

MISCELLANEOUS.

TOLSTOY ON THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

The Hammersmark Publishing Co. of Chicago has published Leo Tolstoy's article, entitled "Bethink Yourselves," which first appeared in the London *Times*. It has been suppressed in Russia, and its author has been denounced as unpatriotic.

Count Tolstoy is certainly serious in his endeavor to understand the spirit of Christianity, and though the Synod of the Greek Catholic Church has excommunicated him, he still considers himself a Christian. He says:

"Two thousand years ago John the Baptist and then Jesus said to men: 'The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand (*μετανοειτε*), bethink yourselves and believe in the Gospel (Mark i. 15), and if you do not bethink yourselves you will all perish' (Luke xiii. 5) .

"But men did not listen to them and the destruction they foretold is already near at hand. And we men of our time cannot but see it. We are already perishing and, therefore, we cannot leave unheeded that—old-in-time, but for us new—means of salvation."

Thus he makes the word of Christ, "bethink yourselves," the subject of his letter and chooses it as its title. He begins his meditations with these words:

"Again war. Again sufferings, necessary to nobody, utterly uncalled for; again fraud, again the universal stupefaction and brutalisation of men.

"Men who are separated from each other by thousands of miles, hundreds of thousands of such men (on the one hand—Buddhists, whose law forbids the killing not only of men but of animals; on the other hand—Christians, professing the law of brotherhood and love), like wild beasts on land and on sea are seeking out each other in order to kill, torture and mutilate each other in the most cruel way. What can this be? Is it a dream or a reality? Something is taking place which should not, cannot be; one longs to believe that it is a dream and to awake from it. But no, it is not a dream, it is a dreadful reality!"

Count Tolstoy does not believe in government by force and even appears to sacrifice his patriotism. He knows only his religious duties, and the Russian Empire is to him a vast conglomeration of different territories. He says:

"If there be a God, He will not ask me when I die (which may happen at any moment) whether I retained Chi-Nam-Po with its timber stores, or Port Arthur, or even that conglomeration which is called the Russian Empire,

which He did not confide to my care, but He will ask me what I have done with that life which He put at my disposal—did I use it for the purpose for which it was predestined, and under the conditions for fulfilling which it was intrusted to me? Have I fulfilled His law?"

Yet the state of war exists and the question is no longer whether or not war is defensible, but what is to be done now when the enemies attack us.

"Love your enemies and ye will have none," is said in the teaching of the twelve apostles. This answer is not merely words, as those may imagine who are accustomed to think that the recommendation of love to one's enemies is something hyperbolic and signifies not that which is expressed, but something else. This answer is the indication of a very clear and definite activity, and of its consequences.

"To love one's enemies—the Japanese, the Chinese, those yellow peoples toward whom benighted men are now endeavoring to excite our hatred—to love them means not to kill them for the purpose of having the right of poisoning them with opium, as did the English; not to kill them in order to seize their land, as was done by the French, the Russians, and the Germans; not to bury them alive in punishment for injuring roads, not to tie them together by their hair, not to drown them in their river Amur, as did the Russians."

The most graphic parts of the letter are the stories which Tolstoy tells of his personal impressions. He says:

"Yesterday I met a reservist soldier accompanied by his mother and wife. All three were riding in a cart; he had a drop too much; his wife's face was swollen with tears. He turned to me:

"Good-bye to thee! Lyof Nikolaevitch, off to the Far East."

"Well, art thou going to fight?"

"Well, some one has to fight!"

"No one need fight!"

"He reflected for a moment. 'But what is one to do, where can one escape?'

"I saw that he had understood me, had understood that the work to which he was being sent was an evil work.

"Where can one escape?' That is the precise expression of that mental condition, which in the official and journalistic world is translated into the words, 'For the Faith, the Czar, and the Fatherland.' Those who, abandoning their hungry families, go to suffering, to death, say as they feel: 'Where can one escape?' Whereas those who sit in safety in their luxurious palaces say that all Russian men are ready to sacrifice their lives for their adored monarch, and for the glory and greatness of Russia.

"Yesterday, from a peasant I know, I received two letters, one after the other.

"This is the first:

"Dear Lyof Nikolaevitch—Well, to-day I have received my official announcement of my call to service, to-morrow I must present myself at the headquarters. That is all. And after that—to the Far East to meet the Japanese bullets.

"About my own and my household's grief, I will not tell you; it is not you who will fail to understand all the horror of my position and the horrors of war, all this you have long ago painfully realised, and you under-

stand it all. How I have longed to visit you, to have a talk with you. I had written to you a long letter, in which I had described the torments of my soul; but I had not had time to copy it when I received my summons. What is my wife to do now with her four children? As an old man, of course, you cannot do anything yourself for my folks, but you might ask some of your friends in their leisure to visit my orphaned family. I beg you earnestly that if my wife proves unable to bear the agony of her helplessness with her burden of children, and makes up her mind to go to you for help and counsel you will receive and console her. Although she does not know you personally, she believes in your word, and that means much.

"I was not able to resist the summons, but I say beforehand that through me not one Japanese family shall be orphaned. My God! how dreadful is all this—how distressing and painful to abandon all by which one lives, and in which one is concerned."

"The second letter is as follows:

"'Kindest Lyof Nikolaevitch—Only one day of actual service has passed, and I have already lived through an eternity of most desperate torments. From 8 o'clock in the morning till 9 in the evening we have been crowded and knocked about to and fro in the barracks yard, like a herd of cattle, the comedy of medical examination was three times repeated, and those who had reported themselves ill did not receive even ten minutes' attention before they were marked "satisfactory." When we, these two thousand satisfactory individuals, were driven from the military commander to the Barracks, along the road spread out for almost a verst stood a crowd of relatives, mothers, and wives, with infants in arms, and if you had only heard and seen how they clasped their fathers, husbands, sons, and hanging round their necks wailed hopelessly! Generally I behave in a reserved way and can restrain my feelings, but I could not hold out, and I also wept.' (In journalistic language this same is expressed thus: 'The upheaval of patriotic feelings is immense.')

"Where is the standard that can measure all this immensity of woe now spreading itself over almost one-third of the world? And we, we are now that food for cannon, which in the near future will be offered as a sacrifice to the god of vengeance and horror.

"I cannot manage to establish my inner balance. Oh! how I execrate myself for this double-mindedness which prevents my serving one Master and God."

"This man does not yet sufficiently believe that what destroys the body is not dreadful, but that which destroys both the body and the soul, therefore he cannot refuse to go, yet while leaving his own family he promises beforehand that through him not one Japanese family shall be orphaned; he believes in the chief law of God, the law of all religions—to act toward others as one wishes others to act toward oneself. Of such men more or less consciously recognising this law, there are in our time, not in the Christian world alone, but in the Buddhistic, Mahomedan, Confucian, and Brahminic world, not only thousands but millions.

"There exist true heroes, not those who are now feted because, having wished to kill others, they were not killed themselves, but true heroes who are now confined in prisons and in the province of Yakoutsk for having categorically refused to enter the ranks of murderers, and who have preferred mar-

tyrdom to this departure from the law of Jesus. There are also such as he who writes to me, who go, but will not kill. But also that majority which goes without thinking, and endeavors not to think of what it is doing, still in the depth of its soul, does not already feel that it is doing an evil deed by obeying authorities who tear men from labor and from their families, and send them to needless slaughter of men, repugnant to their souls and their faith; and they go only because they are so entangled on all sides that—'Where can one escape?'

"Meanwhile those who remain at home not only feel this but know and express it. Yesterday in the high road I met some peasants returning from Toula. One of them was reading a leaflet as he was walking by the side of his cart.

"I asked, 'What is that? a telegram?'

"This is yesterday's, but here is one of to-day.'

"He took another out of his pocket. We stopped. I read it.

"You should have seen what took place yesterday at the station,' he said. 'It was dreadful.'

"Wives, children, more than a thousand of them, weeping. They surrounded the train, but were allowed no further. Strangers wept, looking on. One woman from Toula gasped and fell down dead; five children. They have since been placed in various institutions, but the father was driven away all the same. . . . What do we want with this Manchuria, or whatever it is called? There is sufficient land here. And what a lot of people and of property has been destroyed.'

THE RIGHT OF NEUTRALS.

In the many complications of the present war between Russia and Japan, we see one glimpse of light that promises progress. The protest of the neutral powers to suffer no encroachment upon their interests establishes a precedent that may be of far-reaching importance in the future. Formerly it was a matter of course that the rights of neutrals were not respected by the belligerents. Whatever seemed to them to promote the interests of the enemy was declared contraband, and the rights of other nations were trodden under foot and only respected if they had no bearing whatever upon the war. Belligerents assumed privileges toward all neutral powers weaker than themselves, which, if the same principles were applied in private life, could never be tolerated; and they behaved with a sovereign contempt for the lives, liberties, and property of neutrals, which, we hope, will be regarded a disgrace in the ages to come. Even now they claim the right of search of neutral vessels, and it is suffered even by Great Britain and the United States.

Suppose that two of my neighbors were at odds and that I, being neutral, had dealings with both of them as also with other parties not concerned in their quarrel. Would these hostile neighbors be allowed to stop me or members of my household on the street, search our pockets to see whether we carried letters or anything that might belong or be of use to the opposite party? Who in private life would not resent such behavior? Yet in international politics we still allow belligerents to search neutral vessels on the open seas, and to confiscate what in the style of war is called contraband, to