BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

PROPERTY IN LAND.

It was possible for Maslova's case to come before the Senate in a fortnight, at which time Nekhludoff meant to go to Petersburg, and, if need be, to appeal to the Emperor (as the advocate who had drawn up the petition advised) should the appeal be disregarded (and, according to the advocate, it was best to be prepared for that, since the causes for appeal were so slight). The party of convicts, among whom was Maslova, would very likely leave in the beginning of June. In order to be able to follow her to Siberia, as Nekhludoff was firmly resolved to do, he was now obliged to visit his estates, and settle matters there. Nekhludoff first went to the nearest, Kousminski, a large estate that lay in the black earth district, and from which he derived the greatest part of his income.

He had lived on that estate in his childhood and youth, and had been there twice since, and once, at his mother's request, he had taken a German steward there, and had with him verified the accounts. The state of things there and the peasants' relations

to the management, i.e., the landlord, had therefore been long known to him. The relations of the peasants to the administration were those of utter dependence on that management. Nekhludoff knew all this when still a university student, he had confessed and preached Henry Georgeism, and, on the basis of that teaching, had given the land inherited from his father to the peasants. It is true that after entering the army, when he got into the habit of spending 20,000 roubles a year, those former occupations ceased to be regarded as a duty, and were forgotten, and he not only left off asking himself where the money his mother allowed him came from, but even avoided thinking about it. But his mother's death, the coming into the property, and the necessity of managing it, again raised the question as to what his position in reference to private property in land was. A month before Nekhludoff would have answered that he had not the strength to alter the existing order of things; that it was not he who was administering the estate; and would one way or another have eased his conscience, continuing to live far from his estates, and having the money sent him. But now he decided that he could not leave things to go on as they were, but would have to alter them in a way unprofitable to himself, even though he had all these complicated and difficult relations with the prison world which made money necessary, as well as a probable journey to Siberia before him. Therefore he decided not to farm the land, but to let it to the peasants at a low rent, to enable them to cultivate it without depending on a landlord. More than once, when comparing

the position of a landowner with that of an owner of serfs, Nekhludoff had compared the renting of land to the peasants instead of cultivating it with hired labour, to the old system by which serf proprietors used to exact a money payment from their serfs in place of labour. It was not a solution of the problem, and yet a step towards the solution; it was a movement towards a less rude form of slavery. And it was in this way he meant to act.

Nekhludoff reached Kousminski about noon. Trying to simplify his life in every way, he did not telegraph, but hired a cart and pair at the station. The driver was a young fellow in a nankeen coat, with a belt below his long waist. He was glad to talk to the gentleman, especially because while they were talking his broken-winded white horse and the emaciated spavined one could go at a foot-pace, which they always liked to do.

The driver spoke about the steward at Kousminski without knowing that he was driving "the master." Nekhludoff had purposely not told him who he was.

"That ostentatious German," said the driver (who had been to town and read novels) as he sat sideways on the box, passing his hand from the top to the bottom of his long whip, and trying to show off his accomplishments--"that ostentatious German has procured three light bays, and when he drives out with his lady---oh, my!

At Christmas he had a Christmas-tree in the big house. I drove some of the visitors there. It had 'lectric lights; you could not see the like of it in the whole of the government. What's it to him, he has cribbed a heap of money. I heard say he has bought an estate."

Nekhludoff had imagined that he was quite indifferent to the way the steward managed his estate, and what advantages the steward derived from it. The words of the long-waisted driver, however, were not pleasant to hear.

A dark cloud now and then covered the sun; the larks were soaring above the fields of winter corn; the forests were already covered with fresh young green; the meadows speckled with grazing cattle and horses. The fields were being ploughed, and Nekhludoff enjoyed the lovely day. But every now and then he had an unpleasant feeling, and, when he asked himself what it was caused by, he remembered what the driver had told him about the way the German was managing Kousminski. When he got to his estate and set to work this unpleasant feeling vanished.

Looking over the books in the office, and a talk with the foreman, who naively pointed out the advantages to be derived from the facts that the peasants had very little land of their own and that it lay in the midst of the landlord's fields, made Nekhludoff more than ever determined to leave off farming and to

let his land to the peasants.

From the office books and his talk with the foreman, Nekhludoff found that two-thirds of the best of the cultivated land was still being tilled with improved machinery by labourers receiving fixed wages, while the other third was tilled by the peasants at the rate of five roubles per desiatin [about two and three-quarter acres]. So that the peasants had to plough each desiatin three times, harrow it three times, sow and mow the corn, make it into sheaves, and deliver it on the threshing ground for five roubles, while the same amount of work done by wage labour came to at least 10 roubles. Everything the peasants got from the office they paid for in labour at a very high price. They paid in labour for the use of the meadows, for wood, for potato-stalks, and were nearly all of them in debt to the office. Thus, for the land that lay beyond the cultivated fields, which the peasants hired, four times the price that its value would bring in if invested at five per cent was taken from the peasants.

Nekhludoff had known all this before, but he now saw it in a new light, and wondered how he and others in his position could help seeing how abnormal such conditions are. The steward's arguments that if the land were let to the peasants the agricultural implements would fetch next to nothing, as it would be impossible to get even a quarter of their value for them, and that the

peasants would spoil the land, and how great a loser Nekhludoff would be, only strengthened Nekhludoff in the opinion that he was doing a good action in letting the land to the peasants and thus depriving himself of a large part of his income. He decided to settle this business now, at once, while he was there. The reaping and selling of the corn he left for the steward to manage in due season, and also the selling of the agricultural implements and useless buildings. But he asked his steward to call the peasants of the three neighbouring villages that lay in the midst of his estate (Kousminski) to a meeting, at which he would tell them of his intentions and arrange about the price at which they were to rent the land.

With the pleasant sense of the firmness he had shown in the face of the steward's arguments, and his readiness to make a sacrifice, Nekhludoff left the office, thinking over the business before him, and strolled round the house, through the neglected flower-garden--this year the flowers were planted in front of the steward's house--over the tennis ground, now overgrown with dandelions, and along the lime-tree walk, where he used to smoke his cigar, and where he had flirted with the pretty Kirimova, his mother's visitor. Having briefly prepared in his mind the speech he was going to make to the peasants, he again went in to the steward, and, after tea, having once more arranged his thoughts, he went into the room prepared for him in the big house, which used to be a spare bedroom.

In this clean little room, with pictures of Venice on the walls, and a mirror between the two windows, there stood a clean bed with a spring mattress, and by the side of it a small table, with a decanter of water, matches, and an extinguisher. On a table by the looking-glass lay his open portmanteau, with his dressing-case and some books in it; a Russian book, The Investigation of the Laws of Criminality, and a German and an English book on the same subject, which he meant to read while travelling in the country. But it was too late to begin to-day, and he began preparing to go to bed.

An old-fashioned inlaid mahogany arm-chair stood in the corner of the room, and this chair, which Nekhludoff remembered standing in his mother's bedroom, suddenly raised a perfectly unexpected sensation in his soul. He was suddenly filled with regret at the thought of the house that would tumble to ruin, and the garden that would run wild, and the forest that would be cut down, and all these farmyards, stables, sheds, machines, horses, cows which he knew had cost so much effort, though not to himself, to acquire and to keep. It had seemed easy to give up all this, but now it was hard, not only to give this, but even to let the land and lose half his income. And at once a consideration, which proved that it was unreasonable to let the land to the peasants, and thus to destroy his property, came to his service. "I must not hold property in land. If I possess no property in land, I

cannot keep up the house and farm. And, besides, I am going to Siberia, and shall not need either the house or the estate," said one voice. "All this is so," said another voice, "but you are not going to spend all your life in Siberia. You may marry, and have children, and must hand the estate on to them in as good a condition as you received it. There is a duty to the land, too. To give up, to destroy everything is very easy; to acquire it very difficult. Above all, you must consider your future life, and what you will do with yourself, and you must dispose of your property accordingly. And are you really firm in your resolve? And then, are you really acting according to your conscience, or are you acting in order to be admired of men?" Nekhludoff asked himself all this, and had to acknowledge that he was influenced by the thought of what people would say about him. And the more he thought about it the more questions arose, and the more unsolvable they seemed.

In hopes of ridding himself of these thoughts by falling asleep, and solving them in the morning when his head would be fresh, he lay down on his clean bed. But it was long before he could sleep. Together with the fresh air and the moonlight, the croaking of the frogs entered the room, mingling with the trills of a couple of nightingales in the park and one close to the window in a bush of lilacs in bloom. Listening to the nightingales and the frogs, Nekhludoff remembered the inspector's daughter, and her music, and the inspector; that reminded him of Maslova, and how her lips

trembled, like the croaking of the frogs, when she said, "You must just leave it." Then the German steward began going down to the frogs, and had to be held back, but he not only went down but turned into Maslova, who began reproaching Nekhludoff, saying, "You are a prince, and I am a convict." "No, I must not give in," thought Nekhludoff, waking up, and again asking himself, "Is what I am doing right? I do not know, and no matter, no matter, I must only fall asleep now." And he began himself to descend where he had seen the inspector and Maslova climbing down to, and there it all ended.

CHAPTER II.

EFFORTS AT LAND RESTORATION.

The next day Nekhludoff awoke at nine o'clock. The young office clerk who attended on "the master" brought him his boots, shining as they had never shone before, and some cold, beautifully clear spring water, and informed him that the peasants were already assembling.

Nekhludoff jumped out of bed, and collected his thoughts. Not a trace of yesterday's regret at giving up and thus destroying his property remained now. He remembered this feeling of regret with surprise; he was now looking forward with joy to the task before him, and could not help being proud of it. He could see from the window the old tennis ground, overgrown with dandelions, on which the peasants were beginning to assemble. The frogs had not croaked in vain the night before; the day was dull. There was no wind; a soft warm rain had begun falling in the morning, and hung in drops on leaves, twigs, and grass. Besides the smell of the fresh vegetation, the smell of damp earth, asking for more rain, entered in at the window. While dressing, Nekhludoff several times looked out at the peasants gathered on the tennis ground. One by one they came, took off their hats or caps to one another, and took their places in a circle, leaning on their sticks. The steward, a stout, muscular, strong young man, dressed in a short

pea-jacket, with a green stand-up collar, and enormous buttons, came to say that all had assembled, but that they might wait until Nekhludoff had finished his breakfast--tea and coffee, whichever he pleased; both were ready.

"No, I think I had better go and see them at once," said Nekhludoff, with an unexpected feeling of shyness and shame at the thought of the conversation he was going to have with the peasants. He was going to fulfil a wish of the peasants, the fulfilment of which they did not even dare to hope for--to let the land to them at a low price, i.e., to confer a great boon; and yet he felt ashamed of something. When Nekhludoff came up to the peasants, and the fair, the curly, the bald, the grey heads were bared before him, he felt so confused that he could say nothing. The rain continued to come down in small drops, that remained on the hair, the beards, and the fluff of the men's rough coats. The peasants looked at "the master," waiting for him to speak, and he was so abashed that he could not speak. This confused silence was broken by the sedate, self-assured German steward, who considered himself a good judge of the Russian peasant, and who spoke Russian remarkably well. This strong, over-fed man, and Nekhludoff himself, presented a striking contrast to the peasants, with their thin, wrinkled faces and the shoulder blades protruding beneath their coarse coats.

"Here's the Prince wanting to do you a favor, and to let the land

to you; only you are not worthy of it," said the steward.

"How are we not worthy of it, Vasili Karlovitch? Don't we work for you? We were well satisfied with the deceased lady--God have mercy on her soul--and the young Prince will not desert us now. Our thanks to him," said a redhaired, talkative peasant.

"Yes, that's why I have called you together. I should like to let you have all the land, if you wish it."

The peasants said nothing, as if they did not understand or did not believe it.

"Let's see. Let us have the land? What do you mean?" asked a middle-aged man.

"To let it to you, that you might have the use of it, at a low rent."

"A very agreeable thing," said an old man.

"If only the pay is such as we can afford," said another.

"There's no reason why we should not rent the land."

"We are accustomed to live by tilling the ground."

"And it's quieter for you, too, that way. You'll have to do nothing but receive the rent. Only think of all the sin and worry now!" several voices were heard saying.

"The sin is all on your side," the German remarked. "If only you did your work, and were orderly."

"That's impossible for the likes of us," said a sharp-nosed old man. "You say, 'Why do you let the horse get into the corn?' just as if I let it in. Why, I was swinging my scythe, or something of the kind, the livelong day, till the day seemed as long as a year, and so I fell asleep while watching the herd of horses at night, and it got into your oats, and now you're skinning me."

"And you should keep order."

"It's easy for you to talk about order, but it's more than our strength will bear," answered a tall, dark, hairy middleaged man.

"Didn't I tell you to put up a fence?"

"You give us the wood to make it of," said a short, plain-looking peasant. "I was going to put up a fence last year, and you put me to feed vermin in prison for three months. That was the end of that fence."

"What is it he is saying?" asked Nekhludoff, turning to the steward.

"Der ersto Dieb im Dorfe," [The greatest thief in the village] answered the steward in German. "He is caught stealing wood from the forest every year." Then turning to the peasant, he added, "You must learn to respect other people's property."

"Why, don't we respect you?" said an old man. "We are obliged to respect you. Why, you could twist us into a rope; we are in your hands."

"Eh, my friend, it's impossible to do you. It's you who are ever ready to do us," said the steward.

"Do you, indeed. Didn't you smash my jaw for me, and I got nothing for it? No good going to law with the rich, it seems."

"You should keep to the law."

A tournament of words was apparently going on without those who took part in it knowing exactly what it was all about; but it was noticeable that there was bitterness on one side, restricted by fear, and on the other a consciousness of importance and power. It was very trying to Nekhludoff to listen to all this, so he

returned to the question of arranging the amount and the terms of the rent.

"Well, then, how about the land? Do you wish to take it, and what price will you pay if I let you have the whole of it?"

"The property is yours: it is for you to fix the price."

Nekhludoff named the price. Though it was far below that paid in the neighbourhood, the peasants declared it too high, and began bargaining, as is customary among them. Nekhludoff thought his offer would be accepted with pleasure, but no signs of pleasure were visible.

One thing only showed Nekhludoff that his offer was a profitable one to the peasants. The question as to who would rent the land, the whole commune or a special society, was put, and a violent dispute arose among those peasants who were in favour of excluding the weak and those not likely to pay the rent regularly, and the peasants who would have to be excluded on that score. At last, thanks to the steward, the amount and the terms of the rent were fixed, and the peasants went down the hill towards their villages, talking noisily, while Nekhludoff and the steward went into the office to make up the agreement. Everything was settled in the way Nekhludoff wished and expected it to be. The peasants had their land 30 per cent. cheaper than they could

have got it anywhere in the district, the revenue from the land was diminished by half, but was more than sufficient for Nekhludoff, especially as there would be money coming in for a forest he sold, as well as for the agricultural implements, which would be sold, too. Everything seemed excellently arranged, yet he felt ashamed of something. He could see that the peasants, though they spoke words of thanks, were not satisfied, and had expected something greater. So it turned out that he had deprived himself of a great deal, and yet not done what the peasants had expected.

The next day the agreement was signed, and accompanied by several old peasants, who had been chosen as deputies, Nekhludoff went out, got into the steward's elegant equipage (as the driver from the station had called it), said "good-bye" to the peasants, who stood shaking their heads in a dissatisfied and disappointed manner, and drove off to the station. Nekhludoff was dissatisfied with himself without knowing why, but all the time he felt sad and ashamed of something.

CHAPTER III.

OLD ASSOCIATIONS.

From Kousminski Nekhludoff went to the estate he had inherited from his aunts, the same where he first met Katusha. He meant to arrange about the land there in the way he had done in Kousminski. Besides this, he wished to find out all he could about Katusha and her baby, and when and how it had died. He got to Panovo early one morning, and the first thing that struck him when he drove up was the look of decay and dilapidation that all the buildings bore, especially the house itself. The iron roofs, which had once been painted green, looked red with rust, and a few sheets of iron were bent back, probably by a storm. Some of the planks which covered the house from outside were torn away in several places; these were easier to get by breaking the rusty nails that held them. Both porches, but especially the side porch he remembered so well, were rotten and broken; only the banister remained. Some of the windows were boarded up, and the building in which the foreman lived, the kitchen, the stables--all were grey and decaying. Only the garden had not decayed, but had grown, and was in full bloom; from over the fence the cherry, apple, and plum trees looked like white clouds. The lilac bushes that formed the hedge were in full bloom, as they had been when, 14 years ago, Nekhludoff had played gorelki with the 15-year-old Katusha, and had fallen and got his hand stung by the nettles

behind one of those lilac bushes. The larch that his aunt Sophia had planted near the house, which then was only a short stick, had grown into a tree, the trunk of which would have made a beam, and its branches were covered with soft yellow green needles as with down. The river, now within its banks, rushed noisily over the mill dam. The meadow the other side of the river was dotted over by the peasants' mixed herds. The foreman, a student, who had left the seminary without finishing the course, met Nekhludoff in the yard, with a smile on his face, and, still smiling, asked him to come into the office, and, as if promising something exceptionally good by this smile, he went behind a partition. For a moment some whispering was heard behind the partition. The isvostchik who had driven Nekhludoff from the station, drove away after receiving a tip, and all was silent. Then a barefooted girl passed the window; she had on an embroidered peasant blouse, and long earrings in her ears; then a man walked past, clattering with his nailed boots on the trodden path.

Nekhludoff sat down by the little casement, and looked out into the garden and listened. A soft, fresh spring breeze, smelling of newly-dug earth, streamed in through the window, playing with the hair on his damp forehead and the papers that lay on the window-sill, which was all cut about with a knife.

"Tra-pa-trop, tra-pa-trop," comes a sound from the river, as the

women who were washing clothes there slapped them in regular measure with their wooden bats, and the sound spread over the glittering surface of the mill pond while the rhythmical sound of the falling water came from the mill, and a frightened fly suddenly flew loudly buzzing past his ear.

And all at once Nekhludoff remembered how, long ago, when he was young and innocent, he had heard the women's wooden bats slapping the wet clothes above the rhythmical sound from the mill, and in the same way the spring breeze had blown about the hair on his wet forehead and the papers on the window-sill, which was all cut about with a knife, and just in the same way a fly had buzzed loudly past his car.

It was not exactly that he remembered himself as a lad of 15, but he seemed to feel himself the same as he was then, with the same freshness and purity, and full of the same grand possibilities for the future, and at the same time, as it happens in a dream, he knew that all this could be no more, and he felt terribly sad. "At what time would you like something to eat?" asked the foreman, with a smile.

"When you like; I am not hungry. I shall go for a walk through the village."

"Would you not like to come into the house? Everything is in

order there. Have the goodness to look in. If the outside---"

"Not now; later on. Tell me, please, have you got a woman here called Matrona Kharina?" (This was Katusha's aunt, the village midwife.)

"Oh, yes; in the village she keeps a secret pot-house. I know she does, and I accuse her of it and scold her; but as to taking her up, it would be a pity. An old woman, you know; she has grandchildren," said the foreman, continuing to smile in the same manner, partly wishing to be pleasant to the master, and partly because he was convinced that Nekhludoff understood all these matters just as well as he did himself.

"Where does she live? I shall go across and see her."

"At the end of the village; the further side, the third from the end. To the left there is a brick cottage, and her hut is beyond that. But I'd better see you there," the foreman said with a graceful smile.

"No, thanks, I shall find it; and you be so good as to call a meeting of the peasants, and tell them that I want to speak to them about the land," said Nekhludoff, with the intention of coming to the same agreement with the peasants here as he had done in Kousminski, and, if possible, that same evening.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PEASANTS' LOT.

When Nekhludoff came out of the gate he met the girl with the long earrings on the well-trodden path that lay across the pasture ground, overgrown with dock and plantain leaves. She had a long, brightly-coloured apron on, and was quickly swinging her left arm in front of herself as she stepped briskly with her fat, bare feet. With her right arm she was pressing a fowl to her stomach. The fowl, with red comb shaking, seemed perfectly calm; he only rolled up his eyes and stretched out and drew in one black leg, clawing the girl's apron. When the girl came nearer to "the master," she began moving more slowly, and her run changed into a walk. When she came up to him she stopped, and, after a backward jerk with her head, bowed to him; and only when he had passed did she recommence to run homeward with the cock. As he went down towards the well, he met an old woman, who had a coarse dirty blouse on, carrying two pails full of water, that hung on a yoke across her bent back. The old woman carefully put down the pails and bowed, with the same backward jerk of her head.

After passing the well Nekhludoff entered the village. It was a bright, hot day, and oppressive, though only ten o'clock. At intervals the sun was hidden by the gathering clouds. An unpleasant, sharp smell of manure filled the air in the street.

It came from carts going up the hillside, but chiefly from the disturbed manure heaps in the yards of the huts, by the open gates of which Nekhludoff had to pass. The peasants, barefooted, their shirts and trousers soiled with manure, turned to look at the tall, stout gentleman with the glossy silk ribbon on his grey hat who was walking up the village street, touching the ground every other step with a shiny, bright-knobbed walking-stick. The peasants returning from the fields at a trot and jotting in their empty carts, took off their hats, and, in their surprise, followed with their eyes the extraordinary man who was walking up their street. The women came out of the gates or stood in the porches of their huts, pointing him out to each other and gazing at him as he passed.

When Nekhludoff was passing the fourth gate, he was stopped by a cart that was coming out, its wheels creaking, loaded high with manure, which was pressed down, and was covered with a mat to sit on. A six-year-old boy, excited by the prospect of a drive, followed the cart. A young peasant, with shoes plaited out of bark on his feet, led the horse out of the yard. A long-legged colt jumped out of the gate; but, seeing Nekhludoff, pressed close to the cart, and scraping its legs against the wheels, jumped forward, past its excited, gently-neighing mother, as she was dragging the heavy load through the gateway. The next horse was led out by a barefooted old man, with protruding shoulder-blades, in a dirty shirt and striped trousers.

When the horses got out on to the hard road, strewn over with bits of dry, grey manure, the old man returned to the gate, and bowed to Nekhludoff.

"You are our ladies' nephew, aren't you?"

"Yes, I am their nephew."

"You've kindly come to look us up, eh?" said the garrulous old man.

"Yes, I have. Well, how are you getting on?"

"How do we get on? We get on very badly," the old man drawled, as if it gave him pleasure.

"Why so badly?" Nekhludoff asked, stepping inside the gate.

"What is our life but the very worst life?" said the old man, following Nekhludoff into that part of the yard which was roofed over.

Nekhludoff stopped under the roof.

"I have got 12 of them there," continued the old man, pointing to

two women on the remainder of the manure heap, who stood perspiring with forks in their hands, the kerchiefs tumbling off their heads, with their skirts tucked up, showing the calves of their dirty, bare legs. "Not a month passes but I have to buy six poods [a pood is 36 English pounds] of corn, and where's the money to come from?"

"Have you not got enough corn of your own?"

"My own?" repeated the old man, with a smile of contempt; "why I have only got land for three, and last year we had not enough to last till Christmas."

"What do you do then?"

"What do we do? Why, I hire out as a labourer; and then I borrowed some money from your honour. We spent it all before Lent, and the tax is not paid yet."

"And how much is the tax?"

"Why, it's 17 roubles for my household. Oh, Lord, such a life! One hardly knows one's self how one manages to live it."

"May I go into your hut?" asked Nekhludoff, stepping across the yard over the yellow-brown layers of manure that had been raked

up by the forks, and were giving off a strong smell.

"Why not? Come in," said the old man, and stepping quickly with his bare feet over the manure, the liquid oozing between his toes, he passed Nekhludoff and opened the door of the hut.

The women arranged the kerchiefs on their heads and let down their skirts, and stood looking with surprise at the clean gentleman with gold studs to his sleeves who was entering their house. Two little girls, with nothing on but coarse chemises, rushed out of the hut. Nekhludoff took off his hat, and, stooping to get through the low door, entered, through a passage into the dirty, narrow hut, that smelt of sour food, and where much space was taken up by two weaving looms. In the hut an old woman was standing by the stove, with the sleeves rolled up over her thin, sinewy brown arms.

"Here is our master come to see us," said the old man.

"I'm sure he's very welcome," said the old woman, kindly.

"I would like to see how you live."

"Well, you see how we live. The hut is coming down, and might kill one any day; but my old man he says it's good enough, and so we live like kings," said the brisk old woman, nervously jerking

her head. "I'm getting the dinner; going to feed the workers."

"And what are you going to have for dinner?"

"Our food is very good. First course, bread and kvas; [kvas is a kind of sour, non-intoxicant beer made of rye] second course, kvas and bread," said the old woman, showing her teeth, which were half worn away.

"No," seriously; "let me see what you are going to eat."

"To eat?" said the old man, laughing. "Ours is not a very cunning meal. You just show him, wife."

"Want to see our peasant food? Well, you are an inquisitive gentleman, now I come to look at you. He wants to know everything. Did I not tell you bread and kvas and then we'll have soup. A woman brought us some fish, and that's what the soup is made of, and after that, potatoes."

"Nothing more?"

"What more do you want? We'll also have a little milk," said the old woman, looking towards the door. The door stood open, and the passage outside was full of people--boys, girls, women with babies--thronged together to look at the strange gentleman who

wanted to see the peasants' food. The old woman seemed to pride herself on the way she behaved with a gentleman.

"Yes, it's a miserable life, ours; that goes without saying, sir," said the old man. "What are you doing there?" he shouted to those in the passage. "Well, good-bye," said Nekhludoff, feeling ashamed and uneasy, though unable to account for the feeling.

"Thank you kindly for having looked us up," said the old man.

The people in the passage pressed closer together to let Nekhludoff pass, and he went out and continued his way up the street.

Two barefooted boys followed him out of the passage the elder in a shirt that had once been white, the other in a worn and faded pink one. Nekhludoff looked back at them.

"And where are you going now?" asked the boy with the white shirt. Nekhludoff answered: "To Matrona Kharina. Do you know her?" The boy with the pink shirt began laughing at something; but the elder asked, seriously:

"What Matrona is that? Is she old?"

"Yes, she is old."

"Oh--oh," he drawled; "that one; she's at the other end of the village; we'll show you. Yes, Fedka, we'll go with him. Shall we?"

"Yes, but the horses?"

"They'll be all right, I dare say."

Fedka agreed, and all three went up the street.

CHAPTER V.

MASLOVA'S AUNT.

Nekhludoff felt more at ease with the boys than with the grown-up people, and he began talking to them as they went along. The little one with the pink shirt stopped laughing, and spoke as sensibly and as exactly as the elder one.

"Can you tell me who are the poorest people you have got here?" asked Nekhludoff.

"The poorest? Michael is poor, Simon Makhroff, and Martha, she is very poor."

"And Anisia, she is still poorer; she's not even got a cow. They go begging," said little Fedka.

"She's not got a cow, but they are only three persons, and Martha's family are five," objected the elder boy.

"But the other's a widow," the pink boy said, standing up for Anisia.

"You say Anisia is a widow, and Martha is no better than a widow," said the elder boy; "she's also no husband."

"And where is her husband?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Feeding vermin in prison," said the elder boy, using this expression, common among the peasants.

"A year ago he cut down two birch trees in the land-lord's forest," the little pink boy hurried to say, "so he was locked up; now he's sitting the sixth month there, and the wife goes begging. There are three children and a sick grandmother," he went on with his detailed account.

"And where does she live?" Nekhludoff asked.

"In this very house," answered the boy, pointing to a hut, in front of which, on the footpath along which Nekhludoff was walking, a tiny, flaxen-headed infant stood balancing himself with difficulty on his rickety legs.

"Vaska! Where's the little scamp got to?" shouted a woman, with a dirty grey blouse, and a frightened look, as she ran out of the house, and, rushing forward, seized the baby before Nekhludoff came up to it, and carried it in, just as if she were afraid that Nekhludoff would hurt her child.

This was the woman whose husband was imprisoned for Nekhludoff's

birch trees.

"Well, and this Matrona, is she also poor?" Nekhludoff asked, as they came up to Matrona's house.

"She poor? No. Why, she sells spirits," the thin, pink little boy answered decidedly.

When they reached the house Nekhludoff left the boys outside and went through the passage into the hut. The hut was 14 feet long. The bed that stood behind the big stove was not long enough for a tall person to stretch out on. "And on this very bed," Nekhludoff thought, "Katusha bore her baby and lay ill afterwards." The greater part of the hut was taken up by a loom, on which the old woman and her eldest granddaughter were arranging the warp when Nekhludoff came in, striking his forehead against the low doorway. Two other grandchildren came rushing in after Nekhludoff, and stopped, holding on to the lintels of the door.

"Whom do you want?" asked the old woman, crossly. She was in a bad temper because she could not manage to get the warp right, and, besides, carrying on an illicit trade in spirits, she was always afraid when any stranger came in.

"I am--the owner of the neighbouring estates, and should like to speak to you."

"Dear me; why, it's you, my honey; and I, fool, thought it was just some passer-by. Dear me, you--it's you, my precious," said the old woman, with simulated tenderness in her voice.

"I should like to speak to you alone," said Nekhludoff, with a glance towards the door, where the children were standing, and behind them a woman holding a wasted, pale baby, with a sickly smile on its face, who had a little cap made of different bits of stuff on its head.

"What are you staring at? I'll give it you. Just hand me my crutch," the old woman shouted to those at the door.

"Shut the door, will you!" The children went away, and the woman closed the door.

"And I was thinking, who's that? And it's 'the master' himself. My jewel, my treasure. Just think," said the old woman, "where he has deigned to come. Sit down here, your honour," she said, wiping the seat with her apron. "And I was thinking what devil is it coming in, and it's your honour, 'the master' himself, the good gentleman, our benefactor. Forgive me, old fool that I am; I'm getting blind."

Nekhludoff sat down, and the old woman stood in front of him,

leaning her cheek on her right hand, while the left held up the sharp elbow of her right arm.

"Dear me, you have grown old, your honour; and you used to be as fresh as a daisy. And now! Cares also, I expect?"

"This is what I have come about: Do you remember Katusha Maslova?"

"Katerina? I should think so. Why, she is my niece. How could I help remembering; and the tears I have shed because of her. Why, I know all about it. Eh, sir, who has not sinned before God? who has not offended against the Tsar? We know what youth is. You used to be drinking tea and coffee, so the devil got hold of you. He is strong at times. What's to be done? Now, if you had chucked her; but no, just see how you rewarded her, gave her a hundred roubles. And she? What has she done? Had she but listened to me she might have lived all right. I must say the truth, though she is my niece: that girl's no good. What a good place I found her! She would not submit, but abused her master. Is it for the likes of us to scold gentlefolk? Well, she was sent away. And then at the forester's. She might have lived there; but no, she would not."

"I want to know about the child. She was confined at your house, was she not? Where's the child?"

"As to the child, I considered that well at the time. She was so bad I never thought she would get up again. Well, so I christened the baby quite properly, and we sent it to the Foundlings'. Why should one let an innocent soul languish when the mother is dying? Others do like this: they just leave the baby, don't feed it, and it wastes away. But, thinks I, no; I'd rather take some trouble, and send it to the Foundlings'. There was money enough, so I sent it off."

"Did you not get its registration number from the Foundlings' Hospital?"

"Yes, there was a number, but the baby died," she said. "It died as soon as she brought it there."

"Who is she?"

"That same woman who used to live in Skorodno. She made a business of it. Her name was Malania. She's dead now. She was a wise woman. What do you think she used to do? They'd bring her a baby, and she'd keep it and feed it; and she'd feed it until she had enough of them to take to the Foundlings'. When she had three or four, she'd take them all at once. She had such a clever arrangement, a sort of big cradle--a double one she could put them in one way or the other. It had a handle. So she'd put four

of them in, feet to feet and the heads apart, so that they should not knock against each other. And so she took four at once. She'd put some pap in a rag into their mouths to keep 'em silent, the pets."

"Well, go on."

"Well, she took Katerina's baby in the same way, after keeping it a fortnight, I believe. It was in her house it began to sicken."

"And was it a fine baby?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Such a baby, that if you wanted a finer you could not find one. Your very image," the old woman added, with a wink.

"Why did it sicken? Was the food bad?"

"Eh, what food? Only just a pretence of food. Naturally, when it's not one's own child. Only enough to get it there alive. She said she just managed to get it to Moscow, and there it died. She brought a certificate--all in order. She was such a wise woman."

That was all Nekhludoff could find out concerning his child.

CHAPTER VI.

REFLECTIONS OF A LANDLORD.

Again striking his head against both doors, Nekhludoff went out into the street, where the pink and the white boys were waiting for him. A few newcomers were standing with them. Among the women, of whom several had babies in their arms, was the thin woman with the baby who had the patchwork cap on its head. She held lightly in her arms the bloodless infant, who kept strangely smiling all over its wizened little face, and continually moving its crooked thumbs.

Nekhludoff knew the smile to be one of suffering. He asked who the woman was.

"It is that very Anisia I told you about," said the elder boy.

Nekhludoff turned to Anisia.

"How do you live?" he asked. "By what means do you gain your livelihood?"

"How do I live? I go begging," said Anisia, and began to cry.

Nekhludoff took out his pocket-book, and gave the woman a

10-rouble note. He had not had time to take two steps before another woman with a baby caught him up, then an old woman, then another young one. All of them spoke of their poverty, and asked for help. Nekhludoff gave them the 60 roubles--all in small notes--which he had with him, and, terribly sad at heart, turned home, i.e., to the foreman's house.

The foreman met Nekhludoff with a smile, and informed him that the peasants would come to the meeting in the evening. Nekhludoff thanked him, and went straight into the garden to stroll along the paths strewn over with the petals of apple-blossom and overgrown with weeds, and to think over all he had seen.

At first all was quiet, but soon Nekhludoff heard from behind the foreman's house two angry women's voices interrupting each other, and now and then the voice of the ever-smiling foreman. Nekhludoff listened.

"My strength's at an end. What are you about, dragging the very cross [those baptized in the Russo-Greek Church always wear a cross round their necks] off my neck," said an angry woman's voice.

"But she only got in for a moment," said another voice. "Give it her back, I tell you. Why do you torment the beast, and the children, too, who want their milk?"

"Pay, then, or work it off," said the foreman's voice.

Nekhludoff left the garden and entered the porch, near which stood two dishevelled women--one of them pregnant and evidently near her time. On one of the steps of the porch, with his hands in the pockets of his holland coat, stood the foreman. When they saw the master, the women were silent, and began arranging the kerchiefs on their heads, and the foreman took his hands out of his pockets and began to smile.

This is what had happened. From the foreman's words, it seemed that the peasants were in the habit of letting their calves and even their cows into the meadow belonging to the estate. Two cows belonging to the families of these two women were found in the meadow, and driven into the yard. The foreman demanded from the women 30 copecks for each cow or two days' work. The women, however, maintained that the cows had got into the meadow of their own accord; that they had no money, and asked that the cows, which had stood in the blazing sun since morning without food, piteously lowing, should be returned to them, even if it had to be on the understanding that the price should be worked off later on.

"How often have I not begged of you," said the smiling foreman, looking back at Nekhludoff as if calling upon him to be a

witness, "if you drive your cattle home at noon, that you should have an eye on them?"

"I only ran to my little one for a bit, and they got away."

"Don't run away when you have undertaken to watch the cows."

"And who's to feed the little one? You'd not give him the breast, I suppose?" said the other woman. "Now, if they had really damaged the meadow, one would not take it so much to heart; but they only strayed in a moment."

"All the meadows are damaged," the foreman said, turning to Nekhludoff. "If I exact no penalty there will be no hay."

"There, now, don't go sinning like that; my cows have never been caught there before," shouted the pregnant woman.

"Now that one has been caught, pay up or work it off."

"All right, I'll work it off; only let me have the cow now, don't torture her with hunger," she cried, angrily. "As it is, I have no rest day or night. Mother-in-law is ill, husband taken to drink; I'm all alone to do all the work, and my strength's at an end. I wish you'd choke, you and your working it off."

Nekhludoff asked the foreman to let the women take the cows, and went back into the garden to go on thinking out his problem, but there was nothing more to think about.

Everything seemed so clear to him now that he could not stop wondering how it was that everybody did not see it, and that he himself had for such a long while not seen what was so clearly evident. The people were dying out, and had got used to the dying-out process, and had formed habits of life adapted to this process: there was the great mortality among the children, the over-working of the women, the under-feeding, especially of the aged. And so gradually had the people come to this condition that they did not realise the full horrors of it, and did not complain. Therefore, we consider their condition natural and as it should be. Now it seemed as clear as daylight that the chief cause of the people's great want was one that they themselves knew and always pointed out, i.e., that the land which alone could feed them had been taken from them by the landlords.

And how evident it was that the children and the aged died because they had no milk, and they had no milk because there was no pasture land, and no land to grow corn or make hay on. It was quite evident that all the misery of the people or, at least by far the greater part of it, was caused by the fact that the land which should feed them was not in their hands, but in the hands of those who, profiting by their rights to the land, live by the

work of these people. The land so much needed by men was tilled by these people, who were on the verge of starvation, so that the corn might be sold abroad and the owners of the land might buy themselves hats and canes, and carriages and bronzes, etc. He understood this as clearly as he understood that horses when they have eaten all the grass in the inclosure where they are kept will have to grow thin and starve unless they are put where they can get food off other land.

This was terrible, and must not go on. Means must be found to alter it, or at least not to take part in it. "And I will find them," he thought, as he walked up and down the path under the birch trees.

In scientific circles, Government institutions, and in the papers we talk about the causes of the poverty among the people and the means of ameliorating their condition; but we do not talk of the only sure means which would certainly lighten their condition, i.e., giving back to them the land they need so much.

Henry George's fundamental position recurred vividly to his mind and how he had once been carried away by it, and he was surprised that he could have forgotten it. The earth cannot be any one's property; it cannot be bought or sold any more than water, air, or sunshine. All have an equal right to the advantages it gives to men. And now he knew why he had felt ashamed to remember the

transaction at Kousminski. He had been deceiving himself. He knew that no man could have a right to own land, yet he had accepted this right as his, and had given the peasants something which, in the depth of his heart, he knew he had no right to. Now he would not act in this way, and would alter the arrangement in Kousminski also. And he formed a project in his mind to let the land to the peasants, and to acknowledge the rent they paid for it to be their property, to be kept to pay the taxes and for communal uses. This was, of course, not the single-tax system, still it was as near an approach to it as could be had under existing circumstances. His chief consideration, however, was that in this way he would no longer profit by the possession of landed property.

When he returned to the house the foreman, with a specially pleasant smile, asked him if he would not have his dinner now, expressing the fear that the feast his wife was preparing, with the help of the girl with the earrings, might be overdone.

The table was covered with a coarse, unbleached cloth and an embroidered towel was laid on it in lieu of a napkin. A vieux-saxe soup tureen with a broken handle stood on the table, full of potato soup, the stock made of the fowl that had put out and drawn in his black leg, and was now cut, or rather chopped, in pieces, which were here and there covered with hairs. After the soup more of the same fowl with the hairs was served roasted,

and then curd pasties, very greasy, and with a great deal of sugar. Little appetising as all this was, Nekhludoff hardly noticed what he was eating; he was occupied with the thought which had in a moment dispersed the sadness with which he had returned from the village.

The foreman's wife kept looking in at the door, whilst the frightened maid with the earrings brought in the dishes; and the foreman smiled more and more joyfully, priding himself on his wife's culinary skill. After dinner, Nekhludoff succeeded, with some trouble, in making the foreman sit down. In order to revise his own thoughts, and to express them to some one, he explained his project of letting the land to the peasants, and asked the foreman for his opinion. The foreman, smiling as if he had thought all this himself long ago, and was very pleased to hear it, did not really understand it at all. This was not because Nekhludoff did not express himself clearly, but because according to this project it turned out that Nekhludoff was giving up his own profit for the profit of others, and the thought that every one is only concerned about his own profit, to the harm of others, was so deeply rooted in the foreman's conceptions that he imagined he did not understand something when Nekhludoff said that all the income from the land must be placed to form the communal capital of the peasants.

"Oh, I see; then you, of course, will receive the percentages

from that capital," said the foreman, brightening up.

"Dear me! no. Don't you see, I am giving up the land altogether."

"But then you will not get any income," said the foreman, smiling no longer.

"Yes, I am going to give it up."

The foreman sighed heavily, and then began smiling again. Now he understood. He understood that Nekhludoff was not quite normal, and at once began to consider how he himself could profit by Nekhludoff's project of giving up the land, and tried to see this project in such a way that he might reap some advantage from it. But when he saw that this was impossible he grew sorrowful, and the project ceased to interest him, and he continued to smile only in order to please the master.

Seeing that the foreman did not understand him, Nekhludoff let him go and sat down by the window-sill, that was all cut about and inked over, and began to put his project down on paper.

The sun went down behind the limes, that were covered with fresh green, and the mosquitoes swarmed in, stinging Nekhludoff. Just as he finished his notes, he heard the lowing of cattle and the creaking of opening gates from the village, and the voices of the

peasants gathering together for the meeting. He told the foreman not to call the peasants up to the office, as he meant to go into the village himself and meet the men where they would assemble. Having hurriedly drank a cup of tea offered him by the foreman, Nekhludoff went to the village.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DISINHERITED.

From the crowd assembled in front of the house of the village elder came the sound of voices; but as soon as Nekhludoff came up the talking ceased, and all the peasants took off their caps, just as those in Kousminski had done. The peasants here were of a much poorer class than those in Kousminski. The men wore shoes made of bark and homespun shirts and coats. Some had come straight from their work in their shirts and with bare feet.

Nekhludoff made an effort, and began his speech by telling the peasants of his intention to give up his land to them altogether. The peasants were silent, and the expression on their faces did not undergo any change.

"Because I hold," said Nekhludoff, "and believe that every one has a right to the use of the land."

"That's certain. That's so, exactly," said several voices.

Nekhludoff went on to say that the revenue from the land ought to be divided among all, and that he would therefore suggest that they should rent the land at a price fixed by themselves, the rent to form a communal fund for their own use. Words of approval

and agreement were still to be heard, but the serious faces of the peasants grew still more serious, and the eyes that had been fixed on the gentleman dropped, as if they were unwilling to put him to shame by letting him see that every one had understood his trick, and that no one would be deceived by him.

Nekhludoff spoke clearly, and the peasants were intelligent, but they did not and could not understand him, for the same reason that the foreman had so long been unable to understand him.

They were fully convinced that it is natural for every man to consider his own interest. The experience of many generations had proved to them that the landlords always considered their own interest to the detriment of the peasants. Therefore, if a landlord called them to a meeting and made them some kind of a new offer, it could evidently only be in order to swindle them more cunningly than before.

"Well, then, what are you willing to rent the land at?" asked Nekhludoff.

"How can we fix a price? We cannot do it. The land is yours, and the power is in your hands," answered some voices from among the crowd.

"Oh, not at all. You will yourselves have the use of the money

for communal purposes."

"We cannot do it; the commune is one thing, and this is another."

"Don't you understand?" said the foreman, with a smile (he had followed Nekhludoff to the meeting), "the Prince is letting the land to you for money, and is giving you the money back to form a capital for the commune."

"We understand very well," said a cross, toothless old man, without raising his eyes. "Something like a bank; we should have to pay at a fixed time. We do not wish it; it is hard enough as it is, and that would ruin us completely."

"That's no go. We prefer to go on the old way," began several dissatisfied, and even rude, voices.

The refusals grew very vehement when Nekhludoff mentioned that he would draw up an agreement which would have to be signed by him and by them.

"Why sign? We shall go on working as we have done hitherto. What is all this for? We are ignorant men."

"We can't agree, because this sort of thing is not what we have been used to. As it was, so let it continue to be. Only the seeds

we should like to withdraw."

This meant that under the present arrangement the seeds had to be provided by the peasants, and they wanted the landlord to provide them.

"Then am I to understand that you refuse to accept the land?" Nekhludoff asked, addressing a middle-aged, barefooted peasant, with a tattered coat, and a bright look on his face, who was holding his worn cap with his left hand, in a peculiarly straight position, in the same way soldiers hold theirs when commanded to take them off.

"Just so," said this peasant, who had evidently not yet rid himself of the military hypnotism he had been subjected to while serving his time.

"It means that you have sufficient land," said Nekhludoff.

"No, sir, we have not," said the ex-soldier, with an artificially pleased look, carefully holding his tattered cap in front of him, as if offering it to any one who liked to make use of it.

"Well, anyhow, you'd better think over what I have said." Nekhludoff spoke with surprise, and again repeated his offer.

"We have no need to think about it; as we have said, so it will be," angrily muttered the morose, toothless old man.

"I shall remain here another day, and if you change your minds, send to let me know."

The peasants gave no answer.

So Nekhludoff did not succeed in arriving at any result from this interview.

"If I might make a remark, Prince," said the foreman, when they got home, "you will never come to any agreement with them; they are so obstinate. At a meeting these people just stick in one place, and there is no moving them. It is because they are frightened of everything. Why, these very peasants--say that white-haired one, or the dark one, who were refusing, are intelligent peasants. When one of them comes to the office and one makes him sit down to cup of tea it's like in the Palace of Wisdom--he is quite diplomatist," said the foreman, smiling; "he will consider everything rightly. At a meeting it's a different man--he keeps repeating one and the same . . ."

"Well, could not some of the more intelligent men be asked to come here?" said Nekhludoff. "I would carefully explain it to them."

"That can be done," said the smiling foreman.

"Well, then, would you mind calling them here to-morrow?"

"Oh, certainly I will," said the foreman, and smiled still more joyfully. "I shall call them to-morrow."

"Just hear him; he's not artful, not he," said a blackhaired peasant, with an unkempt beard, as he sat jolting from side to side on a well-fed mare, addressing an old man in a torn coat who rode by his side. The two men were driving a herd of the peasants' horses to graze in the night, alongside the highroad and secretly, in the landlord's forest.

"Give you the land for nothing--you need only sign--have they not done the likes of us often enough? No, my friend, none of your humbug. Nowadays we have a little sense," he added, and began shouting at a colt that had strayed.

He stopped his horse and looked round, but the colt had not remained behind; it had gone into the meadow by the roadside. "Bother that son of a Turk; he's taken to getting into the landowner's meadows," said the dark peasant with the unkempt beard, hearing the cracking of the sorrel stalks that the neighing colt was galloping over as he came running back from the

scented meadow.

"Do you hear the cracking? We'll have to send the women folk to weed the meadow when there's a holiday," said the thin peasant with the torn coat, "or else we'll blunt our scythes."

"Sign," he says. The unkempt man continued giving his opinion of the landlord's speech. "'Sign,' indeed, and let him swallow you up."

"That's certain," answered the old man. And then they were silent, and the tramping of the horses' feet along the highroad was the only sound to be heard.

CHAPTER VIII.

GOD'S PEACE IN THE HEART.

When Nekhludoff returned he found that the office had been arranged as a bedroom for him. A high bedstead, with a feather bed and two large pillows, had been placed in the room. The bed was covered with a dark red doublebedded silk quilt, which was elaborately and finely quilted, and very stiff. It evidently belonged to the trousseau of the foreman's wife. The foreman offered Nekhludoff the remains of the dinner, which the latter refused, and, excusing himself for the poorness of the fare and the accommodation, he left Nekhludoff alone.

The peasants' refusal did not at all bother Nekhludoff. On the contrary, though at Kousminski his offer had been accepted and he had even been thanked for it, and here he was met with suspicion and even enmity, he felt contented and joyful.

It was close and dirty in the office. Nekhludoff went out into the yard, and was going into the garden, but he remembered: that night, the window of the maid-servant's room, the side porch, and he felt uncomfortable, and did not like to pass the spot desecrated by guilty memories. He sat down on the doorstep, and breathing in the warm air, balmy with the strong scent of fresh birch leaves, he sat for a long time looking into the dark garden

and listening to the mill, the nightingales, and some other bird that whistled monotonously in the bush close by. The light disappeared from the foreman's window; in the cast, behind the barn, appeared the light of the rising moon, and sheet lightning began to light up the dilapidated house, and the blooming, over-grown garden more and more frequently. It began to thunder in the distance, and a black cloud spread over one-third of the sky. The nightingales and the other birds were silent. Above the murmur of the water from the mill came the cackling of geese, and then in the village and in the foreman's yard the first cocks began to crow earlier than usual, as they do on warm, thundery nights. There is a saying that if the cocks crow early the night will be a merry one. For Nekhludoff the night was more than merry; it was a happy, joyful night. Imagination renewed the impressions of that happy summer which he had spent here as an innocent lad, and he felt himself as he had been not only at that but at all the best moments of his life. He not only remembered but felt as he had felt when, at the age of 14, he prayed that God would show him the truth; or when as a child he had wept on his mother's lap, when parting from her, and promising to be always good, and never give her pain; he felt as he did when he and Nikolenka Irtenieff resolved always to support each other in living a good life and to try to make everybody happy.

He remembered how he had been tempted in Kousminski, so that he had begun to regret the house and the forest and the farm and the

land, and he asked himself if he regretted them now, and it even seemed strange to think that he could regret them. He remembered all he had seen to-day; the woman with the children, and without her husband, who was in prison for having cut down trees in his (Nekhludoff's) forest, and the terrible Matrona, who considered, or at least talked as if she considered, that women of her position must give themselves to the gentlefolk; he remembered her relation to the babies, the way in which they were taken to the Foundlings' Hospital, and the unfortunate, smiling, wizened baby with the patchwork cap, dying of starvation. And then he suddenly remembered the prison, the shaved heads, the cells, the disgusting smells, the chains, and, by the side of it all, the madly lavish city lift of the rich, himself included.

The bright moon, now almost full, rose above the barn. Dark shadows fell across the yard, and the iron roof of the ruined house shone bright. As if unwilling to waste this light, the nightingales again began their trills.

Nekhludoff called to mind how he had begun to consider his life in the garden of Kousminski when deciding what he was going to do, and remembered how confused he had become, how he could not arrive at any decision, how many difficulties each question had presented. He asked himself these questions now, and was surprised how simple it all was. It was simple because he was not thinking now of what would be the results for himself, but only

thought of what he had to do. And, strange to say, what he had to do for himself he could not decide, but what he had to do for others he knew without any doubt. He had no doubt that he must not leave Katusha, but go on helping her. He had no doubt that he must study, investigate, clear up, understand all this business concerning judgment and punishment, which he felt he saw differently to other people. What would result from it all he did not know, but he knew for certain that he must do it. And this firm assurance gave him joy.

The black cloud had spread all over the sky; the lightning flashed vividly across the yard and the old house with its tumble-down porches, the thunder growled overhead. All the birds were silent, but the leaves rustled and the wind reached the step where Nekhludoff stood and played with his hair. One drop came down, then another; then they came drumming on the dock leaves and on the iron of the roof, and all the air was filled by a bright flash, and before Nekhludoff could count three a fearful crash sounded over head and spread pealing all over the sky.

Nekhludoff went in.

"Yes, yes," he thought. "The work that our life accomplishes, the whole of this work, the meaning of it is not, nor can be, intelligible to me. What were my aunts for? Why did Nikolenka Irtenieff die? Why am I living? What was Katusha for? And my

madness? Why that war? Why my subsequent lawless life? To understand it, to understand the whole of the Master's will is not in my power. But to do His will, that is written down in my conscience, is in my power; that I know for certain. And when I am fulfilling it I have sureness and peace."

The rain came down in torrents and rushed from the roof into a tub beneath; the lightning lit up the house and yard less frequently. Nekhludoff went into his room, undressed, and lay down, not without fear of the bugs, whose presence the dirty, torn wall-papers made him suspect.

"Yes, to feel one's self not the master but a servant," he thought, and rejoiced at the thought. His fears were not vain. Hardly had he put out his candle when the vermin attacked and stung him. "To give up the land and go to Siberia. Fleas, bugs, dirt! Ah, well; if it must be borne, I shall bear it." But, in spite of the best of intentions, he could not bear it, and sat down by the open window and gazed with admiration at the retreating clouds and the reappearing moon.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAND SETTLEMENT.

It was morning before Nekhludoff could fall asleep, and therefore he woke up late. At noon seven men, chosen from among the peasants at the foreman's invitation, came into the orchard, where the foreman had arranged a table and benches by digging posts into the ground, and fixing boards on the top, under the apple trees. It took some time before the peasants could be persuaded to put on their caps and to sit down on the benches. Especially firm was the ex-soldier, who to-day had bark shoes on. He stood erect, holding his cap as they do at funerals, according to military regulation. When one of them, a respectable-looking, broad-shouldered old man, with a curly, grizzly beard like that of Michael Angelo's "Moses," and grey hair that curled round the brown, bald forehead, put on his big cap, and, wrapping his coat round him, got in behind the table and sat down, the rest followed his example. When all had taken their places Nekhludoff sat down opposite them, and leaning on the table over the paper on which he had drawn up his project, he began explaining it.

Whether it was that there were fewer present, or that he was occupied with the business in hand and not with himself, anyhow, this time Nekhludoff felt no confusion. He involuntarily addressed the broad-shouldered old man with white ringlets in his

grizzly beard, expecting approbation or objections from him. But Nekhludoff's conjecture was wrong. The respectable-looking old patriarch, though he nodded his handsome head approvingly or shook it, and frowned when the others raised an objection, evidently understood with great difficulty, and only when the others repeated what Nekhludoff had said in their own words. A little, almost beardless old fellow, blind in one eye, who sat by the side of the patriarch, and had a patched nankeen coat and old boots on, and, as Nekhludoff found out later, was an oven-builder, understood much better. This man moved his brows quickly, attending to Nekhludoff's words with an effort, and at once repeated them in his own way. An old, thick-set man with a white beard and intelligent eyes understood as quickly, and took every opportunity to put in an ironical joke, clearly wishing to show off. The ex-soldier seemed also to understand matters, but got mixed, being used to senseless soldiers' talk. A tall man with a small beard, a long nose, and a bass voice, who wore clean, home-made clothes and new bark-plaited shoes, seemed to be the one most seriously interested. This man spoke only when there was need of it. The two other old men, the same toothless one who had shouted a distinct refusal at the meeting the day before to every proposal of Nekhludoff's, and a tall, white lame old man with a kind face, his thin legs tightly wrapped round with strips of linen, said little, though they listened attentively. First of all Nekhludoff explained his views in regard to personal property in land. "The land, according to my idea, can neither be bought

nor sold, because if it could be, he who has got the money could buy it all, and exact anything he liked for the use of the land from those who have none."

"That's true," said the long-nosed man, in a deep bass.

"Just so," said the ex-soldier.

"A woman gathers a little grass for her cow; she's caught and imprisoned," said the white-bearded old man.

"Our own land is five versts away, and as to renting any it's impossible; the price is raised so high that it won't pay," added the cross, toothless old man. "They twist us into ropes, worse than during serfdom."

"I think as you do, and I count it a sin to possess land, so I wish to give it away," said Nekhludoff.

"Well, that's a good thing," said the old man, with curls like Angelo's "Moses," evidently thinking that Nekhludoff meant to let the land.

"I have come here because I no longer wish to possess any land, and now we must consider the best way of dividing it."

"Just give it to the peasants, that's all," said the cross, toothless old man.

Nekhludoff was abashed for a moment, feeling a suspicion of his not being honest in these words, but he instantly recovered, and made use of the remark, in order to express what was in his mind, in reply.

"I should be glad to give it them," he said, "but to whom, and how? To which of the peasants? Why, to your commune, and not to that of Deminsk." (That was the name of a neighbouring village with very little land.) All were silent. Then the ex-soldier said, "Just so."

"Now, then, tell me how would you divide the land among the peasants if you had to do it?" said Nekhludoff.

"We should divide it up equally, so much for every man," said the oven-builder, quickly raising and lowering his brows.

"How else? Of course, so much per man," said the good natured lame man with the white strips of linen round his legs.

Every one confirmed this statement, considering it satisfactory.

"So much per man? Then are the servants attached to the house

also to have a share?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Oh, no," said the ex-soldier, trying to appear bold and merry. But the tall, reasonable man would not agree with him.

"If one is to divide, all must share alike," he said, in his deep bass, after a little consideration.

"It can't be done," said Nekhludoff, who had already prepared his reply. "If all are to share alike, then those who do not work themselves--do not plough--will sell their shares to the rich. The rich will again get at the land. Those who live by working the land will multiply, and land will again be scarce. Then the rich will again get those who need land into their power."

"Just so," quickly said the ex-soldier.

"Forbid to sell the land; let only him who ploughs it have it," angrily interrupted the oven-builder.

To this Nekhludoff replied that it was impossible to know who was ploughing for himself and who for another.

The tall, reasonable man proposed that an arrangement be made so that they should all plough communally, and those who ploughed should get the produce and those who did not should get nothing.

To this communistic project Nekhludoff had also an answer ready. He said that for such an arrangement it would be necessary that all should have ploughs, and that all the horses should be alike, so that none should be left behind, and that ploughs and horses and all the implements would have to be communal property, and that in order to get that, all the people would have to agree.

"Our people could not be made to agree in a lifetime," said the cross old man.

"We should have regular fights," said the white-bearded old man with the laughing eyes. "So that the thing is not as simple as it looks," said Nekhludoff, "and this is a thing not only we but many have been considering. There is an American, Henry George. This is what he has thought out, and I agree with him."

"Why, you are the master, and you give it as you like. What's it to you? The power is yours," said the cross old man.

This confused Nekhludoff, but he was pleased to see that not he alone was dissatisfied with this interruption.

"You wait a bit, Uncle Simon; let him tell us about it," said the reasonable man, in his imposing bass.

This emboldened Nekhludoff, and he began to explain Henry George's single-tax system "The earth is no man's; it is God's," he began.

"Just so; that it is," several voices replied.

"The land is common to all. All have the same right to it, but there is good land and bad land, and every one would like to take the good land. How is one to do in order to get it justly divided? In this way: he that will use the good land must pay those who have got no land the value of the land he uses," Nekhludoff went on, answering his own question. "As it would be difficult to say who should pay whom, and money is needed for communal use, it should be arranged that he who uses the good land should pay the amount of the value of his land to the commune for its needs. Then every one would share equally. If you want to use land pay for it--more for the good, less for the bad land. If you do not wish to use land, don't pay anything, and those who use the land will pay the taxes and the communal expenses for you."

"Well, he had a head, this George," said the oven-builder, moving his brows. "He who has good land must pay more."

"If only the payment is according to our strength," said the tall man with the bass voice, evidently foreseeing how the matter

would end.

"The payment should be not too high and not too low. If it is too high it will not get paid, and there will be a loss; and if it is too low it will be bought and sold. There would be a trading in land. This is what I wished to arrange among you here."

"That is just, that is right; yes, that would do," said the peasants.

"He has a head, this George," said the broad-shouldered old man with the curls. "See what he has invented."

"Well, then, how would it be if I wished to take some land?" asked the smiling foreman.

"If there is an allotment to spare, take it and work it," said Nekhludoff.

"What do you want it for? You have sufficient as it is," said the old man with the laughing eyes.

With this the conference ended.

Nekhludoff repeated his offer, and advised the men to talk it over with the rest of the commune and to return with the answer.

The peasants said they would talk it over and bring an answer, and left in a state of excitement. Their loud talk was audible as they went along the road, and up to late in the night the sound of voices came along the river from the village.

The next day the peasants did not go to work, but spent it in considering the landlord's offer. The commune was divided into two parties--one which regarded the offer as a profitable one to themselves and saw no danger in agreeing with it, and another which suspected and feared the offer it did not understand. On the third day, however, all agreed, and some were sent to Nekhludoff to accept his offer. They were influenced in their decision by the explanation some of the old men gave of the landlord's conduct, which did away with all fear of deceit. They thought the gentleman had begun to consider his soul, and was acting as he did for its salvation. The alms which Nekhludoff had given away while in Panovo made his explanation seem likely. The fact that Nekhludoff had never before been face to face with such great poverty and so bare a life as the peasants had come to in this place, and was so appalled by it, made him give away money in charity, though he knew that this was not reasonable. He could not help giving the money, of which he now had a great deal, having received a large sum for the forest he had sold the year before, and also the hand money for the implements and stock in Kousminski. As soon as it was known that the master was giving

money in charity, crowds of people, chiefly women, began to come to ask him for help. He did not in the least know how to deal with them, how to decide, how much, and whom to give to. He felt that to refuse to give money, of which he had a great deal, to poor people was impossible, yet to give casually to those who asked was not wise. The last day he spent in Panovo, Nekhludoff looked over the things left in his aunts' house, and in the bottom drawer of the mahogany wardrobe, with the brass lions' heads with rings through them, he found many letters, and amongst them a photograph of a group, consisting of his aunts, Sophia Ivanovna and Mary Ivanovna, a student, and Katusha. Of all the things in the house he took only the letters and the photograph. The rest he left to the miller who, at the smiling foreman's recommendation, had bought the house and all it contained, to be taken down and carried away, at one-tenth of the real value.

Recalling the feeling of regret at the loss of his property which he had felt in Kousminski, Nekhludoff was surprised how he could have felt this regret. Now he felt nothing but unceasing joy at the deliverance, and a sensation of newness something like that which a traveller must experience when discovering new countries.

CHAPTER X.

NEKHLUDOFF RETURNS TO TOWN.

The town struck Nekhludoff in a new and peculiar light on his return. He came back in the evening, when the gas was lit, and drove from the railway station to his house, where the rooms still smelt of naphthaline. Agraphena Petrovna and Corney were both feeling tired and dissatisfied, and had even had a quarrel over those things that seemed made only to be aired and packed away. Nekhludoff's room was empty, but not in order, and the way to it was blocked up with boxes, so that his arrival evidently hindered the business which, owing to a curious kind of inertia, was going on in this house. The evident folly of these proceedings, in which he had once taken part, was so distasteful to Nekhludoff after the impressions the misery of the life of the peasants had made on him, that he decided to go to a hotel the next day, leaving Agraphena Petrovna to put away the things as she thought fit until his sister should come and finally dispose of everything in the house.

Nekhludoff left home early and chose a couple of rooms in a very modest and not particularly clean lodging-house within easy reach of the prison, and, having given orders that some of his things should be sent there, he went to see the advocate. It was cold out of doors. After some rainy and stormy weather it had turned

out cold, as it often does in spring. It was so cold that Nekhludoff felt quite chilly in his light overcoat, and walked fast hoping to get warmer. His mind was filled with thoughts of the peasants, the women, children, old men, and all the poverty and weariness which he seemed to have seen for the first time, especially the smiling, old-faced infant writhing with his calfless little legs, and he could not help contrasting what was going on in the town. Passing by the butchers', fishmongers', and clothiers' shops, he was struck, as if he saw them for the first time, by the appearance of the clean, well-fed shopkeepers, like whom you could not find one peasant in the country. These men were apparently convinced that the pains they took to deceive the people who did not know much about their goods was not a useless but rather an important business. The coachmen with their broad hips and rows of buttons down their sides, and the door-keepers with gold cords on their caps, the servant-girls with their aprons and curly fringes, and especially the smart isvostchiks with the nape of their necks clean shaved, as they sat lolling back in their traps, and examined the passers-by with dissolute and contemptuous air, looked well fed. In all these people Nekhludoff could not now help seeing some of these very peasants who had been driven into the town by lack of land. Some of the peasants driven to the town had found means of profiting by the conditions of town life and had become like the gentlefolk and were pleased with their position; others were in a worse position than they had been in the country and were more to be pitied than

the country people.

Such seemed the bootmakers Nekhludoff saw in the cellar, the pale, dishevelled washerwomen with their thin, bare, arms ironing at an open window, out of which streamed soapy steam; such the two house-painters with their aprons, stockingless feet, all bespattered and smeared with paint, whom Nekhludoff met--their weak, brown arms bared to above the elbows--carrying a pailful of paint, and quarrelling with each other. Their faces looked haggard and cross. The dark faces of the carters jolting along in their carts bore the same expression, and so did the faces of the tattered men and women who stood begging at the street corners. The same kind of faces were to be seen at the open, windows of the eating-houses which Nekhludoff passed. By the dirty tables on which stood tea things and bottles, and between which waiters dressed in white shirts were rushing hither and thither, sat shouting and singing red, perspiring men with stupefied faces. One sat by the window with lifted brows and pouting lips and fixed eyes as if trying to remember something.

"And why are they all gathered here?" Nekhludoff thought, breathing in together with the dust which the cold wind blew towards him the air filled with the smell of rank oil and fresh paint.

In one street he met a row of carts loaded with something made of

iron, that rattled so on the uneven pavement that it made his ears and head ache. He started walking still faster in order to pass the row of carts, when he heard himself called by name. He stopped and saw an officer with sharp pointed moustaches and shining face who sat in the trap of a swell isvostchik and waved his hand in a friendly manner, his smile disclosing unusually long, white teeth.

"Nekhludoff! Can it be you?"

Nekhludoff's first feeling was one of pleasure. "Ah, Schonbock!" he exclaimed joyfully; but he knew the next moment that there was nothing to be joyful about.

This was that Schonbock who had been in the house of Nekhludoff's aunts that day, and whom Nekhludoff had quite lost out of sight, but about whom he had heard that in spite of his debts he had somehow managed to remain in the cavalry, and by some means or other still kept his place among the rich. His gay, contented appearance corroborated this report.

"What a good thing that I have caught you. There is no one in town. Ah, old fellow; you have grown old," he said, getting out of the trap and moving his shoulders about. "I only knew you by your walk. Look here, we must dine together. Is there any place where they feed one decently?"

"I don't think I can spare the time," Nekhludoff answered, thinking only of how he could best get rid of his companion without hurting him.

"And what has brought you here?" he asked.

"Business, old fellow. Guardianship business. I am a guardian now. I am managing Samanoff's affairs--the millionaire, you know. He has softening of the brain, and he's got fifty-four thousand desiatins of land," he said, with peculiar pride, as if he had himself made all these desiatins. "The affairs were terribly neglected. All the land was let to the peasants. They did not pay anything. There were more than eighty thousand roubles debts. I changed it all in one year, and have got 70 per cent. more out of it. What do you think of that?" he asked proudly.

Nekhludoff remembered having heard that this Schonbock, just because, he had spent all he had, had attained by some special influence the post of guardian to a rich old man who was squandering his property--and was now evidently living by this guardianship.

"How am I to get rid of him without offending him?" thought Nekhludoff, looking at this full, shiny face with the stiffened moustache and listening to his friendly, good-humoured chatter

about where one gets fed best, and his bragging about his doings as a guardian.

"Well, then, where do we dine?"

"Really, I have no time to spare," said Nekhludoff, glancing at his watch.

"Then, look here. To-night, at the races--will you be there?"

"No, I shall not be there."

"Do come. I have none of my own now, but I back Grisha's horses. You remember; he has a fine stud. You'll come, won't you? And we'll have some supper together."

"No, I cannot have supper with you either," said Nekhludoff with a smile.

"Well, that's too bad! And where are you off to now? Shall I give you a lift?"

"I am going to see an advocate, close to here round the corner."

"Oh, yes, of course. You have got something to do with the prisons--have turned into a prisoners' mediator, I hear," said

Schonbock, laughing. "The Korchagins told me. They have left town already. What does it all mean? Tell me."

"Yes, yes, it is quite true," Nekhludoff answered; "but I cannot tell you about it in the street."

"Of course; you always were a crank. But you will come to the races?"

"No. I neither can nor wish to come. Please do not be angry with me."

"Angry? Dear me, no. Where do you live?" And suddenly his face became serious, his eyes fixed, and he drew up his brows. He seemed to be trying to remember something, and Nekhludoff noticed the same dull expression as that of the man with the raised brows and pouting lips whom he had seen at the window of the eating-house.

"How cold it is! Is it not? Have you got the parcels?" said Schonbock, turning to the isvostchik.

"All right. Good-bye. I am very glad indeed to have met you," and warmly pressing Nekhludoff's hand, he jumped into the trap and waved his white-gloved hand in front of his shiny face, with his usual smile, showing his exceptionally white teeth.

"Can I have also been like that?" Nekhludoff thought, as he continued his way to the advocate's. "Yes, I wished to be like that, though I was not quite like it. And I thought of living my life in that way."

CHAPTER XI.

AN ADVOCATE'S VIEWS ON JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS.

Nekhludoff was admitted by the advocate before his turn. The advocate at once commenced to talk about the Menshoffs' case, which he had read with indignation at the inconsistency of the accusation.

"This case is perfectly revolting," he said; "it is very likely that the owner himself set fire to the building in order to get the insurance money, and the chief thing is that there is no evidence to prove the Menshoffs' guilt. There are no proofs whatever. It is all owing to the special zeal of the examining magistrate and the carelessness of the prosecutor. If they are tried here, and not in a provincial court, I guarantee that they will be acquitted, and I shall charge nothing. Now then, the next case, that of Theodosia Birukoff. The appeal to the Emperor is written. If you go to Petersburg, you'd better take it with you, and hand it in yourself, with a request of your own, or else they will only make a few inquiries, and nothing will come of it. You must try and get at some of the influential members of the Appeal Committee."

"Well, is this all?"

"No; here I have a letter . . . I see you have turned into a
pipe--a spout through which all the complaints of the prison are
poured," said the advocate, with a smile. "It is too much; you'll
not be able to manage it."

"No, but this is a striking case," said Nekhludoff, and gave a
brief outline of the case of a peasant who began to read the
Gospels to the peasants in the village, and to discuss them with
his friends. The priests regarded this as a crime and informed
the authorities. The magistrate examined him and the public
prosecutor drew up an act of indictment, and the law courts
committed him for trial.

"This is really too terrible," Nekhludoff said. "Can it be true?"

"What are you surprised at?"

"Why, everything. I can understand the police-officer, who simply
obeys orders, but the prosecutor drawing up an act of that kind.
An educated man . . ."

"That is where the mistake lies, that we are in the habit of
considering that the prosecutors and the judges in general are
some kind of liberal persons. There was a time when they were
such, but now it is quite different. They are just officials,
only troubled about pay-day. They receive their salaries and want

them increased, and there their principles end. They will accuse, judge, and sentence any one you like."

"Yes; but do laws really exist that can condemn a man to Siberia for reading the Bible with his friends?"

"Not only to be exiled to the less remote parts of Siberia, but even to the mines, if you can only prove that reading the Bible they took the liberty of explaining it to others not according to orders, and in this way condemned the explanations given by the Church. Blaming the Greek orthodox religion in the presence of the common people means, according to Statute . . . the mines."

"Impossible!"

"I assure you it is so. I always tell these gentlemen, the judges," the advocate continued, "that I cannot look at them without gratitude, because if I am not in prison, and you, and all of us, it is only owing to their kindness. To deprive us of our privileges, and send us all to the less remote parts of Siberia, would be an easy thing for them."

"Well, if it is so, and if everything depends on the Procureur and others who can, at will, either enforce the laws or not, what are the trials for?"

The advocate burst into a merry laugh. "You do put strange questions. My dear sir, that is philosophy. Well, we might have a talk about that, too. Could you come on Saturday? You will meet men of science, literary men, and artists at my house, and then we might discuss these general questions," said the advocate, pronouncing the words "general questions" with ironical pathos. "You have met my wife? Do come."

"Thank you; I will try to," said Nekhludoff, and felt that he was saying an untruth, and knew that if he tried to do anything it would be to keep away froth the advocate's literary evening, and the circle of the men of science, art, and literature.

The laugh with which the advocate met Nekhludoff's remark that trials could have no meaning if the judges might enforce the laws or not, according to their notion, and the tone with which he pronounced the words "philosophy" and "general questions" proved to Nekhludoff how very differently he and the advocate and, probably, the advocate's friends, looked at things; and he felt that in spite of the distance that now existed between himself and his former companions, Schonbock, etc., the difference between himself and the circle of the advocate and his friends was still greater.

CHAPTER XII.

WHY THE PEASANTS FLOCK TO TOWN.

The prison was a long way off and it was getting late, so Nekhludoff took an isvostchik. The isvostchik, a middle-aged man with an intelligent and kind face, turned round towards Nekhludoff as they were driving along one of the streets and pointed to a huge house that was being built there.

"Just see what a tremendous house they have begun to build," he said, as if he was partly responsible for the building of the house and proud of it. The house was really immense and was being built in a very original style. The strong pine beams of the scaffolding were firmly fixed together with iron bands and a plank wall separated the building from the street.

On the boards of the scaffolding workmen, all bespattered with plaster, moved hither and thither like ants. Some were laying bricks, some hewing stones, some carrying up the heavy hods and pails and bringing them down empty. A fat and finely-dressed gentleman--probably the architect--stood by the scaffolding, pointing upward and explaining something to a contractor, a peasant from the Vladimir Government, who was respectfully listening to him. Empty carts were coming out of the gate by which the architect and the contractor were standing, and loaded

ones were going in. "And how sure they all are--those that do the work as well as those that make them do it--that it ought to be; that while their wives at home, who are with child, are labouring beyond their strength, and their children with the patchwork caps, doomed soon to the cold grave, smile with suffering and contort their little legs, they must be building this stupid and useless palace for some stupid and useless person--one of those who spoil and rob them," Nekhludoff thought, while looking at the house.

"Yes, it is a stupid house," he said, uttering his thought out aloud.

"Why stupid?" replied the isvostchik, in an offended tone. "Thanks to it, the people get work; it's not stupid."

"But the work is useless."

"It can't be useless, or why should it be done?" said the isvostchik. "The people get bread by it."

Nekhludoff was silent, and it would have been difficult to talk because of the clatter the wheels made.

When they came nearer the prison, and the isvostchik turned off the paved on to the macadamised road, it became easier to talk,

and he again turned to Nekhludoff.

"And what a lot of these people are flocking to the town nowadays; it's awful," he said, turning round on the box and pointing to a party of peasant workmen who were coming towards them, carrying saws, axes, sheepskins, coats, and bags strapped to their shoulders.

"More than in other years?" Nekhludoff asked.

"By far. This year every place is crowded, so that it's just terrible. The employers just fling the workmen about like chaff. Not a job to be got."

"Why is that?"

"They've increased. There's no room for them."

"Well, what if they have increased? Why do not they stay in the village?"

"There's nothing for them to do in the village--no land to be had."

Nekhludoff felt as one does when touching a sore place. It feels as if the bruised part was always being hit; yet it is only

because the place is sore that the touch is felt.

"Is it possible that the same thing is happening everywhere?" he thought, and began questioning the isvostchik about the quantity of land in his village, how much land the man himself had, and why he had left the country.

"We have a desiatin per man, sir," he said. "Our family have three men's shares of the land. My father and a brother are at home, and manage the land, and another brother is serving in the army. But there's nothing to manage. My brother has had thoughts of coming to Moscow, too."

"And cannot land be rented?"

"How's one to rent it nowadays? The gentry, such as they were, have squandered all theirs. Men of business have got it all into their own hands. One can't rent it from them. They farm it themselves. We have a Frenchman ruling in our place; he bought the estate from our former landlord, and won't let it--and there's an end of it."

"Who's that Frenchman?"

"Dufour is the Frenchman's name. Perhaps you've heard of him. He makes wigs for the actors in the big theatre; it is a good

business, so he's prospering. He bought it from our lady, the whole of the estate, and now he has us in his power; he just rides on us as he pleases. The Lord be thanked, he is a good man himself; only his wife, a Russian, is such a brute that--God have mercy on us. She robs the people. It's awful. Well, here's the prison. Am I to drive you to the entrance? I'm afraid they'll not let us do it, though."

CHAPTER XIII.

NURSE MASLOVA.

When he rang the bell at the front entrance Nekhludoff's heart stood still with horror as he thought of the state he might find Maslova in to-day, and at the mystery that he felt to be in her and in the people that were collected in the prison. He asked the jailer who opened the door for Maslova. After making the necessary inquiry the jailer informed him that she was in the hospital. Nekhludoff went there. A kindly old man, the hospital doorkeeper, let him in at once and, after asking Nekhludoff whom he wanted, directed him to the children's ward. A young doctor saturated with carbolic acid met Nekhludoff in the passage and asked him severely what he wanted. This doctor was always making all sorts of concessions to the prisoners, and was therefore continually coming into conflict with the prison authorities and even with the head doctor. Fearing lest Nekhludoff should demand something unlawful, and wishing to show that he made no exceptions for any one, he pretended to be cross. "There are no women here; it is the children's ward," he said.

"Yes, I know; but a prisoner has been removed here to be an assistant nurse."

"Yes, there are two such here. Then whom do you want?"

"I am closely connected with one of them, named Maslova," Nekhludoff answered, "and should like to speak to her. I am going to Petersburg to hand in an appeal to the Senate about her case and should like to give her this. It is only a photo," Nekhludoff said, taking an envelope out of his pocket.

"All right, you may do that," said the doctor, relenting, and turning to an old woman with a white apron, he told her to call the prisoner--Nurse Maslova.

"Will you take a seat, or go into the waiting-room?"

"Thanks," said Nekhludoff, and profiting by the favourable change in the manner of the doctor towards him asked how they were satisfied with Maslova in the hospital.

"Oh, she is all right. She works fairly well, if you the conditions of her former life into account. But here she is."

The old nurse came in at one of the doors, followed by Maslova, who wore a blue striped dress, a white apron, a kerchief that quite covered her hair. When she saw Nekhludoff her face flushed, and she stopped as if hesitating, then frowned, and with downcast eyes went quickly towards him along the strip of carpet in the middle of the passage. When she came up to Nekhludoff she did not

wish to give him her hand, and then gave it, growing redder still. Nekhludoff had not seen her since the day when she begged forgiveness for having been in a passion, and he expected to find her the same as she was then. But to-day she was quite different. There was something new in the expression of her face, reserve and shyness, and, as it seemed to him, animosity towards him. He told her what he had already said to the doctor, i.e., that he was going to Petersburg, and he handed her the envelope with the photograph which he had brought from Panovo.

"I found this in Panovo--it's an old photo; perhaps you would like it. Take it."

Lifting her dark eyebrows, she looked at him with surprise in her squinting eyes, as if asking, "What is this for?" took the photo silently and put it in the bib of her apron.

"I saw your aunt there," said Nekhludoff.

"Did you?" she said, indifferently.

"Are you all right here?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Oh, yes, it's all right," she said.

"Not too difficult?"

"Oh, no. But I am not used to it yet."

"I am glad, for your sake. Anyhow, it is better than there."

"Than where--there?" she asked, her face flushing again.

"There--in the prison," Nekhludoff hurriedly answered.

"Why better?" she asked.

"I think the people are better. Here are none such as there must be there."

"There are many good ones there," she said.

"I have been seeing about the Menshoffs, and hope they will be liberated," said Nekhludoff.

"God grant they may. Such a splendid old woman," she said, again repeating her opinion of the old woman, and slightly smiling.

"I am going to Petersburg to-day. Your case will come on soon, and I hope the sentence will be repealed."

"Whether it is repealed or not won't matter now," she said.

"Why not now?"

"So," she said, looking with a quick, questioning glance into his eyes.

Nekhludoff understood the word and the look to mean that she wished to know whether he still kept firm to his decision or had accepted her refusal.

"I do not know why it does not matter to you," he said. "It certainly does not matter as far as I am concerned whether you are acquitted or not. I am ready to do what I told you in any case," he said decidedly.

She lifted her head and her black squinting eyes remained fixed on him and beyond him, and her face beamed with joy. But the words she spoke were very different from what her eyes said.

"You should not speak like that," she said.

"I am saying it so that you should know."

"Everything has been said about that, and there is no use speaking," she said, with difficulty repressing a smile.

A sudden noise came from the hospital ward, and the sound of a child crying.

"I think they are calling me," she said, and looked round uneasily.

"Well, good-bye, then," he said. She pretended not to see his extended hand, and, without taking it, turned away and hastily walked along the strip of carpet, trying to hide the triumph she felt.

"What is going on in her? What is she thinking? What does she feel? Does she mean to prove me, or can she really not forgive me? Is it that she cannot or that she will not express what she feels and thinks? Has she softened or hardened?" he asked himself, and could find no answer. He only knew that she had altered and that an important change was going on in her soul, and this change united him not only to her but also to Him for whose sake that change was being wrought. And this union brought on a state of joyful animation and tenderness.

When she returned to the ward, in which there stood eight small beds, Maslova began, in obedience to the nurse's order, to arrange one of the beds; and, bending over too far with the sheet, she slipped and nearly fell down.

A little convalescent boy with a bandaged neck, who was looking at her, laughed. Maslova could no longer contain herself and burst into loud laughter, and such contagious laughter that several of the children also burst out laughing, and one of the sisters rebuked her angrily.

"What are you giggling at? Do you think you are where you used to be? Go and fetch the food." Maslova obeyed and went where she was sent; but, catching the eye of the bandaged boy who was not allowed to laugh, she again burst out laughing.

Whenever she was alone Maslova again and again pulled the photograph partly out of the envelope and looked at it admiringly; but only in the evening when she was off duty and alone in the bedroom which she shared with a nurse, did she take it quite out of the envelope and gaze long at the faded yellow photograph, caressing with, her eyes every detail of faces and clothing, the steps of the veranda, and the bushes which served as a background to his and hers and his aunts' faces, and could not cease from admiring especially herself--her pretty young face with the curly hair round the forehead. She was so absorbed that she did not hear her fellow-nurse come into the room.

"What is it that he's given you?" said the good-natured, fat nurse, stooping over the photograph.

"Who's this? You?"

"Who else?" said Maslova, looking into her companion's face with a smile.

"And who's this?"

"Himself."

"And is this his mother?"

"No, his aunt. Would you not have known me?"

"Never. The whole face is altered. Why, it must be 10 years since then."

"Not years, but a lifetime," said Maslova. And suddenly her animation went, her face grew gloomy, and a deep line appeared between her brows.

"Why so? Your way of life must have been an easy one."

"Easy, indeed," Maslova reiterated, closing her eyes and shaking her head. "It is hell."

"Why, what makes it so?"

"What makes it so! From eight till four in the morning, and every night the same!"

"Then why don't they give it up?"

"They can't give it up if they want to. But what's the use of talking?" Maslova said, jumping up and throwing the photograph into the drawer of the table. And with difficulty repressing angry tears, she ran out into the passage and slammed the door.

While looking at the group she imagined herself such as she was there and dreamt of her happiness then and of the possibility of happiness with him now. But her companion's words reminded her of what she was now and what she had been, and brought back all the horrors of that life, which she had felt but dimly, and not allowed herself to realise.

It was only now that the memory of all those terrible nights came vividly back to her, especially one during the carnival when she was expecting a student who had promised to buy her out. She remembered how she--wearing her low necked silk dress stained with wine, a red bow in her untidy hair, wearied, weak, half tipsy, having seen her visitors off, sat down during an interval in the dancing by the piano beside the bony pianiste with the blotchy face, who played the accompaniments to the violin, and

began complaining of her hard fate; and how this pianiste said that she, too, was feeling how heavy her position was and would like to change it; and how Clara suddenly came up to them; and how they all three decided to change their life. They thought that the night was over, and were about to go away, when suddenly the noise of tipsy voices was heard in the ante-room. The violinist played a tune and the pianiste began hammering the first figure of a quadrille on the piano, to the tune of a most merry Russian song. A small, perspiring man, smelling of spirits, with a white tie and swallow-tail coat, which he took off after the first figure, came up to her, hiccoughing, and caught her up, while another fat man, with a beard, and also wearing a dress-coat (they had come straight from a ball) caught Clara up, and for a long time they turned, danced, screamed, drank. . . . And so it went on for another year, and another, and a third. How could she help changing? And he was the cause of it all. And, suddenly, all her former bitterness against him reawoke; she wished to scold, to reproach him. She regretted having neglected the opportunity of repeating to him once more that she knew him, and would not give in to him--would not let him make use of her spiritually as he had done physically.

And she longed for drink in order to stifle the feeling of pity to herself and the useless feeling of reproach to him. And she would have broken her word if she had been inside the prison. Here she could not get any spirits except by applying to the

medical assistant, and she was afraid of him because he made up to her, and intimate relations with men were disgusting to her now. After sitting a while on a form in the passage she returned to her little room, and without paying any heed to her companion's words, she wept for a long time over her wrecked life.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ARISTOCRATIC CIRCLE.

Nekhludoff had four matters to attend to in Petersburg. The first was the appeal to the Senate in Maslova's case; the second, to hand in Theodosia Birukoff's petition to the committee; the third, to comply with Vera Doukhova's requests--i.e., try to get her friend Shoustova released from prison, and get permission for a mother to visit her son in prison. Vera Doukhova had written to him about this, and he was going to the Gendarmerie Office to attend to these two matters, which he counted as one.

The fourth matter he meant to attend to was the case of some sectarians who had been separated from their families and exiled to the Caucasus because they read and discussed the Gospels. It was not so much to them as to himself he had promised to do all he could to clear up this affair.

Since his last visit to Maslennikoff, and especially since he had been in the country, Nekhludoff had not exactly formed a resolution but felt with his whole nature a loathing for that society in which he had lived till then, that society which so carefully hides the sufferings of millions in order to assure ease and pleasure to a small number of people, that the people belonging to this society do not and cannot see these sufferings,

nor the cruelty and wickedness of their life. Nekhludoff could no longer move in this society without feeling ill at ease and reproaching himself. And yet all the ties of relationship and friendship, and his own habits, were drawing him back into this society. Besides, that which alone interested him now, his desire to help Maslova and the other sufferers, made it necessary to ask for help and service from persons belonging to that society, persons whom he not only could not respect, but who often aroused in him indignation and a feeling of contempt.

When he came to Petersburg and stopped at his aunt's--his mother's sister, the Countess Tcharsky, wife of a former minister--Nekhludoff at once found himself in the very midst of that aristocratic circle which had grown so foreign to him. This was very unpleasant, but there was no possibility of getting out of it. To put up at an hotel instead of at his aunt's house would have been to offend his aunt, and, besides, his aunt had important connections and might be extremely useful in all these matters he meant to attend to.

"What is this I hear about you? All sorts of marvels," said the Countess Katerina Ivanovna Tcharsky, as she gave him his coffee immediately after his arrival. "Vous posez pour un Howard. Helping criminals, going the round of prisons, setting things right."

"Oh, no. I never thought of it."

"Why not? It is a good thing, only there seems to be some romantic story connected with it. Let us hear all about it."

Nekhludoff told her the whole truth about his relations to Maslova.

"Yes, yes, I remember your poor mother telling me about it. That was when you were staying with those old women. I believe they wished to marry you to their ward (the Countess Katerina Ivanovna had always despised Nekhludoff's aunts on his father's side). So it's she. Elle est encore jolie?"

Katerina Ivanovna was a strong, bright, energetic, talkative woman of 60. She was tall and very stout, and had a decided black moustache on her lip. Nekhludoff was fond of her and had even as a child been infected by her energy and mirth.

"No, ma tante, that's at an end. I only wish to help her, because she is innocently accused. I am the cause of it and the cause of her fate being what it is. I feel it my duty to do all I can for her."

"But what is this I have heard about your intention of marrying her?"

"Yes, it was my intention, but she does not wish it."

Katerina Ivanovna looked at her nephew with raised brows and drooping eyeballs, in silent amazement. Suddenly her face changed, and with a look of pleasure she said: "Well, she is wiser than you. Dear me, you are a fool. And you would have married her?"

"Most certainly."

"After her having been what she was?"

"All the more, since I was the cause of it."

"Well, you are a simpleton," said his aunt, repressing a smile, "a terrible simpleton; but it is just because you are such a terrible simpleton that I love you." She repeated the word, evidently liking it, as it seemed to correctly convey to her mind the idea of her nephew's moral state. "Do you know--What a lucky chance. Aline has a wonderful home--the Magdalene Home. I went there once. They are terribly disgusting. After that I had to pray continually. But Aline is devoted to it, body and soul, so we shall place her there--yours, I mean."

"But she is condemned to Siberia. I have come on purpose to

appeal about it. This is one of my requests to you."

"Dear me, and where do you appeal to in this case?"

"To the Senate."

"Ah, the Senate! Yes, my dear Cousin Leo is in the Senate, but he is in the heraldry department, and I don't know any of the real ones. They are all some kind of Germans--Gay, Fay, Day--tout l'alphabet, or else all sorts of Ivanoffs, Simenoffs, Nikitines, or else Ivanenkos, Simonenkos, Nikitenkos, pour varier. Des gens de l'autre monde. Well, it is all the same. I'll tell my husband, he knows them. He knows all sorts of people. I'll tell him, but you will have to explain, he never understands me. Whatever I may say, he always maintains he does not understand it. C'est un parti pris, every one understands but only not he."

At this moment a footman with stockinged legs came in with a note on a silver platter.

"There now, from Aline herself. You'll have a chance of hearing Kiesewetter."

"Who is Kiesewetter?"

"Kiesewetter? Come this evening, and you will find out who he is.

He speaks in such a way that the most hardened criminals sink on their knees and weep and repent."

The Countess Katerina Ivanovna, however strange it may seem, and however little it seemed in keeping with the rest of her character, was a staunch adherent to that teaching which holds that the essence of Christianity lies in the belief in redemption. She went to meetings where this teaching, then in fashion, was being preached, and assembled the "faithful" in her own house. Though this teaching repudiated all ceremonies, icons, and sacraments, Katerina Ivanovna had icons in every room, and one on the wall above her bed, and she kept all that the Church prescribed without noticing any contradiction in that.

"There now; if your Magdalene could hear him she would be converted," said the Countess. "Do stay at home to-night; you will hear him. He is a wonderful man."

"It does not interest me, ma tante."

"But I tell you that it is interesting, and you must come home. Now you may go. What else do you want of me? Videz votre sac."

"The next is in the fortress."

"In the fortress? I can give you a note for that to the Baron

Kriegsmuth. Cest un tres brave homme. Oh, but you know him; he was a comrade of your father's. Il donne dans le spiritisme. But that does not matter, he is a good fellow. What do you want there?"

"I want to get leave for a mother to visit her son who is imprisoned there. But I was told that this did not depend on Kriegsmuth but on Tcherviansky."

"I do not like Tcherviansky, but he is Mariette's husband; we might ask her. She will do it for me. Elle est tres gentille."

"I have also to petition for a woman who is imprisoned there without knowing what for."

"No fear; she knows well enough. They all know it very well, and it serves them right, those short-haired [many advanced women wear their hair short, like men] ones."

"We do not know whether it serves them right or not. But they suffer. You are a Christian and believe in the Gospel teaching and yet you are so pitiless."

"That has nothing to do with it. The Gospels are the Gospels, but what is disgusting remains disgusting. It would be worse if I pretended to love Nihilists, especially short-haired women

Nihilists, when I cannot bear them."

"Why can you not bear them?"

"You ask why, after the 1st of March?" [The Emperor Alexander II was killed on the first of March, old style.]

"They did not all take part in it on the 1st of March."

"Never mind; they should not meddle with what is no business of theirs. It's not women's business."

"Yet you consider that Mariette may take part in business."

"Mariette? Mariette is Mariette, and these are goodness knows what. Want to teach everybody."

"Not to teach but simply to help the people."

"One knows whom to help and whom not to help without them."

"But the peasants are in great need. I have just returned from the country. Is it necessary, that the peasants should work to the very limits of their strength and never have sufficient to eat while we are living in the greatest luxury?" said Nekhludoff, involuntarily led on by his aunt's good nature into telling her

what he was in his thoughts.

"What do you want, then? That I should work and not eat anything?"

"No, I do not wish you not to eat. I only wish that we should all work and all eat." He could not help smiling as he said it.

Again raising her brow and drooping her eyeballs his aunt looked at him curiously. "Mon cher vous finirez mal," she said.

Just then the general, and former minister, Countess Tcharsky's husband, a tall, broad-shouldered man, came into the room.

"Ah, Dmitri, how d'you do?" he said, turning his freshly-shaved cheek to Nekhludoff to be kissed. "When did you get here?" And he silently kissed his wife on the forehead.

"Non il est impayable," the Countess said, turning to her husband. "He wants me to go and wash clothes and live on potatoes. He is an awful fool, but all the same do what he is going to ask of you. A terrible simpleton," she added. "Have you heard? Kamenskaya is in such despair that they fear for her life," she said to her husband. "You should go and call there."

"Yes; it is dreadful," said her husband.

"Go along, then, and talk to him. I must write some letters."

Hardly had Nekhludoff stepped into the room next the drawing-room than she called him back.

"Shall I write to Mariette, then?"

"Please, ma tante."

"I shall leave a blank for what you want to say about the short-haired one, and she will give her husband his orders, and he'll do it. Do not think me wicked; they are all so disgusting, your prologues, but je ne leur veux pas de mal, bother them. Well, go, but be sure to stay at home this evening to hear Kiesewetter, and we shall have some prayers. And if only you do not resist cela vous fera beaucoup de bien. I know your poor mother and all of you were always very backward in these things."

CHAPTER XV.

AN AVERAGE STATESMAN.

Count Ivan Michaelovitch had been a minister, and was a man of strong convictions. The convictions of Count Ivan Michaelovitch consisted in the belief that, just as it was natural for a bird to feed on worms, to be clothed in feathers and down, and to fly in the air, so it was natural for him to feed on the choicest and most expensive food, prepared by highly-paid cooks, to wear the most comfortable and most expensive clothing, to drive with the best and fastest horses, and that, therefore, all these things should be ready found for him. Besides this, Count Ivan Michaelovitch considered that the more money he could get out of the treasury by all sorts of means, the more orders he had, including different diamond insignia of something or other, and the oftener he spoke to highly-placed individuals of both sexes, so much the better it was.

All the rest Count Ivan Michaelovitch considered insignificant and uninteresting beside these dogmas. All the rest might be as it was, or just the reverse. Count Ivan Michaelovitch lived and acted according to these lights for 40 years, and at the end of 40 years reached the position of a Minister of State. The chief qualities that enabled Count Ivan Michaelovitch to reach this position were his capacity of understanding the meaning of

documents and laws and of drawing up, though clumsily, intelligible State papers, and of spelling them correctly; secondly, his very stately appearance, which enabled him, when necessary, to seem not only extremely proud, but unapproachable and majestic, while at other times he could be abjectly and almost passionately servile; thirdly, the absence of any general principles or rules, either of personal or administrative morality, which made it possible for him either to agree or disagree with anybody according to what was wanted at the time. When acting thus his only endeavour was to sustain the appearance of good breeding and not to seem too plainly inconsistent. As for his actions being moral or not, in themselves, or whether they were going to result in the highest welfare or greatest evil for the whole of the Russian Empire, or even the entire world, that was quite indifferent to him. When he became minister, not only those dependent on him (and there were great many of them) and people connected with him, but many strangers and even he himself were convinced that he was a very clever statesman. But after some time had elapsed and he had done nothing and had nothing to show, and when in accordance with the law of the struggle for existence others, like himself, who had learnt to write and understand documents, stately and unprincipled officials, had displaced him, he turned out to be not only far from clever but very limited and badly educated. Though self-assured, his views hardly reaching the level of those in the leading articles of the Conservative papers, it became apparent that there was nothing in

him to distinguish him from those other badly-educated and self-assured officials who had pushed him out, and he himself saw it. But this did not shake his conviction that he had to receive a great deal of money out of the Treasury every year, and new decorations for his dress clothes. This conviction was so firm that no one had the pluck to refuse these things to him, and he received yearly, partly in form of a pension, partly as a salary for being a member in a Government institution and chairman of all sorts of committees and councils, several tens of thousands of roubles, besides the right--highly prized by him--of sewing all sorts of new cords to his shoulders and trousers, and ribbons to wear under and enamel stars to fix on to his dress coat. In consequence of this Count Ivan Michaelovitch had very high connections.

Count Ivan Michaelovitch listened to Nekhludoff as he was wont to listen to the reports of the permanent secretary of his department, and, having heard him, said he would give him two notes, one to the Senator Wolff, of the Appeal Department. "All sorts of things are reported of him, but dans tous les cas c'est un homme tres comme ii faut," he said. "He is indebted to me, and will do all that is possible." The other note Count Ivan Michaelovitch gave Nekhludoff was to an influential member of the Petition Committee. The story of Theodosia Birukoff as told by Nekhludoff interested him very much. When Nekhludoff said that he thought of writing to the Empress, the Count replied that it

certainly was a very touching story, and might, if occasion presented itself, he told her, but he could not promise. Let the petition be handed in in due form.

Should there be an opportunity, and if a petit comite were called on Thursday, he thought he would tell her the story. As soon as Nekhludoff had received these two notes, and a note to Mariette from his aunt, he at once set off to these different places.

First he went to Mariette's. He had known her as a half-grown girl, the daughter of an aristocratic but not wealthy family, and had heard how she had married a man who was making a career, whom Nekhludoff had heard badly spoken of; and, as usual, he felt it hard to ask a favour of a man he did not esteem. In these cases he always felt an inner dissension and dissatisfaction, and wavered whether to ask the favour or not, and always resolved to ask. Besides feeling himself in a false position among those to whose set he no longer regarded himself as belonging, who yet regarded him as belonging to them, he felt himself getting into the old accustomed rut, and in spite of himself fell into the thoughtless and immoral tone that reigned in that circle. He felt that from the first, with his aunt, he involuntarily fell into a bantering tone while talking about serious matters.

Petersburg in general affected him with its usual physically invigorating and mentally dulling effect.

Everything so clean, so comfortably well-arranged and the people so lenient in moral matters, that life seemed very easy.

A fine, clean, and polite isvostchik drove him past fine, clean, polite policemen, along the fine, clean, watered streets, past fine, clean houses to the house in which Mariette lived. At the front door stood a pair of English horses, with English harness, and an English-looking coachman on the box, with the lower part of his face shaved, proudly holding a whip. The doorkeeper, dressed in a wonderfully clean livery, opened the door into the hall, where in still cleaner livery with gold cords stood the footman with his splendid whiskers well combed out, and the orderly on duty in a brand-new uniform. "The general does not receive, and the generaless does not receive either. She is just going to drive out."

Nekhludoff took out Katerina Ivanovna's letter, and going up to a table on which lay a visitors' book, began to write that he was sorry not to have been able to see any one; when the footman went up the staircase the doorkeeper went out and shouted to the coachman, and the orderly stood up rigid with his arms at his sides following with his eyes a little, slight lady, who was coming down the stairs with rapid steps not in keeping with all the grandeur.

Mariette had a large hat on, with feathers, a black dress and cape, and new black gloves. Her face was covered by a veil.

When she saw Nekhludoff she lifted the veil off a very pretty face with bright eyes that looked inquiringly at him.

"Ah, Prince Dmitri Ivanovitch Nekhludoff," she said, with a soft, pleasant voice. "I should have known--"

"What! you even remember my name?"

"I should think so. Why, I and my sisters have even been in love with you," she said, in French. "But, dear me, how you have altered. Oh, what a pity I have to go out. But let us go up again," she said and stopped hesitatingly. Then she looked at the clock. "No, I can't. I am going to Kamenskaya's to attend a mass for the dead. She is terribly afflicted."

"Who is this Kamenskaya?"

"Have you not heard? Her son was killed in a duel. He fought Posen. He was the only son. Terrible I The mother is very much afflicted."

"Yes. I have heard of it."

"No, I had better go, and you must come again, to-night or
to-morrow," she said, and went to the door with quick, light
steps.

"I cannot come to-night," he said, going out after her; "but I
have a request to make you," and he looked at the pair of bays
that were drawing up to the front door.

"What is this?"

"This is a letter from aunt to you," said Nekhludoff, handing her
a narrow envelope, with a large crest. "You'll find all about it
in there."

"I know Countess Katerina Ivanovna thinks I have some influence
with my husband in business matters. She is mistaken. I can do
nothing and do not like to interfere. But, of course, for you I
am willing to be false to my principle. What is this business
about?" she said, searching in vain for her pocket with her
little black gloved hand.

"There is a girl imprisoned in the fortress, and she is ill and
innocent."

"What is her name?"

"Lydia Shoustova. It's in the note."

"All right; I'll see what I can do," she said, and lightly jumped into her little, softly upholstered, open carriage, its brightly-varnished splash-guards glistening in the sunshine, and opened her parasol. The footman got on the box and gave the coachman a sign. The carriage moved, but at that moment she touched the coachman with her parasol and the slim-legged beauties, the bay mares, stopped, bending their beautiful necks and stepping from foot to foot.

"But you must come, only, please, without interested motives," and she looked at him with a smile, the force of which she well knew, and, as if the performance over and she were drawing the curtain, she dropped the veil over her face again. "All right," and she again touched the coachman.

Nekhludoff raised his hat, and the well-bred bays, slightly snorting, set off, their shoes clattering on the pavement, and the carriage rolled quickly and smoothly on its new rubber tyres, giving a jump only now and then over some unevenness of the road.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN UP-TO-DATE SENATOR.

When Nekhludoff remembered the smiles that had passed between him and Mariette, he shook his head.

"You have hardly time to turn round before you are again drawn into this life," he thought, feeling that discord and those doubts which the necessity to curry favour from people he did not esteem caused.

After considering where to go first, so as not to have to retrace his steps, Nekhludoff set off for the Senate. There he was shown into the office where he found a great many very polite and very clean officials in the midst of a magnificent apartment. Maslova's petition was received and handed on to that Wolf, to whom Nekhludoff had a letter from his uncle, to be examined and reported on.

"There will be a meeting of the Senate this week," the official said to Nekhludoff, "but Maslova's case will hardly come before that meeting."

"It might come before the meeting on Wednesday, by special request," one of the officials remarked.

During the time Nekhludoff waited in the office, while some information was being taken, he heard that the conversation in the Senate was all about the duel, and he heard a detailed account of how a young man, Kaminski, had been killed. It was here he first heard all the facts of the case which was exciting the interest of all Petersburg. The story was this: Some officers were eating oysters and, as usual, drinking very much, when one of them said something ill-natured about the regiment to which Kaminski belonged, and Kaminski called him a liar. The other hit Kaminski. The next day they fought. Kaminski was wounded in the stomach and died two hours later. The murderer and the seconds were arrested, but it was said that though they were arrested and in the guardhouse they would be set free in a fortnight.

From the Senate Nekhludoff drove to see an influential member of the petition Committee, Baron Vorobioff, who lived in a splendid house belonging to the Crown. The doorkeeper told Nekhludoff in a severe tone that the Baron could not be seen except on his reception days; that he was with His Majesty the Emperor to-day, and the next day he would again have to deliver a report. Nekhludoff left his uncle's letter with the doorkeeper and went on to see the Senator Wolf. Wolf had just had his lunch, and was as usual helping digestion by smoking a cigar and pacing up and down the room, when Nekhludoff came in. Vladimir Vasilievitch Wolf was certainly un homme tres comme il faut, and prized this

quality very highly, and from that elevation he looked down at everybody else. He could not but esteem this quality of his very highly, because it was thanks to it alone that he had made a brilliant career, the very career he desired, i.e., by marriage he obtained a fortune which brought him in 18,000 roubles a year, and by his own exertions the post of a senator. He considered himself not only un homme tres comme il faut, but also a man of knightly honour. By honour he understood not accepting secret bribes from private persons. But he did not consider it dishonest to beg money for payment of fares and all sorts of travelling expenses from the Crown, and to do anything the Government might require of him in return. To ruin hundreds of innocent people, to cause them to be imprisoned, to be exiled because of their love for their people and the religion of their fathers, as he had done in one of the governments of Poland when he was governor there. He did not consider it dishonourable, but even thought it a noble, manly and patriotic action. Nor did he consider it dishonest to rob his wife and sister-in-law, as he had done, but thought it a wise way of arranging his family life. His family consisted of his commonplace wife, his sister-in-law, whose fortune he had appropriated by selling her estate and putting the money to his account, and his meek, frightened, plain daughter, who lived a lonely, weary life, from which she had lately begun to look for relaxation in evangelicism, attending meetings at Aline's, and the Countess Katerina Ivanovna. Wolf's son, who had grown a beard at the age of 15, and had at that age begun to

drink and lead a depraved life, which he continued to do till the age of 20, when he was turned out by his father because he never finished his studies, moved in a low set and made debts which committed the father. The father had once paid a debt of 250 roubles for his son, then another of 600 roubles, but warned the son that he did it for the last time, and that if the son did not reform he would be turned out of the house and all further intercourse between him and his family would he put a stop to. The son did not reform, but made a debt of a thousand roubles, and took the liberty of telling his father that life at home was a torment anyhow. Then Wolf declared to his son that he might go where he pleased--that he was no son of his any longer. Since then Wolf pretended he had no son, and no one at home dared speak to him about his son, and Vladimir Vasilievitch Wolf was firmly convinced that he had arranged his family life in the best way. Wolf stopped pacing up and down his study, and greeted Nekhludoff with a friendly though slightly ironical smile. This was his way of showing how comme il faut he was, and how superior to the majority of men. He read the note which Nekhludoff handed to him.

"Please take a seat, and excuse me if I continue to walk up and down, with your permission," he said, putting his hands into his coat pockets, and began again to walk with light, soft steps across his large, quietly and stylishly furnished study. "Very pleased to make your acquaintance and of course very glad to do anything that Count Ivan Michaelovitch wishes," he said, blowing

the fragrant blue smoke out of his mouth and removing his cigar carefully so as not to drop the ash.

"I should only like to ask that the case might come on soon, so that if the prisoner has to go to Siberia she might set off early," said Nekhludoff.

"Yes, yes, with one of the first steamers from Nijni. I know," said Wolf, with his patronising smile, always knowing in advance whatever one wanted to tell him.

"What is the prisoner's name?"

"Maslova."

Wolf went up to the table and looked at a paper that lay on a piece of cardboard among other business papers.

"Yes, yes. Maslova. All right, I will ask the others. We shall hear the case on Wednesday."

"Then may I telegraph to the advocate?"

"The advocate! What's that for? But if you like, why not?"

"The causes for appeal may be insufficient," said Nekhludoff,

"but I think the case will show that the sentence was passed owing to a misunderstanding."

"Yes, yes; it may be so, but the Senate cannot decide the case on its merits," said Wolf, looking seriously at the ash of his cigar. "The Senate only considers the exactness of the application of the laws and their right interpretation."

"But this seems to me to be an exceptional case."

"I know, I know! All cases are exceptional. We shall do our duty. That's all." The ash was still holding on, but had began breaking, and was in danger of falling.

"Do you often come to Petersburg?" said Wolf, holding his cigar so that the ash should not fall. But the ash began to shake, and Wolf carefully carried it to the ashpan, into which it fell.

"What a terrible thing this is with regard to Kaminski," he said. "A splendid young man. The only son. Especially the mother's position," he went on, repeating almost word for word what every one in Petersburg was at that time saying about Kaminski. Wolf spoke a little about the Countess Katerina Ivanovna and her enthusiasm for the new religious teaching, which he neither approved nor disapproved of, but which was evidently needless to him who was so comme il faut, and then rang the bell.

Nekhludoff bowed.

"If it is convenient, come and dine on Wednesday, and I will give you a decisive answer," said Wolf, extending his hand.

It was late, and Nekhludoff returned to his aunt's.

CHAPTER XVII.

COUNTESS KATERINA IVANOVNA'S DINNER PARTY.

Countess Katerina Ivanovna's dinner hour was half-past seven, and the dinner was served in a new manner that Nekhludoff had not yet seen anywhere. After they had placed the dishes on the table the waiters left the room and the diners helped themselves. The men would not let the ladies take the trouble of moving, and, as befitted the stronger sex, they manfully took on themselves the burden of putting the food on the ladies' plates and of filling their glasses. When one course was finished, the Countess pressed the button of an electric bell fitted to the table and the waiters stepped in noiselessly and quickly carried away the dishes, changed the plates, and brought in the next course. The dinner was very refined, the wines very costly. A French chef was working in the large, light kitchens, with two white-clad assistants. There were six persons at dinner, the Count and Countess, their son (a surly officer in the Guards who sat with his elbows on the table), Nekhludoff, a French lady reader, and the Count's chief steward, who had come up from the country. Here, too, the conversation was about the duel, and opinions were given as to how the Emperor regarded the case. It was known that the Emperor was very much grieved for the mother's sake, and all were grieved for her, and as it was also known that the Emperor did not mean to be very severe to the murderer, who defended the

honour of his uniform, all were also lenient to the officer who had defended the honour of his uniform. Only the Countess Katerina Ivanovna, with her free thoughtlessness, expressed her disapproval.

"They get drunk, and kill unobjectionable young men. I should not forgive them on any account," she said.

"Now, that's a thing I cannot understand," said the Count.

"I know that you never can understand what I say," the Countess began, and turning to Nekhludoff, she added:

"Everybody understands except my husband. I say I am sorry for the mother, and I do not wish him to be contented, having killed a man." Then her son, who had been silent up to then, took the murderer's part, and rudely attacked his mother, arguing that an officer could not behave in any other way, because his fellow-officers would condemn him and turn him out of the regiment. Nekhludoff listened to the conversation without joining in. Having been an officer himself, he understood, though he did not agree with, young Tcharsky's arguments, and at the same time he could not help contrasting the fate of the officer with that of a beautiful young convict whom he had seen in the prison, and who was condemned to the mines for having killed another in a fight. Both had turned murderers through drunkenness. The peasant

had killed a man in a moment of irritation, and he was parted from his wife and family, had chains on his legs, and his head shaved, and was going to hard labour in Siberia, while the officer was sitting in a fine room in the guardhouse, eating a good dinner, drinking good wine, and reading books, and would be set free in a day or two to live as he had done before, having only become more interesting by the affair. Nekhludoff said what he had been thinking, and at first his aunt, Katerina Ivanovna, seemed to agree with him, but at last she became silent as the rest had done, and Nekhludoff felt that he had committed something akin to an impropriety. In the evening, soon after dinner, the large hall, with high-backed carved chairs arranged in rows as for a meeting, and an armchair next to a little table, with a bottle of water for the speaker, began to fill with people come to hear the foreigner, Kiesewetter, preach. Elegant equipages stopped at the front entrance. In the hall sat richly-dressed ladies in silks and velvets and lace, with false hair and false busts and drawn-in waists, and among them men in uniform and evening dress, and about five persons of the common class, i.e., two men-servants, a shop-keeper, a footman, and a coachman. Kiesewetter, a thick-set, grisly man, spoke English, and a thin young girl, with a pince-nez, translated it into Russian promptly and well. He was saying that our sins were so great, the punishment for them so great and so unavoidable, that it was impossible to live anticipating such punishment. "Beloved brothers and sisters, let us for a moment consider what we are

doing, how we are living, how we have offended against the all-loving Lord, and how we make Christ suffer, and we cannot but understand that there is no forgiveness possible for us, no escape possible, that we are all doomed to perish. A terrible fate awaits us---everlasting torment," he said, with tears in his trembling voice. "Oh, how can we be saved, brothers? How can we be saved from this terrible, unquenchable fire? The house is in flames; there is no escape."

He was silent for a while, and real tears flowed down his cheeks. It was for about eight years that each time when he got to this part of his speech, which he himself liked so well, he felt a choking in his throat and an irritation in his nose, and the tears came in his eyes, and these tears touched him still more. Sobs were heard in the room. The Countess Katerina Ivanovna sat with her elbows on an inlaid table, leaning her head on her hands, and her shoulders were shaking. The coachman looked with fear and surprise at the foreigner, feeling as if he was about to run him down with the pole of his carriage and the foreigner would not move out of his way. All sat in positions similar to that Katerina Ivanovna had assumed. Wolf's daughter, a thin, fashionably-dressed girl, very like her father, knelt with her face in her hands.

The orator suddenly uncovered his face, and smiled a very real-looking smile, such as actors express joy with, and began

again with a sweet, gentle voice:

"Yet there is a way to be saved. Here it is--a joyful, easy way. The salvation is the blood shed for us by the only son of God, who gave himself up to torments for our sake. His sufferings, His blood, will save us. Brothers and sisters," he said, again with tears in his voice, "let us praise the Lord, who has given His only begotten son for the redemption of mankind. His holy blood . . ."

Nekhludoff felt so deeply disgusted that he rose silently, and frowning and keeping back a groan of shame, he left on tiptoe, and went to his room.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OFFICIALDOM.

Hardly had Nekhludoff finished dressing the next morning, just as he was about to go down, the footman brought him a card from the Moscow advocate. The advocate had come to St. Petersburg on business of his own, and was going to be present when Maslova's case was examined in the Senate, if that would be soon. The telegram sent by Nekhludoff crossed him on the way. Having found out from Nekhludoff when the case was going to be heard, and which senators were to be present, he smiled. "Exactly, all the three types of senators," he said. "Wolf is a Petersburg official; Skovorodnikoff is a theoretical, and Bay a practical lawyer, and therefore the most alive of them all," said the advocate. "There is most hope of him. Well, and how about the Petition Committee?"

"Oh, I'm going to Baron Vorobioff to-day. I could not get an audience with him yesterday."

"Do you know why he is Baron Vorobioff?" said the advocate, noticing the slightly ironical stress that Nekhludoff put on this foreign title, followed by so very Russian a surname.

"That was because the Emperor Paul rewarded the grandfather--I

think he was one of the Court footmen--by giving him this title. He managed to please him in some way, so he made him a baron. 'It's my wish, so don't gainsay me!' And so there's a Baron Vorobioff, and very proud of the title. He is a dreadful old humbug."

"Well, I'm going to see him," said Nekhludoff.

"That's good; we can go together. I shall give you a lift."

As they were going to start, a footman met Nekhludoff in the ante-room, and handed him a note from Mariette:

Pour vous faire plaisir, f'ai agi tout a fait contre mes principes et j'ai intercede aupres de mon mari pour votre protegee. Il se trouve que cette personne pout etre relaxee immediatement. Mon mari a ecrit au commandant. Venez donc disinterestedly. Je vous attends.

M.

"Just fancy!" said Nekhludoff to the advocate. "Is this not dreadful? A woman whom they are keeping in solitary confinement for seven months turns out to be quite innocent, and only a word was needed to get her released."

"That's always so. Well, anyhow, you have succeeded in getting what you wanted."

"Yes, but this success grieves me. Just think what must be going on there. Why have they been keeping her?"

"Oh, it's best not to look too deeply into it. Well, then, I shall give you a lift, if I may," said the advocate, as they left the house, and a fine carriage that the advocate had hired drove up to the door. "It's Baron Vorobioff you are going to see?"

The advocate gave the driver his directions, and the two good horses quickly brought Nekhludoff to the house in which the Baron lived. The Baron was at home. A young official in uniform, with a long, thin neck, a much protruding Adam's apple, and an extremely light walk, and two ladies were in the first room.

"Your name, please?" the young man with the Adam's apple asked, stepping with extreme lightness and grace across from the ladies to Nekhludoff.

Nekhludoff gave his name.

"The Baron was just mentioning you," said the young man, the Baron's adjutant, and went out through an inner door. He returned, leading a weeping lady dressed in mourning. With her

bony fingers the lady was trying to pull her tangled veil over
her face in order to hide her tears.

"Come in, please," said the young man to Nekhludoff, lightly
stepping up to the door of the study and holding it open. When
Nekhludoff came in, he saw before him a thick-set man of medium
height, with short hair, in a frock coat, who was sitting in an
armchair opposite a large writing-table, and looking gaily in
front of himself. The kindly, rosy red face, striking by its
contrast with the white hair, moustaches, and beard, turned
towards Nekhludoff with a friendly smile.

"Very glad to see you. Your mother and I were old acquaintances
and friends. I have seen you as a boy, and later on as an
officer. Sit down and tell me what I can do for you. Yes, yes,"
he said, shaking his cropped white head, while Nekhludoff was
telling him Theodosia's story. "Go on, go on. I quite understand.
It is certainly very touching. And have you handed in the
petition?"

"I have got the petition ready," Nekhludoff said, getting it out
of his pocket; "but I thought of speaking to you first in hopes
that the case would then get special attention paid to it."

"You have done very well. I shall certainly report it myself,"
said the Baron, unsuccessfully trying to put an expression of

pity on his merry face. "Very touching! It is clear she was but a child; the husband treated her roughly, this repelled her, but as time went on they fell in love with each other. Yes I will report the case."

"Count Ivan Michaelovitch was also going to speak about it."

Nekhludoff had hardly got these words out when the Baron's face changed.

"You had better hand in the petition into the office, after all, and I shall do what I can," he said.

At this moment the young official again entered the room, evidently showing off his elegant manner of walking.

"That lady is asking if she may say a few words more."

"Well, ask her in. Ah, mon cher, how many tears we have to see shed! If only we could dry them all. One does all that lies within one's power."

The lady entered.

"I forgot to ask you that he should not be allowed to give up the

daughter, because he is ready . . ."

"But I have already told you that I should do all I can."

"Baron, for the love of God! You will save the mother?"

She seized his hand, and began kissing it.

"Everything shall be done."

When the lady went out Nekhludoff also began to take leave.

"We shall do what we can. I shall speak about it at the Ministry of Justice, and when we get their answer we shall do what we can."

Nekhludoff left the study, and went into the office again. Just as in the Senate office, he saw, in a splendid apartment, a number of very elegant officials, clean, polite, severely correct and distinguished in dress and in speech.

"How many there are of them; how very many and how well fed they all look! And what clean shirts and hands they all have, and how well all their boots are polished! Who does it for them? How comfortable they all are, as compared not only with the prisoners, but even with the peasants!" These thoughts again

involuntarily came to Nekhludoff's mind.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN OLD GENERAL OF REPUTE.

The man on whom depended the easing of the fate of the Petersburg prisoners was an old General of repute--a baron of German descent, who, as it was said of him, had outlived his wits. He had received a profusion of orders, but only wore one of them, the Order of the White Cross. He had received this order, which he greatly valued, while serving in the Caucasus, because a number of Russian peasants, with their hair cropped, and dressed in uniform and armed with guns and bayonets, had killed at his command more than a thousand men who were defending their liberty, their homes, and their families. Later on he served in Poland, and there also made Russian peasants commit many different crimes, and got more orders and decorations for his uniform. Then he served somewhere else, and now that he was a weak, old man he had this position, which insured him a good house, an income and respect. He strictly observed all the regulations which were prescribed "from above," and was very zealous in the fulfilment of these regulations, to which he ascribed a special importance, considering that everything else in the world might be changed except the regulations prescribed "from above." His duty was to keep political prisoners, men and women, in solitary confinement in such a way that half of them perished in 10 years' time, some going out of their minds, some

dying of consumption, some committing suicide by starving themselves to death, cutting their veins with bits of glass, hanging, or burning themselves to death.

The old General was not ignorant of this; it all happened within his knowledge; but these cases no more touched his conscience than accidents brought on by thunderstorms, floods, etc. These cases occurred as a consequence of the fulfilment of regulations prescribed "from above" by His Imperial Majesty. These regulations had to be carried out without fail, and therefore it was absolutely useless to think of the consequences of their fulfilment. The old General did not even allow himself to think of such things, counting it his patriotic duty as a soldier not to think of them for fear of getting weak in the carrying out of these, according to his opinion, very important obligations. Once a week the old General made the round of the cells, one of the duties of his position, and asked the prisoners if they had any requests to make. The prisoners had all sorts of requests. He listened to them quietly, in impenetrable silence, and never fulfilled any of their requests, because they were all in disaccord with the regulations. Just as Nekhludoff drove up to the old General's house, the high notes of the bells on the belfry clock chimed "Great is the Lord," and then struck two. The sound of these chimes brought back to Nekhludoff's mind what he had read in the notes of the Decembrists [the Decembrists were a group who attempted, but failed, to put an end to absolutism in

Russia at the time of the accession of Nicholas the First] about the way this sweet music repeated every hour re-echoes in the hearts of those imprisoned for life.

Meanwhile the old General was sitting in his darkened drawing-room at an inlaid table, turning a saucer on a piece of paper with the aid of a young artist, the brother of one of his subordinates. The thin, weak, moist fingers of the artist were pressed against the wrinkled and stiff-jointed fingers of the old General, and the hands joined in this manner were moving together with the saucer over a paper that had all the letters of the alphabet written on it. The saucer was answering the questions put by the General as to how souls will recognise each other after death.

When Nekhludoff sent in his card by an orderly acting as footman, the soul of Joan of Arc was speaking by the aid of the saucer. The soul of Joan of Arc had already spelt letter by letter the words: "They well knew each other," and these words had been written down. When the orderly came in the saucer had stopped first on b, then on y, and began jerking hither and thither. This jerking was caused by the General's opinion that the next letter should be b, i.e., Joan of Arc ought to say that the souls will know each other by being cleansed of all that is earthly, or something of the kind, clashing with the opinion of the artist, who thought the next letter should be l, i.e., that the souls

should know each other by light emanating from their astral bodies. The General, with his bushy grey eyebrows gravely contracted, sat gazing at the hands on the saucer, and, imagining that it was moving of its own accord, kept pulling the saucer towards b. The pale-faced young artist, with his thin hair combed back behind his cars, was looking with his lifeless blue eyes into a dark corner of the drawing-room, nervously moving his lips and pulling the saucer towards l.

The General made a wry face at the interruption, but after a moment's pause he took the card, put on his pince-nez, and, uttering a groan, rose, in spite of the pain in his back, to his full height, rubbing his numb fingers.

"Ask him into the study."

"With your excellency's permission I will finish it alone," said the artist, rising. "I feel the presence."

"All right, finish alone," the General said, severely and decidedly, and stepped quickly, with big, firm and measured strides, into his study.

"Very pleased to see you," said the General to Nekhludoff, uttering the friendly words in a gruff tone, and pointing to an armchair by the side of the writing-table. "Have you been in

Petersburg long?"

Nekhludoff replied that he had only lately arrived.

"Is the Princess, your mother, well?"

"My mother is dead."

"Forgive me; I am very sorry. My son told me he had met you."

The General's son was making the same kind of career for himself that the father had done, and, having passed the Military Academy, was now serving in the Inquiry Office, and was very proud of his duties there. His occupation was the management of Government spies.

"Why, I served with your father. We were friends--comrades. And you; are you also in the Service?"

"No, I am not."

The General bent his head disapprovingly.

"I have a request to make, General."

"Very pleased. In what way can I be of service to you?"

"If my request is out of place pray pardon me. But I am obliged to make it."

"What is it?"

"There is a certain Gourkevitch imprisoned in the fortress; his mother asks for an interview with him, or at least to be allowed to send him some books."

The General expressed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction at Nekhludoff's request, but bending his head on one side he closed his eyes as if considering. In reality he was not considering anything, and was not even interested in Nekhludoff's questions, well knowing that he would answer them according to the law. He was simply resting mentally and not thinking at all.

"You see," he said at last, "this does not depend on me. There is a regulation, confirmed by His Majesty, concerning interviews; and as to books, we have a library, and they may have what is permitted."

"Yes, but he wants scientific books; he wishes to study."

"Don't you believe it," growled the General. "It's not study he wants; it is just only restlessness."

"But what is to be done? They must occupy their time somehow in their hard condition," said Nekhludoff.

"They are always complaining," said the General. "We know them."

He spoke of them in a general way, as if they were all a specially bad race of men. "They have conveniences here which can be found in few places of confinement," said the General, and he began to enumerate the comforts the prisoners enjoyed, as if the aim of the institution was to give the people imprisoned there a comfortable home.

"It is true it used to be rather rough, but now they are very well kept here," he continued. "They have three courses for dinner--and one of them meat--cutlets, or rissoles; and on Sundays they get a fourth--a sweet dish. God grant every Russian may eat as well as they do."

Like all old people, the General, having once got on to a familiar topic, enumerated the various proofs he had often given before of the prisoners being exacting and ungrateful.

"They get books on spiritual subjects and old journals. We have a library. Only they rarely read. At first they seem interested, later on the new books remain uncut, and the old ones with their

leaves unturned. We tried them," said the old General, with the dim likeness of a smile. "We put bits of paper in on purpose, which remained just as they had been placed. Writing is also not forbidden," he continued. "A slate is provided, and a slate pencil, so that they can write as a pastime. They can wipe the slate and write again. But they don't write, either. Oh, they very soon get quite tranquil. At first they seem restless, but later on they even grow fat and become very quiet." Thus spoke the General, never suspecting the terrible meaning of his words.

Nekhludoff listened to the hoarse old voice, looked at the stiff limbs, the swollen eyelids under the grey brows, at the old, clean-shaved, flabby jaw, supported by the collar of the military uniform, at the white cross that this man was so proud of, chiefly because he had gained it by exceptionally cruel and extensive slaughter, and knew that it was useless to reply to the old man or to explain the meaning of his own words to him.

He made another effort, and asked about the prisoner Shoustova, for whose release, as he had been informed that morning, orders were given.

"Shoustova--Shoustova? I cannot remember all their names, there are so many of them," he said, as if reproaching them because there were so many. He rang, and ordered the secretary to be called. While waiting for the latter, he began persuading

Nekhludoff to serve, saying that "honest noblemen," counting himself among the number, "were particularly needed by the Tsar and--the country," he added, evidently only to round off his sentence. "I am old, yet I am serving still, as well as my strength allows."

The secretary, a dry, emaciated man, with restless, intelligent eyes, came in and reported that Shoustova was imprisoned in some queer, fortified place, and that he had received no orders concerning her.

"When we get the order we shall let her out the same day. We do not keep them; we do not value their visits much," said the General, with another attempt at a playful smile, which only distorted his old face.

Nekhludoff rose, trying to keep from expressing the mixed feelings of repugnance and pity which he felt towards this terrible old man. The old man on his part considered that he should not be too severe on the thoughtless and evidently misguided son of his old comrade, and should not leave him without advice.

"Good-bye, my dear fellow; do not take it amiss. It is my affection that makes me say it. Do not keep company with such people as we have at our place here. There are no innocent ones

among them. All these people are most immoral. We know them," he said, in a tone that admitted no possibility of doubt. And he did not doubt, not because the thing was so, but because if it was not so, he would have to admit himself to be not a noble hero living out the last days of a good life, but a scoundrel, who sold, and still continued in his old age to sell, his conscience.

"Best of all, go and serve," he continued; "the Tsar needs honest men--and the country," he added. "Well, supposing I and the others refused to serve, as you are doing? Who would be left? Here we are, finding fault with the order of things, and yet not wishing to help the Government."

With a deep sigh Nekhludoff made a low bow, shook the large, bony hand condescendingly stretched out to him and left the room.

The General shook his head reprovingly, and rubbing his back, he again went into the drawing-room where the artist was waiting for him. He had already written down the answer given by the soul of Joan of Arc. The General put on his pince-nez and read, "Will know one another by light emanating from their astral bodies."

"Ah," said the General, with approval, and closed his eyes. "But how is one to know if the light of all is alike?" he asked, and again crossed fingers with the artist on the saucer.

The isvostchik drove Nekhludoff out of the gate.

It is dull here, sir, he said, turning to Nekhludoff. "I almost wished to drive off without waiting for you."

Nekhludoff agreed. "Yes, it is dull," and he took a deep breath, and looked up with a sense of relief at the grey clouds that were floating in the sky, and at the glistening ripples made by the boats and steamers on the Neva.

CHAPTER XX.

MASLOVA'S APPEAL.

The next day Maslova's case was to be examined at the Senate, and Nekhludoff and the advocate met at the majestic portal of the building, where several carriages were waiting. Ascending the magnificent and imposing staircase to the first floor, the advocate, who knew all the ins and outs of the place, turned to the left and entered through a door which had the date of the introduction of the Code of Laws above it.

After taking off his overcoat in the first narrow room, he found out from the attendant that the Senators had all arrived, and that the last had just come in. Fanarin, in his swallow-tail coat, a white tie above the white shirt-front, and a self-confident smile on his lips, passed into the next room. In this room there were to the right a large cupboard and a table, and to the left a winding staircase, which an elegant official in uniform was descending with a portfolio under his arm. In this room an old man with long, white hair and a patriarchal appearance attracted every one's attention. He wore a short coat and grey trousers. Two attendants stood respectfully beside him. The old man with white hair entered the cupboard and shut himself in.

Fanarin noticed a fellow-advocate dressed in the same way as himself, with a white tie and dress coat, and at once entered into an animated conversation with him.

Nekhludoff was meanwhile examining the people in the room. The public consisted of about 15 persons, of whom two were ladies--a young one with a pince-nez, and an old, grey-haired one.

A case of libel was to be heard that day, and therefore the public were more numerous than usual--chiefly persons belonging to the journalistic world.

The usher, a red-cheeked, handsome man in a fine uniform, came up to Fanarin and asked him what his business was. When he heard that it was the case of Maslova, he noted something down and walked away. Then the cupboard door opened and the old man with the patriarchal appearance stepped out, no longer in a short coat but in a gold-trimmed attire, which made him look like a bird, and with metal plates on his breast. This funny costume seemed to make the old man himself feel uncomfortable, and, walking faster than his wont, he hurried out of the door opposite the entrance.

"That is Bay, a most estimable man," Fanarin said to Nekhludoff, and then having introduced him to his colleague, he explained the case that was about to be heard, which he considered very interesting.

The hearing of the case soon commenced, and Nekhludoff, with the public, entered the left side of the Senate Chamber. They all, including Fanarin, took their places behind a grating. Only the Petersburg advocate went up to a desk in front of the grating.

The Senate Chamber was not so big as the Criminal Court; and was more simply furnished, only the table in front of the senators was covered with crimson, gold-trimmed velvet, instead of green cloth; but the attributes of all places of judgment, i.e., the mirror of justice, the icon, the emblem of hypocrisy, and the Emperor's portrait, the emblem of servility, were there.

The usher announced, in the same solemn manner: "The Court is coming." Every one rose in the same way, and the senators entered in their uniforms and sat down on highbacked chairs and leant on the table, trying to appear natural, just in the same way as the judges in the Court of Law. There were four senators present--Nikitin, who took the chair, a clean-shaved man with a narrow face and steely eyes; Wolf, with significantly compressed lips, and little white hands, with which he kept turning over the pages of the business papers; Skovorodnikoff, a heavy, fat, pockmarked man--the learned lawyer; and Bay, the patriarchal-looking man who had arrived last.

With the advocates entered the chief secretary and public

prosecutor, a lean, clean-shaven young man of medium height, a very dark complexion, and sad, black eyes. Nekhludoff knew him at once, in spite of his curious uniform and the fact that he had not seen him for six years. He had been one of his best friends in Nekhludoff's student days.

"The public prosecutor Selenin?" Nekhludoff asked, turning to the advocate.

"Yes. Why?"

"I know him well. He is a fine fellow."

"And a good public prosecutor; business-like. Now he is the man you should have interested."

"He will act according to his conscience in any case," said Nekhludoff, recalling the intimate relations and friendship between himself and Selenin, and the attractive qualities of the latter--purity, honesty, and good breeding in its best sense.

"Yes, there is no time now," whispered Fanarin, who was listening to the report of the case that had commenced.

The Court of Justice was accused of having left a decision of the Court of Law unaltered.

Nekhludoff listened and tried to make out the meaning of what was going on; but, just as in the Criminal Court, his chief difficulty was that not the evidently chief point, but some side issues, were being discussed. The case was that of a newspaper which had published the account of a swindle arranged by a director of a limited liability company. It seemed that the only important question was whether the director of the company really abused his trust, and how to stop him from doing it. But the questions under consideration were whether the editor had a right to publish this article of his contributor, and what he had been guilty of in publishing it: slander or libel, and in what way slander included libel, or libel included slander, and something rather incomprehensible to ordinary people about all sorts of statutes and resolutions passed by some General Department.

The only thing clear to Nekhludoff was that, in spite of what Wolf had so strenuously insisted on, the day before, i.e., that the Senate could not try a case on its merits, in this case he was evidently strongly in favour of repealing the decision of the Court of Justice, and that Selenin, in spite of his characteristic reticence, stated the opposite opinion with quite unexpected warmth. The warmth, which surprised Nekhludoff, evinced by the usually self-controlled Selenin, was due to his knowledge of the director's shabbiness in money matters, and the fact, which had accidentally come to his cars, that Wolf had been

to a swell dinner party at the swindler's house only a few days before.

Now that Wolf spoke on the case, guardedly enough, but with evident bias, Selenin became excited, and expressed his opinion with too much nervous irritation for an ordinary business transaction.

It was clear that Selenin's speech had offended Wolf. He grew red, moved in his chair, made silent gestures of surprise, and at last rose, with a very dignified and injured look, together with the other senators, and went out into the debating-room.

"What particular case have you come about?" the usher asked again, addressing Fanarin.

"I have already told you: Maslova's case."

"Yes, quite so. It is to be heard to-day, but--"

"But what?" the advocate asked.

"Well, you see, this case was to be examined without taking sides, so that the senators will hardly come out again after passing the resolution. But I will inform them."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll inform them; I'll inform them." And the usher again put something down on his paper.

The Senators really meant to pronounce their decision concerning the libel case, and then to finish the other business, Maslova's case among it, over their tea and cigarettes, without leaving the debating-room.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE APPEAL DISMISSED.

As soon as the Senators were seated round the table in the debating-room, Wolf began to bring forward with great animation all the motives in favour of a repeal. The chairman, an ill-natured man at best, was in a particularly bad humour that day. His thoughts were concentrated on the words he had written down in his memoranda on the occasion when not he but Viglanoff was appointed to the important post he had long coveted. It was the chairman, Nikitin's, honest conviction that his opinions of the officials of the two upper classes with which he was in connection would furnish valuable material for the historians. He had written a chapter the day before in which the officials of the upper classes got it hot for preventing him, as he expressed it, from averting the ruin towards which the present rulers of Russia were driving it, which simply meant that they had prevented his getting a better salary. And now he was considering what a new light to posterity this chapter would shed on events.

"Yes, certainly," he said, in reply to the words addressed to him by Wolf, without listening to them.

Bay was listening to Wolf with a sad face and drawing a garland on the paper that lay before him. Bay was a Liberal of the very

first water. He held sacred the Liberal traditions of the sixth decade of this century, and if he ever overstepped the limits of strict neutrality it was always in the direction of Liberalism. So in this case; beside the fact that the swindling director, who was prosecuting for libel, was a bad lot, the prosecution of a journalist for libel in itself tending, as it did, to restrict the freedom of the press, inclined Bay to reject the appeal.

When Wolf concluded his arguments Bay stopped drawing his garland and began in a sad and gentle voice (he was sad because he was obliged to demonstrate such truisms) concisely, simply and convincingly to show how unfounded the accusation was, and then, bending his white head, he continued drawing his garland.

Skovorodnikoff, who sat opposite Wolf, and, with his fat fingers, kept shoving his beard and moustaches into his mouth, stopped chewing his beard as soon as Bay was silent, and said with a loud, grating voice, that, notwithstanding the fact of the director being a terrible scoundrel, he would have been for the repeal of the sentence if there were any legal reasons for it; but, as there were none, he was of Bay's opinion. He was glad to put this spoke in Wolf's wheel.

The chairman agreed with Skovorodnikoff, and the appeal was rejected.

Wolf was dissatisfied, especially because it was like being caught acting with dishonest partiality; so he pretended to be indifferent, and, unfolding the document which contained Maslova's case, he became engrossed in it. Meanwhile the Senators rang and ordered tea, and began talking about the event that, together with the duel, was occupying the Petersburgers.

It was the case of the chief of a Government department, who was accused of the crime provided for in Statute 995.

"What nastiness," said Bay, with disgust.

"Why; where is the harm of it? I can show you a Russian book containing the project of a German writer, who openly proposes that it should not be considered a crime," said Skovorodnikoff, drawing in greedily the fumes of the crumpled cigarette, which he held between his fingers close to the palm, and he laughed boisterously.

"Impossible!" said Bay.

"I shall show it you," said Skovorodnikoff, giving the full title of the book, and even its date and the name of its editor.

"I hear he has been appointed governor to some town in Siberia."

"That's fine. The archdeacon will meet him with a crucifix. They ought to appoint an archdeacon of the same sort," said Skovorodnikoff. "I could recommend them one," and he threw the end of his cigarette into his saucer, and again shoved as much of his beard and moustaches as he could into his mouth and began chewing them.

The usher came in and reported the advocate's and Nekhludoff's desire to be present at the examination of Maslova's case.

"This case," Wolf said, "is quite romantic," and he told them what he knew about Nekhludoff's relations with Maslova. When they had spoken a little about it and finished their tea and cigarettes, the Senators returned into the Senate Chamber and proclaimed their decision in the libel case, and began to hear Maslova's case.

Wolf, in his thin voice, reported Maslova's appeal very fully, but again not without some bias and an evident wish for the repeal of the sentence.

"Have you anything to add?" the chairman said, turning to Fanarin. Fanarin rose, and standing with his broad white chest expanded, proved point by point, with wonderful exactness and persuasiveness, how the Court had in six points strayed from the exact meaning of the law; and besides this he touched, though

briefly, on the merits of the case, and on the crying injustice of the sentence. The tone of his speech was one of apology to the Senators, who, with their penetration and judicial wisdom, could not help seeing and understanding it all better than he could. He was obliged to speak only because the duty he had undertaken forced him to do so.

After Fanarin's speech one might have thought that there could not remain the least doubt that the Senate ought to repeal the decision of the Court. When he had finished his speech, Fanarin looked round with a smile of triumph, seeing which Nekhludoff felt certain that the case was won. But when he looked at the Senators he saw that Fanarin smiled and triumphed all alone. The Senators and the Public Prosecutor did not smile nor triumph, but looked like people wearied, and who were thinking "We have often heard the like of you; it is all in vain," and were only too glad when he stopped and ceased uselessly detaining them there. Immediately after the end of the advocate's speech the chairman turned to the Public Prosecutor. Selenin briefly and clearly expressed himself in favour of leaving the decision of the Court unaltered, as he considered all the reasons for appealing inadequate. After this the Senators went out into the debating-room. They were divided in their opinions. Wolf was in favour of altering the decision. Bay, when he had understood the case, took up the same side with fervour, vividly presenting the scene at the court to his companions as he clearly saw it

himself. Nikitin, who always was on the side of severity and formality, took up the other side. All depended on Skovorodnikoff's vote, and he voted for rejecting the appeal, because Nekhludoff's determination to marry the woman on moral grounds was extremely repugnant to him.

Skovorodnikoff was a materialist, a Darwinian, and counted every manifestation of abstract morality, or, worse still, religion, not only as a despicable folly, but as a personal affront to himself. All this bother about a prostitute, and the presence of a celebrated advocate and Nekhludoff in the Senate were in the highest degree repugnant to him. So he shoved his beard into his mouth and made faces, and very skilfully pretended to know nothing of this case, excepting that the reasons for an appeal were insufficient, and that he, therefore, agreed with the chairman to leave the decision of the Court unaltered.

So the sentence remained unrepealed.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN OLD FRIEND.

"Terrible," said Nekhludoff, as he went out into the waiting-room with the advocate, who was arranging the papers in his portfolio. "In a matter which is perfectly clear they attach all the importance to the form and reject the appeal. Terrible!"

"The case was spoiled in the Criminal Court," said the advocate.

"And Selenin, too, was in favour of the rejection. Terrible! terrible!" Nekhludoff repeated. "What is to be done now?"

"We will appeal to His Majesty, and you can hand in the petition yourself while you are here. I will write it for you."

At this moment little Wolf, with his stars and uniform, came out into the waiting-room and approached Nekhludoff. "It could not be helped, dear Prince. The reasons for an appeal were not sufficient," he said, shrugging his narrow shoulders and closing his eyes, and then he went his way.

After Wolf, Selenin came out too, having heard from the Senators that his old friend Nekhludoff was there.

"Well, I never expected to see you here," he said, coming up to Nekhludoff, and smiling only with his lips while his eyes remained sad. "I did not know you were in Petersburg."

"And I did not know you were Public Prosecutor-in-Chief."

"How is it you are in the Senate?" asked Selenin. "I had heard, by the way, that you were in Petersburg. But what are you doing here?"

"Here? I am here because I hoped to find justice and save a woman innocently condemned."

"What woman?"

"The one whose case has just been decided."

"Oh! Maslova's case," said Selenin, suddenly remembering it. "The appeal had no grounds whatever."

"It is not the appeal; it's the woman who is innocent, and is being punished."

Selenin sighed. "That may well be, but----"

"Not may be, but is."

"How do you know?"

"Because I was on the jury. I know how we made the mistake."

Selenin became thoughtful. "You should have made a statement at the time," he said.

"I did make the statement."

"It should have been put down in an official report. If this had been added to the petition for the appeal--"

"Yes, but still, as it is, the verdict is evidently absurd."

"The Senate has no right to say so. If the Senate took upon itself to repeal the decision of the law courts according to its own views as to the justice of the decisions in themselves, the verdict of the jury would lose all its meaning, not to mention that the Senate would have no basis to go upon, and would run the risk of infringing justice rather than upholding it," said Selenin, calling to mind the case that had just been heard.

"All I know is that this woman is quite innocent, and that the last hope of saving her from an unmerited punishment is gone. The grossest injustice has been confirmed by the highest court."

"It has not been confirmed. The Senate did not and cannot enter into the merits of the case in itself," said Selenin. Always busy and rarely going out into society, he had evidently heard nothing of Nekhludoff's romance. Nekhludoff noticed it, and made up his mind that it was best to say nothing about his special relations with Maslova.

"You are probably staying with your aunt," Selenin remarked, apparently wishing to change the subject. "She told me you were here yesterday, and she invited me to meet you in the evening, when some foreign preacher was to lecture," and Selenin again smiled only with his lips.

"Yes, I was there, but left in disgust," said Nekhludoff angrily, vexed that Selenin had changed the subject.

"Why with disgust? After all, it is a manifestation of religious feeling, though one-sided and sectarian," said Selenin.

"Why, it's only some kind of whimsical folly."

"Oh, dear, no. The curious thing is that we know the teaching of our church so little that we see some new kind of revelation in what are, after all, our own fundamental dogmas," said Selenin, as if hurrying to let his old friend know his new views.

Nekhludoff looked at Selenin scrutinisingly and with surprise, and Selenin dropped his eyes, in which appeared an expression not only of sadness but also of ill-will.

"Do you, then, believe in the dogmas of the church?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Of course I do," replied Selenin, gazing straight into Nekhludoff's eyes with a lifeless look.

Nekhludoff sighed. "It is strange," he said.

"However, we shall have a talk some other time," said Selenin. "I am coming," he added, in answer to the usher, who had respectfully approached him. "Yes, we must meet again," he went on with a sigh. "But will it be possible for me to find you? You will always find me in at seven o'clock. My address is Nadejdinskaya," and he gave the number. "Ah, time does not stand still," and he turned to go, smiling only with his lips.

"I will come if I can," said Nekhludoff, feeling that a man once near and dear to him had, by this brief conversation, suddenly become strange, distant, and incomprehensible, if not hostile to him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

When Nekhludoff knew Selenin as a student, he was a good son, a true friend, and for his years an educated man of the world, with much tact; elegant, handsome, and at the same time truthful and honest. He learned well, without much exertion and with no pedantry, receiving gold medals for his essays. He considered the service of mankind, not only in words but in acts, to be the aim of his young life. He saw no other way of being useful to humanity than by serving the State. Therefore, as soon as he had completed his studies, he systematically examined all the activities to which he might devote his life, and decided to enter the Second Department of the Chancellerie, where the laws are drawn up, and he did so. But, in spite of the most scrupulous and exact discharge of the duties demanded of him, this service gave no satisfaction to his desire of being useful, nor could he awake in himself the consciousness that he was doing "the right thing."

This dissatisfaction was so much increased by the friction with his very small-minded and vain fellow officials that he left the Chancellerie and entered the Senate. It was better there, but the same dissatisfaction still pursued him; he felt it to be very different from what he had expected, and from what ought to be.

And now that he was in the Senate his relatives obtained for him the post of Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and he had to go in a carriage, dressed in an embroidered uniform and a white linen apron, to thank all sorts of people for having placed him in the position of a lackey. However much he tried he could find no reasonable explanation for the existence of this post, and felt, more than in the Senate, that it was not "the right thing," and yet he could not refuse it for fear of hurting those who felt sure they were giving him much pleasure by this appointment, and because it flattered the lowest part of his nature. It pleased him to see himself in a mirror in his gold-embroidered uniform, and to accept the deference paid him by some people because of his position.

Something of the same kind happened when he married. A very brilliant match, from a worldly point of view, was arranged for him, and he married chiefly because by refusing he would have had to hurt the young lady who wished to be married to him, and those who arranged the marriage, and also because a marriage with a nice young girl of noble birth flattered his vanity and gave him pleasure. But this marriage very soon proved to be even less "the right thing" than the Government service and his position at Court.

After the birth of her first child the wife decided to have no

more, and began leading that luxurious worldly life in which he now had to participate whether he liked or not.

She was not particularly handsome, and was faithful to him, and she seemed, in spite of all the efforts it cost her, to derive nothing but weariness from the life she led, yet she perseveringly continued to live it, though it was poisoning her husband's life. And all his efforts to alter this life was shattered, as against a stone wall, by her conviction, which all her friends and relatives supported, that all was as it should be.

The child, a little girl with bare legs and long golden curls, was a being perfectly foreign to him, chiefly because she was trained quite otherwise than he wished her to be. There sprung up between the husband and wife the usual misunderstanding, without even the wish to understand each other, and then a silent warfare, hidden from outsiders and tempered by decorum. All this made his life at home a burden, and became even less "the right thing" than his service and his post.

But it was above all his attitude towards religion which was not "the right thing." Like every one of his set and his time, by the growth of his reason he broke without the least effort the nets of the religious superstitions in which he was brought up, and did not himself exactly know when it was that he freed himself of

them. Being earnest and upright, he did not, during his youth and intimacy with Nekhludoff as a student, conceal his rejection of the State religion. But as years went on and he rose in the service, and especially at the time of the reaction towards conservatism in society, his spiritual freedom stood in his way.

At home, when his father died, he had to be present at the masses said for his soul, and his mother wished him to go to confession or to communion, and it was in a way expected, by public opinion, but above all, Government service demanded that he should be present at all sorts of services, consecrations, thanksgivings, and the like. Hardly a day passed without some outward religious form having to be observed.

When present at these services he had to pretend that he believed in something which he did not believe in, and being truthful he could not do this. The alternative was, having made up his mind that all these outward signs were deceitful, to alter his life in such a way that he would not have to be present at such ceremonials. But to do what seemed so simple would have cost a great deal. Besides encountering the perpetual hostility of all those who were near to him, he would have to give up the service and his position, and sacrifice his hopes of being useful to humanity by his service, now and in the future. To make such a sacrifice one would have to be firmly convinced of being right.

And he was firmly convinced he was right, as no educated man of our time can help being convinced who knows a little history and how the religions, and especially Church Christianity, originated.

But under the stress of his daily life he, a truthful man, allowed a little falsehood to creep in. He said that in order to do justice to an unreasonable thing one had to study the unreasonable thing. It was a little falsehood, but it sunk him into the big falsehood in which he was now caught.

Before putting to himself the question whether the orthodoxy in which he was born and bred, and which every one expected him to accept, and without which he could not continue his useful occupation, contained the truth, he had already decided the answer. And to clear up the question he did not read Voltaire, Schopenhauer, Herbert Spencer, or Comte, but the philosophical works of Hegel and the religious works of Vinet and Khomyakoff, and naturally found in them what he wanted, i.e., something like peace of mind and a vindication of that religious teaching in which he was educated, which his reason had long ceased to accept, but without which his whole life was filled with unpleasantness which could all be removed by accepting the teaching.

And so he adopted all the usual sophistries which go to prove

that a single human reason cannot know the truth, that the truth is only revealed to an association of men, and can only be known by revelation, that revelation is kept by the church, etc. And so he managed to be present at prayers, masses for the dead, to confess, make signs of the cross in front of icons, with a quiet mind, without being conscious of the lie, and to continue in the service which gave him the feeling of being useful and some comfort in his joyless family life. Although he believed this, he felt with his entire being that this religion of his, more than all else, was not "the right thing," and that is why his eyes always looked sad.

And seeing Nekhludoff, whom he had known before all these lies had rooted themselves within him, reminded him of what he then was. It was especially after he had hurried to hint at his religious views that he had most strongly felt all this "not the right thing," and had become painfully sad. Nekhludoff felt it also after the first joy of meeting his old friend had passed, and therefore, though they promised each other to meet, they did not take any steps towards an interview, and did not again see each other during this stay of Nekhludoff's in Petersburg.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MARIETTE TEMPTS NEKHLUDOFF.

When they left the Senate, Nekhludoff and the advocate walked on together, the advocate having given the driver of his carriage orders to follow them. The advocate told Nekhludoff the story of the chief of a Government department, about whom the Senators had been talking: how the thing was found out, and how the man, who according to law should have been sent to the mines, had been appointed Governor of a town in Siberia. Then he related with particular pleasure how several high-placed persons stole a lot of money collected for the erection of the still unfinished monument which they had passed that morning; also, how the mistress of So-and-so got a lot of money at the Stock Exchange, and how So-and-so agreed with So-and-so to sell him his wife. The advocate began another story about a swindle, and all sorts of crimes committed by persons in high places, who, instead of being in prison, sat on presidential chairs in all sorts of Government institutions. These tales, of which the advocate seemed to have an unending supply, gave him much pleasure, showing as they did, with perfect clearness, that his means of getting money were quite just and innocent compared to the means which the highest officials in Petersburg made use of. The advocate was therefore surprised when Nekhludoff took an isvostchik before hearing the end of the story, said good-bye, and left him. Nekhludoff felt

very sad. It was chiefly the rejection of the appeal by the
Senate, confirming the senseless torments that the innocent
Maslova was enduring, that saddened him, and also the fact that
this rejection made it still harder for him to unite his fate
with hers. The stories about existing evils, which the advocate
recounted with such relish, heightened his sadness, and so did
the cold, unkind look that the once sweet-natured, frank, noble
Selenin had given him, and which kept recurring to his mind.

On his return the doorkeeper handed him a note, and said, rather
scornfully, that some kind of woman had written it in the hall.
It was a note from Shoustova's mother. She wrote that she had
come to thank her daughter's benefactor and saviour, and to
implore him to come to see them on the Vasilievsky, 5th Line,
house No. --. This was very necessary because of Vera Doukhova.
He need not be afraid that they would weary him with expressions
of gratitude. They would not speak their gratitude, but be simply
glad to see him. Would he not come next morning, if he could?

There was another note from Bogotyreff, a former fellow-officer,
aide-de-camp to the Emperor, whom Nekhludoff had asked to hand
personally to the Emperor his petition on behalf of the
sectarians. Bogotyreff wrote, in his large, firm hand, that he
would put the petition into the Emperor's own hands, as he had
promised; but that it had occurred to him that it might be better
for Nekhludoff first to go and see the person on whom the matter

depended.

After the impressions received during the last few days, Nekhludoff felt perfectly hopeless of getting anything done. The plans he had formed in Moscow seemed now something like the dreams of youth, which are inevitably followed by disillusion when life comes to be faced. Still, being now in Petersburg, he considered it his duty to do all he had intended, and he resolved next day, after consulting Bogotyreff, to act on his advice and see the person on whom the case of the sectarians depended.

He got out the sectarians' petition from his portfolio, and began reading it over, when there was a knock at his door, and a footman came in with a message from the Countess Katerina Ivanovna, who asked him to come up and have a cup of tea with her.

Nekhludoff said he would come at once, and having put the papers back into the portfolio, he went up to his aunt's. He looked out of a window on his way, and saw Mariette's pair of bays standing in front of the house, and he suddenly brightened and felt inclined to smile.

Mariette, with a hat on her head, not in black but with a light dress of many shades, sat with a cup in her hand beside the Countess's easy chair, prattling about something while her

beautiful, laughing eyes glistened. She had said something funny--something indecently funny--just as Nekhludoff entered the room. He knew it by the way she laughed, and by the way the good-natured Countess Katerina Ivanovna's fat body was shaking with laughter; while Mariette, her smiling mouth slightly drawn to one side, her head a little bent, a peculiarly mischievous expression in her merry, energetic face, sat silently looking at her companion. From a few words which he overheard, Nekhludoff guessed that they were talking of the second piece of Petersburg news, the episode of the Siberian Governor, and that it was in reference to this subject that Mariette had said something so funny that the Countess could not control herself for a long time.

"You will kill me," she said, coughing.

After saying "How d'you do?" Nekhludoff sat down. He was about to censure Mariette in his mind for her levity when, noticing the serious and even slightly dissatisfied look in his eyes, she suddenly, to please him, changed not only the expression of her face, but also the attitude of her mind; for she felt the wish to please him as soon as she looked at him. She suddenly turned serious, dissatisfied with her life, as if seeking and striving after something; it was not that she pretended, but she really reproduced in herself the very same state of mind that he was in, although it would have been impossible for her to express in

words what was the state of Nekhludoff's mind at that moment.

She asked him how he had accomplished his tasks. He told her about his failure in the Senate and his meeting Selenin.

"Oh, what a pure soul! He is, indeed, a chevalier sans peur et sans reproche. A pure soul!" said both ladies, using the epithet commonly applied to Selenin in Petersburg society.

"What is his wife like?" Nekhludoff asked.

"His wife? Well, I do not wish to judge, but she does not understand him."

"Is it possible that he, too, was for rejecting the appeal?" Mariette asked with real sympathy. "It is dreadful. How sorry I am for her," she added with a sigh.

He frowned, and in order to change the subject began to speak about Shoustova, who had been imprisoned in the fortress and was now set free through the influence of Mariette's husband. He thanked her for her trouble, and was going on to say how dreadful he thought it, that this woman and the whole of her family had suffered merely, because no one had reminded the authorities about them, but Mariette interrupted him and expressed her own indignation.

"Say nothing about it to me," she said. "When my husband told me she could be set free, it was this that struck me, 'What was she kept in prison for if she is innocent?'" She went on expressing what Nekhludoff was about to say.

"It is revolting--revolting."

Countess Katerina Ivanovna noticed that Mariette was coquetting with her nephew, and this amused her. "What do you think?" she said, when they were silent. "Supposing you come to Aline's to-morrow night. Kiesewetter will be there. And you, too," she said, turning to Mariette. "Il vous a remarque," she went on to her nephew. "He told me that what you say (I repeated it all to him) is a very good sign, and that you will certainly come to Christ. You must come absolutely. Tell him to, Mariette, and come yourself."

"Countess, in the first place, I have no right whatever to give any kind of advice to the Prince," said Mariette, and gave Nekhludoff a look that somehow established a full comprehension between them of their attitude in relation to the Countess's words and evangelicalism in general. "Secondly, I do not much care, you know."

"Yes, I know you always do things the wrong way round, and

according to your own ideas."

"My own ideas? I have faith like the most simple peasant woman," said Mariette with a smile. "And, thirdly, I am going to the French Theatre to-morrow night."

"Ah! And have you seen that--What's her name?" asked Countess Katerina Ivanovna. Mariette gave the name of a celebrated French actress.

"You must go, most decidedly; she is wonderful."

"Whom am I to see first, ma tante--the actress or the preacher?" Nekhludoff said with a smile.

"Please don't catch at my words."

"I should think the preacher first and then the actress, or else the desire for the sermon might vanish altogether," said Nekhludoff.

"No; better begin with the French Theatre, and do penance afterwards."

"Now, then, you are not to hold me up for ridicule. The preacher is the preacher and the theatre is the theatre. One need not weep

in order to be saved. One must have faith, and then one is sure to be gay."

"You, ma tante, preach better than any preacher."

"Do you know what?" said Mariette. "Come into my box to-morrow."

"I am afraid I shall not be able to."

The footman interrupted the conversation by announcing a visitor. It was the secretary of a philanthropic society of which the Countess was president.

"Oh, that is the dullest of men. I think I shall receive him out there, and return to you later on. Mariette, give him his tea," said the Countess, and left the room, with her quick, wriggling walk.

Mariette took the glove off her firm, rather flat hand, the fourth finger of which was covered with rings.

"Want any?" she said, taking hold of the silver teapot, under which a spirit lamp was burning, and extending her little finger curiously. Her face looked sad and serious.

"It is always terribly painful to me to notice that people whose

opinion I value confound me with the position I am placed in." She seemed ready to cry as she said these last words. And though these words had no meaning, or at any rate a very indefinite meaning, they seemed to be of exceptional depth, meaning, or goodness to Nekhludoff, so much was he attracted by the look of the bright eyes which accompanied the words of this young, beautiful, and well-dressed woman.

Nekhludoff looked at her in silence, and could not take his eyes from her face.

"You think I do not understand you and all that goes on in you. Why, everybody knows what you are doing. C'est le secret de polichinelle. And I am delighted with your work, and think highly of you."

"Really, there is nothing to be delighted with; and I have done so little as Yet."

"No matter. I understand your feelings, and I understand her. All right, all right. I will say nothing more about it," she said, noticing displeasure on his face. "But I also understand that after seeing all the suffering and the horror in the prisons," Mariette went on, her only desire that of attracting him, and guessing with her woman's instinct what was dear and important to him, "you wish to help the sufferers, those who are

made to suffer so terribly by other men, and their cruelty and indifference. I understand the willingness to give one's life, and could give mine in such a cause, but we each have our own fate."

"Are you, then, dissatisfied with your fate?"

"I?" she asked, as if struck with surprise that such a question could be put to her. "I have to be satisfied, and am satisfied. But there is a worm that wakes up--"

"And he must not be allowed to fall asleep again. It is a voice that must be obeyed," Nekhludoff said, falling into the trap.

Many a time later on Nekhludoff remembered with shame his talk with her. He remembered her words, which were not so much lies as imitations of his own, and her face, which seemed looking at him with sympathetic attention when he told her about the terrors of the prison and of his impressions in the country.

When the Countess returned they were talking not merely like old, but like exclusive friends who alone understood one another. They were talking about the injustice of power, of the sufferings of the unfortunate, the poverty of the people, yet in reality in the midst of the sound of their talk their eyes, gazing at each other, kept asking, "Can you love me?" and answering, "I can,"

and the sex-feeling, taking the most unexpected and brightest forms, drew them to each other. As she was going away she told him that she would always be willing to serve him in any way she could, and asked him to come and see her, if only for a moment, in the theatre next day, as she had a very important thing to tell him about.

"Yes, and when shall I see you again?" she added, with a sigh, carefully drawing the glove over her jewelled hand.

"Say you will come."

Nekhludoff promised.

That night, when Nekhludoff was alone in his room, and lay down after putting out his candle, he could not sleep. He thought of Maslova, of the decision of the Senate, of his resolve to follow her in any case, of his having given up the land. The face of Mariette appeared to him as if in answer to those thoughts--her look, her sigh, her words, "When shall I see you again?" and her smile seemed vivid as if he really saw her, and he also smiled. "Shall I be doing right in going to Siberia? And have I done right in divesting myself of my wealth?" And the answers to the questions on this Petersburg night, on which the daylight streamed into the window from under the blind, were quite indefinite. All seemed mixed in his head. He recalled his former

state of mind, and the former sequence of his thoughts, but they had no longer their former power or validity.

"And supposing I have invented all this, and am unable to live it through--supposing I repent of having acted right," he thought; and unable to answer he was seized with such anguish and despair as he had long not felt. Unable to free himself from his perplexity, he fell into a heavy sleep, such as he had slept after a heavy loss at cards.

CHAPTER XXV.

LYDIA SHOUSTOVA'S HOME.

Nekhludoff awoke next morning feeling as if he had been guilty of some iniquity the day before. He began considering. He could not remember having done anything wrong; he had committed no evil act, but he had had evil thoughts. He had thought that all his present resolutions to marry Katusha and to give up his land were unachievable dreams; that he should be unable to bear it; that it was artificial, unnatural; and that he would have to go on living as he lived.

He had committed no evil action, but, what was far worse than an evil action, he had entertained evil thoughts whence all evil actions proceed. An evil action may not be repeated, and can be repented of; but evil thoughts generate all evil actions.

An evil action only smooths the path for other evil acts; evil thoughts uncontrollably drag one along that path.

When Nekhludoff repeated in his mind the thoughts of the day before, he was surprised that he could for a moment have believed these thoughts. However new and difficult that which he had decided to do might be, he knew that it was the only possible way of life for him now, and however easy and natural it might have

been to return to his former state, he knew that state to be death.

Yesterday's temptation seemed like the feeling when one awakes from deep sleep, and, without feeling sleepy, wants to lie comfortably in bed a little longer, yet knows that it is time to rise and commence the glad and important work that awaits one.

On that, his last day in Petersburg, he went in the morning to the Vasilievski Ostrov to see Shoustova. Shoustova lived on the second floor, and having been shown the back stairs, Nekhludoff entered straight into the hot kitchen, which smelt strongly of food. An elderly woman, with turned-up sleeves, with an apron and spectacles, stood by the fire stirring something in a steaming pan.

"Whom do you want?" she asked severely, looking at him over her spectacles.

Before Nekhludoff had time to answer, an expression of fright and joy appeared on her face.

"Oh, Prince!" she exclaimed, wiping her hands on her apron. "But why have you come the back way? Our Benefactor! I am her mother. They have nearly killed my little girl. You have saved us," she said, catching hold of Nekhludoff's hand and trying to kiss it.

"I went to see you yesterday. My sister asked me to. She is here. This way, this way, please," said Shoustova's mother, as she led the way through a narrow door, and a dark passage, arranging her hair and pulling at her tucked-up skirt. "My sister's name is Kornilova. You must have heard of her," she added, stopping before a closed door. "She was mixed up in a political affair. An extremely clever woman!"

Shoustova's mother opened the door and showed Nekhludoff into a little room where on a sofa with a table before it sat a plump, short girl with fair hair that curled round her pale, round face, which was very like her mother's. She had a striped cotton blouse on.

Opposite her, in an armchair, leaning forward, so that he was nearly bent double, sat a young fellow with a slight, black beard and moustaches.

"Lydia, Prince Nekhludoff!" he said.

The pale girl jumped up, nervously pushing back a lock of hair behind her ear, and gazing at the newcomer with a frightened look in her large, grey eyes.

"So you are that dangerous woman whom Vera Doukhova wished me to

intercede for?" Nekhludoff asked, with a smile.

"Yes, I am," said Lydia Shoustova, her broad, kind, child-like smile disclosing a row of beautiful teeth. "It was aunt who was so anxious to see you. Aunt!" she called out, in a pleasant, tender voice through a door.

"Your imprisonment grieved Vera Doukhova very much," said Nekhludoff.

"Take a seat here, or better here," said Shoustova, pointing to the battered easy-chair from which the young man had just risen.

"My cousin, Zakharov," she said, noticing that Nekhludoff looked at the young man.

The young man greeted the visitor with a smile as kindly as Shoustova's, and when Nekhludoff sat down he brought himself another chair, and sat by his side. A fair-haired schoolboy of about 10 also came into the room and silently sat down on the window-sill.

"Vera Doukhova is a great friend of my aunt's, but I hardly know her," said Shoustova.

Then a woman with a very pleasant face, with a white blouse and

leather belt, came in from the next room.

"How do you do? Thanks for coming," she began as soon as she had taken the place next Shoustova's on the sofa.

"Well, and how is Vera. You have seen her? How does she bear her fate?"

"She does not complain," said Nekhludoff. "She says she feels perfectly happy."'

"Ah, that's like Vera. I know her," said the aunt, smiling and shaking her head. "One must know her. She has a fine character. Everything for others; nothing for herself."

"No, she asked nothing for herself, but only seemed concerned about your niece. What seemed to trouble her most was, as she said, that your niece was imprisoned for nothing."

"Yes, that's true," said the aunt. "It is a dreadful business. She suffered, in reality, because of me."

"Not at all, aunt. I should have taken the papers without you all the same."

"Allow me to know better," said the aunt. "You see," she went on

to Nekhludoff, "it all happened because a certain person asked me to keep his papers for a time, and I, having no house at the time, brought them to her. And that very night the police searched her room and took her and the papers, and have kept her up to now, demanding that she should say from whom she had them."

"But I never told them," said Shoustova quickly, pulling nervously at a lock that was not even out of place.

"I never said you did," answered the aunt.

"If they took Mitin up it was certainly not through me," said Shoustova, blushing, and looking round uneasily.

"Don't speak about it, Lydia dear," said her mother.

"Why not? I should like to relate it," said Shoustova, no longer smiling nor pulling her lock, but twisting it round her finger and getting redder.

"Don't forget what happened yesterday when you began talking about it."

"Not at all---Leave me alone, mamma. I did not tell, I only kept quiet. When he examined me about Mitin and about aunt, I said nothing, and told him I would not answer."

"Then this--Petrov--"

"Petrov is a spy, a gendarme, and a blackguard," put in the aunt, to explain her niece's words to Nekhludoff.

"Then he began persuading," continued Shoustova, excitedly and hurriedly. "'Anything you tell me,' he said, 'can harm no one; on the contrary, if you tell me, we may be able to set free innocent people whom we may be uselessly tormenting.' Well, I still said I would not tell. Then he said, 'All right, don't tell, but do not deny what I am going to say.' And he named Mitin."

"Don't talk about it," said the aunt.

"Oh, aunt, don't interrupt," and she went on pulling the lock of hair and looking round. "And then, only fancy, the next day I hear--they let me know by knocking at the wall--that Mitin is arrested. Well, I think I have betrayed him, and this tormented me so--it tormented me so that I nearly went mad."

"And it turned out that it was not at all because of you he was taken up?"

"Yes, but I didn't know. I think, 'There, now, I have betrayed him.' I walk and walk up and down from wall to wall, and cannot

help thinking. I think, 'I have betrayed him.' I lie down and cover myself up, and hear something whispering, 'Betrayed! betrayed Mitin! Mitin betrayed!' I know it is an hallucination, but cannot help listening. I wish to fall asleep, I cannot. I wish not to think, and cannot cease. That is terrible!" and as Shoustova spoke she got more and more excited, and twisted and untwisted the lock of hair round her finger.

"Lydia, dear, be calm," the mother said, touching her shoulder.

But Shoustova could not stop herself.

"It is all the more terrible--" she began again, but did not finish, and jumping up with a cry rushed out of the room.

Her mother turned to follow her.

"They ought to be hanged, the rascals!" said the schoolboy who was sitting on the window-sill.

"What's that?" said the mother.

"I only said--Oh, it's nothing," the schoolboy answered, and taking a cigarette that lay on the table, he began to smoke.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LYDIA'S AUNT.

"Yes, that solitary confinement is terrible for the young," said the aunt, shaking her head and also lighting a cigarette.

"I should say for every one," Nekhludoff replied.

"No, not for all," answered the aunt. "For the real revolutionists, I have been told, it is rest and quiet. A man who is wanted by the police lives in continual anxiety, material want, and fear for himself and others, and for his cause, and at last, when he is taken up and it is all over, and all responsibility is off his shoulders, he can sit and rest. I have been told they actually feel joyful when taken up. But the young and innocent (they always first arrest the innocent, like Lydia), for them the first shock is terrible. It is not that they deprive you of freedom; and the bad food and bad air--all that is nothing. Three times as many privations would be easily borne if it were not for the moral shock when one is first taken."

"Have you experienced it?"

"I? I was twice in prison," she answered, with a sad, gentle smile. "When I was arrested for the first time I had done

nothing. I was 22, had a child, and was expecting another. Though the loss of freedom and the parting with my child and husband were hard, they were nothing when compared with what I felt when I found out that I had ceased being a human creature and had become a thing. I wished to say good-bye to my little daughter. I was told to go and get into the trap. I asked where I was being taken to. The answer was that I should know when I got there. I asked what I was accused of, but got no reply. After I had been examined, and after they had undressed me and put numbered prison clothes on me, they led me to a vault, opened a door, pushed me in, and left me alone; a sentinel, with a loaded gun, paced up and down in front of my door, and every now and then looked in through a crack--I felt terribly depressed. What struck me most at the time was that the gendarme officer who examined me offered me a cigarette. So he knew that people liked smoking, and must know that they liked freedom and light; and that mothers love their children, and children their mothers. Then how could they tear me pitilessly from all that was dear to me, and lock me up in prison like a wild animal? That sort of thing could not be borne without evil effects. Any one who believes in God and men, and believes that men love one another, will cease to believe it after all that. I have ceased to believe in humanity since then, and have grown embittered," she finished, with a smile.

Shoustova's mother came in at the door through which her daughter had gone out, and said that Lydia was very much upset, and would

not come in again.

"And what has this young life been ruined for?" said the aunt. "What is especially painful to me is that I am the involuntary cause of it."

"She will recover in the country, with God's help," said the mother. "We shall send her to her father."

"Yes, if it were not for you she would have perished altogether," said the aunt. "Thank you. But what I wished to see you for is this: I wished to ask you to take a letter to Vera Doukhova," and she got the letter out of her pocket.

"The letter is not closed; you may read and tear it up, or hand it to her, according to how far it coincides with your principles," she said. "It contains nothing compromising."

Nekhludoff took the letter, and, having promised to give it to Vera Doukhova, he took his leave and went away. He sealed the letter without reading it, meaning to take it to its destination.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE STATE CHURCH AND THE PEOPLE.

The last thing that kept Nekhludoff in Petersburg was the case of the sectarians, whose petition he intended to get his former fellow-officer, Aide-de-camp Bogatyreff, to hand to the Tsar. He came to Bogatyreff in the morning, and found him about to go out, though still at breakfast. Bogatyreff was not tall, but firmly built and wonderfully strong (he could bend a horseshoe), a kind, honest, straight, and even liberal man. In spite of these qualities, he was intimate at Court, and very fond of the Tsar and his family, and by some strange method he managed, while living in that highest circle, to see nothing but the good in it and to take no part in the evil and corruption. He never condemned anybody nor any measure, and either kept silent or spoke in a bold, loud voice, almost shouting what he had to say, and often laughing in the same boisterous manner. And he did not do it for diplomatic reasons, but because such was his character.

"Ah, that's right that you have come. Would you like some breakfast? Sit down, the beefsteaks are fine! I always begin with something substantial--begin and finish, too. Ha! ha! ha! Well, then, have a glass of wine," he shouted, pointing to a decanter of claret. "I have been thinking of you. I will hand on the petition. I shall put it into his own hands. You may count on

that, only it occurred to me that it would be best for you to call on Toporoff."

Nekhludoff made a wry face at the mention of Toporoff.

"It all depends on him. He will be consulted, anyhow. And perhaps he may himself meet your wishes."

"If you advise it I shall go."

"That's right. Well, and how does Petersburg agree with you?" shouted Bogatyreff. "Tell me. Eh?"

"I feel myself getting hypnotised," replied Nekhludoff.

"Hypnotised!" Bogatyreff repeated, and burst out laughing. "You won't have anything? Well, just as you please," and he wiped his moustaches with his napkin. "Then you'll go? Eh? If he does not do it, give the petition to me, and I shall hand it on to-morrow." Shouting these words, he rose, crossed himself just as naturally as he had wiped his mouth, and began buckling on his sword.

"And now good-bye; I must go. We are both going out," said Nekhludoff, and shaking Bogatyreff's strong, broad hand, and with the sense of pleasure which the impression of something healthy

and unconsciously fresh always gave him, Nekhludoff parted from Bogatyreff on the door-steps.

Though he expected no good result from his visit, still Nekhludoff, following Bogatyreff's advice, went to see Toporoff, on whom the sectarians' fate depended.

The position occupied by Toporoff, involving as it did an incongruity of purpose, could only be held by a dull man devoid of moral sensibility. Toporoff possessed both these negative qualities. The incongruity of the position he occupied was this. It was his duty to keep up and to defend, by external measures, not excluding violence, that Church which, by its own declaration, was established by God Himself and could not be shaken by the gates of hell nor by anything human. This divine and immutable God-established institution had to be sustained and defended by a human institution--the Holy Synod, managed by Toporoff and his officials. Toporoff did not see this contradiction, nor did he wish to see it, and he was therefore much concerned lest some Romish priest, some pastor, or some sectarian should destroy that Church which the gates of hell could not conquer.

Toporoff, like all those who are quite destitute of the fundamental religious feeling that recognises the equality and brotherhood of men, was fully convinced that the common people

were creatures entirely different from himself, and that the people needed what he could very well do without, for at the bottom of his heart he believed in nothing, and found such a state very convenient and pleasant. Yet he feared lest the people might also come to such a state, and looked upon it as his sacred duty, as he called it, to save the people therefrom.

A certain cookery book declares that some crabs like to be boiled alive. In the same way he thought and spoke as if the people liked being kept in superstition; only he meant this in a literal sense, whereas the cookery book did not mean its words literally.

His feelings towards the religion he was keeping up were the same as those of the poultry-keeper towards the carrion he fed his fowls on. Carrion was very disgusting, but the fowls liked it; therefore it was right to feed the fowls on carrion. Of course all this worship of the images of the Iberian, Kasan and Smolensk Mothers of God was a gross superstition, but the people liked it and believed in it, and therefore the superstition must be kept up.

Thus thought Toporoff, not considering that the people only liked superstition because there always have been, and still are, men like himself who, being enlightened, instead of using their light to help others to struggle out of their dark ignorance, use it to plunge them still deeper into it.

When Nekhludoff entered the reception-room Toporoff was in his
study talking with an abbess, a lively and aristocratic lady, who
was spreading the Greek orthodox faith in Western Russia among
the Uniates (who acknowledge the Pope of Rome), and who have the
Greek religion enforced on them. An official who was in the
reception-room inquired what Nekhludoff wanted, and when he heard
that Nekhludoff meant to hand in a petition to the Emperor, he
asked him if he would allow the petition to be read first.
Nekhludoff gave it him, and the official took it into the study.
The abbess, with her hood and flowing veil and her long train
trailing behind, left the study and went out, her white hands
(with their well-tended nails) holding a topaz rosary. Nekhludoff
was not immediately asked to come in. Toporoff was reading the
petition and shaking his head. He was unpleasantly surprised by
the clear and emphatic wording of it.

"If it gets into the hands of the Emperor it may cause
misunderstandings, and unpleasant questions may be asked," he
thought as he read. Then he put the petition on the table, rang,
and ordered Nekhludoff to be asked in.

He remembered the case of the sectarians; he had had a petition
from them before. The case was this: These Christians, fallen
away from the Greek Orthodox Church, were first exhorted and then
tried by law, but were acquitted. Then the Archdeacon and the

Governor arranged, on the plea that their marriages were illegal, to exile these sectarians, separating the husbands, wives, and children. These fathers and wives were now petitioning that they should not be parted. Toporoff recollected the first time the case came to his notice: he had at that time hesitated whether he had not better put a stop to it. But then he thought no harm could result from his confirming the decision to separate and exile the different members of the sectarian families, whereas allowing the peasant sect to remain where it was might have a bad effect on the rest of the inhabitants of the place and cause them to fall away from Orthodoxy. And then the affair also proved the zeal of the Archdeacon, and so he let the case proceed along the lines it had taken. But now that they had a defender such as Nekhludoff, who had some influence in Petersburg, the case might be specially pointed out to the Emperor as something cruel, or it might get into the foreign papers. Therefore he at once took an unexpected decision.

"How do you do?" he said, with the air of a very busy man, receiving Nekhludoff standing, and at once starting on the business. "I know this case. As soon as I saw the names I recollected this unfortunate business," he said, taking up the petition and showing it to Nekhludoff. "And I am much indebted to you for reminding me of it. It is the over-zealousness of the provincial authorities."

Nekhludoff stood silent, looking with no kindly feelings at the immovable, pale mask of a face before him.

"And I shall give orders that these measures should be revoked and the people reinstated in their homes."

"So that I need not make use of this petition?"

"I promise you most assuredly," answered Toporoff, laying a stress on the word I, as if quite convinced that his honesty, his word was the best guarantee. "It will be best if I write at once. Take a seat, please."

He went up to the table and began to write. As Nekhludoff sat down he looked at the narrow, bald skull, at the fat, blue-veined hand that was swiftly guiding the pen, and wondered why this evidently indifferent man was doing what he did and why he was doing it with such care.

"Well, here you are," said Toporoff, sealing the envelope; "you may let your clients know," and he stretched his lips to imitate a smile.

"Then what did these people suffer for?" Nekhludoff asked, as he took the envelope.

Toporoff raised his head and smiled, as if Nekhludoff's question gave him pleasure. "That I cannot tell. All I can say is that the interests of the people guarded by us are so important that too great a zeal in matters of religion is not so dangerous or so harmful as the indifference which is now spreading--"

"But how is it that in the name of religion the very first demands of righteousness are violated--families are separated?"

Toporoff continued to smile patronisingly, evidently thinking what Nekhludoff said very pretty. Anything that Nekhludoff could say he would have considered very pretty and very one-sided, from the height of what he considered his far-reaching office in the State.

"It may seem so from the point of view of a private individual," he said, "but from an administrative point of view it appears in a rather different light. However, I must bid you good-bye, now," said Toporoff, bowing his head and holding out his hand, which Nekhludoff pressed.

"The interests of the people! Your interests is what you mean!" thought Nekhludoff as he went out. And he ran over in his mind the people in whom is manifested the activity of the institutions that uphold religion and educate the people. He began with the woman punished for the illicit sale of spirits, the boy for

theft, the tramp for tramping, the incendiary for setting a house on fire, the banker for fraud, and that unfortunate Lydia Shoustova imprisoned only because they hoped to get such information as they required from her. Then he thought of the sectarians punished for violating Orthodoxy, and Gourkevitch for wanting constitutional government, and Nekhludoff clearly saw that all these people were arrested, locked up, exiled, not really because they transgressed against justice or behaved unlawfully, but only because they were an obstacle hindering the officials and the rich from enjoying the property they had taken away from the people. And the woman who sold wine without having a license, and the thief knocking about the town, and Lydia Shoustova hiding proclamations, and the sectarians upsetting superstitions, and Gourkevitch desiring a constitution, were a real hindrance. It seemed perfectly clear to Nekhludoff that all these officials, beginning with his aunt's husband, the Senators, and Toporoff, down to those clean and correct gentlemen who sat at the tables in the Ministry Office, were not at all troubled by the fact that that in such a state of things the innocent had to suffer, but were only concerned how to get rid of the really dangerous, so that the rule that ten guilty should escape rather than that one innocent should be condemned was not observed, but, on the contrary, for the sake of getting rid of one really dangerous person, ten who seemed dangerous were punished, as, when cutting a rotten piece out of anything, one has to cut away some that is good.

This explanation seemed very simple and clear to Nekhludoff; but its very simplicity and clearness made him hesitate to accept it. Was it possible that so complicated a phenomenon could have so simple and terrible an explanation? Was it possible that all these words about justice, law, religion, and God, and so on, were mere words, hiding the coarsest cupidity and cruelty?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MEANING OF MARIETTE'S ATTRACTION.

Nekhludoff would have left Petersburg on the evening of the same day, but he had promised Mariette to meet her at the theatre, and though he knew that he ought not to keep that promise, he deceived himself into the belief that it would not be right to break his word.

"Am I capable of withstanding these temptations?" he asked himself not quite honestly. "I shall try for the last time."

He dressed in his evening clothes, and arrived at the theatre during the second act of the eternal Dame aux Camelias, in which a foreign actress once again, and in a novel manner, showed how women die of consumption.

The theatre was quite full. Mariette's box was at once, and with great deference, shown to Nekhludoff at his request. A liveried servant stood in the corridor outside; he bowed to Nekhludoff as to one whom he knew, and opened the door of the box.

All the people who sat and stood in the boxes on the opposite side, those who sat near and those who were in the parterre, with their grey, grizzly, bald, or curly heads--all were absorbed in

watching the thin, bony actress who, dressed in silks and laces, was wriggling before them, and speaking in an unnatural voice.

Some one called "Hush!" when the door opened, and two streams, one of cool, the other of hot, air touched Nekhludoff's face.

Mariette and a lady whom he did not know, with a red cape and a big, heavy head-dress, were in the box, and two men also, Mariette's husband, the General, a tall, handsome man with a severe, inscrutable countenance, a Roman nose, and a uniform padded round the chest, and a fair man, with a bit of shaved chin between pompous whiskers.

Mariette, graceful, slight, elegant, her low-necked dress showing her firm, shapely, slanting shoulders, with a little black mole where they joined her neck, immediately turned, and pointed with her face to a chair behind her in an engaging manner, and smiled a smile that seemed full of meaning to Nekhludoff.

The husband looked at him in the quiet way in which he did everything, and bowed. In the look he exchanged with his wife, the master, the owner of a beautiful woman, was to be seen at once.

When the monologue was over the theatre resounded with the clapping of hands. Mariette rose, and holding up her rustling

silk skirt, went into the back of the box and introduced Nekhludoff to her husband.

The General, without ceasing to smile with his eyes, said he was very pleased, and then sat inscrutably silent.

"I ought to have left to-day, had I not promised," said Nekhludoff to Mariette.

"If you do not care to see me," said Mariette, in answer to what his words implied, "you will see a wonderful actress. Was she not splendid in the last scene?" she asked, turning to her husband.

The husband bowed his head.

"This sort of thing does not touch me," said Nekhludoff. "I have seen so much real suffering lately that--"

"Yes, sit down and tell me."

The husband listened, his eyes smiling more and more ironically.
"I have been to see that woman whom they have set free, and who has been kept in prison for so long; she is quite broken down."

"That is the woman I spoke to you about," Mariette said to her husband.

"Oh, yes, I was very pleased that she could be set free," said the husband quietly, nodding and smiling under his moustache with evident irony, so it seemed to Nekhludoff. "I shall go and have a smoke."

Nekhludoff sat waiting to hear what the something was that Mariette had to tell him. She said nothing, and did not even try to say anything, but joked and spoke about the performance, which she thought ought to touch Nekhludoff. Nekhludoff saw that she had nothing to tell, but only wished to show herself to him in all the splendour of her evening toilet, with her shoulders and little mole; and this was pleasant and yet repulsive to him.

The charm that had veiled all this sort of thing from Nekhludoff was not removed, but it was as if he could see what lay beneath. Looking at Mariette, he admired her, and yet he knew that she was a liar, living with a husband who was making his career by means of the tears and lives of hundreds and hundreds of people, and that she was quite indifferent about it, and that all she had said the day before was untrue. What she wanted--neither he nor she knew why--was to make him fall in love with her. This both attracted and disgusted him. Several times, on the point of going away, he took up his hat, and then stayed on.

But at last, when the husband returned with a strong smell of

tobacco in his thick moustache, and looked at Nekhludoff with a patronising, contemptuous air, as if not recognising him, Nekhludoff left the box before the door was closed again, found his overcoat, and went out of the theatre. As he was walking home along the Nevski, he could not help noticing a well-shaped and aggressively finely-dressed woman, who was quietly walking in front of him along the broad asphalt pavement. The consciousness of her detestable power was noticeable in her face and the whole of her figure. All who met or passed that woman looked at her. Nekhludoff walked faster than she did and, involuntarily, also looked her in the face. The face, which was probably painted, was handsome, and the woman looked at him with a smile and her eyes sparkled. And, curiously enough, Nekhludoff was suddenly reminded of Mariette, because he again felt both attracted and disgusted just as when in the theatre.

Having hurriedly passed her, Nekhludoff turned off on to the Morskaya, and passed on to the embankment, where, to the surprise of a policeman, he began pacing up and down the pavement.

"The other one gave me just such a smile when I entered the theatre," he thought, "and the meaning of the smile was the same. The only difference is, that this one said plainly, 'If you want me, take me; if not, go your way,' and the other one pretended that she was not thinking of this, but living in some high and refined state, while this was really at the root. Besides, this

one was driven to it by necessity, while the other amused herself by playing with that enchanting, disgusting, frightful passion. This woman of the street was like stagnant, smelling water offered to those whose thirst was greater than their disgust; that other one in the theatre was like the poison which, unnoticed, poisons everything it gets into."

Nekhludoff recalled his liaison with the Marechal's wife, and shameful memories rose before him.

"The animalism of the brute nature in man is disgusting," thought he, "but as long as it remains in its naked form we observe it from the height of our spiritual life and despise it; and--whether one has fallen or resisted--one remains what one was before. But when that same animalism hides under a cloak of poetry and aesthetic feeling and demands our worship--then we are swallowed up by it completely, and worship animalism, no longer distinguishing good from evil. Then it is awful."

Nekhludoff perceived all this now as clearly as he saw the palace, the sentinels, the fortress, the river, the boats, and the Stock Exchange. And just as on this northern summer night there was no restful darkness on the earth, but only a dismal, dull light coming from an invisible source, so in Nekhludoff's soul there was no longer the restful darkness, ignorance. Everything seemed clear. It was clear that everything considered

important and good was insignificant and repulsive, and that all the glamour and luxury hid the old, well-known crimes, which not only remained unpunished but were adorned with all the splendour which men were capable of inventing.

Nekhludoff wished to forget all this, not to see it, but he could no longer help seeing it. Though he could not see the source of the light which revealed it to him any more than he could see the source of the light which lay over Petersburg; and though the light appeared to him dull, dismal, and unnatural, yet he could not help seeing what it revealed, and he felt both joyful and anxious.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FOR HER SAKE AND FOR GOD'S.

On his return to Moscow Nekhludoff went at once to the prison hospital to bring Maslova the sad news that the Senate had confirmed the decision of the Court, and that she must prepare to go to Siberia. He had little hope of the success of his petition to the Emperor, which the advocate had written for him, and which he now brought with him for Maslova to sign. And, strange to say, he did not at present even wish to succeed; he had got used to the thought of going to Siberia and living among the exiled and the convicts, and he could not easily picture to himself how his life and Maslova's would shape if she were acquitted. He remembered the thought of the American writer, Thoreau, who at the time when slavery existed in America said that "under a government that imprisons any unjustly the true place for a just man is also a prison." Nekhludoff, especially after his visit to Petersburg and all he discovered there, thought in the same way.

"Yes, the only place befitting an honest man in Russia at the present time is a prison," he thought, and even felt that this applied to him personally, when he drove up to the prison and entered its walls.

The doorkeeper recognised Nekhludoff, and told him at once that

Maslova was no longer there.

"Where is she, then?"

"In the cell again."

"Why has she been removed?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Oh, your excellency, what are such people?" said the doorkeeper, contemptuously. "She's been carrying on with the medical assistant, so the head doctor ordered her back."

Nekhludoff had had no idea how near Maslova and the state of her mind were to him. He was stunned by the news.

He felt as one feels at the news of a great and unforeseen misfortune, and his pain was very severe. His first feeling was one of shame. He, with his joyful idea of the change that he imagined was going on in her soul, now seemed ridiculous in his own eyes. He thought that all her pretence of not wishing to accept his sacrifice, all the reproaches and tears, were only the devices of a depraved woman, who wished to use him to the best advantage. He seemed to remember having seen signs of obduracy at his last interview with her. All this flashed through his mind as he instinctively put on his hat and left the hospital.

"What am I to do now? Am I still bound to her? Has this action of hers not set me free?" And as he put these questions to himself he knew at once that if he considered himself free, and threw her up, he would be punishing himself, and not her, which was what he wished to do, and he was seized with fear.

"No, what has happened cannot alter--it can only strengthen my resolve. Let her do what flows from the state her mind is in. If it is carrying on with the medical assistant, let her carry on with the medical assistant; that is her business. I must do what my conscience demands of me. And my conscience expects me to sacrifice my freedom. My resolution to marry her, if only in form, and to follow wherever she may be sent, remains unalterable." Nekhludoff said all this to himself with vicious obstinacy as he left the hospital and walked with resolute steps towards the big gates of the prison. He asked the warder on duty at the gate to inform the inspector that he wished to see Maslova. The warder knew Nekhludoff, and told him of an important change that had taken place in the prison. The old inspector had been discharged, and a new, very severe official appointed in his place.

"They are so strict nowadays, it's just awful," said the jailer. "He is in here; they will let him know directly."

The new inspector was in the prison and soon came to Nekhludoff.

He was a tall, angular man, with high cheek bones, morose, and very slow in his movements.

"Interviews are allowed in the visiting room on the appointed days," he said, without looking at Nekhludoff.

"But I have a petition to the Emperor, which I want signed."

"You can give it to me."

"I must see the prisoner myself. I was always allowed to before."

"That was so, before," said the inspector, with a furtive glance at Nekhludoff.

"I have a permission from the governor," insisted Nekhludoff, and took out his pocket-book.

"Allow me," said the inspector, taking the paper from Nekhludoff with his long, dry, white fingers, on the first of which was a gold ring, still without looking him in the eyes. He read the paper slowly. "Step into the office, please."

This time the office was empty. The inspector sat down by the table and began sorting some papers that lay on it, evidently intending to be present at the interview.

When Nekhludoff asked whether he might see the political prisoner, Doukhova, the inspector answered, shortly, that he could not. "Interviews with political prisoners are not permitted," he said, and again fixed his attention on his papers. With a letter to Doukhova in his pocket, Nekhludoff felt as if he had committed some offence, and his plans had been discovered and frustrated.

When Maslova entered the room the inspector raised his head, and, without looking at either her or Nekhludoff, remarked: "You may talk," and went on sorting his papers. Maslova had again the white jacket, petticoat and kerchief on. When she came up to Nekhludoff and saw his cold, hard look, she blushed scarlet, and crumbling the hem of her jacket with her hand, she cast down her eyes. Her confusion, so it seemed to Nekhludoff, confirmed the hospital doorkeeper's words.

Nekhludoff had meant to treat her in the same way as before, but could not bring himself to shake hands with her, so disgusting was she to him now.

"I have brought you bad news," he said, in a monotonous voice, without looking at her or taking her hand. "The Senate has refused."

"I knew it would," she said, in a strange tone, as if she were gasping for breath.

Formerly Nekhludoff would have asked why she said she knew it would; now he only looked at her. Her eyes were full of tears. But this did not soften him; it roused his irritation against her even more.

The inspector rose and began pacing up and down the room.

In spite of the disgust Nekhludoff was feeling at the moment, he considered it right to express his regret at the Senate's decision.

"You must not despair," he said. "The petition to the Emperor may meet with success, and I hope---"

"I'm not thinking of that," she said, looking piteously at him with her wet, squinting eyes.

"What is it, then?"

"You have been to the hospital, and they have most likely told you about me--"

"What of that? That is your affair," said Nekhludoff coldly, and

frowned. The cruel feeling of wounded pride that had quieted down rose with renewed force when she mentioned the hospital.

"He, a man of the world, whom any girl of the best families would think it happiness to marry, offered himself as a husband to this woman, and she could not even wait, but began intriguing with the medical assistant," thought he, with a look of hatred.

"Here, sign this petition," he said, taking a large envelope from his pocket, and laying the paper on the table. She wiped the tears with a corner of her kerchief, and asked what to write and where.

He showed her, and she sat down and arranged the cuff of her right sleeve with her left hand; he stood behind her, and silently looked at her back, which shook with suppressed emotion, and evil and good feelings were fighting in his breast--feelings of wounded pride and of pity for her who was suffering--and the last feeling was victorious.

He could not remember which came first; did the pity for her first enter his heart, or did he first remember his own sins--his own repulsive actions, the very same for which he was condemning her? Anyhow, he both felt himself guilty and pitied her.

Having signed the petition and wiped her inky finger on her

petticoat, she got up and looked at him.

"Whatever happens, whatever comes of it, my resolve remains unchanged," said Nekhludoff. The thought that he had forgiven her heightened his feeling of pity and tenderness for her, and he wished to comfort her. "I will do what I have said; wherever they take you I shall be with you."

"What's the use?" she interrupted hurriedly, though her whole face lighted up.

"Think what you will want on the way--"

"I don't know of anything in particular, thank you."

The inspector came up, and without waiting for a remark from him Nekhludoff took leave, and went out with peace, joy, and love towards everybody in his heart such as he had never felt before. The certainty that no action of Maslova could change his love for her filled him with joy and raised him to a level which he had never before attained. Let her intrigue with the medical assistant; that was her business. He loved her not for his own but for her sake and for God's.

And this intrigue, for which Maslova was turned out of the hospital, and of which Nekhludoff believed she was really guilty,

consisted of the following:

Maslova was sent by the head nurse to get some herb tea from the dispensary at the end of the corridor, and there, all alone, she found the medical assistant, a tall man, with a blotchy face, who had for a long time been bothering her. In trying to get away from him Maslova gave him such a push that he knocked his head against a shelf, from which two bottles fell and broke. The head doctor, who was passing at that moment, heard the sound of breaking glass, and saw Maslova run out, quite red, and shouted to her:

"Ah, my good woman, if you start intriguing here, I'll send you about your business. What is the meaning of it?" he went on, addressing the medical assistant, and looking at him over his spectacles.

The assistant smiled, and began to justify himself. The doctor gave no heed to him, but, lifting his head so that he now looked through his spectacles, he entered the ward. He told the inspector the same day to send another more sedate assistant-nurse in Maslova's place. And this was her "intrigue" with the medical assistant.

Being turned out for a love intrigue was particularly painful to Maslova, because the relations with men, which had long been

repulsive to her, had become specially disgusting after meeting Nekhludoff. The thought that, judging her by her past and present position, every man, the blotchy assistant among them, considered he had a right to offend her, and was surprised at her refusal, hurt her deeply, and made her pity herself and brought tears to her eyes.

When she went out to Nekhludoff this time she wished to clear herself of the false charge which she knew he would certainly have heard about. But when she began to justify herself she felt he did not believe her, and that her excuses would only strengthen his suspicions; tears choked her, and she was silent.

Maslova still thought and continued to persuade herself that she had never forgiven him, and hated him, as she told him at their second interview, but in reality she loved him again, and loved him so that she did all he wished her to do; left off drinking, smoking, coquetting, and entered the hospital because she knew he wished it. And if every time he reminded her of it, she refused so decidedly to accept his sacrifice and marry him, it was because she liked repeating the proud words she had once uttered, and because she knew that a marriage with her would be a misfortune for him.

She had resolutely made up her mind that she would not accept his sacrifice, and yet the thought that he despised her and believed

that she still was what she had been, and did not notice the change that had taken place in her, was very painful. That he could still think she had done wrong while in the hospital tormented her more than the news that her sentence was confirmed.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE ASTONISHING INSTITUTION CALLED CRIMINAL LAW.

Maslova might be sent off with the first gang of prisoners, therefore Nekhludoff got ready for his departure. But there was so much to be done that he felt that he could not finish it, however much time he might have. It was quite different now from what it had been. Formerly he used to be obliged to look for an occupation, the interest of which always centred in one person, i.e., Dmitri Ivanovitch Nekhludoff, and yet, though every interest of his life was thus centred, all these occupations were very wearisome. Now all his occupations related to other people and not to Dmitri Ivanovitch, and they were all interesting and attractive, and there was no end to them. Nor was this all. Formerly Dmitri Ivanovitch Nekhludoff's occupations always made him feel vexed and irritable; now they produced a joyful state of mind. The business at present occupying Nekhludoff could be divided under three headings. He himself, with his usual pedantry, divided it in that way, and accordingly kept the papers referring to it in three different portfolios. The first referred to Maslova, and was chiefly that of taking steps to get her petition to the Emperor attended to, and preparing for her probable journey to Siberia.

The second was about his estates. In Panovo he had given the land

to the peasants on condition of their paying rent to be put to their own communal use. But he had to confirm this transaction by a legal deed, and to make his will, in accordance with it. In Kousminski the state of things was still as he had first arranged it, i.e., he was to receive the rent; but the terms had to be fixed, and also how much of the money he would use to live on, and how much he would leave for the peasants' use. As he did not know what his journey to Siberia would cost him, he could not decide to lose this revenue altogether, though he reduced the income from it by half.

The third part of his business was to help the convicts, who applied more and more often to him. At first when he came in contact with the prisoners, and they appealed to him for help, he at once began interceding for them, hoping to lighten their fate, but he soon had so many applications that he felt the impossibility of attending to all of them, and that naturally led him to take up another piece of work, which at last roused his interest even more than the three first. This new part of his business was finding an answer to the following questions: What was this astonishing institution called criminal law, of which the results were that in the prison, with some of the inmates of which he had lately become acquainted, and in all those other places of confinement, from the Peter and Paul Fortress in Petersburg to the island of Sakhalin, hundreds and thousands of victims were pining? What did this strange criminal law exist

for? How had it originated?

From his personal relations with the prisoners, from notes by some of those in confinement, and by questioning the advocate and the prison priest, Nekhludoff came to the conclusion that the convicts, the so-called criminals, could be divided into five classes. The first were quite innocent people, condemned by judicial blunder. Such were the Menshoffs, supposed to be incendiaries, Maslova, and others. There were not many of these; according to the priest's words, only seven per cent., but their condition excited particular interest.

To the second class belong persons condemned for actions done under peculiar circumstances, i.e., in a fit of passion, jealousy, or drunkenness, circumstances under which those who judged them would surely have committed the same actions.

The third class consisted of people punished for having committed actions which, according to their understanding, were quite natural, and even good, but which those other people, the men who made the laws, considered to be crimes. Such were the persons who sold spirits without a license, smugglers, those who gathered grass and wood on large estates and in the forests belonging to the Crown; the thieving miners; and those unbelieving people who robbed churches.

To the fourth class belonged those who were imprisoned only because they stood morally higher than the average level of society. Such were the Sectarians, the Poles, the Circassians rebelling in order to regain their independence, the political prisoners, the Socialists, the strikers condemned for withstanding the authorities. There was, according to Nekhludoff's observations, a very large percentage belonging to this class; among them some of the best of men.

The fifth class consisted of persons who had been far more sinned against by society than they had sinned against it. These were castaways, stupefied by continual oppression and temptation, such as the boy who had stolen the rugs, and hundreds of others whom Nekhludoff had seen in the prison and out of it. The conditions under which they lived seemed to lead on systematically to those actions which are termed crimes. A great many thieves and murderers with whom he had lately come in contact, according to Nekhludoff's estimate, belonged to this class. To this class Nekhludoff also reckoned those depraved, demoralised creatures whom the new school of criminology classify as the criminal type, and the existence of which is considered to be the chief proof of the necessity of criminal law and punishment. This demoralised, depraved, abnormal type was, according to Nekhludoff, exactly the same as that against whom society had sinned, only here society had sinned not directly against them, but against their parents and forefathers.

Among this latter class Nekhludoff was specially struck by one Okhotin, an inveterate thief, the illegitimate son of a prostitute, brought up in a doss-house, who, up to the age of 30, had apparently never met with any one whose morality was above that of a policeman, and who had got into a band of thieves when quite young. He was gifted with an extraordinary sense of humour, by means of which he made himself very attractive. He asked Nekhludoff for protection, at the same time making fun of himself, the lawyers, the prison, and laws human and divine.

Another was the handsome Fedoroff, who, with a band of robbers, of whom he was the chief, had robbed and murdered an old man, an official. Fedoroff was a peasant, whose father had been unlawfully deprived of his house, and who, later on, when serving as a soldier, had suffered much because he had fallen in love with an officer's mistress. He had a fascinating, passionate nature, that longed for enjoyment at any cost. He had never met anybody who restrained himself for any cause whatever, and had never heard a word about any aim in life other than enjoyment.

Nekhludoff distinctly saw that both these men were richly endowed by nature, but had been neglected and crippled like uncared-for plants.

He had also met a tramp and a woman who had repelled him by their

dulness and seeming cruelty, but even in them he could find no trace of the criminal type written about by the Italian school, but only saw in them people who were repulsive to him personally, just in the same way as some he had met outside the prison, in swallow-tail coats wearing epaulettes, or bedecked with lace. And so the investigation of the reasons why all these very different persons were put in prison, while others just like them were going about free and even judging them, formed a fourth task for Nekhludoff.

He hoped to find an answer to this question in books, and bought all that referred to it. He got the works of Lombroso, Garofalo, Ferry, List, Maudsley, Tard, and read them carefully. But as he read he became more and more disappointed. It happened to him as it always happens to those who turn to science not in order to play a part in it, nor to write, nor to dispute, nor to teach, but simply for an answer to an every-day question of life. Science answered thousands of different very subtle and ingenious questions touching criminal law, but not the one he was trying to solve. He asked a very simple question: "Why, and with what right, do some people lock up, torment, exile, flog, and kill others, while they are themselves just like those whom they torment, flog, and kill?" And in answer he got deliberations as to whether human beings had free will or not. Whether signs of criminality could be detected by measuring the skulls or not. What part heredity played in crime. Whether immorality could be

inherited. What madness is, what degeneration is, and what temperament is. How climate, food, ignorance, imitativeness, hypnotism, or passion act. What society is. What are its duties, etc., etc.

These disquisitions reminded him of the answer he once got from a little boy whom he met coming home from school. Nekhludoff asked him if he had learned his spelling.

"I have," answered the boy.

"Well, then, tell me, how do you spell 'leg'?"

"A dog's leg, or what kind of leg?" the boy answered, with a sly look.

Answers in the form of new questions, like the boy's, was all Nekhludoff got in reply to his one primary question. He found much that was clever, learned much that was interesting, but what he did not find was an answer to the principal question: By what right some people punish others?

Not only did he not find any answer, but all the arguments were brought forward in order to explain and vindicate punishment, the necessity of which was taken as an axiom.

Nekhludoff read much, but only in snatches, and putting down his failure to this superficial way of reading, hoped to find the answer later on. He would not allow himself to believe in the truth of the answer which began, more and more often, to present itself to him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NEKHLUDOFF'S SISTER AND HER HUSBAND.

The gang of prisoners, with Maslova among them, was to start on the 5th July. Nekhludoff arranged to start on the same day.

The day before, Nekhludoff's sister and her husband came to town to see him.

Nekhludoff's sister, Nathalie Ivanovna Rogozhinsky, was 10 years older than her brother. She had been very fond of him when he was a boy, and later on, just before her marriage, they grew very close to each other, as if they were equals, she being a young woman of 25, he a lad of 15. At that time she was in love with his friend, Nikolenka Irtenieff, since dead. They both loved Nikolenka, and loved in him and in themselves that which is good, and which unites all men. Since then they had both been depraved, he by military service and a vicious life, she by marriage with a man whom she loved with a sensual love, who did not care for the things that had once been so dear and holy to her and to her brother, nor even understand the meaning of those aspirations towards moral perfection and the service of mankind, which once constituted her life, and put them down to ambition and the wish to show off; that being the only explanation comprehensible to him.

Nathalie's husband had been a man without a name and without means, but cleverly steering towards Liberalism or Conservatism, according to which best suited his purpose, he managed to make a comparatively brilliant judicial career. Some peculiarity which made him attractive to women assisted him when he was no longer in his first youth. While travelling abroad he made Nekhludoff's acquaintance, and managed to make Nathalie, who was also no longer a girl, fall in love with him, rather against her mother's wishes who considered a marriage with him to be a misalliance for her daughter. Nekhludoff, though he tried to hide it from himself, though he fought against it, hated his brother-in-law.

Nekhludoff had a strong antipathy towards him because of the vulgarity of his feelings, his assurance and narrowness, but chiefly because of Nathalie, who managed to love him in spite of the narrowness of his nature, and loved him so selfishly, so sensually, and stifled for his sake all the good that had been in her.

It always hurt Nekhludoff to think of Nathalie as the wife of that hairy, self-assured man with the shiny, bald patch on his head. He could not even master a feeling of revulsion towards their children, and when he heard that she was again going to have a baby, he felt something like sorrow that she had once more been infected with something bad by this man who was so foreign

to him. The Rogozhinskys had come to Moscow alone, having left their two children--a boy and a girl--at home, and stopped in the best rooms of the best hotel. Nathalie at once went to her mother's old house, but hearing from Agraphena Petrovna that her brother had left, and was living in a lodging-house, she drove there. The dirty servant met her in the stuffy passage, dark but for a lamp which burnt there all day. He told her that the Prince was not in.

Nathalie asked to be shown into his rooms, as she wished to leave a note for him, and the man took her up.

Nathalie carefully examined her brother's two little rooms. She noticed in everything the love of cleanliness and order she knew so well in him, and was struck by the novel simplicity of the surroundings. On his writing-table she saw the paper-weight with the bronze dog on the top which she remembered; the tidy way in which his different portfolios and writing utensils were placed on the table was also familiar, and so was the large, crooked ivory paper knife which marked the place in a French book by Tard, which lay with other volumes on punishment and a book in English by Henry George. She sat down at the table and wrote a note asking him to be sure to come that same day, and shaking her head in surprise at what she saw, she returned to her hotel.

Two questions regarding her brother now interested Nathalie: his

marriage with Katusha, which she had heard spoken about in their town--for everybody was speaking about it--and his giving away the land to the peasants, which was also known, and struck many as something of a political nature, and dangerous. The marriage with Katusha pleased her in a way. She admired that resoluteness which was so like him and herself as they used to be in those happy times before her marriage. And yet she was horrified when she thought her brother was going to marry such a dreadful woman. The latter was the stronger feeling of the two, and she decided to use all her influence to prevent him from doing it, though she knew how difficult this would be.

The other matter, the giving up of the land to the peasants, did not touch her so nearly, but her husband was very indignant about it, and expected her to influence her brother against it.

Rogozhinsky said that such an action was the height of inconsistency, flightiness, and pride, the only possible explanation of which was the desire to appear original, to brag, to make one's self talked about.

"What sense could there be in letting the land to the peasants, on condition that they pay the rent to themselves?" he said. "If he was resolved to do such a thing, why not sell the land to them through the Peasants' Bank? There might have been some sense in that. In fact, this act verges on insanity."

And Rogozhinsky began seriously thinking about putting Nekhludoff under guardianship, and demanded of his wife that she should speak seriously to her brother about his curious intention.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NEKHLUDOFF'S ANARCHISM.

As soon as Nekhludoff returned that evening and saw his sister's note on the table he started to go and see her. He found Nathalie alone, her husband having gone to take a rest in the next room. She wore a tightly-fitting black silk dress, with a red bow in front. Her black hair was crimped and arranged according to the latest fashion.

The pains she took to appear young, for the sake of her husband, whose equal she was in years, were very obvious.

When she saw her brother she jumped up and hurried towards him, with her silk dress rustling. They kissed, and looked smilingly at each other. There passed between them that mysterious exchange of looks, full of meaning, in which all was true, and which cannot be expressed in words. Then came words which were not true. They had not met since their mother's death.

"You have grown stouter and younger," he said, and her lips puckered up with pleasure.

"And you have grown thinner."

"Well, and how is your husband?" Nekhludoff asked.

"He is taking a rest; he did not sleep all night." There was much to say, but it was not said in words; only their looks expressed what their words failed to say.

"I went to see you."

"Yes, I know. I moved because the house is too big for me. I was lonely there, and dull. I want nothing of all that is there, so that you had better take it all--the furniture, I mean, and things."

"Yes, Agraphena Petrovna told me. I went there. Thanks, very much. But--"

At this moment the hotel waiter brought in a silver tea-set. While he set the table they were silent. Then Nathalie sat down at the table and made the tea, still in silence. Nekhludoff also said nothing.

At last Nathalie began resolutely. "Well, Dmitri, I know all about it." And she looked at him.

"What of that? l am glad you know."

"How can you hope to reform her after the life she has led?" she asked.

He sat quite straight on a small chair, and listened attentively, trying to understand her and to answer rightly. The state of mind called forth in him by his last interview with Maslova still filled his soul with quiet joy and good will to all men.

"It is not her but myself I wish to reform," he replied.

Nathalie sighed.

"There are other means besides marriage to do that."

"But I think it is the best. Besides, it leads me into that world in which I can be of use."

"I cannot believe you will be happy," said Nathalie.

"It's not my happiness that is the point."

"Of course, but if she has a heart she cannot be happy--cannot even wish it."

"She does not wish it."

"I understand; but life--"

"Yes--life?"

"Demands something different."

"It demands nothing but that we should do what is right," said Nekhludoff, looking into her face, still handsome, though slightly wrinkled round eyes and mouth.

"I do not understand," she said, and sighed.

"Poor darling; how could she change so?" he thought, calling back to his mind Nathalie as she had been before her marriage, and feeling towards her a tenderness woven out of innumerable memories of childhood. At that moment Rogozhinsky entered the room, with head thrown back and expanded chest, and stepping lightly and softly in his usual manner, his spectacles, his bald patch, and his black beard all glistening.

"How do you do? How do you do?" he said, laying an unnatural and intentional stress on his words. (Though, soon after the marriage, they had tried to be more familiar with each other, they had never succeeded.)

They shook hands, and Rogozhinsky sank softly into an easy-chair.

"Am I not interrupting your conversation?"

"No, I do not wish to hide what I am saying or doing from any one."

As soon as Nekhludoff saw the hairy hands, and heard the patronising, self-assured tones, his meekness left him in a moment.

"Yes, we were talking about his intentions," said Nathalie. "Shall I give you a cup of tea?" she added, taking the teapot.

"Yes, please. What particular intentions do you mean?"

"That of going to Siberia with the gang of prisoners, among whom is the woman I consider myself to have wronged," uttered Nekhludoff.

"I hear not only to accompany her, but more than that."

"Yes, and to marry her if she wishes it."

"Dear me! But if you do not object I should like to ask you to explain your motives. I do not understand them."

"My motives are that this woman--that this woman's first step on her way to degradation--" Nekhludoff got angry with himself, and was unable to find the right expression. "My motives are that I am the guilty one, and she gets the punishment."

"If she is being punished she cannot be innocent, either."

"She is quite innocent." And Nekhludoff related the whole incident with unnecessary warmth.

"Yes, that was a case of carelessness on the part of the president, the result of which was a thoughtless answer on the part of the jury; but there is the Senate for cases like that."

"The Senate has rejected the appeal."

"Well, if the Senate has rejected it, there cannot have been sufficient reasons for an appeal," said Rogozhinsky, evidently sharing the prevailing opinion that truth is the product of judicial decrees. "The Senate cannot enter into the question on its merits. If there is a real mistake, the Emperor should be petitioned."

"That has been done, but there is no probability of success. They will apply to the Department of the Ministry, the Department will consult the Senate, the Senate will repeat its decision, and, as

usual, the innocent will get punished."

"In the first place, the Department of the Ministry won't consult the Senate," said Rogozhinsky, with a condescending smile; "it will give orders for the original deeds to be sent from the Law Court, and if it discovers a mistake it will decide accordingly. And, secondly, the innocent are never punished, or at least in very rare, exceptional cases. It is the guilty who are punished," Rogozhinsky said deliberately, and smiled self-complacently.

"And I have become fully convinced that most of those condemned by law are innocent."

"How's that?"

"Innocent in the literal sense. Just as this woman is innocent of poisoning any one; as innocent as a peasant I have just come to know, of the murder he never committed; as a mother and son who were on the point of being condemned for incendiarism, which was committed by the owner of the house that was set on fire."

"Well, of course there always have been and always will be judicial errors. Human institutions cannot be perfect."

"And, besides, there are a great many people convicted who are innocent of doing anything considered wrong by the society they

have grown up in."

"Excuse me, this is not so; every thief knows that stealing is wrong, and that we should not steal; that it is immoral," said Rogozhinsky, with his quiet, self-assured, slightly contemptuous smile, which specially irritated Nekhludoff.

"No, he does not know it; they say to him 'don't steal,' and he knows that the master of the factory steals his labour by keeping back his wages; that the Government, with its officials, robs him continually by taxation."

"Why, this is anarchism," Rogozhinsky said, quietly defining his brother-in-law's words.

"I don't know what it is; I am only telling you the truth," Nekhludoff continued. "He knows that the Government is robbing him, knows that we landed proprietors have robbed him long since, robbed him of the land which should be the common property of all, and then, if he picks up dry wood to light his fire on that land stolen from him, we put him in jail, and try to persuade him that he is a thief. Of course he knows that not he but those who robbed him of the land are thieves, and that to get any restitution of what has been robbed is his duty towards his family."

"I don't understand, or if I do I cannot agree with it. The land must be somebody's property," began Rogozhinsky quietly, and, convinced that Nekhludoff was a Socialist, and that Socialism demands that all the land should be divided equally, that such a division would be very foolish, and that he could easily prove it to be so, he said. "If you divided it equally to-day, it would to-morrow be again in the hands of the most industrious and clever."

"Nobody is thinking of dividing the land equally. The land must not be anybody's property; must not be a thing to be bought and sold or rented."

"The rights of property are inborn in man; without them the cultivation of land would present no interest. Destroy the rights of property and we lapse into barbarism." Rogozhinsky uttered this authoritatively, repeating the usual argument in favour of private ownership of land which is supposed to be irrefutable, based on the assumption that people's desire to possess land proves that they need it.

"On the contrary, only when the land is nobody's property will it cease to lie idle, as it does now, while the landlords, like dogs in the manger, unable themselves to put it to use, will not let those use it who are able."

"But, Dmitri Ivanovitch, what you are saying is sheer madness. Is it possible to abolish property in land in our age? I know it is your old hobby. But allow me to tell you straight," and Rogozhinsky grew pale, and his voice trembled. It was evident that this question touched him very nearly. "I should advise you to consider this question well before attempting to solve it practically."

"Are you speaking of my personal affairs?"

"Yes, I hold that we who are placed in special circumstances should bear the responsibilities which spring from those circumstances, should uphold the conditions in which we were born, and which we have inherited from our predecessors, and which we ought to pass on to our descendants."

"I consider it my duty--"

"Wait a bit," said Rogozhinsky, not permitting the interruption. "I am not speaking for myself or my children. The position of my children is assured, and I earn enough for us to live comfortably, and I expect my children will live so too, so that my interest in your action--which, if you will allow me to say so, is not well considered--is not based on personal motives; it is on principle that I cannot agree with you. I should advise you to think it well over, to read---?"

"Please allow me to settle my affairs, and to choose what to read and what not to read, myself," said Nekhludoff, turning pale. Feeling his hands grow cold, and that he was no longer master of himself, he stopped, and began drinking his tea.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE AIM OF THE LAW.

"Well, and how are the children?" Nekhludoff asked his sister when he was calmer. The sister told him about the children. She said they were staying with their grandmother (their father's mother), and, pleased that his dispute with her husband had come to an end, she began telling him how her children played that they were travelling, just as he used to do with his three dolls, one of them a negro and another which he called the French lady.

"Can you really remember it all?" said Nekhludoff, smiling.

"Yes, and just fancy, they play in the very same way."

The unpleasant conversation had been brought to an end, and Nathalie was quieter, but she did not care to talk in her husband's presence of what could be comprehensible only to her brother, so, wishing to start a general conversation, she began talking about the sorrow of Kamenski's mother at losing her only son, who had fallen in a duel, for this Petersburg topic of the day had now reached Moscow. Rogozhinsky expressed disapproval at the state of things that excluded murder in a duel from the ordinary criminal offences. This remark evoked a rejoinder from Nekhludoff, and a new dispute arose on the subject. Nothing was

fully explained, neither of the antagonists expressed all he had in his mind, each keeping to his conviction, which condemned the other. Rogozhinsky felt that Nekhludoff condemned him and despised his activity, and he wished to show him the injustice of his opinions.

Nekhludoff, on the other hand, felt provoked by his brother-in-law's interference in his affairs concerning the land. And knowing in his heart of hearts that his sister, her husband, and their children, as his heirs, had a right to do so, was indignant that this narrow-minded man persisted with calm assurance to regard as just and lawful what Nekhludoff no longer doubted was folly and crime.

This man's arrogance annoyed Nekhludoff.

"What could the law do?" he asked.

"It could sentence one of the two duellists to the mines like an ordinary murderer."

Nekhludoff's hands grew cold.

"Well, and what good would that be?" he asked, hotly.

"It would be just."

"As if justice were the aim of the law," said Nekhludoff.

"What else?"

"The upholding of class interests! I think the law is only an instrument for upholding the existing order of things beneficial to our class."

"This is a perfectly new view," said Rogozhinsky with a quiet smile; "the law is generally supposed to have a totally different aim."

"Yes, so it has in theory but not in practice, as I have found out. The law aims only at preserving the present state of things, and therefore it persecutes and executes those who stand above the ordinary level and wish to raise it--the so-called political prisoners, as well as those who are below the average--the so-called criminal types."

"I do not agree with you. In the first place, I cannot admit that the criminals classed as political are punished because they are above the average. In most cases they are the refuse of society, just as much perverted, though in a different way, as the criminal types whom you consider below the average."

"But I happen to know men who are morally far above their judges; all the sectarians are moral, from--"

But Rogozhinsky, a man not accustomed to be interrupted when he spoke, did not listen to Nekhludoff, but went on talking at the same time, thereby irritating him still more.

"Nor can I admit that the object of the law is the upholding of the present state of things. The law aims at reforming--"

"A nice kind of reform, in a prison!" Nekhludoff put in.

"Or removing," Rogozhinsky went on, persistently, "the perverted and brutalised persons that threaten society."

"That's just what it doesn't do. Society has not the means of doing either the one thing or the other."

"How is that? I don't understand," said Rogozhinsky with a forced smile.

"I mean that only two reasonable kinds of punishment exist. Those used in the old days: corporal and capital punishment, which, as human nature gradually softens, come more and more into disuse," said Nekhludoff.

"There, now, this is quite new and very strange to hear from your lips."

"Yes, it is reasonable to hurt a man so that he should not do in future what he is hurt for doing, and it is also quite reasonable to cut a man's head off when he is injurious or dangerous to society. These punishments have a reasonable meaning. But what sense is there in locking up in a prison a man perverted by want of occupation and bad example; to place him in a position where he is provided for, where laziness is imposed on him, and where he is in company with the most perverted of men? What reason is there to take a man at public cost (it comes to more than 500 roubles per head) from the Toula to the Irkoatsk government, or from Koursk--"

"Yes, but all the same, people are afraid of those journeys at public cost, and if it were not for such journeys and the prisons, you and I would not be sitting here as we are."

"The prisons cannot insure our safety, because these people do not stay there for ever, but are set free again. On the contrary, in those establishments men are brought to the greatest vice and degradation, so that the danger is increased."

"You mean to say that the penitentiary system should be improved."

"It cannot be improved. Improved prisons would cost more than all that is being now spent on the people's education, and would lay a still heavier burden on the people."

"The shortcomings of the penitentiary system in nowise invalidate the law itself," Rogozhinsky continued again, without heeding his brother-in-law.

"There is no remedy for these shortcomings," said Nekhludoff, raising his voice.

"What of that? Shall we therefore go and kill, or, as a certain statesman proposed, go putting out people's eyes?" Rogozhinsky remarked.

"Yes; that would be cruel, but it would be effective. What is done now is cruel, and not only ineffective, but so stupid that one cannot understand how people in their senses can take part in so absurd and cruel a business as criminal law."

"But I happen to take part in it," said Rogozhinsky, growing pale.

"That is your business. But to me it is incomprehensible."

"I think there are a good many things incomprehensible to you," said Rogozhinsky, with a trembling voice.

"I have seen how one public prosecutor did his very best to get an unfortunate boy condemned, who could have evoked nothing but sympathy in an unperverted mind. I know how another cross-examined a sectarian and put down the reading of the Gospels as a criminal offence; in fact, the whole business of the Law Courts consists in senseless and cruel actions of that sort."

"I should not serve if I thought so," said Rogozhinsky, rising.

Nekhludoff noticed a peculiar glitter under his brother-in-law's spectacles. "Can it be tears?" he thought. And they were really tears of injured pride. Rogozhinsky went up to the window, got out his handkerchief, coughed and rubbed his spectacles, took them off, and wiped his eyes.

When he returned to the sofa he lit a cigar, and did not speak any more.

Nekhludoff felt pained and ashamed of having offended his brother-in-law and his sister to such a degree, especially as he was going away the next day.

He parted with them in confusion, and drove home.

"All I have said may be true--anyhow he did not reply. But it was not said in the right way. How little I must have changed if I could be carried away by ill-feeling to such an extent as to hurt and wound poor Nathalie in such a way!" he thought.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE PRISONERS START FOR SIBERIA.

The gang of prisoners, among whom was Maslova, was to leave Moscow by rail at 3 p.m.; therefore, in order to see the gang start, and walk to the station with the prisoners Nekhludoff meant to reach the prison before 12 o'clock.

The night before, as he was packing up and sorting his papers, he came upon his diary, and read some bits here and there. The last bit written before he left for Petersburg ran thus: "Katusha does not wish to accept my sacrifice; she wishes to make a sacrifice herself. She has conquered, and so have I. She makes me happy by the inner change, which seems to me, though I fear to believe it, to be going on in her. I fear to believe it, yet she seems to be coming back to life." Then further on he read. "I have lived through something very hard and very joyful. I learnt that she has behaved very badly in the hospital, and I suddenly felt great pain. I never expected that it could be so painful. I spoke to her with loathing and hatred, then all of a sudden I called to mind how many times I have been, and even still am, though but in thought, guilty of the thing that I hated her for, and immediately I became disgusting to myself, and pitied her and felt happy again. If only we could manage to see the beam in our own eye in time, how kind we should be." Then he wrote: "I have

been to see Nathalie, and again self-satisfaction made me unkind and spiteful, and a heavy feeling remains. Well, what is to be done? Tomorrow a new life will begin. A final good-bye to the old! Many new impressions have accumulated, but I cannot yet bring them to unity."

When he awoke the next morning Nekhludoff's first feeling was regret about the affair between him and his brother-in-law.

"I cannot go away like this," he thought. "I must go and make it up with them." But when he looked at his watch he saw that he had not time to go, but must hurry so as not to be too late for the departure of the gang. He hastily got everything ready, and sent the things to the station with a servant and Taras, Theodosia's husband, who was going with them. Then he took the first isvostchik he could find and drove off to the prison.

The prisoners' train started two hours before the train by which he was going, so Nekhludoff paid his bill in the lodgings and left for good.

It was July, and the weather was unbearably hot. From the stones, the walls, the iron of the roofs, which the sultry night had not cooled, the heat streamed into the motionless air. When at rare intervals a slight breeze did arise, it brought but a whiff of hot air filled with dust and smelling of oil paint.

There were few people in the streets, and those who were out tried to keep on the shady side. Only the sunburnt peasants, with their bronzed faces and bark shoes on their feet, who were mending the road, sat hammering the stones into the burning sand in the sun; while the policemen, in their holland blouses, with revolvers fastened with orange cords, stood melancholy and depressed in the middle of the road, changing from foot to foot; and the tramcars, the horses of which wore holland hoods on their heads, with slits for the ears, kept passing up and down the sunny road with ringing bells.

When Nekhludoff drove up to the prison the gang had not left the yard. The work of delivering and receiving the prisoners that had commenced at 4 A.M. was still going on. The gang was to consist of 623 men and 64 women; they had all to be received according to the registry lists. The sick and the weak to be sorted out, and all to be delivered to the convoy. The new inspector, with two assistants, the doctor and medical assistant, the officer of the convoy, and the clerk, were sitting in the prison yard at a table covered with writing materials and papers, which was placed in the shade of a wall. They called the prisoners one by one, examined and questioned them, and took notes. The rays of the sun had gradually reached the table, and it was growing very hot and oppressive for want of air and because of the breathing crowd of prisoners that stood close by.

"Good gracious, will this never come to an end!" the convoy officer, a tall, fat, red-faced man with high shoulders, who kept puffing the smoke, of his cigarette into his thick moustache, asked, as he drew in a long puff. "You are killing me. From where have you got them all? Are there many more?" the clerk inquired.

"Twenty-four men and the women."

"What are you standing there for? Come on," shouted the convoy officer to the prisoners who had not yet passed the revision, and who stood crowded one behind the other. The prisoners had been standing there more than three hours, packed in rows in the full sunlight, waiting their turns.

While this was going on in the prison yard, outside the gate, besides the sentinel who stood there as usual with a gun, were drawn up about 20 carts, to carry the luggage of the prisoners and such prisoners as were too weak to walk, and a group of relatives and friends waiting to see the prisoners as they came out and to exchange a few words if a chance presented itself and to give them a few things. Nekhludoff took his place among the group. He had stood there about an hour when the clanking of chains, the noise of footsteps, authoritative voices, the sound of coughing, and the low murmur of a large crowd became audible.

This continued for about five minutes, during which several jailers went in and out of the gateway. At last the word of command was given. The gate opened with a thundering noise, the clattering of the chains became louder, and the convoy soldiers, dressed in white blouses and carrying guns, came out into the street and took their places in a large, exact circle in front of the gate; this was evidently a usual, often-practised manoeuvre. Then another command was given, and the prisoners began coming out in couples, with flat, pancake-shaped caps on their shaved heads and sacks over their shoulders, dragging their chained legs and swinging one arm, while the other held up a sack.

First came the men condemned to hard labour, all dressed alike in grey trousers and cloaks with marks on the back. All of them--young and old, thin and fat, pale and red, dark and bearded and beardless, Russians, Tartars, and Jews--came out, clattering with their chains and briskly swinging their arms as if prepared to go a long distance, but stopped after having taken ten steps, and obediently took their places behind each other, four abreast. Then without interval streamed out more shaved men, dressed in the same manner but with chains only on their legs. These were condemned to exile. They came out as briskly and stopped as suddenly, taking their places four in a row. Then came those exiled by their Communes. Then the women in the same order, first those condemned to hard labour, with grey cloaks and kerchiefs; then the exiled women, and those following their husbands of

their own free will, dressed in their own town or village clothing. Some of the women were carrying babies wrapped in the fronts of their grey cloaks.

With the women came the children, boys and girls, who, like colts in a herd of horses, pressed in among the prisoners.

The men took their places silently, only coughing now and then, or making short remarks.

The women talked without intermission. Nekhludoff thought he saw Maslova as they were coming out, but she was at once lost in the large crowd, and he could only see grey creatures, seemingly devoid of all that was human, or at any rate of all that was womanly, with sacks on their backs and children round them, taking their places behind the men.

Though all the prisoners had been counted inside the prison walls, the convoy counted them again, comparing the numbers with the list. This took very long, especially as some of the prisoners moved and changed places, which confused the convoy.

The convoy soldiers shouted and pushed the prisoners (who complied obediently, but angrily) and counted them over again. When all had been counted, the convoy officer gave a command, and the crowd became agitated. The weak men and women and children

rushed, racing each other, towards the carts, and began placing their bags on the carts and climbing up themselves. Women with crying babies, merry children quarrelling for places, and dull, careworn prisoners got into the carts.

Several of the prisoners took off their caps and came up to the convoy officer with some request. Nekhludoff found out later that they were asking for places on the carts. Nekhludoff saw how the officer, without looking at the prisoners, drew in a whiff from his cigarette, and then suddenly waved his short arm in front of one of the prisoners, who quickly drew his shaved head back between his shoulders as if afraid of a blow, and sprang back.

"I will give you a lift such that you'll remember. You'll get there on foot right enough," shouted the officer. Only one of the men was granted his request--an old man with chains on his legs; and Nekhludoff saw the old man take off his pancake-shaped cap, and go up to the cart crossing himself. He could not manage to get up on the cart because of the chains that prevented his lifting his old legs, and a woman who was sitting in the cart at last pulled him in by the arm.

When all the sacks were in the carts, and those who were allowed to get in were seated, the officer took off his cap, wiped his forehead, his bald head and fat, red neck, and crossed himself.

"March," commanded the officer. The soldiers' guns gave a click; the prisoners took off their caps and crossed themselves, those who were seeing them off shouted something, the prisoners shouted in answer, a row arose among the women, and the gang, surrounded by the soldiers in their white blouses, moved forward, raising the dust with their chained feet. The soldiers went in front; then came the convicts condemned to hard labour, clattering with their chains; then the exiled and those exiled by the Communes, chained in couples by their wrists; then the women. After them, on the carts loaded with sacks, came the weak. High up on one of the carts sat a woman closely wrapped up, and she kept shrieking and sobbing.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NOT MEN BUT STRANGE AND TERRIBLE CREATURES?

The procession was such a long one that the carts with the luggage and the weak started only when those in front were already out of sight. When the last of the carts moved, Nekhludoff got into the trap that stood waiting for him and told the isvostchik to catch up the prisoners in front, so that he could see if he knew any of the men in the gang, and then try and find out Maslova among the women and ask her if she had received the things he sent.

It was very hot, and a cloud of dust that was raised by a thousand tramping feet stood all the time over the gang that was moving down the middle of the street. The prisoners were walking quickly, and the slow-going isvostchik's horse was some time in catching them up. Row upon row they passed, those strange and terrible-looking creatures, none of whom Nekhludoff knew.

On they went, all dressed alike, moving a thousand feet all shod alike, swinging their free arms as if to keep up their spirits. There were so many of them, they all looked so much alike, and

they were all placed in such unusual, peculiar circumstances, that they seemed to Nekhludoff to be not men but some sort of

strange and terrible creatures. This impression passed when he recognised in the crowd of convicts the murderer Federoff, and among the exiles Okhotin the wit, and another tramp who had appealed to him for assistance. Almost all the prisoners turned and looked at the trap that was passing them and at the gentleman inside. Federoff tossed his head backwards as a sign that he had recognised Nekhludoff, Okhotin winked, but neither of them bowed, considering it not the thing.

As soon as Nekhludoff came up to the women he saw Maslova; she was in the second row. The first in the row was a short-legged, black-eyed, hideous woman, who had her cloak tucked up in her girdle. This was Koroshavka. The next was a pregnant woman, who dragged herself along with difficulty. The third was Maslova; she was carrying her sack on her shoulder, and looking straight before her. Her face looked calm and determined. The fourth in the row was a young, lovely woman who was walking along briskly, dressed in a short cloak, her kerchief tied in peasant fashion. This was Theodosia.

Nekhludoff got down and approached the women, meaning to ask Maslova if she had got the things he had sent her, and how she was feeling, but the convoy sergeant, who was walking on that side, noticed him at once, and ran towards him.

"You must not do that, sir. It is against the regulations to

approach the gang," shouted the sergeant as he came up.

But when he recognised Nekhludoff (every one in the prison knew Nekhludoff) the sergeant raised his fingers to his cap, and, stopping in front of Nekhludoff, said: "Not now; wait till we get to the railway station; here it is not allowed. Don't lag behind; march!" he shouted to the convicts, and putting on a brisk air, he ran back to his place at a trot, in spite of the heat and the elegant new boots on his feet.

Nekhludoff went on to the pavement and told the isvostchik to follow him; himself walking, so as to keep the convicts in sight. Wherever the gang passed it attracted attention mixed with horror and compassion. Those who drove past leaned out of the vehicles and followed the prisoners with their eyes. Those on foot stopped and looked with fear and surprise at the terrible sight. Some came up and gave alms to the prisoners. The alms were received by the convoy. Some, as if they were hypnotised, followed the gang, but then stopped, shook their heads, and followed the prisoners only with their eyes. Everywhere the people came out of the gates and doors, and called others to come out, too, or leaned out of the windows looking, silent and immovable, at the frightful procession. At a cross-road a fine carriage was stopped by the gang. A fat coachman, with a shiny face and two rows of buttons on his back, sat on the box; a married couple sat facing the horses, the wife, a pale, thin woman, with a light-coloured

bonnet on her head and a bright sunshade in her hand, the husband with a top-hat and a well-cut light-coloured overcoat. On the seat in front sat their children--a well-dressed little girl, with loose, fair hair, and as fresh as a flower, who also held a bright parasol, and an eight-year-old boy, with a long, thin neck and sharp collarbones, a sailor hat with long ribbons on his head.

The father was angrily scolding the coachman because he had not passed in front of the gang when he had a chance, and the mother frowned and half closed her eyes with a look of disgust, shielding herself from the dust and the sun with her silk sunshade, which she held close to her face.

The fat coachman frowned angrily at the unjust rebukes of his master--who had himself given the order to drive along that street--and with difficulty held in the glossy, black horses, foaming under their harness and impatient to go on.

The policeman wished with all his soul to please the owner of the fine equipage by stopping the gang, yet felt that the dismal solemnity of the procession could not be broken even for so rich a gentleman. He only raised his fingers to his cap to show his respect for riches, and looked severely at the prisoners as if promising in any case to protect the owners of the carriage from them. So the carriage had to wait till the whole of the

procession had passed, and could only move on when the last of the carts, laden with sacks and prisoners, rattled by. The hysterical woman who sat on one of the carts, and had grown calm, again began shrieking and sobbing when she saw the elegant carriage. Then the coachman tightened the reins with a slight touch, and the black trotters, their shoes ringing against the paving stones, drew the carriage, softly swaying on its rubber tires, towards the country house where the husband, the wife, the girl, and the boy with the sharp collar-bones were going to amuse themselves. Neither the father nor the mother gave the girl and boy any explanation of what they had seen, so that the children had themselves to find out the meaning of this curious sight. The girl, taking the expression of her father's and mother's faces into consideration, solved the problem by assuming that these people were quite another kind of men and women than her father and mother and their acquaintances, that they were bad people, and that they had therefore to be treated in the manner they were being treated.

Therefore the girl felt nothing but fear, and was glad when she could no longer see those people.

But the boy with the long, thin neck, who looked at the procession of prisoners without taking his eyes off them, solved the question differently.

He still knew, firmly and without any doubt, for he had it from God, that these people were just the same kind of people as he was, and like all other people, and therefore some one had done these people some wrong, something that ought not to have been done, and he was sorry for them, and felt no horror either of those who were shaved and chained or of those who had shaved and chained them. And so the boy's lips pouted more and more, and he made greater and greater efforts not to cry, thinking it a shame to cry in such a case.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE TENDER MERCIES OF THE LORD.

Nekhludoff kept up with the quick pace of the convicts. Though lightly clothed he felt dreadfully hot, and it was hard to breathe in the stifling, motionless, burning air filled with dust.

When he had walked about a quarter of a mile he again got into the trap, but it felt still hotter in the middle of the street. He tried to recall last night's conversation with his brother-in-law, but the recollections no longer excited him as they had done in the morning. They were dulled by the impressions made by the starting and procession of the gang, and chiefly by the intolerable heat.

On the pavement, in the shade of some trees overhanging a fence, he saw two schoolboys standing over a kneeling man who sold ices. One of the boys was already sucking a pink spoon and enjoying his ices, the other was waiting for a glass that was being filled with something yellowish.

"Where could I get a drink?" Nekhludoff asked his isvostchik, feeling an insurmountable desire for some refreshment.

"There is a good eating-house close by," the isvostchik answered, and turning a corner, drove up to a door with a large signboard. The plump clerk in a Russian shirt, who stood behind the counter, and the waiters in their once white clothing who sat at the tables (there being hardly any customers) looked with curiosity at the unusual visitor and offered him their services. Nekhludoff asked for a bottle of seltzer water and sat down some way from the window at a small table covered with a dirty cloth. Two men sat at another table with tea-things and a white bottle in front of them, mopping their foreheads, and calculating something in a friendly manner. One of them was dark and bald, and had just such a border of hair at the back as Rogozhinsky. This sight again reminded Nekhludoff of yesterday's talk with his brother-in-law and his wish to see him and Nathalie.

"I shall hardly be able to do it before the train starts," he thought; "I'd better write." He asked for paper, an envelope, and a stamp, and as he was sipping the cool, effervescent water he considered what he should say. But his thoughts wandered, and he could not manage to compose a letter.

"My dear Nathalie,--I cannot go away with the heavy impression that yesterday's talk with your husband has left," he began. "What next? Shall I ask him to forgive me what I said yesterday? But I only said what I felt, and he will think that I am taking it back. Besides, this interference of his in my private matters.

. . . No, I cannot," and again he felt hatred rising in his heart towards that man so foreign to him. He folded the unfinished letter and put it in his pocket, paid, went out, and again got into the trap to catch up the gang. It had grown still hotter. The stones and the walls seemed to be breathing out hot air. The pavement seemed to scorch the feet, and Nekhludoff felt a burning sensation in his hand when he touched the lacquered splashguard of his trap.

The horse was jogging along at a weary trot, beating the uneven, dusty road monotonously with its hoofs, the isvostchik kept falling into a doze, Nekhludoff sat without thinking of anything.

At the bottom of a street, in front of a large house, a group of people had collected, and a convoy soldier stood by.

"What has happened?" Nekhludoff asked of a porter.

"Something the matter with a convict."

Nekhludoff got down and came up to the group. On the rough stones, where the pavement slanted down to the gutter, lay a broadly-built, red-bearded, elderly convict, with his head lower than his feet, and very red in the face. He had a grey cloak and grey trousers on, and lay on his back with the palms of his freckled hands downwards, and at long intervals his broad, high

chest heaved, and he groaned, while his bloodshot eyes were fixed on the sky. By him stood a cross-looking policeman, a pedlar, a postman, a clerk, an old woman with a parasol, and a short-haired boy with an empty basket.

"They are weak. Having been locked up in prison they've got weak, and then they lead them through the most broiling heat," said the clerk, addressing Nekhludoff, who had just come up.

"He'll die, most likely," said the woman with the parasol, in a doleful tone.

"His shirt should be untied," said the postman.

The policeman began, with his thick, trembling fingers, clumsily to untie the tapes that fastened the shirt round the red, sinewy neck. He was evidently excited and confused, but still thought it necessary to address the crowd.

"What have you collected here for? It is hot enough without your keeping the wind off."

"They should have been examined by a doctor, and the weak ones left behind," said the clerk, showing off his knowledge of the law.

The policeman, having undone the tapes of the shirt, rose and looked round.

"Move on, I tell you. It is not your business, is it? What's there to stare at?" he said, and turned to Nekhludoff for sympathy, but not finding any in his face he turned to the convoy soldier.

But the soldier stood aside, examining the trodden-down heel of his boot, and was quite indifferent to the policeman's perplexity.

"Those whose business it is don't care. Is it right to do men to death like this? A convict is a convict, but still he is a man," different voices were heard saying in the crowd.

"Put his head up higher, and give him some water," said Nekhludoff.

"Water has been sent for," said the policeman, and taking the prisoner under the arms he with difficulty pulled his body a little higher up.

"What's this gathering here?" said a decided, authoritative voice, and a police officer, with a wonderfully clean, shiny blouse, and still more shiny top-boots, came up to the assembled

crowd.

"Move on. No standing about here," he shouted to the crowd, before he knew what had attracted it.

When he came near and saw the dying convict, he made a sign of approval with his head, just as if he had quite expected it, and, turning to the policeman, said, "How is this?"

The policeman said that, as a gang of prisoners was passing, one of the convicts had fallen down, and the convoy officer had ordered him to be left behind.

"Well, that's all right. He must be taken to the police station. Call an isvostchik."

"A porter has gone for one," said the policeman, with his fingers raised to his cap.

The shopman began something about the heat.

"Is it your business, eh? Move on," said the police officer, and looked so severely at him that the clerk was silenced.

"He ought to have a little water," said Nekhludoff. The police officer looked severely at Nekhludoff also, but said nothing.

When the porter brought a mug full of water, he told the policeman to offer some to the convict. The policeman raised the drooping head, and tried to pour a little water down the mouth; but the prisoner could not swallow it, and it ran down his beard, wetting his jacket and his coarse, dirty linen shirt.

"Pour it on his head," ordered the officer; and the policeman took off the pancake-shaped cap and poured the water over the red curls and bald part of the prisoner's head. His eyes opened wide as if in fear, but his position remained unchanged.

Streams of dirt trickled down his dusty face, but the mouth continued to gasp in the same regular way, and his whole body shook.

"And what's this? Take this one," said the police officer, pointing to Nekhludoff's isvostchik. "You, there, drive up."

"I am engaged," said the isvostchik, dismally, and without looking up.

"It is my isvostchik; but take him. I will pay you," said Nekhludoff, turning to the isvostchik.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" shouted the officer. "Catch hold."

The policeman, the porter, and the convoy soldier lifted the dying man and carried him to the trap, and put him on the seat. But he could not sit up; his head fell back, and the whole of his body glided off the seat.

"Make him lie down," ordered the officer.

"It's all right, your honour; I'll manage him like this," said the policeman, sitting down by the dying man, and clasping his strong, right arm round the body under the arms. The convoy soldier lifted the stockingless feet, in prison shoes, and put them into the trap.

The police officer looked around, and noticing the pancake-shaped hat of the convict lifted it up and put it on the wet, drooping head.

"Go on," he ordered.

The isvostchik looked angrily round, shook his head, and, accompanied by the convoy soldier, drove back to the police station. The policeman, sitting beside the convict, kept dragging up the body that was continually sliding down from the seat, while the head swung from side to side.

The convoy soldier, who was walking by the side of the trap, kept putting the legs in their place. Nekhludoff followed the trap.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

SPILLED LIKE WATER ON THE GROUND.

The trap passed the fireman who stood sentinel at the entrance, [the headquarters of the fire brigade and the police stations are generally together in Moscow] drove into the yard of the police station, and stopped at one of the doors. In the yard several firemen with their sleeves tucked up were washing some kind of cart and talking loudly. When the trap stopped, several policemen surrounded it, and taking the lifeless body of the convict under the arms, took him out of the trap, which creaked under him. The policeman who had brought the body got down, shook his numbed arm, took off his cap, and crossed himself. The body was carried through the door and up the stairs. Nekhludoff followed. In the small, dirty room where the body was taken there stood four beds. On two of them sat a couple of sick men in dressing-gowns, one with a crooked mouth, whose neck was bandaged, the other one in consumption. Two of the beds were empty; the convict was laid on one of them. A little man, with glistening eyes and continually moving brows, with only his underclothes and stockings on, came up with quick, soft steps, looked at the convict and then at Nekhludoff, and burst into loud laughter. This was a madman who was being kept in the police hospital.

"They wish to frighten me, but no, they won't succeed," he said.

The policemen who carried the corpse were followed by a police officer and a medical assistant. The medical assistant came up to the body and touched the freckled hand, already growing cold, which, though still soft, was deadly pale. He held it for a moment, and then let it go. It fell lifelessly on the stomach of the dead man.

"He's ready," said the medical assistant, but, evidently to be quite in order, he undid the wet, brown shirt, and tossing back the curls from his ear, put it to the yellowish, broad, immovable chest of the convict. All were silent. The medical assistant raised himself again, shook his head, and touched with his fingers first one and then the other lid over the open, fixed blue eyes.

"I'm not frightened, I'm not frightened." The madman kept repeating these words, and spitting in the direction of the medical assistant.

"Well?" asked the police officer.

"Well! He must be put into the mortuary."

"Are you sure? Mind," said the police officer.

"It's time I should know," said the medical assistant, drawing the shirt over the body's chest. "However, I will send for Mathew Ivanovitch. Let him have a look. Petrov, call him," and the medical assistant stepped away from the body.

"Take him to the mortuary," said the police officer. "And then you must come into the office and sign," he added to the convoy soldier, who had not left the convict for a moment.

"Yes, sir," said the soldier.

The policemen lifted the body and carried it down again. Nekhludoff wished to follow, but the madman kept him back.

"You are not in the plot! Well, then, give me a cigarette," he said. Nekhludoff got out his cigarette case and gave him one.

The madman, quickly moving his brows all the time, began relating how they tormented him by thought suggestion.

"Why, they are all against me, and torment and torture me through their mediums."

"I beg your pardon," said Nekhludoff, and without listening any further he left the room and went out into the yard, wishing to know where the body would be put.

The policemen with their burden had already crossed the yard, and were coming to the door of a cellar. Nekhludoff wished to go up to them, but the police officer stopped him.

"What do you want?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing? Then go away."

Nekhludoff obeyed, and went back to his isvostchik, who was dozing. He awoke him, and they drove back towards the railway station.

They had not made a hundred steps when they met a cart accompanied by a convoy soldier with a gun. On the cart lay another convict, who was already dead. The convict lay on his back in the cart, his shaved head, from which the pancake-shaped cap had slid over the black-bearded face down to the nose, shaking and thumping at every jolt. The driver, in his heavy boots, walked by the side of the cart, holding the reins; a policeman followed on foot. Nekhludoff touched his isvostchik's shoulder.

"Just look what they are doing," said the isvostchik, stopping

his horse.

Nekhludoff got down and, following the cart, again passed the sentinel and entered the gate of the police station. By this time the firemen had finished washing the cart, and a tall, bony man, the chief of the fire brigade, with a coloured band round his cap, stood in their place, and, with his hands in his pockets, was severely looking at a fat-necked, well-fed, bay stallion that was being led up and down before him by a fireman. The stallion was lame on one of his fore feet, and the chief of the firemen was angrily saying something to a veterinary who stood by.

The police officer was also present. When he saw the cart he went up to the convoy soldier.

"Where did you bring him from?" he asked, shaking his head disapprovingly.

"From the Gorbatovskaya," answered the policeman.

"A prisoner?" asked the chief of the fire brigade.

"Yes. It's the second to-day."

"Well, I must say they've got some queer arrangements. Though of course it's a broiling day," said the chief of the fire brigade;

then, turning to the fireman who was leading the lame stallion, he shouted: "Put him into the corner stall. And as to you, you hound, I'll teach you how to cripple horses which are worth more than you are, you scoundrel."

The dead man was taken from the cart by the policemen just in the same way as the first had been, and carried upstairs into the hospital. Nekhludoff followed them as if he were hypnotised.

"What do you want?" asked one of the policemen. But Nekhludoff did not answer, and followed where the body was being carried. The madman, sitting on a bed, was smoking greedily the cigarette Nekhludoff had given him.

"Ah, you've come back," he said, and laughed. When he saw the body he made a face, and said, "Again! I am sick of it. I am not a boy, am I, eh?" and he turned to Nekhludoff with a questioning smile.

Nekhludoff was looking at the dead man, whose face, which had been hidden by his cap, was now visible. This convict was as handsome in face and body as the other was hideous. He was a man in the full bloom of life. Notwithstanding that he was disfigured by the half of his head being shaved, the straight, rather low forehead, raised a bit over the black, lifeless eyes, was very fine, and so was the nose above the thin, black moustaches. There

was a smile on the lips that were already growing blue, a small beard outlined the lower part of the face, and on the shaved side of the head a firm, well-shaped ear was visible.

One could see what possibilities of a higher life had been destroyed in this man. The fine bones of his hands and shackled feet, the strong muscles of all his well-proportioned limbs, showed what a beautiful, strong, agile human animal this had been. As an animal merely he had been a far more perfect one of his kind than the bay stallion, about the laming of which the fireman was so angry.

Yet he had been done to death, and no one was sorry for him as a man, nor was any one sorry that so fine a working animal had perished. The only feeling evinced was that of annoyance because of the bother caused by the necessity of getting this body, threatening putrefaction, out of the way. The doctor and his assistant entered the hospital, accompanied by the inspector of the police station. The doctor was a thick-set man, dressed in pongee silk coat and trousers of the same material, closely fitting his muscular thighs. The inspector was a little fat fellow, with a red face, round as a ball, which he made still broader by a habit he had of filling his cheeks with air, and slowly letting it out again. The doctor sat down on the bed by the side of the dead man, and touched the hands in the same way as his assistant had done, put his ear to the heart, rose, and

pulled his trousers straight. "Could not be more dead," he said.

The inspector filled his mouth with air and slowly blew it out again.

"Which prison is he from?" he asked the convoy soldier.

The soldier told him, and reminded him of the chains on the dead man's feet.

"I'll have them taken off; we have got a smith about, the Lord be thanked," said the inspector, and blew up his cheeks again; he went towards the door, slowly letting out the air.

"Why has this happened?" Nekhludoff asked the doctor.

The doctor looked at him through his spectacles.

"Why has what happened? Why they die of sunstroke, you mean? This is why: They sit all through the winter without exercise and without light, and suddenly they are taken out into the sunshine, and on a day like this, and they march in a crowd so that they get no air, and sunstroke is the result."

"Then why are they sent out?"

"Oh, as to that, go and ask those who send them. But may I ask who are you?"

"I am a stranger."

"Ah, well, good-afternoon; I have no time." The doctor was vexed; he gave his trousers a downward pull, and went towards the beds of the sick.

"Well, how are you getting on?" he asked the pale man with the crooked mouth and bandaged neck.

Meanwhile the madman sat on a bed, and having finished his cigarette, kept spitting in the direction of the doctor.

Nekhludoff went down into the yard and out of the gate past the firemen's horses and the hens and the sentinel in his brass helmet, and got into the trap, the driver of which had again fallen asleep.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CONVICT TRAIN.

When Nekhludoff came to the station, the prisoners were all seated in railway carriages with grated windows. Several persons, come to see them off, stood on the platform, but were not allowed to come up to the carriages.

The convoy was much troubled that day. On the way from the prison to the station, besides the two Nekhludoff had seen, three other prisoners had fallen and died of sunstroke. One was taken to the nearest police station like the first two, and the other two died at the railway station. [In Moscow, in the beginning of the eighth decade of this century, five convicts died of sunstroke in one day on their way from the Boutyrki prison to the Nijni railway station.] The convoy men were not troubled because five men who might have been alive died while in their charge. This did not trouble them, but they were concerned lest anything that the law required in such cases should be omitted. To convey the bodies to the places appointed, to deliver up their papers, to take them off the lists of those to be conveyed to Nijni--all this was very troublesome, especially on so hot a day.

It was this that occupied the convoy men, and before it could all be accomplished Nekhludoff and the others who asked for leave to

go up to the carriages were not allowed to do so. Nekhludoff, however, was soon allowed to go up, because he tipped the convoy sergeant. The sergeant let Nekhludoff pass, but asked him to be quick and get his talk over before any of the authorities noticed. There were 15 carriages in all, and except one carriage for the officials, they were full of prisoners. As Nekhludoff passed the carriages he listened to what was going on in them. In all the carriages was heard the clanging of chains, the sound of bustle, mixed with loud and senseless language, but not a word was being said about their dead fellow-prisoners. The talk was all about sacks, drinking water, and the choice of seats.

Looking into one of the carriages, Nekhludoff saw convoy soldiers taking the manacles off the hands of the prisoners. The prisoners held out their arms, and one of the soldiers unlocked the manacles with a key and took them off; the other collected them.

After he had passed all the other carriages, Nekhludoff came up to the women's carriages. From the second of these he heard a woman's groans: "Oh, oh, oh! O God! Oh, oh! O God!"

Nekhludoff passed this carriage and went up to a window of the third carriage, which a soldier pointed out to him. When he approached his face to the window, he felt the hot air, filled with the smell of perspiration, coming out of it, and heard distinctly the shrill sound of women's voices. All the seats were

filled with red, perspiring, loudly-talking women, dressed in prison cloaks and white jackets. Nekhludoff's face at the window attracted their attention. Those nearest ceased talking and drew closer. Maslova, in her white jacket and her head uncovered, sat by the opposite window. The white-skinned, smiling Theodosia sat a little nearer. When she recognised Nekhludoff, she nudged Maslova and pointed to the window. Maslova rose hurriedly, threw her kerchief over her black hair, and with a smile on her hot, red face came up to the window and took hold of one of the bars.

"Well, it is hot," she said, with a glad smile.

"Did you get the things?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Is there anything more you want?" asked Nekhludoff, while the air came out of the hot carriage as out of an oven.

"I want nothing, thank you."

"If we could get a drink?" said Theodosia.

"Yes, if we could get a drink," repeated Maslova.

"Why, have you not got any water?"

"They put some in, but it is all gone."

"Directly, I will ask one of the convoy men. Now we shall not see each other till we get to Nijni."

"Why? Are you going?" said Maslova, as if she did not know it, and looked joyfully at Nekhludoff.

"I am going by the next train."

Maslova said nothing, but only sighed deeply.

"Is it true, sir, that 12 convicts have been done to death?" said a severe-looking old prisoner with a deep voice like a man's.

It was Korableva.

"I did not hear of 12; I have seen two," said Nekhludoff.

"They say there were 12 they killed. And will nothing be done to them? Only think! The fiends!"

"And have none of the women fallen ill?" Nekhludoff asked.

"Women are stronger," said another of the prisoners--a short

little woman, and laughed; "only there's one that has taken it into her head to be delivered. There she goes," she said, pointing to the next carriage, whence proceeded the groans.

"You ask if we want anything," said Maslova, trying to keep the smile of joy from her lips; "could not this woman be left behind, suffering as she is? There, now, if you would tell the authorities."

"Yes, I will."

"And one thing more; could she not see her husband, Taras?" she added, pointing with her eyes to the smiling Theodosia.

"He is going with you, is he not?"

"Sir, you must not talk," said a convoy sergeant, not the one who had let Nekhludoff come up. Nekhludoff left the carriage and went in search of an official to whom he might speak for the woman in travail and about Taras, but could not find him, nor get an answer from any of the convoy for a long time. They were all in a bustle; some were leading a prisoner somewhere or other, others running to get themselves provisions, some were placing their things in the carriages or attending on a lady who was going to accompany the convoy officer, and they answered Nekhludoff's questions unwillingly. Nekhludoff found the convoy officer only

after the second bell had been rung. The officer with his short arm was wiping the moustaches that covered his mouth and shrugging his shoulders, reproving the corporal for something or other.

"What is it you want?" he asked Nekhludoff.

"You've got a woman there who is being confined, so I thought best--"

"Well, let her be confined; we shall see later on," and briskly swinging his short arms, he ran up to his carriage. At the moment the guard passed with a whistle in his hand, and from the people on the platform and from the women's carriages there arose a sound of weeping and words of prayer.

Nekhludoff stood on the platform by the side of Taras, and looked how, one after the other, the carriages glided past him, with the shaved heads of the men at the grated windows. Then the first of the women's carriages came up, with women's heads at the windows, some covered with kerchiefs and some uncovered, then the second, whence proceeded the same groans, then the carriage where Maslova was. She stood with the others at the window, and looked at Nekhludoff with a pathetic smile.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BROTHER AND SISTER.

There were still two hours before the passenger train by which Nekhludoff was going would start. He had thought of using this interval to see his sister again; but after the impressions of the morning he felt much excited and so done up that, sitting down on a sofa in the first-class refreshment-room, he suddenly grew so drowsy that he turned over on to his side, and, laying his face on his hand, fell asleep at once. A waiter in a dress coat with a napkin in his hand woke him.

"Sir, sir, are you not Prince Nekhludoff? There's a lady looking for you."

Nekhludoff started up and recollected where he was and all that had happened in the morning.

He saw in his imagination the procession of prisoners, the dead bodies, the railway carriages with barred windows, and the women locked up in them, one of whom was groaning in travail with no one to help her, and another who was pathetically smiling at him through the bars.

The reality before his eyes was very different, i.e., a table

with vases, candlesticks and crockery, and agile waiters moving round the table, and in the background a cupboard and a counter laden with fruit and bottles, behind it a barman, and in front the backs of passengers who had come up for refreshments. When Nekhludoff had risen and sat gradually collecting his thoughts, he noticed that everybody in the room was inquisitively looking at something that was passing by the open doors.

He also looked, and saw a group of people carrying a chair on which sat a lady whose head was wrapped in a kind of airy fabric.

Nekhludoff thought he knew the footman who was supporting the chair in front. And also the man behind, and a doorkeeper with gold cord on his cap, seemed familiar. A lady's maid with a fringe and an apron, who was carrying a parcel, a parasol, and something round in a leather case, was walking behind the chair. Then came Prince Korchagin, with his thick lips, apoplectic neck, and a travelling cap on his head; behind him Missy, her cousin Misha, and an acquaintance of Nekhludoff's--the long-necked diplomat Osten, with his protruding Adam's apple and his unvarying merry mood and expression. He was saying something very emphatically, though jokingly, to the smiling Missy. The Korchagins were moving from their estate near the city to the estate of the Princess's sister on the Nijni railway. The procession--the men carrying the chair, the maid, and the doctor--vanished into the ladies' waiting-room, evoking a feeling

of curiosity and respect in the onlookers. But the old Prince remained and sat down at the table, called a waiter, and ordered food and drink. Missy and Osten also remained in the refreshment-room and were about to sit down, when they saw an acquaintance in the doorway, and went up to her. It was Nathalie Rogozhinsky. Nathalie came into the refreshment-room accompanied by Agraphena Petrovna, and both looked round the room. Nathalie noticed at one and the same moment both her brother and Missy. She first went up to Missy, only nodding to her brother; but, having kissed her, at once turned to him.

"At last I have found you," she said. Nekhludoff rose to greet Missy, Misha, and Osten, and to say a few words to them. Missy told him about their house in the country having been burnt down, which necessitated their moving to her aunt's. Osten began relating a funny story about a fire. Nekhludoff paid no attention, and turned to his sister.

"How glad I am that you have come."

"I have been here a long time," she said. "Agraphena Petrovna is with me." And she pointed to Agraphena Petrovna, who, in a waterproof and with a bonnet on her head, stood some way off, and bowed to him with kindly dignity and some confusion, not wishing to intrude.

"We looked for you everywhere."

"And I had fallen asleep here. How glad I am that you have come," repeated Nekhludoff. "I had begun to write to you."

"Really?" she said, looking frightened. "What about?"

Missy and the gentleman, noticing that an intimate conversation was about to commence between the brother and sister, went away. Nekhludoff and his sister sat down by the window on a velvet-covered sofa, on which lay a plaid, a box, and a few other things.

"Yesterday, after I left you, I felt inclined to return and express my regret, but I did not know how he would take it," said Nekhludoff. "I spoke hastily to your husband, and this tormented me."

"I knew," said his sister, "that you did not mean to. Oh, you know!" and the tears came to her eyes, and she touched his hand. The sentence was not clear, but he understood it perfectly, and was touched by what it expressed. Her words meant that, besides the love for her husband which held her in its sway, she prized and considered important the love she had for him, her brother, and that every misunderstanding between them caused her deep suffering.

"Thank you, thank you. Oh! what I have seen to-day!" he said, suddenly recalling the second of the dead convicts. "Two prisoners have been done to death."

"Done to death? How?"

"Yes, done to death. They led them in this heat, and two died of sunstroke."

"Impossible! What, to-day? just now?"

"Yes, just now. I have seen their bodies."

"But why done to death? Who killed them?" asked Nathalie.

"They who forced them to go killed them," said Nekhludoff, with irritation, feeling that she looked at this, too, with her husband's eyes.

"Oh, Lord!" said Agraphena Petrovna, who had come up to them.

"Yes, we have not the slightest idea of what is being done to these unfortunate beings. But it ought to be known," added Nekhludoff, and looked at old Korchagin, who sat with a napkin tied round him and a bottle before him, and who looked round at

Nekhludoff.

"Nekhludoff," he called out, "won't you join me and take some refreshment? It is excellent before a journey."

Nekhludoff refused, and turned away.

"But what are you going to do?" Nathalie continued.

"What I can. I don't know, but I feel I must do something. And I shall do what I am able to."

"Yes, I understand. And how about them?" she continued, with a smile and a look towards Korchagin. "Is it possible that it is all over?"

"Completely, and I think without any regret on either side."

"It is a pity. I am sorry. I am fond of her. However, it's all right. But why do you wish to bind yourself?" she added shyly. "Why are you going?"

"I go because I must," answered Nekhludoff, seriously and dryly, as if wishing to stop this conversation. But he felt ashamed of his coldness towards his sister at once. "Why not tell her all I am thinking?" he thought, "and let Agraphena Petrovna also hear

it," he thought, with a look at the old servant, whose presence made the wish to repeat his decision to his sister even stronger.

"You mean my intention to marry Katusha? Well, you see, I made up my mind to do it, but she refuses definitely and firmly," he said, and his voice shook, as it always did when he spoke of it. "She does not wish to accept my sacrifice, but is herself sacrificing what in her position means much, and I cannot accept this sacrifice, if it is only a momentary impulse. And so I am going with her, and shall be where she is, and shall try to lighten her fate as much as I can."

Nathalie said nothing. Agraphena Petrovna looked at her with a questioning look, and shook her head. At this moment the former procession issued from the ladies' room. The same handsome footman (Philip). and the doorkeeper were carrying the Princess Korchagin. She stopped the men who were carrying her, and motioned to Nekhludoff to approach, and, with a pitiful, languishing air, she extended her white, ringed hand, expecting the firm pressure of his hand with a sense of horror.

"Epouvantable!" she said, meaning the heat. "I cannot stand it! Ce climat me tue!" And, after a short talk about the horrors of the Russian climate, she gave the men a sign to go on.

"Be sure and come," she added, turning her long face towards

Nekhludoff as she was borne away.

The procession with the Princess turned to the right towards the first-class carriages. Nekhludoff, with the porter who was carrying his things, and Taras with his bag, turned to the left.

"This is my companion," said Nekhludoff to his sister, pointing to Taras, whose story he had told her before.

"Surely not third class?" said Nathalie, when Nekhludoff stopped in front of a third-class carriage, and Taras and the porter with the things went in.

"Yes; it is more convenient for me to be with Taras," he said. "One thing more," he added; "up to now I have not given the Kousminski land to the peasants; so that, in case of my death, your children will inherit it."

"Dmitri, don't!" said Nathalie.

"If I do give it away, all I can say is that the rest will be theirs, as it is not likely I shall marry; and if I do marry I shall have no children, so that--"

"Dmitri, don't talk like that!" said Nathalie. And yet Nekhludoff noticed that she was glad to hear him say it.

Higher up, by the side of a first-class carriage, there stood a group of people still looking at the carriage into which the Princess Korchagin had been carried. Most of the passengers were already seated. Some of the late comers hurriedly clattered along the boards of the platform, the guard was closing the doors and asking the passengers to get in and those who were seeing them off to come out.

Nekhludoff entered the hot, smelling carriage, but at once stepped out again on to the small platform at the back of the carriage. Nathalie stood opposite the carriage, with her fashionable bonnet and cape, by the side of Agraphena Petrovna, and was evidently trying to find something to say.

She could not even say ecrivez, because they had long ago laughed at this word, habitually spoken by those about to part. The short conversation about money matters had in a moment destroyed the tender brotherly and sisterly feelings that had taken hold of them. They felt estranged, so that Nathalie was glad when the train moved; and she could only say, nodding her head with a sad and tender look, "Goodbye, good-bye, Dmitri." But as soon as the carriage had passed her she thought of how she should repeat her conversation with her brother to her husband, and her face became serious and troubled.

Nekhludoff, too, though he had nothing but the kindest feelings for his sister, and had hidden nothing from her, now felt depressed and uncomfortable with her, and was glad to part. He felt that the Nathalie who was once so near to him no longer existed, and in her place was only a slave of that hairy, unpleasant husband, who was so foreign to him. He saw it clearly when her face lit up with peculiar animation as he spoke of what would peculiarly interest her husband, i.e., the giving up of the land to the peasants and the inheritance.

And this made him sad.

CHAPTER XL.

THE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF HUMAN LIFE.

The heat in the large third-class carriage, which had been standing in the burning sun all day, was so great that Nekhludoff did not go in, but stopped on the little platform behind the carriage which formed a passage to the next one. But there was not a breath of fresh air here either, and Nekhludoff breathed freely only when the train had passed the buildings and the draught blew across the platform.

"Yes, killed," he repeated to himself, the words he had used to his sister. And in his imagination in the midst of all other impressions there arose with wonderful clearness the beautiful face of the second dead convict, with the smile of the lips, the severe expression of the brows, and the small, firm ear below the shaved bluish skull.

And what seemed terrible was that he had been murdered, and no one knew who had murdered him. Yet he had been murdered. He was led out like all the rest of the prisoners by Maslennikoff's orders. Maslennikoff had probably given the order in the usual manner, had signed with his stupid flourish the paper with the printed heading, and most certainly would not consider himself guilty. Still less would the careful doctor who examined the

convicts consider himself guilty. He had performed his duty accurately, and had separated the weak. How could he have foreseen this terrible heat, or the fact that they would start so late in the day and in such crowds? The prison inspector? But the inspector had only carried into execution the order that on a given day a certain number of exiles and convicts--men and women--had to be sent off. The convoy officer could not be guilty either, for his business was to receive a certain number of persons in a certain place, and to deliver up the same number. He conducted them in the usual manner, and could not foresee that two such strong men as those Nekhludoff saw would not be able to stand it and would die. No one is guilty, and yet the men have been murdered by these people who are not guilty of their murder.

"All this comes," Nekhludoff thought, "from the fact that all these people, governors, inspectors, police officers, and men, consider that there are circumstances in which human relations are not necessary between human beings. All these men, Maslennikoff, and the inspector, and the convoy officer, if they were not governor, inspector, officer, would have considered twenty times before sending people in such heat in such a mass--would have stopped twenty times on the way, and, seeing that a man was growing weak, gasping for breath, would have led him into the shade, would have given him water and let him rest, and if an accident had still occurred they would have expressed pity. But they not only did not do it, but hindered others from

doing it, because they considered not men and their duty towards them but only the office they themselves filled, and held what that office demanded of them to be above human relations. That's what it is," Nekhludoff went on in his thoughts. "If one acknowledges but for a single hour that anything can be more important than love for one's fellowmen, even in some one exceptional case, any crime can be committed without a feeling of guilt."

Nekhludoff was so engrossed by his thoughts that he did not notice how the weather changed. The sun was covered over by a low-hanging, ragged cloud. A compact, light grey cloud was rapidly coming from the west, and was already falling in heavy, driving rain on the fields and woods far in the distance. Moisture, coming from the cloud, mixed with the air. Now and then the cloud was rent by flashes of lightning, and peals of thunder mingled more and more often with the rattling of the train. The cloud came nearer and nearer, the rain-drops driven by the wind began to spot the platform and Nekhludoff's coat; and he stepped to the other side of the little platform, and, inhaling the fresh, moist air--filled with the smell of corn and wet earth that had long been waiting for rain--he stood looking at the gardens, the woods, the yellow rye fields, the green oatfields, the dark-green strips of potatoes in bloom, that glided past. Everything looked as if covered over with varnish--the green turned greener, the yellow yellower, the black blacker.

"More! more!" said Nekhludoff, gladdened by the sight of gardens and fields revived by the beneficent shower. The shower did not last long. Part of the cloud had come down in rain, part passed over, and the last fine drops fell straight on to the earth. The sun reappeared, everything began to glisten, and in the east--not very high above the horizon--appeared a bright rainbow, with the violet tint very distinct and broken only at one end.

"Why, what was I thinking about?" Nekhludoff asked himself when all these changes in nature were over, and the train ran into a cutting between two high banks.

"Oh! I was thinking that all those people (inspector, convoy men--all those in the service) are for the greater part kind people--cruel only because they are serving." He recalled Maslennikoff's indifference when he told him about what was being done in the prison, the inspector's severity, the cruelty of the convoy officer when he refused places on the carts to those who asked for them, and paid no attention to the fact that there was a woman in travail in the train. All these people were evidently invulnerable and impregnable to the simplest feelings of compassion only because they held offices. "As officials they were impermeable to the feelings of humanity, as this paved ground is impermeable to the rain." Thus thought Nekhludoff as he looked at the railway embankment paved with stones of different

colours, down which the water was running in streams instead of soaking into the earth. "Perhaps it is necessary to pave the banks with stones, but it is sad to look at the ground, which might be yielding corn, grass, bushes, or trees in the same way as the ground visible up there is doing--deprived of vegetation, and so it is with men," thought Nekhludoff. "Perhaps these governors, inspectors, policemen, are needed, but it is terrible to see men deprived of the chief human attribute, that of love and sympathy for one another. The thing is," he continued, "that these people consider lawful what is not lawful, and do not consider the eternal, immutable law, written in the hearts of men by God, as law. That is why I feel so depressed when I am with these people. I am simply afraid of them, and really they are terrible, more terrible than robbers. A robber might, after all, feel pity, but they can feel no pity, they are inured against pity as these stones are against vegetation. That is what makes them terrible. It is said that the Pougatcheffs, the Razins [leaders of rebellions in Russia: Stonka Razin in the 17th and Pougatcheff in the 18th century] are terrible. These are a thousand times more terrible," he continued, in his thoughts. "If a psychological problem were set to find means of making men of our time--Christian, humane, simple, kind people--perform the most horrible crimes without feeling guilty, only one solution could be devised: to go on doing what is being done. It is only necessary that these people should he governors, inspectors, policemen; that they should be fully convinced that there is a

kind of business, called government service, which allows men to
treat other men as things, without human brotherly relations with
them, and also that these people should be so linked together by
this government service that the responsibility for the results
of their actions should not fall on any one of them separately.
Without these conditions, the terrible acts I witnessed to-day
would be impossible in our times. It all lies in the fact that
men think there are circumstances in which one may deal with
human beings without love; and there are no such circumstances.
One may deal with things without love. One may cut down trees,
make bricks, hammer iron without love; but you cannot deal with
men without it, just as one cannot deal with bees without being
careful. If you deal carelessly with bees you will injure them,
and will yourself be injured. And so with men. It cannot be
otherwise, because natural love is the fundamental law of human
life. It is true that a man cannot force another to love him, as
he can force him to work for him; but it does not follow that a
man may deal with men without love, especially to demand anything
from them. If you feel no love, sit still," Nekhludoff thought;
"occupy yourself with things, with yourself, with anything you
like, only not with men. You can only eat without injuring
yourself when you feel inclined to eat, so you can only deal with
men usefully when you love. Only let yourself deal with a man
without love, as I did yesterday with my brother-in-law, and
there are no limits to the suffering you will bring on yourself,
as all my life proves. Yes, yes, it is so," thought Nekhludoff;

"it is good; yes, it is good," he repeated, enjoying the freshness after the torturing heat, and conscious of having attained to the fullest clearness on a question that had long occupied him.

CHAPTER XLI.

TARAS'S STORY.

The carriage in which Nekhludoff had taken his place was half filled with people. There were in it servants, working men, factory hands, butchers, Jews, shopmen, workmen's wives, a soldier, two ladies, a young one and an old one with bracelets on her arm, and a severe-looking gentleman with a cockade on his black cap. All these people were sitting quietly; the bustle of taking their places was long over; some sat cracking and eating sunflower seeds, some smoking, some talking.

Taras sat, looking very happy, opposite the door, keeping a place for Nekhludoff, and carrying on an animated conversation with a man in a cloth coat who sat opposite to him, and who was, as Nekhludoff afterwards found out, a gardener going to a new situation. Before reaching the place where Taras sat Nekhludoff stopped between the seats near a reverend-looking old man with a white beard and nankeen coat, who was talking with a young woman in peasant dress. A little girl of about seven, dressed in a new peasant costume, sat, her little legs dangling above the floor, by the side of the woman, and kept cracking seeds.

The old man turned round, and, seeing Nekhludoff, he moved the lappets of his coat off the varnished seat next to him, and said,

in a friendly manner:

"Please, here's a seat."

Nekhludoff thanked him, and took the seat. As soon as he was seated the woman continued the interrupted conversation.

She was returning to her village, and related how her husband, whom she had been visiting, had received her in town.

"I was there during the carnival, and now, by the Lord's help, I've been again," she said. "Then, God willing, at Christmas I'll go again."

"That's right," said the old man, with a look at Nekhludoff, "it's the best way to go and see him, else a young man can easily go to the bad, living in a town."

"Oh, no, sir, mine is not such a man. No nonsense of any kind about him; his life is as good as a young maiden's. The money he earns he sends home all to a copeck. And, as to our girl here, he was so glad to see her, there are no words for it," said the woman, and smiled.

The little girl, who sat cracking her seeds and spitting out the shells, listened to her mother's words, and, as if to confirm

them, looked up with calm, intelligent eyes into Nekhludoff's and the old man's faces.

"Well, if he's good, that's better still," said the old man. "And none of that sort of thing?" he added, with a look at a couple, evidently factory hands, who sat at the other side of the carriage. The husband, with his head thrown back, was pouring vodka down his throat out of a bottle, and the wife sat holding a bag, out of which they had taken the bottle, and watched him intently.

"No, mine neither drinks nor smokes," said the woman who was conversing with the old man, glad of the opportunity of praising her husband once more. "No, sir, the earth does not hold many such." And, turning to Nekhludoff, she added, "That's the sort of man he is."

"What could be better," said the old man, looking at the factory worker, who had had his drink and had passed the bottle to his wife. The wife laughed, shook her head, and also raised the bottle to her lips.

Noticing Nekhludoff's and the old man's look directed towards them, the factory worker addressed the former.

"What is it, sir? That we are drinking? Ah, no one sees how we

work, but every one sees how we drink. I have earned it, and I am drinking and treating my wife, and no one else."

"Yes, yes," said Nekhludoff, not knowing what to say.

"True, sir. My wife is a steady woman. I am satisfied with my wife, because she can feel for me. Is it right what I'm saying, Mavra?"

"There you are, take it, I don't want any more," said the wife, returning the bottle to him. "And what are you jawing for like that?" she added.

"There now! She's good--that good; and suddenly she'll begin squeaking like a wheel that's not greased. Mavra, is it right what I'm saying?"

Mavra laughed and moved her hand with a tipsy gesture.

"Oh, my, he's at it again."

"There now, she's that good--that good; but let her get her tail over the reins, and you can't think what she'll be up to. . . . Is it right what I'm saying? You must excuse me, sir, I've had a drop! What's to be done?" said the factory worker, and, preparing to go to sleep, put his head in his wife's lap.

Nekhludoff sat a while with the old man, who told him all about himself. The old man was a stove builder, who had been working for 53 years, and had built so many stoves that he had lost count, and now he wanted to rest, but had no time. He had been to town and found employment for the young ones, and was now going to the country to see the people at home. After hearing the old man's story, Nekhludoff went to the place that Taras was keeping for him.

"It's all right, sir; sit down; we'll put the bag here," said the gardener, who sat opposite Taras, in a friendly tone, looking up into Nekhludoff's face.

"Rather a tight fit, but no matter since we are friends," said Taras, smiling, and lifting the bag, which weighed more than five stone, as if it were a feather, he carried it across to the window.

"Plenty of room; besides, we might stand up a bit; and even under the seat it's as comfortable as you could wish. What's the good of humbugging?" he said, beaming with friendliness and kindness.

Taras spoke of himself as being unable to utter a word when quite sober; but drink, he said, helped him to find the right words, and then he could express everything. And in reality, when he was

sober Taras kept silent; but when he had been drinking, which happened rarely and only on special occasions, he became very pleasantly talkative. Then he spoke a great deal, spoke well and very simply and truthfully, and especially with great kindliness, which shone in his gentle, blue eyes and in the friendly smile that never left his lips. He was in such a state to-day. Nekhludoff's approach interrupted the conversation; but when he had put the bag in its place, Taras sat down again, and with his strong hands folded in his lap, and looking straight into the gardener's face, continued his story. He was telling his new acquaintance about his wife and giving every detail: what she was being sent to Siberia for, and why he was now following her. Nekhludoff had never heard a detailed account of this affair, and so he listened with interest. When he came up, the story had reached the point when the attempt to poison was already an accomplished fact, and the family had discovered that it was Theodosia's doing.

"It's about my troubles that I'm talking," said Taras, addressing Nekhludoff with cordial friendliness. "I have chanced to come across such a hearty man, and we've got into conversation, and I'm telling him all."

"I see," said Nekhludoff.

"Well, then in this way, my friend, the business became known.

Mother, she takes that cake. 'I'm going,' says she, 'to the police officer.' My father is a just old man. 'Wait, wife,' says he, 'the little woman is a mere child, and did not herself know what she was doing. We must have pity. She may come to her senses.' But, dear me, mother would not hear of it. 'While we keep her here,' she says, 'she may destroy us all like cockroaches.' Well, friend, so she goes off for the police officer. He bounces in upon us at once. Calls for witnesses."

"Well, and you?" asked the gardener.

"Well, I, you see, friend, roll about with the pain in my stomach, and vomit. All my inside is turned inside out; I can't even speak. Well, so father he goes and harnesses the mare, and puts Theodosia into the cart, and is off to the police-station, and then to the magistrate's. And she, you know, just as she had done from the first, so also there, confesses all to the magistrate--where she got the arsenic, and how she kneaded the cake. 'Why did you do it?' says he. 'Why,' says she, 'because he's hateful to me. I prefer Siberia to a life with him.' That's me," and Taras smiled.

"Well, so she confessed all. Then, naturally--the prison, and father returns alone. And harvest time just coming, and mother the only woman at home, and she no longer strong. So we think what we are to do. Could we not bail her out? So father went to

see an official. No go. Then another. I think he went to five of them, and we thought of giving it up. Then we happened to come across a clerk--such an artful one as you don't often find. 'You give me five roubles, and I'll get her out,' says he. He agreed to do it for three. Well, and what do you think, friend? I went and pawned the linen she herself had woven, and gave him the money. As soon as he had written that paper," drawled out Taras, just as if he were speaking of a shot being fired, "we succeeded at once. I went to fetch her myself. Well, friend, so I got to town, put up the mare, took the paper, and went to the prison. 'What do you want?' 'This is what I want,' say I, 'you've got my wife here in prison.' 'And have you got a paper?' I gave him the paper. He gave it a look. 'Wait,' says he. So I sat down on a bench. It was already past noon by the sun. An official comes out. 'You are Vargoushoff?' 'I am.' 'Well, you may take her.' The gates opened, and they led her out in her own clothes quite all right. 'Well, come along. Have you come on foot?' 'No, I have the horse here.' So I went and paid the ostler, and harnessed, put in all the hay that was left, and covered it with sacking for her to sit on. She got in and wrapped her shawl round her, and off we drove. She says nothing and I say nothing. Just as we were coming up to the house she says, 'And how's mother; is she alive?' 'Yes, she's alive.' 'And father; is he alive? 'Yes, he is.' 'Forgive me, Taras,' she says, 'for my folly. I did not myself know what I was doing.' So I say, 'Words won't mend matters. I have forgiven you long ago,' and I said no more. We got home, and she just fell

at mother's feet. Mother says, 'The Lord will forgive you.' And father said, 'How d'you do?' and 'What's past is past. Live as best you can. Now,' says he, 'is not the time for all that; there's the harvest to be gathered in down at Skorodino,' he says. 'Down on the manured acre, by the Lord's help, the ground has borne such rye that the sickle can't tackle it. It's all interwoven and heavy, and has sunk beneath its weight; that must be reaped. You and Taras had better go and see to it to-morrow.' Well, friend, from that moment she took to the work and worked so that every one wondered. At that time we rented three desiatins, and by God's help we had a wonderful crop both of oats and rye. I mow and she binds the sheaves, and sometimes we both of us reap. I am good at work and not afraid of it, but she's better still at whatever she takes up. She's a smart woman, young, and full of life; and as to work, friend, she'd grown that eager that I had to stop her. We get home, our fingers swollen, our arms aching, and she, instead of resting, rushes off to the barn to make binders for the sheaves for next day. Such a change!"

"Well, and to you? Was she kinder, now?" asked the gardener.

"That's beyond question. She clings to me as if we were one soul. Whatever I think she understands. Even mother, angry as she was, could not help saying: 'It's as if our Theodosia had been transformed; she's quite a different woman now!' We were once going to cart the sheaves with two carts. She and I were in the

first, and I say, 'How could you think of doing that, Theodosia?' and she says, 'How could I think of it? just so, I did not wish to live with you. I thought I'd rather die than live with you!' I say, 'And now?' and she says, 'Now you're in my heart!'" Taras stopped, and smiled joyfully, shook his head as if surprised. "Hardly had we got the harvest home when I went to soak the hemp, and when I got home there was a summons, she must go to be tried, and we had forgotten all about the matter that she was to be tried for."

"It can only be the evil one," said the gardener. "Could any man of himself think of destroying a living soul? We had a fellow once--" and the gardener was about to commence his tale when the train began to stop.

"It seems we are coming to a station," he said. "I'll go and have a drink."

The conversation stopped, and Nekhludoff followed the gardener out of the carriage onto the wet platform of the station.

CHAPTER XLII.

LE VRAI GRAND MONDE.

Before Nekhludoff got out he had noticed in the station yard several elegant equipages, some with three, some with four, well-fed horses, with tinkling bells on their harness. When he stepped out on the wet, dark-coloured boards of the platform, he saw a group of people in front of the first-class carriage, among whom were conspicuous a stout lady with costly feathers on her hat, and a waterproof, and a tall, thin-legged young man in a cycling suit. The young man had by his side an enormous, well-fed dog, with a valuable collar. Behind them stood footmen, holding wraps and umbrellas, and a coachman, who had also come to meet the train.

On the whole of the group, from the fat lady down to the coachman who stood holding up his long coat, there lay the stamp of wealth and quiet self-assurance. A curious and servile crowd rapidly gathered round this group--the station-master, in his red cap, a gendarme, a thin young lady in a Russian costume, with beads round her neck, who made a point of seeing the trains come in all through the summer, a telegraph clerk, and passengers, men and women.

In the young man with the dog Nekhludoff recognised young

Korchagin, a gymnasium student. The fat lady was the Princess's sister, to whose estate the Korchagins were now moving. The guard, with his gold cord and shiny top-boots, opened the carriage door and stood holding it as a sign of deference, while Philip and a porter with a white apron carefully carried out the long-faced Princess in her folding chair. The sisters greeted each other, and French sentences began flying about. Would the Princess go in a closed or an open carriage? At last the procession started towards the exit, the lady's maid, with her curly fringe, parasol and leather case in the rear.

Nekhludoff not wishing to meet them and to have to take leave over again, stopped before he got to the door, waiting for the procession to pass.

The Princess, her son, Missy, the doctor, and the maid went out first, the old Prince and his sister-in-law remained behind. Nekhludoff was too far to catch anything but a few disconnected French sentences of their conversation One of the sentences uttered by the Prince, as it often happens, for some unaccountable reason remained in his memory with all its intonations and the sound of the voice.

"Oh, il est du vrai grand monde, du vrai grand monde," said the Prince in his loud, self-assured tone as he went out of the station with his sister-in-law, accompanied by the respectful

guards and porters.

At this moment from behind the corner of the station suddenly appeared a crowd of workmen in bark shoes, wearing sheepskin coats and carrying bags on their backs. The workmen went up to the nearest carriage with soft yet determined steps, and were about to get in, but were at once driven away by a guard. Without stopping, the workmen passed on, hurrying and jostling one another, to the next carriage and began getting in, catching their bags against the corners and door of the carriage, but another guard caught sight of them from the door of the station, and shouted at them severely. The workmen, who had already got in, hurried out again and went on, with the same soft and firm steps, still further towards Nekhludoff's carriage. A guard was again going to stop them, but Nekhludoff said there was plenty of room inside, and that they had better get in. They obeyed and got in, followed by Nekhludoff.

The workmen were about to take their seats, when the gentleman with the cockade and the two ladies, looking at this attempt to settle in their carriage as a personal insult to themselves, indignantly protested and wanted to turn them out. The workmen--there were 20 of them, old men and quite young ones, all of them wearied, sunburnt, with haggard faces--began at once to move on through the carriage, catching the seats, the walls, and the doors with their bags. They evidently felt they had offended

in some way, and seemed ready to go on indefinitely wherever they were ordered to go.

"Where are you pushing to, you fiends? Sit down here," shouted another guard they met.

"Voila encore des nouvelles," exclaimed the younger of the two ladies, quite convinced that she would attract Nekhludoff's notice by her good French.

The other lady with the bracelets kept sniffing and making faces, and remarked something about how pleasant it was to sit with smelly peasants.

The workmen, who felt the joy and calm experienced by people who have escaped some kind of danger, threw off their heavy bags with a movement of their shoulders and stowed them away under the seats.

The gardener had left his own seat to talk with Taras, and now went back, so that there were two unoccupied seats opposite and one next to Taras. Three of the workmen took these seats, but when Nekhludoff came up to them, in his gentleman's clothing, they got so confused that they rose to go away, but Nekhludoff asked them to stay, and himself sat down on the arm of the seat, by the passage down the middle of the carriage.

One of the workmen, a man of about 50, exchanged a surprised and even frightened look with a young man. That Nekhludoff, instead of scolding and driving them away, as was natural to a gentleman, should give up his seat to them, astonished and perplexed them. They even feared that this might have some evil result for them.

However, they soon noticed that there was no underlying plot when they heard Nekhludoff talking quite simply with Taras, and they grew quiet and told one of the lads to sit down on his bag and give his seat to Nekhludoff. At first the elderly workman who sat opposite Nekhludoff shrank and drew back his legs for fear of touching the gentleman, but after a while he grew quite friendly, and in talking to him and Taras even slapped Nekhludoff on the knee when he wanted to draw special attention to what he was saying.

He told them all about his position and his work in the peat bogs, whence he was now returning home. He had been working there for two and a half months, and was bringing home his wages, which only came to 10 roubles, since part had been paid beforehand when he was hired. They worked, as he explained, up to their knees in water from sunrise to sunset, with two hours' interval for dinner.

"Those who are not used to it find it hard, of course," he said;

"but when one's hardened it doesn't matter, if only the food is right. At first the food was bad. Later the people complained, and they got good food, and it was easy to work."

Then he told them how, during 28 years he went out to work, and sent all his earnings home. First to his father, then to his eldest brother, and now to his nephew, who was at the head of the household. On himself he spent only two or three roubles of the 50 or 60 he earned a year, just for luxuries--tobacco and matches.

"I'm a sinner, when tired I even drink a little vodka sometimes," he added, with a guilty smile.

Then he told them how the women did the work at home, and how the contractor had treated them to half a pail of vodka before they started to-day, how one of them had died, and another was returning home ill. The sick workman he was talking about was in a corner of the same carriage. He was a young lad, with a pale, sallow face and bluish lips. He was evidently tormented by intermittent fever. Nekhludoff went up to him, but the lad looked up with such a severe and suffering expression that Nekhludoff did not care to bother him with questions, but advised the elder man to give him quinine, and wrote down the name of the medicine. He wished to give him some money, but the old workman said he would pay for it himself.

"Well, much as I have travelled, I have never met such a gentleman before. Instead of punching your head, he actually gives up his place to you," said the old man to Taras. "It seems there are all sorts of gentlefolk, too."

"Yes, this is quite a new and different world," thought Nekhludoff, looking at these spare, sinewy, limbs, coarse, home-made garments, and sunburnt, kindly, though weary-looking faces, and feeling himself surrounded on all sides with new people and the serious interests, joys, and sufferings of a life of labour.

"Here is le vrai grand monde," thought Nekhludoff, remembering the words of Prince Korchagin and all that idle, luxurious world to which the Korchagins belonged, with their petty, mean interests. And he felt the joy of a traveller on discovering a new, unknown, and beautiful world.

END OF BOOK II.