbage, who know how to plough, to reap, to wield the axe, to chop, to harness, to sew,--of people who in strength and endurance, and skill and abstemiousness, are a hundred times superior to me,--and I go to their succor! What except shame could I feel, when I entered into communion with these people? The very weakest of them, a drunkard, an inhabitant of the Rzhanoff house, the one whom they call "the idler," is a hundred-fold more industrious than I; [his balance, so to speak, that is to say, the relation of what he takes from people and that which they give him, stands on a thousand times better footing than my balance, if I take into consideration what I take from people and what I give to them.] {18}

And these are the people to whose assistance I go. I go to help the poor. But who is the poor man? There is no one poorer than myself. I am a thoroughly enervated, good-for-nothing parasite, who can only exist under the most special conditions, who can only exist when thousands of people

toil at the preservation of this life which is utterly useless to every one. And I, that plant-louse, which devours the foliage of trees, wish to help the tree in its growth and health, and I wish to heal it.

I have passed my whole life in this manner: I eat, I talk and I listen; I eat, I write or read, that is to say, I talk and listen again; I eat, I play, I eat, again I talk and listen, I eat, and again I go to bed; and so each day I can do nothing else, and I understand how to do nothing else. And in order that I may be able to do this, it is necessary that the porter, the peasant, the cook, male or female, the footman, the coachman, and the laundress, should toil from morning till night; I will not refer to the labors of the people which are necessary in order that coachman, cooks, male and female, footman, and the rest should have those implements and articles with which, and over which, they toil for my sake; axes, tubs, brushes, household utensils, furniture, wax, blacking, kerosene, hay, wood, and beef. And all these people work hard all day long and every day, so that I may be able to talk and eat and sleep. And I, this cripple of a man, have imagined that I could help others, and those the very people who support me!

It is not remarkable that I could not help any one, and that I felt ashamed; but the remarkable point is that such an absurd idea could have occurred to me. The woman who served the sick old man, helped him; the mistress of the house, who cut a slice from the bread which she had won from the soil, helped the beggar; Semyon, who gave three kopeks which he had earned, helped the beggar, because those three kopeks actually represented his labor: but I served no one, I toiled for no one, and I was well aware that my money did not represent my labor.

CHAPTER XVII

Into the delusion that I could help others I was led by the fact that I fancied that my money was of the same sort as Semyon's. But this was not the case.

A general idea prevails, that money represents wealth; but wealth is the product of labor; and, therefore, money represents labor. But this idea is as just as that every governmental regulation is the result of a compact (contract social).

Every one likes to think that money is only a medium of exchange for labor. I have made shoes, you have raised grain, he has reared sheep: here, in order that we may the more readily effect an exchange, we will institute money, which represents a corresponding quantity of labor, and, by means of it, we will barter our shoes for a breast of lamb and ten pounds of flour. We will exchange our products through the medium of money, and the money of each one of us represents our labor.

This is perfectly true, but true only so long as, in the community where this exchange is effected, the violence of one man over the rest has not made its appearance; not only violence over the labors of others, as happens in wars and slavery, but where he exercises no violence for the protection of the products of their labor from others. This will be true only in a community whose members fully carry out the Christian law, in a community where men give to him who asks, and where he who takes is not asked to make restitution. But just so soon as any violence whatever is used in the community, the significance of money for its possessor loses its significance as a representative of labor, and acquires the significance of a right founded, not on labor, but on violence.

As soon as there is war, and one man has taken any thing from any other man, money can no longer be always the representative of labor; money received by a warrior for the spoils of war, which he sells, even if he is the commander of the warriors, is in no way a product of labor, and possesses an entirely different meaning from money received for work on shoes. As soon as there are slave-owners and slaves, as there always have been throughout the whole world, it is utterly impossible to say that money represents labor.

Women have woven linen, sold it, and received money; serfs have woven for

their master, and the master has sold them and received the money. The money is identical in both cases; but in the one case it is the product of labor, in the other the product of violence. In exactly the same way, a stranger or my own father has given me money; and my father, when he gave me that money, knew, and I know, and everybody knows, that no one can take this money away from me; but if it should occur to any one to take it away from me, or even not to hand it over at the date when it was promised, the law would intervene on my behalf, and would compel the delivery to me of the money; and, again, it is evident that this money can in no wise be called the equivalent of labor, on a level with the money received by Semyon for chopping wood. So that in any community where there is any thing that in any manner whatever controls the labor of others, or where violence hedges in, by means of money, its possessions from others, there money is no longer invariably the representative of labor. In such a community, it is sometimes the representative of labor, and sometimes of violence.

Thus it would be where only one act of violence from one man against others, in the midst of perfectly free relations, should have made its appearance; but now, when centuries of the most varied deeds of violence have passed for accumulations of money, when these deeds of violence are incessant, and merely alter their forms; when, as every one admits, money accumulated itself represents violence; when money, as a representative of direct labor, forms but a very small portion of the money which is derived from every sort of violence,--to say nowadays that money represents the labor of the person who possesses it, is a self-evident error or a deliberate lie.

It may be said, that thus it should be; it may be said, that this is desirable; but by no means can it be said, that thus it is.

Money represents labor. Yes. Money does represent labor; but whose? In our society only in the very rarest, rarest of instances, does money represent the labor of its possessor, but it nearly always represents the labor of other people, the past or future labor of men; it is a representative of the obligation of others to labor, which has been established by force.

Money, in its most accurate and at the same the simple application, is the conventional stamp which confers a right, or, more correctly, a possibility, of taking advantage of the labors of other people. In its ideal significance, money should confer this right, or this possibility, only when it serves as the equivalent of labor, and such money might be in a community in which no violence existed. But just as soon as violence, that is to say, the possibility

of profiting by the labors of others without toil of one's own, exists in a community, then that profiting by the labors of other men is also expressed by money, without any distinction of the persons on whom that violence is exercised.

The landed proprietor has imposed upon his serfs natural debts, a certain quantity of linen, grain, and cattle, or a corresponding amount of money. One household has procured the cattle, but has paid money in lieu of linen. The proprietor takes the money to a certain amount only, because he knows that for that money they will make him the same quantity of linen, (generally he takes a little more, in order to be sure that they will make it for the same amount); and this money, evidently, represents for the proprietor the obligation of other people to toil.

The peasant gives the money as an obligation, to he knows not whom, but to people, and there are many of them, who undertake for this money to make so much linen. But the people who undertake to make the linen, do so because they have not succeeded in raising sheep, and in place of the sheep, they must pay money; but the peasant who takes money for his sheep takes it because he must pay for grain which did not bear well this year. The same thing goes on throughout this realm, and throughout the whole world.

A man sells the product of his labor, past, present or to come, sometimes his food, and generally not because money constitutes for him a convenient means of exchange. He could have effected the barter without money, but he does so because money is exacted from him by violence as a lien on his labor.

When the sovereign of Egypt exacted labor from his slaves, the slaves gave all their labor, but only their past and present labor, their future labor they could not give. But with the dissemination of money tokens, and the credit which had its rise in them, it became possible to sell one's future toil for money. Money, with co-existent violence in the community, only represents the possibility of a new form of impersonal slavery, which has taken the place of personal slavery. The slave-owner has a right to the labor of Piotr, Ivan, and Sidor. But the owner of money, in a place where money is demanded from all, has a right to the toil of all those nameless people who are in need of money. Money has set aside all the oppressive features of slavery, under which an owner knows his right to Ivan, and with them it has set aside all humane relations between the owner and the slave, which mitigated the burden of personal thralldom.

I will not allude to the fact, that such a condition of things is, possibly,

necessary for the development of mankind, for progress, and so forth,--that I do not contest. I have merely tried to elucidate to myself the idea of money, and that universal error into which I fell when I accepted money as the representative of labor. I became convinced, after experience, that money is not the representative of labor, but, in the majority of cases, the representative of violence, or of especially complicated sharp practices founded on violence.

Money, in our day, has completely lost that significance which it is very desirable that it should possess, as the representative of one's own labor; such a significance it has only as an exception, but, as a general rule, it has been converted into a right or a possibility of profiting by the toil of others.

The dissemination of money, of credit, and of all sorts of money tokens, confirms this significance of money ever more and more. Money is a new form of slavery, which differs from the old form of slavery only in its impersonality, its annihilation of all humane relations with the slave.

Money--money, is a value which is always equal to itself, and is always considered legal and righteous, and whose use is regarded as not immoral, just as the right of slavery was regarded.

In my young days, the game of loto was introduced into the clubs. Everybody rushed to play it, and, as it was said, many ruined themselves, rendered their families miserable, lost other people's money, and government funds, and committed suicide; and the game was prohibited, and it remains prohibited to this day.

I remember to have seen old and unsentimental gamblers, who told me that this game was particularly pleasing because you did not see from whom you were winning, as is the case in other games; a lackey brought, not money, but chips; each man lost a little stake, and his disappointment was not visible . . . It is the same with roulette, which is everywhere prohibited, and not without reason.

It is the same with money. I possess a magic, inexhaustible ruble; I cut off my coupons, and have retired from all the business of the world. Whom do I injure,--I, the most inoffensive and kindest of men? But this is nothing more than playing at loto or roulette, where I do not see the man who shoots himself, because of his losses, after procuring for me those coupons which I cut off from the bonds so accurately with a strictly right-angled corner.

I have done nothing, I do nothing, and I shall do nothing, except cut off

those coupons; and I firmly believe that money is the representative of labor! Surely, this is amazing! And people talk of madmen, after that! Why, what degree of lunacy can be more frightful than this? A sensible, educated, in all other respects sane man lives in a senseless manner, and soothes himself for not uttering the word which it is indispensably necessary that he should utter, with the idea that there is some sense in his conclusions, and he considers himself a just man. Coupons--the representatives of toil! Toil! Yes, but of whose toil? Evidently not of the man who owns them, but of him who labors.

Slavery is far from being suppressed. It has been suppressed in Rome and in America, and among us: but only certain laws have been abrogated; only the word, not the thing, has been put down. Slavery is the freeing of ourselves alone from the toil which is necessary for the satisfaction of our demands, by the transfer of this toil to others; and wherever there exists a man who does not work, not because others work lovingly for him, but where he possesses the power of not working, and forces others to work for him, there slavery exists. There too, where, as in all European societies, there are people who make use of the labor of thousands of men, and regard this as their right,--there slavery exists in its broadest measure.

And money is the same thing as slavery. Its object and its consequences are the same. Its object is--that one may rid one's self of the first born of all laws, as a profoundly thoughtful writer from the ranks of the people has expressed it; from the natural law of life, as we have called it; from the law of personal labor for the satisfaction of our own wants. And the results of money are the same as the results of slavery, for the proprietor; the creation, the invention of new and ever new and never-ending demands, which can never be satisfied; the enervation of poverty, vice, and for the slaves, the persecution of man and their degradation to the level of the beasts.

Money is a new and terrible form of slavery, and equally demoralizing with the ancient form of slavery for both slave and slave-owner; only much worse, because it frees the slave and the slave-owner from their personal, humane relations.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

I am always surprised by the oft-repeated words: "Yes, this is so in theory, but how is it in practice?" Just as though theory were fine words, requisite for conversation, but not for the purpose of having all practice, that is, all activity, indispensably founded on them. There must be a fearful number of stupid theories current in the world, that such an extraordinary idea should have become prevalent. Theory is what a man thinks on a subject, but its practice is what he does. How can a man think it necessary to do so and so, and then do the contrary? If the theory of baking bread is, that it must first be mixed, and then set to rise, no one except a lunatic, knowing this theory, would do the reverse. But it has become the fashion with us to say, that "this is so in theory, but how about the practice?"

In the matter which interests me now, that has been confirmed which I have always thought,--that practice infallibly flows from theory, and not that it justifies it, but it cannot possibly be otherwise, for if I have understood the thing of which I have been thinking, then I cannot carry out this thing otherwise than as I have understood it.

I wanted to help the unfortunate only because I had money, and I shared the general belief that money was the representative of labor, or, on the whole, something legal and good. But, having begun to give away this money, I saw, when I gave the bills which I had accumulated from poor people, that I was doing precisely that which was done by some landed proprietors who made some of their serfs wait on others. I saw that every use of money, whether for making purchases, or for giving away without an equivalent to another, is handing over a note for extortion from the poor, or its transfer to another man for extortion from the poor. I saw that money in itself was not only not good, but evidently evil, and that it deprives us of our highest good,--labor, and thereby of the enjoyment of our labor, and that that blessing I was not in a position to confer on any one, because I was myself deprived of it: I do not work, and I take no pleasure in making use of the labor of others.

It would appear that there is something peculiar in this abstract argument as to the nature of money. But this argument which I have made not for the sake of argument, but for the solution of the problem of my life, of my sufferings, was for me an answer to my question: What is to be done?

As soon as I grasped the meaning of riches, and of money, it not only

became clear and indisputable to me, what I ought to do, but also clear and indisputable what others ought to do, because they would infallibly do it. I had only actually come to understand what I had known for a long time previously, the theory which was given to men from the very earliest times, both by Buddha, and Isaiah, and Lao- Tze, and Socrates, and in a peculiarly clear and indisputable manner by Jesus Christ and his forerunner, John the Baptist. John the Baptist, in answer to the question of the people,-- What were they to do? replied simply, briefly, and clearly: "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (Luke iii. 10, 11). In a similar manner, but with even greater clearness, and on many occasions, Christ spoke. He said: "Blessed are the poor, and woe to the rich." He said that it is impossible to serve God and mammon. He forbade his disciples to take not only money, but also two garments. He said to the rich young man, that he could not enter into the kingdom of heaven because he was rich, and that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. He said that he who should not leave every thing, houses and children and lands, and follow him, could not be his disciple. He told the parable of the rich man who did nothing bad, like our own rich men, but who only arrayed himself in costly garments, and ate and drank daintily, and who lost his soul thereby; and of poor Lazarus, who had done nothing good, but who was saved merely because he was poor.

This theory was sufficiently familiar to me, but the false teachings of the world had so obscured it that it had become for me a theory in the sense which people are fond of attributing to that term, that is to say, empty words. But as soon as I had succeeded in destroying in my consciousness the sophisms of worldly teaching, theory conformed to practice, and the truth with regard to my life and to the life of the people about me became its conclusion.

I understood that man, besides life for his own personal good, is unavoidably bound to serve the good of others also; that, if we take an illustration from the animal kingdom,--as some people are fond of doing, defending violence and conflict by the conflict for existence in the animal kingdom,--the illustration must be taken from gregarious animals, like bees; that consequently man, not to mention the love to his neighbor incumbent on him, is called upon, both by reason and by his nature, to serve other people and the common good of humanity. I comprehended that the natural law of man is that according to which only he can fulfil destiny, and therefore be happy. I understood that this law has been and is broken hereby,-- that people get rid of labor by force (like the robber bees), make use of the toil of others, directing this toil, not to the common weal, but to

the private satisfaction of swift-growing desires; and, precisely as in the case of the robber bees, they perish in consequence. [I understood that the original form of this disinclination for the law is the brutal violence against weaker individuals, against women, wars and imprisonments, whose sequel is slavery, and also the present reign of money. I understood that money is the impersonal and concealed enslavement of the poor. And, once having perceived the significance of money as slavery, I could not but hate it, nor refrain from doing all in my power to free myself from it.] {21}

When I was a slave-owner, and comprehended the immorality of my position, I tried to escape from it. My escape consisted in this, that I, regarding it as immoral, tried to exercise my rights as slave-owner as little as possible, but to live, and to allow other people to live, as though that right did not exist. And I cannot refrain from doing the same thing now in reference to the present form of slavery,--exercising my right to the labor of others as little as possible, i.e., hiring and purchasing as little as possible.

The root of every slavery is the use of the labor of others; and hence, the compelling others to it is founded indifferently on my right to the slave, or on my possession of money which is indispensable to him. If I really do not approve, and if I regard as an evil, the employment of the labor of others, then I shall use neither my right nor my money for that purpose; I shall not compel others to toil for me, but I shall endeavor to free them from the labor which they have performed for me, as far as possible, either by doing without this labor or by performing it for myself.

And this very simple and unavoidable deduction enters into all the details of my life, effects a total change in it, and at one blow releases me from those moral sufferings which I have undergone at the sight of the sufferings and the vice of the people, and instantly annihilates all three causes of my inability to aid the poor, which I had encountered while seeking the cause of my lack of success.

The first cause was the herding of the people in towns, and the absorption there of the wealth of the country. All that a man needs is to understand how every hiring or purchase is a handle to extortion from the poor, and that therefore he must abstain from them, and must try to fulfil his own requirements; and not a single man will then quit the country, where all wants can be satisfied without money, for the city, where it is necessary to buy every thing: and in the country he will be in a position to help the needy, as has been my own experience and the experience of every one else.

The second cause is the estrangement of the rich from the poor. A man

needs but to refrain from buying, from hiring, and, disdaining no sort of work, to satisfy his requirements himself, and the former estrangement will immediately be annihilated, and the man, having rejected luxury and the services of others, will amalgamate with the mass of the working people, and, standing shoulder to shoulder with the working people, he can help them.

The third cause was shame, founded on a consciousness of immorality in my owning that money with which I desired to help people. All that is required is: to understand the significance of money as impersonal slavery, which it has acquired among us, in order to escape for the future from falling into the error according to which money, though evil in itself, can be an instrument of good, and in order to refrain from acquiring money; and to rid one's self of it in order to be in a position to do good to people, that is, to bestow on them one's labor, and not the labor of another.

CHAPTER XIX.

[I saw that money is the cause of suffering and vice among the people, and that, if I desired to help people, the first thing that was required of me was not to create those unfortunates whom I wished to assist.

I came to the conclusion that the man who does not love vice and the suffering of the people should not make use of money, thus presenting an inducement to extortion from the poor, by forcing them to work for him; and that, in order not to make use of the toil of others, he must demand as little from others as possible, and work as much as possible himself.] {22}

By dint of a long course of reasoning, I came to this inevitable conclusion, which was drawn thousands of years ago by the Chinese in the saying, "If there is one idle man, there is another dying with hunger to offset him.

[Then what are we to do? John the Baptist gave the answer to this very question two thousand years ago. And when the people asked him, "What are we to do?" he said, "Let him that hath two garments impart to him that hath none, and let him that hath meat do the same." What is the meaning of giving away one garment out of two, and half of one's food? It means giving to others every superfluity, and thenceforth taking nothing superfluous from people.

This expedient, which furnishes such perfect satisfaction to the moral feelings, kept my eyes fast bound, and binds all our eyes; and we do not see it, but gaze aside.

This is precisely like a personage on the stage, who had entered a long time since, and all the spectators see him, and it is obvious that the actors cannot help seeing him, but the point on the stage lies in the acting characters pretending not to see him, and in suffering from his absence.] {23}

Thus we, in our efforts to recover from our social diseases, search in all quarters, governmental and anti-governmental, and in scientific and in philanthropic superstitions; and we do not see what is perfectly visible to every eye.

For the man who really suffers from the sufferings of the people who surround us, there exists the very plainest, simplest, and easiest means; the

only possible one for the cure of the evil about us, and for the acquisition of a consciousness of the legitimacy of his life; the one given by John the Baptist, and confirmed by Christ: not to have more than one garment, and not to have money. And not to have any money, means, not to employ the labor of others, and hence, first of all, to do with our own hands every thing that we can possibly do.

This is so clear and simple! But it is clear and simple when the requirements are simple. I live in the country. I lie on the oven, and I order my debtor, my neighbor, to chop wood and light my fire. It is very clear that I am lazy, and that I tear my neighbor away from his affairs, and I shall feel mortified, and I shall find it tiresome to lie still all the time; and I shall go and split my wood for myself.

But the delusion of slavery of all descriptions lies so far back, so much of artificial exaction has sprung up upon it, so many people, accustomed in different degrees to these habits, are interwoven with each other, enervated people, spoiled for generations, and such complicated delusions and justifications for their luxury and idleness have been devised by people, that it is far from being so easy for a man who stands at the summit of the ladder of idle people to understand his sin, as it is for the peasant who has made his neighbor build his fire.

It is terribly difficult for people at the top of this ladder to understand what is required of them. [Their heads are turned by the height of this ladder of lies, upon which they find themselves when a place on the ground is offered to them, to which they must descend in order to begin to live, not yet well, but no longer cruelly, inhumanly; for this reason, this clear and simple truth appears strange to these people. For the man with ten servants, liveries, coachmen, cooks, pictures, pianofortes, that will infallibly appear strange, and even ridiculous, which is the simplest, the first act of--I will not say every good man--but of every man who is not wicked: to cut his own wood with which his food is cooked, and with which he warms himself; to himself clean those boots with which he has heedlessly stepped in the mire; to himself fetch that water with which he preserves his cleanliness, and to carry out that dirty water in which he has washed himself.] {24}

But, besides the remoteness of people from the truth, there is another cause which prevents people from seeing the obligation for them of the simplest and most natural personal, physical labor for themselves: this is the complication, the inextricability of the conditions, the advantage of all the people who are bound together among themselves by money, in which the rich man lives: My luxurious life feeds people. What would become of my

old valet if I were to discharge him? What! we must all do every thing necessary,--make our clothes and hew wood? . . . And how about the division of labor?"

[This morning I stepped out into the corridor where the fires were being built. A peasant was making a fire in the stove which warms my son's room. I went in; the latter was asleep. It was eleven o'clock in the morning. To-day is a holiday: there is some excuse, there are no lessons.

The smooth-skinned, eighteen-year-old youth, with a beard, who had eaten his fill on the preceding evening, sleeps until eleven o'clock. But the peasant of his age had been up at dawn, and had got through a quantity of work, and was attending to his tenth stove, while the former slept. "The peasant shall not make the fire in his stove to warm that smooth, lazy body of his!" I thought. But I immediately recollected that this stove also warmed the room of the housekeeper, a woman forty years of age, who, on the evening before, had been making preparations up to three o'clock in the morning for the supper which my son had eaten, and that she had cleared the table, and risen at seven, nevertheless. The peasant was building the fire for her also. And under her name the lazybones was warming himself.

It is true that the interests of all are interwoven; but, even without any prolonged reckoning, the conscience of each man will say on whose side lies labor, and on whose idleness. But although conscience says this, the account-book, the cash-book, says it still more clearly. The more money any one spends, the more idle he is, that is to say, the more he makes others work for him. The less he spends, the more he works.] {25} But trade, but public undertakings, and, finally, the most terrible of words, culture, the development of sciences, and the arts,--what of them?

[If I live I will make answer to those points, and in detail; and until such answer I will narrate the following.] {25}

CHAPTER XX.

LIFE IN THE CITY.

Last year, in March, I was returning home late at night. As I turned from the Zubova into Khamovnitshesky Lane, I saw some black spots on the snow of the Dyevitchy Pole (field). Something was moving about in one place. I should not have paid any attention to this, if the policeman who was standing at the end of the street had not shouted in the direction of the black spots, -

"Vasily! why don't you bring her in?"

"She won't come!" answered a voice, and then the spot moved towards the policeman.

I halted and asked the police-officer, "What is it?"

He said,--"They are taking a girl from the Rzhanoff house to the station-house; and she is hanging back, she won't walk." A house-porter in a sheepskin coat was leading her. She was walking forward, and he was pushing her from behind. All of us, I and the porter and the policeman, were dressed in winter clothes, but she had nothing on over her dress. In the darkness I could make out only her brown dress, and the kerchiefs on her head and neck. She was short in stature, as is often the case with the prematurely born, with small feet, and a comparatively broad and awkward figure.

"We're waiting for you, you carrion. Get along, what do you mean by it? I'll give it to you!" shouted the policeman. He was evidently tired, and he had had too much of her. She advanced a few paces, and again halted.

The little old porter, a good-natured fellow (I know him), tugged at her hand. "Here, I'll teach you to stop! On with you!" he repeated, as though in anger. She staggered, and began to talk in a discordant voice. At every sound there was a false note, both hoarse and whining.

"Come now, you're shoving again. I'll get there some time!"

She stopped and then went on. I followed them.

"You'll freeze," said the porters

"The likes of us don't freeze: I'm hot."

She tried to jest, but her words sounded like scolding. She halted again under the lantern which stands not far from our house, and leaned against, almost hung over, the fence, and began to fumble for something among her skirts, with benumbed and awkward hands. Again they shouted at her, but she muttered something and did something. In one hand she held a cigarette bent into a bow, in the other a match. I paused behind her; I was ashamed to pass her, and I was ashamed to stand and look on. But I made up my mind, and stepped forward. Her shoulder was lying against the fence, and against the fence it was that she vainly struck the match and flung it away. I looked in her face. She was really a person prematurely born; but, as it seemed to me, already an old woman. I credited her with thirty years. A dirty hue of face; small, dull, tipsy eyes; a button-like nose; curved moist lips with drooping corners, and a short wisp of harsh hair escaping from beneath her kerchief; a long flat figure, stumpy hands and feet. I paused opposite her. She stared at me, and burst into a laugh, as though she knew all that was going on in my mind.

I felt that it was necessary to say something to her. I wanted to show her that I pitied her.

"Are your parents alive?" I inquired.

She laughed hoarsely, with an expression which said, "he's making up queer things to ask."

"My mother is," said she. "But what do you want?"

"And how old are you?"

"Sixteen," said she, answering promptly to a question which was evidently customary.

"Come, march, you'll freeze, you'll perish entirely," shouted the policeman; and she swayed away from the fence, and, staggering along, she went down Khamovnichesky Lane to the police-station; and I turned to the wicket, and entered the house, and inquired whether my daughters had returned. I was told that they had been to an evening party, had had a very merry time, had come home, and were in bed.

Next morning I wanted to go to the station-house to learn what had been done with this unfortunate woman, and I was preparing to go out very early, when there came to see me one of those unlucky noblemen, who, through weakness, have dropped from the gentlemanly life to which they are accustomed, and who alternately rise and fall. I had been acquainted with this man for three years. In the course of those three years, this man had several times made way with every thing that he had, and even with all his clothes; the same thing had just happened again, and he was passing the nights temporarily in the Rzhanoff house, in the night-lodging section, and he had come to me for the day. He met me as I was going out, at the entrance, and without listening to me he began to tell me what had taken place in the Rzhanoff house the night before. He began his narrative, and did not half finish it; all at once (he is an old man who has seen men under all sorts of aspects) he burst out sobbing, and flooded his countenance with tears, and when he had become silent, turned his face to the wall. This is what he told me. Every thing that he related to me was absolutely true. I authenticated his story on the spot, and learned fresh particulars which I will relate separately.

In that night-lodging house, on the lower floor, in No. 32, in which my friend had spent the night, among the various, ever-changing lodgers, men and women, who came together there for five kopeks, there was a laundress, a woman thirty years of age, light-haired, peaceable and pretty, but sickly. The mistress of the quarters had a boatman lover. In the summer her lover kept a boat, and in the winter they lived by letting accommodations to night-lodgers: three kopeks without a pillow, five kopeks with a pillow.

The laundress had lived there for several months, and was a quiet woman; but latterly they had not liked her, because she coughed and prevented the women from sleeping. An old half-crazy woman eighty years old, in particular, also a regular lodger in these quarters, hated the laundress, and embittered the latter's life because she prevented her sleeping, and cleared her throat all night like a sheep. The laundress held her peace; she was in debt for her lodgings, and was conscious of her guilt, and therefore she was bound to be quiet. She began to go more and more rarely to her work, as her strength failed her, and therefore she could not pay her landlady; and for the last week she had not been out to work at all, and had only poisoned the existence of every one, especially of the old woman, who also did not go out, with her cough. Four days before this, the landlady had given the laundress notice to leave the quarters: the latter was already sixty kopeks in debt, and she neither paid them, nor did the landlady foresee any possibility of getting them; and all the bunks were occupied, and the women

all complained of the laundress's cough.

When the landlady gave the laundress notice, and told her that she must leave the lodgings if she did not pay up, the old woman rejoiced and thrust the laundress out of doors. The laundress departed, but returned in an hour, and the landlady had not the heart to put her out again. And the second and the third day, she did not turn her out. "Where am I to go?" said the laundress. But on the third day, the landlady's lover, a Moscow man, who knew the regulations and how to manage, sent for the police. A policeman with sword and pistol on a red cord came to the lodgings, and with courteous words he led the laundress into the street.

It was a clear, sunny, but freezing March day. The gutters were flowing, the house-porters were picking at the ice. The cabman's sleigh jolted over the icy snow, and screeched over the stones. The laundress walked up the street on the sunny side, went to the church, and seated herself at the entrance, still on the sunny side. But when the sun began to sink behind the houses, the puddles began to be skimmed over with a glass of frost, and the laundress grew cold and wretched. She rose, and dragged herself . . . whither? Home, to the only home where she had lived so long. While she was on her way, resting at times, dusk descended. She approached the gates, turned in, slipped, groaned and fell.

One man came up, and then another. "She must be drunk." Another man came up, and stumbled over the laundress, and said to the potter: "What drunken woman is this wallowing at your gate? I came near breaking my head over her; take her away, won't you?"

The porter came. The laundress was dead. This is what my friend told me. It may be thought that I have wilfully mixed up facts,--I encounter a prostitute of fifteen, and the story of this laundress. But let no one imagine this; it is exactly what happened in the course of one night (only I do not remember which) in March, 1884. And so, after hearing my friend's tale, I went to the station-house, with the intention of proceeding thence to the Rzhanoff house to inquire more minutely into the history of the laundress. The weather was very beautiful and sunny; and again, through the stars of the night-frost, water was to be seen trickling in the shade, and in the glare of the sun on Khamovnichesky square every thing was melting, and the water was streaming. The river emitted a humming noise. The trees of the Neskutchny garden looked blue across the river; the reddish-brown sparrows, invisible in winter, attracted attention by their sprightliness; people also seemed desirous of being merry, but all of them had too many cares. The sound of the bells was audible, and at the foundation of these

mingling sounds, the sounds of shots could be heard from the barracks, the whistle of rifle-balls and their crack against the target.

I entered the station-house. In the station some armed policemen conducted me to their chief. He was similarly armed with sword and pistol, and he was engaged in taking some measures with regard to a tattered, trembling old man, who was standing before him, and who could not answer the questions put to him, on account of his feebleness. Having finished his business with the old man, he turned to me. I inquired about the girl of the night before. At first he listened to me attentively, but afterwards he began to smile, at my ignorance of the regulations, in consequence of which she had been taken to the station-house; and particularly at my surprise at her youth.

"Why, there are plenty of them of twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years of age," he said cheerfully.

But in answer to my question about the girl whom I had seen on the preceding evening, he explained to me that she must have been sent to the committee (so it appeared). To my question where she had passed the night, he replied in an undecided manner. He did not recall the one to whom I referred. There were so many of them every day.

In No. 32 of the Rzhanoff house I found the sacristan already reading prayers over the dead woman. They had taken her to the bunk which she had formerly occupied; and the lodgers, all miserable beings, had collected money for the masses for her soul, a coffin and a shroud, and the old women had dressed her and laid her out. The sacristan was reading something in the gloom; a woman in a long wadded cloak was standing there with a wax candle; and a man (a gentleman, I must state) in a clean coat with a lamb's-skin collar, polished overshoes, and a starched shirt, was holding one like it. This was her brother. They had hunted him up.

I went past the dead woman to the landlady's nook, and questioned her about the whole business.

She was alarmed at my queries; she was evidently afraid that she would be blamed for something; but afterwards she began to talk freely, and told me every thing. As I passed back, I glanced at the dead woman. All dead people are handsome, but this dead woman was particularly beautiful and touching in her coffin; her pure, pale face, with closed swollen eyes, sunken cheeks, and soft reddish hair above the lofty brow,--a weary and kind and not a sad but a surprised face. And in fact, if the living do not see, the dead

are surprised.

On the same day that I wrote the above, there was a great ball in Moscow.

That night I left the house at nine o'clock. I live in a locality which is surrounded by factories, and I left the house after the factory-whistles had sounded, releasing the people for a day of freedom after a week of unremitting toil.

Factory-hands overtook me, and I overtook others of them, directing their steps to the drinking-shops and taverns. Many were already intoxicated, many were women. Every morning at five o'clock we can hear one whistle, a second, a third, a tenth, and so forth, and so forth. That means that the toil of women, children, and of old men has begun. At eight o'clock another whistle, which signifies a breathing-spell of half an hour. At twelve, a third: this means an hour for dinner. And a fourth at eight, which denotes the end of the day.

By an odd coincidence, all three of the factories which are situated near me produce only articles which are in demand for balls.

In one factory, the nearest, only stockings are made; in another opposite, silken fabrics; in the third, perfumes and pomades.

It is possible to listen to these whistles, and connect no other idea with them than as denoting the time: "There's the whistle already, it is time to go to walk." But one can also connect with those whistles that which they signify in reality; that first whistle, at five o'clock, means that people, often all without exception, both men and women, sleeping in a damp cellar, must rise, and hasten to that building buzzing with machines, and must take their places at their work, whose end and use for themselves they do not see, and thus toil, often in heat and a stifling atmosphere, in the midst of dirt, and with the very briefest breathing-spells, an hour, two hours, three hours, twelve, and even more hours in succession. They fall into a doze, and again they rise. And this, for them, senseless work, to which they are driven only by necessity, is continued over and over again.

And thus one week succeeds another with the breaks of holidays; and I see these work-people released on one of these holidays. They emerge into the street. Everywhere there are drinking-shops, taverns, and loose girls. And they, in their drunken state, drag by the hand each other, and girls like the one whom I saw taken to the station-house; they drag with them cabmen, and they ride and they walk from one tavern to another; and they curse and

stagger, and say they themselves know not what. I had previously seen such unsteady gait on the part of factory-hands, and had turned aside in disgust, and had been on the point of rebuking them; but ever since I have been in the habit of hearing those whistles every day, and understand their meaning, I am only amazed that they, all the men, do not come to the condition of the "golden squad," of which Moscow is full, {26} [and the women to the state of the one whom I had seen near my house]. {27}

Thus I walked along, and scrutinized these factory-hands, as long as they roamed the streets, which was until eleven o'clock. Then their movements began to calm down. Some drunken men remained here and there, and here and there I encountered men who were being taken to the station-house. And then carriages began to make their appearance on all sides, directing their course toward one point.

On the box sits a coachman, sometimes in a sheepskin coat; and a footman, a dandy, with a cockade. Well-fed horses in saddle-cloths fly through the frost at the rate of twenty versts an hour; in the carriages sit ladies muffled in round cloaks, and carefully tending their flowers and head-dresses. Every thing from the horse-trappings, the carriages, the gutta-percha wheels, the cloth of the coachman's coat, to the stockings, shoes, flowers, velvet, gloves, and perfumes,--every thing is made by those people, some of whom often roll drunk into their dens or sleeping-rooms, and some stay with disreputable women in the night-lodging houses, while still others are put in jail. Thus past them in all their work, and over them all, ride the frequenters of balls; and it never enters their heads, that there is any connection between these balls to which they make ready to go, and these drunkards at whom their coachman shouts so roughly.

These people enjoy themselves at the ball with the utmost composure of spirit, and assurance that they are doing nothing wrong, but something very good. Enjoy themselves! Enjoy themselves from eleven o'clock until six in the morning, in the very dead of night, at the very hour when people are tossing and turning with empty stomachs in the night-lodging houses, and while some are dying, as did the laundress.

Their enjoyment consists in this,--that the women and young girls, having bared their necks and arms, and applied bustles behind, place themselves in a situation in which no uncorrupted woman or maiden would care to display herself to a man, on any consideration in the world; and in this half-naked condition, with their uncovered bosoms exposed to view, with arms bare to the shoulder, with a bustle behind and tightly swathed hips, under the most brilliant light, women and maidens, whose chief virtue has always

been modesty, exhibit themselves in the midst of strange men, who are also clad in improperly tight-fitting garments; and to the sound of maddening music, they embrace and whirl. Old women, often as naked as the young ones, sit and look on, and eat and drink savory things; old men do the same. It is not to be wondered at that this should take place at night, when all the common people are asleep, so that no one may see them. But this is not done with the object of concealment: it seems to them that there is nothing to conceal; that it is a very good thing; that by this merry-making, in which the labor of thousands of toiling people is destroyed, they not only do not injure any one, but that by this very act they furnish the poor with the means of subsistence. Possibly it is very merry at balls. But how does this come about? When we see that there is a man in the community, in our midst, who has had no food, or who is freezing, we regret our mirth, and we cannot be cheerful until he is fed and warmed, not to mention the impossibility of imagining people who can indulge in such mirth as causes suffering to others. The mirth of wicked little boys, who pitch a dog's tail in a split stick, and make merry over it, is repulsive and incomprehensible to us.

In the same manner here, in these diversions of ours, blindness has fallen upon us, and we do not see the split stick with which we have pitched all those people who suffer for our amusement.

[We live as though there were no connection between the dying laundress, the prostitute of fourteen, and our own life; and yet the connection between them strikes us in the face.

We may say: "But we personally have not pinched any tail in a stick;" but we have no right, to deny that had the tail not been pitched, our merry-making would not have taken place. We do not see what connection exists between the laundress and our luxury; but that is not because no such connection does exist, but because we have placed a screen in front of us, so that we may not see.

If there were no screen, we should see that which it is impossible not to see.]
{28}

Surely all the women who attended that ball in dresses worth a hundred and fifty rubles each were born not in a ballroom, or at Madame Minanguoit's; but they have lived in the country, and have seen the peasants; they know their own nurse and maid, whose father and brother are poor, for whom the earning of a hundred and fifty rubles for a cottage is the object of a long, laborious life. Each woman knows this. How could she

enjoy herself, when she knew that she wore on her bared body at that ball the cottage which is the dream of her good maid's father and brother? But let us suppose that she could not make this reflection; but since velvet and silk and flowers and lace and dresses do not grow of themselves, but are made by people, it would seem that she could not help knowing what sort of people make all these things, and under what conditions, and why they do it. She cannot fail to know that the seamstress, with whom she has already quarrelled, did not make her dress in the least out of love for her; therefore, she cannot help knowing that all these things were made for her as a matter of necessity, that her laces, flowers, and velvet have been made in the same way as her dress.

But possibly they are in such darkness that they do not consider this. One thing she cannot fail to know,--that five or six elderly and respectable, often sick, lackeys and maids have had no sleep, and have been put to trouble on her account. She has seen their weary, gloomy faces. She could not help knowing this also, that the cold that night reached twenty-eight degrees below zero, {29} and that the old coachman sat all night long in that temperature on his box. But I know that they really do not see this. And if they, these young women and girls, do not see this, on account of the hypnotic state superinduced in them by balls, it is impossible to condemn them. They, poor things, have done what is considered right by their elders; but how are their elders to explain away this their cruelty to the people?

The elders always offer the explanation: "I compel no one. I purchase my things; I hire my men, my maid-servants, and my coachman. There is nothing wrong in buying and hiring. I force no one's inclination: I hire, and what harm is there in that?"

I recently went to see an acquaintance. As I passed through one of the rooms, I was surprised to see two women seated at a table, as I knew that my friend was a bachelor. A thin, yellow, old-fashioned woman, thirty years of age, in a dress that had been carelessly thrown on, was doing something with her hands and fingers on the table, with great speed, trembling nervously the while, as though in a fit. Opposite her sat a young girl, who was also engaged in something, and who trembled in the same manner. Both women appeared to be afflicted with St. Vitus' dance. I stepped nearer to them, and looked to see what they were doing. They raised their eyes to me, but went on with their work with the same intentness. In front of them lay scattered tobacco and paper cases. They were making cigarettes. The woman rubbed the tobacco between her hands, pushed it into the machine, slipped on the cover, thrust the tobacco through, then tossed it to the girl. The girl twisted the paper, and, making it fast, threw it aside, and took up

another. All thus was done with such swiftness, with such intentness, as it is impossible to describe to a man who has never seen it done. I expressed my surprise at their quickness.

"I have been doing nothing else for fourteen years," said the woman.

"Is it hard?"

"Yes: it pains my chest, and makes my breathing hard."

It was not necessary for her to add this, however. A look at the girl sufficed. She had worked at this for three years, but any one who had not seen her at this occupation would have said that here was a strong organism which was beginning to break down.

My friend, a kind and liberal man, hires these women to fill his cigarettes at two rubles fifty kopeks the thousand. He has money, and he spends it for work. What harm is there in that? My friend rises at twelve o'clock. He passes the evening, from six until two, at cards, or at the piano. He eats and drinks savory things; others do all his work for him. He has devised a new source of pleasure,-- smoking. He has taken up smoking within my memory.

Here is a woman, and here is a girl, who can barely support themselves by turning themselves into machines, and they pass their whole lives inhaling tobacco, and thereby running their health. He has money which he never earned, and he prefers to play at whist to making his own cigarettes. He gives these women money on condition that they shall continue to live in the same wretched manner in which they are now living, that is to say, by making his cigarettes.

I love cleanliness, and I give money only on the condition that the laundress shall wash the shirt which I change twice a day; and that shirt has destroyed the laundress's last remaining strength, and she has died. What is there wrong about that? People who buy and hire will continue to force other people to make velvet and confections, and will purchase them, without me; and no matter what I may do, they will hire cigarettes made and shirts washed. Then why should I deprive myself of velvet and confections and cigarettes and clean shirts, if things are definitively settled thus? This is the argument which I often, almost always, hear. This is the very argument which makes the mob which is destroying something, lose its senses. This is the very argument by which dogs are guided when one of them has flung himself on another dog, and overthrown him, and the rest of

the pack rush up also, and tear their comrade in pieces. Other people have begun it, and have wrought mischief; then why should not I take advantage of it? Well, what will happen if I wear a soiled shirt, and make my own cigarettes? Will that make it easier for anybody else? ask people who would like to justify their course. If it were not so far from the truth, it would be a shame to answer such a question, but we have become so entangled that this question seems very natural to us; and hence, although it is a shame, it is necessary to reply to it.

What difference will it make if I wear one shirt a week, and make my own cigarettes, or do not smoke at all? This difference, that some laundress and some cigarette-maker will exert their strength less, and that what I have spent for washing and for the making of cigarettes I can give to that very laundress, or even to other laundresses and toilers who are worn out with their labor, and who, instead of laboring beyond their strength, will then be able to rest, and drink tea. But to this I hear an objection. (It is so mortifying to rich and luxurious people to understand their position.) To this they say: "If I go about in a dirty shirt, and give up smoking, and hand over this money to the poor, the poor will still be deprived of every thing, and that drop in the sea of yours will help not at all."

Such an objection it is a shame to answer. It is such a common retort. {30}

If I had gone among savages, and they had regaled me with cutlets which struck me as savory, and if I should learn on the following day that these savory cutlets had been made from a prisoner whom they had slain for the sake of the savory cutlets, if I do not admit that it is a good thing to eat men, then, no matter how dainty the cutlets, no matter how universal the practice of eating men may be among my fellows, however insignificant the advantage to prisoners, prepared for consumption, may be my refusal to eat of the cutlets, I will not and I can not eat any more of them. I may, possibly, eat human flesh, when hunger compels me to it; but I will not make a feast, and I will not take part in feasts, of human flesh, and I will not seek out such feasts, and pride myself on my share in them.

LIFE IN THE COUNTRY.

But what is to be done? Surely it is not we who have done this? And if not we, who then?

We say: "We have not done this, this has done itself;" as the children say, when they break any thing, that it broke itself. We say, that, so long as

there is a city already in existence, we, by living in it, support the people, by purchasing their labor and services. But this is not so. And this is why. We only need to look ourselves, at the way we have in the country, and at the manner in which we support people there.

The winter passes in town. Easter Week passes. On the boulevards, in the gardens in the parks, on the river, there is music. There are theatres, water-trips, walks, all sorts of illuminations and fireworks. But in the country there is something even better,--there are better air, trees and meadows, and the flowers are fresher. One should go thither where all these things have unfolded and blossomed forth. And the majority of wealthy people do go to the country to breathe the superior air, to survey these superior forests and meadows. And there the wealthy settle down in the country, and the gray peasants, who nourish themselves on bread and onions, who toil eighteen hours a day, who get no sound sleep by night, and who are clad in blouses. Here no one has led these people astray. There have been no factories nor industrial establishments, and there are none of those idle hands, of which there are so many in the city. Here the whole population never succeeds, all summer long, in completing all their tasks in season; and not only are there no idle hands, but a vast quantity of property is ruined for the lack of hands, and a throng of people, children, old men, and women, will perish through overstraining their powers in work which is beyond their strength. How do the rich order their lives there? In this fashion:-

If there is an old-fashioned house, built under the serf regime, that house is repaired and embellished; if there is none, then a new one is erected, of two or three stories. The rooms, of which there are from twelve to twenty, and even more, are all six arshins in height. {31} Wood floors are laid down. The windows consist of one sheet of glass. There are rich rugs and costly furniture. The roads around the house are macadamized, the ground is levelled, flower-beds are laid out, croquet-grounds are prepared, swinging-rings for gymnastics are erected, reflecting globes, often orangeries, and hotbeds, and lofty stables always with complicated scroll-work on the gables and ridges.

And here, in the country, an honest educated official, or noble family dwells. All the members of the family and their guests have assembled in the middle of June, because up to June, that is to say, up to the beginning of mowing-time, they have been studying and undergoing examinations; and they live there until September, that is to say, until harvest and sowing-time. The members of this family (as is the case with nearly every one in that circle) have lived in the country from the beginning of the press of work, the

suffering time, not until the end of the season of toil (for in September sowing is still in progress, as well as the digging of potatoes), but until the strain of work has relaxed a little. During the whole of their residence in the country, all around them and beside them, that summer toil of the peasantry has been going on, of whose fatigues, no matter how much we may have heard, no matter how much we may have heard about it, no matter how much we may have gazed upon it, we can form no idea, unless we have had personal experience of it. And the members of this family, about ten in number, live exactly as they do in the city.

At St. Peter's Day, {32} a strict fast, when the people's food consists of kvas, bread, and onions, the mowing begins.

The business which is effected in mowing is one of the most important in the commune. Nearly every year, through the lack of hands and time, the hay crop may be lost by rain; and more or less strain of toil decides the question, as to whether twenty or more per cent of hay is to be added to the wealth of the people, or whether it is to rot or die where it stands. And additional hay means additional meat for the old, and additional milk for the children. Thus, in general and in particular, the question of bread for each one of the mowers, and of milk for himself and his children, in the ensuing winter, is then decided. Every one of the toilers, both male and female, knows this; even the children know that this is an important matter, and that it is necessary to strain every nerve to carry the jug of kvas to their father in the meadow at his mowing, and, shifting the heavy pitcher from hand to hand, to run barefooted as rapidly as possible, two versts from the village, in order to get there in season for dinner, and so that their fathers may not scold them.

Every one knows, that, from the mowing season until the hay is got in, there will be no break in the work, and that there will be no time to breathe. And there is not the mowing alone. Every one of them has other affairs to attend to besides the mowing: the ground must be turned up and harrowed; and the women have linen and bread and washing to attend to; and the peasants have to go to the mill, and to town, and there are communal matters to attend to, and legal matters before the judge and the commissary of police; and the wagons to see to, and the horses to feed at night: and all, old and young, and sickly, labor to the last extent of their powers. The peasants toil so, that on every occasion, the mowers, before the end of the third stint, whether weak, young, or old, can hardly walk as they totter past the last rows, and only with difficulty are they able to rise after the breathing-spell; and the women, often pregnant, or nursing infants, work in the same way. The toil is intense and incessant. All work to the extreme bounds of their

strength, and expend in this toil, not only the entire stock of their scanty nourishment, but all their previous stock. All of them--and they are not fat to begin with--grow gaunt after the "suffering" season.

Here a little association is working at the mowing; three peasants,-- one an old man, the second his nephew, a young married man, and a shoemaker, a thin, sinewy man. This hay-harvest will decide the fate of all of them for the winter. They have been laboring incessantly for two weeks, without rest. The rain has delayed their work. After the rain, when the hay has dried, they have decided to stack it, and, in order to accomplish this as speedily as possible, that two women for each of them shall follow their scythes. On the part of the old man go his wife, a woman of fifty, who has become unfit for work, having borne eleven children, who is deaf, but still a tolerably stout worker; and a thirteen-year-old daughter, who is short of stature, but a strong and clever girl. On the part of his nephew go his wife, a woman as strong and well-grown as a sturdy peasant, and his daughter-in-law, a soldier's wife, who is about to become a mother. On the part of the shoemaker go his wife, a stout laborer, and her aged mother, who has reached her eightieth year, and who generally goes begging. They all stand in line, and labor from morning till night, in the full fervor of the June sun. It is steaming hot, and rain threatens. Every hour of work is precious. It is a pity to tear one's self from work to fetch water or kvas. A tiny boy, the old woman's grandson, brings them water. The old woman, evidently only anxious lest she shall be driven away from her work, will not let the rake out of her hand, though it is evident that she can barely move, and only with difficulty. The little boy, all bent over, and stepping gently, with his tiny bare feet, drags along a jug of water, shifting it from hand to hand, for it is heavier than he. The young girl flings over her shoulder a load of hay which is also heavier than herself, advances a few steps, halts, and drops it, without the strength to carry it. The old woman of fifty rakes away without stopping, and with her kerchief awry she drags the hay, breathing heavily and tottering. The old woman of eighty only rakes the hay, but even this is beyond her strength; she slowly drags along her feet, shod with bast shoes, and, frowning, she gazes gloomily before her, like a seriously ill or dying person. The old man has intentionally sent her farther away than the rest, to rake near the cocks of hay, so that she may not keep in line with the others; but she does not fall in with this arrangement, and she toils on as long as the others do, with the same death-like, gloomy countenance. The sun is already setting behind the forest; but the cocks are not yet all heaped together, and much still remains to do. All feel that it is time to stop, but no one speaks, waiting until the others shall say it. Finally the shoemaker, conscious that his strength is exhausted, proposes to the old man, to leave the cocks until the morrow; and the old man consents, and the women

instantly run for the garments, jugs, pitchforks; and the old woman immediately sits down just where she has been standings and then lies back with the same death-like look, staring straight in front of her. But the women are going; and she rises with a groan, and drags herself after them. And this will go on in July also, when the peasants, without obtaining sufficient sleep, reap the oats by night, lest it should fall, and the women rise gloomily to thresh out the straw for the bands to tie the sheaves; when this old woman, already utterly cramped by the labor of mowing, and the woman with child, and the young children, injure themselves overworking and over-drinking; and when neither hands, nor horses, nor carts will suffice to bring to the ricks that grain with which all men are nourished, and millions of poods {33} of which are daily required in Russia to keep people from perishing.

And we live as though there were no connection between the dying laundress, the prostitute of fourteen years, the toilsome manufacture of cigarettes by women, the strained, intolerable, insufficiently fed toil of old women and children around us; we live as though there were no connection between this and our own lives.

It seems to us, that suffering stands apart by itself, and our life apart by itself. We read the description of the life of the Romans, and we marvel at the inhumanity of those soulless Luculli, who satiated themselves on viands and wines while the populace were dying with hunger. We shake our heads, and we marvel at the savagery of our grandfathers, who were serf-owners, supporters of household orchestras and theatres, and of whole villages devoted to the care of their gardens; and we wonder, from the heights of our grandeur, at their inhumanity. We read the words of Isa. v. 8: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth! (11.) Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them! (12.) And the harp and the viol, and tabret and pipe, and wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. (18.) Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart-rope. (20.) Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! (21.) Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight--(22.) Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink."

We read these words, and it seems to us that this has no reference to us. We read in the Gospels (Matt. iii. 10): "And now also the axe is laid unto the

root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire."

And we are fully convinced that the good tree which bringeth forth good fruit is ourselves; and that these words are not spoken to us, but to some other and wicked people.

We read the words of Isa. vi. 10: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. (11.) Then said I: Lord, how long? And he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate."

We read, and are fully convinced that this marvellous deed is not performed on us, but on some other people. And because we see nothing it is, that this marvellous deed is performed, and has been performed, on us. We hear not, we see not, and we understand not with our heart. How has this happened?

Whether that God, or that natural law by virtue of which men exist in the world, has acted well or ill, yet the position of men in the world, ever since we have known it, has been such, that naked people, without any hair on their bodies, without lairs in which they could shelter themselves, without food which they could find in the fields,--like Robinson {34} on his island,--have all been reduced to the necessity of constantly and unweariedly contending with nature in order to cover their bodies, to make themselves clothing, to construct a roof over their heads, and to earn their bread, that two or three times a day they may satisfy their hunger and the hunger of their helpless children and of their old people who cannot work.

Wherever, at whatever time, in whatever numbers we may have observed people, whether in Europe, in America, in China, or in Russia, whether we regard all humanity, or any small portion of it, in ancient times, in a nomad state, or in our own times, with steam- engines and sewing-machines, perfected agriculture, and electric lighting, we behold always one and the same thing,--that man, toiling intensely and incessantly, is not able to earn for himself and his little ones and his old people clothing, shelter, and food; and that a considerable portion of mankind, as in former times, so at the present day, perish through insufficiency of the necessaries of life, and intolerable toil in the effort to obtain them.

Wherever we have, if we draw a circle round us of a hundred thousand, a thousand, or ten versts, or of one verst, and examine into the lives of the

people comprehended within the limits of our circle, we shall see within that circle prematurely-born children, old men, old women, women in labor, sick and weak persons, who toil beyond their strength, and who have not sufficient food and rest for life, and who therefore die before their time. We shall see people in the flower of their age actually slain by dangerous and injurious work.

We see that people have been struggling, ever since the world has endured, with fearful effort, privation, and suffering, against this universal want, and that they cannot overcome it . . . {35}

Footnotes:

{1} The fine, tall members of a regiment, selected and placed together to form a showy squad.

{2} [] Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition printed in Russia, in the set of Count Tolstoi's works.

{3} Reaumur.

{4} A drink made of water, honey, and laurel or salvia leaves, which is drunk as tea, especially by the poorer classes.

{5} [] Omitted by the censor from the authorized edition published in Russia in the set of count Tolstoi's works. The omission is indicated thus . . .

{6} Kalatch, a kind of roll: baranki, cracknels of fine flour.

{7} An arshin is twenty-eight inches.

{8} A myeshchanin, or citizen, who pays only poll-tax and not a guild tax.

{9} Omitted in authorized edition.

{10} Omitted by the censor in the authorized edition.

{11} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{12} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{13} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{14} Omitted by the Censor from the authorized edition.

{15} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{16} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition

{17} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{18} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{19} A very complicated sort of whist.

{20} The whole of this chapter is omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition, and is there represented by the following sentence: "And I felt that in money, in money itself, in the possession of it, there was something immoral; and I asked myself, What is money?"

{21} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{22} Omitted by the Censor in the authorized edition.

{23} The above passage is omitted in the authorized edition, and the following is added: "I came to the simple and natural conclusion, that, if I pity the tortured horse upon which I am riding, the first thing for me to do is to alight, and to walk on my own feet."

{24} Omitted in the authorized edition.

{25} Omitted in the authorized edition.

{26} "Into a worse state," in the authorized edition.

{27} Omitted in the authorized edition.

{28} Omitted in the authorized edition.

{29} Reaumur.

{30} In the Moscow edition (authorized by the Censor), the concluding paragraph is replaced by the following: --"They say: The action of a single man is but a drop in the sea. A drop in the sea!

"There is an Indian legend relating how a man dropped a pearl into the sea, and in order to recover it he took a bucket, and began to bail out, and to pour the water on the shore. Thus he toiled without intermission, and on the seventh day the spirit of the sea grew alarmed lest the man should dip the sea dry, and so he brought him his pearl. If our social evil of persecuting man were the sea, then that pearl which we have lost is equivalent to devoting our lives to bailing out the sea of that evil. The prince of this world will take fright, he will succumb more promptly than did the spirit of the sea; but this social evil is not the sea, but a foul cesspool, which we assiduously fill with our own uncleanness. All that is required is for us

to come to our senses, and to comprehend what we are doing; to fall out of love with our own uncleanness,--in order that that imaginary sea should dry away, and that we should come into possession of that priceless pearl,--fraternal, humane life."

{31} An arshin is twenty-eight inches.

{32} The fast extends from the 5th to the 30th of June, O.S. (June 27 to July 12, N.S.)

{33} A pood is thirty-six pounds.

{34} Robinson Crusoe.

{35} Here something has been omitted by the Censor, which I am unable to supply.--TRANS.