# FATHER SERGIUS

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## I

There happened in St. Petersburg during the forties an event which startled society.

A handsome youth, a prince, an officer in the Cuirassiers for whom every one had predicted the rank of aide-de-camp and a brilliant career attached to the person of Emperor Nicholas I., quitted the service. He broke with his beautiful fiancee, a lady-in-waiting, and a favourite of the empress, just a fortnight before the wedding-day, and giving his small estate to-his sister, retired to a monastery to become a monk.

To those who were ignorant of the hidden motives, this was an extraordinary and unaccountable step; but as regards Prince Stephen Kasatsky himself, it was such a natural move that he could not conceive an alternative.

His father, a retired colonel of the Guards, died when the son was twelve. Although it was hard for his mother to let him go from her, she would not act in defiance of the wishes of her late

husband, who had expressed the desire that in the event of his death the boy should be sent away and educated as a cadet. So she secured his admission to the corps.

The widow herself with her daughter Varvara moved to St. Petersburg in order to be in the same town with the boy and to take him home for his holidays. He showed brilliant capacity and extraordinary ambition, and came out first in military drill, in riding, and in his studies,— mathematics especially— for which he had a particular liking.

In spite of his abnormal height he was a handsome, graceful lad, and had it not been for his violent temper he would have been an altogether exemplary cadet. He never drank or indulged in any sort of dissipation, and he was particularly truthful. The fits of fury which maddened him from time to time, when he lost all control over himself and raged like a wild animal, were the only faults in his character. Once, when a cadet ragged him because of his collection of minerals, he almost threw the boy out of the window. On another occasion he rushed at an officer and struck him, it was said, for having broken his word and told a direct lie.

For this he would surely have been degraded to the rank of a common

soldier, if it had not been for the head of the school, who hushed up the matter and dismissed the officer.

At eighteen Kasatsky left with the rank of lieutenant and entered an aristocratic Guard regiment. The Emperor Nicholas had known him while he was in the cadet corps, and had shown him favour while in the regiment. It was on this account that people prophesied that he would become an aide-de-camp. Kasatsky desired it greatly, although less from ambition than from passionate love for the emperor whom he had cherished since his cadet days. Each time the emperor visited the school – and he visited it very often – as Kasatsky saw the tall figure, the broad chest, the aquiline nose above the moustache, and the closecropped side whiskers, the military uniform, and the brisk, firm step, and heard him greeting the cadets in his strident voice, he experienced the momentary ecstasy of one who sees his well-beloved. But his passionate adoration of the emperor was even more intense. He desired to give up something, everything, even himself, to show his infinite devotion. The Emperor Nicholas knew that he inspired such admiration, and deliberately provoked it. He played with the cadets, made them surround him, and treated them sometimes with childish simplicity, sometimes as a friend, and then again with an air of solemn grandeur.

After the incident with the officer, the emperor, who did not allude to it, waved Kasatsky theatrically aside when the latter approached him. Then, when he was leaving, he frowned and shook his finger at the boy, saying, “Be assured that everything is known to me; but there are things I do not wish to know. Nevertheless they are here,” and he pointed to his heart.

When the cadets were formally received by the emperor on leaving the school, he did not remind Kasatsky of his insubordination, but told them all, as was his custom, that they could turn to him in need, that they were to serve him and their country with loyalty, and that he would ever remain their best friend. All were touched – as usual – and Kasatsky, remembering the past, shed tears and made a vow to serve his beloved Tsar with all his might.

When Kasatsky entered the regiment, his mother and sister left St. Petersburg, going first to Moscow and then to their estate in the country. Kasatsky gave half his fortune to his sister. What remained was quite sufficient to support him in the expensive regiment which he had joined.

Viewed from outside, Kasatsky seemed like an ordinary brilliant young officer of the Guards making a career for himself. But within his soul there were intense and complex strivings. Although this striving, which had been going on ever since his childhood, seemed to vary in its nature, it was essentially one and the same, and had for its object that absolute perfection in every undertaking which would give him the applause and admiration of the world. Whatever it might be, accomplishments or learning, he worked to merit praise, and to stand as an example to the rest. Mastering one subject he took up another, and so obtained first place in his studies. For

example, while he was still in the corps, conscious of a lack of fluency in his French, he contrived to master the language so that he knew it like his own. Then again, when he became interested in chess while still in the corps, he worked at the game till he acquired proficiency.

Apart from the chief end of life, which was in his eyes the service of the Tsar and his country, he had always some self-appointed aim, and, however unimportant it might be, he pursued this with his whole soul, and lived for it until it was accomplished. But the moment it was attained another arose in its place. This passion for distinguishing himself and for pursuing one object in order to distinguish himself filled his life. So it was that after entering upon his career he set himself to acquire the utmost perfection in the knowledge of the service, and, except for his uncon-trollabic temper, which was sometimes the occasion of actions that were inimical to his success, he soon became a model officer.

Once, during a conversation in society, he realised the need of a more general education. So setting himself to work to read books, he soon attained what he desired. Then he wanted to hold a brilliant position in aristocratic society. He learned to dance beautifully, and was presently invited to all the balls and parties in the best circles. But he was not satisfied with this. He was accustomed to being first in everything, and in this instance he was very far from that. Society at that time consisted, as I suppose it has done in every time and place, of four kinds of people — rich people who are received at court; people who are not rich, but are born and brought up in court circles; rich people who ape the court; and people, neither rich nor of the court, who copy both.

Kasatsky did not belong to the first two, but was gladly received in the last two sets. On entering society his first idea was that he must have a liaison with a society lady; and quite unexpectedly it soon came about. Presently, however, he realised that the circle in which he moved was not the most exclusive, and that there were higher spheres, and that, notwithstanding he was received there, he was a stranger in their midst. They were polite to him, but their manner made it plain that they had their own intimates, and that he was not one of them. Kasatsky longed to be one of them. To attain this end he must become an aide-de-camp — which he expected to be — or else he must marry into the set. He resolved upon this latter course. His choice fell upon a young girl, a beauty, belonging to the court, and not merely belonging to the circle he wished to move in, whose society was coveted by the most distinguished and the most firmly rooted in this circle. This was the Countess Korotkova. Kasatsky began to pay court to her purely for the sake of his career; she was uncommonly attractive, and he very soon fell in love with her. She was noticeably cool towards him at first, and then suddenly everything changed. She treated him graciously, and her mother continually invited him to the house.

Kasatsky proposed, and was accepted. He was rather astonished at the facility with which he gained his happiness, and he noticed

something strange in the behaviour towards him of both mother and daughter. He was deeply in love, and love had made him blind, so he failed to realise what nearly the whole town knew – that the previous year his fiancee had been the favourite of the Emperor Nicholas.

Two weeks before the day arranged for the wedding Kasatsky was at Tsarskoye Selo, at the country place of his fiancee. It was a hot day in May. The lovers had had a walk in the garden, and were sitting on a bench in the shade of the lindens. Mary looked exceedingly pretty in her white muslin dress. She seemed the personification of love and innocence – now bending her head, now gazing at her handsome young lover, who was talking to her with great tenderness and self-restraint, as though he feared by look or gesture to offend her angelic purity. Kasatsky belonged to those men of the 'forties, who do not exist nowadays, who deliberately, while condoning impurity in themselves, require in their wives the most ideal and seraphic innocence. Being prepared to find this purity in every girl of their set, they behaved accordingly. This theory, in so far as it concerned the laxity which the men permitted themselves, was certainly altogether wrong and harmful; but in its relation to the women I think, compared with the notion of the modern young man who sees in every girl nothing but a mate or a female, there was much to be said for it. The girls, perceiving such adoration, endeavoured with more or less success to be goddesses.

Kasatsky held the views of his time, and looked with such eyes upon his sweetheart. That day he was more in love than ever, but there was nothing sensual in his feelings towards his fiancée. On the contrary he regarded her with the tender adoration of something unattainable. He rose and stood at his full height before her, leaning with both hands on his sabre.

" Now for the first time I know what happiness is. And it is you – darling – who have given me that happiness," he said, smiling shyly.

He was still at that stage where endearments are not yet a habit, and it made him gasp to think of using them to such an angel.

" It is you who have made me see myself clearly. You have shown me that I am better than I thought," he added.

"I knew it long ago. That is what made me begin to love you."

The nightingales were beginning their song somewhere near, and the young leaves moved in the sudden gusts of wind. He raised her hand to his lips and there were tears in his eyes.

She understood that he was thanking her for having said that she loved him. He took a few steps backwards and forwards, remaining silent, then approached her again, and sat beside her.

" You know, when I began to make love to you, it was not disinterested on my part. I wanted to get into society. And then,

when I came to know you better, how little all that mattered, compared to you ! Are you angry with me for that? "

She did not answer, but touched his hand. He understood that it meant " I am not angry."

"Well, you said—" he stopped. It seemed too bold to say what he intended. " You said

— that you — began to love me — forgive me

— I quite believe it — but there is something that troubles you and stands in the way of your feelings. What is it?"

"Yes — now or never," she thought. "He will know it anyhow. But now he will not forsake me because of it. Oh, if he should, how dreadful!" And she gazed with deep affection upon that tall, noble, powerful figure. She loved him now more than the Tsar, and were it not for Nicholas being an emperor, her choice between them would rest on Kasatsky.

" Listen," she said, " I cannot deceive you. I must tell you everything. You asked me what stood in the way. It is that I have loved before."

She again laid her hand on his with an imploring gesture.

He was silent.

" Do you want to know who it was? The emperor."

"We all loved him. I can imagine you, a school-girl in the institute —"

" No. After that. It was only a passing infatuation, but I must tell you —"

"Well —what?"

"No; it was not simply—" She covered her face with her hands.

"What! You gave yourself to him?"

She was silent.

" His mistress? "

Still she did not answer.

He sprang to his feet, and pale as death, with his teeth chattering, stood before her. He now remembered how the emperor, meeting him on the Nevsky, had congratulated him.

“ Oh, my God, what have I done! Stephen! ”

“Don’t touch me — don’t touch me! Oh, how terrible ! ”

He turned and went to the house.

There he met her mother.

“What’s the matter with you, prince?” she stopped, seeing his face. The blood rushed suddenly to his head.

" You knew it! And you wanted me to shield them! Oh, if you weren’t a woman—” he

shouted, raising his large fist. Then he turned and ran away.

Had the lover of his fiancee been a private individual he would have killed him. But it was his beloved Tsar.

The next day he asked for furlough, and then for his discharge. Feigning illness, he refused to see any one, and went away to the country.

There he spent the summer putting his affairs in order. When summer was over he did not return to St. Petersburg, but entered a monastery with the intention of becoming a monk.

His mother wrote to dissuade him from this momentous step. He answered that he felt a vocation for God which was above all other considerations. It was only his sister, who was as proud and ambitious as himself, who understood him.

She was quite right in her estimate of his motives. His becoming a monk was only to show his contempt for all that seemed most important to the rest of the world, and had seemed so to himself while he was still an officer. He climbed to a pinnacle from which he could look down on those he had previously envied. However, contrary to his sister’s opinion, this was not the only guiding motive. Mingled with his pride and his passion for ascendancy, there was also a genuine religious sentiment which Varvara did not know he possessed. His sense of injury and his disappointment in Mary, whom he had thought such an angel, were so poignant that they led him to despair. His despair led where? To God, to faith, to a childish faith which had never been destroyed.

II

On the feast of the Intercession of the Virgin, Kasatsky entered the monastery to show his superiority over all those who fancied

themselves above him.

The abbot was a nobleman by birth, a learned man, and a writer. He belonged to that monastic order which hails from Walachia, the members of which choose, and in their turn are chosen, leaders to be followed unswervingly and implicitly obeyed.

This abbot was the disciple of the famous Ambrosius, disciple of Makardix of the Leonidas, disciple of Païssy Velichkovsky.

To this abbot Kasatsky submitted himself as to the superior of his choice.

Beside the feeling of ascendancy over others, which Kasatsky felt in the monastery as he had felt it in the world, he found here the joy of attaining perfection in the highest degree inwardly as well as outwardly. As in the regiment, he had rejoiced in being more than an irreproachable officer, even exceeding his duties; so as a monk his endeavour was to be perfect, industrious, abstemious, meek, and humble: and, above all, pure, not only in deed but in thought; and obedient. This last quality made his life there far easier. In that much-frequented monastery there were many conditions objectionable to him, but through obedience he became reconciled to them all.

" It is not for me to reason. I have but to obey, whatever the command." On guard before the sacred relics, singing in the choir, or adding up accounts in the hostelry, all possibility of doubt was silenced by obedience to his superior. PI ad it not been for that, the monotony and length of the church service, the intrusion of visitors and the inferiority of the other monks, would have been extremely distasteful to him. But as it was he bore it all perfectly and found it even a solace and a support.

" I don't know," he thought, " why I ought to hear the same prayers many times a day, but I know that it is necessary, and knowing this I rejoice." His superior had told him that as food is necessary for the life of the body, so is spiritual food, such as prayers in church, necessary for maintaining the life of the spirit. He believed it, and though he found the service for which he had to rise at a very early hour a difficulty, it brought him indubitable comfort and joy.

This was the result of humility and the certainty that anything done in obedience to the superior was right.

I he aim of his life was neither the gradual attainment of utter subjugation of his will, nor the attainment of greater and greater humility; but the achievement of all those Christian virtues which seemed in the beginning so easy of possession.

Being not in the least half hearted, he gave what fortune remained to him to the monastery without regret.

Humility before his inferiors, far from being difficult, was a

delight to him. Even the victory over the sins of greed and lust were easy for him. The superior had especially warned him against this latter sin, but Kasatsky was glad to feel immunity from it. He was only tortured by the thought of his fiancee. It was not only the thought of what had been; but the vivid picture of what might have been. He could not resist recalling to himself the image of the famous mistress of the emperor who afterwards married and became a good wife and mother. Her husband had a high position, influence, and esteem, and a good and penitent wife.

In his better hours Kasatsky was not distressed by this thought. At such times he rejoiced that these temptations were past. But there were moments when all that went to make up his present life grew dark before his mind; moments when, if he did not actually cease to believe in the foundation of his present life, he was at least unable to perceive it; when he could not discover the object of his present life; when he was overcome with recollections of the past, and terrible to say, with regret at having abandoned the world. His only salvation in that state of mind was obedience and work, and prayers the whole day long. He went through his usual forms at prayers, he even prayed more than was his wont, but it was lip-service, and his soul took no part. This condition would sometimes last a day or two days, and would then pass away. But these days were hideous. Kasatsky felt that he was neither in his own hands nor God’s, but subject to some outside will. All he could do at those times was to follow the advice of his superior and undertake nothing, but simply wait.

On the whole, Kasatsky lived then, not according to his own will but in complete obedience to his superior; and in that obedience he found peace.

Such was Kasatsky’s life in his first monastery, which lasted seven years. At the end of the third year he was ordained to the priesthood and was given the name of Sergius. The ordination was a momentous event in his inner life. He had previously experienced great comfort and spiritual uplifting at holy communions. At first, when he was himself celebrating mass, at the moment of the oblation, his soul was filled with exaltation. But gradually this sense became dulled; and when on one occasion he had to celebrate mass in an hour of depression as he sometimes had, he felt that this exaltation could not endure. The emotion eventually paled until only the habit was left.

On the whole, in the seven years of his life in the monastery, Sergius began to grow weary. All that he had to learn, all that he had to attain was done, and he had nothing more to do.

But his stupefaction only increased. During that time he heard of his mother’s death and of Mary’s marriage. Both events were matters of indifference to him, as all his attention and all his interest were concentrated on his inner life.

In the fourth year of his monastic experience, during which the

bishop had shown him marked kindness, his superior told him that in the event of high honours being offered to him he should not decline. Just then monastic ambition, precisely that quality which was so disgusting to him in all the other monks, arose within him. He was sent to a monastery close to the capital. He would have been glad to refuse, but his superior ordered him to accept, so he obeyed, and taking leave of his superior, left for the other monastery.

This transfer to the monastery near the metropolis was an important event in Sergius's life. There he encountered many temptations, and his whole will power was concentrated on the struggle they entailed. In the first monastery women were no trial to him, but in the second instance this special temptation assumed grave dimensions and even took definite shape.

There was a lady known for her frivolous behaviour, who began to seek his favour. She talked to him and asked him to call upon her. Sergius refused with severity, but was horrified at the definiteness of his desire. He was so alarmed that he wrote to his superior. Moreover, for the sake of humiliation, he called a young novice and, conquering his shame, confessed his weakness. He begged him to keep an eye on him and not let him go anywhere but to service and to do penance.

Besides that, Sergius suffered severely on account of his great antipathy to the abbot of this monastery, a worldly man and clever in worldly ways who was making a career for himself within the church. In spite of his most earnest endeavours, Sergius could not overcome his dislike for him. He was submissive to him, but in his heart he criticised him unceasingly. At last, when he had been there nearly two years, his real sentiments burst forth.

On the feast of the Intercession of the Virgin, the vesper service was being celebrated in the church proper. There were many visitors from the neighbourhood, and the service was conducted by the abbot himself. Father Sergius was standing in his usual place, and was praying; that is to say, he was engaged in that inner combat which always occupied him during service, especially in this second monastery.

The conflict was caused by his irritation at the presence of all the fine folk and especially the ladies. He tried not to notice what was going on around him. He could not help, however, seeing a soldier who while conducting the better dressed people pushed the common crowd aside, and noticing the ladies who pointed out the monks, often himself and another monk as well, who was noted for his good looks. He tried to concentrate his mind, to see nothing but the light of the candles on the ikonostasis, the sacred images, and the priests. Fie tried to hear nothing but the prayers which were spoken and chanted; to feel nothing but self-oblivion in the fulfilment of his duty. This was a feeling he always experienced when he listened to prayers and anticipated the word in the prayers he had so often heard.

So he stood, crossing himself, prostrating himself, struggling with himself, now indulging in quiet condemnation, and now giving himself up to that obliteration of thought and feeling which he voluntarily induced in himself.

When the treasurer, Father Nicodemus (also a great stumbling-block in Father Sergius's way — that Father Nicodemus!), whom he couldn't help censuring for flattering and fawning on the abbot, approached him, and saluting him with a low bow that nearly bent him in two, said that the abbot requested his presence behind the holy gates, Father Sergius straightened his cassock, covered his head, and went circumspectly through the crowd.

" Lise, regardes â droite — c'est lui," he heard a woman's voice say.

" Où, où? Il n'est pas tellement beau! "

He knew they were referring to him. As his habit was when he was tempted, he repeated, " Lead us not into temptation." Dropping his eyes and bowing his head, he walked past the lectern and the canons, who at that moment were passing in front of the ikonostasis; and went behind the holy gates by the north portal. According to custom, he crossed himself, bending double before the ikon. Then he raised his head and looked at the abbot, whom, together with some one standing beside him in brilliant array, he had already seen out of the corner of his eye.

The abbot stood against the wall in his vestments, taking his short fat hands from beneath his chasuble and folding them on his fat stomach. Fingering the braid on his chasuble, he smiled as he talked to a man wearing the uniform of a general in the emperor's suite, with insignia and epaulettes, which Father Sergius at once recognised with his experienced military eye. This general was a former colonel in command of his regiment, who now evidently held a very high position. Father Sergius at once noticed that the abbot was fully aware of this, and was so pleased that his fat red face and his bald head gleamed with satisfaction. Father Sergius was grieved and disgusted, and all the more so when he heard from the abbot that he had only sent for him to satisfy the curiosity of the general, who wanted to see his famous " colleague," as he put it.

" I am so glad to see you in your angelic guise," said the general, holding out his hand. " I hope you have not forgotten your old comrade."

The whole thing — the abbot's red and smiling face above his white beard in evident approval of the general's words; the well-scrubbed face of the general with his self-satisfied smile, the smell of wine from the general's breath, and the smell of cigars from his whiskers — made Sergius boil.

He bowed once more before the abbot, and said, " Your grace deigned

to call me—” and he stopped, asking by the very expression of his face and eyes, “ What for? ”

The abbot said, “ Yes, to meet the general.”

" Your grace, I left the world to save myself from temptation,” he said, pale and with quivering lips; “ why, then, do you expose me to it during prayers in the house of God? ”

“ Go! go! ” said the abbot, frowning and growing angry.

Next day Father Sergius asked forgiveness of the abbot and of the brethren for his pride. But at the same time, after a night spent in prayer, he decided that his only possible course was to leave this monastery; so he wrote a letter to his superior imploring him to grant him leave to return to his monastery. He wrote that he felt his weakness and the impossibility of struggling alone against temptation without his help. He did penance for his sin of pride. The next post brought him a letter from the superior, who wrote that the sole cause of all his trouble was pride. The old man explained to him that his fits of anger were due to the fact that in refusing all clerical honour he humiliated himself not for the sake of God, but for the sake of his pride; merely for the sake of saying to himself: “Now, am I not a splendid fellow not to desire anything?” That was why he could not tolerate the abbot’s action. “ I have renounced everything for the glory of God, and here I am exhibited like a wild beast! ” “If you would just give up vanity for God’s glory you would be able to bear it,” wrote the old man; “ worldly pride is not yet dead in you. I have thought often of you, Sergius, my son. I have prayed also, and this is God’s message with regard to you: Go on as you are, and submit.”

At that moment tidings came that the recluse Hilary, a man of saintly life, had died in the hermitage. He had lived there for eighteen years. The abbot of that hermitage inquired whether there was not a brother who would take his place.

“ Now with regard to that letter of yours,” wrote the superior, " go to Father Païssy, of the T----Monastery. I have written to him about

you, and asked him to take you into Hilary’s cell. I do not say you could replace Hilary, but you want solitude to stifle your pride. And may God bless you in your undertaking.”

Sergius obeyed his superior, showed his letter to the abbot, and, asking his permission, gave up his cell, handed all his belongings over to the monastery, and departed for the hermitage at

The abbot of that hermitage, a former merchant, received Sergius calmly and quietly, and left him alone in his cell. This cell was a cave dug in a mountain, and Hilary was buried there. In a niche at the back was Hilary’s grave, and in front was a place to sleep, a small table, and a shelf with ikons and books. At the entrance door, which could be closed, was another shelf. Upon that shelf food was

placed once a day by a brother from the monastery.

So Father Sergius became a hermit.

Ill

During the Carnival in Sergius's second year of seclusion a merry company of rich people, ladies and gentlemen from the neighbouring town, made up a troika party after a meal of carnival pancakes and wine. The company was composed of two lawyers, a wealthy landowner, an officer, and four ladies. One of the ladies was the wife of the officer; another was the wife of the landowner; the third was his sister, a young girl; the fourth was a divorcee, beautiful, rich, a little mad, whose ways gave rise to amazement and indignation in the town.

The night was fine; the roads smooth as a floor. They drove ten miles out of town, and then held a consultation as to whether they should turn back or go on.

"But where does this road lead?" asked Madame Makovkin, the beautiful divorcee.

"To T-----, twelve miles further on," said the

lawyer who was having a flirtation with Madame Makovkin.

" And beyond? "

" Then to L----, past the monastery."

" Oh, the one where Father Sergius is? "

" Yes."

" The handsome hermit— Kasatsky."

" Yes."

" Oh — messieurs et mesdames! — let us go in and see Kasatsky. We can rest at T---- and

have a bite."

" But we shan't get home to-night? "

" We'll just spend the night at Kasatsky's then."

" Of course. There is a hostelry at the monastery, and a very good one. When I was defending Makine I stopped there."

" No, I shall spend the night at Kasatsky's! "

" Even your great power, dear lady, could not make that possible."

“ Not possible? I’ll bet you ! ”

“ Good! If you spend the night at Kasatsky’s I’ll pay you whatever you like.”

“ A discrétion! ”

“ And you the same, remember.”

“Agreed! Let’s start.”

They gave the driver some wine, and they opened a basket of pies, cakes, and wines for themselves. The ladies drew their white furs round about them. The postillions broke into a dispute as to which should go ahead, and the younger one, turning sharply round, lifted his whip-handle high up and shouted at the horses; the bells tinkled, and the runners creaked beneath the sledge. The sledge swayed and rocked a little; the outer horses trotted smoothly and briskly, with their tightly-bound tails under the gaily decorated breech-bands. The slippery road faded away rapidly. The driver held the reins tightly.

The lawyer and the officer who sat on the back seat talked nonsense to Madame Makovkin’s neighbour, and she herself, huddled in her furs, sat motionless and in thought.

“ Eternally the same old things! The ugliness of it. Shiny red faces reeking with liquor and with tobacco, the same words, the same thoughts, for ever the same abomination; and they are all content and satisfied that it should be so, and thus they will go on till they die. But I can’t—it bores me. I want something to happen that will upset and shatter the whole thing. We might at least be frozen to death as they were at Saratov. What would these people do? How would they behave? Execrably, I suppose. Everybody would think of nothing but himself, and I no less than the rest. But I have beauty — that’s something. They know it. Well — and that monk ,— I wonder if he really is indifferent to beauty.

No, they all care for it, just like that cadet last autumn. And what a fool he was!”

“ Ivan Nicolaievich,” she said.

He answered, “Yes?”

" How old is he? "

“Who?”

" Why, Kasatsky.”

“ Over forty, I should think.”

" Does he receive visitors? Does he see everybody? ”

“ Everybody, yes; but not always.”

“Cover up my feet. Not that way – how clumsy you are? Yes, like that. But you needn’t squeeze them.”

Thus they came to the forest where the cell was.

She stepped out of the sledge and bade them drive on. They tried to dissuade her, but she grew irritable, and commanded them to go on.

Father Sergius was now forty-nine years old. His life in solitude was very hard: not because of fasting and prayers. He endured those easily. But it was the inner struggle which he had not anticipated. There were two reasons for this struggle: his religious doubts and the temptations of desire. He thought these were two different fiends. But they were one and the same. When his doubts were gone lust was gone. But thinking these were two different devils, he fought them separately. They, however, always attacked him together.

“O my God, my God,” he cried, " why dost Thou not give me faith? There is lust of course, but even St. Anthony and the rest had to fight that; but faith – they had that! There are moments and hours and days when I do not possess it. Why does the world exist with all its charm, if it is sinful and we must renounce it? Why hast Thou created this temptation? Temptation? But isn’t this temptation to renounce the joys of the world and to prepare for the life beyond, where there is nothing and where there can be nothing?.” Saying this to himself, he became horrified and filled with disgust at himself.

“You vile thing! And you think of being a saint! ” he said.

He rose to pray. But when he began praying he saw himself as he appeared at the monastery in his vestments and all his grandeur, and he shook his head.

" No, that is not so. It is a lie. I may deceive all the world, but not myself, and not God. I am insignificant. I am pitiable.” And he pushed back the skirts of his cassock, and gazed at his thin legs in their underclothing.

Then he dropped his robe again, and began to repeat his prayers, making the sign ot the cross and prostrating himself.

“ Will that couch be my bier?” he read; and, as if a demon whispered to him, he heard: “The solitary couch is also the coffin.”

“ It is a lie! ” and he saw in imagination the shoulders of a widow who had been his mistress. He shook himself and went on reading. After having read the precepts he took up the Gospels. He opened the book at a passage that he had often repeated and knew by heart.

“ Lord, I believe. Help thou my unbelief.”

He stifled the doubts that arose. Just as one replaces an object without disturbing its balance, he carefully put his faith back into its position while it trembled at its base, and stepped back cautiously so as neither to touch it nor upset it. He again pulled himself together and regained his peace of mind and repeating his childish prayer: “O Lord, take me, take me!” felt not only at ease, but glad and thrilled. He crossed himself and lay down to sleep on his narrow bench, putting his light summer garment under his head. He dropped off to sleep at once. In his light slumber he heard small tinkling bells. He did not know whether he was dreaming or waking. But a knock at the door aroused him. He sat up on his couch, not trusting his senses. The knock came again. lYes, it was nearer, it was at his own door, and after it came the sound of a woman’s voice.

" My God ! is it true that the devil takes the form of a woman, as I have read in the lives of the saints? Yes — it is a woman’s voice! So timid — so sweet — so tender ! " And he spat to exorcise the devil. " No ! It was only imagination! ” and he went to the corner where the lectern stood and fell on his knees, his regular and habitual motion that of itself gave him comfort and pleasure. He bowed low, his hair falling forward on his face, and pressed his bare forehead to the damp, cold floor. There was a draught from the floor. He read a psalm which, as old P'ather Piman had told him, would ward off the assaults of the devil. His light, slender frame started up upon its strong limbs, and he meant to go on reading his prayers. But he did not read. He involuntarily inclined his head to listen. He wanted to hear more.

All was silent. From the corner of the roof the same regular drops fell into the tub below. Without was a mist, a fog that swallowed up the snow. It was still, very still. There was a sudden rustle at the window, and a distinct voice, the same tender, timid voice, a voice that could only belong to a charming woman.

" Let me in, for Christ’s sake.”

All the blood rushed to his heart and settled there. He could not even sigh.

" May the Lord appear and his enemies be confounded.”

“But I am not the devil!”

He could not hear that the words were spoken by smiling lips. “ I am not the devil. I am just a wicked woman that’s lost her way, literally and figuratively.” (She laughed.) “I am frozen, and I beg for shelter.”

He put his face close to the window. The little ikon lamp was reflected in the glass. He put his hands up to his face and peered between them. Fog, mist, darkness, a tree, and — at the right — She herself, a woman in thick white furs, in a fur cap with a lovely, lovely, gentle, frightened face, two inches away, leaning towards

him. Their eyes met and they recognised each other – not because they had ever seen each other before. They had never met. But in the look they exchanged they felt – and he particularly – that they knew each other; that they understood.

After that glance which they exchanged how could he entertain any further doubt that this was the devil instead of just a sweet, timid, frightened woman?

“Who are you? Why have you come?” he asked.

“ Open the door, I say,” she said with a whimsical authority. “ I tell you I’ve lost my way.”

“ But I am a monk – a hermit.”

“ Open that door all the same. Do you want me to freeze while you say your prayers?”

" But how –”

“ I won’t eat you. Let me in for God’s sake. I’m quite frozen.”

She began to be really frightened and spoke almost tearfully.

He stepped back into the room, looked at the ikon representing the Saviour with His crown of thorns.

" God help me – help me, O God! ” he said, crossing himself and bowing low. Then he went to the door which opened into the little porch, and feeling for the latch tried to unhook it. He heard steps outside. She was going from the window to the door.

“ Oh ! ” he heard her exclaim, and he knew she had stepped into a puddle made by the dripping rain. His hands trembled, and he could not move the hook which stuck a little.

" Well, can’t you let me in? I’m quite soaked, and I’m frozen. You are only bent on saving your own soul while I freeze to death.”

He jerked the door towards him in order to raise the latch, and then, unable to measure his movements, pushed it open with such violence that it struck her.

“Oh – pardon!” he said suddenly, reverting to his former tone with ladies.

She smiled, hearing that “ pardon.” " Oh, well, he’s not so dreadful,” she thought. " Never mind; it is you who must pardon me,” she said, passing by him. “ I would never have ventured, but such an extraordinary circumstance –”

" If you please,” he said, making way for her.

He was struck by the fragrance of fine perfume that he had not smelt for many a long day.

She went through the porch into the chamber. He shut the outer door without latching it and passed into the room after her. Not only in his heart but involuntarily moving his lips he repeated unceasingly, “ O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

“ If you please,” he said to her again.

She stood in the middle of the room, dripping, and examined him closely. Her eyes smiled.

“ Forgive me for disturbing your solitude,” she said, “ but you must see what a position I am placed in. It all came about by our coming out for a drive from town. I made a wager that I would walk by myself from Vorobievka to town. But I lost my way. That’s how I happened to find your cell.” Her lies now began.

But his face confused her so that she could not proceed, so she stopped. She expected him to be quite different from the man she saw. He was not as handsome as she had imagined, but he was beautiful to her. His grey hair and beard, slightly curling, his fine, regular features and his eyes like burning coals when he looked straight at her, impressed her profoundly. He saw that she was lying.

“Yes; very well,” he said, looking at her and dropping his eyes. " Now I will go in there, and this place is at your disposal.”

He took the burning lamp down from before the ikon, lit a candle, and making a low bow went out to the little niche on the other side of the partition, and she heard him begin to move something there.

“ He is probably trying to shut himself up away from me,” she thought, smiling. Taking off her white fur, she tried to remove her cap, but it caught in her hair and in the knitted shawl she was wearing underneath it. She had not got wet at all standing outside at the window. She said so only as a pretext to be admitted. But she had really stepped into a puddle at the door, and her left foot was wet to the ankle, and one shoe was full of water. She sat down on his bed, a bench only covered with a carpet, and began to take her shoes off. The little cell pleased her. It was about nine feet by twelve, and as clean as glass. There was nothing in it save the bench on which she sat, the book-shelf above it, and the lectern in the corner. On the door were nails where his fur coat and his cassock hung. Beside the lantern was the image of Christ with His crown of thorns, and the lamp. The room smelt strangely of oil and of earth. She liked everything, even that smell. Her wet feet were uncomfortable, the left one especially, and she took off her shoes and stockings, never ceasing to smile. She was happy not only in having achieved her object, but because she perceived that he was troubled by her presence. He, the charming, striking, strange,

attractive man !

“ Well, if he wasn’t responsive, it doesn’t matter,” she said to herself. “Father Sergius! Father Sergius! — or what am I to call you ! ”

“ What do you want? ” answered a low voice.

“ Please forgive me for disturbing your solitude, but really I couldn’t help it. I would have fallen ill. And even now I don’t know if I shan’t. I’m quite wet and my feet are like ice.”

" Pardon me," answered the quiet voice. “ I cannot be of any assistance to you.”

“ I would not have come if I could have helped it. I shall only stop till dawn.”

He did not answer. She heard him muttering something, probably his prayers.

" I hope you will not come in here,” she said, smiling, “ for I must undress to get dry.”

He did not answer, continuing to read his prayers in a steady voice.

" That is a man,” she thought, as she attempted to remove her wet shoe. She tugged at it in vain and felt like laughing. Almost inaudibly, she did laugh ; then, knowing that he would hear, and would be moved by it just as she wanted him to be, she laughed louder. The kind, cheerful, natural laughter did indeed affect him just as she had wished.

" I could love a man like that. Such eyes; and his simple, noble face, passionate in spite of all the prayers it mutters. There’s no fooling us women in that. The instant he put his face against the window-pane and saw me, he knew me and understood me. The glimmer of it was in his eyes and a seal was set upon it for ever. That instant he began to love me and to want me. Yes — he wants me,” she said, finally getting off her shoe and fumbling at her stocking.

To remove those long stockings fastened with elastic, she had to raise her skirts. She felt embarrassed and said, " Don’t come in.” But there was no answer from the other side and she heard the same monotonous murmurs and movements.

“ I suppose he’s bowing down to the ground,” she thought, “ but that won’t help him. He’s thinking about me just as I’m thinking about him. He’s thinking about these very feet of mine,” she said, taking off the wet stockings and sitting up on the couch barefooted, with her hands clasped about her knees. She sat awhile like this, gazing pensively before her.

" It’s a perfect desert here. Nobody would ever know—”

She got down, took her stockings over to the stove and hung them on the damper. It was such a quaint damper! She turned it, and then slipping quietly over to the couch she sat up there again with her feet upon it. There was absolute silence on the other side of the partition. She looked at the little watch hanging round her neck. Two o'clock. " My people will return about three." She had more than an hour before her.

" Well! Am I going to sit here by myself the whole time? Nonsense! I don't like that. I'll call him at once. Father Sergius! Father Sergius! Sergei Dimitrievich! Prince Kasatsky!"

No answer.

" I say! That's cruel. I wouldn't call you if I didn't need you. I'm ill. I don't know what's the matter," she said in a tone of suffering. "Oh! oh!" she groaned, falling back on the couch, and, strange to say, she really felt that she was getting faint, that everything ached, that she was trembling as if with fever.

"Here, listen! Help me! I don't know what's the matter with. Oh! oh!"

She opened her dress, uncovering her breast, and raised her arms, bare to the elbows, above her head. " Oh, oh ! "

All this time he stood on the other side of the door and prayed.

Having finished all the evening prayers, he stood motionless, fixing his eyes on the end of his nose, and praying in his heart he repeated with all his soul: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me ! "

He had heard everything. He had heard how the silk rustled when she took off her dress; how she stepped on the floor with her bare feet. He heard how she rubbed her hands and feet. He felt himself getting weak, and thought he might be lost at any moment. That was why he prayed unceasingly. His feelings must have been somewhat like those of the hero in the fairy tale who had to go on and on without ever turning back. Sergius heard and felt that the danger was there just above his head, around him, and that the only way to escape it was not to look round on it for an instant. Then suddenly the desire to see her came upon him, and at that very instant she exclaimed, "Now this is monstrous! I may die."

" Yes, I will come. But I will go like that saint who laid one hand upon the adulteress but put the other upon burning coals."

But there were no burning coals. He looked round. The lamp ! The lamp!

He put a finger over the flame and frowned, ready to endure. In the beginning it seemed to him that there was no sensation. But then of

a sudden, before he had decided whether it hurt him or how much it hurt him, his face writhed, and he jerked his hand away, shaking it in the air.

“ No, that I can’t do.”

“ For God’s sake, come to me. I am dying.

Oh!”

“Must I be lost? No! I’ll come to you presently,” he said, opening the door. And without looking at her he passed through the room to the porch where he used to chop wood. He felt about to find the block and the axe which were leaning against the wall.

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" Presently! ” he said, and taking the axe in his right hand, he laid the forefinger of his left hand upon the block. He raised the axe and struck at the finger below the second joint. The finger flew off more lightly than wood, and bounding up, turned over on the edge of the block and then on to the floor. Sergius heard that sound before he realised the pain, but ere he could recover his senses he felt a burning pain and the warmth of the flowing blood. He hastily pressed the end of his cassock to the maimed finger, pressed it to his hip, and going back into her room stood before the woman.

“ What do you want? " he asked her in a low voice.

She looked at his pale face with its trembling cheeks and felt ashamed. She jumped up, grasped her fur, and throwing it around her shoulders tucked herself up in it.

“I was in pain — I’ve taken cold—I — Father Sergius — I —”

He turned his eyes, which were shining with the quiet light of joy upon her, and said,—

" Dear sister, why have you desired to lose your immortal soul? Temptation must come into the world, but woe to him by whom temptation cometh. Pray that God may forgive us both.”

She listened and looked at him. Suddenly she heard the sound of something dripping. She looked closely and saw that blood was dropping from his hand on to his cassock.

“ What have you done to your hand? ”

She remembered the sound she had heard, and seizing the little ikon lamp ran out to the porch; there on the floor she saw the bloody finger.

She returned with her face paler than his, and wanted to say something. But he went silently to his little apartment and shut the

door.

" Forgive me," she said. " How can I atone for my sin? "

“ Go.”

" Let me bind your wound.”

" Go hence.”

She dressed hurriedly and silently and sat in her furs waiting.

The sound of little bells reached her from outside.

" Father Sergius, forgive me.”

" Go — God will forgive you.”

" Father Sergius, I will change my life. Do not forsake me.”

“ Go.”

" Forgive — and bless me ! ”

" In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," she heard from behind the door. “ Go.”

She sobbed and went out from the cell.

The lawyer came forward to meet her.

" Well," he said, “ I see I have lost. There’s no help for it. Where will you sit?”

" I don’t care.”

She took a seat in the sledge and did not speak a word till they reached home.

A year later she entered a convent as a novice and led a life of severe discipline under the guidance of hermit R who wrote her letters at long intervals.

## IV

Another seven years Father Sergius lived as a hermit. In the beginning he accepted a great part of what people used to bring him — tea, sugar, white bread, milk, clothes, and wood.

But as time went on he led a life of ever greater austerity.

Refusing anything that could be thought superfluous, he finally accepted nothing but rye bread once a week. All that was brought to him he gave to the poor who visited him.

His entire time was spent in his cell in prayer or in conversation with visitors whose number continually increased.

Father Sergius appeared in church only three times a year, and when it was necessary he went out to fetch water and wood.

After the episode with Madame Makovkin, the change he effected in her life, and her taking the veil, the fame of Father Sergius increased. Visitors came in greater and greater numbers, and monks came to live in his neighbourhood. A church was built there, and a hostelry. Fame, as usual, exaggerated his feats. People came from

a great distance and began bringing invalids to him in the belief that he could heal them.

His first cure happened in the eighth year of his seclusion. He actually healed a boy of fourteen brought to him by his mother who insisted on Father Sergius putting his hand on the child’s head. The idea had never occurred to him that he could heal the sick. He would have regarded such a thought as a great sin of pride.

But the mother who brought the boy never ceased imploring him, on her knees.

“ Why wouldn’t he help her son when he healed other people? " she asked, and again besought him in the name of Christ.

When Father Sergius replied that only God could heal, she said she wanted him only to lay his hands on his head and pray.

Father Sergius refused and went back to his cell. But next morning— for this happened in the autumn and the nights were already cold — coming out of his cell to fetch water, he saw the same mother with her child, the same boy of fourteen, and heard the same petitions.

Father Sergius remembered the parable of the righteous judge, and contrary to his first instinct that he must indubitably refuse, he began to pray, and prayed until a resolve formed itself in his soul. This decision was that he must accede to the woman’s request, and that her taith was sufficient to save her child. As for him, Father Sergius, he would be in that case but the worthless instrument chosen by God.

Returning to the mother, Father Sergius yielded to her request, put his hand on the boy’s head and prayed.

The mother left with her son. In a month the boy was cured, and the fame of the holy healing power of " old Father Sergius,” as he was called then, spread abroad. From that time not a week passed without sick people coming to Father Sergius.

Complying with the requests of some, he could not refuse the rest; he laid his hands on them and prayed. Many were healed and his fame became more and more widespread.

Having thus passed seven years in the monastery and many years in the hermitage, he looked now like an old man. He had a long grey beard, and his hair had grown thin.

Now Father Sergius had for weeks been haunted by one relentless thought, whether it was right for him to have acquiesced in a state of things not so much created by himself as by the archimandrite and the abbot.

This state of things had begun after the healing of the boy of fourteen. Since that time Sergius felt that each passing month, each week and each day, his inner life had somehow been destroyed and a merely external life had been substituted for it. It was as if he had been turned inside out. Sergius saw that he was a means of attracting visitors and patrons to the monastery, and that, therefore, the authorities of the monastery tried to arrange matters in such a way that he might be- most profitable to them. For instance, he had no chance of doing any work. Everything was provided that he could require, and the only thing they asked was that he should not refuse his blessing to the visitors who came to seek it. For his convenience days were appointed on which he should receive them. A reception room was arranged for men; and a place was also enclosed by railings in order that the crowds of women who came to him should not overwhelm him, a place where he could bestow his blessing upon those who came.

When he was told that he was necessary to men, and that if he would follow the rule of Christ's love, he could not refuse them when they desired to see him, and that his holding aloof from them would be cruel, he could not but agree.

But the more he gave himself up to such an existence the more he felt his inner life transformed into an external one. He felt the fount of living water drying up within him; and that everything he did now was performed more and more for man and less for God. Whatever he did, whether admonishing or simply blessing, or praying for the sick, or giving advice on the conduct of life, or listening to expressions of gratitude from those he had helped, or healed (as they say) or instructed or advised, he could not help feeling a certain pleasure when they expressed their gratitude to him. Neither could he be indifferent to the results of his activity, nor to his influence. He now thought himself a shining light. But the more he harboured that idea, the more he was conscious of the fact that the divine light of truth which had previously burned within him was flickering and dying.

" How much of what I do is done for God and how much for man?" That was the question that tormented him. Not that he could not find an answer to it, but he dared not give an answer. He felt deep down in

his soul that the devil had somehow changed all his work for God into work for man. Because just as it had formerly been hard for him to be torn from solitude, now solitude itself was hard. He was often wearied with visitors, but in the bottom of his heart he enjoyed their presence and rejoiced in the praise which was heaped on him.

There came a time when he made up his mind to go away, to hide. He even thought out a plan. He got ready a peasant shirt and peasant trousers, a coat and a cap. He explained that he wanted them to give to the poor, and he kept these clothes in his cell, thinking how he would one day put them on and cut his hair, and go away. First he would take a train and travel for about three hundred miles. Then he would get out and walk from village to village. He asked an old soldier how he tramped; if people gave alms, and whether they admitted wayfarers into their houses. The soldier told him where people were most charitable, and where they would take a wanderer in for the night, and Father Sergius decided to act on his advice. One night, he even put on those clothes and was about to go. But he did not know which was best, to remain or to run away. For a time he was undecided. Then the state of indecision passed. He grew accustomed to the devil and yielded to him; and the peasant clothes only served to remind him of thoughts and feelings that were no more.

Crowds flocked to him increasingly from day to day, and he had less and less time for prayers and for renewing his spiritual strength. Sometimes, in his brighter moments, he thought he was like a place where a brook had once been. There had been a quiet stream of living water which flowed out of him and through him, he thought. That had been real life, the time when she had tempted him. He always thought with ecstasy of that night and of her who was now Mother Agnes. She had tasted of that pure water. Since then the water had hardly been given time to collect before those who were thirsty arrived in crowds, pushing one another aside, and they had trodden down the little brook until nothing but mud was left. So he thought in his clearer moments; but his ordinary state of mind was weariness and a sort of tenderness for himself because of that weariness.

It was spring, the eve of a festal day. Father Sergius celebrated Vespers in the church in the

cave. There were as many people as the place could hold – about twenty altogether. They all belonged to the better classes, rich merchants and such like. Father Sergius admitted every one to his church, but a selection was made by the monk appointed to serve him and by a man on duty who was sent to the hermitage every day from the monastery. A crowd of about eighty pilgrims, chiefly women, stood outside, waiting for Father Sergius to come out and bless them. In that part of the service, when he went to the tomb of his predecessor to bless it, he felt faint, and staggered, and would have fallen had it not been for a merchant who served as deacon who caught him.

“What is the matter with you? Father Sergius, dear Father Sergius! O God! " exclaimed a woman’s voice. " He is as white as a sheet! "

But Father Sergius pulled himself together and though still very pale, pushed aside the deacon and the merchant and resumed the prayers. Father Serafian, the deacon, and the acolytes and a lady, Sophia Ivanovna, who always lived close by the hermitage to attend on Father Sergius, begged him to bring the service to an end.

" No, there's nothing the matter," said Father Sergius, faintly smiling from beneath his moustache and continuing

the way of saints," he thought.

" A holy man — an angel of God," he heard Sophia Ivanovna and the merchant who had supported him a moment before murmur. He did not heed their entreaties, but went on with the service. Crowding one another as before, they all filed through narrow passages back into the little church where Father Sergius completed vespers, merely curtailing the service a little. Directly after this, having pronounced the benediction on those present, he sat down outside on a little bench beneath an elm tree at the entrance to the cave. He wanted to rest; to breathe fresh air. He felt the need of it; but the moment he appeared, a crowd of people rushed to him soliciting his blessing, his advice, and his help. In the crowd was a number of women, pilgrims going from one holy place to another, from one holy man to another, ever in ecstasy before each sanctuary and before each saint.

Father Sergius knew this common, cold, irreligious, unemotional type. As for the men in the crowd, they were for the most part retired soldiers, long unaccustomed to a settled life, and most of them were poor, drunken old men who tramped from monastery to monastery merely for a living. The dull peasantry also flocked there,

men and women, with their selfish requirements seeking healing or advice in their little daily interests; how their daughters should be married, or a shop hired, or land bought, or how a woman could atone for a child she had lain over in sleep and killed, or for a child she had borne out of wedlock.

All this was an old story to Father Sergius and did not interest him. He knew he would hear nothing new from them. The spectacle of their faces could not arouse any religious emotion in him. But he liked to look at them as a crowd which was in need of hi? benediction and revered his words. This made him like the crowd, although he found them fatiguing and tiresome.

Father Serafian began to disperse the people saying that Father Sergius was weary. But Father Sergius recollected the words of the Gospel, " Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not," and touched at his recollection of the passage he permitted them to approach. He rose, walked to the little railing beyond which the crowd had gathered, and began to bless them, but his answers to their questions were so faint that he was moved at hearing himself.

Despite his wish to receive them all, it was too much for him. Everything grew dark again before his eyes, and he staggered and grasped the railings. He felt the blood rushing to his head, and grew pale and then scarlet.

“ I must leave the rest till to-morrow, I can do no more now,” he said, and pronouncing a general benediction, returned to the bench.

The merchant supported him again, and taking him by the arm assisted him to be seated. Voices exclaimed in the crowd,-

" Father, dear father, don’t forsake us. We are lost without you.”

The merchant, having helped Father Sergius to the bench under the elm tree, took upon himself the duties of policeman and began energetically to disperse the crowd. It was true he spoke in a low voice so that Father Sergius could not overhear, but he spoke very decidedly and in an angry tone.

“ Get away, get away, I say! He has blessed you. What else do you want? Get along! or you’ll catch it. Move on there! Get along there, old woman, with your dirty rags. Go on! Where do you think you’re going; I told you it was finished. To-morrow’s coming, but to-day he’s done, I tell you! ”

“Dear father! I only want to look on his dear face with my own little eyes,” said an old woman.

" Little eyes indeed! You don’t get in here! ”

Father Sergius noticed that the merchant was doing it rather too thoroughly, and spoke to his attendant saying the crowd was not to be turned away. He knew perfectly well that the crowd would be dispersed all the same, and he desired to remain alone and rest, but he sent his attendant with the order merely to make an impression.

“Well – well – I’m not turning them away; I’m only talking to them,” answered the merchant. " They’ll drive the man to death. They have no mercy. They’re only thinking of themselves. No, I say! Get away! To-morrow!” and he drove them all away.

The merchant took all this trouble because he loved order and liked to turn people away and abuse them; but more because he wanted to have Father Sergius to himself. He was a widower and had an only daughter, an invalid and unmarried. He had brought her fourteen hundred miles to Father Sergius to be healed. During the two years of the girl’s illness he had taken her to various cures. First to the university clinic in the principal town of the province, but this was not of much use; then to a peasant in the province of Samara, who did her a little good. Afterwards he took her to a doctor in Moscow and paid him a huge fee; but this did not help at all. Then he was told that Father Sergius wrought cures, so he brought her to him. Consequently when he had scattered the crowd he

approached Father Sergius, and falling upon his knees without any warning, he said in a loud voice,—

“Holy Father! Bless my afflicted child and heal her of her sufferings. I venture to prostrate myself at your holy feet,” and he put one hand on another, palms up, cup-wise. All this he did as if it were something distinctly and rigidly appointed by law and usage; as if it were the sole and precise method by which a man should request the healing of his daughter. He did it with such conviction that even Sergius felt for the moment that that was just the right way. However he bade him rise from his knees and tell him what the trouble was. The merchant said that his daughter, a girl of twenty-two, had fallen ill two years before, after the sudden death of her mother. She just said “Ah! ” as he put it, and went out of her mind. He had brought her fourteen hundred miles, and she was waiting in the hostelry till Father Sergius could receive her. She never went out by day, being afraid of the sunlight, but only after dusk.

“ Is she very weak? ” asked Father Sergius.

“ No, she has no special weakness, but she’s rather stout, and the doctor says she’s neurasthenic. If you will just let me fetch her, Father Sergius, I’ll be back with her in a minute. Revive, O holy father, the heart of a parent, restore his line, and save my afflicted offspring with your prayers!” and the merchant fell down on his knees again and bending sideways with his head over his palms, which appeared to hold little heaps of something, remained like a figure in stone. Father Sergius again told him to get up, and thinking once more how trying his work was, and how patiently he bore it in spite of everything, sighed heavily. After a few moments’ silence, he said:

" Well, bring her to-night. I will pray over her. But now I am weary,” and he closed his eyes. " I will send for you.”

The merchant went away, stepping on tiptoe, which made his boots creak still louder, and Father Sergius remained alone.

Father Sergius’s life was filled with church services and with visitors; but this day was particularly difficult. In the morning an important official had come to hold a long conference with him. Then a lady came with her son. The son was a young professor, an unbeliever, and his mother, who was ardently religious and devoted to Father Sergius, brought him to Father Sergius that he might talk to him. The talk was very trying. The young man evidently did not wish to have a discussion with the monk, and just agreed with him in everything, as with an inferior. Father Sergius saw that the youth was an infidel, but that he had nevertheless a clear and tranquil conscience. The memory of the conversation was now unpleasant to him.

" Won’t you eat something, Father Sergius?” asked the attendant.

" Very well — bring me something.”

The attendant went to a little hut built ten paces from the cave, and Father Sergius remained alone.

The time was long past when Father Sergius lived alone, doing everything for himself and having but a holy wafer and bread for nourishment. He had been warned long ago that he had no right to be careless of his health and he was given wholesome meals, although of Lenten quality. He did not eat much, but more than he had done; and sometimes he even felt a pleasure in eating; the disgust and the sense of sin he had experienced before was gone.

He took some gruel and had a cup of tea with half a roll of white bread. The attendant went away while he remained alone on the bench under the elm-tree. It was a beautiful evening in May. The leaves of the birches, the aspens, the elms, the alder bushes, and the oaks were just beginning

to blossom. The alder bushes behind the elms were still in full bloom. A nightingale was singing near at hand, and two or three more in the bushes down by the river trilled and warbled. From the river came the songs of working-men, perhaps on their way home from their labour. The sun was setting behind the forest and was throwing little broken rays of light among the leaves. This side was bright green and the other side was dark. Beetles were flying about and, colliding together, were falling to the ground. After supper Father Sergius began to repeat a prayer mentally:

" O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us," and then he read a psalm. Suddenly, in the middle of the psalm a sparrow flew out from a bush on the ground, and hopping along, came to him; then it flew away frightened. He was reading a prayer that bore upon renunciation of the world and hastened to get to the end of it in order that he might send for the merchant and his daughter. He was interested in the daughter because she offered a sort of diversion, and also because she and her father thought him a saint, a saint whose prayer was efficacious. He repudiated the idea, but in the depths of his soul he nevertheless concurred. He often wondered how he, oergiua *

become such an extraordinary saint and worker of miracles, but that it was a fact he did not doubt. He could not fail to believe in the miracles he saw with his own eyes, beginning with the sick boy and ending with this last old woman who had recovered her sight through his prayers. Strange as it was, it was a fact. Accordingly the merchant's daughter interested him as a new individual that had faith in him, and besides, as an occasion of bearing witness to his healing power and to his fame.

" People come thousands of miles. Papers talk about it. The emperor knows. All Europe knows – all godless Europe." And then he felt ashamed of his vanity and began to pray:

" God, King of Heaven, Comforter, True Soul, come into – inspire me

– and cleanse me from all sin, and save, O All-merciful, my soul. Cleanse me from the sin of worldly vanity that has overtaken me," he said, remembering how often he had made that prayer and how vain it had been. His prayers worked miracles for others, but as for himself God had not granted him strength to conquer this petty passion. He remembered his prayers at the commencement of his seclusion when he asked for the grace of pur-

ity, humility, and love, and how it seemed to him at that time that God heard his prayers. He had retained his purity and had hewn off his finger. He raised the stump of the finger with folds of skin on it to his lips, and kissed it. It seemed to him now, that at that time when he had been filled with disgust at his own sinfulness, he had been humble; and that he had also possessed love. He recalled also the tender feelings with which he had received the old drunken soldier who had come to ask alms of him ; and how he had received her. And now; he asked himself whether he loved anybody; whether he loved Sophia Ivanovna or Father Serafian; whether he had any feeling of love for those who had come to him that day. He asked himself if he had felt any love toward the learned young man with whom he had held that instructive discussion with the object only of showing off his own intelligence and proving that he had not fallen behind in knowledge.

He wanted love from them, and rejoiced in it; but felt no love himself for them. Now he had neither love nor humility. He was pleased to hear that the merchant's daughter was twenty-two, and was anxious to know if she was goodlooking. When he inquired if she was weak, he only wanted to know if she had feminine charm. " Is it true that I have fallen so low?" he thought. "God help me! Restore my strength – restore me, 0 God my Saviour!" and he clasped his hands and began to pray.

The nightingales sang, a beetle flew at him and crept along the back of his neck. He brushed it away.

" But does He exist? What if I am knocking at a house which is locked from without. The bar is on the door, and we can see it. Nightingales, beetles, nature are the bar to our understanding. That young man was perhaps right." He began to pray aloud, and prayed long, till all these thoughts disappeared and he became calm and firm in the faith. He rang the bell, and told the attendant to say that the merchant might now come with his daughter.

The merchant came, leading his daughter by the arm, and brought her to the cell, where he left her.

The daughter was pale, with fair hair. She was very short, and had a frightened, childish face and full figure. Father Sergius remained seated on the bench at the entrance. When the girl passed him and stood near him he blessed her, feeling aghast because of the way in which he looked at her figure. As she passed by him, he felt a sting. He saw by her face that she was sensual and feeble minded. He rose and entered

his cell. She was sitting on a stool waiting for him, and when he entered she rose.

“ I want to go back to my papa,” she said.

" Do not be afraid,” he said. " Where do you feel pain ? ”

" I feel pain all over,” she answered, and suddenly her face brightened with a smile.

" You will regain your health,” he said. “ Pray.”

“What’s the use? I’ve prayed. It doesn’t help,” and she continued smiling. “ I wish you would pray and lay your hands on me. I saw you in a dream.”

“How so?”

“ I saw you put your hand on my chest.”

She took his hand and pressed it to her breast.

“ Here.”

He yielded his right hand to her.

“What is your name?” he asked, his whole body shaking, and feeling that he was overcome and could not control his instinct.

“Marie, why?”

She took his hand and kissed it, and then put her arm around his waist and pressed him.

" Marie, what are you doing? ” he said. “ You are a devil, Marie! ”

" Oh, perhaps. Never mind.”

And embracing him, she sat down at his side on the bed.

At dawn he went out of the door. Had all this really happened? Her father would come. She would tell. “ She’s a devil. But what have I done? Oh, there is the axe which I used to chop off my finger.”

He took the axe and went back to the cell.

The attendant came toward him. “ Do you want some wood cut? Give me the axe.”

He gave him the axe, and entered the cell. She lay asleep. He looked on her with horror. Going back into the cell he put on the peasant clothes, seized the scissors, cut his hair, and then, issuing forth, took the path down the hill to the river, where he had not been for

four years.

The road ran along the river. He went by it, walking till noon. Then he went into a cornfield and lay among the corn. Toward evening he approached a village, but did not enter it. He went again to the river, to a cliff.

It was early morning, half an hour before sunrise. All was grey and mournful around him, and a cold, early morning wind blew from the west.

" I must end it all. There is no God. How can I do it? Throw myself in! I can swim;

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I should not drown. Hang myself? les; just with this belt, to a branch."

This seemed so feasible and so easy that he wanted to pray, as he always did in moments of distress. But there was nothing to pray to. God was not. He dropped down on his elbow, and such a longing for sleep instantly overcame him that he couldn't hold his head up with his arm any longer. Stretching out his arm, he laid his head upon it and went to sleep. But this sleep lasted only a moment. He woke at once, and what followed was half dream and half recollection.

He saw himself as a child in the house of his mother in the country. A carriage was approaching, and out of it stepped Uncle Nicholas Sergei-vich, with a long black beard like a spade, and with him a slender girl, Pashinka, with large soft eyes and a timid, pathetic little face. This girl was taken to the place where the boys were playing, and they were forced to play with her, which was very tedious indeed. She was a silly little girl, and it ended in their making fun of her, and making her show them how she swam. She lay down on the floor and went through the motions. They laughed and turned her into ridicule; which, when she became aware of it, made her blush in patches. She looked so piteous that his conscience pricked him, and he could never forget her kind, submissive, tremulous smile. Sergius remembered how he had seen her since then. A long time ago, just before he became a monk, she had married a landowner who had squandered all her fortune, and who beat her. She had two children, a son and a daughter; but the son died when he was little, and Sergius remembered seeing her very wretched after that, and then again at the monastery, when she was a widow. She was still just the same, not exactly stupid, but insipid, insignificant, and piteous. She had come with her daughter and her daughter's fiance. They were poor at that time, and later on he heard that she was living in a little provincial town and was almost destitute.

"Why does she come into my head?" he asked himself, but still he could not help thinking about her. "Where is she? What has become of her? Is she as unhappy as she was when she had to show us how she swam on the floor? But what's the use of my thinking of her now? My

business is to put an end to myself.”

Again he was afraid, and again, in order to spare himself, he began to think about her. Thus he lay a long time, thinking now of his extraordinary end, now of Pashinka. She seemed somehow the means of his salvation. At last he fell

asleep, and in his dream he saw an angel, who came to him and said: —

“ Go to Pashinka. Find out what you have to do, and what your sin is, and what is your way of salvation.”

He awoke, convinced that this was a vision from on high. He rejoiced, and resolved to do as he was told in the dream. He knew the town where she lived, three hundred miles away, so he walked to that place.

## VI

Pashinka was no longer Pashinka. She had become Praskovia Mikhailovna, old, wrinkled, and shrivelled, the mother-in-law of a drunken official, Mavrikiev — a failure. She lived in the little provincial town where he had occupied his last position, and had supported the family: a daughter, a nervous, ailing husband, and five grandchildren. Her sole means of supporting them was by giving music lessons to the daughters of merchants for fifty kopeks an hour. She had sometimes four, sometimes five lessons a day, and earned about sixty roubles a month. They all lived for the moment on that in expectation of another situation. She had sent letters to all her friends and relations, asking for a post for her son-in-law, and had also written to Sergius, but the letter had never reached him.

It was Saturday, and Praskovia Mikhailovna was kneading dough for currant bread such as the cook, a serf on her father’s estate, used to make, for she wanted to give her grandchildren a treat on Sunday.

Her daughter Masha was looking after her youngest child, and the eldest boy and girl were at school. As for her husband, he had not slept that night, and was now asleep. Praskovia Mikhailovna had not slept well either, trying to appease her daughter’s anger against her husband.

She saw that her son-in-law, being a weak character, could not talk or act differently, and she perceived that the reproaches of his wife availed nothing. All her energies were employed in softening these reproaches. She did not want harsh feelings and resentment to exist. Physically she could not stand a condition of ill-will. It was clear to her that bitter feelings did not mend matters, but

simply made them worse. She did not think about it. Seeing anger made her suffer precisely as a bad odour or a shrill sound or a blow.

She was just showing Lucaria, the servant, how to mix the dough when her grandson, Misha, a boy six years old, with little crooked legs in darned stockings, ran into the kitchen looking frightened.

“ Grandmother, a dreadful old man wants to see you ! "

Lucaria looked out of the door.

" Oh, ma’am, it’s a pilgrim.”

Praskovia Mikhailovna wiped her thin elbows with her hands, and then her hands on her apron, and was about to go into the room to get five kopeks out of her purse, when she remembered that she had only a ten kopek piece, so, deciding to give bread instead, she turned to the cupboard. But then she blushed at the thought of having grudged him alms, and ordering Lucaria to cut a slice of bread, went to fetch the ten kopeks. " That serves you right,” she said to herself. " Now you must give twice as much.”

She gave both bread and money to the pilgrim with apologies, and in doing so she was not at all proud of her generosity. On the contrary, she was ashamed of having given so little. The man had such an imposing appearance.

In spite of having tramped three hundred miles, begging in the name of Christ, and being nearly in rags; in spite of having grown thin and weather-beaten, and having his hair cut, and wearing a peasant cap and boots; in spite, also, of his bowing with great humility, Sergius had the same impressive appearance which had attracted every one to him. Praskovia Mikhailovna did not recognise him. How could she, not having seen him for many years?

" Excuse this humble gift, father. Wouldn’t you like something to eat?”

He took the bread and money, and Praskovia Mikhailovna was astonished that he did not go, but stood looking at her.

" Pashinka, I have come to you. Won’t you take me in? ”

His beautiful black eyes looked at her intently, imploringly, and shone, tears starting; and his lips quivered painfully under the grey moustache.

Praskovia Mikhailovna pressed her hand to her shrivelled breast, opened her mouth, and stared at the pilgrim with dilated eyes.

“It can’t be possible! Steph – Sergius – Father Sergius ! ”

“ Yes, it is I,” said Sergius in a low voice. " But no longer

Sergius or Father Sergius, but a great sinner, Stephen Kasatsky – a great sinner, a lost sinner. Take me in – help me."

"No, it can't be possible! Such great humility! Come?" She stretched out her hand, but he did not take it. He only followed her.

But where could she lead him? They had very little space. She had a tiny little room for herself, hardly more than a closet, but even that she had given up to her daughter, and now Masha was sitting there rocking the baby to sleep.

" Please, be seated here," she said to Sergius, pointing to a bench in the kitchen. He sat down at once, and took off, with an evidently accustomed action, the straps of his wallet first from one shoulder and then from the other.

"Heavens! What humility! What an honour, and now –"

Sergius did not answer, but smiled meekly, laying his wallet on one side.

"Masha, do you know who this is?" And Praskovia Mikhailovna told her daughter in a whisper. They took the bed and the cradle out of the little room, and made it ready for Sergius.

Praskovia Mikhailovna led him in.

" Now have a rest. Excuse this humble room.

I must go."

"Where?"

" I have lessons. I'm ashamed to say 1 teach music."

"Music! That is well. But just one thing, Praskovia Mikhailovna. I came to you with an object. Could I have a talk with you? "

" I shall be happy. Will this evening do?"

" It will. One thing more. Do not say who I am. I have only revealed myself to you. No one knows where I went, and no one need know."

" Oh, but I told my daughter–"

" Well, ask her not to tell any one."

Sergius took off his boots and slept after a sleepless night and a forty-mile tramp.

When Praskovia Mikhailovna returned Sergius was sitting in the little room waiting for her. He had not come out for dinner, but had some soup and gruel which Lucaria brought in to him.

" Why did you return earlier than you said? " asked Father Sergius. “ May I speak to you now ? "

" What have I done to deserve the happiness of having such a guest! I only missed one lesson. That can wait. I have dreamed for a long time of going to see you. I wrote to you. And now this good fortune ! "

“ Pashinka, please – listen to what I am going to tell you, as if it were a confession; as if it were something I should say to God in the hour of death. Pashinka, I am not a holy man. I am a vile and loathsome sinner. I have gone astray through pride, and I am the vilest of the vile.”

Pashinka stared at him. She believed what he said. Then, when she had quite taken it in, she touched his hand and smiled sadly, and said,–

" Stevie, perhaps you exaggerate.”

" No, Pashinka, I am an adulterer, a murderer, a blasphemer, a cheat.”

“My God, what does he mean?” she muttered.

" But I must go on living. I, who thought I knew everything, who taught others how to live, I know nothing. I ask you to teach me.”

“O Stevie! You are laughing at me. Why do you always laugh at me? ”

“Very well; have it as you will that I am laughing at you. Still, tell me how you live, and how you have lived your life.”

“I? But I've lived a very bad life, the worst life possible. Now God is punishing me, and I deserve it. And I am so miserable now – so miserable ! ”

“ And your marriage – how did you get on? ”

“ It was all bad. I married because I fell in love from low motives. Father didn’t want me to, but I wouldn’t listen to anything. I just married. And then, instead of helping my husband, I made him wretched by my jealousy, which I couldn't overcome.”

“ He drank, I heard.”

" Well, but I didn’t give him any peace. I reproached him. That’s a disease. He couldn’t stop it. I remember now how I took his drink away from him. We had such frightful scenes! ” She looked at Kasatsky with pain in her beautiful eyes at the recollection.

Kasatsky called to mind that he had been told that her husband beat Pashinka, and looking at her thin withered neck with veins standing out behind her ears, the thin coil of hair, half grey, half auburn,

he saw it all just as it happened.

" Then I was left alone with two children, and with no means."

“ But you had an estate! ”

" Oh, that was sold when Vasily was alive. And the money was — spent. We had to live, and I didn't know how to work — like all the young ladies of that time. I was worse than the rest — quite helpless. So we spent everything we had. I taught the children. Masha had learnt something. Then Misha fell ill when he was in the fourth class in the school, and God took him. Masha fell in love with Vania, my son-in-law. He's a good man but very unfortunate. He's ill."

“ Mother," interrupted her daughter, " take Misha. I can't be everywhere."

Praskovia Mikhailovna started, rose, and stepping quickly in her worn shoes, went out of the room and came back with a boy of two in her arms. The child was throwing himself backwards and grabbing at her shawl.

" Where was I? Yes — he had a very good post here, and such a good chief, too. But poor Vania couldn't go on, and he had to give up his position."

" What is the matter with him? ”

" Neurasthenia. It's such a horrid illness. We have been to the doctor, but he ought to go away, and we can't afford it. Still, I hope it will pass. He doesn't suffer much pain, but—"

“Lucaria!" said a feeble and angry voice. “ She's always sent out when I need her. Mother ! ”

“ I'm coming," said Praskovia Mikhailovna, again interrupting her conversation. " You see, he hasn't had his dinner yet. He can't eat with us."

She went out and arranged something, and came back, wiping her thin, dark hands.

" Well, this is the way I live. I complain, and I'm not satisfied, but, thank God, all my grandchildren are such nice healthy children, and life is quite bearable. But why am I talking about myself?"

“ What do you live on? ”

" Why, I earn a little. How I used to hate music ! and now it's so useful to me ! ”

Her small hand lay on the chest of drawers that stood beside her where she was sitting, and she drummed exercises with her thin

fingers.

" How much are you paid for your lessons? ”

" Sometimes a rouble, sometimes fifty kopeks, and sometimes thirty. They are all so kind to

“And do your pupils get on well?” asked Kasatsky, smiling faintly with his eyes.

Praskovia Mikhailovna did not believe at first that he was asking ker seriously, and looked inquiringly into his eyes.

" Some of them do,” she said. " I have one very nice pupil—the butcher’s daughter. Such a good, kind girl. If I were a clever woman I could surely use my father’s influence and get a position for my son-in-law. But it is my fault they are so badly off. 1 brought them to it.”

“ Yes, yes,” said Kasatsky, dropping his head. " Well, Pashinka, and what about your attitude to the church ? ”

" Oh, don’t speak of it! I’m so bad that way. I have neglected it so! When the children have to go, I fast and go to communion with them, but as for the rest of the time I often do not go for a month. I just send them.”

" And why don’t you go? ”

" Well, to tell the truth —” she blushed —“ I’m ashamed for Masha’s sake and the children’s to go in my old clothes. And I haven’t anything else. Besides, I’m just lazy.”

" And do you pray at home? ”

" I do, but it’s just a mechanical sort of praying. I know it’s wrong, but I have no real religious feeling. I only know I’m wicked — that’s all.”

“Yes, yes. That’s right, that’s right!” said Kasatsky, as if in approval.

“I’m coming—I’m coming!” she called, in answer to her son-in-law, and, tidying her hair, went to the other room.

This time she was absent a long while. When she returned, Kasatsky was sitting in the same position, his elbow on his knee and his head down. But his wallet was ready strapped on his back.

When she came in with a little tin lamp without a shade, he raised his beautiful, weary eyes, and sighed deeply.

“ I didn’t tell them who you were,” she began shyly. “ I just said you were a pilgrim — a nobleman— and that I used to know you. Won’t

you come into the dining-room and have tea? ”

“ No.”

“ Then I’ll bring some in to you here.”

“No; I don’t want anything. God bless you, Pashinka. I am going now. If you have any pity for me, don’t tell any one you have seen me. For the love of God, tell no one. I thank you. I would kneel down before you, but I know it would only make you feel awkward. Forgive me, for Christ’s sake.”

“ Give me your blessing.”

“ God bless you. Forgive me, for Christ’s sake.”

He rose to go, but she restrained him and brought him some bread and butter, which he took and departed.

It was dark, and he had hardly passed the second house when he was lost to sight, and she only knew he was there because the dog at the priest’s house was barking.

" That was the meaning of my vision. Pa-shinka is what I should have been, and was not. I lived for man, on the pretext of living for God; and she lives for God, imagining she lives for man ! Yes; one good deed — a cup of cold water given without expectation of reward — is worth far more than all the benefits I thought I was bestowing on the world. But was there not, after all, one grain of sincere desire to serve God? ” he asked himself. And the answer came: “Yes, there was; but it was so soiled, so overgrown with desire for the world’s praise. No; there is no God for the man who lives for the praise of the world. I must now seek Him.”

He walked on, just as he had made his way to Pashinka, from village to village, meeting and parting with other pilgrims, and asking for bread and a night’s rest in the name of Christ. Sometimes an angry housekeeper would abuse him, sometimes a drunken peasant would revile him; but for the most part he was given food and drink, and often something to take with him. Many were favourably disposed towards him on account of his noble bearing. Some, on the other hand, seemed to enjoy the Kight of a gentleman so reduced to poverty. But his gentleness vanquished all hearts.

He often found a Bible in a house where he was staying. He would read it aloud, and the people always listened to him, touched by what he read them, and wondering, as if it were something new, although so familiar.

If he succeeded in helping people by his advice or by knowing how to read and write, or by settling a dispute, he did not afterwards wait to see their gratitude, for he went away directly. And little by little God began to reveal Himself within him.

One day he was walking along the road with two women and a soldier. They were stopped by a party consisting of a lady and gentleman in a trap drawn by a trotter, and another gentleman and lady riding. The gentleman beside the lady in the trap was evidently a traveller – a Frenchman – while her husband was on horseback with his daughter.

The party stopped to show the Frenchman the pilgrims, who, according to a superstition of the

Russian peasantry, show their superiority by tramping instead of working. They spoke French, thinking they would not be understood.

“ Demandez-leur” asked the Frenchman, " s’ils sont bien sûres de ce que leur pèlerinage est agréable à Dieu ? ”

The old woman answered,–

" Just as God wills it. Our feet have arrived at the holy places, but we can’t tell about our hearts.”

They asked the soldier. He answered that he was alone in the world, and belonged nowhere.

They asked Kasatsky who he was.

“ A servant of God.”

" Qu’est-ce-qu’il dit? Il ne répond pas? ”

" Il dit qu’il est un serviteur de Dieu.”

" Il doit être un fils de prêtre. Il a de la race. Avez-vous de la petite monnaie? ”

The Frenchman had some change, and gave each of them twenty kopeks.

“Mais dites-leur que ce nest pas pour les cierges que je leur donne, mais pour qu’ils se régalent du thé. Tea – tea,” he said, with a smile. " Pour vous, mon vieux.” And he patted Kasatsky on the shoulder with his gloved hand.

" Christ save you,” said Kasatsky, and without putting on his hat, bent his bald head.

Kasatsky rejoiced particularly in this incident, because he had shown contempt for the world’s opinion, and had done something quite trifling and easy. He accepted twenty kopeks, and gave them afterwards to a blind beggar who was a friend of his.

The less he cared for the opinion of the world the more he felt that God was with him.

For eight months Kasatsky tramped in this fashion, until at last he was arrested in a provincial town in a night-shelter where he passed

the night with other pilgrims. Having no passport to show, he was taken to the police-station. When he was asked for documents to prove his identity he said he had none; that he was a servant of God. He was numbered among the tramps and sent to Siberia.

There he settled down on the estate of a rich peasant, where he still lives. He works in the vegetable garden, teaches the children to read and write, and nurses the sick.