



# The Kingdom of God is Within You

Leo Tolstoy

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The book I have had the privilege of translating is, undoubtedly, one of the most remarkable studies of the social and psychological condition of the modern world which has appeared in Europe for many years, and its influence is sure to be lasting and far reaching. Tolstoi's genius is beyond dispute. The verdict of the civilized world has pronounced him as perhaps the greatest novelist of our generation. But the philosophical and religious works of his later years have met with a somewhat indifferent reception. They have been much talked about, simply because they were his work, but, as Tolstoi himself complains, they have never been seriously discussed. I hardly think that he will have to repeat the complaint in regard to the present volume. One may disagree with his views, but no one can seriously deny the originality, boldness, and depth of the social conception which he develops with such powerful logic. The novelist has shown in this book the religious fervor and spiritual insight of the prophet; yet one is pleased to recognize that the artist is not wholly lost in the thinker. The subtle intuitive perception of the psychological basis of the social position, the analysis of the frame of mind of oppressors and oppressed, and of the intoxication of Authority and Servility, as well as the purely descriptive passages in the last chapter—these could only have come from the author of "War and Peace."

The book will surely give all classes of readers much to think of, and must call forth much criticism. It must be refuted by those who disapprove of its teaching, if they do not want it to have great influence. One cannot of course anticipate that English people, slow as they are to be influenced by ideas, and instinctively distrustful of all that is logical, will take a leap in the dark and attempt to put Tolstoi's theory of life into practice. But one may at least be sure that his destructive criticism of the present social and political RÉGIME will become a powerful force in the work of disintegration and social reconstruction which is going on around us. Many earnest thinkers who, like Tolstoi, are struggling to find their way out of the contradictions of our social order will hail him as their spiritual guide. The individuality of the author is felt in every line of his work, and even the most prejudiced cannot resist the fascination of his genuineness, sincerity, and profound earnestness. Whatever comes from a heart such as his, swelling with anger and pity at the sufferings of humanity, cannot fail to reach the hearts of others. No reader can put down the book without feeling himself better and more truth-loving for having read it.

Many readers may be disappointed with the opening chapters of the book. Tolstoi disdains all attempt to captivate the reader. He begins by

laying what he considers to be the logical foundation of his doctrines, stringing together quotations from little-known theological writers, and he keeps his own incisive logic for the later part of the book.

One word as to the translation. Tolstoi's style in his religious and philosophical works differs considerably from that of his novels. He no longer cares about the form of his work, and his style is often slipshod, involved, and diffuse. It has been my aim to give a faithful reproduction of the original.

CONSTANCE GARNETT. January, 1894

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## PREFACE

In the year 1884 I wrote a book under the title "What I Believe," in which I did in fact make a sincere statement of my beliefs.

In affirming my belief in Christ's teaching, I could not help explaining why I do not believe, and consider as mistaken, the Church's doctrine, which is usually called Christianity.

Among the many points in which this doctrine falls short of the doctrine of Christ I pointed out as the principal one the absence of any commandment of non-resistance to evil by force. The perversion of Christ's teaching by the teaching of the Church is more clearly apparent in this than in any other point of difference.

I know—as we all do—very little of the practice and the spoken and written doctrine of former times on the subject of non-resistance to evil. I knew what had been said on the subject by the fathers of the Church—Origen, Tertullian, and others—I knew too of the existence of some so-called sects of Mennonites, Herrnhuters, and Quakers, who do not allow a Christian the use of weapons, and do not enter military service; but I knew little of what had been done by these so-called sects toward expounding the question.

My book was, as I had anticipated, suppressed by the Russian censorship; but partly owing to my literary reputation, partly because the book had excited people's curiosity, it circulated in manuscript and in lithographed copies in Russia and through translations abroad, and it evolved, on one side, from those who shared my convictions, a series of essays with a great deal of information on the subject, on the other side a series of criticisms on the principles laid down in my book.

A great deal was made clear to me by both hostile and sympathetic criticism, and also by the historical events of late years; and I was led to fresh results and conclusions, which I wish now to expound.

First I will speak of the information I received on the history of the question of non-resistance to evil; then of the views of this question maintained by spiritual critics, that is, by professed believers in the Christian religion, and also by temporal ones, that is, those who do not profess the Christian religion; and lastly I will speak of the conclusions to which I have been brought by all this in the light of the historical events of late years.

L. TOLSTOI. YASNAÏA POLIANA, May 14/26, 1893.

# CHAPTER 1. THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL BY FORCE HAS BEEN PROFESSED BY A MINORITY OF MEN FROM THE VERY FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY

*Of the Book "What I Believe"—The Correspondence Evoked by it—Letters from Quakers—Garrison's Declaration—Adin Ballou, his Works, his Catechism—Helchitsky's "Net of Faith"—The Attitude of the World to Works Elucidating Christ's Teaching—Dymond's Book "On War"—Musser's "Non-resistance Asserted"—Attitude of the Government in 1818 to Men who Refused to Serve in the Army—Hostile Attitude of Governments Generally and of Liberals to Those who Refuse to Assist in Acts of State Violence, and their Conscious Efforts to Silence and Suppress these Manifestations of Christian Non-resistance.*

Among the first responses called forth by my book were some letters from American Quakers. In these letters, expressing their sympathy with my views on the unlawfulness for a Christian of war and the use of force of any kind, the Quakers gave me details of their own so-called sect, which for more than two hundred years has actually professed the teaching of Christ on non-resistance to evil by force, and does not make use of weapons in self-defense. The Quakers sent me books, from which I learnt how they had, years ago, established beyond doubt the duty for a Christian of fulfilling the command of non-resistance to evil by force, and had exposed the error of the Church's teaching in allowing war and capital punishment.

In a whole series of arguments and texts showing that war—that is, the wounding and killing of men—is inconsistent with a religion founded on peace and good will toward men, the Quakers maintain and prove that nothing has contributed so much to the obscuring of Christian truth in the eyes of the heathen, and has hindered so much the diffusion of Christianity through the world, as the disregard of this command by men calling themselves Christians, and the permission of war and violence to Christians.

"Christ's teaching, which came to be known to men, not by means of violence and the sword," they say, "but by means of non-resistance to evil, gentleness, meekness, and peaceableness, can only be diffused through the world by the example of peace, harmony, and love among its followers."

"A Christian, according to the teaching of God himself, can act only peaceably toward all men, and therefore there can be no authority able to force the Christian to act in opposition to the teaching of God and to the principal virtue of the Christian in his relation with his neighbors."

"The law of state necessity," they say, "can force only those to change the law of God who, for the sake of earthly gains, try to reconcile the

irreconcilable; but for a Christian who sincerely believes that following Christ's teaching will give him salvation, such considerations of state can have no force."

Further acquaintance with the labors of the Quakers and their works—with Fox, Penn, and especially the work of Dymond (published in 1827)—showed me not only that the impossibility of reconciling Christianity with force and war had been recognized long, long ago, but that this irreconcilability had been long ago proved so clearly and so indubitably that one could only wonder how this impossible reconciliation of Christian teaching with the use of force, which has been, and is still, preached in the churches, could have been maintained in spite of it.

In addition to what I learned from the Quakers I received about the same time, also from America, some information on the subject from a source perfectly distinct and previously unknown to me.

The son of William Lloyd Garrison, the famous champion of the emancipation of the negroes, wrote to me that he had read my book, in which he found ideas similar to those expressed by his father in the year 1838, and that, thinking it would be interesting to me to know this, he sent me a declaration or proclamation of "non-resistance" drawn up by his father nearly fifty years ago.

This declaration came about under the following circumstances: William Lloyd Garrison took part in a discussion on the means of suppressing war in the Society for the Establishment of Peace among Men, which existed in 1838 in America. He came to the conclusion that the establishment of universal peace can only be founded on the open profession of the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by violence (Matt. v. 39), in its full significance, as understood by the Quakers, with whom Garrison happened to be on friendly relations. Having come to this conclusion, Garrison thereupon composed and laid before the society a declaration, which was signed at the time—in 1838—by many members. "DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS ADOPTED BY PEACE CONVENTION.

"Boston, 1838.

"We the undersigned, regard it as due to ourselves, to the cause which we love, to the country in which we live, to publish a declaration expressive of the purposes we aim to accomplish and the measures we shall adopt to carry forward the work of peaceful universal reformation.

"We do not 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 and rights of American citizens are not dearer to us than those of the whole human race. Hence we can allow no appeal to patriotism to revenge any national insult or injury...

"We conceive that a nation has no right to defend itself against foreign enemies or to punish its invaders, and no individual possesses that right



in his own case, and the unit cannot be of greater importance than the aggregate. If soldiers thronging from abroad with intent to commit rapine and destroy life may not be resisted by the people or the 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 no less absurd than impious. It makes the impartial Author of our existence 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 regard as unchristian and unlawful not only all wars, whether offensive or defensive, but all preparations for war; every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification, we regard as unchristian and unlawful; the existence of any kind of standing army, all military chieftains, all monuments commemorative of victory over a fallen foe, all trophies won in battle, all celebrations in honor of military exploits, all appropriations for defense by arms; we regard as unchristian and unlawful every edict of government requiring of its subjects military service.

"Hence we deem it unlawful to bear arms, and we cannot hold any office which imposes on 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 force him to return anything he may have wrongly taken from us; if he has seized our coat, we shall surrender him our cloak also 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 on all his disciples in all cases whatsoever. To extort money from enemies, cast them into prison, exile or execute them, 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, and that the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated only by good; that it is not safe to rely upon the strength of an arm to preserve us from harm; that there is great security in being gentle, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy; that it is only the meek

who shall inherit the earth; for those who take up the sword shall perish by 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, is armed with omnipotent power, and must ultimately triumph over every assailing force.

"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 evil by our fundamental principle of not opposing evil by evil we cannot participate in sedition, treason, or violence. We shall submit to every ordinance and every requirement of government, except such as are contrary to the commands of the Gospel, and in no case 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 assail iniquity in high places and in low places, to apply our principles to all existing evil, political, legal, and ecclesiastical institutions, and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world will have become the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. 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 stated our principles, 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. We shall endeavor to promulgate our views among all persons, to whatever nation, sect, or grade of society they may belong. Hence we shall organize public lectures, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition every governing body. 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, and calumny. Tumults may arise against us. The

proud and pharisaical, the ambitious and tyrannical, principalities and powers, 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. Our confidence is in the Lord Almighty and 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, but rejoice inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings.

"Wherefore we commit the keeping of our souls to God. 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 hundredfold, 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, we hereby affix our signatures to it; commending it to the reason and conscience of mankind, and resolving, in the strength of the Lord God, to calmly and meekly abide the issue."

Immediately after this declaration a Society for Non-resistance was founded by Garrison, and a journal called the NON-RESISTANT, in which the doctrine of non-resistance was advocated in its full significance and in all its consequences, as it had been expounded in the declaration. Further information as to the ultimate destiny of the society and the journal I gained from the excellent biography of W. L. Garrison, the work of his son.

The society and the journal did not exist for long. The greater number of Garrison's fellow-workers in the movement for the liberation of the slaves, fearing that the too radical programme of the journal, the NON-RESISTANT, might keep people away from the practical work of negro-emancipation, gave up the profession of the principle of non-resistance as it had been expressed in the declaration, and both society and journal ceased to exist.

This declaration of Garrison's gave so powerful and eloquent an expression of a confession of faith of such importance to men, that one would have thought it must have produced a strong impression on people, and have become known throughout the world and the subject of discussion on every side. But nothing of the kind occurred. Not only was it unknown in Europe, even the Americans, who have such a high opinion of Garrison, hardly knew of the declaration.

Another champion of non-resistance has been overlooked in the same way—the American Adin Ballou, who lately died, after spending fifty years in preaching this doctrine. Lord God, to calmly and meekly abide the doctrine. How great the ignorance is of everything relating to the question of non-resistance may be seen from the fact that Garrison the son, who has written an excellent biography of his father in four great

volumes, in answer to my inquiry whether there are existing now societies for non-resistance, and adherents of the doctrine, told me that as far as he knew that society had broken up, and that there were no adherents of that doctrine, while at the very time when he was writing to me there was living, at Hopedale in Massachusetts, Adin Ballou, who had taken part in the labors of Garrison the father, and had devoted fifty years of his life to advocating, both orally and in print, the doctrine of non-resistance. Later on I received a letter from Wilson, a pupil and colleague of Ballou's, and entered into correspondence with Ballou himself. I wrote to Ballou, and he answered me and sent me his works. Here is the summary of some extracts from them:

"Jesus Christ is my Lord and teacher," says Ballou in one of his essays exposing the inconsistency of Christians who allowed a right of self-defense and of warfare. "I have promised leaving all else, to follow good and through evil, to death itself. But I am a citizen of the democratic republic of the United States; and in allegiance to it I have sworn to defend the Constitution of my country, if need be, with my life. Christ requires of me to do unto others as I would they should do unto me. The Constitution of the United States requires of me to do unto two millions of slaves [at that time there were slaves; now one might venture to substitute the word 'laborers'] the very opposite of what I would they should do unto me—that is to help to keep them in their present condition of slavery. And, in spite of this, I continue to elect or be elected, I propose to vote, I am even ready to be appointed to any office under government. That will not hinder me from being a Christian. I shall still profess Christianity, and shall find no difficulty in carrying out my covenant with Christ and with the government.

"Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evil doers, and to take from them an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, bloodshed for bloodshed, and life for life.

"My government demands from me quite the opposite, and bases a system of self-defense on gallows, musket, and sword, to be used against its foreign and domestic foes. And the land is filled accordingly with gibbets, prisons, arsenals, ships of war, and soldiers.

"In the maintenance and use of these expensive appliances for murder, we can very suitably exercise to the full the virtues of forgiveness to those who injure us, love toward our enemies, blessings to those who curse us, and doing good to those who hate us.

"For this we have a succession of Christian priests to pray for us and beseech the blessing of Heaven on the holy work of slaughter.

"I see all this (i. e., the contradiction between profession and practice), and I continue to profess religion and take part in government, and pride myself on being at the same time a devout Christian and a devoted servant of the government. I do not want to agree with these senseless notions of non-resistance. I cannot renounce my authority and leave

only immoral men in control of the government. The Constitution says the government has the right to declare war, and I assent to this and support it, and swear that I will support it. And I do not for that cease to be a Christian. War, too, is a Christian duty. Is it not a Christian duty to kill hundreds of thousands of one's fellow-men, to outrage women, to raze and burn towns, and to practice every possible cruelty? It is time to dismiss all these false sentimentalities. It is the truest means of forgiving injuries and loving enemies. If we only do it in the spirit of love, nothing can be more Christian than such murder."

In another pamphlet, entitled "How many Men are Necessary to Change a Crime into a Virtue?" he says: "One man may not kill. If he kills a fellow-creature, he is a murderer. If two, ten, a hundred men do so, they, too, are murderers. But a government or a nation may kill as many men as it chooses, and that will not be murder, but a great and noble action. Only gather the people together on a large scale, and a battle of ten thousand men becomes an innocent action. But precisely how many people must there be to make it so?—that is the question. One man cannot plunder and pillage, but a whole nation can. But precisely how many are needed to make it permissible? Why is it that one man, ten, a hundred, may not break the law of God, but a great number may?"

And here is a version of Ballou's catechism composed for his flock:

#### CATECHISM OF NON-RESISTANCE.

Q. Whence is the word "non-resistance" derived?

A. From the command, "Resist not evil." (M. v. 39.)

Q. What does this word express?

A. It expresses a lofty Christian virtue enjoined on us by Christ.

Q. Ought the word "non-resistance" to be taken in its widest sense—that is to say, as intending that we should not offer any resistance of any kind to evil?

A. No; it ought to be taken in the exact sense of our Saviour's teaching—that is, not repaying evil for evil. We ought to oppose evil by every righteous means in our power, but not by evil.

Q. What is there to show that Christ enjoined non-resistance in that sense?

A. It is shown by the words he uttered at the same time. He said: "Ye have heard, it was said of old, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you Resist not evil. But if one smites thee on the right cheek, turn him the other also; and if one will go to law with thee to take thy coat from thee, give him thy cloak also."

Q. Of whom was he speaking in the words, "Ye have heard it was said of old"?

A. Of the patriarchs and the prophets, contained in the Old Testament, which the Hebrews ordinarily call the Law and the Prophets.

Q. What utterances did Christ refer to in the words, "It was said of old"?

A. The utterances of Noah, Moses, and the other prophets, in which they admit the right of doing bodily harm to those who inflict harm, so as to punish and prevent evil deeds.

Q. Quote such utterances.

A. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."—GEN. ix. 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." —Ex. xxi. 12 and 23-25.

"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 unto him: breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth."—LEV. xxiv. 17, 19, 20.

"Then 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."—DEUT. xix. 18, 21.

Noah, Moses, and the Prophets taught that he who kills, maims, or injures his neighbors does evil. To resist such evil, and to prevent it, the evil doer must be punished with death, or maiming, or some physical injury. Wrong must be opposed by wrong, murder by murder, injury by injury, evil by evil. Thus taught Noah, Moses, and the Prophets. But Christ rejects all this. "I say unto you," is written in the Gospel, "resist not evil," do not oppose injury with injury, but rather bear repeated injury from the evil doer. What was permitted is forbidden. When we understand what kind of resistance they taught, we know exactly what resistance Christ forbade.

Q. Then the ancients allowed the resistance of injury by injury?

A. Yes. But Jesus forbids it. The Christian has in no case the right to put to death his neighbor who has done him evil, or to do him injury in return.

Q. May he kill or maim him in self-defense?

A. No.

Q. May he go with a complaint to the judge that he who has wronged him may be punished?

A. No. What he does through others, he is in reality doing himself.

Q. Can he fight in conflict with foreign enemies or disturbers of the peace?

A. Certainly not. He cannot take any part in war or in preparations for war. He cannot make use of a deadly weapon. He cannot oppose injury to injury, whether he is alone or with others, either in person or through other people.

Q. Can he voluntarily vote or furnish soldiers for the government?



A. He can do nothing of that kind if he wishes to be faithful to Christ's law.

Q. Can he voluntarily give money to aid a government resting on military force, capital punishment, and violence in general?

A. No, unless the money is destined for some special object, right in itself, and good both in aim and means.

Q. Can he pay taxes to such a government?

A. No; he ought not voluntarily to pay taxes, but he ought not to resist the collecting of taxes. A tax is levied by the government, and is exacted independently of the will of the subject. It is impossible to resist it without having recourse to violence of some kind. Since the Christian cannot employ violence, he is obliged to offer his property at once to the loss by violence inflicted on it by the authorities.

Q. Can a Christian give a vote at elections, or take part in government or law business?

A. No; participation in election, government, or law business is participation in government by force.

Q. Wherein lies the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance?

A. In the fact that it alone allows of the possibility of eradicating evil from one's own heart, and also from one's neighbor's. This doctrine forbids doing that whereby evil has endured for ages and multiplied in the world. He who attacks another and injures him, kindles in the other a feeling of hatred, the root of every evil. To injure another because he has injured us, even with the aim of overcoming evil, is doubling the harm for him and for oneself; it is begetting, or at least setting free and inciting, that evil spirit which we should wish to drive out. Satan can never be driven out by Satan. Error can never be corrected by error, and evil cannot be vanquished by evil.

True non-resistance is the only real resistance to evil. It is crushing the serpent's head. It destroys and in the end extirpates the evil feeling.

Q. But if that is the true meaning of the rule of non-resistance, can it always put into practice?

A. It can be put into practice like every virtue enjoined by the law of God. A virtue cannot be practiced in all circumstances without self-sacrifice, privation, suffering, and in extreme cases loss of life itself. But he who esteems life more than fulfilling the will of God is already dead to the only true life. Trying to save his life he loses it. Besides, generally speaking, where non-resistance costs the sacrifice of a single life or of some material welfare, resistance costs a thousand such sacrifices.

Non-resistance is Salvation; Resistance is Ruin.

It is incomparably less dangerous to act justly than unjustly, to submit to injuries than to resist them with violence, less dangerous even in one's relations to the present life. If all men refused to resist evil by evil our world would be happy.

Q. But so long as only a few act thus, what will happen to them?

A. If only one man acted thus, and all the rest agreed to crucify him, would it not be nobler for him to die in the glory of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than to live to wear the crown of Caesar stained with the blood of the slain? However, one man, or a thousand men, firmly resolved not to oppose evil by evil are far more free from danger by violence than those who resort to violence, whether among civilized or savage neighbors. The robber, the murderer, and the cheat will leave them in peace, sooner than those who oppose them with arms, and those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword, but those who seek after peace, and behave kindly and harmlessly, forgiving and forgetting injuries, for the most part enjoy peace, or, if they die, they die blessed. In this way, if all kept the ordinance of non-resistance, there would obviously be no evil nor crime. If the majority acted thus they would establish the rule of love and good will even over evil doers, never opposing evil with evil, and never resorting to force. If there were a moderately large minority of such men, they would exercise such a salutary moral influence on society that every cruel punishment would be abolished, and violence and feud would be replaced by peace and love. Even if there were only a small minority of them, they would rarely experience anything worse than the world's contempt, and meantime the world, though unconscious of it, and not grateful for it, would be continually becoming wiser and better for their unseen action on it. And if in the worst case some members of the minority were persecuted to death, in dying for the truth they would have left behind them their doctrine, sanctified by the blood of their martyrdom. Peace, then, to all who seek peace, and may overruling love be the imperishable heritage of every soul who obeys willingly Christ's word, "Resist not evil."

ADIN BALLOU.

For fifty years Ballou wrote and published books dealing principally with the question of non-resistance to evil by force. In these works, which are distinguished by the clearness of their thought and eloquence of exposition, the question is looked at from every possible side, and the binding nature of this command on every Christian who acknowledges the Bible as the revelation of God is firmly established. All the ordinary objections to the doctrine of non-resistance from the Old and New Testaments are brought forward, such as the expulsion of the moneychangers from the Temple, and so on, and arguments follow in disproof of them all. The practical reasonableness of this rule of conduct is shown independently of Scripture, and all the objections ordinarily made against its practicability are stated and refuted. Thus one chapter in a book of his treats of non-resistance in exceptional cases, and he owns in this connection that if there were cases in which the rule of non-resistance were impossible of application, it would prove that the law was not universally authoritative. Quoting these cases, he shows

that it is precisely in them that the application of the rule is both necessary and reasonable. There is no aspect of the question, either on his side or on his opponents', which he has not followed up in his writings. I mention all this to show the unmistakable interest which such works ought to have for men who make a profession of Christianity, and because one would have thought Ballou's work would have been well known, and the ideas expressed by him would have been either accepted or refuted; but such has not been the case.

The work of Garrison, the father, in his foundation of the Society of Non-resistants and his Declaration, even more than my correspondence with the Quakers, convinced me of the fact that the departure of the ruling form of Christianity from the law of Christ on non-resistance by force is an error that has long been observed and pointed out, and that men have labored, and are still laboring, to correct. Ballou's work confirmed me still more in this view. But the fate of Garrison, still more that of Ballou, in being completely unrecognized in spite of fifty years of obstinate and persistent work in the same direction, confirmed me in the idea that there exists a kind of tacit but steadfast conspiracy of silence about all such efforts.

Ballou died in August, 1890, and there was an obituary notice of him in an American journal of Christian views (RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL, August 23). In this laudatory notice it is recorded that Ballou was the spiritual director of a parish, that he delivered from eight to nine thousand sermons, married one thousand couples, and wrote about five hundred articles; but there is not a single word said of the object to which he devoted his life; even the word "non-resistance" is not mentioned. Precisely as it was with all the preaching of the Quakers for two hundred years and, too, with the efforts of Garrison the father, the foundation of his society and journal, and his Declaration, so it is with the life-work of Ballou. It seems just as though it did not exist and never had existed.

We have an astounding example of the obscurity of works which aim at expounding the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force, and at confuting those who do not recognize this commandment, in the book of the Tsech Helchitsky, which has only lately been noticed and has not hitherto been printed.

Soon after the appearance of my book in German, I received a letter from Prague, from a professor of the university there, informing me of the existence of a work, never yet printed, by Helchitsky, a Tsech of the fifteenth century, entitled "The Net of Faith." In this work, the professor told me, Helchitsky expressed precisely the same view as to true and false Christianity as I had expressed in my book "What I Believe." The professor wrote to me that Helchitsky's work was to be published for the first time in the Tsech language in the JOURNAL OF THE PETERSBURG ACADEMY OF SILENCE. Since I could not obtain the book itself, I tried to

make myself acquainted with what was known of Helchitsky, and I gained the following information from a German book sent me by the Prague professor and from Pypin's history of Tsech literature. This was Pypin's account:

"'The Net of Faith' is Christ's teaching, which ought to draw man up out of the dark depths of the sea of worldliness and his own iniquity. True faith consists in believing God's Word; but now a time has come when men mistake the true faith for heresy, and therefore it is for the reason to point out what the true faith consists in, if anyone does not know this. It is hidden in darkness from men, and they do not recognize the true law of Christ.

"To make this law plain, Helchitsky points to the primitive organization of Christian society—the organization which, he says, is now regarded in the Roman Church as an abominable heresy. This Primitive Church was his special ideal of social organization, founded on equality, liberty, and fraternity. Christianity, in Helchitsky's view, still preserves these elements, and it is only necessary for society to return to its pure doctrine to render unnecessary every other form of social order in which kings and popes are essential; the law of love would alone be sufficient in every case.

"Historically, Helchitsky attributes the degeneration of Christianity to the times of Constantine the Great, whom he Pope Sylvester admitted into the Christian Church with all his heathen morals and life. Constantine, in his turn, endowed the Pope with worldly riches and power. From that time forward these two ruling powers were constantly aiding one another to strive for nothing but outward glory. Divines and ecclesiastical dignitaries began to concern themselves only about subduing the whole world to their authority, incited men against one another to murder and plunder, and in creed and life reduced Christianity to a nullity. Helchitsky denies completely the right to make war and to inflict the punishment of death; every soldier, even the 'knight,' is only a violent evil doer—a murderer."

The same account is given by the German book, with the addition of a few biographical details and some extracts from Helchitsky's writings. Having learnt the drift of Helchitsky's teaching in this way, I awaited all the more impatiently the appearance of "The Net of Faith" in the journal of the Academy. But one year passed, then two and three, and still the book did not appear. It was only in 1888 that I learned that the printing of the book, which had been begun, was stopped. I obtained the proofs of what had been printed and read them through. It is a marvelous book from every point of view.

Its general tenor is given with perfect accuracy by Pypin. Helchitsky's fundamental idea is that Christianity, by allying itself with temporal power in the days of Constantine, and by continuing to develop in such conditions, has become completely distorted, and has ceased to be

Christian altogether. Helchitsky gave the title "The Net of Faith" to his book, taking as his motto the verse of the Gospel about the calling of the disciples to be fishers of men; and, developing this metaphor, he says: "Christ, by means of his disciples, would have caught all the world in his net of faith, but the greater fishes broke the net and escaped out of it, and all the rest have slipped through the holes made by the greater fishes, so that the net has remained quite empty. The greater fishes who broke the net are the rulers, emperors, popes, kings, who have not renounced power, and instead of true Christianity have put on what is simply a mask of it."

Helchitsky teaches precisely what has been and is taught in these days by the non-resistant Mennonites and Quakers, and in former times by the Bogomilites, Paulicians, and many others. He teaches that Christianity, expecting from its adherents gentleness, meekness, peaceableness, forgiveness of injuries, turning the other cheek when one is struck, and love for enemies, is inconsistent with the use of force, which is an indispensable condition of authority.

The Christian, according to Helchitsky's reasoning, not only cannot be a ruler or a soldier; he cannot take any part in government nor in trade, or even be a landowner; he can only be an artisan or a husbandman. This book is one of the few works attacking official Christianity which has escaped being burned. All such so-called heretical works were burned at the stake, together with their authors, so that there are few ancient works exposing the errors of official Christianity. The book has a special interest for this reason alone. But apart from its interest from every point of view, it is one of the most remarkable products of thought for its depth of aim, for the astounding strength and beauty of the national language in which it is written, and for its antiquity. And yet for more than four centuries it has remained unprinted, and is still unknown, except to a few learned specialists.

One would have thought that all such works, whether of the Quakers, of Garrison, of Ballou, or of Helchitsky, asserting and proving as they do, on the principles of the Gospel, that our modern world takes a false view of Christ's teaching, would have awakened interest, excitement, talk, and discussion among spiritual teachers and their flocks alike.

Works of this kind, dealing with the very essence of Christian doctrine, ought, one would have thought, to have been examined and accepted as true, or refuted and rejected. But nothing of the kind has occurred, and the same fate has been repeated with all those works. Men of the most diverse views, believers, and, what is surprising, unbelieving liberals also, as though by agreement, all preserve the same persistent silence about them, and all that has been done by people to explain the true meaning of Christ's doctrine remains either ignored or forgotten.

But it is still more astonishing that two other books, of which I heard on the appearance of my book, should be so little known, I mean 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. It is particularly astonishing that these books should be unknown, because, apart from their intrinsic merits, both books treat not so much of the theory as of the practical application of the theory to life, of the attitude of Christianity to military service, which is especially important and interesting now in these clays of universal conscription.

People will ask, perhaps: How ought a subject to behave who believes that war is inconsistent with his religion while the government demands from him that he should enter military service?

This question is, I think, a most vital one, and the answer to it is specially important in these days of universal conscription. All—or at least the great majority of the people—are Christians, and all men are called upon for military service. How ought a man, as a Christian, to meet this demand? This is the gist of Dymond's answer:

"His duty is humbly but steadfastly to refuse to serve."

There are some people, who, without any definite reasoning about it, conclude straightway that the responsibility of government measures rests entirely on those who resolve on them, or that the governments and sovereigns decide the question of what is good or bad for their subjects, and the duty of the subjects is merely to obey. I think that arguments of this kind only obscure men's conscience. I cannot take part in the councils of government, and therefore I am not responsible for its misdeeds.. Indeed, but we are responsible for our own misdeeds. And the misdeeds of our rulers become our own, if we, knowing that they are misdeeds, assist in carrying, them out. Those who suppose that they are bound to obey the government, and that the responsibility for the misdeeds they commit is transferred from them to their rulers, deceive themselves. They say: "We give our acts up to the will of others, and our acts cannot be good or bad; there is no merit in what is good nor responsibility for what is evil in our actions, since they are not done of our own will."

It is remarkable that the very same thing is said in the instructions to soldiers which they make them learn—that is, that the officer is alone responsible for the consequences of his command. But this is not right. A man cannot get rid of the responsibility, for his own actions. And that is clear from the following example. If your officer commands you to kill your neighbor's child, to kill your father or your mother, would you obey? If you would not obey, the whole argument falls to the ground, for if you can disobey the governors in one case, where do you draw the line up to which you can obey them? There is no line other than that laid down by Christianity, and that line is both reasonable and practicable. And therefore we consider it the duty of every man who thinks war inconsistent with Christianity, meekly but firmly to refuse to serve in the army. And let those whose lot it is to act thus, remember that the



fulfillment of a great duty rests with them. The destiny of humanity in the world depends, so far as it depends on men at all, on their fidelity to their religion. Let them confess their conviction, and stand up for it, and not in words alone, but in sufferings too, if need be. If you believe that Christ forbade murder, pay no heed to the arguments nor to the commands of those who call on you to bear a hand in it. By such a steadfast refusal to make use of force, you call down on yourselves the blessing promised to those "who hear these sayings and do them," and the time will come when the world will recognize you as having aided in the reformation of mankind.

Musser's book is called "Non-resistance Asserted," or "Kingdom of Christ and Kingdoms of this World Separated." This book is devoted to the same question, and was written when the American Government was exacting military service from its citizens at the time of the Civil War. And it has, too, a value for all time, dealing with the question how, in such circumstances, people should and can refuse to enter military service. Here is the tenor of the author's introductory remarks:

"It is well known that there are many persons in the United States who refuse to fight on grounds of conscience. They are called the 'defenseless,' or 'non-resistant' Christians. These Christians refuse to defend their country, to bear arms, or at the call of government to make war on its enemies. Till lately this religious scruple seemed a valid excuse to the government, and those who urged it were let off service. But at the beginning of our Civil War public opinion was agitated on this subject. It was natural that persons who considered it their duty to bear all the hardships and dangers of war in defense of their country should feel resentment against those persons who had for long shared with them the advantages of the protection of government, and who now in time of need and danger would not share in bearing the labors and dangers of its defense. It was even natural that they should declare the attitude of such men monstrous, irrational, and suspicious."

A host of orators and writers, our author tells us, arose to oppose this attitude, and tried to prove the sinfulness of non-resistance, both from Scripture and on common-sense grounds. And this was perfectly natural, and in many cases the authors were right—right, that is, in regard to persons who did not renounce the benefits they received from the government and tried to avoid the hardships of military service, but not right in regard to the principle of non-resistance itself. Above all, our author proves the binding nature of the rule of non-resistance for a Christian, pointing out that this command is perfectly clear, and is enjoined upon every Christian by Christ without possibility of misinterpretation. "Bethink yourselves whether it is righteous to obey man more than God," said Peter and John. And this is precisely what ought to be the attitude to every man who wishes to be Christian to the claim on him for military service, when Christ has said, "Resist not evil

by force." As for the question of the principle itself, the author regards that as decided. As to the second question, whether people have the right to refuse to serve in the army who have not refused the benefits conferred by a government resting on force, the author considers it in detail, and arrives at the conclusion that a Christian following the law of Christ, since he does not go to war, ought not either to take advantage of any institutions of government, courts of law, or elections, and that in his private concerns he must not have recourse to the authorities, the police, or the law. Further on in the book he treats of the relation of the Old Testament to the New, the value of government for those who are Christians, and makes some observations on the doctrine of non-resistance and the attacks made on it. The author concludes his book by saying: "Christians do not need government, and therefore they cannot either obey it in what is contrary to Christ's teaching nor, still less, take part in it." Christ took his disciples out of the world, he says. They do not expect worldly blessings and worldly happiness, but they expect eternal life. The Spirit in whom they live makes them contented and happy in every position. If the world tolerates them, they are always happy. If the world will not leave them in peace, they will go elsewhere, since they are pilgrims on the earth and they have no fixed place of habitation. They believe that "the dead may bury their dead." One thing only is needful for them, "to follow their Master."

Even putting aside the question as to the principle laid down in these two books as to the Christian's duty in his attitude to war, one cannot help perceiving the practical importance and the urgent need of deciding the question.

There are people, hundreds of thousands of Quakers, Mennonites, all our Douhobortsi, Molokani, and others who do not belong to any definite sect, who consider that the use of force—and, consequently, military service—is inconsistent with Christianity. Consequently there are every year among us in Russia some men called upon for military service who refuse to serve on the ground of their religious convictions. Does the government let them off then? No. Does it compel them to go, and in case of disobedience punish them? No. This was how the government treated them in 1818. Here is an extract from the diary of Nicholas Myravyov of Kars, which was not passed by the censor, and is not known in Russia:

"Tiflis, October 2, 1818.

"In the morning the commandant told me that five peasants belonging to a landowner in the Tamboff government had lately been sent to Georgia. These men had been sent for soldiers, but they would not serve; they had been several times flogged and made to run the gauntlet, but they would submit readily to the cruelest tortures, and even to death, rather than serve. 'Let us go,' they said, 'and leave us alone; we will not hurt anyone; all men are equal, and the Tzar is a man like us; why

should we pay him tribute; why should I expose my life to danger to kill in battle some man who has done me no harm? You can cut us to pieces and we will not be soldiers. He who has compassion on us will give us charity, but as for the government rations, we have not had them and we do not want to have them.' These were the words of those peasants, who declare that there are numbers like them Russia. They brought them four times before the Committee of Ministers, and at last decided to lay the matter before the Tzar who gave orders that they should be taken to Georgia for correction, and commanded the commander-in-chief to send him a report every month of their gradual success in bringing these peasants to a better mind."

How the correction ended is not known, as the whole episode indeed was unknown, having been kept in profound secrecy.

This was how the government behaved seventy-five years ago—this is how it has behaved in a great number of cases, studiously concealed from the people. And this is how the government behaves now, except in the case of the German Mennonites, living in the province of Kherson, whose plea against military service is considered well grounded. They are made to work off their term of service in labor in the forests.

But in the recent cases of refusal on the part of Mennonites to serve in the army on religious grounds, the government authorities have acted in the following manner:

To begin with, they have recourse to every means of coercion used in our times to "correct" the culprit and bring him to "a better mind," and these measures are carried out with the greatest secrecy. I know that in the case of one man who declined to serve in 1884 in Moscow, the official correspondence on the subject had two months after his refusal accumulated into a big folio, and was kept absolutely secret among the Ministry.

They usually begin by sending the culprit to the priests, and the latter, to their shame be it said, always exhort him to obedience. But since the exhortation in Christ's name to forswear Christ is for the most part unsuccessful, after he has received the admonitions of the spiritual authorities, they send him to the gendarmes, and the latter, finding, as a rule, no political cause for offense in him, dispatch him back again, and then he is sent to the learned men, to the doctors, and to the madhouse. During all these vicissitudes he is deprived of liberty and has to endure every kind of humiliation and suffering as a convicted criminal. (All this has been repeated in four cases.) The doctors let him out of the madhouse, and then every kind of secret shift is employed to prevent him from going free—whereby others would be encouraged to refuse to serve as he has done—and at the same time to avoid leaving him among the soldiers, for fear they too should learn from him that military service is not at all their duty by the law of God, as they are assured, but quite contrary to it.

The most convenient thing for the government would be to kill the non-resistant by flogging him to death or some other means, as was done in former days. But to put a man openly to death because he believes in the creed we all confess is impossible. To let a man alone who has refused obedience is also impossible. And so the government tries either to compel the man by ill-treatment to renounce Christ, or in some way or other to get rid of him unobserved, without openly putting him to death, and to hide somehow both the action and the man himself from other people. And so all kinds of shifts and wiles and cruelties are set on foot against him. They either send him to the frontier or provoke him to insubordination, and then try him for breach of discipline and shut him up in the prison of the disciplinary battalion, where they can ill treat him freely unseen by anyone, or they declare him mad, and lock him up in a lunatic asylum. They sent one man in this way to Tashkend—that is, they pretended to transfer to the Tashkend army; another to Omsk; a third him they convicted of insubordination and shut up in prison; a fourth they sent to a lunatic asylum.

Everywhere the same story is repeated. Not only the government, but the great majority of liberal, advanced people, as they are called, studiously turn away from everything that has been said, written, or done, or is being done by men to prove the incompatibility of force in its most awful, gross, and glaring form—in the form, that is, of an army of soldiers prepared to murder anyone, whoever it may be—with the teachings of Christianity, or even of the humanity which society professes as its creed.

So that the information I have gained of the attitude of the higher ruling classes, not only in Russia but in Europe and America, toward the elucidation of this question has convinced me that there exists in these ruling classes a consciously hostile attitude to true Christianity, which is shown pre-eminently in their reticence in regard to all manifestations of it.

## CHAPTER 2. CRITICISMS OF THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL BY FORCE ON THE PART OF BELIEVERS AND OF UNBELIEVERS

*Fate of the Book "What I Believe"—Evasive Character of Religious Criticisms of Principles of my Book—1st Reply: Use of Force not Opposed to Christianity—2d Reply: Use of Force Necessary to Restrain Evil Doers—3d Reply: Duty of Using Force in Defense of One's Neighbor—4th Reply: The Breach of the Command of Non-resistance to be Regarded Simply as a Weakness—5th Reply: Reply Evaded by Making Believe that the Question has long been Decided—To Devise such Subterfuges and to take Refuge Behind the Authority of the Church, of Antiquity, and of Religion is all that Ecclesiastical Critics can do to get out of the Contradiction between Use of Force and Christianity in Theory and in Practice—General Attitude of the Ecclesiastical World and of the Authorities to Profession of True Christianity—General Character of Russian Freethinking Critics—Foreign Freethinking Critics—Mistaken Arguments of these Critics the Result of Misunderstanding the True Meaning of Christ's Teaching.*

The impression I gained of a desire to conceal, to hush up, what I had tried to express in my book, led me to judge the book itself afresh. On its appearance it had, as I had anticipated, been forbidden, and ought therefore by law to have been burnt. But, at the same time, it was discussed among officials, and circulated in a great number of manuscript and lithograph copies, and in translations printed abroad. And very quickly after the book, criticisms, both religious and secular in character, made their appearance, and these the government tolerated, and even encouraged. So that the refutation of a book which no one was supposed to know anything about was even chosen as the subject for theological dissertations in the academies.

The criticisms of my book, Russian and foreign alike, fall under two general divisions—the religious criticisms of men who regard themselves as believers, and secular criticisms, that is, those of freethinkers.

I will begin with the first class. In my book I made it an accusation against the teachers of the Church that their teaching is opposed to Christ's commands clearly and definitely expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, and opposed in especial to his command in regard to resistance to evil, and that in this way they deprive Christ's teaching of all value. The Church authorities accept the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount on non-resistance to evil by force as divine revelation; and therefore one would have thought that if they felt called upon to write about my book at all, they would have found it inevitable before everything else to reply to the principal point of my charge against them, and to say plainly, do they or do they not admit the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount and the commandment of non-resistance to evil as binding on a Christian. And they were bound to answer this

question, not after the usual fashion (i. e., "that although on the one side one cannot absolutely deny, yet on the other side one cannot main fully assent, all the more seeing that," etc., etc.). No; they should have answered the question as plainly as it was put in my book—Did Christ really demand from his disciples that they should carry out what he taught them in the Sermon on the Mount? And can a Christian, then, or can he not, always remaining a Christian, go to law or make any use of the law, or seek his own protection in the law? And can the Christian, or can he not, remaining a Christian, take part in the administration of government, using compulsion against his neighbors? And—the most important question hanging over the heads of all of us in these days of universal military service—can the Christian, or can he not, remaining a Christian, against Christ's direct prohibition, promise obedience in future actions directly opposed to his teaching? And can he, by taking his share of service in the army, prepare himself to murder men, and even actually murder them?

These questions were put plainly and directly, and seemed to require a plain and direct answer; but in all the criticisms of my book there was no such plain and direct answer. No; my book received precisely the same treatment as all the attacks upon the teachers of the Church for their defection from the Law of Christ of which history from the days of Constantine is full.

A very great deal was said in connection with my book of my having incorrectly interpreted this and other passages of the Gospel, of my being in error in not recognizing the Trinity, the redemption, and the immortality of the soul. A very great deal was said, but not a word about the one thing which for every Christian is the most essential question in life—how to reconcile the duty of forgiveness, meekness, patience, and love for all, neighbors and enemies alike, which is so clearly expressed in the words of our teacher, and in the heart of each of us—how to reconcile this duty with the obligation of using force in war upon men of our own or a foreign people.

All that are worth calling answers to this question can be brought under the following five heads. I have tried to bring together in this connection all I could, not only from the criticisms on my book, but from what has been written in past times on this theme.

The first and crudest form of reply consists in the bold assertion that the use of force is not opposed by the teaching of Christ; that it is permitted, and even enjoined, on the Christian by the Old and New Testaments.

Assertions of this kind proceed, for the most part, from men who have attained the highest ranks in the governing or ecclesiastical hierarchy, and who are consequently perfectly assured that no one will dare to contradict their assertion, and that if anyone does contradict it they will hear nothing of the contradiction. These men have, for the most part,