

CHAPTER III.

The influence exerted by Maria Pablovna over Katiousha was due to the fact that Katiousha loved Maria Pablovna. There was another influence--that of Simonson, and that was due to the fact that Simonson loved Katiousha.

Simonson decided everything by the light of his reason, and having once decided upon a thing, he never swerved. While yet a student he made up his mind that the wealth of his father, who was an officer of the Commissary Department, was dishonestly accumulated. He then declared to him that his wealth ought to be returned to the people. And when he was reprimanded he left the house and refused to avail himself of his father's means. Having come to the conclusion that all evil can be traced to the people's ignorance, he joined the Democrats, on leaving the university, and obtaining the position of village teacher, he boldly preached before his pupils and the peasants that which he considered to be just, and denounced that which he considered unjust and false.

He was arrested and prosecuted.

During the trial he decided that the court had no right to judge him, and said so. The judges disagreeing with him and proceeding with the trial, he concluded not to answer their questions and remained silent.

He was sentenced to exile in the Government of Archangel. There he formulated a religious creed defining all his actions. According to this religious teaching nothing in the world is dead, there is life in everything; all those things which we consider dead, inorganic, are but parts of a huge organic body which we cannot embrace, and that, as a part of a huge organism, man's aim should be to conserve the life of that organism and the lives of all its parts. He therefore considered it a crime to destroy life; was against war, executions, the killing in any manner not only of human beings, but of animals. He also had his theory of marriage, according to which the breeding of people was man's lower function, his higher function consisting in conserving life already existing. He found confirmation of this idea in the existence of phagocytes in the blood. Bachelors, according to him, were the same phagocytes whose function was to help the weak, sickly parts of the organism. And true to his convictions, he had been performing this function since he became convinced of the truth of the theory, although as a youth he had led a different life. He called himself, as well as Maria Pablovna, a phagocyte of the world.

His love for Katiousha did not violate this theory, since it was purely platonic. He assumed that such love not only did not prevent his phagocyte activity, but aided it.

And it was this man who, falling in love with Katiousha, had a decisive influence over her. With the instincts of a woman, Maslova soon discovered it, and the consciousness that she could arouse the

feeling of love in such a remarkable man raised her in her own estimation. Nekhludoff offered to marry her out of magnanimity, and the obligation for the past, but Simonson loved her as she was now, and loved her simply because he loved her. She felt, besides, that he considered her an unusual woman, distinguished from all other women, and possessing high moral qualities. She did not know exactly what those qualities were, but, at all events, not to deceive him, she endeavored with all her power to call forth her best qualities and, necessarily, be as good as she could be.