

BOYHOOD

A Novel

by Leo Tolstoy

Translated from the Original Russian and edited by Leo Wiener
Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages at Harvard University

1854

I.

AT EASY STAGES

Again two carriages drove up to the veranda of the Petrovskoe house: one, a coach, in which seated themselves Mimi, Katenka, Lyubochka and a chambermaid, and steward Yakov himself, on the box ; another, a calash, in which Volodya and I, and lackey Vasili, who had but lately been taken from field labour, were to travel.

Papa, who was to follow us to Moscow a few days later, stood on the veranda without his cap, and made the sign of the cross against the window of the coach, and at the calash.

" Well, Christ be with you ! Move on ! " Yakov and the coachmen (we were travelling in our own carriages) doffed their caps and made the sign of the cross. " Move on ! Godspeed ! "

The bodies of the carriages began to leap up and down on the uneven road, and the birches of the highway flew by us, one after another. I did not feel sad in the least : my mental vision was turned not to what I left behind me, but to what was ahead of me. The farther I departed from the objects that were connected with sad memories, which until then had filled my imagination,

the more these memories faded, and were soon exchanged for the joyous consciousness of a life full of strength, freshness, and hope.

I have rarely passed a few days, I shall not say as merrily, for I felt as yet ashamed to abandon myself to merriment, – but as agreeably, as well, as the four days of our journey. Before my eyes was neither the locked door of mother's chamber, by which I could not pass without a shudder, nor the closed piano, which not only was not opened, but was looked upon with a certain terror, nor the mourning garments (we were all dressed in simple travelling costumes), nor any other of the many things which reminded me of my irretrievable loss and caused me to beware of every manifestation of life that in any manner could offend her memory. Here, on the contrary, the ever new, picturesque places and objects arrested and

diverted my attention, and vernal nature peopled my soul with balmy feelings of satisfaction with the present, and with bright hope for the future.

Early, very early in the morning, heartless and, as is always the case with men in their new duties, overzealous, Vasili pulled off my coverlet and assured me that it was time to travel, and that everything was ready. However much I squirmed, and pretended, and growled, to get at least another quarter of an hour for my sweet morning sleep, I could see by Vasili's firm face that he was inexorable, and would pull off my coverlet another twenty times; so I jumped up and ran into the courtyard to get washed.

In the hall was already boiling the samovar, which outrider Mitka, turning red like a lobster, was fanning with his breath. The air was damp and misty, just as when steam rises from a strong-smelling dunghill. The sun with its bright, merry light illuminated the eastern part of the heavens and the straw thatches of the spacious sheds around the courtyard, the straw gleaming from the dew that covered it. Beneath the sheds could be seen our horses, tied to the manger, and could be heard their measured chewing. A shaggy black dog, who had cuddled up before dawn on a dry head of manure, lazily stretched himself and, wagging his tail, betook himself at a jogging pace to the other side of the yard. The industrious housewife opened the creaking gates, and drove the pensive cows into the street, where were already heard the tramp and lowing and bleating of the cattle, and exchanged a word or two with her sleepy neighbour. Filipp, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up, drew the bucket from the deep well by turning the wheel, and, splashing the clear water, poured it into the oaken trough, near which the wakeful ducks were plashing in a puddle; and I looked with pleasure at Filipp's large face with its expansive beard, and at his swollen veins and muscles, which were sharply defined on his powerful bare arms, whenever he exerted himself at work.

They were stirring behind the partition, where Mimi slept with the girls, and through which we had carried on a conversation in the evening; Masha ran by us ever more frequently, carrying various objects which she tried to conceal with a cloth from our curiosity. Finally the door was opened, and we were called to drink tea.

Vasili kept on running into the room, in a fit of superfluous zeal, carried away, now one thing, now another, beckoned to us, and persistently implored Marya Ivanovna to make an early start. The horses were hitched up, and expressed their impatience by tinkling their bells from time to time. The portmanteaus, coffers, cases, and boxes were again put in their places, and we took our seats. But every time we seated ourselves in the calash, we found a mountain instead of a seat, so that we never could understand how it had all been properly packed away the day before, and how we were going to sit down. In particular a walnut tea-box with a three-cornered lid,

which they had placed in our calash, provoked my greatest anger. But Vasili said that it would all settle after awhile, and I was

compelled to believe him.

The sun had just risen from under a dense white cloud which had covered the east, and the whole surrounding country was merged in a soft, soothing light. Everything around me was beautiful, and my soul felt light and calm. The road wound in front of us like a broad ribbon, among fields of dried-up stubble and verdure a gleam with dew. Here and there along the road we came across a gloomy willow or a young birch-tree with small, viscous leaves, which threw its long, immovable shadow across the dry, clayey ruts and the small, green grass of the road. The monotonous rumble of the wheels and tinkling of the bells did not drown the song of the skylarks which circled near the very road. The odour of moth-eaten cloth, of the dust, or of some acid, which characterized our calash, was overcome by the fragrance of morning, and I felt in my soul a pleasurable unrest, a desire to do something, – which is a sign of genuine enjoyment.

I had not had any time to say my prayers at the tavern : but having frequently observed that some misfortune always befell me on days when I, for some reason or other, forgot to carry out this ceremony, I tried to correct my omission : I doffed my cap, turned to one side of the calash, said my prayers, and made the signs of the cross under my blouse, so that no one should see them. But a thousand different objects distracted my attention, and I absent-mindedly repeated several times in succession the same words of my prayer.

Some figures were seen to move on the foot-path which wound along the road : those were women making their pilgrimage. Their heads were wrapped in soiled kerchiefs ; on their backs they carried bast knapsacks; their feet were covered with dirty, torn rag stockings and heavy bast sandals. They moved onward in single file, with slow and heavy steps, moving their staffs in even measure, and barely casting a glance upon us. I was long busy with the question, whither they went, and wherefore, – whether their wandering would last a considerable time and how soon it would be before their long shadows, which they cast upon the road, would merge with the shadow of the willow, which they had to pass.

Then a four-horse post-carriage rapidly bore down upon us. Two seconds more, and the faces, which, at the distance of five feet, had cast a glance of curiosity and greeting upon us, flashed by us, and it seemed strange to me that these faces had nothing in common with me, and that I should, probably, never see them again.

Along one side of the road ran two sweating, shaggy horses with their collars and their traces tucked under their harness. The driver, a young fellow, with his lambskin cap poised on one ear, hung his long legs in large boots astride a horse, whose yoke rested loosely upon its neck, so that the bell tinkled but rarely and inaudibly, and he sang a drawling song. His countenance and attitude expressed so much indolent, careless satisfaction, that it seemed to me the acme of happiness to be a driver, to ride on return horses, and sing melancholy songs.

There, far beyond the ravine, a village church with a green roof was outlined against the light-blue sky ; there, appeared the village itself, the red roof of the manor, and a green garden. Who was living in that house ? Were there any children, a father, a mother, a teacher in it ? Why could we not drive up to the house, and become acquainted with its proprietors ? There, was a long caravan of immense wagons, each of which was drawn by three well-fed, stout-legged horses, and we were compelled to drive far to one side, to get beyond them.

"What are you hauling?" asked Vasili of the first driver, who, dangling his huge legs over the foot-rest and

waving his whip, kept on staring at us meaninglessly, and gave us an answer only when it was not possible to hear him.

" What goods are these ? " Vasili turned to another wagon, in the fenced-off front part of which the driver lay under a new mat. A blond head with a red face and russet beard for a moment stuck out from the mat, with an indifferent, contemptuous look gazed at our calash, and again hid itself. It occurred to me that the drivers could not make out who we were, and whither and whence we were travelling.

For an hour and a half I was absorbed in various observations, and paid no attention to the crooked figures on the verst-posts. But now the sun began to glow more warmly upon my head and back, the road grew more dusty, the three-cornered lid of the tea-box annoyed me more and more, and I several times changed my position : I felt warm, uncomfortable, and tired. All my attention was turned to the verst-posts and the figures upon them. I made all kinds of mathematical calculations in regard to the time when we should arrive at the station. " Twelve versts are one third of thirty-six, and to Lipty is forty-one versts, consequently we have travelled one third, and how much ? " and so forth.

" Vasili," said I, when I noticed that he was beginning to nod on his box, " let me sit on the box, my dear ! "

Vasili consented. We exchanged places: he immediately started to snore, and so spread himself in the calash that no place was left for anybody else ; while from the height which I occupied, a very pleasing picture was unravelled before me, namely our four horses, Neruch-inskaya, Sexton, Left Shaft, and Apothecary, whose properties I had studied to the minutest details and shades.

« Why is Sexton to-day on the off side, and not on the nigh side, Filipp ? " I asked him somewhat timidly.

" Sexton ? "

" And Neruchinskaya is not pulling at all," said I.

"Sexton can't be put on the nigh side," said Filipp, without paying

any attention to my last remark. " She is not the kind of a horse to be put on the nigh side. On the nigh side you need a horse which, in short, is a horse, and not this kind of a horse."

Saying this, Filipp bent down to the right, and, pulling the reins with all his might, began, in a peculiar upward manner, to strike Sexton's tail and legs; and though Sexton was doing her best and drawing the whole calash, Filipp did not put a stop to his manoeuvre except when he felt the necessity for resting and, for some reason, pushing his cap down on one side, though it was firmly and correctly poised upon his head.

I took advantage of such a happy moment, and asked Filipp to let me do the driving. Filipp gave me at first one line, then another ; finally all six lines and the whip passed into my hands, and I was completely happy. I tried in every way to imitate Filipp, and asked him whether I was doing right, but it generally ended by his being dissatisfied with me : he said that one was drawing too much, and another was not drawing at all, and finally he stuck his elbow in front of me, and took the lines away.

The heat was increasing, and the cirrus clouds swelled like soap-bubbles, higher and higher, and came together and assumed dark gray shades. A hand with a bottle and a bundle was thrust out of the window of the coach. Vasili, with remarkable agility, leaped from the box, while the calash was in motion, and brought us cheesecakes and kvas.

When we reached the incline of a steep hill, we all alighted from our carriages, and sometimes we ran a race down to the bridge, while Vasili and Yakov put the brakes to the wheels and from both sides supported the coach with their hands, as if they could prevent it from falling. Then, with Mimi's permission, Volodya or I took a seat in the coach, and Lyubochka or Katenka seated themselves in The calash. These exchanges gave the girls great pleasure, because they justly discovered that it was much jollier in the calash. At times, when we crossed a grove during the heat, we fell behind the coach, gathered green branches, and built an arbour in the calash. The transportable arbour caught up with the coach, at full speed, while Lyubochka screamed at the top of her voice, which she never failed to do at any occasion that gave her much pleasure.

At last, there was the village where we were to dine and rest. There were the smells of the village, – the smoke, the tar, and the sheepskins, and we heard the sound of conversation, the tramp of steps, and the rattle of wheels. The carriage bells no longer sounded as in the open field, and on both sides cabins flew by with their straw thatches, carved frame porches, and tiny windows, with red and green shutters, through which here and there stuck out the head of a curious woman. Here were the village boys and girls in shirts only : opening wide their eyes, and extending their arms, they stood stock-still, or, tripping with their bare feet in the dust, ran, in spite of the threatening motions of Filipp, after the carriages and endeavoured to climb on the portmanteaus which were

tied behind. Now, red-haired tavern-keepers came running to the carriages on both sides, and with enticing words and gestures vied in the effort to attract the travellers. " Whoa ! " the gate creaked, the catch held it in place, and we drove into the courtyard. Four hours of rest and freedom !

II.

THE STORM

The sun inclined to the west, and with its hot rays unbearably burnt my neck and cheeks. It was impossible to touch the heated edges of the calash. Dense dust rose along the road and filled the air. There was not the least breeze to carry it off. In front of us, at a constant distance, shook the tall, dusty body of the coach with its baggage, and beyond it now and then could be discerned the whip which the coachman waved, and his hat and Yakov's cap. I did not know what to do with myself; neither the black, dust-covered face of Volodya, who was dozing by my side, nor the movements of Filipp's back, nor the elongated shadow of our calash, which followed us at an oblique angle, afforded me any distraction. All my attention was directed to the verst-posts, which I noticed at a distance, and to the clouds, which before were scattered over the horizon and now assumed ominous, black hues, and gathered into one gloomy storm-cloud. Now and then rumbled a far-off peal of thunder. This latter circumstance more than anything else increased my impatience to reach a tavern at the earliest possible moment. The storm induced in me an inexpressibly heavy feeling of melancholy and terror.

It was yet ten versts to the nearest village, when a dark, lilac cloud arose, God knows where, without the slightest wind, but nevertheless rapidly moved up toward us. The sun, not yet overcast, brightly illuminated its sombre form and the gray streaks which ran down from it to the horizon. At times lightning flashed in the distance, and I heard a weak din, which by degrees grew louder, came nearer, and passed into uninterrupted peals that resounded through the whole heavens. Vasili rose from his seat and raised the top of the calash ; the coachmen put on their sleeveless coats, and at every thunderclap doffed their caps, and made the sign of the cross ; the horses pricked up their ears, expanded their nostrils, as if to sniff the fresh air which was borne from the approaching storm-cloud, and the calash ran faster over the dusty road.

I was ill at ease, and felt my blood coursing faster in my veins. Now the foremost clouds began to shroud the sun ; now it peeped out for the last time, lighted up the terribly gloomy side of the horizon, and disappeared. The whole country was suddenly changed and assumed a sombre aspect. Here, an aspen grove began to quiver ; its leaves turned turbidly white, brightly outlined against the lilac background of the cloud, and they rustled and whirled about. The

tops of tall birches began to sway, and tufts of dry grass flew across the road. Sand-martins and white-breasted swallows flitted all about the calash, as if wishing to stop it, and flew by the very breasts of the horses ; jackdaws, with their disarranged wings, flew somehow sideways along the wind. The corners of the leather boot, which we had pinned over us, commenced to rise, letting in streams of moist wind, and, flapping, struck the body of the calash. Lightning flashed, in the very calash it seemed, blinded our eyes, and for an instant lighted up the gray cloth, the tasselled border, and Volodya's figure crouching in a corner. At the same moment a majestic peal was heard over our heads, and it rose higher and higher, wider and wider, on an immense spiral, increased in strength, and passed into a deafening roar, which made me tremble against my will, and hold my breath. God's anger ! How much poetry there is in this popular conception !

The wheels revolved faster and faster ; I could see by the backs of Vasili and Filipp, who impatiently waved his whip, that they, too, were afraid. The calash rapidly descended a hill, and rattled over a board bridge ; I was afraid to move, and every minute expected our common destruction.

" Whoa ! " the trace-leather was torn, and we were compelled to stop, in spite of the uninterrupted, deafening peals.

Leaning my head against the edge of the calash, I followed, in breathless expectancy, and against hope, the movements of the fat, black fingers of Filipp, who leisurely tied a knot and straightened out the traces, all the time striking the off horse with the palm of his hand and with the whip handle.

Agitated feelings of melancholy and terror grew apace in me with the storm, but when the majestic moment of silence came, which generally preceded the burst of storm, these feelings were so intensified that, if this condition had lasted another fifteen minutes, I should have died of excitement. Just then there issued from underneath the bridge a human being, having on nothing but a dirty, ragged shirt, with a swollen, meaningless countenance, a shaking, close-cropped bare head, crooked, fleshless legs, and a shining, red stump of a hand which he thrust straight into the calash.

"Good people! Give, for Christ's sake, to the poor man ! " resounded his ailing voice, and the beggar made the sign of the cross with each word, and bowed low to the ground.

I cannot express the sensation of cold terror which at that moment took possession of my soul. A chill ran through my hair, and my eyes were directed to the beggar with a blank stare of terror.

Vasili handed the beggar some alms and instructed Filipp in regard to the fastening of the trace-leather, and when all was done, Filipp gathered up his hues, climbed on his box, and began to fetch something out of his side pocket. No sooner did we start, than a blinding flash of lightning, which for a moment filled the ravine

with a sheet of fiery light, compelled the horses to stop ; without the slightest interval, it was accompanied by such a deafening crack of thunder that it seemed the whole vault of heaven would cave in upon us. The wind grew stronger ; the manes and tails of the horses, Vasili's cloak and the edges of the boot took the same direction, and desperately flapped in the gusts of the furious wind. A large drop of rain fell upon the leather top of the calash ; then another, a third, a fourth, and suddenly it sounded as if some one had started drumming over our heads, and the whole country resounded with the even pattering of the falling rain. By the movement of Vasili's elbow I could tell that he was untying his purse; the beggar continued making the signs of the cross and the low obeisances, and ran along so near the very wheels that I thought he would be run over. " Give, for Christ's sake ! " Finally a copper coin flew past us, and the pitiful creature, whose dripping wet shirt closely fitted his lean body, swaying in the wind, stopped perplexed in the middle of the road, and disappeared from my sight.

The slanting rain was driven by the wind, and fell as from a bucket ; streams ran down Vasili's frieze back and into a puddle of turbid water, which had formed itself on the boot. The dust, gathering up in globular form, was changed into liquid mud, which was kneaded by the turning wheels. The jolts of the carriage became less frequent, and streams of turbid water ran along the clayey ruts. The lightning flashed over a greater space and was paler, and the bursts of thunder were not so striking in the even patter of the rain.

Then the rain fell in smaller drops; the storm-cloud broke up into billowy cloudlets, and began to grow brighter there where the sun ought to have been, and through the grayish-white edges of the cloud a patch of pure azure was barely visible. A minute later, a timid sunbeam glistened in the puddles of the road, upon strips of drizzling rain that fell as through a sieve, and upon the bright, rain-washed verdure along the highway. A black cloud just as threateningly shrouded the opposite side of the horizon, but I no longer was afraid of it. I experienced an inexpressibly joyful sensation of the hope of life, which rapidly took the place in me of the heavy feeling of terror. My soul was as smiling as the refreshed and gladsome Nature.

Vasili threw back the collar of his cloak, took off his cap and shook it; Volodya threw back the boot; I put my head out of the calash, and eagerly breathed the fresh, aromatic air. The bright, washed body of the coach with its portmanteaus and boxes swayed in front of us ; the backs of the horses, the harness, the lines, the tires, - everything was wet and glistened in the sun, as if it were freshly varnished.

On one side of the road was a boundless field of winter grain, which was here and there intercepted by shallow hollows ; it gleamed with its wet earth and verdure, and spread its shady carpet to the very horizon. On the other side was an aspen grove, overgrown with hazel and black alder bushes; it stood as though in a superabundance of

happiness, without stirring, and slowly shed bright drops of rain from its clean-washed branches on the dry last year's leaves below. On all sides crested skylarks circled with their merry songs, or rapidly swooped down ; in the wet bushes could be heard the busy movements of tiny birds, and from the middle of the grove resounded the voice of the cuckoo.

So bewitching to me was the exquisite fragrance of

the forest after a vernal storm, – the sweet odour of the birches, the violets, the sere leaves, the clavarias, and the bird-cherry, that I was not able to stay in the calash, leaped down from the carriage step, ran into the bushes and, paying no attention to the rain-drops that showered down upon me, broke off some wet branches of budding bird-cherry, and struck my face with it, intoxicating myself with its exquisite aroma. I did not even pay any attention to the fact that immense clods of dirt were sticking to my boots, and that my stockings were quite wet, but, plashing through the mud, ran to the window of the coach.

" Lyubochka ! Kâtenka ! " I cried, giving them a few branches of bird-cherry. " Just see, how nice it is ! "

The girls screamed and went into ecstasies, and Mimi cried that I should go away, or I would be run over.

" Just smell it, how nice it is ! " I cried.

III.

A NEW VIEW

Katenka sat near me in the calash and, inclining her pretty head, pensively followed the dusty road which retreated under the wheels. I looked at her in silence, and I was surprised at the unchildlike, sad expression which I had observed for the first time upon her rosy face.

" Now, we shall soon be in Moscow," I said. " What do you think of Moscow ? "

" I do not know," she answered, unwillingly.

" Anyway, what do you think ? Is it larger than Serpukhov, or not ?"

" What ? "

" Oh, nothing."

But, with the instinctive feeling, with which one guesses the thoughts of another, and which serves as the guiding thread to a conversation, Katenka understood that her indifference pained me. She raised her head, and turned toward me.

" Papa told you that we are to live at grandmother's ? "

" He did. Grandmother wants us all to live together."

" And we shall all live there ? "

"Of course. We shall live up-stairs, occupying one half, you the other, and papa the wing ; but we shall eat together down-stairs, with grandmother."

" Mamma says that grandmother is such a serious woman, and has such a quick temper."

" N-no ! That seems so only at first. She is serious, but not impatient ; on the contrary, she is good and jolly. You ought to have seen what a party there was upon her name day ! "

" Still, I am afraid of her ; and, besides, God knows whether we shall - "

Katenka suddenly grew silent, and again fell to mus* ing.

" Wha-at?" I asked in agitation.

"Nothing, I just was thinking."

" No, you said : ' God knows.' "

" So you said that you had a party at grandmother's."

" Yes, it is a pity you were not there. There were a lot of people, - a thousand people, - music, and generals, and I danced. Katenka ! " I suddenly said, stopping in the middle of my description, " you are not listening ! "

" Yes, I am ; you said that you were dancing."

" Why are you so sad ? "

" One can't always be merry."

" No, you have changed a great deal since we came back from Moscow. Tell me truly," I added with a firm glance, turning toward her, " why have you become so strange ? "

" Am I ? " Katenka answered with animation, which proved that my remark interested her. " I am not strange at all."

"No, you are not the same you used to be," I continued. " Formerly

it was evident that you were one with us in everything, that you regarded us as your relatives and loved us as we love you ; but now you have become so solemn, and you keep away from us - "

" Not at all ! "

" No, let me finish," I interrupted her, as I began to feel a light tickling in my nose, which preceded the tears that always stood in my eyes when I expressed a long repressed secret thought. " You keep away from us, and talk only with Mimi, as though you did not wish to know us."

" A person can't always be one and the same ; one has to change sometime," answered Katenka, who was in the habit of explaining everything by a certain fatalistic necessity, whenever she did not know what to say.

I recalled how once, when she had quarrelled with Lyubochka, who had called her a "silly girl," she had answered : "Not everybody can be clever, somebody has to be silly," but I was not satisfied with the answer that one has to change sometime, so I continued my inquiry :

" But why must one ? "

" We shall not be living together all the time," Katenka answered, lightly blushing and looking fixedly at Filipp's back. " Mamma was able to stay at the house of your mother, who was her friend ; but it is yet a question whether she will be able to get along with the countess, who, they say, is such an irritable woman. And, besides, we shall have to part sometime: you are rich, - you have the Petrovskoe estate, and we are poor, - mamma has nothing."

" You are rich, we are poor," these words and the conceptions which were connected with them appeared uncommonly strange to me. According to the ideas which I then had, only beggars and peasants could be poor, and I in no way was able in my imagination to connect this idea of poverty with graceful, pretty Katenka. It seemed to me that Mimi and Katenka, who had always lived with us, would remain with us for ever, and that everything would be divided equally. It could not be otherwise. Now, a thousand new, indistinct ideas in regard to their lonely condition nestled in my brain, and I felt so ashamed that we were rich, and they poor, that I blushed and could not take courage to look up into Katenka's face.

" What of it, if we are rich, and they poor ?" I thought, " and how does the necessity for our separation follow from it ? Why can't we divide equally what we have ? " But I understood that it was not proper to speak with Katenka about it, and a certain practical instinct told me, in opposition to my logical observations, that she was right, and that it would be out of place to explain my thought to her.

" You really mean to leave us?" I said ; " but how are we going to live separately ? "

"What is to be done? I am sorry myself. Only, when this happens, I know what I shall do - "

"You will become an actress! What nonsense!" I interrupted her, for I knew that it was her favourite dream to become an actress.

"No, I used to say that when I was little."

" Then, what are you going to do ? "

" I will go to a monastery to live, and I will wear a black dress and a velvet bonnet."

Kätenka burst out weeping.

My reader, have you ever happened to notice at a certain stage of your life, how your view of things completely changed, as though all the things which you used to know, heretofore, suddenly turned a different, unfamiliar side to you ? Some such moral transformation took place in me for the first time, during our journey, and from this I count the beginning of my boyhood.

I obtained for the first time a clear idea of the fact that we, that is, our family, were not alone in the world, that not all interests centred about us, and that there was another life for people who had nothing in common with us, who did not care for us, and who even did not have any idea of our existence. To be sure, I knew it before ; but I did not know it in the same manner as now, - I was not conscious of it, did not feel it.

A thought passes into a conviction only by one certain road, which is frequently quite unexpected and different from the roads which other minds pass over, in order to obtain the same conviction. My conversation with Katenka, which had touched me so powerfully, and had caused me to consider her future position, was that road for me. When I looked at the villages and towns, through which we passed, where in every house lived at least one such family as ours, at the women and children, who with a moment's curiosity gazed at the carriage, and then for ever disappeared from view, at the shopkeepers and peasants, who not only did not greet us, as I was used to being greeted at Petrovskoe, but did not even favour us with their glances, - the question for the first time troubled me, what it was that could interest them, if they did not at all care for us. And from this question originated others. What they lived by, and how ? How they were educated ? Whether people taught them, and let them play, and how they punished them ? and so forth.

IV.

AT MOSCOW

Upon arriving at Moscow, my changed view of things and men, and my relation to them became even more perceptible.

When, at my first meeting with grandmother, I saw her thin, wrinkled face and dim eyes, my feelings of servile respect and awe, which I used to experience before her, gave way to compassion ; and when she, burying her face in Lyubochka's head, sobbed as if the body of her beloved daughter were before her eyes, my compassion was changed even into a feeling of affection. I felt ill at ease, when I saw her grief at our first meeting. I was conscious of the fact that we were nothing in her eyes in our own persons, and that we were dear to her only as a memory ; I felt that in every kiss, which she showered upon my cheeks, only this thought was expressed : she is no more, she is dead, and I shall never see her again !

Papa, who in Moscow paid very little attention to us, and, with an ever worried face, came to us only for dinner, in a black coat or dress coat, together with his tall shirt collars, with his wadded morning-gown, his village elders, stewards, visits to the threshing-floor and hunts, had lost much in my eyes. Karl Ivanovich, whom grandmother called " valet," and who, God knows why, had suddenly taken it into his head to exchange his respectable, familiar bald head for a red wig with a straight parting almost in the middle, appeared so odd and ridiculous to me, that I wondered how it was I had never noticed it before.

An invisible barrier had arisen also between the girls and ourselves. We all had secrets of our own. They evidently were proud of their skirts, which were getting longer, and we were proud of our pantaloons with straps. Mimi on the first Sunday came to dinner in such a swell dress and with such ribbons upon her head, that one could see at once we were no longer in the country, and everything would go differently now.

V.

MY ELDER BROTHER

I was only a year and a few months younger than Volodya; we grew up, studied, and always played together. No distinction of elder and younger was made between us; but just about this time of which I am speaking, I began to understand that Volodya was not my companion either in years, inclinations, or ability. It even seemed to me that Volodya himself recognized his seniority, and was proud of it. This impression, however false it may have been, inspired me with an egoism which suffered at every conflict with him. He stood higher than I in everything : in games, in study, in disputes, in the ability to carry himself, - and all this removed me from him, and

caused me to experience incomprehensible moral suffering. If, when Volodya for the first time received Dutch shirts with turned down collars, I had said straight out that I was angry because I did not have such myself, I am sure I should have felt more at ease, and should not have thought every time he fixed his collar that he was doing it only to annoy me.

I was vexed most of all by the fact that Volodya seemed to understand me but tried to conceal it.

Who has not noticed those mysterious, wordless relations which manifest themselves in a scarcely visible smile, in the motion or glance of persons who always live together, in brothers, friends, husband and wife, master and servant, especially when these people are not entirely open to each other? How many unuttered desires, thoughts, and fears of not being understood are expressed in one casual glance, when your eyes meet timidly and with indecision !

But, it may be, my excessive sensibility and tendency for analysis deceived me in this respect; it may be, Volodya did not feel at all as I did. He was impassioned, open, and inconstant in his emotions. When he was carried away by any matter whatsoever, he gave himself up to it with his whole soul.

Suddenly he would be smitten with a passion for pictures: he immediately began to paint, bought pictures with all his pocket money, begged them of his teacher of drawing, from papa, and from grandmother; or with a passion for trifles with which to adorn his table, and which he, therefore, gathered up all over the house ; or with a passion for novels, which he secretly procured and read for days and nights at a time. I was involuntarily carried away by his passions, but was too proud to follow in his footsteps, and too young and dependent to choose a road for myself. I envied nothing so much as Volodya's felicitous, noble, and open-hearted character, which was expressed with particular precision in the quarrels which arose between us. I felt that he was doing right, but I was unable to imitate him.

Once, while his passion for things was at white heat, I walked up to his table and by chance broke an empty, gaily coloured bottle.

"Who asked you to touch my things?" said Volodya, who had just entered the room and noticed the disorder which I had produced in the symmetry of the various ornaments on his table. " And where is the bottle ? I am sure, you - "

" Accidentally dropped it, and it was broken. I am sorry."

" Do me the favour, and never dare to touch any of my things again," he said, putting together the pieces of the broken bottle, and looking at them with deep regret.

" Please do not command," I answered. " I have broken it, and that is the end of it ; what is the use of saying anything about it ? "

And I smiled, although I did not feel in the least like smiling.

" Yes, it is nothing to you, but it is much to me," continued Volodya, shrugging his shoulder, which gesture he had inherited from papa. " You broke it, and now you laugh ! What an unbearable urchin ! "

" I am an urchin, and you are big and stupid."

" I do not intend having any words with you," said Volodya, lightly brushing me aside. " Get away ! "

" Don't push me ! "

" Get away ! "

" I tell you, don't push me ! "

Volodya took hold of my arm, and was about to pull me away from the table, but I was in the highest degree excited, and so I seized the leg of the table, and upset it.

" There you have it ! " and all the porcelain and crystal ornaments fell to the ground with a crash.

" Disgusting urchin ! " cried Volodya, trying to catch the falling objects.

" Well, now everything is ended between us," thought I, as I left the room. "We shall be enemies from now on."

We did not speak with each other until evening. I felt I was guilty, was afraid to look at him, and could not do a thing all day ; Volodya, on the contrary, studied well, and, as usual, chatted and laughed with the girls after dinner.

The moment our teacher was through with our lesson, I left the room, for I felt ill at ease, awkward, and ashamed in the presence of my brother. After our evening lesson in history, I took my copy-books and started for the door. When I passed by Volodya, I felt at heart like going to him and making up with him, but I pouted and tried to look angry. Volodya just happened to raise his head, and he looked at me with a barely noticeable, open-hearted, derisive smile. • Our eyes met, and I knew that he understood me, and that he understood that I knew that he understood, but some irresistible feeling made me turn away.

" Nikolenka ! " he said to me in the simplest, not in the least pathetic voice, " stop pouting. Pardon me, if I have offended you."

And he gave me his hand.

I felt as if something was rising in my throat and choking me ; but

that lasted only a minute ; tears rolled down my eyes, and I felt better.

" For-give – me – Vol-dya ! " said I, pressing his hand.

Volddya looked at me as though he could not understand why the tears were in my eyes.

VL

MÂSHA

Not one of the changes which had taken place, in my view of things, was so striking, so far as I myself was concerned, as the one by which I ceased to see in one of our chambermaids merely a female servant, and began to see, instead, a woman, on whom, in a certain degree, my peace and happiness might depend. As far back as I can remember myself, I remember Masha in our house, but never had I paid the slightest attention to her, before the incident had taken place which completely changed my view of her, and which I shall now relate. Masha was about twenty-five years old, when I was fourteen. She was very pretty, but I am afraid to describe her, lest my imagination should reproduce the enchanting and deceptive image which formed itself during my passion. Not to make any mistake, I shall only say that she was uncommonly white, voluptuously developed, and a woman, – and I was fourteen years old.

In one of those moments, when with lesson in hand one paces up and down the room, trying to step only on the cracks between the deals, or sings some senseless air, or smears ink over the edges of the table, or repeats some meaningless words, – in short, in one of those moments, when the mind refuses to work, and the imagination is uppermost and seeks impressions, I left the class-room and aimlessly went to the landing of the stairs.

Somebody was ascending the stairs in shoes, at the lower turn of the staircase. Of course, I wanted to know who it was, but suddenly the noise of the steps died down, and I heard Masha's voice : " Please don't ! Stop your nonsense! If Marya Ivanovna should come upon you, it would go ill with you ! "

"She will not come," I heard Volodya's voice in a whisper, and right after something rustled, as if Volodya were trying to hold her back.

"Where are you putting your hand? For shame!" and Masha, with her kerchief awry on her head, displaying her full white neck, rushed by me.

I can't explain how this discovery surprised me ; but the feeling of

surprise soon gave way to the feeling of sympathy for Volodya's act. I did not so much marvel at his deed, as at his conclusion that it was agreeable to act thus. I involuntarily wanted to imitate him.

I often passed hours at a time upon the landing of the staircase, listening with the closest attention to the slightest movements above me ; but I could never bring myself to imitate Volodya, though I wished to do that more than anything else in the world. At times I hid behind the door, and with a heavy feeling of envy and jealousy listened to the disturbance in the maids' room, and I wondered what my situation would be if I walked up-stairs and tried to kiss Masha, just as Volodya had done. What should I have said with my broad nose and towering tufts of hair, if she had asked me what I wanted there? At times I heard Masha speaking to Volodya :

" This is a true punishment ! Why do you annoy meso much ! Go away from here, naughty boy. Why does Nikolay Petrovich never come here, and bother me ? "

She did not know that Nikoläy Petrdvich was at that moment sitting under the staircase, and that he would gladly have given everything in the world, if he could be in the place of naughty Volodya.

I was bashful by nature, and my bashfulness only increased my conviction that I was homely. I am convinced that nothing has such a telling influence upon the direction of a man's life as his looks, and not so much his looks as his conviction of their attractiveness or unattractiveness.

I was too egoistic to get used to my situation, and tried to convince myself, like the fox, that the grapes were yet too green; that is, I tried to despise all the pleasures which are brought about by a pleasant countenance, such as, in my opinion, Volodya enjoyed, and such as I envied with all my heart, and I exerted all the powers of mind and imagination to find pleasure in haughty solitude.

VII.

SHOT

" 0 Lord, powder ! " cried out Mimi, in a voice of breathless agitation. "What are you doing? You want to burn the house, and to ruin us all - "

And Mimi ordered, with an indescribable expression of fortitude, all persons present to step aside, strutted with firm steps up to the scattered shot, and, despising all danger which might be produced from a sudden explosion, began to tramp it with her feet. When the

danger, in her opinion, was passed, she called Mikhéy and ordered him to throw all that " powder " as far away as possible, or, better still, into the water, and, proudly shaking her cap, directed her steps to the drawing-room. " They are watching them well, I must say," she grumbled.

When papa came from the wing, and we went together to grandmother, Mimi was already sitting in the room near the window, and sternly looked beyond the door with a certain mysterious and official glance. In her hand was something wrapped in several folds of paper. I guessed that it was the shot, and that grandmother, no doubt, knew everything.

Besides Mimi, there were in grandmother's room chambermaid Gasha, who, to judge from her angry red face, was greatly agitated, and Doctor Blumenthal, a small, pockmarked man, who was trying in vain to quiet

Gäsha, by making with his eyes and head some mysterious, pacifying signs to her.

Grandmother herself was sitting a little to one side, and was laying out a solitaire, a " Traveller," which always signified a very inauspicious frame of mind.

" How are you feeling to-day, mamma ? Have you rested well ? " asked papa, respectfully kissing her hand.

" Nicely, my dear. I think you know that I am always well," answered grandmother, in a tone which indicated that the question was very much out of place and offensive. " Well, are you going to give me a clean handkerchief ? " she continued, turning to Gäsha.

" I have handed it to you," answered Gäsha, pointing to a snow-white batiste handkerchief, which was lying on the arm of the chair.

" Take away this dirty rag, and give me a clean handkerchief, my dear ! "

Gäsha walked up to the chiffonier, pulled out a drawer, and slammed it so hard that the windows of the room began to rattle. Grandmother looked sternly at all of us, and continued to watch all the movements of the chambermaid. When she handed to her, as it seemed to me, the same handkerchief, grandmother said:

" And when are you going to crush some snuff for me, my dear ? "

" I will crush it, if I have time."

" What did you say ? "

" I will crush it to-day."

" If you do not wish to serve with me, my dear, you ought to say

so ; I should have let you off long ago."

" You may let me off ; I sha'n't cry," grumbled the chambermaid, half aloud.

Just then the doctor began to beckon to her, but she looked at him so angrily and firmly, that he immediately dropped his head, and busied himself with his watch-key.

" You see, my dear," said grandmother, turning to papa, when Gäsha, continuing to grumble, left the room, " how they treat me in my own house ? "

" Permit me, mamma, I shall crush some snuff for you, myself," said papa, who, evidently, was much perplexed by this unexpected behaviour.

" No, thank you : she is so impudent because she knows that no one else knows so well how to crush the snuff as I like it. You know, my dear," continued grandmother, after a moment's silence, "that your children came very near burning the house to-day ? "

Papa looked with respectful curiosity at grandmother.

"Yes, that is what they are playing with. Show it to him," she said, turning to Mimi.

Papa took the shot in his hand, and could not help smiling.

" But this is shot," he said, * and it is not at all dangerous."

" Thank you, my dear, for instructing me, only I am a little too old - "

"Nerves, nerves!" whispered the doctor.

And papa forthwith turned to us:

" Where did you get it ? and how dare you play with such things ? "

" You do not have to ask them, but you had better ask the valet," said grandmother, pronouncing the word " valet " with especial contempt. " That is the way he is watching."

" Voldemar said that Karl Ivänovich himself had given him this powder," Mimi hastened to add.

"Now, you see what a fine man he is," continued grandmother. " And where is he, that valet, what do you call him ? Send for him ! "

" I have given him permission to make some visits," said papa.

"That is no reason. He ought always to be here. The children are not mine, but yours, and I have no right to advise you, because you are

wiser than I," continued grandmother, "but it seems to me, it is time to get a tutor for them, and not a valet, a German churl. Yes, a stupid churl who can't teach them anything but bad manners and Tyrolese songs. I ask you, what need have your children to know how to sing Tyrolese songs ? However, now there is nobody to think of these things, and you may do as you please."

The word " now " meant " since they have no mother," and it called forth sad memories in grandmother's heart. She lowered her eyes upon the snuff-box with a portrait upon it, and fell to musing.

" I have been thinking of it for quite awhile," papa hastened to say, " and had intended to take counsel with you, mamma. Had I not better propose the place to St. Jérôme, who has been giving them hour lessons ? "

" You will do well, my dear," said grandmother, no longer in the dissatisfied voice in which she had been speaking. " St. Jérôme is at least a tutor, who will know how to manage des enfants de bonne maison, and not an ordinary ménin valet, who is only good to take them out for an airing."

"I will speak to him to-morrow," said papa.

Two days after this conversation, Karl Ivanovich really gave up his place to the young French dandy.

VIII.

THE HISTORY OF KARL IVANOVICH

Late in the evening preceding the day when Karl Ivanovich was for ever to leave us, he stood in his wadded gown and red cap near his bed and, bending over his portmanteau, packed his things with great care.

Toward the end Karl Ivanovich's behaviour to us was exceedingly formal ; he seemed to avoid all relations with us. Even now, when I entered the room, he looked at me askance, and again betook himself to his work. I lay down on my bed, and Karl Ivanovich, who formerly used to forbid it, said not a word to me, and the thought that he no longer would scold us, nor stop us, and that he had no business with us, vividly reminded me of the impending separation. I felt sad because he no longer loved us, and I wished to express this feeling to him.

" Permit me to help you, Karl Ivanovich," I said, approaching him.

He looked at me and again turned away, but in the cursory glance

which he cast upon me I read not indifference, by which I explained his coldness, but genuine and concentrated sorrow.

" God sees everything and knows everything, and His holy will is in everything," he said, straightening himself out the full length of his stature, and drawing a deep breath. " Yes, Nikdlenka," he continued, when he noticed the expression of sincere sympathy with which I was looking at him, " it has been my fate to be unhappy from my earliest childhood to my grave. I have always been paid with evil for the good which I have done people, and my reward is not here, but there," he said, pointing to heaven. " If you knew my history and all I have suffered in this life! I was a shoemaker, I was a soldier, I was a deserter, I was a manufacturer, I was a teacher, and now I am zero, and I have, like the Son of God, no place where to lay my head," he concluded and, closing his eyes, dropped down into his chair.

Noticing that Karl Ivänovich was in that sentimental frame of mind when he paid no attention to his hearers and expressed his secret thoughts to himself, I seated myself on my bed, and in silence fixed my eyes on his good face.

" You are not a child, you can understand ! I shall tell you my history and all I have suffered in this life. Some day you will think of your old friend who loved you children very much ! "

Karl Ivanovich leaned with his arm against the small table which was standing near him, took a pinch of snuff, and, rolling his eyes to heaven, began his story in that peculiar, even, guttural voice, in which he generally dictated to us :

" I vos unhappy even in de lap of my moder. Das Unglück verfolgte mich schon im Schosse meiner Mutter ! " he repeated with greater feeling:

Since Karl Ivänovich told me his history often afterward, following the same order, and using the same expressions and ever unchanged intonations, I hope I shall be able to render it almost word for word, except, of course, for the irregularities of language, of which the reader may judge by the first sentence. I have not yet decided whether it was his real history, or the production of his fancy, which originated during his lonely life in our house, and which he had himself come to believe from his frequent repetitions, or whether he had adorned the actual facts of his life with fantastic incidents. On the one hand, he told his history with too much feeling and methodical consistency, which form the chief characteristics of verisimilitude, not to be believed; on the other hand, there were too many poetical beauties in his history, so that these very beauties provoked doubt.

" Through my veins courses the noble blood of the Counts of Sommerblatt ! In meinen Adern fließt das edle Blut der Grafen von Sommerblatt ! I was born six weeks after the wedding. The husband of my mother (I called him father) was a tenant at Count von Sommer-

blatt's. He could not forget my mother's shame, and did not like me. I had a smaller brother, Johann, and two sisters ; but I was a stranger in my own family ! Ich war ein Fremder in meiner eigenen Familie ! When Johann did anything naughty, father said : ' I shall not have a moment of peace with this child Karl ! ' and I was scolded and punished. When my sisters quarrelled, father said : ' Karl will never be an obedient child ! ' and I was scolded and punished. Only my good mother loved and petted me. She frequently said to me, ' Karl, come here, into my room ! ' and she softly kissed me. ' Poor, poor Karl,' she said, * nobody loves you, but I would not exchange you for anybody. Your mother asks only this of you,' she said to me, ' study well, and be always an honest man, and God will not abandon you ! ' ' Trachte nur ein ehrlicher Deutscher zu werden,' sagte sie, ' und der liebe Gott wird dich nicht verlassen /' And I tried.

" When I was fourteen years old, and I could go to confirmation, mother said to father : ' Karl is now a grownup boy, Gustav. What are we going to do with him ? ' And father said : 'I do not know.' Then mother said : ' We shall take him to town to Mr. Schulz, so he may become a shoemaker ! ' and father said : ' All right ! ' und mein Vater sagte : ' Gut ! ' I lived six years and seven months in town with my master, the shoemaker, and my master loved me. He said : < Karl is a good workman, and he will soon be my Geselle ! ' but man proposes, and God disposes. In 1796 a general conscription was announced, and everybody who could serve, from eighteen years of age to twenty-one, was to appear in town.

" Father and brother Johann arrived in town, and we all went together to cast a Loos, who was to be Soldat, and who was not to be Soldat. Johann drew a bad number, – he was to be Soldat ; I drew a good number, – I was not to be Soldat. And father said : ' I had an only son, and I have to part from him ! ' ' Ich hatte einen einzigen Sohn, lind von diesem muss ich mich trennen /'

« I took his hand and said : ' Why do you say so, father ? Come with me, and I will tell you something.' And father went. Father went, and we seated ourselves in the inn at a small table. * Give us two Bierkrug ! ' I said, and they brought them to us. We drank a glass each, and brother Johann drank also.

" ' Father ! ' I said, ' do not say that you had an only son, and that you have to part from him ! My heart wants to jump out, when I hear this. Brother Johann shall not serve, – I will be Soldat. Karl is of no use here to anybody, and Karl will be Soldat.'

“‘You are an honest man, Karl Ivanovich!’ said father to me and kissed me. ' Du bist ein braver Bursche ! ' sagte mir mein Vater und küsste mich !

" And I became Soldat."

IX.

CONTINUATION

" Then was a terrible time, Nikolenka," continued Karl Ivanovich, –
" then was Napoleon. He wanted to conquer Germany, and we defended
our country to our last drop of blood ! und wir vertheidigten unser
Vaterland bis auf den letzten Tropfen Blut !

" I was at Ulm, I was at Austerlitz ! I was at Wagram ! Ich war bei
Wagram ! "

" Did you yourself take part in the battles ?" I asked him, looking
at him in wonderment. "Did you kill people yourself ? "

Karl Ivanovich soon quieted me in regard to this.

" Once a French Grenadier lagged behind his own, and fell down on
the road. I ran up to him with my gun, and wanted to pierce him,
aber der Franzose warf sein Gewehr und rief Pardon, and I let him
alone !

" At Wagram Napoleon drove us to an island, and surrounded us so
that it was impossible to escape. We had no provision for three
days, and we stood up to our knees in water. Miscreant Napoleon
neither took us prisoners, nor let us get away ! und der Bösewicht
Napoleon wollte uns nicht gefangen nehmen und auch nicht
freilassen !

" On the fourth day, thank the Lord, we were taken prisoners, and
were led into a fortress. I had my blue pantaloons, a uniform of
good cloth, fifteen thalers of money and a silver watch, a present
from my father. A French Soldat took it all away from me.
Fortunately I had three ducats which mother had sewed up under my
jacket. Nobody found them !

" I did not wish to stay long in the fortress, and so I decided to
run. Once, upon a great holiday, I said to the sergeant who was
watching us : ' Mr. Sergeant, to-day is a great holiday, and I want
to celebrate it. Bring me, if you please, a bottle of Madeira, and
we will drink it together.' And the sergeant said ' All right ! '
When the sergeant brought the Madeira, and we had drunk a wine-glass
full, I took his hand, and said : ' Mr. Sergeant, you probably have
a father and a mother, too.' He said : ' I have, Mr. Mauer.' ' My
parents,' I said, ' have not seen me for eight years, and they do
not know whether I am alive, or whether my bones have long been
lying in the damp earth. O Mr. Sergeant ! I have two ducats that
were under my jacket, – take them, and let me off ! Be my
benefactor, and my mother will pray to the Almighty for you all her
life.'

" The sergeant drank a glass of Madeira and said : ' Mr. Mauer, I love you and pity you very much, only you are a captive, and I am a Soldat ! ' I pressed his hand and said : ' Mr. Sergeant ! ' Ich drückte ihm die Hand und sagte : * Herr Serjant ! ' "

"And the sergeant said: 'You are a poor man, and I will not take your money, but I will help you. When I go to bed, buy a pail of brandy for the Soldat, and they will sleep. I will not see you.'

" He was a good man. I bought a pail of brandy, and when the Soldat were drunk, I put on my boots and an old cloak, and went softly out into the yard. I went on the rampart, and wanted to jump, but there was water below, and I did not want to spoil my last garment. I went to the gate.

" A sentinel was going auf und ab with his gun, and he looked at me : ' Qui vive ? ' sagte er auf ein Mal, and I was silent. ' Qui vive ? ' sagte er zum zweiten Mal, and I was silent. ' Qui vive ? ' sagte er zum dritten Mal, and I ran. I jumped into the water, climbed up the other side, and ran. Ich sprang in's Wasser, kletterte auf die andere Seite und machte mich aus dem Staube.

" The whole night I ran along the road, but when it dawned, I was afraid I should be recognized, so I hid myself in the high rye. There I knelt, folded my hands, thanked the Heavenly Father for my salvation, and fell asleep with a peaceful feeling. Ich dankte dem Allmächtigen Gott für seine Barmherzigkeit und mit beruhigtem Gefühl schlief ich ein.

" I awoke in the evening and walked on. Suddenly a large German wagon with two black horses overtook me. In the wagon sat a well-dressed man, who smoked a pipe and looked at me. I went slower, to let the wagon get by me ; but as I went slowly, so did the wagon, and the man looked at me. I went faster, and the wagon went faster, and the man looked at me. I sat down near the road ; the man stopped his horses, and looked at me. ' Young man,' he said, ' whither are you going so late ? ' I said : ' I am going to Frankfurt.' ' Get into my wagon, there is a place here, and I will take you there. Why have you nothing with you, why is your beard not shaven, and why are all your clothes dirty ? ' said he to me, when I took my seat. 'I am a poor man,' I said, ' and I want to find some place in a factory; and my garments are dirty because I fell down on the road.' ' You are not telling the truth, young man,' he said, ' the roads are dry now.'

" And I was silent.

" ' Tell me the whole truth,' said the good man to me, ' who you are, and whence you are coming ! I like your face, and, if you are an honest man, I will help you.'

" And I told him everything. He said : ' All right, young man, come with me to my rope factory. I will give you work, clothes, and money, and you shall live with me.'

" And I said : * All right ! ' "

"We came to the rope factory, and the good man said to his wife :
' Here is a young man who has fought for his country and has run away from captivity. He has no home nor clothes nor bread. He will live with me. Give him clean linen and feed him.'

" I lived for a year and a half in the rope factory, and my master liked me so much that he did not wish to let me go. And I was happy there. I was then a handsome man : I was young, tall, had blue eyes, and a Roman nose, and Madame L----(I cannot tell you her name),

the wife of my master, was a young, beautiful lady. And she fell in love with me.

" When she saw me, she said : ' Mr. Mauer, how does your mother call you ? ' I said : * Karlchen.'

" And she said, ' Karlchen, sit down by my side ! ' "

" I sat down beside her, and she said : ' Karlchen, kiss me ! ' "

" I kissed her, and she said : ' Karlchen, I love you so much that I can't stand it any longer,' and she began to tremble."

Here Karl Ivanovich made a protracted pause and, rolling his good blue eyes and lightly shaking his head, smiled, as people always smile under the influence of agreeable reminiscences.

" Yes," he began once more, fixing himself in his chair, and wrapping his gown about him, " I have experienced many good and bad things in my life, but here is my witness," he said, pointing to an image of the Saviour, embroidered on canvas, which hung over his bed, " nobody can say that Karl Ivanovich is a dishonest man ! I did not wish to repay by black ingratitude the good which Mr. L----had done me, and I decided to run away. In

the evening, when all were asleep, I wrote a letter to my master which I placed on the table in my room ; then I took my clothes and three thalers of money, and softly went into the street. Nobody saw me, and I walked along the road."

X.

CONTINUATION

" I had not seen my mother for nine years, and I did not know whether she was alive, or whether her bones were already resting in

the damp earth. I went to my native home. When I came to the town, I asked where Gustav Mauer lived, who had been a tenant at Count von Sommerblatt's. And they said to me : ' Count von Sommerblatt has died, and Gustav Mauer is living now on the wide street, and keeping a store for liqueurs' I put on my new waistcoat, a good coat, – a present from the manufacturer,– fixed my hair nicely, and went to my father's liquor store. Sister Mariechen was sitting there, and asked me what I wanted. I said : ' May I drink a glass of liqueur?' and she said : ' Vater, a young man is asking for a glass of liqueur.' And father said : ' Give the young man a glass of liqueur! ' I sat down at the table, drank my glass, smoked a pipe, and looked at father, at Marie-ehen, and at Johann, who had also come into the store. In our conversation father said to me: ' You, no doubt, know where our Armee is stationed now!' I said: 'I myself have come from the Armee, and it is stationed at Wien!' ' Our son,' said father, ' was a Soldat, and now he has not written to us for nine years, and we do not know whether he is alive or dead. My wife always weeps for him.' I smoked my pipe and said : 'What was the name of your son, and where did he serve? Maybe I know him.' ' His name is Karl Mauer, and he served with the Austrian chasseurs,' said my father. ' He is tall and a fine-looking man, just like you,' said sister Mariechen. I said : ' I know your Karl.' ' Amalia ! ' sagte auf einmal mein Vater, ' come here ! Here is a young man who knows our Karl.' And my dear mother comes out from the back door. I at once knew her. ' You know our Karl,' and she looks at me, and is all pale and trembles! 'Yes, I have seen him,' I said, and did not dare to raise my eyes to her : my heart wanted to break. ' My Karl is alive ! ' said mother. ' The Lord be thanked. Where is he, my dear Karl ? I could die in peace, if I could look once more upon him, upon my beloved son ; but God does not wish it,' and she burst out into tears. I could not stand it any longer. 'Mother!' I said, 'I am your Karl,' and she fell into my arms."

Karl Ivanovich covered his eyes, and his lips trembled.

'11 Mutter!' sagte ich, 'ich bin ihr Sohn, ich bin ihr Karl ! ' und sie stürzte mir in die Arme," he repeated, after quieting down and wiping off the tears which rolled down his cheeks.

" But it did not please God that I should end my days in my native country. A misfortune was decreed for me ! Das Unglück verfolgte mich überall! I lived in my home only three months. One Sunday I was in a coffeehouse, where I ordered a mug of beer, smoked my pipe, and chatted with my acquaintances about Politik, about Emperor Franz, about Napoleon, and about the war, and everybody expressed his opinion. Near us sat a strange gentleman in a gray Uber rock, who drank coffee, smoked a pipe, and did not speak with us. Er rauchte sein Pfeifchen und saß wieg still. When the Nachtmächler called the tenth hour, I took my hat, paid my bill, and went home. At midnight somebody knocked at our door. I awoke and said: 'Who is there?' ' Macht auf ! ' I said: 'Say who you are, and I will open.' Ich sagte : * Sagt wer ihr seid, und ich werde auf machen.' I Macht auf im Namen des Gesetzes /' somebody said at the door. I opened. Two Soldat with guns stood at the door, and into the room entered

the strange man in the gray Ueberrock, who had been sitting near us in the coffee-house. He was a spy ! Es war ein Spion ! ' Come with me ! ' said the spy. ' All right ! ' said I. I put on my boots and pantaloons, and my suspenders, and walked up and down the room. My blood boiled. I said to myself, he was a scoundrel. When I walked up to the wall where my sword was hanging, I grabbed it suddenly and said: 'You are a spy, defend yourself ! ' * Du bist ein Spion, vertheidige dich ! ' Ich gab einen Hieb to the right, einen Hieb to the left, and one upon his head. The spy fell ! I seized my portmanteau and money, and jumped out of the window. Ich nahm meinen Mantelsack und Beutel und sprang zum Fenster hinaus. Ich kam nach Ems. There I became acquainted with General Zazin. He took a fancy to me, got a passport for me from the ambassador, and took me with him to Russia to teach his children. When General Zdzin died, your mother employed me. She said : ' Karl Ivanovich ! I give my children to you, and I shall never abandon you ; I shall assure you an easy old age.' Now she is no more, and everything is forgotten. In return for the twenty years of my service I have to go now into the street, old as I am, to find a crust of dry bread. Got sees dat, and knows dat, and for dat is His holy will-only I am sorry for you, my childers ! " concluded Karl Ivanovich, drawing me to him and kissing my head.

XI.

ONE (1)

(1) One is the lowest, and five the highest mark in Russian schools. about the lesson - However, however, here he comes," I added, in a sad voice.

After a year's mourning, grandmother had a little recovered from the grief which had struck her down, and she began now and then to receive guests, especially girls and boys who were of our age.

On the 13th of December, Lyubochka's birthday, there came even before dinner Princess Kornakov with her daughters, Madame Valakhin with Sonichka, Ilfnka Grap, and the two younger brothers of the Ivins.

The sound of conversation, laughter, and running about reached us from below, where the whole company had gathered, but we could not join them before the end of the morning classes. On the schedule which hung in the class-room it said : Lundi, de 8 à 3, maître d'histoire et de géographie ; and it was this maître d'histoire whom we had to wait for, listen to, and see off, before we could be free. It was already twenty minutes past two, but the teacher of history

had not yet arrived, nor could he be heard or seen in the street, over which he had to pass to reach us, and upon which I was looking with a strong desire not to see him.

" Apparently Lébedev is not coming to-day," said Volodya, raising his eyes for a moment from Smaràgdov's textbook, from which he was preparing his lesson.

" May the Lord grant it be so, for I do not know a thing

Volodya rose from his seat and went up to the window.

" No, that is not he, that is some gentleman," said he. " We shall wait until half-past two," he added, stretching himself and at the same time scratching his crown, as he was in the habit of doing whenever he rested for a minute from his work. " If he is not here by half-past two, we shall tell St. Jérôme to pick up the copy-books."

" What does he want to be coming for ?" I said, also stretching myself and shaking over my head the book of Kaydanov, which I held in both my hands.

Having nothing to do, I opened the book where the lesson was, and began to read it. It was a long and hard lesson ; I did not know a thing about it, and I saw that I should never have enough time to learn a thing, especially since I was in that nervous condition when the thoughts refuse to centre on any subject whatsoever.

Lébedev had complained about me to St. Jérôme for my previous lesson in history, a subject which had always seemed to me tiresome and hard, and he had written down in the book in which the marks were kept, number two, which was regarded as very bad. St. Jérôme told me then, that if I should get less than three at the next lesson, I should be punished severely. This next lesson was before me and, I confess, I trembled.

I had been so absorbed in the reading of the unfamiliar lesson that I was startled by the noise of taking off overshoes, which was heard in the antechamber. I had not had any time to look around, when in the door appeared the pockmarked, despised face and the familiar, awkward figure of the teacher, in his buttoned blue dress coat with the buttons of the learned profession.

The teacher slowly put his hat on the window, and his note-books on the table, with both his hands spread the folds of his coat, as though this was absolutely necessary, and, puffing, sat down in his chair.

" Well, gentlemen," he said, rubbing his clammy hands against each other, " first we shall go over what was said in the previous lesson, and then I shall try to acquaint you with the next events of the Middle Ages."

This meant : Recite your lesson.

While Volodya answered him with a freedom and self-assurance peculiar to those who know their subject well, I, without any aim whatsoever, went out on the staircase, and, since it was not possible to go down-stairs, I quite naturally walked up to the landing. I had just intended to settle in my usual place of observation, when Mimi, who always was the cause of my misfortunes, suddenly bumped against me. " You are here ? " she said, looking threateningly at me, then at the door of the maids' room, and then again at me.

I felt myself thoroughly guilty, both because I was not at the lesson, and because I found myself in such an improper place, so I kept silent and, lowering my head, presented a most pathetic picture of repentance.

" No, that passes all bounds ! " said Mimi. " What were you doing here ? " I kept silent. " No, that can't remain this way ! " she repeated, striking the knuckles of her fingers against the balustrade of the staircase, " I shall tell everything to the countess."

It was five minutes to three, when I returned to the schoolroom. The teacher, acting as though he had not noticed my absence nor my presence, was explaining the next lesson to Volodya. When, after having finished his explanations, he began to fold up his note-books, and Volodya went into the other room to bring him his ticket, the joyful thought struck me that it was all over, and that I was forgotten.

But suddenly the teacher turned to me with a mischievous half-smile.

" I hope that you have learned your lesson, sir," he said, rubbing his hands.

" I have, sir," I answered.

" Will you take the trouble to tell me something about the crusade of St. Louis ? " he said, swaying in his chair, and pensively looking between his legs. " You will first tell me about the reason which caused the French king to take up the cross," he said, raising his eyebrows and pointing his finger to the inkstand, " then explain to me the general characteristic features of that crusade," he added, moving his whole wrist as if he wanted to catch something, "and finally, the effect of that crusade upon the European countries in general," he said, striking the left part of the table with his note-books, " upon the French realm in particular," he concluded, striking the right side of the table, and bending his head to the right.

I swallowed several times, hemmed and hawed, bent my head to one side, and kept silent. Then I picked up a goose-quill which was lying on the table, and began to tear it to pieces, but I kept

silent all the time.

" Let me have the pen," said the teacher to me, stretching out his hand. " It could be used yet. Well, sir ? "

" Louis – Kar – Louis the Holy was – was – was – a good and wise Tsar – "

« What, sir ? "

" Tsar. He had got it into his head to go to Jerusalem, and he transferred the reins of government to his mother."

" What was her name ? "

" B – b – lanka."

" What ? Bulanka ?"1

I smiled a sinister and awkward smile.

"Well, sir, is there anything else you know?" he said, smiling.

I had nothing to lose, so I coughed and began to tell

1 Name of a dun horse.

anything that occurred to me. The teacher did not say anything, and only swept off the dust from the table with the pen which he had taken away from me ; he stared somewhere beyond my ear, and now and then exclaimed : " Very well, sir, very well, sir." I felt that I did not know a thing, that I did not express myself as I ought to, and I was very much pained because my teacher did not stop me, or correct me.

"Why did he get it into his head to go to Jerusalem ? " said the teacher, repeating my own words.

" Because – on account of – since – in as much as – "

I was completely floored, did not say another word, and felt that if that rascal of a teacher were to be silent for a whole year and looking interrogatively at me all the time, I should not be able to utter another sound. The teacher looked at me for about three minutes, then his face suddenly manifested an expression of profound grief, and, in a pathetic voice, he said to Volodya who had just entered the room :

" Please let me have the book for the marks !"

Volddya gave him the book, and gently placed a ticket near it.

The teacher opened the book and, carefully dipping the pen, in a beautiful hand marked Volddya number five in the columns for

progress and deportment. Then, resting the pen over the line where my marks were to be put down, he glanced at me, shook off the ink, and thought awhile.

Suddenly his hand made a scarcely perceptible motion, and in the column appeared a beautifully written number one, with a period after it; another motion, and in the column for deportment went down another number one, with a period after it.

Carefully folding the book with the marks, the teacher rose and walked to the door, as though he had not noticed my glance, in which were expressed despair, supplication, and reproach.

" Mikhail Laridnovich ! " said I.

" No," he answered, guessing what I intended to tell him, " you can't study that way. I will not take money for nothing."

The teacher put on his overshoes and camel overcoat, and carefully wrapped himself in a shawl. As if one could think of anything, after what had happened to me ! For him it was but a movement of the pen, but for me it was my greatest misfortune.

"Is the lesson over?" asked St. Jérôme, as he entered the room.

" Yes."

" Was the teacher satisfied with you ? "

"Yes," said Volodya.

" What did you get ? "

" Five."

" And Nicolas ? "

I was silent.

"I think, four," said Volddya.

He knew I had to be saved, if only for to-day. Let them punish me, as long as it was not to-day, when guests were at the house.

" Voyons, messieurs ! " (St. Jérôme was in the habit of saying voyons ! to everything.) " Faites votre toilette et descendons ! "

XII.

THE SMALL KEY

We had barely greeted the guests, upon coming downstairs, when we were called to table. Papa was in a very happy frame of mind (he had been winning of late) ; he had presented Lyubochka with a costly silver tea service, and at dinner he remembered that he had left a bonbonnière for her in his room in the wing.

" What is the use sending a servant there ? You had better go there yourself, Koko ! " he said to me. " The keys are in the shell on the large table, you know. So take them, and with the largest key open the second drawer at the right. There you will find the candy box. The candy is in paper ; bring it here ! "

" And shall I bring you any cigars ? " I asked, knowing that he always sent for them after dinner.

" Bring some, only don't touch anything ; you hear ? " he said, as I went out.

I found the keys in the place indicated, and was on the point of opening the drawer, when I was arrested by the desire of finding out what thing the tiny key of the bunch could open.

On the table stood, against a small railing, among a thousand different things, a hand-sewn portfolio with a padlock, and I was dying to find out whether the small key would fit in it. My effort was rewarded with complete success, the portfolio was opened, and inside I found a whole stack of papers. My feeling of curiosity so persuasively compelled me to find out what kind of papers they were, that I was not able to listen to the voice of my conscience, and began to examine what was in the portfolio.

The childish feeling of unconditional respect for older people, especially for papa, was so strong in me, that my mind unconsciously refused to draw any conclusions from what I saw. I felt that papa was living in an entirely separate, beautiful, inapproachable, and incomprehensible sphere, and that it would be a kind of sacrilege for me to try to penetrate the secrets of his life.

For this reason the discoveries which I had made, almost by accident, in papa's portfolio did not leave any clear idea with me, except a dim consciousness of having done something bad. I felt ashamed and ill at ease.

Under the influence of this feeling I wanted to close the portfolio as quickly as possible, but I was evidently fated to experience all kinds of misfortunes upon that memorable day. When I put the key into the keyhole, I turned it in the wrong direction. Thinking that the padlock was locked, I pulled the key out, and, oh, horror ! only the head of the key was left in my hands. I tried in vain to connect it with the half which was left in the keyhole, and by some magic to extricate it. At last I had to get used to the terrible thought that I had committed a new crime, which would be discovered that very

day, upon papa's return to his cabinet.

Mimi's complaint, number one, and the key ! Nothing worse could have happened to me. Grandmother – for Mimi's complaint, St. Jérôme – for number one, and papa – for the key, – all that would overwhelm me not later than that very evening.

" What will become of me ? Oh, what have I done ! " I said aloud, as I walked across the soft carpet of the cabinet. " Oh, well ! " I said to myself, getting the confectionary and the cigars, " there is no escaping fate," and I ran to the house.

That fatalistic expression, which I had caught from Nikolây in my childhood, had produced upon me, in all the heavy moments of my life, a beneficent, temporarily soothing effect. When I entered the parlour, I was in a somewhat nervous and unnatural, but exceedingly happy frame of mind.

XIII.

THE TRAITRESS

After dinner began the petits jeux, and I took a very lively part in them. As we were playing "Cat-and-mouse," I awkwardly ran against the governess of the Kornâkovs, and, accidentally stepping on her skirt, tore it. When I noticed that all the girls, but particularly Sonichka, took great delight in seeing the governess put out about it, and going to the maids' room to fix her dress, I decided I would afford them that pleasure once more. In consequence of this amiable intention, I began to gallop around the governess, the moment she returned to the room, and continued these evolutions until I found a favourable opportunity of catching my heel in her skirt, and tearing it. Sdnichka and the princesses could hardly hold themselves with laughing, which very agreeably flattered my egoism, but St. Jérôme, who had evidently noticed my tricks, said that I was too merry for any good, and that if I would not behave better, he would make me feel sorry, in spite of the celebration.

I was in the irritated condition of a man who has lost more than he has in his pocket, who is afraid to look up his standing, and proceeds to play desperately, without any hope of winning back, but only in order not to give himself any time to come to his senses. I smiled insolently and walked away from him.

After the " cat-and-mouse," somebody started a game which, I think, is called " Lange Nase " with us. The game consisted in placing two rows of chairs facing each other, and dividing the ladies and gentlemen into two parties, and having each chosen from the other by alternation.

The younger princess chose every time the younger Ivin, Katenka chose Volédya or Ilinka, and Sonichka – every time Serézha, and she was, to my great amazement, not in the least ashamed when Serézha went and seated himself right opposite her. She laughed her sweet, melodious laugh and nodded her head to him in token that he had guessed correctly. Nobody chose me. This greatly offended my vanity, and I understood that I was superfluous, one who is left over, and that they had to say of me every time : " Who is left over ? Yes, Nikolenka. So you take him ! " So that whenever I was out, I went up straight to sister, or to one of the homely princesses, and, to my misfortune, I never made a mistake. S6-nichka, however, seemed to be so occupied with Serézha Ivin, that I did not exist for her at all. I do not know on what ground I mentally called her " traitress," for she had never given me a promise that she would choose me, and not Serézha; but I was firmly convinced that she acted in a most shameful manner toward me.

After the game I noticed that the " traitress," whom I despised, but from whom I nevertheless could not keep my eyes, had gone into the corner with Serézha and Katenka, and that they were talking mysteriously about something. I stole behind the piano, in order to discover their secrets, and I saw this: Katenka was holding a batiste handkerchief at two of its ends, so that it served for a screen and concealed Serézha's and Sdnichka's heads. " No, you have lost, so pay your fine ! " said Serézha. Sdnichka dropped her hands, stood before him like a guilty person, and said, blushing : " No, I have not lost ! Am I not right, Mademoiselle Catherine ?" "I love truth," answered Katenka, " you have lost the wager, ma chère ! "

No sooner had Katenka pronounced these words than Serézha leaned over and kissed Sdnichka. He just kissed her rosy lips. And Sdnichka laughed as if that were all right, as if it were a very jolly thing. Terrible ! 0 tricky traitress !

XIV.

THE ECLIPSE

I suddenly felt a contempt for the whole feminine sex in general and for Sdnichka in particular. I began to persuade myself that there was no fun in those games, and that they were good enough only for little girls, and I was dying to do some daring act and show such a bit of bravado as to make them wonder at me. The opportunity presented itself in due time.

St. Jérôme had a talk with Mimi about something, then he left the room. The sound of his steps was heard at first upon the staircase,

then above us, in the classroom. It occurred to me that Mimi had told him where she had seen me during class hours, and that he had gone to look at the class book. At that time I could not suppose any other aim in St. Jérôme's life than the desire to punish me. I have read somewhere that children between twelve and fourteen years of age, that is, those who are in the transitional stage of boyhood, have a particular mania for arson and murder. As I think of my own boyhood and, in particular, of the state of my mind on that fatal day, I very clearly comprehend the possibility of an aimless crime, without any desire of doing harm, but just out of curiosity and out of an unconscious need of some activity. There are minutes when the future presents itself to a man in so sombre a light that he is afraid to rest his mental vision upon it, completely interrupts his mind's activity, and endeavours

to persuade himself that there will be no future and that there has been no past. In such minutes, when the mind does not judge in advance the determinations of the will, and carnal instincts are the only mainsprings of life that are left, a child without any experience, and predisposed to such a condition, naturally, without the least hesitation or fear, and with a smile of curiosity, starts up and fans a fire under his own house, where his brothers and his parents sleep, whom he loves tenderly. Under the influence of this same momentary absence of reasoning power, – almost under the influence of distraction, – a peasant lad of seventeen years of age, who is examining the edge of a newly ground axe near the bench on which his old father is sleeping face downward, suddenly swings his axe, and with dull curiosity looks at the blood gushing under the bench from the severed neck. Under the influence of the same absence of thought and of an instinctive curiosity a man finds a certain pleasure in stopping on the very brink of a precipice, and in thinking : " What if I jumped down there ? " or in placing a loaded pistol to his forehead, and in thinking : " What if I pressed the trigger ? " or in looking at some distinguished person, for whom all society has the profoundest respect, and in thinking: "What if I went up to him and took him by the nose, and said: 'Now, my dear sir, come along with me ! ' "

When St. Jérôme came down-stairs and told me that I had no right to be here to-day, because I had behaved and studied so badly, and that I should go up-stairs at once, I, under the influence of just such an inward agitation and absence of reasoning, showed him my tongue, and told him that I would not go.

At first St. Jérôme could not pronounce a word from amazement and anger.

" C'est bien," he said to me, as he caught up with me, "I have more than once promised you a punishment, from which your grandmother has been trying to save you. Now I see that nothing but the rod will make you obey, and to-day you have well deserved it."

He said that so loudly that all heard his words. My blood rushed with unusual vehemence to my heart. I felt it pulsating terribly,

and pallor covering my face, and my lips quivering entirely against my will. I must have been terrible at that moment, because St. Jérôme avoided my look as he walked up to me and took me by my arm ; but at the touch of his hand, I felt so badly that, forgetting myself in my anger, I drew my arm away from him and with all my boyish strength dealt him a blow.

" What is the matter with you ? " said Volodya, approaching me, when he, in terror and amazement, saw my deed.

" Leave me alone ! " I cried out to him through my tears. " You none of you love me, and you do not understand how unhappy I am ! You are all mean and despicable ! " I added, in a kind of stupor, turning to all the company assembled.

Just then St. Jérôme again walked up to me, with a determined and pale countenance, and, before I had any time to prepare myself for the defence, with a quick motion compressed both my arms, as in a vise, and pulled me away to some place. My head was dizzy from excitement. I remember only that I fought desperately with my head and knees as long as I had any strength left ; I remember that my nose several times struck against somebody's thighs, that somebody's coat kept on getting into my mouth, and that all about me I heard the presence of somebody's feet, and smelled the smell of dust and of violets, with which St. Jérôme used to perfume himself.

Five minutes later the door of the lumber-room was closed after me.

" Vasili ! " he said in a contemptuous, triumphant voice, " bring some rods ! "

XV.

DREAMS

Could I have thought at that time that I should remain alive, after the many misfortunes which had befallen me, and that the time would come when I should think calmly of them?

As I considered what I had done, I was unable to imagine what would become of me, but I had a dim presentiment that I was irretrievably lost.

At first, complete silence reigned below me and about me, or at least it so appeared to me from too great an inward agitation. By degrees I began to distinguish different sounds. Vasili came upstairs and, throwing something that resembled a broom on the window, lay down on the clothes-bench, yawning. Below me was heard the loud voice of Avgust Antonych (he, no doubt, was speaking about me), then

some children's voices, then laughter and running, and a few minutes later everything in the house was moving as before, as if no one knew or cared to know that I was sitting in a dark lumber-room.

I was not crying, but something heavy, like a stone, lay upon my heart. Thoughts and pictures passed through my disturbed imagination with increased rapidity ; but the recollection of the misfortune which had befallen me continually interrupted their fanciful chain, and I again entered into an inextricable labyrinth of uncertainty as to my impending fate, of despair, and of terror.

Then it occurred to me that there must have existed a certain unknown reason for the universal hostility and hatred manifested toward me. (I was firmly convinced that all, beginning with grandmother and ending with coachman Filipp, hated me and found pleasure in my sufferings.) " It must be, I am not the son of my mother and of my father, not Volodya's brother, but some unfortunate orphan, a foundling, picked up for charity's sake," I said to myself, and that absurd idea not only afforded me some sad consolation, but appeared quite probable to me. It was a relief for me to think that I was unhappy, not because I was guilty, but because that had been my fate since my very birth, and because my fate resembled that of unfortunate Karl Ivanovich.

" But why should this secret be concealed any longer, since I myself have discovered it ?" I said to myself. "I will go to-morrow to papa, and will say to him : ' Papa, you are in vain concealing the secret of my birth from me; I know it.' He will say to me: 'What is to be done, my dear ? Sooner or later you would have found it out, - you are not my son, but I have adopted you, and if you will be worthy of my love, I shall never abandon you.' And I will tell him : ' Papa, although I have no right to call you by this name, I now pronounce it for the last time. I have always loved you, and always shall. I shall never forget that you are my benefactor, but I no longer can remain in your house. Here nobody loves me, and St. Jérôme has vowed to destroy me. Either he or I must leave your house, because I am not responsible for my acts, - I so hate that man that I am capable of doing anything. I will kill him, that's it precisely, I will kill him.' Papa will begin to reason with me, but I shall only wave my hand, and shall tell him : ' No, my friend and benefactor, we cannot live together, so let me go ! ' And I shall embrace him, and shall tell him, for some reason in French : ' Oh, mon père, oh, mon bienfaiteur, donne-moi pour la dernière fois ta benediction, et que la volonté de Dieu soit faite ! ' " At this thought I burst out into loud tears, as I sat on a box in the dark lumber-room. Suddenly I thought of the degrading punishment which awaited me, and the actual facts presented themselves in their real light to me, and my dreams were dispersed immediately.

Now I imagined I was already at liberty, out of our house. I joined the hussars, and went to war. Enemies bore down upon me from all sides, I brandished my sword and killed one ; another brandish, and I killed a second, a third. At last, I fell to the ground, exhausted from wounds and fatigue, and cried, " Victory ! " A general rode up

to me and asked : " Where is he, our saviour ? " They pointed to me, and he rushed to embrace me, and with tears of joy cried out, " Victory ! " I grew well again, and, with my arm in a black sling, walked down the Tver Boulevard. I was a general ! and the Tsar met me and asked : " Who is that wounded young man ? " He was told that it was the famous hero, Nikolay. The Tsar walked up to me and said : " I thank you. I shall do anything you may ask of me." I made a respectful bow, leaning upon my sword, and said : " I am happy, great Tsar, that I was able to shed my blood for my country, and I should like to die for it; but since you are so gracious as to permit me to ask something of you, I ask only this: permit me to destroy my enemy, the foreigner St. Jérôme. I want to destroy my enemy, St. Jérôme." I angrily stopped in front of St. Jérôme, and said to him : " You have caused my misfortune, à genoux!" Suddenly it occurred to me that the real St. Jérôme might come in any minute with the rods, and I again saw myself, not as a general who had saved his country, but as a most wretched and pitiful creature.

Then again I thought of God, and I boldly asked Him, for what He was punishing me. " I think I have never forgotten to say my prayers, neither in the morning nor in the evening; then, what am I suffering for?" I can absolutely affirm that my first step in the direction of religious doubts, which agitated me in my boyhood, was made by me at this time, not because my misfortune had incited me to murmuring and unbelief, but because the thought of an unjust Providence, which had entered my mind at this moment of complete spiritual disorganization, rapidly sprouted and took root, just like an evil seed which after a rain has fallen on the loosened earth.

Then, again, I imagined that I should certainly die, and I represented vividly to myself St. Jérôme's astonishment when he would find my lifeless body in the lumber-room. I recalled the stories of Natalya Sàvishna about the soul of a deceased person not leaving the house for forty days, and I mentally passed unnoticed, after my death, through all the rooms of grandmother's house, and listened to the genuine tears of Lyubochka, to the laments of grandmother, and to papa's conversation with Avgust Antonovich. " He was a fine boy," papa would say with tears in his eyes. " Yes," St. Jérôme would answer, " but a wild fellow." " You ought to respect the dead," papa would say, " you were the cause of his death, you have frightened him to death, and he could not bear the humiliation which you had caused him. Away from here, rascal ! "

St. Jérôme would fall upon his knees, would weep and beg forgiveness. After forty days my soul would fly away to heaven. There I see something wonderfully beautiful, white, transparent, and long, and I feel it is my mother. This white form surrounds and pets me. " If it is really you," I say, « show yourself better, that I may be able to embrace you." And the voice answers me: "We are all like this here, I cannot embrace you any better. Are you not happy as it is?" "Yes, I am very happy, but you cannot tickle me, and I cannot kiss your hands."

" There is no need of it ; it is nice here without it," she says,

and I feel that it is nice indeed, and we fly together higher and higher.

Just then, it seemed, I awoke and found myself again on the box, in the lumber-room, with cheeks wet from tears, meaninglessly repeating the words : " And we fly higher and higher ! " I made every imaginable effort to clear up my situation, but only a terribly gloomy, impenetrable distance presented itself to my mental vision. I tried to return to those consoling, happy dreams, which the consciousness of reality had interrupted, but to my astonishment I found, every time I returned on the road of my former dreams, that their continuation was impossible, and what was most remarkable, that they no longer afforded me any pleasure.

XVI.

AFTER GRINDING COMES FLOUR

I passed the night in the lumber-room, and nobody came to see me. Only the next day, that is, on Sunday, I was transferred to a small room, near the class-room, and was locked up again. I began to hope that my punishment would be limited to incarceration, and my thoughts grew calmer, under the influence of a sweet and refreshing sleep, of the bright sun which glistened on the frosty designs of the windows, and of the usual noise in the street in daytime. Nevertheless, the solitary confinement was hard to bear : I wanted to move about, to tell somebody everything that had accumulated within my soul, and there was no living being near me. This situation was the more disagreeable since I could not help hearing, however much I hated it, St. Jérôme pacing up and down his room, and calmly whistling some merry tunes. I was absolutely convinced that he did not want to whistle at all, but that he did so only to annoy me.

At two o'clock St. Jérôme and Volodya went downstairs, and Nikolay brought me my dinner, and when I talked with him about what I had done, and what awaited me, he said :

" Oh, well, sir ! Don't worry : After grinding comes flour."

Though this proverb, which later in life often fortified my spirit, gave me some consolation, the fact that they had sent me, not bread and water, but the whole dinner,

even dessert – white-loaves – gave me much concern. If they had not sent me the white-loaves, I should have concluded that the incarceration was my punishment, but now it appeared that I was not yet punished, that I was only removed from the others as a dangerous man, and that the punishment was still ahead. While I was deeply

engaged in the solution of this question, a key was turned in the lock of my prison, and St. Jérôme entered the room, with an austere and official expression on his face.

" Come to grandmother ! " he said, without looking at me.

I wanted to clean the sleeves of the blouse, that had become soiled by chalk, before leaving the room, but St. Jérôme said that this was entirely unnecessary, as though I was already in such a wretched moral state that it was not worth while to trouble myself about my appearance.

Katenka, Lyubochka, and Volodya gazed at me, as St. Jérôme led me by my arm through the parlour, with exactly the same expression with which we looked at the prisoners who used to be taken by our windows on Mondays. When I walked up to grandmother's armchair, with the intention of kissing her hand, she turned away from me and hid her hand under her mantilla.

" Yes, my dear," she said, after a protracted silence, during which she surveyed me from head to foot with such an expression that I did not know what to do with my eyes and hands, " I must say you value my love very much, and afford me genuine consolation. M. St. Jérôme, who, at my request," she added, stretching out every word, " undertook your education, does not wish to stay in my house any longer. And why ? On your account, my dear. I had hoped that you would be grateful," she continued, after a moment's silence and in a tone which proved that her speech had been prepared long before, " for his care and labours, that you would know how to value his deserts, whereas you, pert little urchin, have dared to lift your hand against him ! Very well ! Beautiful ! I am beginning to think myself that you are not capable of understanding kind treatment, and that other, lower means must be used with you. Immediately ask his pardon," she added, in a stem, commanding tone, pointing to St. Jérôme ; " do you hear ? "

I looked in the direction indicated by grandmother's hand, and, noticing St. Jérôme's coat, turned away and did not budge from the spot, a sensation of fainting overcoming me again.

" Well, do you not hear what I am saying to you ? "

I trembled with my whole body, but did not budge.

" Kok6 ! " said grandmother, when she, evidently, observed the inward suffering which I was experiencing. " Kokd," she said, this time not so much in a commanding, as in a tender voice, " is it you ? "

" Grandmother, I will not ask his pardon for anything," I said, and suddenly stopped, for I felt that I should not be able to restrain the tears that were choking me, if I were to say another word.

" I command you, I beg you. What is the matter with you ? "

"I – I – do not – want to – I cannot," I muttered, and the checked sobs, which had accumulated in my breast, suddenly burst their barrier, and issued in a furious torrent.

" C'est ainsi que vous obéissez à votre seconde mère, c'est ainsi que vous reconnaissez ses bontés," said St. Jérôme in a tragic voice. " A genoux ! "

" My God, if she saw this ! " said grandmother, turning away from me and wiping off the tears that had appeared in her eyes.

" If she saw this ! But all is for the best. Yes, she would not have lived through this sorrow, she would not."

And grandmother wept harder and harder. I, too, wept, but I did not even think of asking forgiveness.

" Tranquillisez-vous au nom du ciel, Madame la Comtesse" said St. Jérôme.

But grandmother was not listening to him. She covered her face with her hands, and her sobs soon passed into hiccoughs and hysterics. Mimi and Gasha ran into the room with frightened faces, there was an odour of spirits, and the whole house was on its feet and whispering.

"Enjoy what you have done," said St. Jérôme, as he led me up-stairs.

" O God ! what have I done ? What a terrible criminal I am ! "

No sooner had St. Jérôme walked down-stairs, after ordering me to go to my room, than I ran down the large staircase which led to the street, without being clearly conscious of what I was doing.

" Whither are you running ?" a familiar voice suddenly asked me. "I want you, my darling!"

I wanted to run by him, but father caught my arm, and said, sternly :

" Come with me, my dear ! How did you dare to touch the portfolio in my cabinet ? " He led me into the small sofa-room. " Well ? Why don't you say something ? Well ? " he added, pulling my ear.

" I am guilty," I said. " I do not know myself what tempted me ! "

" Oh, you don't know what tempted you, you don't know, you don't, you don't, you don't," he repeated, at every word shaking my ear. " Will you ever again put in your nose where it does not belong ? Will you ? Will you? "

Though I felt a terrible pain in my ear, I did not weep, but experienced a pleasant moral sensation. The moment he let my ear go,

I seized his hand, and, with tears in my eyes, began to cover it with kisses.

" Strike me again," I said through my tears, " harder, more ! I am a good-for-nothing, miserable, unhappy man ! "

" What is the matter with you ? " he said, pushing me lightly aside.

"No, I sha'n't go away for anything," I said, clinging to his coat. " Everybody hates me, I know it, but, for the Lord's sake, listen to me, defend me, or drive me out of the house ! I cannot live with him ! He is trying in every way to humiliate me, orders me to kneel in his presence, and wants to whip me. I cannot stand it. I am not a little child ; I shall not live through it, I shall die ; I will kill myself. He told grandmother that I was a good-for-nothing, and she is now ill, she will die through me, I - with - him - for the Lord's sake, whip me - - why - do they - tor-ment me ? "

My tears choked me, I sat down on the divan, and, not being able to say anything more, fell with my head upon his knees and sobbed so much that I thought I was going to die that very minute.

" What are you weeping about, you round-cheeks ? " said papa, sympathetically, as he leaned over me.

" He is my tyrant - tormentor - I shall die - nobody loves me ! " I barely was able to utter, and I fell into convulsions.

Bapa took me in his arms and carried me into the sleeping-room. I fell asleep.

When I awoke, it was very late, a candle was burning near my bed, and in the room sat our family doctor, Mimi, and Lyubochka. I could see by their faces that they were afraid for my health. But I felt so well and light after a sleep of almost twelve hours that I should have leaped out of my bed, if it had not been so disagreeable for me to disturb their conviction that I was very ill

XVII.

HATRED

Yes, it was a real feeling of hatred, - not of that hatred of which we read in novels, and in which I do not believe, - not of that hatred which finds pleasure in doing a person some harm, but of that hatred which inspires you with an irresistible loathing for a person who, otherwise, deserves your respect, which makes you loathe his hair, his neck, his gait, the sound of his voice, all his members and all his motions, and, at the same time, attracts you to him by

some incomprehensible power, and compels you with restless attention to follow every minutest act of his. I experienced this feeling for St. Jérôme.

St. Jérôme had been living in our house for a year and a half. When I now think coolly of the man, I find that he was a good Frenchman, but a Frenchman in the highest degree. He was not stupid, quite well educated, and conscientiously executed his duty toward us; but he was possessed of the characteristic traits of frivolous egotism, vanity, impudence, and ignorant self-confidence, which are common to all of his countrymen, and are diametrically opposed to the Russian character. —All that I did not like. Of course, grandmother had explained to him her opinion in regard to corporal punishment, and he did not dare strike us ; but, in spite of this, he often threatened us, especially me, with the rod, and pronounced the word fouetter (something like founder) so disgustingly, and with such an intonation as if it would give him the greatest pleasure to whip me.

I was not in the least afraid of the pain of the punishment, though I had never experienced it, but the mere thought that St. Jérôme could strike me induced in me a heavy feeling of subdued despair and fury.

In moments of anger Karl Ivanovich used to make his personal accounts with us by means of the ruler or suspenders, but I recall that without the least annoyance. Even if Karl Ivanovich had struck me at that particular moment (when I was fourteen years old), I should have borne his blows with equanimity. I loved Karl Ivanovich, remembered him as far back as I could remember myself, and was accustomed to regard him as a member of the family ; but St. Jérôme was a haughty and selfsatisfied man, for whom I felt nothing but that involuntary respect with which all grown people inspired me. Karl Ivanovich was a funny old valet, whom I loved with all my soul, but whom I placed, nevertheless, below myself in my childish conception of social standing.

St. Jérôme, on the contrary, was an educated, fine-looking young dandy, who tried to stand on the same level with us.

Karl Ivanovich used to scold and punish us with indifference ; it was evident that he regarded it as a disagreeable, though necessary, duty. St. Jérôme, on the contrary, liked to pose as a tutor; it was evident that, when he punished us, he did so more for his own pleasure than for our good. He was carried away by his majesty. His high-flowing French phrases, which he pronounced with a strong accent on the last syllable, with circumflexes, were inexpressibly repulsive to me. When Karl Ivanovich grew angry, he said : " Puppet show, vanton boy, Shampanish fly." St. Jérôme called us "mauvais sujet, vilain garnement," and so forth, giving me names which offended my self-esteem.

Karl Ivanovich used to put us on our knees with face to the corner, and the punishment consisted in the physical pain which arose from such an attitude ; St. Jérôme threw out his chest, made a majestic

gesture with his hand, and cried, in a tragic voice : " A genoux, mauvais sujet ! " and compelled us to get down on our knees with our faces turned toward him, and ask his forgiveness. The punishment consisted in humiliation.

I was not punished and nobody even mentioned what had happened to me ; but I could not forget what despair, shame, and terror I had experienced in those two days. Although St. Jérôme ever since then gave me up and hardly paid any attention to me, I could not get accustomed to looking upon him with equanimity. Every time our eyes met by accident, I felt that my glance expressed too much apparent hatred, and I hastened to assume an expression of indifference ; but when I thought he understood my simulation, I blushed and turned my face away altogether.

In short, it was inexpressibly hard for me to have any relations with him.

XVIII.

THE MAIDS' CHAMBER

I felt more and more lonely, and my chief pleasures were solitary meditations and observations. I shall tell in the next chapter of the subject of my meditations ; but the scene of my observations was preeminently the maids' chamber, where a pathetic romance took place, which interested me very much. The heroine of this romance, of course, was Masha. She was in love with Vasili, who had known her when she was still at liberty, and who had promised to marry her. Fate, which had separated them five years before, had again brought them together in grandmother's house, but had placed a barrier to their mutual love in the person of Nikolay, Masha's uncle, who would not listen to Masha's marrying Vasili, whom he called a weak-brained and reckless man.

This barrier had the result that Vasili, who heretofore had been cold and careless in his relations to Masha, now fell in love with her, and he fell in love as much as a man is capable of such a sentiment, when he has been a tailor in manorial service, wearing a rose-coloured blouse and waxing his hair with pomatum.

Although his manifestations of love were very strange and awkward (for example, whenever he met Masha he tried to cause her pain : either he pinched her, or struck her with the palm of his hand, or squeezed her with such power that she scarcely could draw breath), his love was sincere, which is proved even by this, that from the very time when Nikolay had definitely refused him the hand of his niece, he had gone on a protracted spree from sorrow, and frequented inns and was riotous in his behaviour, - in short, he acted so

outrageously that he often was subjected to humiliating punishments at the police station. But these actions of his and their consequences seemed to constitute a special merit in Masha's eyes, and only increased her love for him. Whenever Vasili was retained in the lockup, Masha cried for days at a time and did not dry her tears ; she complained of her bitter fate to Gäsha, who took a lively part in the affairs of the unfortunate lovers, and paying no attention to her uncle's scolding and beating, she stealthily ran to the police station to visit and comfort her friend.

Reader, do not look with contempt upon the society to which I am introducing you ! If the strings of love and sympathy have not slackened in your souls, you will find sounds in the maids' chamber to which they will respond. Whether you like to follow me or not, I betake myself to the landing on the staircase, from which I can see everything that takes place in the room. There is the ovenbench, upon which stands a flat-iron, a papier-maché doll with a broken nose, a wash-basin, and a pitcher ; there is the window, upon which lies in disorder a bit of black wax, a skein of silk, a half-eaten green cucumber and a candy box ; there is a large red table, upon which a chintz-covered brick is placed over a new piece of sewing.

It was here that Masha sat, wearing my favourite, rose-coloured gingham dress and blue kerchief, which particularly attracted my attention. She was sewing, and stopped, now and then, to scratch her head with the needle, or to fix the candle. I looked at her and thought : Why was she not born a lady with those bright blue eyes, immense auburn braid and high breast ? How well she would look in a sitting-room in a cap with rose-coloured ribbons and in a crimson capote, not such as Mimi had, but such as I had seen in the Tver Boulevard. She would be working at the embroidery-frame, and I should be looking at her in the mirror, and I should give her anything she might ask for, hand her her cloak, and myself serve her her food.

What a drunken face and repulsive figure that Vasili had, in his tight coat which he wore over his dirty rose-coloured blouse ! In every motion of his, in every curvature of his back, I thought I read the undoubted signs of the disgusting punishment which had befallen him.

" What, Vasya, again ? " said Masha, sticking her needle into the cushion, and without raising her head to meet Vasili, who was just entering.

" Well, what good will come from him ? " answered Vasili. "If he'd only make his mind up one way or the other ! As it is, I am ruined, and all on his account ! "

" Will you drink tea ? " said Nadézhda, another chambermaid.

" Thank you very much. What does that thief, your uncle, hate me for? For having a decent suit, for my bearing, for my gait ? In short – the deuce ! " Vasili concluded, waving his hand.

" You must be submissive," said Masha, biting off a thread, " but you, on the contrary – "

" My patience has given out, that's what ! "

Just then a door was heard slamming in grandmother's room, and the gruff voice of Gäsha, who was walking up the stairs.

" Go and please her, when she does not know herself what she wants – it is an accursed life, a prisoner's life ! If only the Lord will forgive my sin," she grumbled, waving her arms.

"My respects to Agafya Mikhaylovna!" said Vasili, rising in his seat, as she entered.

" You here again ! I have other things to think of besides your respects," she answered, looking threateningly at him. " Why are you coming here ? Is it proper for a man to come to girls' rooms ? "

" I wanted to find out about your health," timidly said Vasili.

" I'll bite the dust soon, that's the way of my health ! " angrily cried Agafya Mikhäylovna at the top of her voice.

Vasili laughed.

" There is nothing to laugh about, and when I tell you to get out, go ! I declare, that heathen, that rascal wants to marry ! Now, march, get out ! "

Agafya Mikhaylovna stamped her foot and went to her room, slamming the door with such force that the window-panes shook.

One could hear her behind the partition for a long time, flinging about her things and pulling the ears of her favourite cat, while scolding everybody and everything, and cursing her life ; finally the door was opened, and the cat, mewing pitifully, was whirled out by her tail.

" I see I had better come some other time to take a glass of tea," said Vasili in a whisper. " Good-bye till the next pleasant meeting ! "

" Never mind," said Nadézhda, winking, " I shall go and look after the samovär."

" I will make an end of it," continued Vasili, seating himself nearer to Masha, the moment Nadézhda left the room. " Either I'll go straight to the countess, and will say : ' It is so and so,' or I'll throw everything away, and, upon my word, will run away to the end of the world."

"And I shall remain – "

"It is you alone I am sorry for, or else my head would long ago have been in the free world, upon my word, upon my word."

" Vasili, why don't you bring me your blouses to get them washed," said Masha, after a minute's silence, " for just see how black it is," she added, taking hold of the collar of his blouse.

Just then grandmother's bell was heard down-stairs, and Gäsha came out of her room.

" Well, rascal, what do you want of her ? " she said, pushing Vasili out of the door, who got up in haste, when he saw her. " This is what you have brought her to, and now you annoy her. You beggar, you evidently take delight in looking at her tears. Get out ! Let not your breath be here again ! And what good thing have you found in him ? " she continued, turning to Masha. " Has your uncle not beaten you enough to-day ? No, you stick to it : 'I sha'n't marry anybody but Vasili Gruskov ! ' Fool ! "

" Yes, and I will not marry anybody, I will not love anybody, even though you kill me," said Masha, suddenly bursting into tears.

For a long time I looked at Masha, who lay on a trunk and wiped her tears with her kerchief. I endeavoured to get rid of my idea of Vasili, and to find that point of view from which he could appear so attractive to her. Yet, though I sincerely sympathized with her grief, I was unable to comprehend how such a charming being as Masha seemed to be in my eyes, could love Vasili.

" When I am grown up," I discoursed to myself, after I had returned to my room, " the Petrovskoe estate will go to me, and Vasili and Masha will be my serfs. I shall be sitting in my cabinet and smoking a pipe. Masha will pass to the kitchen with a flat-iron. I shall say, ' Call Masha ! ' She will come, and nobody will be in the room. Suddenly Vasili will enter, and, seeing Masha, he will say : 'I am a ruined man !' and Masha, too, will burst out weeping, and I shall say : ' Vasili, I know that you love her, and that she loves you. Here, take one thousand roubles, marry her, and God grant you happiness ! ' and I shall myself go into the sofa-room."

Among the endless number of thoughts and dreams that tracklessly cross the mind and the imagination,

there are some that leave a deep, pronounced furrow behind them ; so that frequently one remembers, without remembering the essence of the thought, that something good has been in the head, one feels the traces of the thought, and tries to reproduce it. Such a deep trace was left in my soul by the thought of sacrificing my feeling in favour of Masha's happiness, which she could find only in her marriage with Vasili.

XIX.

BOYHOOD

People will hardly believe what the favourite and most constant subjects of my thoughts were during the period of my boyhood, – for they were incompatible with my age and station. But, according to my opinion, the incompatibility between a man's position and his moral activity is the safest token of truth.

In the course of the year, during which I led a solitary, concentrated moral life, all abstract thoughts of man's destiny, of the future life, of the immortality of the soul presented themselves to my mind, and my weak childish reason tried with all the fervour of inexperience to elucidate those questions, whose proposition marks the highest degree the human mind can reach, but the solution of which is not given to it.

It seems to me that the human mind in its evolution passes in every separate individual over the same path on which it evolves during whole generations ; that the ideas which have served for the basis of distinct philosophical theories form inseparable parts of mind ; and that every man has more or less clearly been conscious of them long before he knew of the existence of philosophical theories.

These ideas presented themselves to my mind with such clearness and precision that I even tried to apply them to life, imagining that I was the first who had discovered such great and useful truths.

At one time it occurred to me that happiness did not

depend on external causes, but on our relation to them ; that a man who is accustomed to bear suffering could not be unhappy. To accustom myself to endurance, I would hold for five minutes at a time the dictionaries of Tatishchev in my outstretched hands, though that caused me unspeakable pain, or I would go into the lumber-room and strike my bare back so painfully with a rope that the tears would involuntarily appear in my eyes.

At another time, I happened to think that death awaited me at any hour and at any minute, and wondering how it was people had not seen this before me, I decided that man cannot be happy otherwise than by enjoying the present and not caring for the future. Under the influence of this thought, I abandoned my lessons for two or three days, and did nothing but lie on my bed and enjoy myself reading some novel and eating honey cakes which I bought with my last money.

At another time, as I was standing at the blackboard and drawing various figures upon it with a piece of chalk, I was suddenly struck by the idea: Why is symmetry pleasant to the eye ? What is symmetry ? It is an implanted feeling, I answered myself. What is it

based upon ? Is symmetry to be found in everything in life ? Not at all. Here is life, – and I drew an oval figure on the board. After life the soul passes into eternity ; here is eternity, – and I drew, on one side of the figure, a line to the very edge of the board. Why is there no such line on the other side of the figure ? Really, what kind of an eternity is that which is only on one side ? We have no doubt existed before this life, although we have lost the recollection of it.

This consideration, which then appeared extremely novel and clear to me, but the connection of which I can barely make out now, gave me extreme pleasure, and I took a sheet of paper and intended to put my idea down in writing ; but such a mass of ideas suddenly burst upon me that I was compelled to get up and walk about the room. As I walked up to the window, my attention was drawn to the horse which a driver was hitching to a water-cart, and all my thoughts centred on the solution of the question, into what animal or man the soul of that horse would pass after her death. Just then Volodya crossed the room and, seeing that I was deep in thought, smiled. This smile was enough to make me understand that all I had been thinking about was the merest bosh.

I have told this memorable incident only to give the reader an idea what my reasonings were like.

By none of these philosophical considerations was I so carried away as by scepticism, which at one time led me to a condition bordering on insanity. I imagined that nothing existed in the whole world outside of me, that objects were no objects, but only images which appeared whenever I turned my attention to them, and that these images would immediately disappear when I no longer thought of them. In short, I held the conviction with Schelling that objects do not exist, but only my relation to them. There were moments when, under the influence of this fixed idea, I reached such a degree of absurdity that I sometimes suddenly turned in the opposite direction, hoping to take nothingness by surprise, where I was not.

What a miserable, insignificant mainspring of moral activities the human mind is!

My feeble reason could not penetrate the impenetrable, and in the labour which transcended its power, I lost, one after another, those convictions which, for the happiness of my life, I ought never to have presumed to touch.

From all that heavy moral labour I earned away nothing but agility of mind, which weakened my will-power, and a habit of constant moral analysis, which destroyed the freshness of my feeling and the clearness of my understanding.

Abstract ideas are formed in consequence of a man's ability to grasp, consciously, the condition of his soul at a certain moment, and to transfer it to his memory. My inclination for abstract reasonings so unnaturally developed my consciousness that

frequently, when I began to think of the simplest thing, I fell into the inextricable circle of the analysis of my thoughts, and I no longer thought of the question which occupied my attention, but I thought of the fact that I thought. If I asked myself : Of what am I thinking ? I answered : I am thinking of thinking. And what am I thinking of now ? I am thinking of thinking that I am thinking, and so on. Reason was lost in empty speculation.

However, the philosophical discoveries which I made flattered my vanity very much : I frequently imagined myself a great man who was discovering new truths for the good of mankind, and I looked upon all other mortals with a proud consciousness of my dignity. But, strange to say, whenever I came in contact with these mortals, I grew timid, and the higher I placed myself in my own opinion, the less I was able to express the consciousness of my own dignity before others, and could not even get accustomed to not being ashamed of every simplest word and motion of mine.

XX.

VOLODYA

Yes, the farther I advance in the description of this period of my life, the harder and the more painful it is getting for me. Among the memories of this time I rarely, very rarely, find those moments of genuine, warm feeling, which so brilliantly and constantly illuminated the beginning of my life. I involuntarily want to run through the desert of my boyhood as fast as possible, and to reach that happy period, when the truly tender and noble feeling of friendship again brightly illuminated the end of that age, and laid the foundation for the new period of youth, full of poetry and charm.

I shall not follow my memories hourly, but shall cast a rapid glance at the most important events from the time to which I have brought my narrative up to the time of my association with an unusual man who had a definite and beneficent influence upon my character and thought.

Volodya was on the point of entering the university. He had separate teachers, and I listened with envy and involuntary awe when he, tapping the chalk on the blackboard, talked of functions, sinuses, coordinates, and so on, which seemed to me to be the expressions of an inaccessible wisdom. One Sunday, after dinner, all the teachers and two professors assembled in grandmother's room, and in presence of some invited guests rehearsed a university examination, at which rehearsal Volodya, to grandmother's great delight, showed unusual knowledge. They also asked me some questions in a few subjects, but I made a very poor showing, and the professors were evidently anxious to conceal my ignorance from grandmother, which confused me

even more. However, they paid little attention to me ; I was only fifteen years old, and I had another year yet till my examination. Volodya came down-stairs only for dinner, and passed his whole days and even evenings up-stairs studying, not because he was compelled to do so, but from his own choice. He was very vain, and did not wish to pass a mediocre, but an excellent examination.

At last the day for the first examination arrived. Vo-lodya put on a blue dress coat with brass buttons, a gold watch, and lacquered boots. Papa's phaeton drove up to the porch, Nikolay threw back the boot, and Volodya and St. Jérôme drove to the university. The girls, especially Katenka, with joyful and ecstatic countenances, looked through the window at the stately figure of Volodya, as he seated himself in the carriage, and papa said : " God grant it, God grant it ! " and grandmother, who had also dragged herself to the window, with tears in her eyes made the sign of the cross at Volodya until the phaeton was lost around the corner of the street, and even after that continued murmuring something.

Volodya returned. All impatiently asked him : " Well ? Was it all right ? How much did you get ? " It was, however, evident from his looks that everything had gone well. Volodya had received a five mark. On the next day he was seen off with the same wishes for success and with anxiety, and he was met with the same impatience and joy. Thus nine days passed. On the tenth day was to be the last, the most difficult examination, in religion. All stood at the window, and awaited him with even greater impatience. It was two o'clock, and Volodya had not yet returned.

" O Lord ! Dear me ! It is they ! they ! " cried Lyubochka, pressing against the window.

And there, in reality, side by side with St. Jérôme, sat Volodya, but no longer in the blue dress coat and gray cap, but in a student's uniform with a hand-sewn blue collar, three-cornered hat, and gilt short sword at his side

" Oh, if you were alive ! " cried grandmother, when she saw Volodya in his uniform, and fell into a swoon.

Volodya ran into the antechamber with a beaming face and kissed and embraced me, Lyubochka, Mimi, and Katenka, who blushed up to her ears. Volodya was beside himself with joy. And how well he looked in that uniform! How becoming his blue collar was to his sprouting black moustache ' What a long, thin waist and noble carriage he had !

On that memorable day all dined in grandmother's room. Joy was in the faces of all, and at dinner, during dessert, a servant, with an adequately majestic, yet merry countenance, brought a bottle of champagne, wrapped in a napkin. Grandmother, for the first time after mother's death, drank champagne, emptying a whole glass as she congratulated Volodya, and again wept for joy, looking at him.

Volodya after that drove out alone, in his own carriage, received his own acquaintances, smoked, and drove to balls; and I myself once saw him drink two bottles of champagne with his acquaintances in his room, while with every glass they drank the health of some mysterious persons, and discussed who would get le fond de la bouteille. Yet he dined regularly at home, and after dinner sat down, as formerly, in the sofa-room, and always mysteriously chatted with Kätenka about something. As much as I could make out, without taking part in their conversations, they were talking about the heroes and heroines of novels they had read, about jealousy, and

love, and I could not understand what interest they could find in such discussions, nor why they smiled so gently and discussed so fervently.

I noticed in general that between Katenka and Volodya there existed, in addition to the natural friendship between companions of childhood, some other strange relation, which removed them from us, and mysteriously bound them together.

XXL

KATENKA AND LYÛBOCHKA

Katenka was sixteen years old. She was tall; her angularity of form, her bashfulness and awkwardness of movement, which are peculiar to a girl in her transitional age, had given way to the harmonious freshness and gracefulness of a newly budded flower ; but she had not changed. The same light blue eyes and smiling countenance; the same straight nose, with its strong nostrils, forming almost a line with her forehead, and her little mouth with its bright smile; the same tiny dimples on her transparent rosy cheeks ; the same little white hands, – and, for some reason, her former name of a " clean " girl remarkably fitted her even then. The only new things were her thick blond braid, which she wore like grown young ladies, and her young breast, the appearance of which visibly pleased and shamed her.

Though Lyubochka had grown up and had been educated together with her, she was in every respect a different girl. Lyubochka was not tall in stature, and she was bow-legged from early rickets, and had a badly shaped waist. In her whole figure nothing was beautiful but her eyes, and her eyes were beautiful indeed ; they were large and black, and had such an irresistibly pleasant expression of dignity and naïveté that they invariably arrested the attention. Lyubochka was simple and natural in everything, while Katenka, so it seemed, always tried to resemble somebody. Lyubochka always looked

Straight at you, and, at times, when she fixed her immense black

eyes on a person, she did not take them away for so long, that she was scolded for being impolite ; Katenka, on the contrary, lowered her eyelashes, blinked, and assured people that she was near-sighted, while I knew very well that she had good eyesight.

Lyubochka did not like to be demonstrative in the presence of strangers, and when some one began to kiss her before guests, she pouted and said that she could not bear "tenderness." Katenka, on the other hand, grew particularly affectionate to Mimi, whenever guests were about, and was fond of walking up and down the parlour with her arms about some girl. Lyubochka was a terrible giggler, and often, when in a fit of laughter, waved her arms and ran up and down the room ; Katenka, on the contrary, covered her mouth with a handkerchief or with her hand, whenever she began to laugh. Lyubochka always sat straight, and walked with her arms hanging down ; Katenka held her head a little on one side, and walked with her arms folded.

Lyubochka was always exceedingly happy whenever she had a chance to talk to a very tall man, and she used to say that she would marry nobody but a hussar; Katenka, however, said that all men were equally distasteful to her and that she would never marry, and she acted, every time she spoke with a man, like an entirely different person, as though she was afraid of something. Lyubochka always quarrelled with Mimi for lacing her corsets so tightly that it was impossible to breathe, and was fond of something good to eat ; Katenka, on the contrary, frequently put her finger under the band of her skirt, to show us how loose it was, and she ate very little. Lyubochka was fond of drawing heads, while Katenka drew only flowers and butterflies. Lyubochka played with great clearness Field's concerts and a few sonatas of Beethoven ; Katenka played variations and waltzes, retarded the tempo, banged, continually took the pedal, and, before starting out to play, feelingly took three chords arpeggio.

But Katenka, as I then used to think, resembled a grown woman more, and therefore she pleased me more.

XXII.

PAPA

Papa had been unusually happy ever since Volodya entered the university, and came more frequently than was his custom to dine with grandmother. However, his happiness, as I found out from Nikolay, was caused by his unusually great winnings. It even happened that he came to see us in the evening, before going to his club ; he then seated himself at the piano, gathered us all about him, and, tapping with his soft boots (he could not bear heels,

which he never wore), sang gipsy songs. It was then a sight to see the ridiculous ecstasy of his favourite, Lyubochka, who simply worshipped him. At times he came to the class-room and listened with austere face to the recital of my lessons, but by the few words which he employed in order to correct me I noticed that he did not know the subjects well in which I was being instructed. At times he stealthily winked at us and made signs to us, when grandmother began to growl and scold everybody without cause. " Well, we did catch it, children ! " he would say afterward. In general, he came down in my opinion, from that inaccessible height where my childish imagination had placed him. I kissed his large white hand with the same genuine feeling of love and respect, but I took the liberty of deliberating about him, and judging his acts, and I was involuntarily surprised by thoughts that frightened me. I shall never forget the occasion that inspired me with many such thoughts and afforded me much moral suffering.

Late one evening he entered the sitting-room in his black dress coat and white vest, to take Volodya, who. was dressing at that time in his room, to a ball. Grandmother was waiting in her chamber for Volodya to appear before her, for she was in the habit of calling him up before every ball, to bless him, look him over, and give him instructions. In the parlour, which was lighted only by one lamp, Mimi and Katenka paced up and down, while Lyubochka sat at the piano and studied Field's second concert, mamma's favourite piece.

I have never seen such a family resemblance as existed between sister and mother. This resemblance did not consist in the face, nor in the whole figure, but in something intangible : in the hands, in the manner of walking, but especially in the voice and in certain expressions. When Lyubochka was angry and said : " They keep me my whole life," she pronounced these words " my whole life," which mamma, too, was in the habit of using, in such a manner, somewhat protracted, like " my who-o-le life," that I thought I heard mamma ; but most striking was the resemblance in her playing, and in all her attitudes at the piano : she arranged her dress in the same way, in the same way turned the pages with her left hand, in the same way struck the keys with her fist, when she was angry because she did not succeed in playing smoothly a difficult passage, and said : " O Lord," and there was the same inimitable tenderness and clearness of expression, that beautiful expression of Field's, which is so appropriately called *jeu perlé*, the charm of which all the hocus-pocus of the modern pianists has not been able to obliterate.

Papa entered the room with rapid, mincing steps, and walked up to Lyubochka, who stopped playing the moment she noticed him.

" No, keep on, Lyubochka, keep on ! " he said, seating her on the stool, " you know how I like to hear you."

Lyubochka continued to play, and papa sat long opposite her, leaning on his arm ; then he suddenly jerked his shoulder, rose from his chair, and began to pace the room. Every time he came near the piano, he stopped and gazed long and fixedly at Lyubochka. I

observed by his movements and gait that he was agitated. After crossing the parlour several times, he stopped behind Lyubochka's seat and kissed her black hair, then he rapidly turned about, and continued to pace the room. When Lyubochka had finished her playing and walked up to him with the question: "Was it all right?" he silently took her head and began to kiss her brow and eyes with a tenderness I had never seen in him before.

" O Lord, you are weeping ! " suddenly said Lyubochka, letting the chain of his watch slip out of her hands, and fixing her large, wondering eyes upon his face. " Forgive me, darling father, I forgot entirely that it was mother's piece."

" Not at all, my dear girl, play it often," he said in a voice quivering with emotion ; " if you only knew how much good it does me to weep with you ! "

He kissed her once more and, trying to overcome his inward agitation, went, with a jerk of his shoulder, through the door that led over the corridor to Volodya's room.

"Voldemar! Shall you be ready soon?" he called out, stopping in the middle of the corridor. Just then chambermaid Masha passed by him. When she saw her master, she lowered her eyes and wanted to make a circuit round him. He stopped her. " You are getting prettier all the time," he said, leaning down to her.

Masha blushed, and lowered her head still more. "Allow me," she whispered.

"Voldemar, will it be long?" papa repeated, shrugging his shoulder and coughing, when Masha had passed by him, and he saw me.

I loved my father, but a man's mind lives independently from his heart, and frequently harbours incomprehensible and cruel thoughts which offend his feelings. Such thoughts came to me, though I endeavoured to remove them.

XXIII.

GRANDMOTHER

Grandmother grew weaker from day to day. Her bell, the voice of gruff Gasha, and the slamming of the doors were heard with increasing frequency in her room, and she no longer received us in her cabinet, seated in her armchair, but in her chamber, lying upon a high bed with lace-covered pillows. When I greeted her, I noticed a light yellow shining swelling on her hand, and in the room was a heavy odour, such as I had smelled five years before in mother's

room. The doctor called upon her three times a day, and several consultations had taken place. But her character, her proud, ceremonious treatment of all the people of the house, especially of papa, had not changed in the least. She stretched her words as before, and raised her brows and said : " My dear ! "

We had not been admitted to her presence for several days, when one morning St. Jérôme proposed to me during class hours that I should go out driving with Lyubochka and Katenka. Though, while seating myself in the sleigh, I noticed that the street was covered with straw under grandmother's windows, and that some strange people in blue cloaks were standing near our gate, I could not make out why we were sent out driving at such an inauspicious hour. On that day, and during the drive, Lyubochka and I were, for some reason, in that unusually happy frame of mind when every incident, every word, every motion caused us to laugh.

A peddler trotted across the road clutching his tray, – and we laughed. A ragged Jehu, waving the ends of his fies, in a gallop caught up with our sleigh, – and we laughed. Filipp's whip caught in the runner of the sleigh ; he turned around and called out, " The deuce ! " and we roared with laughter. Mimi said, with a dissatisfied look, that only stupid people laughed without cause, and Lyubochka, red with exertion from a subdued laugh, looked at me stealthily. Our eyes met, and we burst into such a Homeric laugh, that tears stood in our eyes, and we were unable to restrain the torrent of laughter which was choking us. No sooner had we quieted down a little, than I looked at Lyubochka and pronounced the secret word which had been current among us for some time and which invariably produced laughter, and we roared again.

Just as we were reaching home, I opened my mouth to make a face at Lyubochka, when my eyes were struck by the lid of a black coffin, which was leaning against the wing of the entrance door, and my mouth remained in its contorted position.

" Votre grand'mère est morte ! " said St. Jérôme with a pale face, coming out to meet us.

During all the time that grandmother's body remained in the house, I experienced the heavy feeling of the terror of death ; that is, the dead body vividly and unpleasantly reminded me of the fact that I should die some day, – a feeling which, for some reason, is confounded with grief. I did not regret grandmother, and I doubt if any one sincerely regretted her. Though the house was full of mourning visitors, nobody regretted her death, except one person, whose unbounded grief amazed me inexpressibly. That person was chambermaid Gàsha. She went to the garret, locked herself up there, and, without ceasing to weep, cursed herself, tore her hair, would not listen to any consolation, and kept on saying that her own death would be her only consolation after the death of her beloved mistress.

I again repeat that improbability in matters of feeling is the

surest token of truth.

Grandmother was no more, but the memories of her and the various discussions about her were still living in our house. These discussions referred especially to the will which she had made before her demise, and which nobody knew, except her executor, Prince Ivan Ivanovich. I noticed a certain agitation among the servants of grandmother, and there were frequent conversations about what each could expect, and, I must confess, I involuntarily thought with pleasure of our getting an inheritance.

Six weeks later, Nikolay – the daily gazette of the news of our house – told me that grandmother had left her whole estate to Lyubochka, leaving the guardianship up to her marriage not to papa, but to Prince Ivan Ivanovich.

XXIV.

I

But a few months were left before my entering the university. I studied well. I not only waited for my teachers without fear, but even experienced a certain pleasure in my class work.

I felt happy whenever I recited my lesson clearly and distinctly. I was preparing for the mathematical faculty ; which selection, to tell the truth, I made only because the words sinus, tangent, differential, integral, and so on, pleased me very much.

I was much smaller than Volodya, broad-shouldered and flabby, and as homely as ever, which worried me, as before. I tried to appear original. One thing consoled me : namely, that papa had said about me that I had a " clever phiz," and I firmly believed it.

St. Jérôme was satisfied with me and praised me, and I not only did not hate him, but it even seemed to me that I loved him when he said that with my ability, with my mind, it would be a shame if I did not accomplish this or that.

My observations in the maids' chamber had ceased long ago, for I felt ashamed to conceal myself behind the door, and, besides, my conviction of Masha's and Vasili's love had, I must say, somewhat cooled me off. I was completely cured of this unfortunate passion by Vasili's marriage, for which, at Vasili's request, I asked papa's permission.

When the newly married couple came, with candy on a tray, to thank papa, and when Masha, in a cap with blue ribbons, thanked us all for something, kissing each of us on the shoulder, I smelled only the

perfume of rose pomatum on her hair, and did not feel the least emotion.

I began to be cured altogether of my boyish faults, except the chief fault, which was to cause me no end of trouble in my life, – the tendency to philosophize.

XXV.

VOLODYA'S FRIENDS

Although I played in the company of Volddya's acquaintances a part which offended my vanity, I liked to sit in his room, when he had guests, and in silence to observe everything that took place there. His most frequent visitors were Adjutant Dubkov and Prince Nekhlyudov, a student. Dubkov, who had passed his first youth, was a small, muscular fellow, of dark complexion. He had rather short legs, but was not bad-looking, and was always jolly. He was one of those narrow-minded men who please on account of their very narrow-mindedness, who are not able to see objects from various sides, and who are eternally carried away by something. The reasoning of such people is one-sided and faulty, but always open-hearted and persuasive. Even their narrow egotism somehow appears pardonable and attractive. In addition, Dubkov had a double charm for Volodya and me, that of his military appearance and, chiefly, of age, which young people are in the habit of mistaking for decency (*comme il faut*), which is highly valued in these years. And, indeed, Dubkov was what one calls "un homme comme il faut." One thing displeased me, and that was that Volddya seemed to be ashamed before him for all my innocent acts, but more especially for my youth.

Nekhlyudov was not good-looking: his small, gray eyes, low, straight forehead, disproportionate arms and legs

could not be regarded as beautiful features. His redeeming features were his very tall stature, soft complexion, and beautiful teeth. But his face assumed such an original and energetic character from his narrow, glistening eyes and changeable, now severe, now childishly indefinite smile, that one could not fail to take notice of him.

He seemed to be very bashful, because every trifle made him blush to his ears ; but his bashfulness was different from mine. The more he blushed, the more determination his face expressed, as though he was angry at his own weakness.

Though he appeared to be very friendly with Dubkov and Volodya, it was evident that only chance had brought them together. Their views were quite different : Dubkov and Volodya avoided everything that

resembled serious discussion and sentimentality ; Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, was an enthusiast in the highest degree, and in spite of ridicule, often entered into the discussion of philosophical questions and of sentiments. Volodya and Dubkov were fond of talking of the objects of their love (they were generally in love with several women at the same time and both with the same woman) ; Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, was always seriously angry when they hinted of his love for a red-haired girl.

Volodya and Dubkov often allowed themselves to speak lightly of their relatives ; Nekhlyudov, on the contrary, was beside himself with anger at any unfavourable reference to his aunt, for whom he felt an ecstatic adoration. Volodya and Dubkov drove away after supper without Nekhlyudov, whom they called a " blushing maiden."

I was struck from the start by Nekhlyudov, both on account of his conversation and his looks. Yet, in spite of the fact that I found many common points in our views, or, maybe, on account of it, – the feeling with which he inspired me when I first saw him was far from friendly.

I did not like his rapid glance, firm voice, haughty mien, but, above all, the complete indifference which he showed me. I often felt dreadfully like contradicting him, when he was talking ; I wished to dispute with him, to punish him for his haughtiness, and to prove to him that I was sensible, even though he did not wish to pay the least attention to me. My bashfulness kept me back.

XXVI.

REFLECTIONS

Volodya was lying with his feet on a sofa, and leaning on his arm, was reading some French novel, when I, after my evening classes, entered his room, as usual. He lifted his head for a second to look at me, and again turned to his reading, – a very simple and natural movement, but it made me blush. It seemed to me that in his glance was expressed the question why I had come there, and that in the rapid inclination of his head was manifested a desire of concealing from me the meaning of that glance. This tendency to give a meaning to the simplest motion was a characteristic of mine at that period. I went up to the table and picked up a book ; but before I began to read it, it occurred to me that it was too ridiculous that, not having seen each other for a whole day, we should exchange no words.

" Shall you be at home this evening ? "

" I do not know. Why ? "

" Nothing," I said, and noticing that there was a hitch in the conversation, I took the book and began to read.

Oddly enough, Volodya and I passed whole hours in silence, when face to face with each other, but the presence of a third, even silent, person, was sufficient to make us enter into most interesting and varied conversations. We felt that we knew each other too well, and to know each other too much or too little is equally unfavourable for a close communion.

"Is Volodya at home?" was heard Dubkov's voice in the antechamber.

"Yes," said Volodya, taking down his legs and placing his book on the table.

Dubkov and Nekhlyudov, dressed in their overcoats and hats, entered the room.

" Well, Volodya, shall we drive to the theatre ? "

"No, I have no time," said Volodya, blushing.

" Don't say that ! Come, let us go ! "

" I have not even a ticket."

" You may get all the tickets you want at the entrance."

"Wait, I shall be back in a moment," Volodya said evasively, and, jerking his shoulder, left the room.

I knew that Volodya wanted very much to go to the theatre, to which Dubkov had invited him, that he declined only because he had no money, and that he went out to borrow five roubles of the steward against his next allowance.

" Good evening, diplomat ! " Dubkov said to me, giving me his hand.

Volodya's friends called me diplomat, because once at dinner grandmother, who was talking of our future, said, in their presence, that Volodya would be a soldier, and that she hoped to see me in the diplomatic service in a black dress coat and with my hair combed à la coq, which, in her opinion, were the necessary conditions for a diplomatic calling.

" Where has Volodya gone?" Nekhlyudov asked me.

" I do not know," I answered, blushing at the thought that they, no doubt, guessed the cause of Volodya's leaving.

" I suppose he has no money. Am I right ? O diplomat ! " he added affirmatively, as he explained my smile. "I have not any money, either. And have you any, Dubkov ? "

" Let us see," said Dubkov, taking out his purse and very carefully feeling a few small coins with his short fingers. "Here is a five-kopek piece, here is a twentykopek piece, and then fffu ! " he said, making a comic gesture with his hand.

Volodya entered the room.

" Well, are we going ? "

« No. "

" How funny you are!" said Nekhlyudov. " Why did you not tell us that you had no money ? Take my ticket if you wish ! "

" And how about you? "

" He will go to the box of his cousins," said Dubkov.

"No, I shall not go at all."

" Why? "

" Because, as you know, I do not like to stay in a box."

<< Why ? "

" I do not like it; I do not feel at ease."

" The old story! I can't understand why you should feel ill at ease, where everybody likes to see you. It is ridiculous, mon cher."

" What is to be done, si je suis timide ? I am sure you have never blushed in all your life, but I do, for the merest trifle ! " he said, blushing.

" Savez vous d'où vient votre timidité ? D'un excès d'amour propre, mon cher" said Dubkov, in a condescending tone.

" Where does the excès d'amour propre come in ? " answered Nekhlyudov, touched to the quick. " On the contrary, I am timid because I have too little amour propre; it always seems to me that people must feel tired and annoyed in my presence – that's why."

"Dress yourself, Volodya!" said Dubkov, taking him by his shoulder, and pulling off his coat. " Ignat, your master wants to dress ! "

"That's why I often feel – " continued Nekhlyudov.

But Dubkov did not listen to him. " Tra-la-ta-ra-ra-la-la," he sang out some air.

"You can't get rid of me," said Nekhlyudov. "I'll prove to you that bashfulness originates from anything but egoism."

" You may prove it when we are out driving."

" I told you I was not going with you."

"Well, then, stay here and prove it to the diplomat; he will tell it to us when we return."

" I will prove it," replied Nekhlyudov with childish stubbornness, " only come back as soon as possible."

" Do you think I am egoistic ? " he said, sitting down near me.

Although I had made up my mind in regard to this, I became so timid from this sudden question that it was some time before I could answer him.

" I think you are," I said, feeling my voice tremble, and my face flush at the thought that the time had come to prove to him that I was a man of sense. " I think that every man is egoistic, and that all a man does he does through egoism."

" What, then, in your opinion, is egoism ? " said Nekhlyudov, smiling rather contemptuously, as I thought.

" Egoism," I said, " is the conviction that I am better and wiser than all men."

" But how can all be convinced of this ? "

" I do not know whether it is just or not, only nobody acknowledges it but me. I am convinced that I am wiser than anybody in the world, and I am convinced that you, too, have the same conviction as regards yourself."

"No, I must say for my own part that I have met people whom I have acknowledged to be wiser than I am," said Nekhlyudov.

" It is impossible," I answered with conviction.

" Do you really think so ? " said Nekhlyudov, looking fixedly at me.

"In all earnest," I answered.

And suddenly a thought struck me, which I at once expressed : " I shall prove it to you. Why do we love ourselves more than others ? Because we regard ourselves better than others, and more worthy of love. If we found others to be better than we are, we should love them better than ourselves, but this never happens. And if it does happen, I am still right," I added with an involuntary smile of self-satisfaction.

Nekhlyudov was silent for moment.

" I never imagined you were such a clever fellow ! " he said to me,

with so kindly, good-hearted a smile that it suddenly seemed to me that I was exceedingly happy.

Praise acts so powerfully not only on the feelings, but also on the reason of a man, that under its pleasant influence I thought that I had become much wiser, and ideas one after another crowded into my head with unusual rapidity. From egoism we passed to love, and the conversation upon that theme seemed inexhaustible. Though to an outsider these reflections might have appeared as the merest rubbish, – they were so obscure and one-sided, – they were of high importance to us. Our souls were attuned in the same key, so that the least touch of any one string found an echo in the other. We had pleasure in this very responsiveness of the various strings which we touched in our conversation. It seemed to us that we lacked words and time to express to each other our thoughts, that begged for recognition.

XXVII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FRIENDSHIP

Since then sufficiently strange, but exceedingly pleasant relations established themselves between me and Dmitri Nekhlyudov. In the presence of other people he paid almost no attention to me ; but the moment we happened to be alone, we seated ourselves in a cosy corner, and began to philosophize, forgetting everything and not noticing how time flew.

We discussed the future life, art, government service, marriage, education of children, and it never occurred to us that all we were saying was the most terrible nonsense. This did not occur to us, because the nonsense we were talking was wise and agreeable nonsense ; and in youth we still value reason, and believe in it. In youth all the powers of the soul are directed to the future, and this future assumes, under the influence of hope, which is based, not on the experience of the past, but on an imaginary possibility of happiness, such varied, living, and enchanting forms, that the mere conceived and imparted dreams of a future happiness constitute the genuine happiness of that age. In the metaphysical discussions, which formed one of the chief subjects of our conversations, I liked that minute when the thoughts followed each other faster and faster and, becoming ever more abstract, finally reached such a degree of mistiness that I no longer saw any possibility of expressing them, and, trying to say what I thought, said something entirely different. I liked that minute when, rising ever higher in the sphere of thought, I suddenly grasped all its immeasurableness, and became conscious of the impossibility of going any farther.

Once, during the Butter-Week, Nekhlyudov was so busy with all kinds

of pleasures that, though he called several times a day at our house, he did not once speak to me, and this so offended me that I again thought of him as a haughty and disagreeable man. I only waited for an opportunity to show him that I did not in the least value his society, and did not have any particular attachment for him.

When he wanted to talk to me for the first time, after the Butter-Week, I told him that I had to prepare my lessons, and went up-stairs ; but fifteen minutes later somebody opened the door of the class-room, and Nekhlyudov came up to me.

" Am I disturbing you ? " he said.

" No," I answered, though I had intended to show him that I really was busy.

" Then why did you go away from Volodya's room ? We have not philosophized for quite awhile. And I am so used to it, that I feel as though something were wanting."

My annoyance passed away in a minute, and Dmitri again became in my eyes the good and dear man he was.

" You, no doubt, know why I went out," said I.

" Perhaps," he answered, seating himself near me. " But if I do guess it, I cannot tell you, though you may tell me," he said.

" I will tell you. I went away because I was angry with you – not angry, but I was annoyed. I am simply always afraid that you despise me because I am so young."

" Do you know why we have become so friendly ? " he said, answering my confession with a wise, kindly smile, " why I love you more than people with whom I am better acquainted, and with whom I have more in common ? I have just solved it. You have a remarkable, rare quality – sincerity."

" Yes, I always say those things which I am ashamed to confess," I confirmed him, " but only to those of whom I am sure."

" Yes. But to be sure of a man, one must be friends with him, but we are not yet friends, Nicolas. You remember we said of friendship that, in order to be true friends, each must be sure of the other."

" Sure that you will not tell anybody what I tell you," I said. " And the most important and interesting thoughts are those which we would not tell each other for anything. And mean thoughts, – contemptible thoughts would never dare to enter our minds, if we knew that we had to confess them."

" Do you know what idea has struck me, Nicolas ? " he added, rising from his chair, and rubbing his hands with a smile. " Let us do it,

and you will see how useful it will be to both of us : let us promise to confess everything to each other ! We shall know each other, and we shall have no scruples ; and, not to be afraid of outsiders, let us promise never to mention each other to anybody, at any time ? Let us do it ! ”

“ All right,” I said.

And we really did it. I shall tell you later what came of it.

Karr has said that in every attachment there are two sides : one loves, the other allows itself to be loved ; one kisses, the other submits its cheek. That is quite true. In our friendship, I kissed, and Dmitri submitted his cheek ; but he, too, was ready to kiss me. We loved equally, because we knew and esteemed each other ; but this did not prevent his exerting an influence upon me, and my submitting to him.

Of course, under the influence of Nekhlyudov I invol-

untarily appropriated his point of view, the essence of which was an ecstatic worship of the ideal of virtue, and the conviction that a man's destiny is continually to perfect himself. At that time it seemed a practicable affair to correct humanity at large, to destroy all human vices and misfortunes, - and, therefore, it looked easy and simple to correct oneself, to appropriate to oneself all virtues and be happy.

Still, God alone knows whether these noble dreams of youth were ridiculous, and who is to blame that they were not realized.