

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

Christianity Not As A Mystical Teaching But As A New
Concept of Life

by Leo Tolstoy

[Podcast 10 of 13]

[Dear Soul, This book has been edited to begin with Chapter Five instead of the Author's original Preface and Chapters One through Four. Chapters One through Four are essentially a defense of Tolstoy's previous book on Christianity, entitled My Religion, a fascinating book which emphasizes the importance of adhering to the teachings of Jesus Christ. For one who is already familiar with that previous book, the Author's original order is not — in the view of the editor — most effective. Tolstoy's opening chapters, which are still good to read, are included after Chapter Twelve.

Peace be with you, Alan Lewis Silva, editor]

[CHAPTER 12 (Continues)]

Part 6 Come to your senses, men, and believe in the Gospel, in the teaching of the good. If you shall not come to your senses, you will all perish, as perished the men who were killed by Pilate, as perished those who were crushed by the tower of Siloam, as perished millions and millions of men, slayers and slain, executioners and executed, tormentors and tormented, and as foolishly perished that man who

filled up his granaries and prepared himself to live for a long time, and died the same night on which he wanted to begin his new life. "Come to your senses and believe in the Gospel," Christ said eighteen hundred years ago, and says now with even greater convincingness, through the utter wretchedness and irrationality of our life, predicted by Him and now an accomplished fact. Now, after so many centuries of vain endeavors to make our life secure by means of the pagan institution of violence, it would seem to be absolutely obvious to everybody that all the efforts which are directed toward this end only introduce new dangers into our personal and social life, but in no way make it secure. No matter what we may call ourselves; what attires we may put on; what we may smear ourselves with, and in the presence of what priests; how many millions we may have; what protection there may be along our path; how many policemen may protect our wealth; how much we may execute the so-called revolutionary malefactors and anarchists; what exploits we ourselves may perform; what kingdoms we may found, and what fortresses and towers we may erect, from that of Babel to that of Eiffel — we are all of us at all times confronted by two inevitable conditions of our life, which destroy its whole meaning: 1. by death, which may overtake any of us at any moment, and 2. by the impermanency of all the acts performed by us, which are rapidly and tracklessly destroyed. No matter what we may do, whether we found kingdoms, build palaces, erect monuments, compose poems, it is but for a short time, and everything passes, without leaving a trace. And so, no matter how much we may conceal the fact from ourselves, we cannot help but see that the meaning of our life can be neither in our personal, carnal existence, which is subject to inevitable sufferings and inevitable death, nor in any worldly institution or structure. Whoever you, the reader of these lines, may be, think of your condition and of your duties —

not of the condition of landowner, merchant, judge, emperor, president, minister, priest, soldier, which people temporarily ascribe to you, nor of those imaginary duties, which these positions impose upon you, but of that real, eternal condition of existence, which by somebody's will after a whole eternity of non-existence has issued forth from unconsciousness, and at any moment by somebody's will may return to where you come from. Think of your duties — not of your imaginary duties as a landowner to your estate, of a merchant to your capital, of an emperor, minister, official to the state — but of those real duties of yours, which result from your real condition of existence, which is called into life and is endowed with reason and love. Are you doing what is demanded of you by Him who has sent you into the world, and to whom you will very soon return? Are you doing what He is demanding of you? Are you doing what is right, when, being a landowner, manufacturer, you take away the productions of labor from the poor, building up your life on this spoliation, or when, being a ruler, a judge, you do violence to people and sentence them to capital punishment, or when, being a soldier, you prepare yourself for wars, and wage war, plunder, and kill? You say that the world is constructed that way, that this is unavoidable, that you are not doing this of your own will, but that you are compelled to do so. But is it possible that the aversion for human sufferings, for tortures, for the killing of men should be so deeply implanted in you; that you should be so imbued with the necessity for loving men and the still more potent necessity of being loved by them; that you should clearly see that only with the recognition of the equality of all men, with their mutual service, is possible the realization of the greatest good which is accessible to men; that your heart, your intellect, the religion professed by you should tell you the same; that science should tell you the same — and that, in spite of it, you should be by some very dim, complex

considerations compelled to do what is precisely opposed to it? that, being a landowner or a capitalist, you should be compelled to construct all your life on the oppression of the masses? or that, being an emperor or a president, you should be compelled to command troops, that is, to be the leader and guide of murderers? or that, being a government official, you should be compelled by violence to take from poor people their hard-earned money, in order to use it yourself and give it to the rich? or that, being a judge, a juror, you should be compelled to sentence erring men to tortures and to death, because the truth has not been revealed to them? or that — a thing on which all the evil of the world is chiefly based — you, every young man, should be compelled to become a soldier and, renouncing your own will and all human sentiments, should promise, at the will of men who are alien to you, to kill all those men whom they may command you to kill? It cannot be. Even though men tell you that all this is necessary for the maintenance of the existing structure of life; that the existing order, with its wretchedness, hunger, prisons, executions, armies, wars, is indispensable for society; that, if this order should be impaired, there would come worse calamities — it is only those to whom this structure of life is advantageous that tell you this, while those — and there are ten times as many of them — who are suffering from this structure of life think and say the very opposite. You yourself know in the depth of your heart that this is not true, that the existing structure of life has outlived its time and soon must be reconstructed on new principles, and that, therefore, there is no need to maintain it, while sacrificing human sentiments. Above all else, even if we admit that the existing order is necessary, why do you feel yourself obliged to maintain it, while trampling on all better human sentiments? Who has engaged you as a nurse to this decaying order? Neither society, nor the state, nor any men have ever asked you to maintain this order, by holding the

place of landowner, merchant, emperor, priest, soldier, which you now hold; and you know full well that you took up your position, not at all with the self-sacrificing purpose of maintaining an order of life which is indispensable for the good of men, but for your own sake — for the sake of your greed, love of glory, ambition, indolence, cowardice. If you did not want this position, you would not be doing everything it is necessary for you to do all the time, in order to keep your place. Just try to stop doing those complex, cruel, tricky, and mean things, which you are doing without cessation in order to keep your place, and you will immediately lose it. Just try, while being a ruler or an official, to stop lying, committing base acts, taking part in acts of violence, in executions; being a priest, to stop deceiving; being a soldier, to stop killing; being a landowner, a manufacturer, to stop protecting your property by means of the courts and of violence — and you will at once lose the position which, you say, is imposed upon you, and which, you say, weighs heavily upon you. It cannot be that a man should be placed against his will in a position which is contrary to his consciousness. If you are in this position, it is not because that is necessary for anybody, but because you want it. And so, knowing that this position is directly opposed to your heart, your reason, your faith, and even to science, in which you believe, you cannot help but meditate on the question as to whether you are doing right by staying in this position and, above all, by trying to justify it. You might be able to risk making a mistake, if you had time to see and correct your mistake, and if that in the name of which you should take your risk had any importance. But when you know for certain that you may vanish any second, without the slightest chance of correcting the mistake, either for your own sake or for the sake of those whom you will draw into your error, and when you know, besides, that, no matter what you may do in the external structure of the world, it will disappear very

soon, and just as certainly as you yourself, without leaving any trace, it is obvious to you that you have no reason to risk such a terrible mistake. This is all so simple and so clear, if only we did not with hypocrisy bedim the truth which is revealed to us. "Share with others what you have, do not amass any wealth, do not glorify yourself, do not plunder, do not torture, do not kill any one, do not do unto others what you do not wish to have done to yourself," was said, not eighteen hundred, but five thousand years ago, and there could be no doubt as to the truth of this law, if there were no hypocrisy: it would have been impossible, if not to do so, at least not to recognize that we ought always to do so, and that he who does not do so is doing wrong. But you say that there also exists a common good, for which it is possible and necessary to depart from these rules — for the common good it is right to kill, torture, rob. It is better for one man to perish, than that a whole nation should perish, you say, like Caiaphas, and you sign one, two, three death-warrants, load your gun for that man who is to perish for the common good, put him in prison, take away his property. You say that you do these cruel things, because you feel yourself to be a man of society, the state, under obligation to serve it and to carry out its laws, a landowner, a judge, an emperor, a soldier. But, besides your belonging to a certain state, and the obligations resulting therefrom, you also belong to the infinite life of the world and to God, and have certain obligations resulting from this relation. And as your duties, which result from your belonging to a certain family, a certain society, are always subordinated to the higher duties, which result from your belonging to the state, so also your obligations, which result from your belonging to the state, must necessarily be subordinated to the duties which result from your belonging to the life of the world, to God. And as it would be senseless to cut down the telegraph-posts, in order to provide fuel for the family or society, and to

increase its well-being, because this would violate the laws which preserve the good of the state, so it would be senseless, for the purpose of making the state secure and increasing its well-being, to torture, execute, kill a man, because this violates the unquestionable laws which preserve the good of the world. Your obligations, which result from your belonging to the state, cannot help but be subordinated to the higher eternal duty, which results from your belonging to the infinite life of the world, or to God, and cannot contradict them, as Christ's disciples said eighteen hundred years ago: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye" (Acts 4: 19), and, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5: 29). You are assured that, in order not to violate the constantly changing order, which was yesterday established by some men in some corner of the world, you must commit acts of torture and murder separate men, who violate the eternal, invariable order of the universe, which was established by God, or by reason. Can that be? And so you cannot help but meditate on your position as a landowner, merchant, judge, emperor, president, minister, priest, soldier, which is connected with oppression, violence, deception, tortures, and murders, and you cannot help but recognize their illegality. I do not say that, if you are a landowner, you should at once give your land to the poor; if you are a capitalist, you should at once give your money, your factory to the laborers; if you are a king, a minister, an official, a judge, a general, you should at once give up your advantageous position; if you are a soldier (that is, occupy a position on which all violence is based), you should, in spite of all the dangers of a refusal to obey, at once throw up your position. If you do so, you will do the very best possible; but it may happen — and this is most likely — that you will not have the strength to do so: you have connections, a family, inferiors, superiors; you may be under such a strong influence of temptations that

you will not be able to do so — but you are always able to recognize the truth as a truth, and to stop lying. Do not assert that you remain a landed proprietor, a manufacturer, a merchant, an artist, a writer, because this is useful for men; that you are serving as a governor, a prosecutor, a king, not because that gives you pleasure and you are used to it, but for the good of humanity; that you continue to be a soldier, not because you are afraid of punishment, but because you consider the army indispensable for the security of human life; you can always keep from lying thus to yourself and to men, and you are not only able, but even must do so, because in this alone, in the liberation of oneself from the lie and in the profession of the truth, does the only good of your life consist. You need but do this, and your position will inevitably change of its own accord. There is one, only one thing in which you are free and almighty in your life — everything else is beyond your power. This thing is, to recognize the truth and to profess it. Suddenly, because just such miserable, erring people like yourself have assured you that you are a soldier, emperor, landed proprietor, rich man, priest, general, you begin to do evil, which is obviously and unquestionably contrary to your reason and heart: you begin to torture, rob, kill men, to build up your life on their sufferings, and, above all, instead of doing the one work of your life — recognizing and professing the truth which is known to you — you carefully pretend that you do not know it, and conceal it from yourself and from others, doing thus what is directly opposed to the one thing to which you have been called. And under what conditions do you do that? You, who are likely to die at any moment, sign a sentence of death, declare war, go to war, sit in judgment, torture, fleece the laborers, live luxuriously among the poor, and teach weak, trustful people that this must be so, and that in this does the duty of men consist, and you are running the chance that, at the moment that you are doing this, a bacterium or

a bullet will fly into you, and you will rattle in your throat and die, and will for ever be deprived of the possibility of correcting and changing the evil which you have done to others and, above all, to yourself, losing for nothing the life which is given to you but once in a whole eternity, without having done the one thing which you ought unquestionably to have done. However simple and old this may be, and however much we may have stupefied ourselves by hypocrisy and the auto-suggestion resulting from it, nothing can destroy the absolute certainty of that simple and clear truth that no external efforts can safeguard our life, which is inevitably connected with unavoidable sufferings and which ends in still more unavoidable death, that may come to each of us at any moment, and that, therefore, our life can have no other meaning than the fulfilment, at any moment, of what is wanted from us by the power that sent us into life and gave us in this life one sure guide — our rational consciousness. And so this power cannot want from us what is irrational and impossible — the establishment of our temporal, carnal life, the life of society or of the state. This power demands of us what alone is certain and rational and possible — our serving the kingdom of God, that is, our cooperation in the establishment of the greatest union of everything living, which is possible only in the truth, and, therefore, the recognition of the truth revealed to us, and the profession of it, precisely what alone is always in our power. “Seek ye the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.” The only meaning of man’s life consists in serving the world by cooperating in the establishment of the kingdom of God; but this service can be rendered only through the recognition of the truth, and the profession of it, by every separate individual. “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.”

LEO TOLSTOY Yásnaya Polyána, 14 May 1893. [As follows is Leo Tolstoy's original beginning of his book:] THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE: In the year 1884 I wrote a book under the title, My Religion. In this book I really expounded what my religion is. In expounding my belief in Christ's teaching, I could not help but express the reason why I do not believe in the ecclesiastic faith, which is generally called Christianity, and why I consider it to be a delusion. Among the many deviations of this teaching of Christ, I pointed out the chief deviation, namely, the failure to acknowledge the commandment of non-resistance to evil, which more obviously than any other shows the distortion of Christ's teaching in the church doctrine. I knew very little, like the rest of us, as to what had been done and preached and written in former days on this subject of non-resistance to evil. I knew what had been said on this subject by the fathers of the church, Origen, Tertullian, and others, and I knew also that there have existed certain so-called sects of the Mennonites, Herrnhuters, Quakers, who do not admit for a Christian the use of weapons and who do not enter military service, but what had been done by these so-called sects for the solution of this question was quite unknown to me. My book, as I expected, was held back by the Russian censor, but, partly in consequence of my reputation as a writer, partly because it interested people, this book was disseminated in manuscripts and lithographic reprints in Russia and in translations abroad, and called forth, on the one hand, on the part of men who shared my views, a series of references to works written on the subject, and, on the other, a series of criticisms on the thoughts expressed in that book itself. Both, together with the historical phenomena of recent times, have made many things clear to me and have brought me to new deductions and conclusions, which I wish to express. First I shall tell of the information which I received concerning the history of the question of non-resistance to evil, then of the opinions

on this subject which were expressed by ecclesiastic critics, that is, such as profess the Christian religion, and also by laymen, that is, such as do not profess the Christian religion; and finally, those deductions to which I was brought by both and by the historical events of recent times.

CHAPTER ONE Among the first answers to my book there came some letters from the American Quakers. In these letters, which express their sympathy with my views concerning the unlawfulness for Christianity of all violence and war, the Quakers informed me of the details of their so-called sect, which for more than two hundred years has in fact professed Christ's teaching about non-resistance to evil, and which has used no arms in order to defend itself. With their letters, the Quakers sent me their pamphlets, periodicals, and books. From these periodicals, pamphlets, and books which they sent me I learned to what extent they had many years ago incontestably proved the obligation for a Christian to fulfil the commandment about nonresistance to evil and had laid bare the incorrectness of the church teaching, which admitted executions and wars. Having proved, by a whole series of considerations and texts, that war, that is, the maiming and killing of men, is incompatible with a religion which is based on love of peace and good-will to men, the Quakers affirm and prove that nothing has so much contributed to the obscuring of Christ's truth in the eyes of the pagans and impeded the dissemination of Christianity in the world as the nonacknowledgment of this commandment by men who called themselves Christians — as the permission granted to a Christian to wage war and use violence. "Christ's teaching, which entered into the consciousness of men, not by means of the sword and of violence," they say, "but by means of non-resistance to evil, can be disseminated in the world only through humility, meekness, peace, concord,

and love among its followers. "A Christian, according to the teaching of God Himself, can be guided in his relations to men by peace only, and so there cannot be such an authority as would compel a Christian to act contrary to God's teaching and contrary to the chief property of a Christian in relation to those who are near to him. "The rule of state necessity," they say, "may compel those to become untrue to God's law, who for the sake of worldly advantages try to harmonize what cannot be harmonized, but for a Christian, who sincerely believes in this, that the adherence to Christ's teaching gives him salvation, this rule can have no meaning." My acquaintance with the activity of the Quakers and with their writings — with Fox, Paine, and especially with Dymond's book (1827), — showed me that not only had the impossibility of uniting Christianity with violence and war been recognized long ago, but that this incompatibility had long ago been proved so clearly and so incontestably that one has only to marvel how this impossible connection of the Christian teaching with violence, which has been preached all this time by the churches, could have been continued. Besides the information received by me from the Quakers, I, at about the same time, received, again from America, information in regard to the same subject from an entirely different source, which had been quite unknown to me before. The son of William Lloyd Garrison, the famous champion for the liberation of the negroes, wrote to me that, when he read my book, in which he found ideas resembling those expressed by his father in 1838, he, assuming that it might be interesting for me to know this, sent me the "Declaration of Non-resistance," which his father had made about fifty years ago. This declaration had its origin under the following conditions: William Lloyd Garrison, in speaking before a society for the establishment of peace among men, which existed in America in 1838, about the measures for abolishing war, came to the conclusion that

the establishment of universal peace could be based only on the obvious recognition of the commandment of non-resistance to evil (Matthew 5: 39) in all its significance, as this was understood by the Quakers, with whom Garrison stood in friendly relations. When he came to this conclusion, he formulated and proposed to the society the following declaration, which was then, in 1838, signed by many members.

Declaration of Sentiments Adopted by the Peace Convention, Held in Boston in 1838 [W]e, the undersigned, regard it as due to ourselves, to the cause which we love, to the country in which we live, and to the world, to publish a Declaration, expressive of the principles we cherish, the purposes we aim to accomplish, and the measures we shall adopt to carry forward the work of peaceful, universal reformation. We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government.... We recognize but one King and Lawgiver, one Judge and Ruler of mankind.... Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity only as we love all other lands. The interests, rights, and liberties of American citizens are no more dear to us than are those of the whole human race. Hence we can allow no appeal to patriotism, to revenge any national insult or injury.... We conceive, that if a nation has no right to defend itself against foreign enemies, or to punish its invaders, no individual possesses that right in his own case. The unit cannot be of greater importance than the aggregate.... But if a rapacious and bloodthirsty soldiery, thronging these shores from abroad, with intent to commit rapine and destroy life, may not be resisted by the people or magistracy, then ought no resistance to be offered to domestic troublers of the public peace or of private security.... The dogma, that all the governments of the world are approvingly ordained of God, and that The Powers That Be in the United States, in Russia, in Turkey,

are in accordance with His will, is not less absurd than impious. It makes the impartial Author of human freedom and equality, unequal and tyrannical. It cannot be affirmed that The Powers That Be, in any nation, are actuated by the spirit, or guided by the example of Christ, in the treatment of enemies: therefore, they cannot be agreeable to the will of God: and, therefore, their overthrow, by a spiritual regeneration of their subjects, is inevitable. We register our testimony, not only against all wars, whether offensive or defensive, but all preparations for war; against every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification; against the militia system and a standing army; against all military chieftains and soldiers; against all monuments commemorative of victory over a foreign foe, all trophies won in battle, all celebrations in honor of military or naval exploits: against all appropriations for the defence of a nation by force and arms on the part of any legislative body; against every edict of government, requiring of its subjects military service. Hence, we deem it unlawful to bear arms, or to hold a military office. As every human government is upheld by physical strength, and its laws are enforced virtually at the point of the bayonet, we cannot hold any office which imposes upon its incumbent the obligation to compel men to do right, on pain of imprisonment or death. We therefore voluntarily exclude ourselves from every legislative and judicial body, and repudiate all human politics, worldly honors, and stations of authority. If we cannot occupy a seat in the legislature, or on the bench, neither can we elect others to act as our substitutes in any such capacity. It follows, that we cannot sue any man at law, to compel him by force to restore anything which he may have wrongfully taken from us or others; but, if he has seized our coat, we shall surrender up our cloak, rather than subject him to punishment. We believe that the penal code of the old covenant, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," has been abrogated by Jesus Christ; and that, under

the new covenant, the forgiveness, instead of the punishment of enemies has been enjoined upon all His disciples, in all cases whatsoever. To extort money from enemies, or set them upon a pillory, or cast them into prison, or hang them upon a gallows, is obviously not to forgive, but to take retribution.... The history of mankind is crowded with evidences, proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness; that it is not safe to rely upon an arm of flesh.... to preserve us from harm; that there is great security in being gentle, harmless, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy; that it is only the meek who shall inherit the earth, for the violent who resort to the sword are destined to perish with the sword. Hence, as a measure of sound policy — of safety to property, life, and liberty — of public quietude and private enjoyment, as well as on the ground of allegiance to Him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, we cordially adopt the non-resistance principle; being confident that it provides for all possible consequences, will ensure all things needful to us, is armed with omnipotent power, and must ultimately triumph over every assailing foe. We advocate no jacobinical doctrines. The spirit of jacobinism is the spirit of retaliation, violence, and murder. It neither fears God, nor regards man. We would be filled with the spirit of Christ. If we abide by our principles, it is impossible for us to be disorderly, or plot treason, or participate in any evil work; we shall submit to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; obey all the requirements of Government, except such as we deem contrary to the commands of the gospel; and in no wise resist the operation of law, except by meekly submitting to the penalty of disobedience. But, while we shall adhere to the doctrine of non-resistance and passive submission to enemies, we purpose, in a moral and spiritual sense, to

speak and act boldly in the cause of God; to assail iniquity, in high places and in low places; to apply our principles to all existing civil, political, legal, and ecclesiastical institutions; and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever. It appears to us a self-evident truth, that, whatever the gospel is designed to destroy at any period of the world, being contrary to it, ought now to be abandoned. If, then, the time is predicted, when swords shall be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall not learn the art of war any more, it follows that all who manufacture, sell, or wield these deadly weapons, do thus array themselves against the peaceful dominion of the Son of God on earth. Having thus briefly, but frankly, stated our principles and purposes, we proceed to specify the measures we propose to adopt, in carrying our object into effect. We expect to prevail through the foolishness of preaching — striving to commend ourselves unto every man's conscience, in the sight of God. From the press, we shall promulgate our sentiments as widely as practicable. We shall endeavor to secure the cooperation of all persons, of whatever name or sect.... Hence we shall employ lectures, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition our State and national governments, in relation to the subject of Universal Peace. It will be our leading object to devise ways and means for effecting a radical change in the views, feelings, and practices of society, respecting the sinfulness of war and the treatment of enemies. In entering upon the great work before us, we are not unmindful that, in its prosecution, we may be called to test our sincerity, even as in a fiery ordeal. It may subject us to insult, outrage, suffering, yea, even death itself. We anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, calumny. Tumults may arise against us. The ungodly and the violent, the proud and pharisaical, the ambitious and tyrannical,

principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, may combine to crush us. So they treated the Messiah, whose example we are humbly striving to imitate.... We shall not be afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Our confidence is in the Lord Almighty, not in man. Having withdrawn from human protection, what can sustain us but that faith which overcomes the world? We shall not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us; but rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. Wherefore, we commit the keeping of our souls to God, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. "For every one that forsakes houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for Christ's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Firmly relying upon the certain and universal triumph of the sentiments contained in this Declaration, however formidable may be the opposition arrayed against them — in solemn testimony of our faith in their divine origin — we hereby affix our signatures to it; commending it to the reason and conscience of mankind, giving ourselves no anxiety as to what may befall us, and resolving in the strength of the Lord God calmly and meekly to abide the issue.

Immediately after this declaration Garrison founded a society of non-resistance, and a periodical, called The Non-Resistant, in which was preached the doctrine of non-resistance in all its significance and with all its consequences, as it had been expressed in the "Declaration." The information as to the later fate of the society and the periodical of non-resistance I received from the beautiful biography of William Lloyd Garrison, written by his sons. The society and the periodical did not exist long: the majority of Garrison's collaborators in matters of freeing the slaves, fearing lest the too radical demands, as

expressed in *The Non-Resistant*, might repel people from the practical work of the liberation of the negroes, refused to profess the principle of non-resistance, as it had been expressed in the "Declaration," and the society and the periodical ceased to exist. This "Declaration" by Garrison, which so powerfully and so beautifully expressed such an important profession of faith, ought, it seems, to have startled men and to have become universally known and a subject of wide discussion. But nothing of the kind happened. It is not only unknown in Europe, but even among the Americans, who so highly esteem Garrison's memory, this declaration is almost unknown. The same ingloriousness has fallen to the share of another champion of non-resistance to evil, the American Adin Ballou, who lately died, and who preached this doctrine for fifty years. How little is known of what refers to the question of non-resistance may be seen from the fact that Garrison's son, who has written an excellent biography of his father in four volumes, this son of Garrison, in reply to my question whether the society of nonresistance was still in existence, and whether there were any followers of it, answered me that so far as he knew the society had fallen to pieces, and there existed no followers of this doctrine, whereas at the time of his writing, there lived in Hopedale, Massachusetts, Adin Ballou, who had taken part in Garrison's labors and had devoted fifty years of his life to the oral and printed propaganda of the doctrine of non-resistance. Later on I received a letter from [Lewis G.] Wilson, a disciple and assistant of Ballou, and entered into direct communication with Ballou himself. I wrote to Ballou, and he answered me and sent me his writings. Here are a few extracts from them: "Jesus Christ is my Lord and Master," says Ballou in one of the articles [*The Non-Resistant*, Volume One, Number 4, 15 February 1845], in which he arraigns the inconsistency of the Christians who recognize the right of defence and war.

I have covenanted to forsake all and follow Him, through good and evil report, until death. But I am nevertheless a Democratic Republican citizen of the United States, implicitly sworn to bear true allegiance to my country, and to support its Constitution, if need be, with my life. Jesus Christ requires me to do unto others as I would that others should do unto me. The Constitution of the United States requires me to do unto twenty-seven hundred thousand slaves [there were slaves then, now we may put the working people in their place] the very contrary of what I would have them do unto me, namely, assist to keep them in a grievous bondage.... But I am quite easy. I vote on. I help govern on. I am willing to hold any office I may be elected to under the Constitution. And I am still a Christian. I profess on. I find no difficulty in keeping covenant both with Christ and the Constitution.... Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evil-doers by taking "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blood for blood, and life for life." My government requires the very reverse, and depends, for its own self-preservation, on the halter, the musket, and the sword, seasonably employed against its domestic and foreign enemies. Accordingly, the land is well furnished with gibbets, prisons, arsenals, train-bands, soldiers, and ships of war. In the maintenance and use of this expensive life-destroying apparatus, we can exemplify the virtues of forgiving our injurers, loving our enemies, blessing them that curse us, and doing good to those that hate us. For this reason, we have regular Christian chaplains to pray for us, and call down the smiles of God on our holy murders.... I see it all; and yet I insist that I am as good a Christian as ever. I fellowship all; I vote on; I help govern on; I profess on; and I glory in being at once a devoted Christian, and a no less devoted adherent to the existing government. I will not give in to those miserable Non-Resistant notions. I will not throw away my political influence, and leave unprincipled men to carry on government alone.... The

Constitution says — “Congress shall have power to declare war....” I agree to this. I endorse it. I swear to help carry it through.... What then, am I less a Christian? Is not war a Christian service? Is it not perfectly Christian to murder hundreds of thousands of fellow human beings; to ravish defenseless females, sack and burn cities, and enact all the other cruelties of war? Out upon these new-fangled scruples! This is the very way to forgive injuries, and love our enemies! If we only do it all in true love, nothing can be more Christian than wholesale murder! In another pamphlet, under the title, How Many Does It Take? he says, “How many does it take to metamorphose wickedness into righteousness? One man must not kill. If he does it is murder. Two, ten, one hundred men, acting on their own responsibility, must not kill. If they do, it is still murder. But a state or nation may kill as many as they please, and it is no murder. It is just, necessary, commendable, and right. Only get people enough to agree to it, and the butchery of myriads of human beings is perfectly innocent. But how many does it take? This is the question. Just so with theft, robbery, burglary, and all other crimes.... But a whole nation can commit it.... But how many does it take?” Why must one, ten, one hundred men not violate God’s law, while very many may? Here is Ballou’s catechism (translated freely, with some omissions), composed for his flock (The Catechism of Non-Resistance): Q. Whence originated the term “non-resistance?” A. From the injunction, “Resist not evil,” Matthew 5: 39. Q. What does the term signify? A. It expresses a high Christian virtue, prescribed by Christ. Q. Is the word “resistance” to be taken in its widest meaning, that is, as showing that no resistance whatever is to be shown to evil? A. No, it is to be taken in the strict sense of the Savior’s injunction; that is, we are not to retaliate evil with evil. Evil is to be resisted by all just means, but never with evil. Q. From what can we see that Christ in such cases prescribed non-resistance? A.

From the words which He then used. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Q. To whom does Jesus refer in the words, "It hath been said?" A. To the patriarchs and prophets, to what they said — to what is contained in the writings of the Old Testament, which the Jews generally call the Law and the Prophets. Q. What injunctions did Christ mean by "It hath been said?" A. Those injunctions by which Noah, Moses, and other prophets authorize men to inflict personal injury on injurers, in order to punish and destroy evil. Q. Quote these precepts. A. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man (Genesis 9: 6). He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death, and if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe (Exodus 11: 12, 23 — 25). And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbor; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him: breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again (Leviticus 24: 17, 19, 20). And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: and thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot (Deuteronomy 19: 18, 19, 21). These are the precepts of which Jesus is speaking. Noah, Moses, and the prophets taught that he who kills, maims, and tortures his neighbors does evil. To resist such evil and destroy it, the doer of evil is to be punished by death or maiming or

some personal injury. Insult is to be opposed to insult, murder to murder, torture to torture, evil to evil. Thus taught Noah, Moses, and the prophets. But Christ denies it all. "But I say unto you," it says in the Gospel, "that ye resist not evil, resist not an insult with an insult, but rather bear the repeated insult from the doer of evil." What was authorized is prohibited. If we understand what kind of resistance they taught, we clearly see what we are taught by Christ's nonresistance. Q. Did the ancients authorize the resistance of insult with insult? A. Yes; but Jesus prohibited this. A Christian has under no condition the right to deprive of life or to subject to insult him who does evil to his neighbor. Q. May a man kill or maim another in self-defence? A. No. Q. May he enter a court with a complaint, to have his insulter punished? A. No; for what he is doing through others, he is in reality doing in his own person. Q. May he fight with an army against enemies, or against domestic rebels? A. Of course not. He cannot take any part in war or warlike preparations. He cannot use death-dealing arms. He cannot resist injury with injury, no matter whether he be alone or with others, through himself or through others. Q. May he choose or fit out military men for the government? A. He can do nothing of the kind, if he wishes to be true to Christ's law. Q. May he voluntarily give money, to aid the government, which is supported by military forces, capital punishment, and violence in general? A. No, if the money is not intended for some special object, just in itself, where the aim and means are good. Q. May he pay taxes to such a government? A. No; he must not voluntarily pay the taxes, but he must also not resist their collection. The taxes imposed by the government are collected independently of the will of the subjects. It is impossible to resist the collection, without having recourse to violence; but a Christian must not use violence, and so he must give up his property to the violence which is exerted by the powers. Q. May a Christian

vote at elections and take part in a court or in the government? A. No; the participation in elections, in the court, or in the government, is a participation in governmental violence. Q. In what does the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance consist? A. In that it alone makes it possible to tear the evil out by the root, both out of one's own heart and out of the neighbor's heart. This doctrine forbids doing that by which evil is perpetuated and multiplied. He who attacks another and insults him, engenders in another the sentiment of hatred, the root of all evil. To offend another, because he offended us, for the specious reason of removing an evil, means to repeat an evil deed, both against him and against ourselves — to beget, or at least to free, to encourage, the very demon whom we claim we wish to expel. Satan cannot be driven out by Satan, untruth cannot be cleansed by untruth, and evil cannot be vanquished by evil. True non-resistance is the one true resistance to evil. It kills and finally destroys the evil sentiment. Q. But, if the idea of the doctrine is right, is it practicable? A. It is as practicable as any good prescribed by the Law of God. The good cannot under all circumstances be executed without self-renunciation, privation, suffering, and, in extreme cases, without the loss of life itself. But he who values life more than the fulfilment of God's will is already dead to the one true life. Such a man, in trying to save his life, shall lose it. Besides, in general, where non-resistance costs the sacrifice of one life, or the sacrifice of some essential good of life, resistance costs thousands of such sacrifices. Non-resistance preserves, resistance destroys. It is incomparably safer to act justly than unjustly; to bear an insult than to resist it with violence — it is safer even in relation to the present life. If all men did not resist evil with evil, the world would be blessed. Q. But if only a few shall act thus, what will become of them? A. If only one man acted thus, and all the others agreed to crucify him, would

it not be more glorious for him to die in the triumph of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than to live wearing the crown of Cæsar, bespattered with the blood of the slain? But one or thousands who have firmly determined not to resist evil with evil, whether among the enlightened or among savage neighbors, are much safer from violence than those who rely on violence. A robber, murderer, deceiver, will more quickly leave them alone than those who resist with weapons. They who take the sword perish with the sword, and those who seek peace, who act in a friendly manner, inoffensively, who forget and forgive offences, for the most part enjoy peace or, if they die, die blessed. Thus, if all kept the commandment of non-resistance, it is evident that there would be no offences, no evil deeds. If these formed a majority, they would establish the reign of love and good-will, even toward the ill-disposed, by never resisting evil with evil, never using violence. If there were a considerable minority of these, they would have such a corrective, moral effect upon society that every cruel punishment would be abolished, and violence and enmity would be changed to peace and love. If there were but a small minority of them, they would rarely experience anything worse than the contempt of the world, and the world would in the meantime, without noticing it, and without feeling itself under obligation, become wiser and better from this secret influence. And if, in the very worst case, a few members of the minority should be persecuted to death, these men, dying for the truth, would leave behind them their teaching, which is already sanctified by their martyr's death. Peace be with all who seek peace, and all-conquering love be the imperishable inheritance of every soul, which voluntarily submits to the Law of Christ: "Resist not evil." In the course of fifty years, Ballou wrote and edited books dealing mainly with the question of nonresistance to evil. In these works, which are beautiful in their lucidity of thought and

elegance of expression, the question is discussed from every possible side. He establishes the obligatoriness of this commandment for every Christian who professes the Bible as a divine revelation. He adduces all the customary retorts to the commandment of non-resistance, both from the Old Testament and from the New, as, for example, the expulsion from the temple, and so forth, and all these are overthrown; he shows, independently of Scripture, the practical wisdom of this rule, and adduces all the objections which are usually made to it, and meets all these objections. Thus one chapter of a work of his treats of non-resistance to evil in exclusive cases, and here he acknowledges that, if there were cases when the application of non-resistance to evil were impossible, this would prove that the rule is altogether untenable. In adducing these special cases, he proves that it is precisely in them that the application of this rule is necessary and rational. There is not a single side of the question, either for his followers or for his adversaries, which is not investigated in these works. I say all this, in order to show the unquestionable interest which such works ought to have for men who profess Christianity, and that, therefore, one would think Ballou's activity ought to have been known, and the thoughts expressed by him ought to have been accepted or refuted; but there has been nothing of the kind. The activity of Garrison the father, with his foundation of a society of non-resistants and his declaration, convinced me even more than my relations with the Quakers, that the departure of state Christianity from Christ's law about non-resistance to evil is something that has been observed and pointed out long ago, and that men have without cessation worked to arraign it. Ballou's activity still more confirmed this fact to me. But the fate of Garrison and especially of Ballou, who is not known to any one, in spite of his fifty years of stubborn and constant work in one and the same direction, has also confirmed to

me the other fact, that there exists some kind of unexpressed but firm understanding as to passing all such attempts in silence. Ballou died in August, 1890, and his obituary was given in an American periodical with a Christian tendency (Religio-Philosophical Journal, August 23d). In this eulogistic obituary it says that Ballou was a spiritual guide of a community, that he delivered between eight and nine thousand sermons, married one thousand pairs, and wrote about five hundred articles, but not a word is said about the aim to which he devoted all his life — the word “non-resistance” is not even used. Like all that which the Quakers have been preaching for two hundred years, like the activity of Garrison the father, the foundation of his society and periodical, and his declaration, so Ballou’s whole activity does not seem to have existed at all. A striking example of such an ingloriousness of writings intended to elucidate non-resistance to evil, and to arraign those who do not recognize this commandment, is found in the fate of the book by the Bohemian Chelčický, which has but lately become known and has so far not yet been printed. Soon after the publication of my book in German, I received a letter from a professor of the Prague University, which informed me of the existence of a still unpublished work by the Bohemian Chelčický, of the fifteenth century, by the name of The Net of Faith. In this work, as the professor wrote me, Chelčický about four centuries ago expressed the same view in regard to the true and the false Christianity, which I had expressed in my work, My Religion. The professor wrote to me that Chelčický’s work was for the first time to be published in Bohemian in the periodical of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. As I was unable to procure the work itself, I tried to become acquainted with what was known of Chelčický, and such information I got from a German book sent me by the same Prague professor, and from Pýpin’s “History of Bohemian Literature.” This is what Pýpin says: The Net of Faith is

that teaching of Christ which is to draw man out from the dark depths of the sea of life and its untruths. True faith consists in believing in God's words; but now there has come a time when men consider the true faith to be heresy, and so reason must show wherein the true faith consists, if one does not know it. Darkness has concealed it from men, and they do not know Christ's true law. To explain this law, Chelčický points out the original structure of Christian society, which, he says, is now regarded as rank heresy by the Roman Church. This primitive church was his own ideal of a social structure, based on equality, freedom, and brotherhood. Christianity, according to Chelčický, still treasures these principles, and all that is necessary is, that society should return to its pure teaching, and then any other order, in which kings and popes are needed, would seem superfluous: in everything the law of love alone is sufficient. Historically Chelčický refers the fall of Christianity to the times of Constantine the Great, whom Pope Sylvester introduced into Christianity with all the pagan customs and life. Constantine, in his turn, invested the Pope with worldly wealth and power. Since then both powers have been aiding one another and have striven after external glory. Doctors and masters and the clergy have begun to care only for the subjugation of the whole world to their dominion, have armed men against one another for the purpose of murdering and plundering, and have completely destroyed Christianity in faith and in life. Chelčický absolutely denies the right to wage war and administer capital punishment; every warrior and even "knight" is only an oppressor, malefactor, and murderer. The same, except for some biographical details and excerpts from Chelčický's correspondence, is said in the German book. Having thus learned the essence of Chelčický's teaching, I with much greater impatience waited for the appearance of The Net of Faith in the journal of the Academy. But a year, two, three years passed, and

the book did not appear. Only in 1888 I learned that the printing of the book, which had been begun, had come to a stop. I got the proof-sheets of as much as had been printed, and I read the book. The book is in every respect remarkable. The contents are quite correctly rendered by Pýpin. Chelčický's fundamental idea is this, that Christianity, having united with the power in the time of Constantine and having continued to develop under these conditions, has become absolutely corrupt and has ceased to be Christianity. The title "The Net of Faith," was given by Chelčický to his work, because, taking for his motto the verse of the Gospel about calling the disciples to become fishers of men, Chelčický, continuing this comparison, says, "Christ by means of His disciples caught in His net of faith the whole world, but the larger fish, tearing the net, jumped out of it, and through the holes, which these larger fish had made, all the others went away, and the net was left almost empty." The large fish that broke through the net are the rulers, emperors, popes, kings, who, in not renouncing their power, did not accept Christianity, but its semblance only. Chelčický taught what has been taught until the present by the Mennonites and Quakers, and what in former years was taught by the Bogomils, Paulicians, and many others. He teaches that Christianity, which demands from its followers meekness, humility, kindness, forgiveness of sins, the offering of the other cheek when one cheek has been smitten, love of enemies, is incompatible with violence, which forms an indispensable condition of power. A Christian, according to Chelčický's interpretation, can not only not be a chief or a soldier, but cannot even take part in the government, be a merchant or even a landowner; he can be only an artisan or an agriculturist. This book is one of the extremely few that have survived the auto-da-fés of books in which the official Christianity is arraigned. All such books, which are called heretical, have been burned together with the authors, so

that there are very few ancient works which arraign the departure of official Christianity, and so this book is especially interesting. But besides being interesting, no matter how we look upon it, this book is one of the most remarkable productions of thoughts, as judged by the depth of its contents, and the wonderful force and beauty of the popular language, and its antiquity. And yet this book has for more than four centuries remained unprinted, and continues to be unknown, except to learned specialists. One would think that all these kinds of works, by the Quakers, and Garrison, and Ballou, and Chelčický, which assert and prove, on the basis of the Gospel, that our world comprehends Christ's teaching falsely, ought to rouse interest, agitation, discussions, in the midst of the pastors and of the flock. Works of this kind, which touch on the essence of the Christian teaching, ought, it seems, to be analyzed and recognized as true, or to be rejected and overthrown. But nothing of the kind has happened. One and the same thing is repeated with all these works. People of the most different views, both those who believe and, what is most surprising, those who are unbelieving liberals, seem to have an agreement to pass them stubbornly in silence, and all that has been done by men to elucidate the true meaning of Christ's teaching remains unknown or forgotten. But still more startling is the ingloriousness of two works, of which I learned also in connection with the appearance of my book. These are Dymond's book on war, published for the first time in London, in 1824, and Daniel Musser's book on Non-Resistance, written in 1864. The ignorance about these two books is particularly remarkable, because, to say nothing of their worth, both books treat not so much of the theory as of the practical application of the theory to life, of the relation of Christianity to military service, which is particularly important and interesting now, in connection with the universal liability to do military service. It seems that this is

a very living question, one, the answer to which is particularly important in connection with the military service of the present time. All, or a vast majority of men — Christians — all males, are called on to perform military service. What must a man, as a Christian, answer in reply to this demand? Dymond's answer is as follows: It is his duty, mildly and temperately, yet firmly, to refuse to serve. There are some persons, who, without any determinate process of reasoning, appear to conclude that responsibility for national measures attaches solely to those who direct them; that it is the business of governments to consider what is good for the community, and that, in these cases, the duty of the subject is merged in the will of the sovereign. Considerations like these are, I believe, often voluntarily permitted to become opiates of the conscience. I have no part, it is said, in the counsels of the government, and am not therefore responsible for its crimes. We are, indeed, not responsible for the crimes of our rulers, but we are responsible for our own; and the crimes of our rulers are our own, if, whilst we believe them to be crimes, we promote them by our cooperation. But those who suppose that obedience in all things is required, or that responsibility in political affairs is transferred from the subject to the sovereign, reduce themselves to a great dilemma. It is to say that we must resign our conduct and our consciences to the will of others, and act wickedly or well, as their good or evil may preponderate, without merit for virtue, or responsibility for crime. What is remarkable is this, that precisely the same is expressed in the instruction to the soldiers, which they are made to learn by rote: it says there that only the general is responsible for the consequences of his command. But this is not true. A man cannot shift the responsibility for his acts. And this may be seen from what follows: If the government direct you to fire your neighbor's property, or to throw him over a precipice, will you obey? [If a child direct you to kill your neighbor's

child, or your father, or your mother, will you obey?] If you will not, there is an end of the argument, for if you may reject its authority in one instance, where is the limit to rejection? There is no rational limit but that which is assigned by Christianity, and that is both rational and practicable. We think, then, that it is the business of every man, who believes that war is inconsistent with our religion, respectfully, but steadfastly, to refuse to engage in it. Let such as these remember that an honorable and an awful duty is laid upon them. It is upon their fidelity, so far as human agency is concerned, that the cause of peace is suspended. Let them be willing to avow their opinions and to defend them. Neither let them be contented with words, if more than words, if suffering also, is required. If you believe that Jesus Christ has prohibited slaughter, let not the opinion or the commands of a world induce you to join in it. By this "steady and determinate pursuit of virtue," the benediction which attaches to those who hear the sayings of God and do them, will rest upon you, and the time will come when even the world will honor you, as contributors to the work of human reformation. Musser's book is called *Non-Resistance Asserted; or, Kingdom of Christ and Kingdom of This World Separated*, 1864. The book is devoted to the same question, which it analyzes in relation with the demand made by the government of the United States on its citizens as regards military service during that Civil War, and it has the same contemporary importance, in that it analyzes the question as to how and under what conditions men must and can refuse to do military service. In the introduction the author says: It is well known that there are great numbers of people in the United States who profess to be conscientiously opposed to war. They are mostly called non-resistants, or defenseless Christians, and refuse to defend their country or take up arms at the call of the Government to go forth in battle against its enemies. Until now, this conscientious scruple has been respected by

the Government in this country, and those claiming it have been relieved or excused from this service. Since the commencement of the present civil war in the United States, the public mind has been unusually agitated on this subject. It is not unreasonable that such persons as feel it to be their duty to go forth and endure the hardships of camp life, and imperil health, life, and limb in defense of their country and Government, should feel some jealousy of those who have, with themselves, long enjoyed the protection and benefits of the Government, and yet, in the hour of its need, refuse to share the burden of its defense and protection. Neither is it strange that such a position should be looked upon as most unreasonable and monstrous, and those who hold it are regarded with some suspicion. Many able speakers and writers... have raised their voices and pens to refute the idea of non-resistance as both unreasonable and unscriptural. This is not to be wondered at, seeing those who profess the principle and do not possess it or correctly understand it act inconsistently, and thereby bring the profession into disrepute and contempt. However much misapplication or abuse of a principle may prejudice the minds of those who are unacquainted with a subject, it is yet no argument against its truth. First of all the author proves the obligatoriness of the rule of non-resistance for every Christian in that it is clear and that it is given to a Christian beyond any possibility of misinterpretation. "Judge ye, whether it is right to obey man rather than God," said Peter and John. Similarly every man who wants to be a Christian must act in relation to the demand that he should go to war, since Christ has told him, "Resist not evil with violence." With this the author considers the question as to principle itself completely solved. The author analyzes in detail the other question as to whether persons, who do not decline the advantages which are obtained through the violence of government, have a right to refuse to do military service,

and comes to the conclusion that a Christian, who follows Christ's law and refuses to go to war, can just as little take part in any governmental affairs — either in courts or in elections — nor can he in private matters have recourse to power, police, or court. Then the book proceeds to analyze the relation of the Old Testament to the New — the significance of government for non-Christians; there are offered objections to the doctrine of non-resistance, and these are refuted. The author concludes his book with the following: Christ has chosen his disciples out of the world. They have no promise of temporal good or happiness, but the contrary. Their promise is in the world to come. The spirit that they possess renders them happy and contented in any sphere of life. So long as the world tolerates them, they are contented; but if the world will not let them dwell in peace, they flee to another city or place; and so they are true pilgrims and strangers on earth, having no certain abiding-place. Their hope and prospects are in the world to come. They are well contented that the dead may bury their dead, if they are only permitted to follow Christ. Without touching the question whether the duty of a Christian in relation to war, as established in these two books, is correct or not, it is impossible not to see the practical importance and urgency of the solution of this question. There are some people — hundreds of thousands of Quakers — and all our Spirit Wrestlers and Milkers, and people belonging to no definite sects, who assert that violence — and so military service — is not compatible with Christianity, and therefore every year several recruits in Russia refuse to do military service on the basis of their religious convictions. What does the government do? Does it excuse them? No. Does it compel them to serve, and, in case of a refusal, punish them? No. In 1818 the government acted as follows. Here is an excerpt, which is almost unknown in Russia, from a diary by N. N. Muravév-Kárski, which was not sanctioned by the censor. Tiflis, October 2,

1818. In the morning the commandant told me that lately five manorial peasants from the Government of Támbov had been sent to Georgia. These men had been sent to the army, but they refused to serve; they have been flogged several times and have been sent between the rows, but they gladly undergo the most cruel torments and are prepared for death, if only they can avoid serving. "Send us away," they say, "and do not touch us; we shall not touch any one. All men are equal and the Tsar is just such a man as we are. Why should we pay him tribute? Why should I subject my life to danger in order to kill in war a man who has done me no wrong? You may cut us into small pieces, but we will not change our ideas, we will not put on the military cloak, and will not eat rations. He who will pity us will give us an alms, but we have nothing belonging to the Crown and we want nothing." Such are the words of these peasants, who assert that there is a large number like them in Russia. They have four times been taken before the Committee of Ministers, and it was finally decided to refer the matter to the Tsar, who commanded that they be sent to Georgia to mend their ways, and ordered the commander-in-chief to report to him every month concerning the gradual success in turning these peasants to the proper ideas. It is not known how this improvement ended, just as nothing is known of the whole episode, which was kept a profound secret. Thus the government acted seventy-five years ago — thus it has acted in the vast majority of cases, which are always cautiously concealed from the people. Thus it acts even at present, except in relation to the German Mennonites, who live in the Government of Khersón, for their refusal to do military service is heeded and they are made to serve their time in connection with forestry work. In the late cases of refusal to do military service in consequence of religious convictions, other than those of the Mennonites, the authorities have acted as follows: At first they use all

means of violence employed in our time for the purpose of “mending” them and bringing them back to “the proper ideas,” and the whole matter is kept a profound secret. I know that in the case of one man in Moscow, who in 1884 refused to serve, they wrote up voluminous documents two months after his refusal, and these were kept in the ministry as the greatest secret. They generally begin by sending the one who refuses to the priests, who, to their shame be it said, always admonish the person refusing. But since the admonition, in the name of Christ, to renounce Christ is generally fruitless, the refusing person is after the admonition by the clergy sent to the gendarmes. The gendarmes, finding nothing of a political nature in the case, generally return him, and then the refusing person is sent to the learned, to the physicians, and into the insane asylum. In all these recommitments the refuser, who is deprived of his liberty, undergoes all kinds of humiliations and sufferings, like a condemned criminal. (This was repeated in four cases.) The physicians dismiss the refuser from the insane asylum, and then begin all kinds of secret, cunning measures, in order not to dismiss the refuser and thus encourage others to refuse like him, and at the same time not to leave him amidst the soldiers, lest the soldiers might find out from him that the levy for military service does not at all take place in accordance with God’s law, as they are assured, but contrary to it. The most convenient thing for the government to do would be to have the refuser executed, beaten to death with sticks, as they used to do of old, or executed in some other manner. But it is impossible openly to execute a man for being true to a teaching which we all profess, and it is equally impossible to let a man alone, who refuses to serve. And so the government tries either through suffering to compel the man to renounce Christ, or in some way imperceptibly to get rid of the man, without having him publicly executed — in some way to conceal this man’s act and the man himself

from other people. And so there begin all kinds of devices and cunning and tortures of this man. Either he is sent to some outlying region, or he is provoked to commit some act of insubordination, and then he is tried for breach of discipline and is locked up in prison, in a disciplinary battalion, where he is freely tortured in secret, or he is declared insane and is locked up in an insane asylum. Thus one man was sent to Tashkent, that is, as though he were transferred to the Tashkent army, another to Omsk, a third was tried for insubordination and sent to prison, and a fourth was put into a lunatic asylum. Everywhere the same is repeated. Not only the government, but also the majority of liberals, of freethinkers, as though by agreement, carefully turn away from everything which has been said, written, and done by men to show the incompatibility of violence in its most terrible, rude, and lurid form, in the form of militarism, that is, the readiness to kill anybody, with the teaching, not only of Christianity, but even of humanitarianism, which society pretends to be professing. Thus the information which I received concerning the extent to which the true significance of Christ's teaching has been elucidated and is being elucidated more and more, and concerning the attitude which the highest ruling classes, not only in Russia, but also in Europe and in America, take toward this elucidation and execution of the teaching, convinced me that in these ruling classes there existed a consciously hostile relation toward true Christianity, which found its expression mainly in the silence observed concerning all its manifestations.

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