

PREFACE TO SEVASTOPOL AND OTHER MILITARY TALES

DURING the siege of Sevastopol, from 17th October 1854 to 6th September 1855, the Allies, it has been calculated, fired from their cannon and mortars no less than 1,356,000 shots at the town and its defenders. None of these, however, or of the much more numerous small-arm bullets, hit a young officer, Count Leo Tolstoy by name, whose death would have deprived the world of much that it could ill spare.

Thanks to the sketches he then wrote and published, we may to-day know what was occupying the hearts and minds of the men our fathers fought against.

He had no preconceived theories to defend, but—as the reader may see—observed closely, and fearlessly expressed what he perceived; knowing instinctively that truth is desirable, and that sincerity is the path towards what is good. Perhaps to see and speak the truth during a patriotic war needed a rarer kind of courage than that demanded for service at the front. Indeed, Tolstoy remembers that, contending with his main desire to see things as they were and to pass on to others the feelings he really experienced, another mental current drew him towards saying what was expected of him, and he managed, here and there, to wring out of himself a few patriotic words. What he was able to constrain himself to in that direction was, however, not sufficient to satisfy the censor or the

editor of the magazine in which the sketches first appeared ; and the latter, on his side, added sundry patriotic touches.

Knowing this to be the case, I selected certain passages which had a spurious ring, and wrote to Tolstoy about them. His reply was: "With reference to the translation of *Sevastopol*, all the extracts you sent were either altered or inserted by the editor to meet the wishes of the censor, and it would therefore be better to omit them. The last extract quoted by you is especially abominable ; it was added by the editor and displeased me very much at the time."

The chief passages referred to were these, from the last pages of *Sevastopol in December* :—

"But here it seems to you that, on each face, peril, animosity, and the privations of war, have added to these dominant characteristics, traces of a sense of personal dignity and of higher thought and feeling."

"And this power is a feeling which the Russian people rarely show and are even ashamed of showing, but which lies deep in every heart—the love of their native land."

And the "especially abominable" passage was from the conclusion of *May* and ran as follows:—

"It is a comfort to think that it was not we who began this war, that we are only defending our own country, our Fatherland."

Many men have written books to make out a case for this or that sentiment or opinion, and many, on the other hand, have written, without understanding that "morality is in the nature of things,"—Tolstoy, differing from both these classes, wished to get at realities, and felt that there are realities to get at.

By thought and observation, and knowledge of his own

heart, he found the motives that lead men voluntarily to join armies, to apply for active service, and to put on a bold front in face of death. As a result of his sincerity, he is able to give us more of the truth about war than other writers have done. Proclamations by Governments, reports by Generals, official despatches, Ministerial statements, newspapers articles, biographies of General This, and So-and-So's history of this or that war, are largely engaged in making out a case for some nation, party, or person, or in favour of this or that semi-artificial sentiment or theory. Tolstoy's appeal is to those who care for *truth*. The profoundest truth we can reach relates to man's mind and soul, and it results in guidance for thoughts, feelings, and actions. Compared to this, statistics, and the facts usually dealt with by politicians, are but an outer husk. That is why stories such as these of Tolstoy remain fresh and living, when to read the histories telling us of disputes about old treaties, and giving details of fights with obsolete weapons in forts long since demolished, has, to many men, become like chewing chaff.

As far as the actual occurrences are concerned, though the material dealt with is evidently drawn from real life, Tolstoy's stories and sketches cannot be regarded as autobiographical; but they are autobiographical in this respect, that they most faithfully transmit the thoughts and feelings their author experienced. And there is so close a relation between his life and his writings that a knowledge of the one helps us to appreciate the other.

Count Leo Tolstoy, born in 1828, lost his mother when he was three years old, and his father when he was nine. The Countess Osten-Saken, who was his guardian from 1837, died in 1840, and Leo Tolstoy, his sister, and his three brothers then went to Kazán to live with their aunt, Polína

Ilyínishna Ushkóf, who was a *grande dame*, moving in and receiving the "best" society. Of the influences brought to bear upon him we know something from *My Confession* :— "The kind aunt with whom I lived (herself the purest of women) always told me there was nothing she so desired for me as an intimacy with a married woman : 'rien ne forme un homme comme une liaison avec une femme comme il faut.' Another happiness she desired for me was that I should become an aide-de-camp, and, if possible, aide-de-camp to the Emperor. But the greatest happiness of all would be that I should marry a very rich girl, and should, in consequence of such marriage, have as many slaves as possible."

To some extent Tolstoy, during his seven years in Kazán (from 1840 to 1847), adopted the views prevalent in the set among whom he lived, and acquired that class feeling and worship of gentility which exists "in every grade of society that is reached by vanity," and which has never been more clearly described than by him in *Youth*, when, having spoken of it as "one of the most harmful and false conceptions instilled into me by education and society," he continues :—

"My favourite and chief classification of people, at the time of which I am writing, was into *comme il faut* and *comme il ne faut pas* (people of *good form* and people of *no class*). The second category was again subdivided into those who were in themselves not *comme il faut* and the common folk. Those who were *comme il faut* I respected, and counted as worthy of being on an equal footing with myself. The second category I pretended to despise, but in reality hated, cherishing towards them a feeling of personal offence. The third (the common folk) did not exist for me : I despised them absolutely. My '*comme il faut*' consisted, first and chiefly, in excellent French, especially as to pronuncia-

tion. A man who spoke bad French excited in me an immediate feeling of enmity. 'Why do you want to talk as we do, when you can't?' was the ironical question I mentally put to him. The second condition of *comme il faut* was to have long nails, well-trimmed and clean. The third was ability to bow, to dance, and to converse. The fourth, and a very important one, was indifference to everything, and a perpetual expression of elegant, contemptuous ennui. In addition to these there were certain general indications by which I could, without speaking to a man, decide to which category he belonged. The chief of these, besides the arrangement of his rooms, his gloves, handwriting, and equipage, was his *feet*. The relation of a man's boots to his trousers immediately decided my opinion of his position. Boots without heels, with square toes, and trousers narrow at the bottom without foot-straps, indicated a common fellow; boots with narrow rounded toes and with heels, and trousers narrow at the bottom, tight to the leg, or wide with foot-straps and coming over the front of the foot like a baldachin, showed a man to be '*mauvais genre*'—and so on."

It was inevitable that Count Leo Tolstoy, brought up in aristocratic circles, should have to face that bogey which, in various walks of life, we all have to meet and see through if we wish to possess our own souls: the bogey of "social propriety," "the proper thing," "what is expected of one," and the rest of those mysterious superstitions which hold many men and women in life-long bondage. That he had made up his mind about these matters, and had burst, or was bursting, all such bonds asunder, is plainly to be seen in these stories. Had he not fought and overcome that enemy, none of his subsequent achieve-

ments would have been possible. For the freedom to think, feel, speak, and act for ourselves is essential if we are to progress, and the most exacting and most omnipresent tyrant is the social pressure which seeks to mould live men into conventional forms. In that respect England is to-day less free than Russia; and one may doubt whether political freedom is of much value unless men's souls are emancipated, and they dare to think as well as to vote.

As Tolstoy says in *Youth* :—

“ At a certain period, after many mistakes and illusions, it is usual for a man to have to choose an active part in the life of the community : to choose some branch of work and devote himself to it ; but to one who is *comme il faut* this seldom happens. I have known, and still know, very, very many people—old, proud, self-assured, harsh in their judgments—who, should the question be put to them in the next world : ‘ Who are you ? What did you do in the world ? ’ will not be able to answer otherwise than by saying : ‘ *I was quite a gentleman.* ’ ”

“ That fate awaited me.”

But before those words were written Tolstoy had seen what an exorbitant price the devotees of gentility have to pay for the advantages they enjoy, and (to bring the matter nearer home) that there are things more important even than well-placed *h's* and the correct management of knife, fork, and spoon. Tolstoy's perception of the pettiness and artificiality of the conventions of “ good society,” runs like a red thread in the warp through all these stories. Lieutenant-Captain Mihálylof's hesitation before venturing to accost the staff-officers on the Boulevard, in *Sevastopol*, and Bólhof serving in the Caucasus in obedience to tradition, in *The Wood-Felling*, are instances of it ; but the most

striking example is in the story *Meeting a Moscow Acquaintance*, where poor Gouskóf, once so brilliant in Petersburg society and still clinging to his social superstitions, cuts so abject and despicable a figure in the rough Caucasus.

"To him that hath shall be given," and the love of truth which enabled Tolstoy to emancipate himself from his class prejudices, enabled him also to penetrate deeper and deeper into the realities of life. The common folk no longer "did not exist" for him; on the contrary, he began to understand, to appreciate, and to learn from them.

Leaving the university of Kázan in 1847, he settled at Yásnaya Polyána, determined to improve the wretched condition of his 700 serfs. His attempts were not very successful in their apparent results. He had himself much to learn; the relations of owner to serf were not such as could readily be adjusted to the ideas then forming in his mind. The real success of his efforts lay in their effect on his own character, in the experience he gained, and the insight into the complexity of things, which prepared him for the work that lay before him. But sincerity, a desire to do right, and the new ideas that were forming in his mind, did not immediately, or even rapidly, overcome in him defects due to character or to education.

In 1851, after losing heavily at cards (an experience of which we have many a reminder in this volume), and finding that to pay off his debts he must change his way of life, he set out for the Caucasus, and having repeatedly given himself a solemn promise "never again to take those accursed cards in his hand," he lived for a time, it is said, on five roubles a month, which was little enough, though, no doubt, it meant a good deal more in the Caucasus than than it would now.

Here, in the Caucasus, the wild, free life, the close inter-

course with nature, and the beauty of the scenery, delighted Tolstoy. He hunted much, and came into intimate touch with common people under conditions which showed wherein they were superior to the men of his own class.

The gradual conquest of the Caucasus by Russia was then proceeding, and war was chronic. Meeting a relation who held an important position on the staff, Tolstoy, at his instigation, entered the artillery as a Junker, and took part in some small engagements such as that described in *The Wood-Felling*.

At first he was passionately desirous of distinguishing himself; but though he was recommended for a Cross of St. George, his hopes of receiving it were disappointed in consequence of the personal ill-will of one of his commanders. This rebuff helped him to clear his mind on the subject of bravery, a matter often alluded to in his writings. He realised that there is a truer bravery in the steady performance of dangerous duties than in the showy gallantry that, panting for rewards, exposes itself to unnecessary perils; and that we should disentangle our ideas of bravery from all association with distinctions and rewards, which are often capriciously bestowed, and are for the most part the perquisite of those who have influence.

It was at this time that the artistic side of Tolstoy's nature—which during the preceding years in Yásnaya Polyána had found satisfaction in music—first expressed itself in literature. His first sketch, *Childhood*, finished 9th July 1852, was sent anonymously to the poet N. A. Nekrásóf, editor of the Petersburg *Contemporary*. At once recognising the genius of the new writer, Nekrásóf hastened to print the sketch, and asked for further contributions.

In 1853 the war with Turkey broke out, and Tolstoy, applying for service in the army of the Danube, received an appointment on the staff of his uncle, Count Gortchakóf,

the Commander-in-Chief. Next year the chief scene of action shifted from the borders of Turkey to Sevastopol, where Tolstoy arrived in November 1854, a few weeks after the commencement of the siege; and where (with the exception of sundry excursions to Simferópol) he remained until the town was abandoned by the Russians after a siege of eleven months. His bravery throughout his military career was irreproachable, and he is said to have been unwilling to avail himself of his privileges as a staff-officer. At Sevastopol he served for some days in the terrible Fourth Bastion. In May 1855 he was appointed to the command of a mountain division, and on 23rd August (new style) distinguished himself in the battle of the Tchérnaya, when the Russian army outside Sevastopol unsuccessfully attacked a position held by the French and Sardinians. He was also present at the final assault on Sevastopol, which he has so vividly described in this volume. Of the fierceness of that fight we may form some idea by remembering that the losses on the side of the allies alone on that one day amounted to nearly 10,000 men killed, wounded, or missing (7546 French and 2447 English).

Especially after the affair at the Tchérnaya, Tolstoy nourished hopes of promotion, and even of achieving his aunt's desire by becoming aide-de-camp to the Emperor. But one cannot serve two masters, and truth—the master Tolstoy had elected to serve—was more exacting in its claims than he had foreseen. "Speak the truth as you see it, and others will take care not to let you be too inconsistent," is a saying he has often repeated in later years.

The gross incompetence of the Russian military system under Nicholas I.—though everything else was sacrificed to military organisation—had been strikingly exhibited at the commencement of the Crimean War, when Ménshikof—who

was the Commander-in-Chief in the Crimea before Gortchakóv's arrival—practically abandoned Sevastopol to its fate. Admiral Kornflov and his sailors, aided by the genius of the engineer officer Todlében, and supported by those remarkable qualities of endurance, faithfulness to duty, equanimity under privations, and trust in a Higher Power, which existed in the common people, and which Tolstoy was learning to appreciate, had to improvise the defence of the town, and shame the Commander-in-Chief into allowing the army to return to its defence.

Tolstoy was the first writer to contrast the sterling qualities of the Russian peasant with the vanity, emptiness, and incompetence of the governing class, who sent these peasants to death by tens of thousands with as little compunction as a chess-player feels when sacrificing a piece to improve his position. Tolstoy expressed his perception of the incompetence of his official superiors in satirical verses, which gained immediate popularity and were sung throughout the army. The following lines (translated by my wife) refer to the ill-planned affair on the Tchérnaya. Their authorship becoming known, Tolstoy once more forfeited all chance of the rewards he anticipated, and, saved from all danger of becoming aide-de-camp to an emperor, became great both as a novelist and as a moral force calling mankind to a new and fundamental reformation.

“ 'Twas in August, on the Fourth,
That the devil sent us forth
That same hill to take.
General Baron Vrévsky, he,
Gortchakóv would not let be,
Being rather screwed.
'Prince, if you don't take that hill
'Twixt us two 'twill make ill-will.
I'd report you soon.'
So they all in council met,

Each big-wig and epaulet.
 E'en Bekók, of the police,
 Police-Master of the place,
 Could not think in this here case
 What he'd better say.
 So they pondered, racked their brains,
 Drew up plans with care and pains
 On a large white sheet.
 All so smooth without a blot—
 The ravines they clean forgot
 Which we had to cross !

 Reyád, not troubling of his pate,
 To the bridge then led us straight :
 ' Now, then, shout, Hurrah ! '
 And ' Hurrah ' we then did shout—
 I don't know how 't came about—
 No supports were there !
 Though in regiment started we,
 Of them all some comp'nies three
 Reached Fedúhin's heights.
 Of the French there was a lot—
 Three times more than we had got,
 And re'forcements—heaps !
 We a column to our aid
 Did expect, and signals made
 To the garrison.
 But while the General—you know who—
 With long prayers made great ado,
 We had to retreat." . . .

There is not much ground for surprise that the author of those verses, when he left the army, after being sent with despatches to Petersburg, did so with no higher rank than that of lieutenant.

As a set-off against his disappointments in the army, came the great success of his stories of Sevastopol. There were, of course, the usual—and even more than the usual—difficulties with the censor. The day has not yet dawned—and certainly it had not dawned fifty years ago in Russia—when the naked truth about war is acceptable to those in authority.

These difficulties, and the mutilation which resulted from them (the effects of which still make themselves felt, especially in the first sketch), are referred to in a letter Nekrásóf wrote from Petersburg on 2nd September (old style) 1855.

“I reached Petersburg in the middle of August under circumstances most lamentable for the *Contemporary*. The revolting mutilation of your article quite upset me. Even now I cannot think of it without regret and rage. Your work will, of course, not be lost . . . it will always remain as proof of a strength able to utter such profound and sober truth under circumstances amid which few men would have retained it. I do not wish to say how highly I value this article, as well as the general direction your talent has taken, nor will I speak of its general strength and freshness. It is just what is now needed by Russian society : truth—truth of which since Gógol's death there has been so little left in Russian literature. You are right to value that side of your gifts most of all. Truth—in such form as you have introduced it into our literature—is something completely new among us. I do not know another writer of to-day who so compels the reader to love him and sympathise heartily with him, as he to whom I now write ; and I only fear lest time and the nastiness of life, the deafness and dumbness that surround us, should do to you what it has done to most of us, should kill the energy without which there can be no writer—at least none such as Russia now needs. You are young : changes are taking place which, let us hope, may end well, and perhaps a wide field lies before you. You are beginning in a way that compels the most cautious to let their expectations travel far.

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“ But I have wandered from the purpose of my letter. I will not console you by saying that even the printed fragments of your article are considered excellent by many ; to those who read the article in its original form, what is published seems but a collection of words deprived of sense or inner meaning. It could not be helped ! I will only say that the article (having been so treated) would not have been printed had it not been obligatory to do so. But your name is not appended to it.

“ *The Wood-Felling* has passed (the censor) pretty fairly, though from it also some valuable touches have disappeared. My opinion of that article is this : in form it reminds one of Tourgényef, but there the similarity ends ; all the rest belongs to you, and could have been written by no one but you. In that sketch there are a multitude of astonishingly acute remarks, and it is all *new*, interesting, and to the point. Do not neglect such sketches. Of the common soldier our literature has as yet not spoken, except frivolously. You are but beginning, and in whatever form you may utter all that you know on this subject, it will all be in the highest degree interesting and useful.

“ Panáef gave me the letter in which you promise soon to send us *Youth*. Please send it. Apart from the magazine, I am personally interested in the continuation of your first work. We will keep open a place in No. X. or No. XI. for *Youth*, according to when we receive it.

“ The money shall be sent you in a few days.

“ I have moved to Petersburg for the winter, and shall be glad if you will write me a few lines when convenient.

“ Receive the assurance of my sincere respect.

“ N. NEKRÁSOV.”

Sevastopol is a work written by an officer of twenty-seven, still eager for distinctions, volunteering for active service, and brought up amid the bustle of Vanity-Fair, who was able to observe himself and others with the impartiality and profound insight that could be expected only of an abstract philosopher calmly reviewing past events. This message is not one of those blocks of petrified truth which often impede the path to further progress, nor is it a justification of himself, or of any class, or set, or creed. For truth's sake he does not shrink from condemning his own occupations and preoccupations, and the sincerity of what he says is testified to by the convincing force of his message and by the gradual evolution of his own life and character during the subsequent half century.

Faithfully recording his feelings in 1855 he wrote :—

“And these people—Christians confessing the one great law of love and self-sacrifice—looking at what they have done, do not fall repentant on their knees. . . . The white flags are lowered . . . again innocent blood flows, and the air is filled with moans and curses.”

The perception is a vital and growing one, which harmonises with and helps other truths he reaches in later years, till in the twentieth century, looking out on life from the standpoint of his religious perception, he is able to say that the modern system of militarism—whether men are coerced or are bribed and coaxed into it—is a system under which men are drilled, stupefied, and vitiated till they are ready to kill any one at whom their officers may set them, and that this is as brutal and degrading a form of slavery as ever afflicted humanity.

It was not anger that filled his mind. Of the enemy who, banded with the Turks, had come thousands of miles and killed tens of thousands of Russian peasants, he speaks

merely as he sees them—from a distance. For the poor, dumb Russian soldiers, who willingly or unwillingly take part in the dreadful slaughter, he feels an increasing comprehension and respect. Even of the incompetent staff-officers, whose faults (next to his own) he sees most clearly, he speaks without exaggeration. Among themselves they were “very nice, merry, and good-natured young fellows.” Of the regimental officers, Nehlúdor assured Gouskóf “with perfect sincerity that I did not wish for better comrades than those I had,” and some twenty-five years later, in *My Confession*, Tolstoy, comparing army men with literary men he had known, said of the latter that they were as a class “much below the men I had associated with in my former dissolute and military life.” So when in *Sevastopol* he asks:—

“Where then in this tale is the evil shown that should be avoided? Where is the good that should be imitated? Who is the villain, who the hero of the story?”

The reply is: “All are good and all are bad.” It is not this man or that set of men that is the enemy to strive against. The enemy to be exposed and attacked is *evil*, and has his entrenchments in the heart of author and reader alike. To recognise evil and to know how to attack it without injuring the good growing by its side in the same individuals and the same systems, is the hardest task life sets to religions and philosophies.

That hardly any mention is made of the English in these Sevastopol sketches reminds one of the fact that it was the French, and not the English, who imposed themselves on the popular imagination of Russia. This was due, no doubt, less to the larger force employed by the former, than to

the vivid tradition of the great invasion of 1812. The French, under the rule of a Napoleon, had then brought other foreigners—Prussians, Austrians, Bavarians, &c.—in their train, and it seemed natural enough that they should now bring some more: Englishmen, Turks, and Sardinians this time.

Perhaps as nations get to know each other more intimately, and learn (as schoolboys learn one from another) that the impression one creates is not always the impression one wishes to create, the craving for *prestige* will be a less common cause of wars, and we shall all be more disposed to understand one another.

It should be mentioned that the name Sevastopol is left unaccentuated, because it has already been Anglicised as Sevástopol (or even Sebástopol), and it would seem pedantic to begin now accentuating it, according to the Russian pronunciation, as Sevastópol. What has usually been called in English books the Malakoff, I have, however, ventured to transliterate as the Maláhof.

Another point needing mention is the name of the last of the Sevastopol sketches, *August* 1855. The assault of the Maláhof Battery, and the retreat there mentioned of the Russians to the North Side of the Roadstead, took place, according to our histories, on the 5th of *September*. But the explanation lies in the difference of the Calendars. What was the 5th September, New Style, was the 24th August, Russian Style; there being a difference of twelve days. At the commencement of the twentieth century this was increased by one day, so that now, what is 1st of January in Russia is the 14th of January in England.

The accompanying sketch-map of Sevastopol will, it is hoped, serve its purpose of making the narrative more intelligible to the reader. The spot from which the officers

mentioned in chapter xxiii. watched the assault on the Maláhof through the fixed telescope, was shown on this map by Tolstoy during his severe illness this summer (1901).

In the last story, *Two Hussars* (1856), the manners, customs, and amusements of the nobility, gentry, and official world of the provincial town of K— are amusingly depicted, and we have presented to us the difference the awakening of thought and reflection make in our moral responsibility. The first Hussar is a fine animal, with a nature resembling that of his dog Blücher. Passionate, outspoken, living in the passing hour, yielding to his appetites, but always generous and brave, we have to accept his virtues and his vices as we accept the nature of birds or beasts. His son, the Hussar of a younger generation, who looks before and after, and is practical and careful of his own advantages, is far worse, because, being a thinking man, he yet does not seek to rise above his lower nature. His acts may be less outrageous than those of his father, but he is despicable, which his father was not. A thoughtful man must be better, or he will be far worse, than one who is unreflectingly carried along by his animal spirits.

In each of these stories the *rouble* is mentioned, and sometimes the silver rouble (which was generally paper) and "*assignations*," which were a depreciated currency. Instead of burdening the pages with footnotes, it may therefore be well here to give a brief sketch of the history of the Russian currency.

Russian money is extremely simple, the unit being the *rouble*, which is divided into 100 *kopeýkas*. The latter word has been spelt in various ways in English, but as none of those ways were justifiable, it seems better simply to transliterate *kopeýka* from the Russian. A reason of

making a plural form by adding the English *s* (копéýkas) is that in Russian a dual as well as a plural number exists, and it would be impracticable to follow both those inflections in English.

The *assignments* were paper money introduced in Russia in 1768. Before the end of the Napoleonic wars they had greatly depreciated in value, and remained in an unstable condition till 1841, when a reform of the currency was accomplished. A new "silver rouble" was then introduced, the value of which was a little over 38 pence of our currency. Paper "silver rouble" notes could be exchanged for coin at par. It was also arranged that the value of the old, depreciated *assignment* roubles should be fixed, and that they should be redeemable at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ *assignment* roubles for one "silver rouble." Thus at the time of the second of the *Two Hussars* (say 1848), two kinds of money (each consisting of roubles containing 100 kopéýkas) were in use concurrently; the paper *assignments* to which old people were accustomed, and the newer "silver roubles," which were also generally paper money. The new "silver roubles" retained their full value till the Crimean War commenced, when the notes were declared inconvertible and fell considerably. A decree was issued stating that within three years of the termination of hostilities steps would be taken to restore the currency to its former value. The "three years" proved a lengthy period, but eventually efforts were made to re-establish the value of the rouble, and this time on a *gold* basis. Just when these efforts seemed on the point of success, they had to be abandoned in consequence of the outbreak of the Polish insurrection of 1863.

The rouble then fluctuated for several years in the neighbourhood of 30 to 33 pence, but the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 caused it again to fall heavily, and at one time it

dropped as low as 19 pence. After many and violent fluctuations it was at last raised to 25 pence, at a little above which figure it has now been made redeemable in gold, three "silver-roubles" being now exchangeable for two of the old gold roubles of a fraction over 38 pence each. The former 10 rouble gold pieces are now being stamped 15 roubles. So that, at present, it looks as though the currency of Russia was in future to be based on a gold rouble of something over 25 pence in value, or just two-thirds the nominal value of the silver roubles current from 1841 till the time of the Crimean War.

Footnotes that occur in the Russian edition are marked L. T., those not so marked are by the translators.

Excepting in a few places already referred to, the translation follows the Moscow editions of 1889 and 1893.

A. M.

TRANSLITERATION OF RUSSIAN NAMES

To secure regularity in the transliteration of Russian names, the following plan has been adopted in the present edition of Tolstoy's works. Should it find wider acceptance, uniformity may be introduced in a sphere where it is, at present, conspicuously lacking.

No perfect system of transliteration from Russian into English being possible, it is a case of choosing lesser evils. The principles here followed are :—

- (1) Not to repel readers by superabundant letters.
- (2) To give a spelling of which an English reader can make something recognisable.
- (3) Not to expect readers to pronounce sounds to which they are unaccustomed in English.
- (4) To mark the syllable on which an accent falls.
- (5) As nearly as possible, always to let the same English letters represent the same Russian letters. Exceptions must, however, be allowed in cases mentioned in the following rules.
- (6) Names already naturalised in English (such as Warsaw, Moscow, &c.) may be written in the usual English manner; and in cases where a Russian has adopted an English spelling for his own name, his spelling may be followed.
- (7) Names, such as Pyotr, Lyof, &c., which can easily be Anglicised (into Peter, Leo, &c.), may be so treated, even

when it involves joining an English form (*e.g.* Leo) to a Russian patronymic (*e.g.* Nikoláyevitch).

(8) The Russian *e* should be represented by *e*, *ye*, or *yo*, according to its pronunciation, and similarly *ѣ* by *e* or *ye*. Other such cases are mentioned in the following transliteration plan :—

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	REMARKS
а	a	As in <i>father</i> .
б	b	
в	v or f	v except in termination, where it is <i>f</i> .
г	g	Hard, as in <i>go</i> .
д	d	
е	e, ye, yo	<i>e</i> as <i>a</i> in <i>fate</i> ; <i>ye</i> as in <i>yes</i> ; <i>yo</i> as <i>yore</i> .
ж	zh	As <i>z</i> in <i>azure</i> .
з	z	As in <i>zenith</i> .
и or i	i	As <i>ee</i> in <i>meet</i> .
й	—	<i>y</i> as in <i>joy</i> .
к	k	
л	l	
м	m	
н	n	
о	o or a	As in <i>loch</i> . May be written <i>a</i> when so pronounced.
п	p	
р	r	As in <i>road</i> , <i>barren</i> .
с	s	Sharp, as in <i>seat</i> , <i>pass</i> .
т	t	
у	ou	As <i>oo</i> in <i>boot</i> .
ф	f	
х	h	As <i>ch</i> in <i>loch</i> .
ц	ts	As <i>tz</i> in <i>howitzer</i> .

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	REMARKS
ч	tch	As <i>ch</i> in <i>church</i> .
ш	sh	As <i>she</i> , <i>bush</i> .
щ	stch	As <i>shch</i> in <i>parish-church</i> .
ъ	—	Omit in transliteration.
ы	i	This Russian sound does not exist in English.
ь	—	Omit, except before a vowel when it can be represented by <i>y</i> .
ѣ	e or ye	<i>e</i> as <i>a</i> in <i>fate</i> , <i>ye</i> as <i>yes</i> .
э	e	As <i>a</i> in <i>fate</i> .
ю	u	As <i>you</i> .
я	ya	As <i>yard</i> .
ѳ	f	May be rendered by <i>th</i> sometimes.

The following diphthongs and terminations should also be noted :—

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	REMARKS
ое	o-ye	A termination on which no accent falls; it sounds nearly like a diphthong.
ай	ay	As <i>eye</i> .
ей	ey	As in <i>they</i> .
ой	oy	As in <i>boy</i> . It is accentuated, and therefore prolonged.
ій } ый }	y	As <i>ie</i> in <i>hygiene</i> . These terminations not being accentuated, the difference that exists in Russian may be neglected in English.
кс	x or ks	

In all cases vowels have a broad, open, Italian sound.

RECAPITULATION

TO AID ENGLISH READERS IN PRONOUNCING RUSSIAN
NAMES AS PRINTED IN THIS EDITION

- I. Lay stress on the syllable marked with an accent.
- II. Names of more than one syllable not accentuated are not Russian forms, and should be pronounced as in English (French or German, &c.).
- III. Vowel sounds are broad and open :

a as in *father*.
e as *a* in *fate*.
i as *ee* in *meet*.
o as in *loch*.
u as *you*.

Also in diphthongs the broad sound is retained :

ou as *oo* in *boot*.
ya as in *yard*.
ye as in *ye*.
yo as in *yore*.
ay as *eye*.
ey as in *they*.
oy as in *boy*.

IV. *y* with a vowel forms a diphthong ; *y* at the end of a word, after a consonant, sounds something like *ie* in *hygiene*.

V. Consonants :

G is hard, as in *go*.
Zh is like *z* in *azure*.
R is sounded strongly, as in *rough*, *barren*.
S is sharp, as in *seat*, *pass*.

SEVASTOPOL

IN DECEMBER 1854

THE dawn has just begun to tinge the horizon above the Sapoun hill. The dark-blue surface of the sea has already thrown off the shadows of night, and lies waiting the appearance of the first sunbeam to sparkle merrily. A cold mist blows in from the bay; there is no snow—all is black—but the sharp morning frost creaks underfoot and makes the face tingle, while only the distant ceaseless murmur of the sea, now and then overpowered by the thunder of the cannons in Sevastopol, breaks the stillness of the morning. All is quiet on the ships. It strikes eight bells.

On the North Side the activity of day begins gradually to replace the stillness of night: here some soldiers, with clanking muskets, pass to relieve guard; here a doctor is already hurrying to the hospital; here a soldier has crept out of his dug-out, washed his bronzed face with icy water, and, turning towards the reddening east, is now praying, rapidly crossing himself; there a high and heavy cart, drawn by camels, passes with creaking wheels towards the cemetery, where the blood-stained corpses that load it almost to the top are to be buried. Approaching the harbour, you are struck by a peculiar smell of coal, dampness, and meat. Thousands of different things—firewood,

▲

meat, gabions, flour, iron, and so forth—are lying in heaps near the harbour. Soldiers of various regiments, with or without bags and muskets, crowd around, smoking, scolding, or helping to load the steamer which lies with smoking funnel close to the wharf. Boats filled with people of all sorts—soldiers, seamen, tradesmen and women—come and go.

“To the Gráfskaya?¹ here you are, your honour,” and two or three old salts, getting out of their skiffs, offer their services.

You choose the nearest, step across the half-decayed carcass of a bay horse that lies in the mud beside the boat, and take your place at the rudder. The boat pulls off from the shore. Around you is the sea, now already glittering in the morning sun; before you, rowing steadily and silently, are the old sailor in a camel’s-hair coat, and a flaxen-haired boy. You look at the huge bulk of the striped ships, scattered far and near over the Roadstead; at the ships’ boats, like black dots moving over the glittering azure; and, in another direction, at the handsome light-coloured buildings of the town, lit up by the rosy rays of the morning sun; and, again, at the frothy white outline of the break-water, at the foam above the sunken ships, the ends of whose black masts sadly project here and there; at the enemy’s fleet swaying on the crystal horizon of the sea, and at the salt bubbles dancing on the eddying wash made by the oars. You listen to the steady murmur of voices which reaches you across the water,

¹ The landing-place here called the Gráfskaya, is evidently the one called the Ekaterininskaya on Todleben’s plans of Sevastopol. The purpose of the map given in this volume being to elucidate the story, the Gráfskaya is shown where Tolstoy puts it, though no authority can be superior to Todleben’s on such a matter.

and to the majestic sounds of the firing which, it seems to you, now grows stronger in Sevastopol.

Some feeling of courage or pride surely enters your soul, and the blood flows faster in your veins, at the thought that you, too, are in Sevastopol.

"Your honour, you're steering straight into the *Constantine*," says the old seaman, who has turned to see where you are steering.

"All her cannons are still on board,"¹ says the boy, examining the ship as he rows past her.

"Well, of course; she's a new ship. Kornilof himself lived on her," remarks the old seaman, also looking at her.

"Look where it has burst!" says the boy, after a long silence, watching a small white cloud of spreading smoke, which has suddenly appeared high above the South Bay, accompanied by the sharp report of an exploding bomb.

"That's *him* firing from the new battery to-day," adds the old man calmly, spitting on his hand. "Now then, pull away, Míshka, we'll get ahead of that long-boat there." And your skiff travels faster over the broad swells of the Roadstead, really overtakes the heavy long-boat, laden with sacks and rowed by clumsy sailors who do not keep stroke, and—making its way among all sorts of boats moored there—reaches the Gráfskaya landing.

On the quay, soldiers in grey, sailors in black, and women in many colours throng noisily. Women are selling rolls, peasants with *samovárs*² are calling "hot

¹ Cannons were removed from the vessels for use on the fortifications.

² The *samovář*, or "self-boiler," is an urn in which water can be boiled and kept hot without any other fire having to be lit.

sbiten,"¹ and here, on the very first steps, lie rusty cannon-balls, bombs, grape-shot, and cast-iron cannons of various calibres. A little beyond is a large open space where huge beams, gun-carriages, and sleeping soldiers are lying; horses, carts, green cannons, ammunition-waggon, and stacked muskets are standing; soldiers, sailors, officers, women, children, and dealers are moving about, and here and there a Cossack and an officer ride along, or a general drives by in a trap. To the right the street is blocked by a barricade with small cannon mounted in embrasures, and near them sits a sailor smoking away at his pipe. To the left is a handsome building with a date in Roman figures on the frontal, and near it stand soldiers with blood-stained stretchers—everywhere you see unpleasant indications of a war camp. Your first impressions are sure to be most unpleasant: the strange combination of camp and urban life, of a fine town and a dirty bivouac, is not only ugly, but looks like horrible disorder; it even seems to you that every one is frightened and in commotion, not knowing what to do. But look closer into the faces of these people moving about you, and you will come to quite a different conclusion. Take, for instance, this convoy soldier going to water those three bay horses and muttering something to himself, and doing it all so quietly that it is evident he will not lose himself in this motley crowd (which does not even exist for him), but will fulfil his duty, whatever it may be—watering a horse, or helping to drag cannon—as calmly, confidently, and with as much equanimity as if it were all happening in *Toula* or *Saransk*. You will read the same in the face of that

¹ A hot drink made with treacle and lemon, also sometimes with honey and spice.

officer passing by in irreproachably white gloves ; in the face of the sailor who sits smoking on the barricade ; in the faces of the soldiers in the portico of what was once the Assembly Hall, and in the face of that young girl who, fearing to dirty her pink dress, jumps from stone to stone as she crosses the road.

Yes ! disenchantment certainly awaits you if you are entering Sevastopol for the first time. You will look in vain, in any of the faces, for a trace of ardour, flurry, or even enthusiasm, determination, or readiness for death,—there is nothing of the kind. What you do see are every-day people, quietly occupied with their every-day business ; so that perhaps you may reproach yourself for having felt undue enthusiasm, and may begin to doubt the justice of the ideas you had formed of the heroism of the defenders of Sevastopol, ideas founded on tales, descriptions, and the sights and sounds that reached you on the North Side of the Roadstead. But before giving way to such doubts, go to the bastions and see the defenders of Sevastopol where they are defending it ; or, better still, go straight into that building opposite, formerly the Sevastopol Assembly Rooms, and in the portico of which the soldiers with stretchers are standing. There you will see the defenders of Sevastopol : you will see terrible, sad, solemn, and amusing, but astonishing and soul-elevating sights.

You enter the large Assembly Hall. At once, as soon as you open the door, the sight and smell of forty or fifty of the amputated and most severely wounded, some in beds but most on the floor, staggers you. Do not trust the feeling that detains you at the threshold ; it is a bad feeling : go on ; do not feel shame that you have come as if *to look at* the sufferers ; do not

hesitate to approach and speak to them. The unfortunate like to see a sympathetic human face, like to speak of their sufferings, and to hear words of love and pity. You pass between the rows of beds and look for some face less stern and full of suffering, that you can make up your mind to approach and speak to.

"Where are you wounded?" you hesitatingly and timidly ask an old and emaciated sailor, who, sitting up on his bed, is following you with kindly gaze as if inviting you to speak to him. I say "hesitatingly and timidly," because suffering seems to inspire not only deep pity and dread of offending the sufferer, but also deep respect.

"In my leg," replies the sailor, and you now notice by the way the folds of the blanket fall that he has lost one leg above the knee. "But the Lord be thanked," he adds, "I am now getting ready to leave the hospital."

"And is it long since you were wounded?"

"Well, it's over five weeks now, your honour."

"And are you still in pain?"

"No, I've no pain now; only when we have bad weather it feels as if the calf were aching, nothing else."

"And how did it happen that you were wounded?"

"It was at the Fifth Bastion, your honour, during the first bombardment. I trained the gun, and was just stepping across to the next embrasure, when *he* struck me in the leg. It was just as if I had stumbled into a hole, and I look—and the leg's gone!"

"Is it possible it did not hurt you then?"

"Nothing to speak of; it was only as if something hot had blown against my leg."

"Well, and afterwards?"

“And afterwards it was nothing much either, only it did smart when they drew the skin together. The chief thing, your honour, is not to think: if you don't think, it's nothing much. It mostly all comes of thinking.”

At this moment a woman in a grey striped dress, with a black kerchief on her head, approaches you and joins in your conversation with the sailor. She begins to tell you about him: of his sufferings, the desperate condition he was in for four weeks; how, when he was wounded, he stopped his stretcher-bearers that he might see a volley from our battery; how the Grand-Dukes had spoken to him and given him twenty-five roubles, and he had told them he would like to return to the battery to teach the youngsters, if he could no longer work himself. As she says this all in a breath, the woman constantly looks from you to the sailor—who, with his face turned from her, is picking lint on his pillow—and her eyes are bright with some peculiar rapture.

“It's my missus, your honour!” remarks the sailor, with a look that seems to say, ‘You must excuse her; it's a woman's way to say foolish things.’

You begin to understand the defenders of Sevastopol; without knowing why, you begin to feel ashamed of yourself before this man. To show your sympathy and admiration you are tempted to say too much; but the right words do not come, and you are dissatisfied with those that occur to you, so you bow down in silence before this quiet, unconscious greatness and firmness of spirit, that is ashamed to have its worth revealed.

“Well, God grant you a quick recovery,” you say, and you stop in front of another patient, who, lying on

the floor, seems to be awaiting death in unendurable agony.

This is a fair-haired man, with a pale and swollen face. He is lying on his back, with his left arm thrown back in a way that shows cruel suffering. He breathes hoarsely and with difficulty through his parched, open mouth; the leaden, blue eyes are turned upwards; the blanket has slipped, and from under it the bandaged remains of his right arm sticks out.

The oppressive, corpse-like smell strikes you more strongly, and the devouring inner fever burning in all the sufferer's limbs seems to penetrate through you also.

"Is he unconscious?" you ask the woman, who has followed you and looks at you kindly as at a friend.

"No, he can still hear,—but he is very bad," she adds in a whisper. "I gave him some tea to-day—though he is a stranger one must have pity—and he could hardly drink it."

"How do you feel?" you ask him. The wounded man turns his eyes towards you, but neither sees you nor understands, and only says—

"My heart is on fire."

A little further on you see an old soldier changing his shirt. His face and body are a kind of brick-red, and he is as gaunt as a skeleton. One arm is quite gone, taken right off at the socket. He is sitting up firmly, and has recovered; but you can see by the dull, dead look of his eyes, by the terrible gauntness of his body, and by the wrinkles on his face, that the best part of this man's life has been wasted by his sufferings.

On a bed on the other side you may see the pale, suffering, delicate face of a woman, her cheeks suffused with a feverish glow.

"That's the wife of one of our sailors," says your guide. "She was hit in the leg by a bomb on the 5th;¹ she was taking her husband's dinner to him at the bastion."

"Have they amputated it?"

"Yes, above the knee."

Now, if your nerves are strong, go in at the door to the left; it is there they bandage and operate. There you will see doctors with pale, gloomy faces, and arms red with blood up to the elbows, busy by a bed on which lies a wounded man under chloroform. His eyes are open, and he utters, as if in delirium, incoherent, but sometimes simple and pathetic words. The doctors are engaged on the horrible but beneficent work of amputation. You will see the sharp, curved knife enter the healthy white flesh; you will see the wounded man come back to life with terrible heart-rending screams and curses. You will see the doctor's assistant toss the amputated arm into a corner, and you will see, in the same room, another wounded man on a stretcher, watching the operation, and writhing and groaning, not so much with physical pain, as with the mental torture of anticipation. You will see ghastly sights that will rend your soul; you will see war, not with its orderly, beautiful, and brilliant ranks, its music and beating drums, its waving banners, its generals on prancing horses, but war in its real aspect of blood, suffering, and death. . . .

On coming out of this house of pain you will be sure to experience a sense of relief, you will take deeper breaths of the fresh air, and rejoice in the consciousness of your own health. But, at the same time,

¹ The first bombardment of Sevastopol took place on 5th October, old style, i.e. the 17th our style.

by the contemplation of these sufferings you will realise your own insignificance, and you will go to the bastions calmly and without hesitation. . . .

“What matters the death and suffering of so insignificant a worm as I, compared to so many deaths, so much suffering?” But the sight of the clear sky, the brilliant sun, the beautiful town, the open church, and the soldiers moving in all directions, will soon bring your spirit back to its normal state of frivolity, its petty cares and absorption in the present. You may meet the funeral procession of an officer as it leaves the church, the pink coffin accompanied by waving banners and music, and the sound of firing from the bastions may reach your ears. But these things will not bring back your former thoughts. The funeral will seem a very beautiful military pageant; the sounds very beautiful warlike sounds; and neither to these sights nor to these sounds will you attach that clear and personal sense of suffering and death which came to you in the hospital.

Passing the church and the barricade, you enter that part of the town where the every-day life is most active. On both sides hang the signboards¹ of shops and restaurants. Tradesmen, women with bonnets or kerchiefs on their heads, dandified officers: all speaks of the firmness, self-confidence, and security of the inhabitants.

If you care to hear the conversation of army and navy officers enter the restaurant on the right. There you are sure to hear talk about last night, about Fanny, about that affair of the 24th,² how dear and badly

¹ Among a population largely illiterate, the signboards were usually pictorial. The bakers showed loaves and rolls, the bootmakers boots and shoes, &c. &c.

² The 24th October, O.S. = 5th November N.S., i.e., the date of the battle of Inkerman.

served the cutlets are, and how such and such comrades have been killed.

"Things were confoundedly bad at our place to-day!" says, in a bass voice, a fair, beardless little naval officer with a green knitted scarf.

"Where's that?" asks another.

"Oh, in the Fourth Bastion," answers the young officer, and at the words "Fourth Bastion," you will certainly look more attentively, and even with some respect, at this fair-complexioned officer. The excessive freedom of his manner, his gesticulations, and his loud voice and laugh, which before had seemed to you impudent, now appear to indicate that peculiarly combative frame of mind noticeable in some young men after they have been in danger; but still you expect him to tell how bad it was in the Fourth Bastion because of the bombs and bullets. Not at all! it was bad because of the mud. "One can scarcely get to the battery," he continues, pointing to his boots, which are muddy even above the calves. "And I have lost my best gunner," says another, "hit right in the forehead." "Who's that? Mitúhin?" "No . . . but am I ever to have my veal? You rascal!" he adds, addressing the waiter. "Not Mitúhin but Abrámof—such a fine fellow! He was out in six sallies."

At another corner of the table, with plates of cutlets and peas before them, and a bottle of sour Crimean wine called "Bordeaux," sit two infantry officers. One of them, a young man with a red collar and two little stars on his cloak, is talking to the other, who has a black collar and no stars, about the Alma affair. The former has already been drinking, and by the pauses he makes, by the indecision in his face—expressing his doubt of being believed—and especially

by the fact that his own part in the story is too important, and the affair is too dreadful, one sees that he is diverging considerably from the strict truth. But you do not care much for stories of this kind, which will long be current all over Russia; you want to get quickly to the bastions, especially to that Fourth Bastion about which you have been told so many and such different tales. When any one says, "I am going to the Fourth Bastion," a slight agitation or a too marked indifference is always noticeable in him; if men are joking they say, "You should be sent to the Fourth Bastion." When you meet some one carried on a stretcher, and ask, "Where from?" the answer usually is, "From the Fourth Bastion." Two quite different opinions are current concerning this terrible bastion:¹ that of those who have never been there, and who are convinced it is a certain grave for any one who goes there, and that of those who, like the fair-complexioned midshipman, live there, and who, when speaking of the Fourth Bastion, will tell you whether it is dry or muddy, and whether it is cold or warm in the dug-outs, and so forth.

During the half-hour you spent in the restaurant, the weather has changed. The mist that spread over the sea has gathered into dull, grey, moist clouds which hide the sun, and a kind of dismal sleet showers down and wets the roofs, the pavements, and the soldiers' overcoats.

Passing another barricade, you go through some doors to the right and up a broad street. Beyond this barricade the houses on both sides of the street are unoccupied: there are no signboards, the doors are

¹ Called by the English the "Flagstaff Bastion."

boarded up, the windows smashed; here a corner of the walls is knocked down, and there a roof is broken in. The buildings look like old veterans who have borne much sorrow and privation; they even seem to gaze proudly and somewhat contemptuously at you. On the road you stumble over cannon-balls that lie about, and into holes, full of water, made in the stony ground by bombs. You meet and overtake detachments of soldiers, Cossacks, officers, and occasionally a woman or a child—only it will not be a woman wearing a bonnet, but a sailor's wife wearing an old cloak and soldier's boots. Farther along the same street, after you have descended a little slope, you will notice that there are now no houses, but only ruined walls in strange heaps of bricks, boards, clay and beams, and before you, up a steep hill, you see a black, untidy space cut up by ditches. This space you are approaching is the Fourth Bastion. . . . Here you will meet still fewer people and no women at all, the soldiers walk briskly by, traces of blood may be seen on the road, and you are sure to meet four soldiers carrying a stretcher, and on the stretcher probably a pale, yellow face and a blood-stained overcoat. If you ask, "Where is he wounded?" the bearers, without looking at you, will answer crossly "in the leg" or "in the arm" if the man is not severely wounded; or they will remain sternly silent if no head is raised on the stretcher, and the man is either dead or badly wounded.

The whiz of cannon ball or bomb near by, impresses you unpleasantly as you ascend the hill, and you at once understand the meaning of the sounds very differently from when they reached you in the town. Some peaceful and joyous memory will suddenly flash through your mind; consciousness of your own personality begins

to supersede the activity of your observation : you are less attentive to all that is around you, and a disagreeable feeling of indecision suddenly seizes you. But, silencing this despicable little voice that has suddenly lifted itself within you at the sight of danger, you—especially after seeing a soldier run past you laughing, waving his arms, and slipping down the hill in the yellow mud—involuntarily expand your chest, raise your head higher, and clamber up the slippery clay hill. You have hardly gone a little way up, when bullets begin to whiz past you right and left, and you will, perhaps, consider whether you had not better walk inside the trench which runs parallel to the road ; but the trench is full of such yellow, liquid, stinking mud, more than knee deep, that you are sure to choose the road, especially as *everybody* keeps to the road. After walking a couple of hundred yards, you come to a muddy place much cut up, surrounded by gabions, cellars, platforms, and dug-outs, and on which large cast-iron cannon are mounted and cannon balls lie piled in orderly heaps. All seems placed without any aim, connection, or order. Here a group of sailors are sitting in the battery ; here, in the middle of the open space, half sunk in mud, lies a shattered cannon ; and there a foot-soldier is crossing the battery, drawing his feet with difficulty out of the sticky mud. Everywhere, on all sides, and all about, you see bomb-fragments, unexploded bombs, cannon balls, and various traces of an encampment, all sunk in the liquid, sticky mud. You think you hear the thud of a cannon ball not far off, and you seem to hear the different sounds of bullets all around—some humming like bees, some whistling, and some rapidly flying past with a shrill screech like the string of some instrument. You hear the awful

boom of a shot which sends a shock all through you, and seems most dreadful.

“So this is it, the Fourth Bastion! This is that terrible, truly dreadful spot!” So you think, experiencing a slight feeling of pride and a strong feeling of suppressed fear. But you are mistaken; this is, still, not the Fourth Bastion. This is only the Yazónovsky Redoubt—comparatively a very safe and not at all dreadful place. To get to the Fourth Bastion you must turn to the right, along that narrow trench, where a foot-soldier, stooping down, has just passed. In this trench you may again meet men with stretchers, and perhaps a sailor or a soldier with spades. You will see the mouths of mines, dug-outs into which only two men can crawl, and there you will see the Cossacks of the Black Sea Battalions, changing their boots, eating, smoking their pipes, and, in short, living. And you will see again the same stinking mud, the traces of camp life, and cast-iron refuse of every shape and form. When you have gone some three hundred steps more, you come out at another battery—a flat space with many holes, surrounded with gabions filled with earth, and cannons on platforms, and the whole walled in with earthworks. Here you will perhaps see four or five soldiers playing cards under shelter of the breastworks; and a naval officer, noticing that you are a stranger and inquisitive, is pleased to show you his ‘household’ and everything that can interest you. This officer, sitting on a cannon, rolls a yellow cigarette so composedly, walks from one embrasure to another so quietly, talks to you so calmly and without affectation, that, in spite of the bullets whizzing around you oftener than before, you yourself grow cooler, question him carefully, and listen to his stories. He will tell you (but only if you ask) about the bom-

bardment on the 5th of October; will tell you how only one gun in his battery remained usable and only eight gunners were left of the whole crew, and how, all the same, next morning, the 6th, he fired all his guns. He will tell you how a bomb dropped into one of the dug-outs and knocked over eleven sailors; he will show you from an embrasure the enemy's batteries and trenches, which are here not more than seventy-five to eighty-five yards distant. I am afraid, though, that when you lean out of the embrasure to have a look at the enemy, you will, under the influence of the whizzing bullets, not see anything; but if you do see anything, you will be much surprised to find that this whitish stone wall which is so near you, and from which puffs of white smoke keep bursting—that this white wall is the enemy: *he*, as the soldiers and sailors say.

It is even very likely that the naval officer, from vanity, or merely for a little recreation, will wish to show you some firing. "Call the gunner and crew to the cannon;" and fourteen sailors—clattering their hob-nailed boots on the platform, one putting his pipe in his pocket, another still chewing a rusk—quickly and cheerfully man the gun and begin loading. Look well into these faces, and note the bearing and carriage of these men. In every wrinkle, every muscle, in the breadth of these shoulders, the thickness of these legs in enormous boots: in every movement, quiet, firm, and deliberate, are seen the distinctive traits of that which forms the strength of the Russian—his simplicity and obstinacy.

Suddenly the most fearful roar strikes, not only your ears but your whole being, and makes you shudder all over. It is followed by the whistle of the receding ball, and a thick cloud of powder-smoke envelops

you, the platform, and the moving black figures of the sailors. You will hear various comments by the sailors concerning this shot of ours, and you will notice their animation, the evidences of a feeling which you had not, perhaps, expected: the feeling of animosity and thirst for vengeance which lies hidden in each man's soul. You will hear joyful exclamations: "It's gone right into the embrasure! It's killed two, I think . . . There, they're carrying them off!" "And now *he's* riled, and will send one this way," some one remarks; and really, soon after, you will see before you a flash and some smoke, the sentinel standing on the breastwork will call out "Ca-n-non," and then a ball will whiz past you and squash into the earth, throwing out a circle of stones and mud. The commander of the battery will be irritated by this shot, and will give orders to fire another and another cannon, the enemy will reply in like manner, and you will experience interesting sensations and see interesting sights. The sentinel will again call "Cannon!" and you will have the same sound and shock, and the mud will be splashed round as before. Or he will call out "Mortar!" and you will hear the regular and rather pleasant whistle—which it is difficult to connect with the thought of anything dreadful—of a bomb; you will hear this whistle coming nearer and faster towards you, then you will see a black ball, feel the shock as it strikes the ground, and will hear the ringing explosion. The bomb will fly apart into whizzing and shrieking fragments, stones will rattle into the air, and you will be bespattered with mud.

At these sounds you will experience a strange feeling of mingled pleasure and fear. At the moment you know the shot is flying towards you, you are sure to imagine

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that this shot will kill you, but a feeling of pride will support you, and no one will know of the knife that is cutting your heart. But when the shot has flown past and has not hit you, you revive, and, though only for a moment, a glad, inexpressibly joyous feeling seizes you, so that you feel some peculiar delight in the danger—in this game of life and death—and wish that bombs and balls would fall nearer and nearer to you.

But again the sentinel, in his loud, thick voice, shouts "Mortar!" again a whistle, a fall, an explosion; and mingled with the last you are startled by the groans of a man. You approach the wounded man just as the stretchers are brought. Covered with blood and dirt he presents a strange, not human appearance. Part of the sailor's breast has been torn away. For the first few moments only terror, and the kind of feigned, premature look of suffering common to men in this state, are to be seen in his mud-besprinkled face; but when the stretcher is brought, and he himself lies down on it on his healthy side, you notice that his expression changes. His eyes shine more brightly, his teeth are clenched, with difficulty he raises his head higher, and when the stretcher is lifted he stops the bearers for a moment, and, turning to his comrades, says with an effort in a trembling voice, "Forgive me, brothers!"¹ He wishes to say more, something pathetic, but only repeats, "Forgive me, brothers!" At this moment a sailor approaches him, places the cap on the head the wounded man raises, and then quietly, placidly swinging his arms, returns to his cannon.

¹ "Forgive me" or "farewell" are almost interchangeable expressions in Russian. "Good-bye" (*prostcháyte*) etymologically means "forgive." The form (*prostite*) here used, however, means primarily "forgive me."

“That’s the way with seven or eight every day,” the naval officer remarks to you, answering the look of horror on your face, and he yawns as he rolls another yellow cigarette.

So now you have seen the defenders of Sevastopol where they are defending it, and, somehow, you return with a tranquil, heightened spirit, paying no heed to the balls and bombs whose whistle accompanies you all the way to the ruined theatre. The principal joyous thought you have brought away with you is a conviction of the strength of the Russian people; and this conviction you gained, not by looking at all those traverses, breastworks, cunningly interlaced trenches, mines, cannon, one on top of the other, of which you could make nothing; but you have received it from the eyes, words, and actions—in short, from seeing what is called the “spirit”—of the defenders of Sevastopol. What they do is all done so simply, with so little effort, that you feel convinced they could do a hundred times as much. . . . You understand that the motive which actuates them is not that petty ambition or forgetfulness which you yourself experienced, but some stronger feeling, which has made of them beings who live quietly under the flying balls, facing a hundred chances of death instead of the one others are subjected to,—and this amid conditions of continual toil, lack of sleep, and dirt. For the sake of a cross, or promotion, or because of a threat, men could not accept such terrible conditions of life: there must be some other and higher motive power.

It is only now that the tales of the early days of the siege of Sevastopol are for you no longer beautiful historical legends, but have become realities: the tales

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of the time when it was not fortified, when there was no army to defend it, when it seemed a physical impossibility to retain it, and there was yet not the slightest idea of abandoning it to the enemy—of the time when Kornílof, that hero worthy of ancient Greece, making his round of the troops, said, “Lads, we will die, but we will not surrender Sevastopol!” and our Russians, incapable of phrase-making, replied, “We will die! Hurrah!” You will clearly recognise in the men you have just left the heroes whose spirits did not flag, but rose, during those dismal days, and who gladly prepared to die.

The evening closes in. The sun, just as it is setting, comes out from behind the grey clouds that covered the sky, and suddenly lights up with ruddy radiance the purple clouds, the greenish waters of the sea with ships and boats rocking on its broad even swell, the white buildings of the town, and the people moving along the streets. The sound of some old valse played by a military band on the boulevard is borne along the water, and seems, in some strange way, answered by the firing from the bastions.

SEVASTOPOL, *25th April*, o.s., 1855.