

THE KREUTZER SONATA

by Leo Tolstoy

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

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" But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. v. 28).

" His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry. But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given " (Matt. xx. 10-11).

I.

This was early in the spring. We had been travelling for two days. People who were going but a short distance kept coming in and going out of the car; but three persons travelled, like myself, from the starting-point of the train: a plain-looking, no longer young lady, with a drawn face, dressed in a semi-masculine overcoat and cap, and smoking cigarettes; her acquaintance, a talkative man of about forty, in fashionable new clothes; and another, an undersized gentleman, with jerky motions, who kept to himself. The latter was not old, but his curly hair was apparently prematurely gray, and his uncommonly sparkling eyes rapidly flitted from one object to another. He wore an old, tailor-made overcoat, with a curly lamb-fur collar, and a tall lamb-fur cap. • Under his overcoat, whenever he unbuttoned it, could be seen the national sleeveless coat and embroidered shirt. The peculiarity of this gentleman consisted further in his now

and then emitting strange sounds which resembled a clearing of the throat or a jerky laugh.

This gentleman during the whole journey carefully avoided conversing and becoming acquainted with the passengers. To his neighbours' remarks he answered curtly, or he read, or smoked, looking out of the window, or, fetching some provisions out of his old bag, drank tea or ate a lunch.

I thought that his loneliness weighed upon him, and I tried several times to start a conversation with him, but every time when our eyes met, which was often, because we were sitting diagonally opposite each other, he turned away and picked up a book, or looked out of the window.

During a stop, in the evening of the second day, at a large station, this nervous gentleman got some hot water and brewed some tea for himself, while the gentleman in the fashionable new clothes, – a lawyer, as I learned later, – with his neighbour, the smoking lady in the semi-masculine overcoat, went to drink tea at the station.

During the absence of the gentleman and the lady, a few new persons entered our car; among them was a tall, cleanly shaven, wrinkled old man, apparently a merchant, in a fitchew-fur coat and a cloth cap with an immense visor. The merchant sat down opposite the lady's and the lawyer's places, and immediately entered into a conversation with a young man, evidently a merchant's clerk, who had also entered the car at this station.

I was sitting diagonally across from them, and, as the train was not moving, was able to catch bits of their conversation whenever there was no one passing between us. The merchant informed him at first that he was going to his estate, which was but one station away; then, as is always the case, they began to speak about prices and about trade, and about business in Moscow and at the Nfzhni-Ndvgorod Fair. The clerk began to tell about the carousals of a certain rich merchant, whom they both knew, at the fair, but the old man interrupted him, and himself told of past carousals at Kundvin, in which he had taken part. He was apparently proud of the part taken by him in them, and was telling with obvious joy how once he and this acquaintance of his were drunk in Kunavin and did something of such a nature that it was necessary to tell it in a whisper, whereat the clerk roared so that he could be heard through the whole car, and the old man laughed, displaying his yellow teeth.

As I did not expect to hear anything interesting, I got up to walk up and down the platform until the departure of the train. I met the lawyer and the lady in the door, who were with animation talking about something, while making for the car.

" You will have no time," the affable lawyer said to me. " The second bell will ring in a minute."

And so it was. I had not reached the end of the train when the bell rang out. When I returned, the animated conversation between the lady and the lawyer was still in progress. The old merchant sat silently opposite them, sternly looking in front of him, and now and then disapprovingly gnashing his teeth.

" Then she frankly informed her husband," the lawyer was saying, with a smile, just as I passed by him, " that she could not and would not live with him because – "

He continued to tell her the rest, but I could not make out what he was saying. After me, other passengers passed in; then the conductor; then a porter ran in, and there was a din for quite awhile, so that their conversation could not be heard. When all had quieted down, and I again heard the lawyer's voice, the conversation had evidently passed from the particular case to generalizations.

The lawyer was saying that the question of divorce now occupied public opinion in Europe, and that such cases were becoming ever more frequent in our country. Upon noticing that he was the only person whose voice was heard, he interrupted his speech, and addressed himself to the old man. " Such things did not happen in olden times, did they ?" he said, with a pleasant smile.

The old man wanted to make a reply, but just then the train started, and the old man took off his cap and began to make the sign of the cross and to whisper a prayer. The lawyer turned his eyes away and waited respectfully. Having finished his prayer and the threefold sign of the cross, the old man pulled his cap down over his head, adjusted himself in his seat, and began to speak:

" It used to happen, sir, only not so often," he said. " It could not be different considering the times we are living in. People are too much educated nowadays."

The train moved faster and faster, rumbling over the rail ends, so that I could not hear them well. As I was interested in what they were saying, I seated myself nearer to them. My neighbour, the nervous gentleman with the sparkling eyes, was apparently interested himself : he listened attentively, without getting up.

" What makes education bad ? " the lady said, with a scarcely perceptible smile. " Do you think it is better to marry as of old, when bridegroom and bride did not see each other ?" she continued, replying, as is the habit with women, not to the words of her interlocutor, but to the words which she supposed he would utter.

" They did not know whether they loved each other or could love each other, and married by chance, and then suffered all their lives. In your opinion this is better ? " she said, obviously directing her remarks to me and to the lawyer, and least of all to the old man, with whom she was speaking.

" People are too much educated," repeated the merchant, looking contemptuously at the lady and leaving her question unanswered.

" It would be desirable to know how you explain the connection between education and marital incompatibility," the lawyer said, with a slight smile.

The merchant wanted to say something, but the lady interrupted him:

" No, that time has passed," she said. But the lawyer stopped her:

" Permit the gentleman to express his idea! "

" Foolishness comes from education," the old man said, with determination.

" They join in marriage those who do not love each other, and then

they wonder why it is they do not live in peace," the lady hastened to say, looking at the lawyer and at me, and even at the clerk, who had raised himself in his seat and, leaning on the hand-rest, was listening to the conversation. " Only animals may be paired according to their master's will, but people have their inclinations and attachments," said the lady, evidently wishing to sting the merchant.

" Madam, you say this in vain," said the old man. " An animal is a beast, but law is given to man."

" But how can you want one to live with a person, when there is no love between them ? " the lady still hastened to express her sentiments, which, no doubt, seemed very novel to her.

" In former days this was not considered," the old man said, in an impressive voice. " This has only come in lately. Let the least thing happen, and the wife says: ' I will leave you ! ' Even peasants have taken to it. ' Here,' she says, ' are your shirt and trousers, but I will go with Vdnka, because his hair is more curly than yours.' Go and talk with them ! Woman must, above everything else, have fear."

The clerk glanced at the lawyer, and at the lady, and at me, apparently holding back a smile, and ready to approve or ridicule the merchant's speech, according to the way it was accepted.

" What fear ? " asked the lady.

" Namely, let her fear her husband! That's the fear I mean!"

" But, my friend, that time has passed," the lady said, almost with annoyance.

" No, madam, that time never can pass. Just as Eve was created from the rib of a man, so she will always remain, to the end of the world," said the old man, shaking his head so sternly and victoriously that the clerk at once decided that victory was on the side of the merchant, and so laughed out loud.

" You men judge like this," said the lady, looking at us, and not giving in. " You have taken liberty for yourselves, and you want to keep woman in her chamber, but you take all kinds of liberties yourselves."

" Nobody gives them such a permission. However, there will be no increase in the house through a man, whereas a woman is a weak vessel," the merchant continued, in an impressive voice. The impressiveness of the merchant's intonations obviously vanquished his hearers, and even the lady felt herself crushed, but she would not submit.

" Yes. But I think you will agree with me that woman is a human being and has feelings like a man. What is she to do if she does not

love her husband ?"

" If she does not love ? " the merchant repeated, austerely, moving his brows and lips. " Never mind, she will love him!" This unexpected argument gave special pleasure to the clerk, and he emitted a sound of approval.

" No, she will not," said the lady. " If there is no love, you can't force her to love."

" Well, and if the wife is false to her husband, what then ? " said the lawyer.

" That is not supposed to happen," said the merchant, " and has to be watched."

" But if it does happen, then what ? Such things do occur."

" Maybe these things happen elsewhere, only not with us," said the old man.

Everybody was silent. The clerk moved forward restlessly, and, apparently not wishing to be behind the others, smiled and said:

" Yes, there was once a scandal with a fellow of our set. It is pretty hard to make it out. His wife happened to be a loose woman, and off she went, gallivanting. He was a sober kind of a fellow, with great ability. At first it was with a clerk. Her husband tried to check her with kind treatment, – but she did not stop. She did all kinds of unseemly things, and began to steal his money. Then he beat her. Well ? She got worse and worse. She began intrigues with an infidel Jew, excuse me for mentioning it. What could he do ? He gave her up entirely. And so he lives single, and she walks the streets."

" Because he is a fool," said the old man. " If he had not given her the reins at first, but had checked her in, she would have been all right. You must not give them their liberty at first. Don't trust a horse in the field, nor a woman in the house! "

Just then the conductor came to ask for the tickets to the next station. The old man gave up his.

" Yes, you must check in the women at the start, or else all is lost."

" What about the jollification married men have at the Kunavin Fair, of which you were telling awhile ago ? " I asked, having lost my patience.

" That is a different matter," said the merchant, and buried himself in silence.

When the whistle blew, the merchant got up, got his bag out from

under the bench, wrapped himself in his coat, and, raising his cap, went out on the brake platform.

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No sooner had the old man left than there arose a conversation in which several persons took part.

" He is a papa of the old style," said the clerk.

" A living Domostroy ! "1 said the lady. " What a savage conception about woman and about marriage ! "

" Yes, we are very far from the European conception of marriage," said the lawyer.

" The main thing is, these people do not understand," said the lady, " that marriage without love is not a marriage, that love alone sanctifies love, and that real marriage is only such as is sanctified by love."

The clerk listened attentively, trying to memorize as much as possible of the clever remarks, to use them on occasion.

In the middle of the lady's speech, there was heard behind me the sound of what might have been an interrupted laugh or sob; and, upon looking around, we saw my neighbour, the gray-haired lonely gentleman with the sparkling eyes, who, unnoticed by any one, had come up to us, evidently interested in the conversation. He was standing, with his hands on the back of the seat, and was apparently very much agitated: his face was red and the muscle of his cheek was jerking.

" What kind of a love is it that sanctifies marriage ?" he asked, hesitatingly.

Seeing the agitated condition of the questioner, the lady tried to answer him as gently and clearly as possible.

sixteenth century work in which rules of conduct are laid down.

" True love – If this love exists between a man and a woman, then marriage is possible," said the lady.

" Yes. But what do you mean by true love ? " said the gentleman of the sparkling eyes, with an awkward smile, and with timidity.

" Everybody knows what love is," said the lady, evidently wishing to break off her conversation with him.

" But I do not," said the gentleman. " You must define what you understand – "

" What ? It is very simple," said the lady, but she stopped to

think. " Love – love is the exclusive preference of one person to all others," she said.

" Preference for how long? For a month, or two, or for half an hour ?" muttered the gray-haired gentleman, laughing.

" Excuse me, but you are evidently not speaking of the same tiling."

" Yes, I am."

" The lady says," interposed the lawyer, pointing to the lady, " that marriage must, in the first place, spring from attachment, – love, if you please, – and only if such is on hand does marriage represent something sacred, so to speak: then, that no marriage, without natural attachments – love, if you wish – at its base, carries any moral obligations with it. Do I understand you right ? " he turned to the lady.

The lady with a nod of her head expressed her approval of the exposition of her idea.

" Besides – " the lawyer continued his speech, but the nervous gentleman, with eyes now aflame, not being able to repress himself any longer, did not allow the lawyer to finish it, and himself said:

"No, I have in mind that which you said about the preference of one to all the rest; but I ask: a preference for how long ? "

" For how much time ? For a long time, sometimes for a whole life," said the lady, shrugging her shoulders.

" But that happens only in novels, and never in real life. In real life this preference of one to others may last a few years, which it rarely does; more frequently for months, or weeks, days, and even hours," he said, being apparently conscious of puzzling all with this opinion of his, and satisfied with it.

" Oh, how can you say that ? But no. No, excuse me," all three of us spoke at the same time. Even the clerk uttered a certain sound of disapproval.

" Yes, I know," the gray-haired gentleman tried to rise above our voices, " you are speaking of that which you assume as existing, whereas I speak of that which really is. Every man experiences that which you call love in the presence of any beautiful woman."

" Ah, what you say is terrible ! But there certainly is among people that feeling which is called love, and which lasts for months and years, and even for a lifetime ? "

" No, there is not! Even if we should grant that a man might prefer a certain woman for all his life, the woman, in all probability, would prefer another, and thus it has always been, and always will be," he said, and, drawing out his cigarette-holder, he lighted a

cigarette.

" But there might be a mutual feeling," said the lawyer.

" No, that cannot be," he retorted, " just as it is impossible that any two marked peas out of a bag of peas should happen to lie together. Besides, it is not only a question of probability, but of certain satiety. To love one and the same person all your life amounts to saying that one candle will bum a lifetime," he said, taking a long puff at his cigarette.

" You are all speaking of carnal love. Do you not admit love based on oneness of ideals, on spiritual affinity ? " said the lady.

" Spiritual affinity ! Oneness of ideals ! " he repeated, emitting his peculiar sound. " In that case there is no reason for sleeping together (pardon my coarseness). As it is, people sleep together on account of oneness of ideals," he said, bursting into a nervous laugh.

" But pardon me," said the lawyer," facts contradict your statement. We do see that marital relations exist, that all humankind, or the majority of it, live a conjugal life, and many persevere honestly in a protracted conjugal life."

The gray-haired gentleman laughed out once more.

" At first you say that marriage is based on love, and when I express a doubt in the existence of a love other than the sensual, you prove to me the existence of love in the fact that marriages exist. Yes, but marriages are mere deception in our days! "

" You will pardon me," said the lawyer," all I said was that marriages have always existed."

" They have. But what makes them exist ? They have existed with those people who in marriage see something mysterious, – a mystery which puts them under obligations in the sight of God, – there they have existed. With us, people marry, seeing in marriage nothing but cohabitation, and from this results either deception or violence. If it is a deception, it is easily borne. Husband and wife deceive others by making them believe that they are monogamous, whereas they are polygamous and polyandrous. This is bad, but it will pass ; but when, as so very frequently happens, husband and wife have assumed the external obligation to live together all their lives, and they begin to hate each other from the second month on, and wish to separate, and still continue to live together, then there results that terrible hell which leads people to take to drink, to shoot, kill, and poison themselves and each other." He spoke ever more rapidly, without giving anybody a chance to interpose a word, and getting more and more excited. It was an awkward situation.

"Yes, no doubt there are critical episodes in marital life," said the lawyer, wishing to put an end to the indecently heated

conversation.

" I see you have found out who I am," the gray-haired gentleman said, softly, and almost quietly.

"No, I have not the pleasure."

" It is not a great pleasure. I am Pozdnyshev, the man to whom that critical episode has happened, at which you have hinted, that episode which has led to his killing his wife," he said, casting a rapid glance upon us.

Nobody knew what to say, and all kept silent.

" Well, it makes no difference," he said, emitting his strange sound. " However, excuse me! I will not trouble you."

" Why, no, not at all," said the lawyer, himself not knowing what it was that was " not at all."

But Pozdnyshev paid no attention to him, rapidly turned around, and went back to his seat. The lawyer and the lady whispered together. I sat by Pdzdnyshev's side and was silent, not being able to find anything to talk about. It was too dark to read, and so I closed my eyes and pretended that I wished to fall asleep. Thus we rode in silence to the next station.

At this station the lawyer and the lady went to another car, having first spoken about it to the conductor. The clerk settled himself on the bench and fell asleep. Pozdnyshev continued smoking all the time and drank the tea which he had prepared for himself at the previous station.

When I opened my eyes and looked at him, he suddenly turned to me with determination and irritation:

" Maybe it is not agreeable to you to be sitting with me, knowing who I am ? In that case, I will go out."

" Oh, not at all! "

" Well, then won't you have a glass ? It is rather strong."

He poured out a glass of tea for me.

" They are talking and lying - " he said.

" What are you referring to ? " I asked.

" To the same thing: to that love of theirs, and to what they mean by it. Don't you want to sleep ? "

" Not at all."

" Then, if you wish, I will tell you how this same love had led me to do what I did."

" If it -will not be painful to you."

" No, it is painful for me to keep quiet. Drink the tea – or is it too strong ? " The tea was really like beer, but I swallowed a glass. Just then the conductor entered. He silently followed him with angry eyes, and began to speak only after he had left.

III.

V.

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III.

" Well, then I will tell you – But do you really want me to ? "

I repeated that I wanted it very much. He was silent for a moment, rubbed his face with his hands, and began:

" If I am to tell it to you, I must begin from the beginning: I must tell you how I married and why, and the kind of man I was previous to my marriage.

" Before my marriage I lived like everybody else, that is, in our circle. I am a landed proprietor and a graduate of the university, and was a marshal of nobility. I lived before my marriage like the rest, that is, in debauchery, and, like all the people of our circle, I was convinced that, living in debauchery, I was living as was proper. I thought of myself that I was a nice fellow and entirely moral. I was not a seducer, had no unnatural tastes, did not make it the chief purpose of my life, as many of my contemporaries are doing, and abandoned myself to debauchery in a moderate and decent way, for health's sake. I avoided all such women as by bearing a child or by attachment for me might tie my hands. However, there may have been children and attachments, but I acted as though they did not exist. And this I not only regarded as moral, but I even was proud of it – "

He stopped, emitted his strange sound, as he always did whenever, apparently, a new thought struck him.

" Herein lies the main villainy," he exclaimed. " Debauchery is not anything physical, – no physical excess is debauchery, – debauchery, real debauchery, lies in freeing oneself from the moral relations with a woman, with whom one enters into physical communion. It was

this liberation on which I prided myself. I remember how I was once tormented when I was not able to pay a woman who, having evidently fallen in love with me, had abandoned herself to me, and how my conscience was appeased only when I sent her the money, by which I showed that I morally did not regard myself as in the least under any obligations to her. Don't shake your head as though you agreed with me," he suddenly called out to me. " I know all about that. All of you, and you, too, if by some rare chance you are not an exception, hold the same views which I once held. Well, never mind, pardon me," he continued, " but the main thing is, this is terrible, terrible, terrible! "

" What is terrible ?" I asked.

" That abyss of delusions in which we live as regards women and our relations with them. Yes, I cannot speak of this calmly, not because this episode, as he called it, has happened to me, but because, when this episode happened to me, my eyes were opened; and I suddenly saw everything in an entirely different light, – everything topsyturvy, everything topsyturvy ! "

He lighted a cigarette and, leaning on his knees, began to speak.

I could not see his face in the darkness of the car, but above the rumbling of the car I heard his impressive and pleasant voice.

IV.

"Yes, only by having gone through all the torment, only thanks to this, did I comprehend where the root of it all was, did I comprehend what ought to be, and therefore did I see the terror of all that which is.

" So you see how and when all that began which led me up to my episode. It began when I was not quite sixteen years old. It happened when I was still in the gymnasium, while my elder brother was a first year student at the university. I did not yet know women, but, like all unfortunate children of our circle, I was no longer an innocent boy: I had been debauched by boys for two years: already woman, not any kind of a woman, but woman as a sweet being, woman, every woman, the nakedness of woman, had been tormenting me. My with drawmen ts were impure. I suffered as suffer ninety-nine hundredths of our boys. I was horrified, I was tormented, I prayed, and I fell. I was already debauched in imagination and in fact, but the last step had not yet been taken. I was perishing myself, but I had not yet laid hands on another human being. But my brother's comrade, a jolly student, a so-called good fellow, that is, the worst kind of a good-for-nothing, who had taught us to drink and play cards, persuaded me after a carousal to drive to that place. We went. My brother, too, was innocent still, and he fell that night. And I, a fifteenyear-old boy, desecrated myself and was instrumental in the desecration of a woman, without comprehending what I was doing. I had never heard from my elders that that which I was doing was bad. And even now they 322

do not hear it. It is true it is mentioned in the commandments, but the commandments are needed only to answer the priest properly at the examination ; nor are they as necessary, anywhere near as necessary, as the commandment about the use of ut in conditional sentences.

" Thus, I had never heard it said by my elders, whose opinion I valued, that this was bad. On the contrary, I heard from people whom I respected that it was good. I heard that my struggles and my suffering would cease after it; I heard it and I read it; I heard my elders say that it was good for health; and I heard my companions say that it was meritorious and dashing. Thus, in general, I could foresee nothing but good in it. The danger of disease ? Even that was foreseen. The paternal government takes care of that. It watches over the regular activity of the houses of prostitution, and makes debauchery for gymnasiasts safe. And the doctors watch over it, for a stated salary. So it ought to be. They affirm that debauchery is good for health, and they provide a well-regulated, accurate debauchery. I know some mothers who in this sense watch over the health of their sons. And science sends them into houses of prostitution."

" How does science send them there ?" I asked.

" Who are the doctors ? Priests of science. Who debauches the youths, insisting that this is necessary for their health ? They.

" If one-hundredth part of the effort exerted on the cure of syphilis were utilized on the eradication of debauchery, there would long ago not have been a trace left of syphilis. Instead, all effort is exerted not on the eradication of debauchery, but on its encouragement, on securing the safety of debauchery. Well, that is another matter. The point is that to me, as to nine-tenths, if not more, of the men of all conditions of life, even among the peasants, there happened that terrible thing that I fell, not because I became a prey to the natural seductions of a certain woman's charms, - no, not a woman had seduced me, but I fell because the people around me saw in the fall either a most lawful function which was very useful to health, or a most natural, and not only pardonable, but even innocent pastime for a young man.

" I did not understand that there was any fall; I simply began to abandon myself to those part pleasures, part necessities, which, so I had been impressed, were peculiar to a certain age, and I abandoned myself to this debauchery, as I had abandoned myself to drinking and smoking. And yet there was something especial and pathetic in this fall. I remember how even then, before I had left the room, I felt sad, so sad that I felt like weeping,- weeping for the loss of my innocence, for my past relation to woman, now for ever lost. Yes, the simple, natural relation to woman was now for ever lost. From that time there no longer was nor could be any pure relation with women. I became what is called a libertine.

" To be a libertine is a physical condition, resembling the condition of a morphine fiend, a drunkard, a smoker. Just as morphine-eaters, drunkards, smokers no longer are normal men, just so a man who has known several women is no longer a normal man, but will for ever be spoiled, – a libertine. Just as drunkards and morphine-eaters may at once be recognized by their faces and by their manner, just so is a libertine. A libertine may restrain himself and struggle, but the simple, pure, the fraternal relations with women will never again exist for him. A libertine may at once be told from the way he looks at a young woman and surveys her. And thus I became a libertine and remained one, and it was this which brought me to ruin."

V.

" Yes, that is so. Then it went farther, and farther, and there were all kinds of deviations. O God ! I am horrified when I think of all my villainies. This is the way I think of myself, whom my companions ridiculed for my so-called innocence. But when you hear of the golden youths, of the officers, of the Parisians! And all these gentlemen, and I, whenever we, thirty-year-old debauchees, who have upon our souls hundreds of the • most varied and terrible crimes in regard to women, when we, thirty-year-old debauchees, cleanly washed, shaven, perfumed, in clean linen, in evening dress or uniform, enter a drawing-room or appear at a ball, – we are emblems of purity, charming!

" Consider what it ought to be and what it is! It ought to be that if, in society, such a gentleman comes up to my sister or daughter, I, knowing his life, ought to walk over to him, to call him aside, and quietly to say to him : < Dear sir, I know the kind of a life you lead and with whom you pass your nights. This is not the place for you. Here are pure, innocent girls. Go away!' Thus it ought to be; whereas, in reality, when such a gentleman makes his appearance and dances with my sister or daughter, and embraces her, we rejoice, if he happens to be rich and has influential connections. Maybe he will honour my daughter after Rigolboge! Even if traces of the disease are left, – that does not matter much, – nowadays they cure well. Pieally, I know several girls of high life who have with delight been married off by their parents to men suffering from a well-known disease. Oh, oh, what abomination! The time will come when such abomination and lie shall be laid bare!"

He several times emitted his strange sounds, and took to drinking tea. The tea was dreadfully strong, – there was no water with which to weaken it. I felt that the two glasses which I had drunk had made me very nervous. The tea seemed to have affected him, too, for he became ever more agitated. His voice became more and more sonorous and expressive. He continually changed his position ; he now took

off his cap, and now put it on again, and his face assumed strange forms in the semidarkness in which we were sitting.

"Well, thus I lived to my thirtieth year, not giving up for a minute my intention of marrying and preparing for a most elevated and pure family life. For this purpose I looked around for a girl who would best answer to these requirements," he continued. " I besmirched myself in the mire of debauchery, and, at the same time, scrutinized girls to see who from her purity would be most worthy of me.

" I threw out many of them simply because they were not sufficiently pure for my purpose; finally I found one whom I considered worthy of me. She was one of two daughters of a former rich P[^]nza landed proprietor, who had lost his fortune.

" One evening, after we had had an outing in a boat, and in the night, when we returned home in the moonlight, and I was sitting near her and admiring her stately figure, which was well set off by a jersey, and her locks, I suddenly decided that it was she. It appeared to me on that evening that she understood everything, everything which I felt and thought, and that I felt and thought nothing but the most elevated things, whereas in reality it was only that her jersey and her locks were very becoming to her, and that after a day passed near her I longed for a greater approximation to her.

" It is wonderful how complete the illusion is that beauty is identical with goodness. A beautiful woman says insipid things, but you hear only cleverness. She speaks and does unseemly things, and you see only charm. And when she says no insipidities and does nothing unseemly, you at once come to the conclusion that she is wonderfully clever and moral!

" I returned home in transport and decided that she was the acme of moral perfection, and that therefore she was worthy of being my wife, and so I proposed to her the very next day.

" What a chaos that is ! Out of a thousand men who are marrying, not only in our circle, but, unfortunately, also among the masses, there is hardly one who has not been married, like Don Juan, ten, or a hundred, or even a thousand times before his wedding.

" It is true, I now hear of young men – and I have observed it to be so – who feel and know that it is not a joke, but a great deed.

" God help them ! But in my days there was not one such in ten thousand. All know this, and yet they pretend not to know it. In all the novels we have detailed descriptions of the heroes, and of ponds and bushes, near which they walk; but, in describing their great love for some maiden, there is nothing said about what had taken place before with the interesting hero, – not a word of his frequenting certain houses, of chambermaids, cooks, and other people's wives. And if there are such indecent novels, they are never put into the hands of those who, above all others, ought to

know it, into girls' hands.

"At first we pretend before these girls that the debauchery which fills one-half of our cities, and even of the villages, does not exist at all.

" Then we all get so used to this pretence that, like the

English, we begin sincerely to believe that we are all moral people and live in a moral world. These maidens – poor maidens – believe this quite in earnest. Even thus my wife believed it. I remember how once, while engaged to her, I showed her my diary, from which she could tell, even though only in a slight degree, what my past had been, but more especially what my last liaison had been. This she might have learned from others, and I, for some reason, felt the necessity of informing her of it. I remember her terror, despair, and confusion, when she learned this and comprehended it. I saw that she wanted to give me up. Why did she not ?"

He emitted his sound, gulped down another swallow of tea, and kept silent.

VI.

"No, after all, it is better this way, it is better!" he exclaimed. " It served me right! But this is another matter. I wanted to say that the only ones who are deceived are these unfortunate maidens.

" The mothers know it, especially the mothers who have been educated by their husbands know it well. Pretending to believe in the purity of men, they, in fact, act quite differently. They know with what line to catch men for themselves and for their daughters.

" We men do not know it, and we do not know it because we do not want to know it, but the women know very well that the most elevated, the poetical love, as we call it, depends not on moral qualities, but on physical nearness, and besides on the dressing of the hair, and the colour and cut of the dress. Ask an expert coquette, who has undertaken to entice a certain man, what she would prefer to risk: to be accused, in presence of him whom she is endeavouring to charm, of lying, cruelty, and even debauchery, or to appear before him in a badly made and homely dress, – and you will find that she will always prefer the first. She knows that we men are ranting about high sentiments, but that we mean only her body, and that we, therefore, will forgive her all her nastiness, but that we will not forgive an ugly, inartistic, tasteless costume.

" The coquette knows this consciously, and every innocent girl knows it unconsciously, just as animals know it.

" This accounts for those nasty jerseys, bustles, these bare shoulders, arms, and almost breasts. Women, espe-

cially those who have passed the male school, know full well that all the talk about elevated subjects is only talk, and that man wants only the body and all that which presents it in the most deceptive, but at the same time in the most enticing, light, - and it is this which actually is done. Cast aside this familiarity with all this unseemliness, which has become our second nature, and take a look at the life of our higher classes, just as it is, with all its shamelessness, and you will find that it is through and through nothing but a house of prostitution. You do not agree with me ? Permit me to prove it to you," he said, interrupting me. " You say that the women of our society have other interests than those in the houses of prostitution, but I say no, and I will prove it to you. If people differ in the aims of their lives, in the inner contents of their lives, this difference must necessarily be reflected in their externals, and their externals must be different. But look at those unfortunate and despised creatures, and at the ladies of higher society: you will find the same costumes, the same fashions, the same perfumes, the same baring of arms, shoulders, and breasts, and the same accentuation of the prominent bustle, - the same passion for stones and expensive baubles, the same entertainments, dances, music, and singing. As those use all means with which to entice men, so do these.

VII.

" Well, it was these jerseys, and locks, and bustles that caught me.

" It was easy to catch me because I had been brought up under those conditions which, as cucumbers are forced in a hothouse, force young men to fall in love. Our stimulating, superabundant food, united with complete physical inactivity, is nothing but a systematic incitement to lust. You may marvel at it, or not, but it is a fact. I myself did not notice it until very recently. But now I know it. And it is precisely this which vexes me: nobody knows it, but they all continue talking such nonsense as that which that lady has been talking.

" Yes, one spring, peasants had been working on a railroad embankment near my farm. The usual food of a peasant lad consists of bread, kvas, and onions, and with this he is alive, happy, and healthy; he performs light field labour. He comes to work on the railroad, and he receives his food allotment of porridge and a pound of meat, but he works off this meat on sixteen hours of work back of a wheelbarrow weighing more than a thousand pounds, - and this agrees with him. But we devour two pounds of meat, and venison, and fish, and all kinds of highly exciting eatables and drinks, - where does it all go to ? To create sensual excesses. If it goes that way, and the safety-valve is open, all is well; but close up the valve, as I used to close it temporarily, and you at once get incitement, which, passing through the prism of our artificial life, will find its expression in an infatuation of

the clearest water, sometimes even in platonic love. And thus I fell in love, like the rest.

" Everything was in evidence: the transports, the tender moods, and the poetry. In reality this love of mine was the result, on the one hand, of the activity of her mamma and of the tailors, and, on the other, of a surplus of food swallowed by me, combined with an inactive life. If, on the one hand, there had been no rowing and no tailors with their finely made waists, etc., and my wife had worn an unsightly capote and remained at home, and if I, on the other, had been under normal conditions, a man devouring no more food than was necessary to do work, and my safety-valve had been open, – for the time being it happened to be closed, – I should not have fallen in love, and nothing would have happened.

VIII.

" Well, everything seemed to be favourable : my condition, the well-made garment, and the successful rowing. It had been a failure some twenty times, but this once everything went well, as happens with a trap. I am not laughing. Marriages are now arranged like traps. Is there anything natural about it? A girl is grown up, – she must be married.' This seems so simple, when the girl is not a monster, and there are men who want to get married. Thus it was done in ancient times. When the girl became of the proper age, her parents arranged the match for her. Thus it was done, and still is done, with the whole human race: among the Chinese, the Hindoos, the Mohammedans, and among our lower classes; thus it is done with the whole human race, at least with ninety-nine hundredths of it. Only one hundredth, and even less, of us debauchees have discovered that this is not good, and something new has been concocted. What is this new thing ? It is this: the girls sit, and the men, as at a fair, walk up and down, and make their selection. The girls sit and think, not daring to say it: 'Darting, take me!– No, me !– Not her, but me; see what shoulders, etc., I have !' But we men keep walking up and down, scrutinizing, and feeling quite satisfied. ' I know, but I will not be caught.' They walk about, and scrutinize, and are quite satisfied, seeing that it is all fixed that way to please them. If one is not on the lookout, – bang, and he is caught!"

" How would you have it otherwise ? " I said. " Would you want a woman to propose ?"

" I do not know what I want; only, if there is to be equality, let there be equality. If it has been discovered that match-making is degrading, this is a thousand times worse. There the rights and chances are equal, but here a woman is either a slave in the market, or a bait in a trap. Just try and tell a mother or the girl herself the truth that all that she is concerned in is to catch a husband,

my God, what a storm you would raise ! But this is all they are doing, and they have nothing else to do. What is terrible is to see at times extremely young, poor, innocent girls busy themselves with it. Then again, if it were done openly, but no, deception is practised. – ' Ah, the origin of species, how interesting that is! Ah, Lili is interested in painting! Shall you be at the exposition ? How instructive ! And sleigh-riding, and the theatre, and the symphony ? Ah, how remarkable ! My Lili goes into ecstasies over music. Why do you not share her convictions ? And rowing ? ' – But the only thought which occupies them is: ' Take me, take me, my Lili! No, me ! Well, just try ! ' – Oh, what an abomination, what a lie !" he concluded, and, finishing what there was left of the tea, he began to clear away the cups and the dishes.

IX.

" Do you know," he began, putting the tea and sugar in a bag, " it is the domination of women from which the world suffers. All this comes from it.

" How do you mean the domination of women ?" I said.

« The rights, the privileges, are on the side of men."

" Precisely," he interrupted me. " It is exactly what I wanted to tell you. It explains that unusual phenomenon that, on the one hand, it is quite true that woman has been brought to the lowest degree of humiliation, while, on the other, she dominates. The women dominate in the same way that the Jews, with their monetary power, pay us back for their oppression. * Ah, you want us to be traders only, – very well, we Jews will take possession of you,' say the Jews. 'Ah, you want us to be nothing but objects of sensuality, – very well, we, as objects of sensuality, will enslave you,' say the women. Woman is deprived of rights not because she cannot vote or be a judge, – there is no special privilege in being occupied with these affairs, – but because in sexual intercourse she is not man's equal, has not the right to use a man or abstain from him according to her wish, to select a man according to her wish, instead of being selected. You say this is abominable, – very well: then let men be deprived of the same rights. At the present time woman is deprived of the right which man enjoys. So, in order to avenge herself on him for this right, she acts on man's sensuality, through this sensuality subdues him so that he selects only formally, for in reality it is she who makes the selection. Having once possessed herself of this means, she misuses it, and gains a terrible power over men."

" Wherein does this special power lie ?" I asked.

" Where does it lie ? Everywhere, in everything. Go through the shops in any large city ! Millions of roubles* worth of goods are displayed here, – it is hard to estimate the labour expended on them, – and see whether in nine-tenths of these shops there is anything for the use of men. The whole luxury of life is demanded

and supported by women.

" Count all the factories. An immense proportion of them make useless adornments, carriages, furniture, baubles for women. Millions of people, whole generations of slaves, perish in this forced labour of the factories, merely to satisfy this craving of the women. The women, like queens, keep in bondage and at hard labour nine-tenths of the human race. All this comes from having humiliated them and deprived them of equal rights with men. So they avenge themselves by acting on our sensuality, and by catching us in their nets. Yes, that is what it comes from.

" Women have made of themselves such a weapon of sensual incitement that a man is not able to treat a woman calmly. The moment a man walks over to a woman he comes under the influence of her poison, and becomes intoxicated. In former days I never felt at ease when I saw a woman all dressed up in her evening attire, but now I simply feel terribly, I cannot help seeing something dangerous for men and illicit, and I feel like calling a policeman and asking protection against a peril, and demanding that the dangerous object be taken away and removed.

" Yes, you laugh !" he cried to me, " but it is not at all a joke. I am sure that the time will come, and maybe very soon, when people will understand it and will wonder how society could exist where, in violation of the social peace, such deeds could be permitted as are the wearing of those bodily ornaments which directly provoke sensuality, and which society tolerates in the case of women. Is not this the same as putting traps on all walks and paths ? No, it is worse! Why is gambling forbidden, and why are women permitted to appear in garbs which provoke sensuality ? They are a thousand times more dangerous.

X.

"Well, I was caught in this manner. I was what we call in love. I not only imagined her to be the acme of perfection, but during all the time of my engagement to her I considered myself to be the acme of perfection. There is no rascal so great that, upon instituting a search, he could not find some rascals who in some respects stand lower than he himself, and could not, therefore, find a cause for being proud and satisfied with himself. Even thus it was with me : I did not marry for money, – calculation was absent in my case, whereas the majority of my acquaintances married for money or connections, – I was rich, she poor. This was one thing. The other thing of which I was proud was that, while others married with the intention of continuing to live in the same state of polygamy as before their marriage, I had the firm intention of remaining monogamous after marriage, and there was no limit to my pride on that score. Yes, I was a terrible swine, and I imagined that I was an angel.

" The time of my engagement did not last long. I cannot think of this time without shame. What an abomination ! Love is supposed to

be spiritual and not sensual. Well, if love is of a spiritual nature and consists in spiritual communion, then this spiritual communion ought to find its expression in words and conversation. There was nothing of the kind. It was very hard for us to speak together when we were left alone. It was the labour of a Sisyphus. No sooner had I thought of something and said it than I had to become silent and think of the next thing to say. There was nothing to talk about. Everything that could be said about the life which was in store for us, about arrangements and plans, had been said, – and what next? If we had been animals we would have known that there is no need of talking; here, on the contrary, we had to talk, but there was nothing to talk about, because we were not interested in that which could be gleaned from our conversations. Then there was that ugly habit of eating candy, that coarse gormandizing on sweets, and all those abominable preparations for the wedding: the talks about the apartments, the sleeping-room, the beds, the capotes, the morninggowns, the linen, the toilets – You must consider that if people marry according to the injunctions of the Domostroy, as the old man remarked, then the feather beds, the dowry, the beds, – all these are only details corresponding to the mystery. But with us, where of every ten people thinking of matrimony nine certainly do not believe in any mystery, and do not believe even that that which they do puts them under any obligations, when there is hardly one out of a hundred men who has not been married before, and of fifty hardly one who does not prepare himself in advance to be false to his wife on any convenient occasion, when the majority look upon the church ceremony as only a special condition for getting possession of a certain woman, – think what terrible meaning all these details have under these conditions. It turns out that the whole question lies only in this: it turns out to be a kind of sale. An innocent girl is sold to a libertine, and this sale is surrounded with certain formalities.

XL

" Thus all marry, and thus I married, and the much-praised honeymoon began. What a despicable name!" he hissed in anger. " I once took in all kinds of shows in Paris, and, being attracted by a sign, I went in to see a bearded woman and a water dog. It turned out that it was nothing but a man in a ddcolletd dress and in female attire, and the dog was covered with a sealskin and swam around in a tub of water. There was nothing of interest there; but as I went out the showman politely saw me out, and, turning to the crowd at the door, he pointed to me and said: ' You ask this gentleman whether it is worth seeing. Come in, come in, one franc a person !' I felt ashamed to say that I had been taken in, and the showman evidently counted on that. Thus, no doubt, it is with those who have experienced all the abomination of the honeymoon and do not wish to disenchant others. Neither did I disenchant any one, but now I see no reason for

concealing the truth. I even regard it as my duty to tell the truth about it. It is awkward, shameful, abominable, wretched, and, above everything else, dull, inexpressibly dull! It was something like when I first learned to smoke, when I felt like vomiting and the spittle was abundant, and I swallowed it, and pretended to be happy. The enjoyment from smoking, even as from this, if it is to be at all, will be later: it is necessary for the husband to cultivate this vice in his wife, in order to derive pleasure from it."

" You call it a vice ?" I said. " You are speaking of the most natural human quality."

" Natural ?" he said. " Natural ? No, I will tell you, on the contrary, that I have come to the conclusion that it is not natural. Yes, entirely unnatural. Ask a child, ask an uncorrupted girl!

" You say natural!

" It is natural to eat. It is a pleasure and a joy to eat, and comes easy and causes no shame from the very start; but in this case it is abominable, shameful, and painful. No, it is unnatural! And I have convinced myself that uncorrupted girls always hate it."

"But how," said I, "how would the human race be continued ?"

" Yes, what is to be done in order that the human race may not perish ! " he said, with malicious irony, as though expecting this familiar and unscrupulous retort. "Preach continence from childbirth in order that English lords may always be able to gormandize, that is all right. Preach continence from childbirth in order to derive as much pleasure as possible, that is all right. But only mention continence from childbirth in the name of morality, – Lord, what a cry is raised ! The human race might come to an end because they want to stop being swine! However, excuse me, this light annoys me, – may I shade it ?" he said, pointing to the lamp. I told him that it made no difference to me, and then he rose in his seat hurriedly, just as he did everything, and drew the cloth shade over the lamp.

" Still," I said, " if you considered this to be a law, the human race would soon stop."

He did not answer at once.

" You ask me how the human race will be continued ?" he said, again taking a place opposite me, spreading his legs wide, and resting his elbows low upon them. " Why should it be continued ? " he said.

« Why ? Else we should not be here."

" Why should we ?

« Why ? In order to live."

" Why should we live ? If there is no aim, if life is given us for

life's sake, there is no reason for living. And if it is so, then Schopenhauer and Hartmann, and all the Buddhists are quite right. Well, if there is an aim in life, it is evident that life must cease when that aim is reached. That is what it comes to," he said, with agitation, apparently very proud of his idea. " That is what it comes to. You must notice that if the aim of humanity is goodness, – love, if you wish, – if the aim of humanity is that which is mentioned in the prophecies, when all people will unite together in love, and the spears will be forged into sickles, and so forth, then what is in the way of the accomplishment of this aim? – The passions. Of all the passions, the sexual, carnal love is the strongest, the most evil and stubborn ; therefore, if all the passions are to be destroyed, this latter, the strongest of them all, carnal love, will also be destroyed, and the prophecy will be fulfilled, people will be united, the aim of humanity will be reached, and there will be no reason for it to exist. As long as the human race exists, the ideal is before it, and, of course, not the ideal of rabbits and swine, which is to breed as fast as possible, and not of monkeys and Parisians, to use in the most refined manner the enjoyments of sexual passion, but the ideal of goodness, which is reached through continence and purity. People have always striven for this. And see what comes of it!

" It turns out that carnal love is a safety-valve. If the present, living generation of the human race has not reached its aim, it has not reached it because it has passions, and the strongest of them is the sexual passion. As long as there is sexual passion there is a new generation, consequently there is a possibility for the next generation to reach the aim. If this one does not reach it, the next may, and so it goes on until it will be attained, and the prophecy will be fulfilled, and people will be united.

" See what would have happened otherwise! If we are to admit that God has created men in order to attain a certain aim, he would have made them mortal, but without sexual passion, or immortal. If they were mortal but without sexual passion, what would happen ? They would live and die without reaching that aim, and so God would have to create new men. But if they were immortal, then let us suppose (although it would be harder for them than for new generations to correct mistakes and approach perfection), – then let us suppose that they would reach their aim after many thousand years. What would they then be for? Where are they to be put then ? And so it is better as it is. But it may be that this form of expression docs not please you, and you are an evolutionist. Even then it will come to the same. The highest race of animals, the human, to be able to maintain itself in its struggle with other animals, must unite compactly, like a swarm of bees, and not breed endlessly; it must, like the bees, bring up sexless individuals, that is, it again must strive for continence, and not for the incitement of lust, toward which our whole structure of life is directed." He grew silent. " The human race will cease ? But is there any one who will doubt this, whatever his way of looking upon the world may be ? This is as certain as death. According to all the teachings of the church there will come an end of the world, and the same is inevitable by all the

teachings of science.

XII.

" In our world the very opposite takes place: if a man thought of continence while unmarried, he considers such continence unnecessary the moment he has married. These solitary journeys after the wedding, which the young people take with their parents' consent, what are they but a license to commit debauchery ? But a moral law, being violated, demands its own punishment.

"No matter how much I tried to arrange the honeymoon for myself, nothing came of it. All the time I only felt an abomination, shame, and dulness. Very soon a painful and oppressive feeling was added to this. It began very soon. I believe on the third or fourth day I found my wife in a dull mood; I began to ask her what the matter was, and embraced her, which, in my opinion, was all she could wish, but she pushed my arm aside and burst out weeping. What about? She could not say. She simply felt sad and oppressed. In all probability her tired nerves told her the truth of the abomination of our relations, but she could not say so. I began to inquire: she said something about being lonely without her mother. It appeared to me that this was not true. I began to speak persuasively to her, without mentioning her mother. I did not understand that she simply was oppressed and that her mother was only an excuse. But she soon felt offended because I did not mention her mother, as though I did not believe her. She told me that she was sure I did not love her. I accused her of caprice, and suddenly her face was completely changed: instead of sadness there was now an expression of irritation, and with the most venomous words she began to upbraid me for my egotism and cruelty.

" I looked at her. Her countenance expressed complete coldness and hostility, almost hatred of me. I remember how frightened I was when I saw this. ' What is this ? ' I thought. ' Love is the union of souls, and this has come in place of it! This cannot be, that is not she!' I tried to appease her, but I ran up against such an insuperable wall of coldness and venomous hostility that before I had time to look around, the irritation took possession of me, too, and we told each other a mass of unpleasant things. The impression of this first quarrel was terrible. I called it a quarrel, but it was not a quarrel; it was a manifestation of the abyss which was in reality between us. The infatuation was exhausted by the gratification of sensuality, and we were left in our real relations to each other, that is, two mutually strange egotists, who wished to derive as much pleasure from each other as was possible. I called that a quarrel which had taken place between us; it was not a quarrel, - it was only the result of an interrupted sensuality which laid bare our real relations to each other. I did not understand that this cold and hostile attitude was our normal relation; I did

not understand it because the hostile relation was in the beginning soon veiled from us by a new access of fleeting sensuality, that is, by infatuation.

" I thought that we had quarreled and made up, and that it would never happen again. But even during this same honeymoon there again was reached a period of satiety, again we ceased to be useful to each other, and another quarrel took place. The second quarrel impressed me even more than the first. 'It appears that the first quarrel was not an accident, but that it must be so and always will be so,' I thought.

" The second quarrel struck me the more forcibly because it had its rise in an absolutely impossible cause, something about money, which I never grudged, and certainly not to my wife. All I remember is that she gave such a twist to a remark of mine that it turned out to be an expression of my desire to rule over her by means of money, to which, according to her words, I had affirmed my own exclusive right, - at all events, it was something impossible, stupid, mean, and unnatural, of no consequence either to her or to me. I grew irritated, began to upbraid her for her want of delicacy, she did the same, and off it started again. In her words, in the expression of her countenance and her eyes, I saw the same cruel, cold animosity, which had struck me so before. I remember I had quarreled with my brother, my friend, my father, but there had never been between us that venomous malice which arose in this case.

" Some time passed, and this mutual hatred was again veiled under the infatuation, that is, under sensuality, and I consoled myself with the thought that these two quarrels were mistakes that could be mended. But soon there came a third and a fourth quarrel, and I understood that it was not an accident, but that it must be so, that it would be so, and I was horrified at that which awaited me. I was, besides, tormented by the terrible thought that it was I alone who was living with my wife so badly and contrary to all expectation, whereas this does not happen in other cases of matrimony. I did not know then that it was a common fate, and that every one thought, like myself, that it was his exclusive misfortune, that he concealed this exclusive and disgraceful misfortune, not only from everybody else but even from himself, without acknowledging it to himself.

" It had begun in the very first days and it continued all the time, and it grew ever stronger and more pointed. In the depth of my heart I felt from the start that I was lost, that there had happened that which I had not expected, that marriage was not only no happiness, but even something very oppressive; however, like all the rest, I did not wish to acknowledge the fact to myself (I would not have acknowledged it even now were it not for the end), and I concealed it not only from others, but even from myself. Now I wonder how it was that I did not see my real situation. It might have been seen from the very fact that the quarrels began from such causes that later, when they were over, it was difficult to recall what had caused them. Reason had no time to simulate sufficient causes for the constant animosity which subsisted between us. Still more

striking was the insufficiency of excuses for making up again. At times there were words, explanations, even tears, but often— Oh, it is horrible to think of it — after the bitterest words uttered toward each other, suddenly there were silent glances, smiles, kisses, embraces — Fie, what abomination ! How could I have missed seeing then all the vileness of it ?"

XIII.

Two passengers entered and seated themselves on a distant bench. He kept silent while they were seating themselves, but as soon as they quieted down he proceeded, apparently not losing the thread of his thoughts for a minute even.

" The vilest thing about it is," he began, " that in theory love is something ideal, elevated, whereas in practice it is abominable, swinish, a thing of which it is abominable and a shame to think and speak. Nature has purposely made it abominable and shameful. And if it is an abomination and a shame, it ought to be understood as such, whereas people, on the contrary, pretend that this abomination and shame is beautiful and elevated. What were the first signs of my love ? They were these: I abandoned myself to animal excesses, not only feeling no shame, but somehow priding myself on the possibility of these physical excesses, paying not the least attention to her spiritual, nay, not even to her physical, life. I was bewildered to discover whence our animosity to each other came, but it was quite simple: this animosity was nothing but a protest of human nature against the animal which oppressed it.

" I marvelled at our mutual enmity. How could it have been otherwise ? This hatred was nothing but the hatred which is common to participators in a crime, both for the incitement to the crime, and for the part taken in it. What else was it but a crime, when she, poor woman, became pregnant in the first month, and our swinish union still continued ? You think that I am deviating from my story ? Not in the least! I am telling you how I killed my wife. In the court they asked me how and with what I killed my wife. The fools thought that I killed her with a knife on the 5th of October. I did not kill her then, but much earlier. Just as they now continue to kill them, all of them, all — "

" With what ? "

" This is the remarkable thing: nobody wants to know that which is so clear and evident; that which doctors ought to know and preach, but about which they keep silent. The thing is dreadfully simple. Men and women are created like animals, and after sexual love begins pregnancy, then lactation, — that is, conditions under which carnal love is injurious both to the woman and to her child. There are an equal number of men and women. What follows from this ? It seems to

be clear, and it does not take much wisdom to draw from it the same conclusion that animals draw, namely, continence. But no. Science has gone so far as to discover certain leucocytes that race about in the blood, and all kinds of useless foolishness, but it has not been able to grasp this matter. At least, one does not hear science speaking of it.

" Thus there are but two ways out for woman : one is to make a monster of herself and destroy once and for all, or every time when the necessity arises, the possibility of being a woman, that is, a mother, in order that man may quietly and constantly enjoy himself; the other way out, - it is not even a way out, but merely a simple, coarse, direct violation of the laws of Nature, which is committed in all so-called decent families, and which is, that woman, in opposition to her nature, must at the same time be pregnant, and nurse a child, and be a mistress, - that is, that she must be that to which not one animal would descend. Strength does not hold out. Therefore, we have hysterics and nerves, and, among the lower masses, epilepsy. You will notice that pure girls have no epilepsy, but only women, that is, women living with their husbands. Thus it is in our country. The same is true of Europe in general. All the hospitals of hystericals are full of women who violate the laws of Nature. The epileptics and Charcot's patients are the complete wrecks, whereas the world is full of half-maimed women. Just think what a great work is going on in woman when she has conceived or when she nurses the newly-born child ! There is growing up that which continues us and takes our place ! And this sacred work is violated, - by what ? - it is terrible to think of it! And they prate about the liberty and the rights of woman. It is as though cannibals were fattening captives for their feast, and, at the same time, assuring us that they are considerate about their rights and their freedom."

All this was entirely new to me and startled me.

" Well, if it is so," I said, " it turns out that one may love his wife about twice in a year, and a man - "

" A man must! " he interrupted me. " Again the dear priests of science have so assured us. Impress a man with the idea that he needs whiskey, tobacco, opium, and all this becomes necessary to him. It appears that God did not comprehend what was necessary, and since He did not consult with the wizards, He made blunders. You will see that this is not reasonable. They have decided that man must of necessity gratify his lust, but childbirth and lactation, which interfere with the gratification of this necessity, are in the way. What is to be done ? Turn to the wizards, and they will fix it up. And they have done so! Oh, when will these wizards with their deceptions be dethroned ? It is high time! What have we come to ? People lose their minds and commit suicide, - all from this cause. How could it be otherwise ? Animals seem to understand that their progeny continues their race, and they adhere to certain laws in this respect. Only man does not know it, nor wants to know it. He is concerned only about getting the greatest possible enjoyment. And

who is doing that ? The king of Nature, – man ! You will notice that animals come together only when they can ensure a progeny, whereas the accursed king of Nature is always at it, provided he can derive pleasure from it. More than that: he extols this simian occupation into a pearl of creation, into love. And in the name of this love, – that is, of abomination, he destroys – what? – one-half of the human race. Of all the women, who ought to be the helpmates in humanity's progress toward truth and goodness, he, in the name of his pleasure, makes not helpmates, but enemies. See, who is it that everywhere impedes the onward march of humanity ? Women. Why are they such ? For the reason which I have mentioned. Yes, sir, yes, sir," he repeated several times and began to move about, to take out his cigarettes, and to smoke, apparently wishing to calm himself.

XIV.

" I lived like just such a swine," he continued, in his former tone of voice. " The worst of it was that, living this bad life, I imagined that, because I was not attracted to other women, because I was living an honest domestic life, I was a moral man, and that I was not guilty of anything, but that our quarrels were due to her, her character.

" Of course, it was not she alone who was at fault. She was such as all, or as the majority are. She had been educated as the position of woman in our society demands, and as are brought up all the women, without exception, of our privileged classes, and as they of necessity must be brought up. They are prating of a new education for women. Empty words: the education of woman is just what it ought to be considering the existing unfeigned, true, general view held in regard to woman.

" The education of woman will always correspond to man's view of her. We all know what men think of them: * J Vein, Weib, und Gesang,' and poets say so in verse. Take all poetry, all painting and sculpture, beginning with amatory poems and naked Venuses and Phry-nes, and you will see that woman is an instrument of enjoyment; so she is on the Truba and on the Grach^vka,¹ and at the most refined ball. Take note of the devil's cunning: all right, let it be enjoyment and pleasure, let it, then, be known that it is enjoyment, and that woman is a dainty morsel. No, at first the knights assure us that they will worship woman (that they will, but they

1 Streets in Moscow.

will not cease looking upon her as an instrument of enjoyment). Now they assure us that they respect woman. Some give their seats to them, and pick up their handkerchiefs ; others acknowledge their right to occupy certain positions, to take part in the government, and so on. This they do, but the view remains the same: she is an

instrument of enjoyment; her body is a means for enjoyment. And she knows it. It is just the same as with slavery.

" Slavery is nothing but the enjoyment of the forced labour of others. Consequently, in order that there should be no slavery, it would be necessary for men not to wish to make use of the forced labour of others, that they should regard this as sinful and disgraceful, whereas, in reality, they change the external form of slavery and imagine and assure themselves that there is no longer any slavery, and they do not see and do not wish to see that slavery still exists, because people still continue to love and consider good and just the enjoyment of the labours of others. As long as they regard this as good, there will always be found men who are stronger and more cunning than the rest and who will be able to accomplish it.

" Precisely the same is the case with the emancipation of woman. The enslavement of woman consists in men's desire to make use of her as an instrument of enjoyment, and in their considering this to be right. So they go and free woman, and give her all kinds of equal rights with man, but continue to look upon her as an instrument of enjoyment, and to educate her accordingly, in childhood, and in public opinion. And she remains the same humiliated and debauched slave, and man is the same debauched slave-owner.

" They free woman in the colleges and in courts, but still look upon her as an instrument of enjoyment. Teach her, as she is taught with us, to look upon herself in this manner, and she will always remain a lower being. Either, with the aid of scoundrel doctors, she will prevent conception, that is, she will be a complete prostitute, who has descended, not to the lowest animal, but to the level of a thing, or she will be what she is in the majority of cases, diseased in mind, hysterical, unhappy, without any possibility for spiritual growth.

" The gymnasias and the colleges cannot change this. This can be changed only by a changed view held by men in regard to women, and by women in regard to themselves. This will come about only when women will regard as their highest state the condition of virginity, and not, as now, look upon this highest condition of man as a shame and disgrace. As long as this does not exist, the ideal of every girl, whatever her education may be, will be to attract to herself as many men, as many males as possible, in order to have a chance to select.

" But the fact that one knows a lot of mathematics and that another can play on the harp, will not change it. A woman is happy and obtains everything she may wish for, if she fascinates a man. And thus a woman's chief problem becomes the ability to fascinate. Thus it has been, and thus it will be. Thus it is in the life of a girl of our society, and thus it remains after marriage. In the maiden state she needs it for selection, in her matrimonial state – in order to rule over her husband.

" There is but one thing which cuts it short, or at least for a time suppresses it, and that is children, provided the woman is not a monster and herself nurses them. But here the doctors come in.

" My wife, who wanted herself to suckle and did suckle the last four children, was not in good health when the first baby was born. These doctors, who cynically undressed and felt her all over, for which I had to thank them and pay them money,— these charming doctors found that she must not herself nurse, and she was, during this first time, deprived of the only means which would have saved her from coquetry. The baby was brought up by a wet-nurse, that is, we made use of the poverty, want, and ignorance of a woman, enticed her away from her own child to ours, and for this put on her a nurse's headgear with galloons. But this is another matter. The trouble was that during her period of freedom from pregnancy and lactation her former dormant feminine coquetry returned to her. And in me there appeared with unusual force the corresponding torment of jealousy, which never ceased torturing me during the whole time of my married life, just as all husbands are tortured who live with their wives as I did, that is immorally.

XV.

" During all the time of my married life I never stopped experiencing pangs of jealousy. But there were certain periods when I suffered more than usual from it. One such period was when, after the first babe, the doctors forbade her to nurse it. I was especially jealous during that time, in the first place, because my wife was experiencing that unrest, peculiar to mothers, which produces a causeless violation of the regular order of life; and, in the second, because, seeing how easily she rejected the moral obligation of mothers, I justly, though unconsciously, concluded that it would be just as easy for her to violate her marital life, the more so since she was quite well and, in spite of the prohibition of the charming doctors, later nursed her own children, and brought up healthy children."

" I see you do not like doctors," I said, noticing an especially malignant expression of his voice every time he mentioned them.

" It is not a question of likes and dislikes. They have ruined my life, as they have ruined the lives of thousands, of hundreds of thousands, without my being able to connect the consequences with the cause. I understand that they want to make money, just like the lawyers and others, and I should gladly have given up to them half of my income, and everybody else, understanding what they are doing, would gladly give up to them half of their possessions, if they only would not interfere with your domestic life, and never came up close to you. I have not been collecting information, but I know dozens of cases — there are plenty of them — where they have killed either the

child in the mother's womb, averring that the mother could not bring forth the child, although later the mother has borne children without difficulty, or have killed the mothers, under the pretext of some operation. Nobody counts these murders, just as they did not count the murders of the Inquisition, because they were supposed to be for the good of humanity. It is impossible to count all the crimes which are committed by them. But all these crimes are nothing in comparison with that moral materialistic decadence which they introduce into the world, especially through the women.

" I shall leave out of account the fact that, if one were to follow their instructions, people would have to tend, on account of ever present infections in everything and everywhere, not to union but to disunion; according to their injunctions, people ought to sit in solitude, without letting an atomizer with carbolic acid out of their mouths (however, they have discovered that even this is of no avail). But this is nothing. The chief poison lies in the corruption of men, especially of women.

"Nowadays one must not say: 'You are not living well, you must live better? One can't say that to himself, nor to any one else. And if you are living badly, the cause of it is the abnormality of the nerve functions, or something of the kind. And you have to go to them, and they will prescribe thirty-five kopeks' worth of medicine from the apothecary's, and you have to take it!

" You will grow worse, then take more medicine, and go again to the doctor. It is very clever !

" But that is another matter. I only wish to say that she had not the slightest difficulty in nursing her children, and that this pregnancy and nursing alone saved me from the torments of jealousy. If it had not been for this, it would all have happened before. The children saved me and her. In eight years she bore five children, and she nursed them all but the first herself."

" Where are your children now ?" I asked.

" The children ?" he repeated the question, with an expression of terror.

" Excuse me, maybe this is too painful for you ? "

" No, not at all. My wife's sister and her brother have taken them. They did not give them to me. I have given them my estate, but they did not give them up to me. I am something like a lunatic according to them. I am now leaving them. I saw them, but they will not let me have them, because I should educate them to be different from their parents, whereas it is necessary for them to be like them. Well, what is to be done ? Of course they will not let me have them, and they will not trust me. Besides, I do not know whether I should have strength enough to bring them up. I think not. I am a ruin, a cripple. There is just one thing in me - I know. Yes, this much is certain: I know that which others will not know so soon.

" Yes, the children are alive and growing up to be just such savages as all around them are. I have seen them, I have seen them three times. I can do nothing for them, nothing. I am now travelling south, to my home: I have a cottage and garden there.

" Yes, it will be a long time before people will find out that which I know. It is easy enough to find out how much iron and what metals there are in the sun and stars; but it is hard, dreadfully hard, to comprehend that which casts any aspersions on our swinishness!

" I am thankful to you for being willing to listen to me.

XVI.

"You mentioned my children. What a lot of lying they do' about children ! Children are God's blessing, children are a joy. This is nothing but a lie. That used to be so, but now there is no semblance of it. Children are a bother, and nothing else. The majority of mothers feel it outright, and incidentally allow themselves to say so. Ask the majority of mothers of our circle, well-to-do people, and they will tell you that out of fear that their children might get ill and die, they do not wish to have any children, and do not wish to nurse them after they are born, in order not to become attached to them and not to suffer. The pleasure which the child affords them by its charm, – by those little hands and feet, and by the whole body, – the pleasure afforded by the child is less than the suffering which they experience, – let alone from disease or loss of the child,– from the mere fear of possible sickness or death. Weighing both the advantages and disadvantages, it appears that it is disadvantageous and, consequently, undesirable to have children. They say this frankly and boldly, imagining that these sentiments arise from their love for children, a good and praiseworthy feeling, of which they are proud. They do not notice that by this reflection they directly refute love, and only confirm their egotism. They derive less pleasure from the charm of a child than suffering caused by anxiety, and so that child, which they might love, is not wanted. They do not sacrifice themselves for the beloved creature, but for their own sakes they sacrifice the creature who might be loved.

" It is evident that this is not love, but egotism. But not a hand is raised to condemn them, the mothers of well-to-do families, for this egotism, when you consider what it is they suffer for the sake of their children's health, thanks again to the role these doctors play in our upper classes. It makes me shudder even now when I recall the life and the condition of my wife during those first years, when there were three or four children, and she was all absorbed in them. We led no life at all. It was an eternal danger, an escaping from it, a new impending danger, new desperate efforts,

and a new salvation,— eternally the same condition as on a sinking ship. At times I thought that it was done on purpose, that she only, pretended to be so anxious about the children, in order to vanquish me. It solved so enticingly and simply all the questions in her favour. It seemed to me at times that everything she said and did in such cases was done on purpose. But no, she really was all the time in terrible agony and pain about the children, their health and sicknesses. It was a trial for her and for me, too. Nor could she help suffering. Her attachment for her children, the animal necessity of feeding, fostering, defending them, was such as it is in the majority of women, but there was not that which animals have, — an absence of imagination and reason.

" A hen is not afraid of what might happen with her chick, does not know all the diseases which might befall it, does not know all the means with which people imagine they can save from disease and death. The young ones are no torment for the hen. She does for her chicks what is natural and pleasurable for her to do, — her young ones are a joy to her. When a chick becomes ill, her cares are quite definite: she warms and feeds it. Doing this, she knows that she is doing all that is necessary. If the chick dies, she does not ask herself why it has died, whither it has gone; she cackles for awhile, then stops and continues to live as of old. But for our unfortunate women this is not the case, and it was not for my wife. Let alone the diseases, how to cure them, she heard on all sides and read endlessly varied and eternally changed rules about how to rear and educate the children: to feed them with this and that, and in such a way, — no, not with this and that, and in such a way, but like this; to dress, give them drink, bathe, put them to bed, give them outings, air, — in regard to all these things we, but more especially she, learned new rules every week. It looked as though it was but yesterday that women had begun to bear children. And if a child was not fed so or so, not properly bathed and not in time, and it grew ill, — then the conclusion was that we were at fault, that we had not done right by it.

" There was enough trouble as long as they kept well; but let them get ill, and then, of course, it was a real hell. It is supposed that a disease can be cured and that there is a science about it, and people, the doctors, who know how to cure. Not all, but the very best know how. So the child is ill, and you must strike him, that best doctor, who can save, and the child will be saved; or if you do not get him, or you do not live in the place where that doctor lives, the child will perish. This is not her exclusive belief, but the belief of all the women of her circle, and she hears it on all sides : Ekaterina Semenovna has lost two, because she did not call Ivan Zakharych in time. Ivdn Zakharych has saved Marya Ivanovna's elder daughter; at the Petrovs', they, by the doctor's advice, scattered to various hotels, and they survived; — they did not scatter, and the children died; such and such a one had a weak child, and they went to the south, by the doctor's advice, and saved the child. How can she help worrying and suffering all her life when the lives of her children, to whom she is animally attached, depend upon her finding out in time what Ivan Zakhdrych may say about it ?

But what Ivan Zakharych will say, nobody knows, least of all he himself, because he knows full well that he knows nothing and is unable to be of any use, and continues making haphazard guesses, in order that people should not lose faith in his knowledge. If she were all animal, she would not worry so much; if she were all man, she would have faith in God, and she would say and think as believers say: * God hath given, God hath taken, you cannot go away from God.'

" The whole life with the children had been for my wife, consequently also for me, not a pleasure, but a torment. How could this have been avoided ? She was in eternal worry. We would calm down from some scene of jealousy or simply from a quarrel, and we would try to live in peace, to read and think, or we would take up some work, when the sudden news would be brought to us that Vasya was vomiting, or Masha was having a bleeding spell, or Andryusha had an eruption, – well, there was an end to peace. Now the question was: ' Where must one gallop ? for what doctors ? how shall the children be isolated?' And there would begin clysters, temperatures, mixtures, and doctors. No sooner would one thing be finished, than another began. There was no regular, settled domestic life. There was only, as I have told you, an eternal anxiety on account of imaginary or real dangers. It is so now in the majority of families. In my family this was very pronounced. My wife was fond of her children and credulous.

" Thus the presence of children did not improve our life; it only poisoned it. Besides, the children were a new cause for dissensions. The children themselves were the means and objects of dissensions from the moment they existed, and the older they grew, the more frequently was this so. The children were not only the objects of our dissensions, but also the weapons of our battles, – we used our children, as it were, to fight each other with. Each of us had a favourite child, the weapon of the fight. I fought mainly by means of Vasya, the elder, and she by means of Liza. Besides, when the children grew up and their characters defined themselves, we attracted them to our sides. The poor things suffered dreadfully from it, but we, in our constant state of war, had no time to consider them. A little girl was my partisan, whereas the elder boy, who resembled her, her favourite, was frequently the object of my hatred.

XVII.

" Well, this is the way we lived. Our relations grew ever more hostile. Finally we reached such a stage that it was not the dissensions that caused the hostility, but the hostility which provoked the dissensions. No matter what she said, I disagreed with her from the start, and the same was the case with her.

" In the fourth year both sides came to the natural conclusion that we could not understand each other or agree. We did not even try to hear each other's opinions. In regard to the simplest things, especially in regard to the children, we invariably stuck to our ideas. As I think of them now, the opinions which I defended were not of such prime importance to me as not to admit of deviations ; but she held the contrary view, and yielding would have meant yielding to her. That I could not do. Neither could she. She, no doubt, considered herself absolutely right in regard to me, while I was, to my thinking, a saint in her presence. When we were left alone, we were doomed to silence or to kinds of conversation which, I am sure, animals even could carry on: ' What time is it ? It is time to go to bed. What shall we have for dinner ? Where shall I go ? What do the papers say ? Send for the doctor. Masha has a sore throat? It was enough for us to deviate a hair's breadth from this circle of conversations, which was contracted to impossible limits, in order to give irritation a chance to flame up.

" There were conflicts and expressions of hatred for the coffee, the table-cloth, the vehicle, the progress of the game of cards, - for things that could be of no importance to either of us. In me, at least, a terrible hatred for her was frequently fermenting. I frequently looked at her, while she poured out the tea, swung her foot, or carried the spoon to her mouth and noisily sipped a liquid, and I hated her for it as for the meanest act. I did not notice then that the periods of irritation arose quite regularly and evenly in me, corresponding to the periods of what we called love. A period of love, then a period of irritation; an energetic period of love, a long period of irritation; a more feeble manifestation of love, a short period of irritation. We did not understand then that love and anger were the same animal sensations, only from opposite ends.

" It would have been terrible to live thus if we had understood our situation; but we did not understand, nor see it. A man's salvation, and punishment at the same time, when he lives irregularly, lies in the fact that he can befog himself, in order not to see the wretchedness of his situation. This we did. She tried to forget herself in tense, always hurried occupations with household affairs, with her own and her children's toilets, and with her children's studies and health. I had my own affairs: drinking, service, the chase, cards. We were both all the time occupied. Both of us felt that the more we were occupied, the more infuriated we could be at each other. ' It is easy enough for you to make grimaces,' thought I, * but you have worn me out with your all-night scenes, and here I have to attend a meeting.' ' You are all right,' she not only thought, but even said, 'but I have sat up all night with the baby.' All these new theories of hypnotism, mental diseases, and hysterics, - all that is not a simple, but a dangerous and abominable insipidity. Charcot would, no doubt, have said about my wife that she was hysterical, and of me he would have said that I was abnormal, and would have, no doubt, begun to cure me. But there was nothing there to cure.

"Thus we lived in an eternal fog, without seeing the situation we

were in. If that which had happened had not taken place and if I had lived in the same manner until old age, I should, at my death, have thought that I had lived a good life, – not an especially good, but not necessarily a bad, life, – such as all live; I should not have come to comprehend that abyss of wretchedness and that contemptible lie in which I wallowed.

“ We should have been two mutually hating prisoners, fettered with one chain, poisoning each other’s life, and endeavouring not to see this. I did not know then that ninety-nine out of a hundred married couples live in the same hell, and that it cannot be otherwise. At that time I knew neither of others, nor of myself.

“ It is remarkable what coincidences there are in well-regulated and even in badly regulated lives! Just when the life of the parents becomes unbearable to both of them, it becomes necessary to subject the children to the conditions of the city for the sake of their education. And thus rises the necessity of settling in the city.”

He grew silent and once or twice uttered his strange sounds, which now perfectly resembled repressed sobs. We were getting near to a station.

“ What time is it ?” he asked.

I looked at my watch: it was two o’clock.

“ Are you not tired ? ” he asked.

“ No. But you are!”

“ I have a choking feeling. Excuse me, I will walk a little and take a drink of water.”

He went, staggering, through the car. I remained sitting alone, running through everything he had told me, and I was so lost in thought that I did not notice how he had come in by the other door.

XVIII.

“Yes, I digress all the time,” he began. “Much have I thought over. At many things I now look differently, and I feel like telling about this. Well, we began to live in the city. A man may live a hundred years in the city without perceiving that he has long been dead and decayed. There is no time to balance one’s own accounts, – one is too busy: with affairs, society obligations, health, art, the children’s health, their education. Now you must receive this and that person, now you must visit this and that one; and now again you must look at such and such a one, or listen to what they have to say. In the city there are, at any given moment, one, two, or three celebrities whom you cannot afford to miss. Now you have to cure yourself, or this or that child; and now you have to look for teachers, tutors, governesses, but in reality it is dreadfully empty. Well, thus we lived and felt less the pain of our

companionship. Besides, at first we had admirable occupations: getting fixed in the new city and in our new apartments, and our migrations from the city to the country, and from the country back again to the city.

"We passed one winter in this way, but the next winter there happened the following apparently insignificant incident, which was not taken notice of by any one, but which produced that which later took place.

" She was not in good health, and the doctors told her that she must have no children, and taught her how to keep from having them. This disgusted me. I fought against it, but she insisted upon it with frivolous stubbornness, and I had to submit; the last justification of a swinish life, the children, was taken away, and life became more abominable still.

" A peasant, a labourer, needs children. It is hard for him to bring them up, but he needs them, and therefore his conjugal relations are justified. But we people who have children, need no more children: they are an additional care, an expense, co-heirs, they are a burden. And thus there is no justification whatsoever for our swinish life. Either we artificially get rid of children or we look upon them as a misfortune, as the result of an accident, and this is still more abominable.

" There are no justifications. But we have fallen morally so deep that we do not even see the need of any justification.

" The majority of the contemporary educated world abandon themselves to tins debauchery without the least compunction.

" There is no reason for feeling any compunction, because in our existence there is no other conscience than, if one may call it so, the conscience of public opinion and' criminal law. In this case neither the one nor the other are violated: there is no cause to be conscience-stricken before society, because they all do it: Marya Pavlovna, and Ivan Zakharych. And what sense would there be in breeding paupers and depriving yourself of the possibility of leading a social life ? Nor is there any cause for being conscience-stricken before the criminal law, or to be afraid of it. Those monstrous girls and soldiers' wives throw their children into ponds and wells, - they, of course, must be put in jail, - but we do it all at the proper time and in a decent manner.

" Thus we lived two more years. The measures of the scoundrel doctors apparently began to bear fruit: she became physically stronger and handsomer, like the last beauty of summer. She felt it and paid attention to it. There developed in her a certain provoking beauty which made people feel uneasy. She was in all the strength of a thirty-year-old, non-bearing, well-fed, and irritated woman. A glance at her caused uneasiness. When she passed by men, she attracted their glances to her. She was like a long-rested, well-fed harnessed horse when its bridle is taken off. There was no bridle,

just as is the case with ninety-nine hundredths of our women. I was conscious of it, and I felt terribly."

XIX.

He suddenly got up and sat down near the window.

" Pardon me," he said, and, staring through the window, sat thus for about three minutes in silence. Then he drew a deep breath and again seated himself opposite me. His face was quite changed, his eyes looked wretched, and what might be taken for a strange smile wrinkled his lips. " I am a little tired, but I will continue. There is much time yet, – day has not broken yet. Yes, sir," he began, after lighting a cigarette, " she grew plump as soon as she stopped having children, and her disease, – her eternal suffering on account of the children, began to pass away; it did not pass away exactly; rather, she seemed to awaken as if from an intoxication, she came to her senses, and saw that there was a whole God's world with its joys, which she had forgotten, but in which she did not know how to live, – a God's world, which she did not at all understand. ' I must not miss the chance! Time will pass, and it will never return! ' Thus, I imagine, she reasoned, or rather felt, nor could she help reasoning and feeling like this: she had been educated to consider nothing more worthy of attention in the world than love. She had married, had tasted a little of that love, but nowhere near that which she had promised herself, which she had expected, and there had been so many disenchantments, so much suffering, and that unexpected torment, – so many children ! This torment had worn her out. And now, thanks to obliging doctors, she had discovered that it was possible to get along without children.

" She was happy and conscious of it, and again bloomed forth for that one thing she knew, for love. But love for her husband, who had defiled himself by jealousy and malice of every kind, was no longer for her. She began to dream of another, a pure, new love, – at least I thought so about her. And she began to look around, as though expecting something. I saw it and could not help worrying. It came to be a usual occurrence for her to speak to me, even as she had done before, through a third person, that is, to speak to strangers while really addressing me, and, without thinking that but an hour before she had said the very opposite, to say boldly and half in earnest that maternal love was a deception, that it was not worth while to sacrifice life for the children's sake, that there was youth, and that life ought to be enjoyed. She busied herself less with the children, and not with such abandonment as before, but she was ever more concerned about herself and her exterior, even though she concealed this, and about her pleasures, and even about perfecting herself. She again took with enthusiasm to the piano, which had been entirely given up. This was the beginning of it all."

He again turned to the window with strained eyes, but, evidently making an effort over himself, he immediately continued:

" Yes, that man made his appearance – " He hesitated and once or

twice emitted his strange nasal sounds.

I saw that it was painful for him to name that man, to recall him, to speak of him. But he made an effort, and, as if overcoming the impediment which was in his way, continued with determination:

" He was a worthless man, to my thinking, so far as I could judge him, not on account of the significance which he received in my life, but because he really was such. The fact that he was of no account only serves as a proof of how little amenable to reason she was. If not he, it would have been another, – but it had to happen –" He again grew silent. " Yes, he was a musician, a violin player, – not a professional musician, but a semi-professional, a semi-society man.

" His father is a landed proprietor, a neighbour of my father's. His father had lost his fortune, and his children – there were three boys – had got up in the world; only this youngest one had been taken to his godmother in Paris. There he was sent to the Conservatory, because he had talent for music, and he graduated from it as a violin player, taking part in concerts. This man was – " Apparently he was about to say something uncomplimentary of him, but he restrained himself and rapidly said, " Well, I do not know the kind of life he led; all I know is that he made his appearance that year in Russia and that he appeared at my house –

" Almond-shaped, moist eyes; red, smiling lips; pomaded moustache; the latest fashionable hair-dress; a common, handsome face, what women call not at all bad; of a weak, though not misshapen figure, with unusually well-developed hips, as with women, and such as, they say, Hottentots have. They, too, are musical. Forward to the point of familiarity, so far as possible, but sensitive and ever ready to stop at the least repulse, with the preservation of external dignity, and with that peculiarly Parisian shade of his button shoes and brightly coloured ties and all that which strangers acquire in Paris and which, on account of its novelty, always affects women. In his manners an artificial, external cheerfulness, – that manner, you know, of saying everything by hints and snatches, as though you knew and remembered it all, and were able to supplement it yourself.

" He, with his music, was the cause of everything. At the trial the case was presented as being the result of jealousy. Not at all, that is, it was not at all the reason of it, though it had something to do with it. At the trial it was decided that I was a deceived husband and that I had killed her, while defending my honour (that is what they call it). And so they acquitted me. At the trial I endeavoured to explain things, but they understood me as wishing to rehabilitate my wife's honour.

" Her relations with the musician, whatever they may have been, have no meaning for me, nor for her either. But what has a meaning is that which I have told you about, that is, my swinishness. Everything happened because there was between us that terrible abyss of which I have told you, that terrible tension of mutual hatred,

when the first cause was sufficient to produce a crisis. Our quarrels became toward the end something terrible, and were very startling, alternating with tense animal passion.

" If he had not appeared, another man would have. If there had not been the excuse of jealousy, there would have been something else. I insist that all men who live as I did must either take to debauch, or separate, or kill themselves, or their wives, just as I did. If this has not happened with them, it must be taken as an extremely rare exception. Even I have been, before ending as I did, several times on the brink of suicide, and she, too, had several times almost poisoned herself.

XX.

" Yes, it was even so before it happened.

" We lived in a kind of truce, when there seemed to be no reason for breaking it. Suddenly the conversation touches upon a certain dog, of which I say that it received a medal at the show. She says that it was not a medal, but honourable mention. A discussion ensues. We begin to jump from one subject to another and to hurl accusations at each other: ' Of course, it is always that way? - 'You said -'-'No, I did not say.' - 'So I am lying?' You feel that before you know it that terrible quarrel will be on, when you will kill yourself or her. You know that it will begin directly, and you are afraid of it as of fire, and you would like to restrain yourself, but fury takes possession of your whole being. And she, being in the same, but even worse condition, purposely misinterprets every word of mine, and every word of hers is saturated with poison; she stings me in whatever she knows is the most painful spot. The farther it goes the worse it gets. I cry out, ' Shut up! ' or something of the kind.

" She jumps out of the room and runs into the nursery. I try to keep her back, in order to finish my sentence to her, and I seize her by the arm. She pretends that I have hurt her, and cries: ' Children, your father is striking me !' I cry out, ' Don't lie ! ' - 'It is not the first time !' she cries, or something of the kind. The children rush to her. She calms them down. I say, ' Don't pretend !' She says : 'For you everything is pretence. You will kill a person, and then you will say that the person pretends. Now I understand you. That is what you want to do!' - ' Oh, I wish you were dead !' I cry. I remember how these terrible words frightened me. I had not thought I could say such terrible, coarse words, and I wonder how they could have escaped from me. I cry these terrible words, and I run into my cabinet, and sit down and smoke. I hear her coming out into the antechamber and getting ready to depart. I ask her where she is going, but she does not answer. ' The devil take her,' I say to myself, returning to my cabinet, and I again lie down and smoke. A thousand different plans as to how to take my revenge on her and get rid of her, how to mend it all and make it appear as though nothing had happened, pass through my mind. I meditate over this, and I smoke, and smoke, and smoke. I think of running away from her, of hiding, of going to America. I go so far as to imagine how I

shall be rid of her and how nice it will be when I shall unite with another beautiful and entirely fresh woman. I shall get rid of her by her death, or by being divorced from her, and I am planning how to do it. I see that I am getting mixed up and that I am not thinking of what I ought to think about, and in order not to see that I am not thinking of what I ought to think about, I smoke.

" Life at home goes on. The governess comes and asks : ' Where is madam ? When will she return ? ' The lackey asks: ' Shall tea be served ? ' I come to the dining-room, and the children, especially the eldest, Liza, who can comprehend, look interrogatively and disapprovingly at me. We drink tea in silence. She is not yet back. A whole evening passes, she is not back, and two feelings alternately arise in my soul: anger with her for tormenting me and the children by her absence, which will end by her return, and fear that she will not return and will do something to herself. I should like to go to find her. But where shall I look for her ? At her sister's ? It would be stupid to go there to ask. Well, if she wants to torment me, let her, too, be tormented. That is what she is waiting for. The next time it will be only worse. What if she is not at her sister's, but is doing or has already done something to herself ? Eleven o'clock, twelve. I do not go to the sleeping-room, - it is stupid to lie there alone and wait, - I will lie down here. I want to busy myself with something, to write a letter, to read; but I am not able to do anything. I sit alone in my cabinet, and worry, and am angry, and listen. Three o'clock, four o'clock, - she is not back yet. Toward morning I fall asleep. I awake, -she is not back.

" Everything in the house goes as of old, but all are perplexed, and all look interrogatively and reproachfully at me, assuming that it is all my fault. Within me is the same struggle, - fury because she torments me so, and anxiety on her account.

" At about eleven o'clock in the morning her sister comes as her messenger to me, and there begins the customary: ' She is in a terrible state. What can it be ? Nothing has happened ? ' I speak of the impossibility of her disposition, and say that I have not done anything.

" ' It cannot remain as it is,' says her sister.

" ' It is all her doing, not mine,' I say. ' I will not make the first step. If we are to separate, well and good! '

"My sister-in-law goes away without having accomplished anything. I said boldly that I would not make the first step ; but the moment she is gone and I go out and see the poor, frightened children, I am ready to make the first step. I should like to make it, but I do not know how. Again I walk around, I smoke, I drink brandy and wine at breakfast, and I reach the point which I unconsciously wish: I do not see the stupidity and meanness of my situation.

" About three o'clock she returns. She says nothing to me as she

meets me. I imagine that she is pacified, and I begin to tell her how her reproaches provoked me. She says with the same stern and terribly drawn face that she has come not to make explanations, but to take the children away, that we cannot live together. I tell her that it was not my fault, that she made me lose my patience. She looks sternly and solemnly at me, and then says: 'Don't speak another word, or you will regret it!' I say to her that I can't now stand any comedy. She shouts something which I cannot make out and runs to her room. The key rings out after her: she has locked herself in. I push the door, - there is no answer, and I go away in fury. Half an hour later Liza comes to me in tears. - 'What, what is the matter?' - 'We do not hear mamma.' - We go there. I jerk the door with all my might. The bolt is not well fastened, and both halves of the door come open. I walk up to the bed. She is lying uncomfortably on her bed, in her skirts and high shoes. On the table is an empty opium bottle. We bring her back to her senses. Tears, and, at last, we make up. We do not make up: in the soul of each is the same malice toward the other, with the addition of irritation for the pain inflicted by this quarrel, which one puts to the account of the other. But it has to be ended in some way, and life proceeds as of old.

" It was quarrels of this kind, and even worse quarrels that we had all the time, - once a week, or once a month, and, at times, even every day. And it was all the time the same. Once I went so far as to provide myself with a passport for abroad, - the quarrel had lasted two days. But after that there was again a semblance of an explanation, a patched-up peace, - and I remained.

XXL

" So these were our relations when that man made his appearance. He arrived at Moscow, - his name is Tru-khachdovski, - and showed up at my house. It was in the morning. I received him. We had once been on 'thou' terms. He manoeuvred between 'thou' and 'you,' trying to stick to '< thou,' but I at once set the pace at 'you,' and he immediately submitted. I did not like him from the start. But, strange to say, a certain strange and fatal power urged me not to repel and remove him, but, on the contrary, to draw him closer to me. There would have been nothing simpler than talking coldly to him and seeing him out without introducing him to my wife. No, I, as it were on purpose, mentioned his playing, and said that I had been told that he had given up the violin. He told me that, on the contrary, he now played more than ever. He recalled what it was I used to play formerly. I told him that I had given up playing, but that my wife played well. A remarkable thing happened! My relations with him on that first day, during the first hour of our meeting, were just such as they could be only after all that has taken place. There was a certain restraint in my relations with him: I noticed every word, every expression, uttered by him or by me, and I ascribed an importance to them.

" I introduced him to my wife. They immediately began to talk about music, and he offered his services to her, to play with her. My

wife, as always during this last period, was extremely elegant in appearance, and enticingly and disquietingly beautiful. She apparently took a liking to him from the start. Besides, she was happy to have a chance of playing with a violin, which she liked so much that she used to hire a violinist from the theatre for the purpose, and her face beamed with joy. But, upon looking at me, she at once understood my feeling and so she changed her expression, and there began that game of mutual deception. I smiled a pleasant smile, making it appear that this gave me pleasure. He, glancing at my wife, as all immoral men look at a pretty woman, made it appear that he was interested only in the subject of the conversation, although it did not interest him in the least. She tried to seem indifferent, but my familiar false smile of a jealous man and his lustful glance apparently excited her.

" I noticed that from that first meeting on her eyes were peculiarly sparkling, and, obviously on account of my jealousy, there was established between them something like an electrical current, which provoked in them a similarity of facial expressions and smiles. She blushed and he blushed. She smiled and he smiled. They spoke of music, of Paris, of all kinds of trifles. He arose to leave, and stood, smiling, with his hat on his contracting thigh, looking now at her, and now at me, as though waiting to see what we would do. I remember that particular moment because I might have failed to invite him, and nothing further would have happened. But I looked at him and at her. 'Don't imagine that I am jealous,' I mentally said to her, ' or that I am afraid of you,' I mentally said to him, and I invited him to bring his violin some evening, in order to play with my wife. She looked at me in surprise, flared up, and, as though frightened at something, began to refuse, saying that she did not play well enough. This refusal irritated me even more, and I insisted more urgently.

" I remember the strange feeling with which I looked at the back of his head and at his white neck, which stood out under his black hair, combed in both directions, as he was leaving us with a certain birdlike, hopping motion. I could not help confessing to myself that the presence of this man tormented me. * It depends on me,' thought I, ' to fix it in such a way that I shall never see him again. But doing so would only be a confession that I am afraid of him. No, I am not afraid of him, - that would be humiliating,' I said to myself. And so I insisted in the antechamber, knowing well that my wife was hearing me, that he should come that same evening with his violin. He promised me he would, and went away.

" In the evening he came with his violin, and they played together. But the playing did not go smoothly, - they did not have the proper music, or if they did have it, my wife could not play it without preparation. I was very fond of music and was in sympathy with their playing, fixing a stand for him and turning the music. They managed to play something, some songs without words, and a sonata by Mozart. He played superbly; he possessed in the highest degree that which is called tone and, besides, a refined, noble taste, which was quite out of keeping with his character.

" He was, naturally, a much better musician than my wife; he helped her and, at the same time, politely praised her play. He bore himself very well. My wife seemed to be interested in nothing but the music, and was very simple and natural. But I, although pretending to be interested in the music, did not cease all the evening to be consumed by jealousy.

" I saw from the very first minute when their eyes met that the animal that was sitting in both of them, notwithstanding all the conditions of position and society, was asking, ' May I ? ' and answering, ' Oh, yes, certainly.' I saw that he had not at all expected to find in my wife, in a Moscow lady, such an attractive woman, and that he was glad of it. He did not have the least doubt that o

she was willing. The whole question revolved only on keeping the intolerable husband out of the way. If I myself had been pure, I should not have understood it; but I used to think the same way about women, before I was married, and so I read in his soul as in a book.

" What tormented me more especially was that I had convinced myself that she had no other feeling for me than that of constant irritation, rarely interrupted by the usual sensuality, and that this man, by his external elegance and novelty, but especially by his unquestionably great musical talent, by the proximity due to their play in common, by the influence produced on impressionable natures by music, particularly by the violin, – that this man must of necessity not only be to her liking, but that he, without the least wavering, must vanquish, crush, and twist her, wind her into a rope, make of her anything he pleased. I could not help seeing all this, and I suffered terribly. Yet, in spite of it, or maybe on that very account, some power against my will made me be not only very polite, but even gracious to him. I do not know whether I did so for my wife's sake, or for his, in order to show that I was not afraid of him, or for my own sake, in order to deceive myself, – however it may be, I could not be simple with him from my first relations with him. In order not to surrender myself to my desire of killing him on the spot, I had to be kind to him. I gave him costly wines to drink at supper, went into ecstasies over his playing, spoke with him with an unusually kindly smile, and invited him to dinner for the coming Sunday, when he could again play with my wife. I told him I would call together a few of my acquaintances, lovers of music, to listen to his playing. And thus came the end."

Pozdnyshev in great agitation changed his position and emitted his peculiar sound.

" The presence of this man affected me in a strange manner," he began once more, evidently making an effort to be calm.

" Two or three days later I returned home from some exhibition. I entered the antechamber, and a heavy sensation overcame me: I felt

as though a stone had been rolled upon my heart, and I was unable to account for this sensation. There was something which reminded me of him, as I passed through the antechamber. Only when I had reached the cabinet did I find an explanation of it, and I returned to the antechamber to verify it. Yes, I was not mistaken: it was his overcoat. (Everything which came in contact with him I noticed very attentively, without being conscious of doing so.) I asked whether he was there, and I found he was. I went to the parlour, not through the drawing-room, but through the children's study. My daughter, Liza, was sitting over a book, and the nurse was with the baby at the table, spinning a lid or something. The door to the parlour was closed, and I there heard an even arpeggio and his voice and hers. I listened, but could not make out what it was.

" ' Evidently the sounds of the piano are on purpose to drown their words and kisses,' I thought, - ' perhaps.' 0 Lord, what a storm rose within me! Terror takes possession of me as I think of what animal was then living within me! My heart was compressed and stopped, and then began to beat as with a hammer. The chief feeling, as during every rage, was that of compassion for myself. ' Before the children, before the nurse ! ' I thought. I must have been terrible, because Liza looked at me with strange eyes. ' What had I better do ? ' I asked myself. ' Had T better go in ? I can't, - for God knows what I will do there. Nor can I go away. The nurse is looking at me as though she understood my situation. I must go in,' I said to myself, and rapidly opened the door. He was sitting at the piano and was making these arpeggios with his large, white, arched fingers. She was standing at the corner of the grand over some open music. She was the first to see or hear me, and she glanced at me. I do not know whether she was frightened, or pretended not to be frightened, or really was not frightened, but she did not shudder, nor budge, - she only blushed, and that, too, after some time.

« ' How glad I am you have come ! We have not yet decided what to play on Sunday,' she said to me in a tone of voice which she would not have employed if we had been alone. This fact and her saying ' we ' of herself and of him exasperated me. I silently exchanged greetings with him.

" He pressed my hand and immediately began to explain to me, with a smile which I interpreted as ridicule, that he had brought me some music for the Sunday, and that they could not agree what to play : whether it was to be more difficult and classical music, more especially a sonata by Beethoven with the violin, or some light things. Everything was so natural and simple that it was impossible to find any fault with anything; at the same time I was convinced that it was all an untruth, and that they had come to some kind of an agreement how to deceive me.

" One of the most agonizing situations for a jealous man (in our social life all men are jealous) is caused by certain social conditions under which the greatest and most perilous proximity between man and woman is permitted. One would become a laughing-stock of people, if one were to be set against the close proximity

at balls, or the doctors' proximity to their female patients, or the proximity during occupations with art, painting, or more especially with music. A certain proximity is necessary there, and there is nothing prejudicial in this proximity : only a foolish, jealous man can see anything undesirable in it. And yet, everybody knows that the greater part of all cases of adultery in our society are committed by means of such occupations, especially by means of music.

" I evidently confused them by the confusion which was apparent in me: I was for a long time not able to say anything. I was like an upturned bottle, from which the water does not flow, because it is too full. I wanted to call him names, and drive him out, but, instead, I felt that I must again be gracious and pleasant to him. And so I was. I acted as though I approved of everything, submitting to that strange feeling which caused me to treat him with greater kindness in the measure as his presence tormented me. I told him that I depended on his taste, and- that I advised her to do likewise. He remained long enough to wear off the unpleasant impression produced by my sudden entrance into the room with a frightened face and by my silence, and went away pretending to have decided what to play on the next day. I was fully convinced that, in comparison with that which interested them, the question what to play was quite a matter of indifference to them.

" I took him to the antechamber with especial politeness. (Why not see off a man who has come in order to break the peace and ruin the happiness of a whole family !) I pressed his white, soft hand with unusual kindness.

XXII.

" I did not speak with her all that day, - I could not. Her proximity to me provoked in me such a hatred of her, that I was afraid of myself. At dinner, she asked me, in the presence of the children, when I was going to leave. I had to go next week to the county to attend a meeting. I told her when. She asked me whether I needed anything for my way. I did not answer, and silently sat at the table, and silently went to my cabinet. During that last period she never came into my room, especially not then. I was lying down in my cabinet and fretting. Suddenly I heard a familiar tread. And suddenly a terrible, monstrous thought passed through my mind that she, like the wife of Uriah, wanted to conceal her accomplished sin, and that it was for this purpose that she was coming to my room at such an untimely hour. ' Is it possible she is coming here ?' I thought, listening to her approaching steps. ' If she is coming here, then I am right? And in my soul there rose an inexpressible hatred of her. Nearer, nearer the steps came. ' Will she really pass by and go into the parlour ? ' No, the door creaked, and there stood her tall, beautiful figure, and in her face and eyes there was timidity and supplication, which she tried to conceal, but which I saw, and the meaning of which I understood. I almost choked, - I so long held my breath, - and, continuing to look at her, I grasped the cigarette-holder and began to smoke.

“How does this look ? I come to sit with you awhile, and you smoke/ and she seated herself near me on the divan, leaning toward me. I moved away so as not to come in contact with her.

“‘I see you are dissatisfied with my playing on Sunday,’ she said.

“ ‘ I am not in the least,’ I said.

“ ‘ But I see it.’

“ * Let me congratulate you if you do. All I see is that you are acting like a coquette. You find pleasure in all kinds of baseness, but to me this is terrible!’

“ ‘ If you are going to swear like a cabman, then I will go away.’

“ ‘ Go, but know that if you do not respect the honour of the family, I will not respect you (the devil take you), but will guard the honour of the family.’

“ ‘ What is the matter, what ? ’

“ ‘ Get out, for the Lord’s sake, get out! ’

“ I do not know whether she pretended that she did not understand or whether she really did not understand,— in any case she was offended, grew angry, and did not go away, but stopped in the middle of the room.

“ ‘ You are absolutely impossible,’ she said. ‘ With any one of your character not even an angel could get along,’ and, as always, wishing to sting me in the most painful manner, she reminded me of my action toward my sister (she referred to an incident when I lost my patience with my sister and told her a lot of rude things; she knew that it tormented me and so she stung me with it). ‘ After this nothing from you will surprise me,’ she said.

“ ‘ Yes, she will offend, humiliate, disgrace me, and then she will make me guilty of it,’ I said to myself, and I was suddenly seized by such terrible rage against her as I had never experienced before.

“ I wanted now for the first time to give a physical expression to this rage. I jumped up and moved toward her; but just as I jumped up I remember that I became conscious of my rage and asked myself, ‘ Is it right to abandon myself to this feeling ? ’ and immediately replied to myself that it was right, that this would frighten her, and so, instead of opposing myself to this rage, I began to fan it in myself and to take pleasure in its spreading more and more in me.

“ ‘ Get away, or I will kill you! ’ I shouted, walking up to her and grasping her arm. I consciously increased the intonations of rage in my voice, as I was saying this. I must have been terrible, because she was so intimidated that she did not have sufficient strength to

leave, and only said: ' Vdsya, what is the matter with you, what is the matter?' – 'Get out!' I bellowed louder still. 'You will drive me to insanity. I will not answer for myself! '

" Having given the reins to my fury, I was intoxicated by it and wanted to do something unusual, which would show the highest degree of my fury. I just burned to strike and kill her, but I knew that this could not be, and so, to give full vent to my rage, I grabbed a paper-weight from the table and, crying once more, ' Get out! ' I hurled it against the floor beyond her. I aimed purposely beyond her. Then she started to leave the room, but stopped at the door. And here, while she was able to see it (I did it that she should see it), I picked up a number of things from the table, candlesticks, the inkstand, and began to throw them on the floor, continuing to cry out: ' Get out! Go away ! I will not answer for myself! ' She went away, and I immediately stopped.

"An hour later the nurse came and informed me that my wife was in hysterics. I went to her : she was sobbing and laughing; she was unable to say a word, and continually shuddered with her whole body. There was no pretence there: she was really ill.

" Toward morning she quieted down, and we made up under the influence of that feeling which we called love.

" In the morning, when, after the pacification, I confessed to her that I was jealous of Trukhachdovski, she was

not in the least embarrassed, but laughed out in the most natural manner, – so strange, so she said, did the possibility of being infatuated with such a man seem to her.

" < Can a decent woman have any other feeling for such a man than the pleasure derived by music ? If you want me to, I am ready never to see him again. Not even on Sunday, even though guests have been invited. Write to him that I am not well, and all is ended. It is disgusting to think that anybody, but especially he, should imagine that he is a dangerous man. I am too proud to allow any one to think so.'

" She was not telling an untruth. She believed all she was saying: she hoped with these words to elicit in herself contempt for him and in this way to defend herself against him, but she did not succeed. Everything was against her, more particularly that accursed music. So all was ended, and on Sunday the guests arrived and they again played together.

xxm.

" I think it is superfluous to say that I was very vainglorious : if

we are not to be vainglorious in our habitual life, then there is no cause for living at all. Well, on that Sunday I entered with zest into the preparations for the dinner and soirée with the music. I myself bought things for the dinner and called the guests.

" At about six o'clock the guests arrived, and he appeared in evening dress with diamond studs, showing poor taste. He bore himself with ease, replied to everything hurriedly and with a slight smile of agreement and comprehension, – you know, with that especial expression which says that everything you may do or say is just what he expected. Everything which was improper in him I now took notice of with particular pleasure, because all this served to calm me and show me that he stood for my wife on a low level to which, as she said, she could not descend. I did not allow myself to be jealous. In the first place, my torment had been too great and I had to rest from it; in the second, I wished to believe the assertions of my wife, and I did believe them. And yet, although I was not jealous, I was unnatural toward him and toward her, and during the dinner and the first part of the evening entertainment, before the music began, I continued to watch their motions and glances.

" The dinner was like all dinners, – dull and stiff. The music began quite early. Oh, how I remember all the details of that evening! I remember how he brought the violin, opened the case, lifted the cover which had been embroidered for him by a lady, took

out the violin, and began to tune it. I remember how my wife sat down, feigning indifference, under which I saw her conceal her timidity, – timidity mainly as to her own ability, – how she sat down with a look of indifference at the piano, and there began the usual *la* on the piano, the *pizzicato* of the violin, and the placing of the music. I remember how, then, they looked at each other, casting a glance at the seated guests, how they said something one to the other, and how then it began. He took the first chords. His face grew serious, stern, and sympathetic, and, listening to his tones, he picked the strings with cautious fingers. The piano replied to him. And it began – "

Pdzdnyshév stopped and several times in succession emitted his sounds. He wanted to speak, but he snuffled and again stopped.

" They were playing the Kreutzer Sonata by Beethoven," he continued. " Do you know the first presto ? You do?" he exclaimed. "Ugh! Ugh! That sonata is a terrible thing, particularly that part of it. Music, in general, is a terrible thing. I cannot understand what it is. What is music ? What does it do ? And why does it do that which it does ? They say that music acts upon the soul by elevating it, – nonsense, a lie ! It acts, acts terribly, – I am speaking for myself, – but not at all by elevating. It neither elevates nor humbles the soul, – it irritates it. How shall I tell it to you ? Music makes me forget myself and my real condition; it transfers me to another, not my own condition: it seems to me that under the influence of music I feel that which I really do not feel, that I understand that which I do not understand, that I can do that which

I cannot do. I explain this by supposing that music acts like yawning, like laughter: I do not want to sleep, but I yawn seeing people yawn; I have no cause for laughing, but I laugh hearing others laugh.

" This music immediately, directly transfers me to the mental condition in which he was who wrote that music. I am merged in his soul, and am with him carried from one condition to another; but I do not know why this happens with me. He who wrote it, say the Kreutzer Sonata, – Beethoven, – he knew why he was in such a mood; this mood led him to do certain acts, and so this mood had some meaning for him, whereas for me it has none. Therefore music only irritates, – it does not end. Well, they play a military march, and the soldiers march under its strain, and the music comes to an end; they play dance music, and I finish dancing, and the music comes to an end; well, they sing a mass, I receive the Holy Sacrament, and the music comes to an end. But here there is only an irritation, but that which is to be done under this irritation is absent. It is for this reason that music is so terrible and often acts so dreadfully. In China music is a state matter. That is the way it ought to be. How can any one who wishes be allowed to hypnotize another, or many persons, and then do with them what he pleases ? And especially how can they allow any kind of an immoral man to be the hypnotizer ?

" Into whose hands has this terrible power fallen ? Let us take for example the Kreutzer Sonata. How can one play the first presto in a drawing-room amidst ladies in décolleté garments ? To play this presto, to applaud it, and then to eat ice-cream and talk about the last bit of gossip ? These things should be played only under certain important, significant circumstances, and then when certain acts, corresponding to this music, are to be performed, and that is to be done which the music demands of you. But the provocation of energy and feeling which do not correspond to the time or place, and which find no expression, cannot help acting perniciously. Upon me, at least, it had a most terrible effect: it seemed to me as though entirely new feelings, new possibilities, of which

I had never known before, were revealed to me. ' Yes, that is so, it is quite different from what I used to think and feel about it; it is like this,' a voice seemed to say within me. What this new thing was which I had discovered I was not able to explain to myself, but the consciousness of this new condition was a pleasurable one. All the people present – among them my wife and he – presented themselves in a new light to me.

" After the allegro they played the beautiful, but common, and not new andante with trite variations, and a very weak finale. After that they played, at the guests' request, an elegy by Ernst, and some other trifles. All that was very nice, but it did not produce on me one-hundredth part of the impression which the first had produced. All this took place on the background of the impression which had been evoked by the first piece.

" I felt light and happy on that evening. I had never before seen my

wife as she was on that evening. Those sparkling eyes, that severity and expressiveness while she was playing, and that complete dissolution, if I may so call it, and that feeble, pitiable, and blissful smile after they were through! I saw it all, but ascribed no other meaning to it than that she was experiencing the same as I, and that to her, as to me, there were revealed, or, as it were, brought back, new, unfelt sensations. The evening came to a successful end and all departed.

" Knowing that I was to leave in two days to attend to the meeting, Trukhach[^]vski at leaving said that he hoped at his next visit to repeat the pleasure of the present evening. From this I could conclude that he did not consider it possible to be in my house during my absence, and this pleased me.

" It turned out that since I should not be back before his departure, we should not meet again.

" I for the first time pressed his hand with real joy and

XXIV.

" Two days later I left for the meeting in the county, bidding my wife farewell in the best and quietest of moods.

" In the county there was always a great deal to do, and there was a special life, a special world by itself. There, in the office, I passed ten hours a day for two days in succession. On the second day they brought me a letter from my wife. I read it at once.

" She wrote about the children, about uncle, about the nurse, about purchases, and, among other things, she mentioned, as a most natural occurrence, that Trukha-ch[^]vski had called, bringing the promised music, and that he had promised to play again with her, but that she had refused.

" I did not remember his having promised to bring any music: it seemed to me that he had then bidden her farewell for good, and so this startled me. I was, however, so busy that I had no time to think about it, and only in the evening, when I returned to my room, did I re-read the letter.

" Not only had Trukhachdvski been at my house during my absence, but the whole tenor of the letter seemed to be strained. The furious beast of jealousy roared in its kennel and wanted to leap out, but I was afraid of that beast and I quickly locked it up. ' What an abominable feeling this jealousy is!' said I to myself. ' What can there be more natural than what she writes ?'

" So I lay down in my bed and began to think of the affairs which I

had to attend to on the following day.

During these meetings I could not easily fall asleep, in a strange bed, but this time I fell asleep at once. And, as sometimes happens, you know, you feel a kind of electric shock and you wake up. So I awoke. I awoke with the thought of her, of my carnal love for her, and of Trukha-ch[^]vski, and that everything was at an end between him and her. Terror and rage compressed my heart. But I began to reason with myself. * What nonsense,' said I to myself, ' there is no cause for it, - there is nothing and has been nothing. And how can I so lower her and myself, by supposing such horrors ? He - something in the nature of a hired fiddler, known as a worthless man, and a worthy woman, a respected mother of a family, my wife ! What absurdity !' was what presented itself to me on one side. ' Why can't it be ? ' was what presented itself on the other. ' Why could there not be that simplest and most intelligible thing in the name of which I married her, the same thing in the name of which I lived with her, which alone I needed in her, and which, therefore, others could need, and that musician, too ? He is unmarried, healthy (I remembered how he crunched the gristle in the cutlet and with what eager red lips he clasped the wine-glass), well-fed, smooth, and not only unprincipled, but obviously following the rule to make use of every pleasure which presents itself. And between them there is the bond of music, of the most refined sensual lust. What can keep him back ? She ? Who is she ? She is the same mystery she has always been. I do not know her. I know her only as an animal. And nothing can nor must keep back an animal.'

" Only then for the first time did I recall their faces on that evening, when, after the Kreutzer Sonata, they played some impassioned piece, - I do not remember by whom, - impassioned to the point of obscenity. ' How could I have left ? ' I said to myself, recalling their faces. * Was it not clear that everything had taken place between

them on that evening ? And was it not evident that even on that evening there was no barrier between them, and that both of them, but especially she, experienced a certain measure of shame after what had happened to them ? I remember how she smiled feebly, pitiably, and blissfully, wiping off the perspiration from her heated face, as I went up to the piano. They even then avoided looking at each other, and only at supper, as he poured out a glass of water for her, did they glance at each other and smile an imperceptible smile.'

" I now in terror recalled that glance of theirs with the barely perceptible smile, which I had accidentally noticed. ' Yes, all is ended,' one voice said to me, and immediately the other voice said something quite different: ' You are working under a delusion, - this cannot be.' It made me shudder to lie in the dark. I struck a match, and I felt terribly in that small room with the yellow wall-paper. I lighted a cigarette, and, as is always the case when I move in one and the same circle of insoluble contradictions, I smoked; I smoked one cigarette after another, in order to be befogged and not

to notice the contradictions.

" I did not fall asleep all night long, and having decided at five o'clock that I could not remain any longer in this state of tension and that I must go home, I arose, woke the janitor, who was attending to me, and sent him for the horses. I sent a letter to the meeting saying that I was called back to Moscow on urgent business, and asking a member to take my chair. At eight o'clock I sat down in the tarantas and started."

XXV.

The conductor came in, and, noticing that the candle was burning low, put it out, without substituting another for it. Day began to break. Pozdnyshev was silent, drawing deep sighs as long as the conductor was in the car. He continued his story only when the conductor had left, and in the half-dark car could be heard only the rattle of the windows of the moving car and the even snoring of the clerk. In the twilight of the dawn I could not see Pozdnyshev's face at all. I could hear only his ever more agitated and suffering voice.

" I had to travel thirty-five miles in a carriage and eight hours by train. It was nice travelling in the carriage. It was a frosty autumn day with a bright sun, - you know, that period of the year when the ruts are clearly defined on the muddy road. The roads are smooth, the light is bright, the air bracing. It was a pleasure to ride in the tarantas. When it was day and I had started, I felt easier. As I looked at the horses, at the fields, and at the passers-by, I forgot whither I was travelling. At times it seemed to me that I was merely journeying, and that there was nothing of that which had provoked me. It was a relief to me to be able to forget myself thus. Whenever I recalled where I was travelling to, I said to myself : ' There will be time then, but now do not think !'

«In the middle of the road there happened an accident which detained me and still more diverted my attention: the tarantas broke and had to be repaired. This breakdown was of great importance in that it made me arrive at Moscow, not at five o'clock, as I had expected, but at twelve, and at home at one, as I missed the express and had to take the passenger train. The search for a cart, the mending, the settling of bills, the tea at the inn, the talks with the janitor, - all that still more diverted my attention. At evening twilight all was done, and I started once more. In the night it was pleasanter to travel than in daytime. The new moon was up; there was a slight frost; then the beautiful road, the horses, the merry driver, - and I travelled and enjoyed myself, hardly thinking of what awaited me, or maybe I enjoyed it all so much because I knew what was awaiting me and I was bidding farewell to all the joys of life. This calm mood, this ability to suppress my feelings, came to an end with the

carriage drive.

" The moment I entered the car, something quite different began for me. This eight-hour journey in the car was something terrible, – I shall not forget it all my life. I do not know whether it was that, seating myself in the car, I vividly presented to myself my arrival, or because the railroad acts in such an exciting manner upon people, but the moment I sat down in the car I could not control my imagination, and it did not cease painting for me with the greatest clearness, one after another, pictures that fanned my jealousy, and what was all the time going on there, while she was false to me. I burned with indignation, rage, and a certain special feeling of gloating over my humiliation, as I contemplated these pictures, and I could not tear myself away from them, could not help looking at them, could not wipe them out, could not help evoking them. More than that. The more I contemplated these imaginary pictures, the more I believed in their reality. The brightness with which these pictures arose before me seemed to serve as a proof that that which I imagined was real. A devil, as it were against my will, concocted and whispered to me the most terrible combinations. I recalled a late conversation with a brother of Trukhachdovski, and I with a kind of transport lacerated my heart with this conversation, referring it to Trukhachdovski and my wife.

" That had happened long ago, but I recalled it. Trukhachdovski's brother, I remembered once, in reply to a question whether he frequented certain houses, said that a decent man would not go where he might catch a disease, and it was dirty and nasty to do it, as long as one could find a decent woman. And so he, his brother, had found my wife. ' It is true, she is no longer in her first youth ; she has lost one side tooth, and there is a certain puffiness,' I thought for him, ' but what is to be done ? I must make use of what I find. – Yes, he is condescending to her in making her his mistress,' I said to myself. ' Besides, there is no danger with her—No, it is impossible ! ' I said to myself, in terror. * There is nothing of the kind, nothing ! There is not even basis for supposing anything of the kind. Did she not tell me that even the thought of my being jealous of him was humiliating to her ? Ah, but she is lying, she is doing nothing but lying ! ' I called out, and. it began once more – There were but two passengers in our car: an old woman and her husband, both very talkative, but they left at a station, and I remained all alone. I was like a beast in a cage: now I jumped up and walked over to the windows ; now I staggered and began to walk as though to get ahead of the car; but the car with all its benches and windows kept shaking just like this one – "

Pdzdnyshv jumped up, took a few steps, and again sat down.

" Oh, I am afraid, I am afraid of the railway cars, – terror takes possession of me ! Yes, they are terrible ! " he continued. " I said to myself that I would think of something else, say of the landlord of the inn where I drank the tea. And so before my mental eye arose the janitor with a long beard and his grandson, a child as old as my Vasya. 'My Vasya! He will see the musician kiss his mother. What

will take place in his poor soul ? What does she care! She loves – ‘
And again the same storm arose in me. ‘ No, no. I will think of the
inspection of the hospital. Yes, how the patient yesterday
complained of the doctor. The doctor has a moustache just like
Trukhachdovski’s. With what a brazen face he – both of them –
deceived me, when he said that he was leaving.’ And again it began.
Everything of which I thought was connected with him. I suffered
terribly. My chief suffering was in the ignorance, the doubts, the
doubleness, the want of knowledge of whether I was to love or hate
her. The suffering was a strange feeling: a hatred of the
consciousness of my humiliation and Ills victory, and a terrible
hatred for her.

“ ‘ I cannot make an end of myself and leave her; she must suffer at
least some, in order that she may understand what I have gone
through/ I said to myself. I went out at every station to divert
myself. In one station I saw people drinking near the counter, and I
immediately drank some brandy. Near me was standing a Jew, and he
also was drinking. He began to talk, and I, not to be left alone in
the car, went with him into a dirty, smoke-filled car of the third
class, the floor of which was covered with shells of pumpkin seeds.
I sat down at his side, and he kept chatting and telling some kinds
of anecdotes. I listened to him, but was unable to understand what
he was saying because I was all the time thinking about myself. He
noticed it and began to demand my attention; so I got up and went
back to my car.

“ ‘ I must consider/ I said to myself, ‘ whether that which I am
thinking is true, and whether there is any cause for me to be
tormented so.’ I sat down, wishing quietly to reflect over it, but
immediately, instead of the quiet reflection, it started again:
instead of meditation there were pictures and presentations. ‘ How
often have

I been tormented thus/ I said to myself (I recalled former similar
fits of jealousy) ‘and then it all ended in nothing. It may be thus
even now, and I am sure I shall find her quietly asleep; she will
wake up, will be glad to see me, and from her words and looks I
shall feel that nothing has happened, and that all this is nonsense.
Oh; how good it would be!’ – ‘ No, this has happened too often, and
will not be so now/ a certain voice told me, and again it started.
That is where the punishment was ! Not to a syphilitic hospital
would I take a young man in order to cure him of his desire for
woman, but into my soul, to look at those devils that were tearing
it to pieces ! What was terrible was that I arrogated to myself the
unquestioned, full right over her body, as though it were my own
body, and at the same time felt that I could not rule over this
body, that it was not mine, and that she could dispose of it as she
wished, and wished to dispose of it . differently from what I wanted
her to. And I could do nothing to her or to him. He, like Vanka, the
steward of the fable, will sing before the gibbet a song of having
kissed the sugared lips, and so forth, and his will be the victory.
Still less can I do anything with her. If she did not do it, but
wished to do it, – and I know that she does want to, – it is even

worse. It would be better if she did do it, and I should know, – there would be no uncertainty. I could not tell what it was I wanted. I wanted her not to wish for that which she could not help wishing for. This was complete insanity !

XXVI.

" At next to the last station, after the conductor had come to collect tickets, I picked up my things and went out on the brake platform, and the consciousness of the near solution only increased my agitation. I felt cold, and my jaws began to tremble so that my teeth chattered. I mechanically left the depot with the crowd, took a cab, seated myself in it, and drove off. I rode, looking at the few pedestrians and the janitors and the shadows cast by the lamps and by my vehicle, now in front, and now back of me, not thinking of anything. Having ridden about half a verst, my feet grew cold, and I recalled that I had taken off my woollen stockings in the car and had put them into the carpet-bag. ' Where is the carpet-bag, – here? Yes, it is. And the wicker trunk?' I recalled that I had entirely forgotten about the luggage, but finding that I had a receipt, I decided that it was not worth while to go back for it, and so I continued on my way.

" No matter how much I try to recall now, I am absolutely unable to remember what my condition at that time was: I know nothing of what I thought or wished. I only remember having been conscious that something terrible and very important for my life was in store for me. I do not know whether this important thing happened to me because I thought of it, or because I had a presentiment of it. It may also be that after what happened all the previous moments received in my recollection a sombre shade. I drove up to the entrance. It was one o'clock. Several cabmen were standing near the entrance, expecting passengers from the lighted windows (the windows that were lighted were those of the parlour and drawing-room of my apartment). Without rendering myself any account of why there was a light in our windows so late at night, I, in the same mood of expectation of something terrible, ascended the staircase and rang the bell. Egor, a good, careful, and most stupid lackey, opened the door. The first thing my eyes fell upon was an overcoat hanging with other clothes on the rack of the antechamber. I ought to have been surprised, but I was not, because I expected it. ' That's it,' I said to myself. When I asked Egor who was there and he named Trukhachdovski, I asked whether there was anybody else. He said, ' Nobody, sir.' I remember how he told me this with an intonation as if to give me pleasure and dispel my doubts as to the presence of anybody else. ' Yes, yes,' I seemed to be saying to myself. ' And the children ? ' – ' Thank God, they are well. They have been asleep for quite awhile, sir.'

" I could not draw breath nor stop my jaws from shaking. ' So, I

see, it is not as I had thought: formerly I used to expect a misfortune, but everything was as of old. Now everything is not as of old; here is everything I have been imagining, – everything I thought I only imagined has now actually happened. Here it is all –

" I came very near sobbing out, but the devil immediately whispered to me: 'You weep and become sentimental, and they will quietly part from each other, there will be no proofs, and you will all your life be in doubt and torment.' Directly my sentimentality disappeared, and there arose a strange feeling of joy because now my torment will come to an end, because I could punish her and get rid of her, because I could give free play to my rage. I did give free play to my rage, – I became a beast, an evil, cunning beast. ' Don't, don't,' I said to . Egor, who wanted to go to the drawing-room. ' Do this: take a cab at once and go to the station; here is the

into my cabinet, where I flung myself down on the divan and burst out into sobs.

" ' I am an honest man, I am the son of my parents, I have all my life dreamt of the happiness of domestic life; I am a man who has never betrayed her– Here are five children, and she embraces a musician because he has red lips!

" ' No, she is not a human being! She is a bitch, an abominable bitch! In the next room to her children, whom she has been pretending to love all her life. And to write to me what she did! So impudently to hang about his neck! How do I know but that it has been so all the time ? Maybe the lackeys begot all the children whom I regard as my own!

" ' I should have arrived on the morrow, and she, in her coiffure, with her waist and her indolent, graceful motions (I saw all her attractive, hateful face), would have met me, and the beast of jealousy would have for ever remained in my heart and would have lacerated it. What will the nurse think ? – Egor – And poor Liza ! She understands a little now. And that impudence! That lie! And that animal sensuality, which I know so well!' I said to myself.

" I wanted to get up, but I could not. My heart was beating so much that I could not stand on my feet. ' Yes, I shall die of apoplexy. She will kill me. That is what she wants. She wants to kill me! No, that would be too advantageous for her, and I will not afford her that pleasure. Here I am sitting, and they are eating and laughing there, and – Yes, although she is no longer in her first youth, he has not disdained her: she is not bad-looking, but, chiefly, she is safe for his precious health. Why did I not choke her then ?' I said to myself, recalling the moment when, the week before, I drove her out of the cabinet and then hurled things at her. I vividly recalled the condition in which I then was ; I not only

recalled it, but experienced the same necessity of beating and destroying which I experienced then. I remember how I wanted to act

and how all other considerations than those which were necessary for action had taken flight from my mind. I entered into that condition of the beast or of a man under the influence of physical excitement in time of danger, when a man acts precisely, leisurely, but, at the same time, without losing a minute and with one definite purpose in view.

" The first thing I did was to take off my boots and, remaining in my socks, to walk over to the wall above the divan, where guns and daggers were hanging, and to take down a sharp Damascus dagger which had never been used and which was very sharp. I took it out of the scabbard. The scabbard, I remember, I threw behind the divan, and I remember saying to myself, ' I must find it later, or else it will be lost.' Then I took off my overcoat, which I had kept on all the time, and, stepping softly in my socks, I went there.

XXVII.

" Having softly approached the door, I suddenly opened it. I remember the expression of their faces. I remember that expression, because it afforded me a painful pleasure, — it was the expression of terror. That was what I wanted. I shall never forget that expression of desperate terror which during the first second had appeared on their faces, as they caught sight of me. He, I think, was sitting at the table, but, upon seeing or hearing me, he jumped to his feet and stood up with his back against a safe. On his face was nothing but an unmistakable expression of terror. On her face there was also an expression of terror, but at the same time there was also something else. If there had been nothing but terror, probably that which took place would not have happened; but in the expression of her face there was —: at least it so appeared to me during this first moment — annoyance, dissatisfaction at having been disturbed in her infatuation and happiness with him. It looked as though all she needed was that she should not be interfered with in her happiness. Both these expressions hovered but an instant on their faces. The expression of terror on his face soon gave way to a questioning expression : ' May I lie or not ? If I may, I must begin. If not, there will happen something else. What will it be ? ' He cast an interrogative glance at her. Upon her face the expression of vexation and aggravation gave way, as I thought when she looked at him, to anxiety in his behalf.

" I stopped for an instant at the door, holding the dagger behind my back.

" Just then he smiled and said, in a ridiculously indifferent voice, ' We have been playing together?'

" * I did not expect you ! ' she at once began, submitting to his tone. But neither the one nor the other finished what they wanted to say: the same fury, of which I had been possessed the week before, overcame me now. I again experienced that necessity of destruction, violence, and transport of rage, and abandoned myself to it. They did not finish their sentences. There began that other thing, of

which he was afraid, that which at once put to nought that which they had said. I rushed against her, still concealing the dagger, that he might not interfere with my thrusting it into her side, underneath the breast. I had chosen that spot from the very start. Just as I flew against her he saw it, and, what I had not expected of him, seized my arm and exclaimed: ' Think what you are doing! The people !'

" I tore my arm away from him and silently rushed against him. His eyes met mine; he suddenly grew as pale as a sheet, up to his very lips; his eyes flashed in a peculiar manner, and, what again I had not expected, he flung himself under the piano and out through the door. I rushed after him, but a weight hung upon my left arm. It was she. I tried to jerk myself away, but she clung more firmly to me and did not let me out of her grasp. This sudden impediment, the weight, and her touch, which was loathsome to me, fanned my rage even more. I felt that I was infuriated and that I must be terrible, and I was glad of it. I swung my left arm with all my might, and my elbow struck her face. She cried out and let my arm drop. I wanted to run after him, but recalled that it would be ridiculous to run after my wife's lover in my socks, and I did not want to be ridiculous, I wanted to be terrible. In spite of the terrible fury which I was in, I was all the time conscious of the impression I was producing upon others, and I was partly guided by this very impression. I turned to her. She fell down on a sofa and, putting her hand to her blackened eyes, looked at me. In her face there was an expression of terror and hatred for me, the enemy, such as is expressed in a rat when the trap is opened, in which it has been caught. At least, I did not see anything else in her but this expression of terror and hatred for me. It was the same terror and hatred for me which the love for the other man must have provoked. I still might have abstained from doing what I did if she had kept quiet. But she suddenly began to speak and to seize the hand in which I held the dagger.

" ' Come to your senses ! What are you doing ? What is the matter with you ? There is nothing, nothing. I swear! ' "

" I should have hesitated, but these last words, from which I concluded the opposite, that is, that there was everything, demanded an answer; And the answer had to correspond to the mood to which I had brought myself and which was going crescendo, and continued to become more intense. Fury, too, has its laws.

" * Don't lie, you wretch! ' I cried, and caught her arm with my left hand, but she tore herself away. Then I, without dropping the dagger, caught her by the throat with my left hand, threw her down on her back, and began to choke her. How rough her neck was! She clasped my hands with both of hers, pulling them away from her throat. I seemed to have waited just for that: with all my might I thrust the dagger into her left side, below the ribs.

" When people say that in a fit of fury they do not remember what they are doing, they are telling an untruth. I remembered

everything, nor did I stop remembering for a single second. The more I raised within me the steam of my fury, the more clearly did the light of consciousness burn within me, so that I could not help seeing all I was doing. I knew every second what I was doing. I cannot say that I knew in advance what I was going to do, but at any second when I was doing something, – I almost think even a little before it, – I knew what I was doing, as though having a chance of regretting my action, and of saying that I might have stopped it. I knew that I struck her below the ribs, and that the dagger would enter. At the very moment when I was doing it I knew that I was doing something terrible, something which I had never done before, and which would have terrible consequences. But this consciousness flashed like lightning, and the deed followed immediately after the consciousness. The deed was perceived by me with unusual clearness. I heard, and I remember, the momentary resistance of the corset and of something else, and then the sinking of the dagger in something soft. She caught the dagger with her hands and only cut them, without keeping it back.

" I for a long time thought of this moment later, in prison, after the moral transformation had taken place in me; I recalled what I might have done, and I reflected. I remember how for an instant, only for an instant, the deed was preceded by the terrible consciousness that I was killing and already had killed a woman, a helpless woman, my wife! I remember the horror of that consciousness, and so I conclude and even dimly remember that, having pierced her with a dagger, I immediately pulled it out, wishing to mend that which I had done, and to stop it. I stood a moment motionless, waiting to see what would happen and whether it could not be mended.

" She jumped to her feet and cried, ' Nurse, he has killed me!'

" The nurse, who had heard the noise, was standing at the door. I was still standing, waiting, and not believing myself, just then the blood burst from under her corset. Only then did I understand that it could not be mended, and I immediately concluded that it was not necessary to mend it, that it was precisely what I wanted and what I had to do. I waited until she fell down, and the nurse with a cry of ' Help!' ran up to her, and then only threw down the dagger and went out of the room.

" ' I must not be agitated; I must know what I am doing,' I said to myself, without looking at her or at the nurse. The nurse was crying and calling the maid. I went through the corridor and, having sent in the maid, went back to my cabinet. ' What must I do now ? ' I asked myself, and immediately saw what. Upon entering the cabinet, I went directly up to the wall, took down a revolver from it, and examined it: it was loaded, – and I put it down on the table. Then I took the scabbard out from behind the divan and sat down on the divan.

" I sat thus for a long time. I thought of nothing, recalled nothing. I heard them bustling outside. I heard somebody arrive, and

then again somebody. Then I heard and saw Egor come in and bring my wicker trunk into the cabinet. As though anybody wanted it!

" ' Have you heard what has happened ? ' I asked him. ' Tell the janitor to inform the police.' He said nothing and went out. I got up, locked the door, took out the cigarettes and matches, and began to smoke.

" I had not finished one cigarette when sleep overpowered me. I must have slept about two hours. I remember I dreamt that we were on good terms, that we had had a quarrel and had made up again, that there was something in the way, but we were friends. I was awakened by a rap at the door. ' This is the police,' I thought, as I awoke. ' I think I killed her. And maybe it is she, and there has been nothing.' There was another rap at the door. I did not answer and I decided the question, ' Has it happened, or not ? Yes, it has.' I remembered the resistance of the corset and the sinking of the dagger, and a chill ran down my back. ' Yes, it has. And now I must do away with myself,' I said to myself. I said this, and I knew that I would not kill myself. Still, I arose and took the revolver into my hands. But, strange to say, although I had often been near committing suicide, although even on that day this had seemed to me an easy thing to do, as I was riding on the railway, easy because I thought I would startle her with it,— now I was not only unable to do so, but even to think of it. ' Why do I want to do it ? ' I asked myself, and there was no answer. They again knocked at the door. ' Yes, first I must find out who is knocking. I shall have time to do this.' I put down the revolver and covered it with a newspaper. I went up to the door and opened the latch. It was my wife's sister, a kind, stupid widow. ' Vasya, what is this ? ' she said, and the ever ready tears burst forth.

" ' What do you want ? ' I asked, roughly. I saw that there was no reason whatever for me to be rough with her, but I could not think of any other tone of voice. ' Vasya, she is dying ! Ivdn Zakharych said so.'

" Ivan Zakharych was her doctor, her adviser. ' Is he here ? ' I asked, and all my rage against her again rose in me. ' Well what of it?' — ' Vdsya, go to her. Ah, how terrible it is! ' she said. ' Shall I go to her ? ' I asked myself, and I immediately answered myself that I must, that, no doubt, it is always that way, — that when a man kills his wife he must go to see her. ' If that is the way it is done, I must go,' I said to myself. ' Well, if it is necessary for me to shoot myself, I shall have time to do so,' I thought in regard to my intention of killing myself, and followed her. ' Now there will be phrases and giimaces, but I will not submit to them.' ' Wait,' I said to her sister, ' it is foolish to go without my boots. Let me at least put on my slippers.'

XXVIII.

" A strange thing happened ! When I left my room and walked through the familiar rooms, I again was stirred by the hope that nothing had

happened, but the smell of the physician's nasty things, of the iodoform and carbolic acid, startled me. Yes, it has happened. Walking along the corridor, past the children's room, I saw Liza. She looked at me with frightened eyes. I thought that all five of the children were there, looking at me. I went up to the door, and the chambermaid opened it for me from within and went out. The first thing that my eyes fell upon was her light gray dress upon the chair, all black with gore. On our double bed – on my bed (it was easier to get at it) – she lay with uplifted knees. She lay in a very inclined position, on pillows, with her bodice unbuttoned. There was something placed over the wound. The room was filled with the heavy odour of iodoform. Nothing impressed me so much as her swollen face, with part of the nose and the lower part of the eyes blue and discoloured. This was the result of the blow with my elbow, when she tried to keep me back. There was no beauty whatever, and I saw only something abominable in her. I stopped at the threshold. 'Go up, go up to her,' her sister said to me. 'No doubt she wants to confess,' I thought, trying to be magnanimous. I walked over to her. She with difficulty raised her eyes, one of which was badly bruised, and she muttered with difficulty and hesitatingly :

" ' You have accomplished it, you have killed me – ' and in her face, through the physical suffering and the nearness of death, there was expressed the old, familiar, cold; animal hatred. ' The children – however – I will not give – to you – She ' (her sister) ' will take them –'

" But that which to me was the most important thing, her guilt, she did not consider worth while mentioning, so it seemed.

" ' Yes, enjoy your deed,' she said, looking at the door, and she began to sob. At the door stood her sister with the children. ' Yes, this is what you have done.'

" I looked at the children, at her bruised, discoloured face, and for the first time I forgot myself, my rights, my pride, – for the first time I saw the human being in her. And so insignificant seemed everything to me which had offended me, all my jealousy, and so significant what I had done, that I wanted to fall with my face to her hand and say, 'Forgive me!' but I did not dare to.

" She was silent and covered her eyes, evidently not having the strength to speak any more. Then her maimed face quivered and became wrinkled. She feebly pushed me away.

" ' Why has all this been, why ? '

" ' Forgive me!' I said.

" ' Forgive you ? It is all nonsense! If only I could live! ' she cried, and, raising herself a little, her feverishly shining eyes were directed toward me. 'Yes, you have got what you wanted ! – I hate you ! – Oh, oh! ' she called out, evidently already in delirium, as though frightened at something.–

" ' Shoot! I am not afraid ! – Kill everybody ! – He got away ! –
Away ! – ' "

" Her delirium lasted the rest of the time. She did not recognize anybody. She died that very day, at noon. Before that time, at eight o'clock, I was taken to the police station, and then to prison. While staying there eleven months and waiting for the trial, I thought about myself and my past, and I understood it. I began to understand it on the third day. On the third day they took me back there – "

He wanted to say something, but stopped, being unable to keep back his sobs. Having collected himself, he continued:

" I began to understand only when she was in her grave – "

He sobbed, but immediately continued in a hurry:

" Only when I saw her dead face I understood all I had done. I understood that it was I who had killed her; that through me she, who had been alive, moving, warm, had become immovable, waxlike, cold; and that this could never, nowhere, in no way, be mended. He who has not passed through it cannot comprehend it. Ugh! Ugh! Ugh! " he cried several times and grew silent.

We sat for a long time in silence. He sobbed and trembled, sitting silently in front of me. His face grew thin and drawn and his mouth was stretched out to its full width.

" Yes," he suddenly exclaimed, " if I had known then what I know now, things would have been different. I would not have married her for anything – I would not have married at all."

Again we sat for a long time in silence.

" Well, forgive me – " He turned away from me, lay down on the bench, and covered himself with his plaid. At the station where I had to get off, – it was eight o'clock in the morning, – I went up to him, to bid him good-bye. I did not know whether he was asleep or only pretended to be, but he did not stir. I touched him with my hand. He uncovered himself, and it was evident that he was not sleeping.

"Good-bye," I said, offering him my hand. He gave

me his and barely smiled such a pitiable smile that I felt like weeping.

" Yes, forgive me," he repeated the word with which he had concluded his story.

EPILOGUE TO THE KREUT-ZER SONATA

EPILOGUE TO THE KREUT-ZER SONATA

I have received many letters from strangers asking me to explain in simple and clear words what I think of the subject of the story which I wrote under the title of the " Kreutzer Sonata." I shall try to do so, that is, in a few words to express, so far as possible, the essence of what I had intended to convey by my story, and of the conclusions at which one may arrive from it.

I wanted to say, in the first place, that in our society there has formed itself a firm conviction, common to all classes and supported by the false science, that sexual intercourse is necessary for health, and that, since marriage is not always possible, sexual intercourse outside of matrimony, which does not put men under any other obligations than that of monetary payment, is quite natural and worthy of emulation. This conviction has become so general and deep-rooted that parents, by the advice of doctors, arrange debauchery for their children; governments, whose only meaning consists in the care for the moral well-being of its citizens, establish debauchery, that is, regulate a whole class of women, who are to perish bodily and morally, in order to satisfy the imaginary needs of men, while unmarried men abandon themselves to this debauchery with the calmest conscience.

And so I wanted to say that this is not good, because it is not right that for the sake of the health of one class of people it should be necessary to ruin the bodies and souls of another class, just as it is not right that for the

sake of the health of one class of people it should be necessary to drink the blood of others.

The natural conclusion from this, it seems to me, is that it is not good to submit to this delusion and deception. And, in order not to submit, it is necessary, in the first place, not to believe in this immoral doctrine, no matter by what imaginary science it may be supported, and, in the second, to understand that such sexual intercourse, where people free themselves from its possible consequences, from children, or shift the whole burden of these consequences to the woman, or prevent the possibility of childbirth, – that such sexual intercourse is a transgression of the simplest requirement of morality, that it is base, and that, therefore, unmarried men, who do not wish to live basely, must not do it.

But, in order to be able to abstain, they must, in addition, lead a natural life, not drink, not stuff themselves, not eat meat, and not avoid labour (I do not mean gymnastics, nor play, but fatiguing labour); they must not permit themselves to think of the possibility of intercourse with strange women, just as all men exclude the possibility of intercourse between themselves and their mothers,

sisters, relatives, and the wives of their friends.

Any man may find a hundred proofs about him that continence is possible and less dangerous and injurious to him than non-continence.

So much in the first place.

Secondly, that in our society, on account of the current view in regard to carnal love as not only a necessary condition of health and as a pleasure, but also as a poetical, exalted good of life, marital infidelity has become in all strata of society (especially among the peasants, thanks to militarism) a most common phenomenon.

I assume that this is not good. The conclusion which springs from it is that one ought not to do it.

But, in order not to do it, it is necessary for the view in regard to carnal love to change. Men and women ought to be educated in their homes and by public opinion to look, before and after marriage, on infatuation and the carnal love connected with it, not as upon a poetical and exalted condition, such as it is now considered to be, but as upon an animal condition, degrading to man; it is necessary that the violation of a promise of fidelity, given at marriage, should be punished by public opinion certainly in no lesser degree than are punished the violations of monetary obligations and mercantile frauds, and that it should not be extolled, as it is now, in novels, poetry, songs, operas, etc.

So much in the second place.

Thirdly, that in our society, again on account of the false meaning which is ascribed to carnal love, the procreation of children has lost its purpose, and, instead of being the aim and justification of marital relations, has become a hindrance in the pleasant continuation of amatory relations ; that, therefore, outside of wedlock and in wedlock, there has begun to spread, at the advice of the servants of the medical science, the use of means depriving women of the possibility of childbirth, or there has arisen a custom, a habit (that which had not been before and even now is not found in patriarchal peasant families) of continuing the conjugal relations during pregnancy and nursing. I assume that this is not good.

It is not good to use means preventive of childbirth, in the first place, because people are thus relieved of cares and labours in regard to children, who serve as a redemption of carnal love, and, in the second, because it comes very near to the act which is most repulsive to a human conscience, to murder. Nor is non-continence during pregnancy and nursing good, because it is destructive of the physical, and still more of the mental, powers of woman. The conclusion which springs from this is that it is not good to do it. But, in order not to do it, it must be understood that continence, which forms a necessary condition of human dignity in the single

state, is still more binding in marriage.

So much in the third place.

Fourthly, that in our society, where children appear as a hindrance to enjoyment, or as an unfortunate accident, or as a peculiar kind of enjoyment, when there are borne a predetermined number of them, these children are brought up, not in conformity with the problems of human existence, with which they will be confronted as sensible and loving beings, but only in conformity with those pleasures which they may afford their parents. In consequence of this, the children of human beings are brought up like the young of animals, so that the chief problem of the parents does not consist in preparing them for an activity which would be worthy of man, but (in which view the parents are supported by the false science called medicine) in feeding them as well as possible, in increasing their stature, in making them clean, white, beautiful (if this is not done in the lower classes, the fault is that of circumstances, for the view there held is the same). In these pampered children, as in all overfed animals, there is early developed an unnatural and insuperable sensuality, which is the cause of terrible suffering for these children in their youth. The attire, the reading, the shows, the music, the dances, the sweet food, the whole circumstance of life, from the pictures on the boxes to the novels, stories, and poems, – everything still more fans this sensuality, and in consequence of this, the most terrible sexual vices and diseases become the usual conditions of the bringing up of children of both sexes, and frequently remain so through manhood.

I assume that this is not good. The conclusion which may be drawn from it is that we must stop bringing up the children of men like the young of animals, and that other aims must be kept in view in the bringing up of children besides a beautiful, well-kept body.

So much in the fourth place.

Fifthly, that in our society infatuation between a young man and a young woman, which has, after all, carnal love at its base, has been exalted into the highest poetical aim of human tendencies, to which all the art and poetry of our society bear witness. The best part of young people's lives are passed, by men, in discovering and taking possession of the best objects of love in the form of love-affairs or of marriage, and by women and girls, in alluring and drawing men into love-affairs or marriage.

Thus the best powers of people are wasted not only on unproductive, but even on dangerous, work. From this originates the greater part of the senseless luxury of our life; from this comes the indolence of men and the shamelessness of women, who do not disdain the fashions which are borrowed from notoriously debauched women, and which lay bare and accentuate the parts of the body that provoke sensuality.

I assume that this is not good.

It is not good because the attainment of the aim of being united in wedlock or of being outside of wedlock with the object of love, however much extolled by poetry it may be, is unworthy of man, just as the aim of obtaining sweet and superabundant food, which presents itself to many as the highest good, is unworthy of man.

The conclusion to which we may arrive from this is that we must cease thinking that carnal love is something peculiarly exalted; we must come to understand that the aim which is worthy of man is to serve humanity, his country, science, or art (let alone serving God), whatever it may be, as long as it is worthy of man, and that this aim is not attained through a union with the object of love in wedlock or outside of wedlock, but that, on the contrary, infatuation and union with the object of love (however much the opposite may be attempted to be proved in poetry and prose) never makes the attainment of the aim which is worthy of man any easier, but always impedes it.

So much in the fifth place.

These are the essentials which I wished to express, and which, I think, I have expressed in my story. It seemed to me that there might be a difference of opinion as to how the evil to which these propositions point may be mended, but that it was impossible not to admit their truth. It seemed to me that it was not possible to deny the truth of these propositions, in the first place, because they are entirely in agreement with the progress of humanity, which has always marched from looseness of morals to an ever increasing chastity, and with the moral consciousness of society, with our conscience, which always condemns looseness of morals and values chastity; and, in the second place, because these propositions are the inevitable deductions from the teaching of the Gospel, which we profess, or, at least, even though it be only unconsciously, assume as the basis for our ideas of morality.

But it has turned out quite differently.

Nobody, it is true, directly disputes the proposition that debauchery should not be practised, either before or after marriage, that it is wrong artificially to destroy childbirth, that children are not to be made playthings, and that amatory union ought not to be placed higher than anything else, – in short, nobody denies that chastity is better than looseness of morals. But they say : " If the single state is better than wedlock, then people ought evidently to do that which is better. But, if people do that, then the human race will come to an end, and therefore the destruction of the human race cannot be its ideal." Yet, not to mention the fact that the destruction of the human race is not a new conception for the people of this world, being a dogma of faith with the religious people and for the scientific men an inevitable deduction from the observations in regard to the sun's congealment, – there is in this expression a great, wide-spread, and old misunderstanding. They say : " If people will reach the ideal of complete chastity, they will be destroyed,

and therefore the ideal is wrong." But those who say so purposely or unwittingly mix up two different things,— a precept and an ideal.

Chastity is not a rule or a precept, but an ideal, or, more correctly, one of its conditions. An ideal is only then an ideal when its realization is possible in the idea only, in thought, when it presents itself as attainable only at infinity, and when, therefore, the approach to it is infinite. If an ideal were not only attainable, but we could imagine its realization, it would cease to be an ideal. Such is Christ's ideal, the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth, — an ideal which had been foretold even by the prophets when they said that the time would come when the people would be instructed by God, when the swords would be forged into ploughshares and the spears into sickles, when the lion would lie with the lamb, when all the creatures would be united in love. The whole meaning of human life consists in a motion toward this ideal, and therefore the striving after the Christian ideal, in all its entirety, and after chastity, as one of the conditions of this ideal, not only does not exclude the possibility of life, but, on the contrary, the absence of this Christian ideal would destroy all movement forward and, consequently, all possibility of life.

The reflection that the human race would come to an end if people should with all their power tend toward chastity resembles that other reflection which might be made (and it is made), that the human race will perish if people, instead of struggling for existence, should with all their power tend to the realization of love for their neighbor, for their enemies, for all living beings. Such reflections spring from the inability to distinguish between two rules of moral guidance.

Just as there are two ways for indicating the road to a traveller, even thus there are two ways for moral guidance in the case of a man who is seeking the truth. One way consists in indicating to the man the objects which he will come across, and then he is guided by these objects.

The other way consists in giving the man the direction by the compass, which he is carrying with him, and on which he observes the one immutable direction, and, consequently, every deflection from it.

The first way of moral guidance is the way of external definitions, of rules: man is given definite tokens of acts which he must perform and which not.

" Observe the Sabbath, be circumcised, do not steal, drink no intoxicating drink, kill no living being, give the tithe to the poor, make your ablutions, and pray five times a day," and so forth, — such are the injunctions of external religious teachings, — of the Brahmanical, Buddhistic, Mohammedan, Hebrew, and the ecclesiastic, falsely called Christian.

The other way is to indicate to man unattainable perfection, the

striving after which man is cognizant of: man has pointed out to him the ideal, in relation to which he is at any time able to see the degree of his divergence from it.

" Love God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. – Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

Such is the teaching of Christ.

The verification of the execution of external religious tenets is the coincidence of the acts with the injunctions of these tenets, and this coincidence is possible.

The verification of the execution of Christ's teaching is the consciousness of the degree of its non-correspondence with the ideal perfection. (The degree of approximation is not visible; what is visible is the deflection from perfection.)

A man who professes an external law is a man who is standing in the light of a lamp which is attached to a post. He is standing in the light of this lamp, he sees the light, and he has no other place to go to. A man who professes the teaching of Christ is like a man carrying a lamp before him on a more or less long pole: the light is always before him; it always incites him to follow it, and continually opens up in front of him a new illuminated space which draws him on.

The Pharisee thanks God for executing everything.

The rich youth also executes everything from his childhood, and he cannot understand what may be wanting to him. Nor can they think otherwise: there is not in front of them that toward which they may continue to strive. The tithe has been delivered, the Sabbath has been kept, the parents are respected, there is no adultery, no theft, no murder. What else shall it be ? But in him who professes the Christian teaching the attainment of any new round of perfection incites the necessity of stepping on the next round, from which a still higher round is perceived, and so on without end. He who professes Christ's Law is always in the position of the publican. He always feels himself imperfect, not seeing the road behind him, which he has passed, but only the road in front of him, which he has not yet travelled upon and which he must pass over.

In this consists the difference between the teaching of Christ and all other religious teachings, – a difference consisting not in the difference of demands, but in the difference of the way of guiding men. Christ gave no definitions of life. He never established any institutions, he never established marriage. But people who do not understand the peculiarities of Christ's teaching, who are accustomed to external tenets, and who wish to feel themselves in the right, as does the Pharisee, contrary to the whole spirit of Christ's teaching, – have out of the letter made an external teaching of rules, and have substituted this teaching for Christ's

true teaching of the ideal.

The church teachings, which call themselves Christian, have in all manifestations of life substituted for Christ's teaching and ideal the external injunctions and rules which are contrary to the spirit of the teaching. This has been done in reference to government, courts, armies, churches, divine service; this has also been done in reference to marriage. Disregarding the fact that Christ nowhere established marriage, – on the contrary, whenever he mentioned an external rule it was to oppose it ("Forsake thy wife and follow me"), – the church teachings, which call themselves Christian, have established marriage as a Christian institution, that is, they have established external observances which make sexual love sinless and entirely lawful for a Christian.

Since in the true Christian teaching there are no foundations for the institution of marriage, the result has been that people of our world have departed from one shore without landing on the other, that is, they do not believe, in reality, in the church definitions of marriage, feeling that this institution has no foundation in the Christian teaching, and at the same time not seeing before them Christ's ideal, which is concealed by the church doctrine, – the striving after complete chastity, they are left without any guidance in relation to marriage. From this comes the seemingly strange phenomenon that with the Jews, Mohammedans, Lamaists, and others, who profess religious teachings of a much lower order than the Christian, but who possess precise external injunctions in regard to marriage, the family principle and conjugal fidelity are incomparably more firmly rooted than with the so-called Christians.

They have definite concubinage, and polygamy, and polyandry, limited by certain restrictions. But with us there is complete looseness, – there is concubinage, and polygamy, and polyandry, not subject to any limitations, and concealed under the aspect of supposed monogamy.

Only because over a small part of the persons united the clergy performs a certain ceremony, called church marriage, people of our world naively or hypocritically imagine that they are living in matrimony.

There cannot be and never has been such a thing as Christian marriage, just as there has not been and cannot be a Christian divine service (Matt. vi. 5-12 ; John iv. 21), nor any Christian teachers and fathers (Matt, xxiii. 8-10), nor Christian property, nor army, nor courts, nor state.

Thus the early Christians always understood it.

The Christian's ideal is love of God and his neighbour, self-renunciation in order to serve God and his neighbour; carnal love, marriage, means serving oneself, and therefore is, in any case, a hindrance in the service of God and men, and, consequently, from the Christian point of view, a fall, a sin.

Entering into matrimony cannot cooperate with the service of God and men even in that case when those who enter into marriage have in view the continuation of the human race. Rather than enter into marriage in order to procreate children, it would be much simpler for such people to sustain and save the lives of those millions of children who are perishing around us through want of material, not to say of spiritual, food.

Only then could a Christian enter into marriage without the consciousness of a fall, a sin, if he saw and knew all the existing lives of children to be secure.

We may reject the teaching of Christ, that teaching which permeates all our life and upon which all our morality is based, but, if we accept this teaching, we cannot fail to acknowledge that it points out the ideal of complete chastity.

The Gospel says clearly and without any possibility of misinterpretation, in the first place, that a married man must not be divorced from his wife, in order to take another, and that he must live with the one with whom he has come together (Matt. v. 31-32; xix. 8); in the second place, that for man in general, both married and unmarried man, it is sinful to look upon woman as an object of enjoyment (Matt. v. 28-29), and, in the third place, that for an unmarried man it is better not to marry at all, that is, to be absolutely chaste (Matt, xix. 10-12).

Many, very many people will regard these thoughts as strange and even contradictory. They really are contradictory, but not among themselves. These thoughts are contradictory to our whole life, and involuntarily the doubt arises who is right: these thoughts, or the lives of millions of people and my own? I experienced the same feeling in the highest degree, as I arrived at the convictions which I am expounding here: I had not in the least expected that the progress of my thoughts would bring me to what it has. I was terrified at my deductions and wished not to believe them, but it was impossible not to believe. However much these deductions contradict the whole structure of our life, however much they contradict that which I thought and expressed before, I was compelled to acknowledge them.

" All these are general reflections, which may be just. But they refer to the teaching of Christ and are obligatory for those who profess it; but life is life, and it is impossible, by pointing out Christ's unattainable ideal, to leave people in one of the most burning and common questions, which produces most misery, with nothing but this ideal and without any guidance whatsoever.

" A young, impassioned man will at first be carried away by the ideal; then he will not be able to endure it and will break loose, and, not knowing, nor acknowledging any rules, he will fall into complete debauchery! "

Thus they reason usually.

« Christ's ideal is unattainable, therefore it cannot serve us as a guide of life; we may speak and dream of it, but it is not applicable to life, and therefore we must abandon it. We need, not an ideal, but a rule, a guidance, which shall be according to our strength, according to the mean average of the moral powers of our society: an honourable church marriage, or even one which is not entirely honourable, where one of the parties entering into matrimony, as the man with us, has already come together with many individuals of the other sex, or at least marriage with the possibility of divorce, or civil marriage, or (proceeding in the same path) a Japanese marriage, for a definite time, – why may we not also reach the houses of prostitution ?" »

They say that this is better than street debauchery. The trouble is that, having allowed ourselves to degrade the ideal in accordance with our weakness, we are unable to find the limit at which to stop.

But this reflection is false from the start: first of all it is a false supposition that the ideal of infinite perfection cannot be a guidance for life, and that, looking at it, it is necessary to dismiss it with a motion of the hand, saying that it is useless to me because I can never attain it, or to degrade the ideal to the level on which my weakness wants to stand.

To reflect in this manner is the same as though a navigator should say: " Since I cannot go in the direction indicated by the compass, I shall throw away the compass or cease looking at it, that is, I will abandon the ideal or will fasten the needle of the compass to the place which at a given moment will correspond to the direction of my vessel, that is, I will degrade the ideal in accordance with my weakness."

The ideal of perfection which Christ has given us is not a dream or a subject for rhetorical sermons, but a most necessary, most accessible guide of moral life for man. just as the compass is a necessary and accessible implement guiding the navigator; all that is necessary is to believe in the one as in the other. In whatever situation a man may be, the teaching about the ideal, given by Christ, is sufficient in order to obtain the safest indication of those acts which one may and which one may not perform. But it is necessary completely to believe in this teaching, this one teaching, and to stop believing in any other, just as it is necessary for the navigator to believe in the compass, and to stop looking at and being guided by what he sees on both sides. One must know how to be guided by the Christian teaching, how to be guided by the compass, and for this it is most important to understand one's position, and to be able not to be afraid precisely to indicate one's own deflection from the one, ideal direction. No matter on what round man may stand, there is always a possibility of his approaching this ideal, and no position of his can be such that he should be able to say that he has attained it and no longer can strive after a greater approximation.

Such is the striving of man after the Christian ideal in general and after chastity in particular. If the most varied positions of people, from innocent childhood until marriage, when continence is not practised, were to be considered in respect to the sexual question, then at every stage between these two positions the teaching of Christ, with its ideal which it puts forward, will always serve as a clear and definite guide to what man ought and ought not to do at every one of these stages.

What are a pure young man and girl to do ? To keep themselves pure against temptations, and, in order that they may be able to give all their strength to the service of God and men, to strive after a greater and greater chastity of thoughts and desires.

What are a young man and girl to do, who have fallen a prey to temptations, whose thoughts are absorbed in indefinite love or in love for a certain individual, and who thus have lost a certain portion of their ability to serve God and men ? Again the same: not to allow themselves to fall, knowing that such weakness will not free them from temptation, but will only strengthen it, and to continue to strive after greater and greater chastity in order to be able the more fully to serve God and men.

What are people to do if they have not come out victorious from the struggle and have fallen ? To look upon their fall not as a lawful enjoyment, as people now do, when it is justified by the ceremony of marriage, not as an accidental enjoyment which may be repeated with others, not as a misfortune if the fall has been committed with an inferior person and without the ceremony, but to look upon this first fall as the only one, and upon themselves as having entered upon an indissoluble marriage.

This entering into marriage, with the consequences springing from it, the birth of children, determines for those who have entered into matrimony a new, more limited form of serving God and men. Before marriage man could serve God and men directly, in most varied forms, but his entering into matrimony limits his field of action and demands of him the bringing up and education of the progeny arising from marriage, the future servants of God and men.

What are a man and a woman to do, who are living in wedlock and performing that limited service of God and men, by means of bringing up and educating their children, as befits their position ?

Again the same: to strive together after liberation from temptation, after self-purification, and cessation of sin, by exchanging the relations which impede the general and particular service of God and men, by exchanging carnal love for the pure relations of brother and sister.

Therefore it is not true that we are not able to be guided by Christ's ideal because it is so high, so perfect, and so unattainable. We cannot be guided by it only because we are lying to

ourselves and deceiving ourselves.

When we say that we must have more realizable rules than Christ's ideal, or else we, without reaching Christ's ideal, shall fall into debauchery, we do not mean by this that Christ's ideal is too high for us, but that we do not believe in it and that we do not wish to determine our acts by this ideal.

When we say that having once fallen we become subject to debauchery, we only say by this that we have decided in advance that a fall with an inferior individual is not a sin, but a pastime, an infatuation, which need not be mended by what we call marriage. But if we understood that the fall is a sin which must and can be redeemed only by the indissolubility of marriage and all the activity which springs from the education of children born in wedlock, then the fall could in no way be the cause of becoming debauched.

This would, in reality, be the same as though a farmer should not consider as a sowing that sowing which gave him no crop, but, sowing in a second and third place, should regard as real sowing that which was successful. It is obvious that that man would ruin much land and seed, and would never learn to sow properly. Make chastity your ideal, consider every fall, of any person, with any person, as the only marriage, indissoluble through life, and it will become clear that the guidance given by Christ is not only sufficient but also the only possible.

"Man is weak, - he must receive a task which is according to his strength," say people. This amounts to saying: "My hands are weak and I cannot draw a straight line, that is, one which is the shortest distance between two points, and therefore, in order to make it easier for myself, though wishing to draw a straight line, I will take a curved or a broken line as my guide." The weaker my hand is, the more perfect must my guide be.

It is not right, having come to know the Christian teaching of the ideal, to act as though we did not know it, and to substitute external definitions for it. The Christian teaching of the ideal is open to humanity because it can guide it at its present age. Humanity has passed out from external religious injunctions, and nobody believes in them.

The Christian doctrine of the ideal is the only one which can guide humanity. We must not, we should not substitute external rules for the ideal of Christ, but this ideal must be kept firmly before us in all its purity, and, above everything else, we must believe in it.

To him who was navigating near the shore it was possible to say: "Watch that elevation, promontory, tower," and so forth.

But a time came when the navigators passed away from the shore, and their guides could be and must be only the unattainable luminaries and the compass which points out the direction. Both are given to us.

