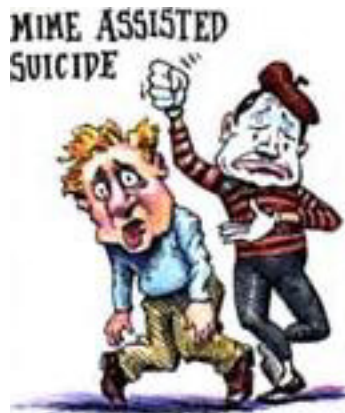


COUNT LEV NIKOLÆVICH GRAF TOLSTÒY



"And there I was, a fortunate man....
And I quit going hunting with a gun,
so that I would not be too easily tempted
to rid myself of life."

– [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)



The Wikipedia page on [Henry David Thoreau](#) makes the standard grandiloquent assertion that he "influenced" first [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#), then [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#), then the Reverend Dr. [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) I might go into the page to point up the fact that although this is a standard assertion, it is a standard piece of puffery that happens to be entirely unsupported by anything (except piety, which is as marvelously supportive as a Beautyrest® mattress). The primary American influence upon Tolstòy according to Tolstòy himself was the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#), who lived in the [Hopedale](#) intentional Christian community outside Worcester during Thoreau's lifetime and had once debated Thoreau about war, pro and con. The primary influence upon Gandhi was a Jain ascetic who died during Gandhi's youth. The primary influence upon the Reverend King was Friend [Bayard Rustin](#), a black queer pacifist [Quaker](#) civil-rights activist. All three of these now-adored leaders have indeed attempted to explain themselves to American audiences familiar with Thoreau by affiliating themselves with Thoreau – **but**, "explaining yourself" by means of something familiar to the people with whom you are communicating by making reference to some understood point-of-reference "A" happens **not** to be the same animule as being "influenced by" that given point-of-reference "A."

In the case of Tolstòy, had he attempted to explain himself by reference to the Reverend Adin Ballou, he would have encountered only blank stares or hostility –because Americans know nothing whatever about the Reverend Ballou, and when they learn something about him, in general they disdain people such as that. Although Tolstòy's beliefs were in some respects similar



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to those of Thoreau, we are unable to specify any particular belief of Thoreau which induced Tolstòy, when he learned of it, to then reform his own beliefs.

In the case of Gandhiji, had he attempted to explain himself by reference to this Jain ascetic, Raychandrabhai Mehta, it would have decidedly hurt him politically, for he was an Indian politician whose primary field of influence lay among persons of the Hindu faith who would have been very much put off by this primary sympathy with Jainism. Although Gandhiji's beliefs were in some respects similar to those of Thoreau, we are unable to specify any particular belief shared by Thoreau and Gandhi to which Gandhi did not already adhere before he had become familiar with the writings of Thoreau.

In the case of the Reverend Dr. King, had he attempted to explain himself by reference to a black queer Quaker pacifist, it would have hurt him both in the black American community (which typically is disdainful of black queers as people whose very existence is harmful to their race cause), and in the white American community (which typically condescends to pacifists as people who don't understand how the world works or are so cowardly that they cannot play a man's role).

In all three of these cases the reference to Thoreau was useful, was helpful – but does not actually amount to anything that anyone one could fairly term "influence."

**“NARRATIVE HISTORY” AMOUNTS TO FABULATION,
THE REAL STUFF BEING MERE CHRONOLOGY**



LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

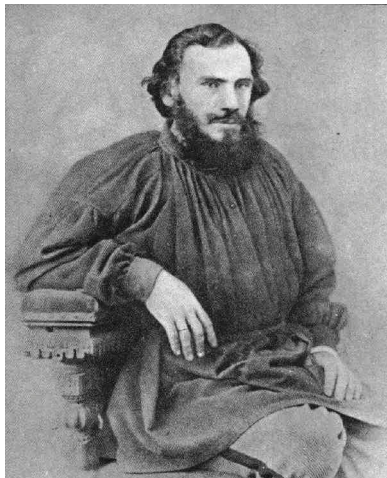
LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1828



September 9, Tuesday: [Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin](#) boarded a stagecoach in Warsaw to accompany a friend of his father on a trip to Berlin.

On this same day, but in Russia where (old style) it was August 28th, [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) was born in Yasnaya Polyana, in the Tula province of Russia. At the time, although the infant had some hair and some wrinkles and was rather cross, it did not look at all like this:



The Directors of [Harvard Divinity School](#) issued their circular soliciting aid towards the establishment of a Professorship of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care. The sum asked for was speedily furnished and the Reverend Henry Ware, Jr. was elected to that chair.

NOBODY COULD GUESS WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT





LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1833



In Russia, [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) was playing an invented game with his brothers. They had heard of the Moravian Christians and had gotten them mixed up with ants –*muravey* in Russian– and the boys were crawling around under an improvised tent pretending to be ant brothers. The game was that they would practice saying considerate things to each other and doing caring things for each other. Nikolai, the oldest brother, told the others that he had written the secret of human happiness, Christian Love, on a green stick and buried it in the woods near their home. Tolstòy would later comment that he had never in his life been as wise as he had been when he was five years old. Here is a photo of him, made not in this year of 1833 but later in his life, when he was a young student and no longer so wise, and on the next page is an idealized portrait of his hero:



LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

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[HDT](#)[WHAT?](#)[INDEX](#)**LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY****LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY**

Let us not forget that [Tolstòy](#) said he was wiser when he was five years old than at any later, more hirsute or more wrinkled point in his life, for if, due to historical investigations and revisings, we were to lose [Henry Thoreau](#) as an apostle of nonviolence, then Tolstòy would have to stand alone beside his hero Yehoshua bar



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Yusef of Nazareth in Galilee — whether or not he ever managed to recover that green stick.



The excommunicant, in 1868

Lord of the communicants

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION? GOOD.



LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1838

September 18, Tuesday: 160 delegates attended the Peace Convention in the Marlboro Chapel of Boston.



This meeting creating the New England Non-Resistance Society is notable not only for creating a chain of influence that extends down through [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) and [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) and the Reverend [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) to us,¹ but also for a feminist “first”: William Lloyd Garrison uttered, from the platform, the new locution “his or her” — a locution deliberately designed to de-privilege the male as the normative specimen of the human being.

There was a smile on the countenance of many abolition friends while others in the Convention looked grave.

However, the smiles lasted longer than the grave looks: immediately that [Friend Abby Kelley](#) called a minister to order for speaking out of turn, the “woman-contemners” marched out of the meeting.

1. Although the society put out a bimonthly publication named [The Non-Resistant](#) (until 1842), public newspapers quickly characterized this un-Christian attitude of nonresistance to evil as “No-Governmentism.”



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Garrison wrote the “Declaration of Sentiments” for this assembly:



We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government.... Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind.... 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....While we shall adhere to the doctrines of non-resistance and passive submission to enemies, we purpose to speak and act boldly in the cause of God, to assail iniquity in high places.... 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 our enemies.

25 of the 160 delegates were able to commit their lives to the principle that



evil can be exterminated from the earth only by good; that it is not safe to rely on an arm of flesh, -upon man, whose breath is in his nostrils- ...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 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.

**WHAT I'M WRITING IS TRUE BUT NEVER MIND
YOU CAN ALWAYS LIE TO YOURSELF**



LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1842

Due to lack of funds, the bimonthly publication of the New England Non-Resistance Society, The Non-Resistant, ceased publication. The future influence of this society would have to come to us via the lives and writings of [Henry Thoreau](#) and [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) and [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) and the Reverend [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) At the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, William Lloyd Garrison first advocated the solution to the problem of evil that is explored in the Book of Job, that of “departing from evil,” and the manner in which the Jobean solution to the problem of evil applied in this case, the case of politics within the United States of America, amounted to: disunion, that is, disuniting with those states that refused to protect their own people from being held in [slavery](#). The good North should depart from the evil South:

No Union with Slaveholders.



“It is simply crazy that there should ever have come into being a world with such a sin in it, in which a man is set apart because of his color – the superficial fact about a human being. Who could **want** such a world? For an American fighting for his love of country, that the last hope of earth should from its beginning have swallowed [slavery](#), is an irony so withering, a justice so intimate in its rebuke of pride, as to measure only with God.”



– Stanley Cavell, *MUST WE MEAN WHAT WE SAY?*
1976, page 141



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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1846

The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) published CHRISTIAN NON-RESISTANCE, IN ALL ITS IMPORTANT BEARINGS, ILLUSTRATED AND DEFENDED, his primary work on his specific version of absolute pacifism. (This is the work that would so impress [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#).)

NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL

During the [Hopedale](#) years the Reverend had been traveling around New England lecturing on and debating Practical Christianity, Christian Non-resistance, abolition, temperance, and other social issues. In this year he made in addition an anti-slavery lecture foray into Pennsylvania.

CHANGE IS ETERNITY, STASIS A FIGMENT



LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1847

June 16, Wednesday: Real misogyny as of 1847:

Regard the society of women as a necessary unpleasantness of social life, and avoid it as much as possible.

– [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#), journal entry

Men hate learned women.

– Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "The Princess"





LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTOY

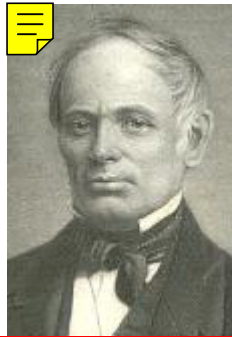
LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTOY

1848

January: The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#)'s CHRISTIAN NON-RESISTANCE IN ALL ITS IMPORTANT BEARINGS ILLUSTRATED AND DEFENDED (the book which so much influenced [Lev Nikolævich Tolstoy](#)) was critically reviewed by

NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL

“C.H.” in the January issue of The Christian Examiner.



CHRISTIAN EXAMINER

The following consists of extracts from that review, a review protected by anonymity and by editorial policy — a review to which the Reverend Ballou could most definitely have provided a full response had the editors granted to him any opportunity to do so:



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Mr. Ballou defines his doctrine as follows: –

It is not non-resistance to animals and inanimate things, nor to Satan, but only to human beings. Nor is it **moral** non-resistance to human beings, but chiefly physical. NOR is it physical non-resistance to all human beings under all circumstances, but only so far as to abstain totally from the infliction of personal injury as a means of resistance. It is simply non-resistance of injury with injury, evil with evil. – p. 11.

Mr. Ballou holds that it is wrong in all cases to inflict any punishment of a character injurious to the individual; and that no injustice may be done to his views, we will let him define his own position, and explain his use of the term **injury**.

I use the term in a somewhat peculiar sense, to signify any moral influence or physical force exerted by one human being upon another, the legitimate effect of which is to destroy or impair life, to destroy or impair the physical faculties, to destroy or impair the intellectual powers, to destroy, impair, or pervert the moral and religious sentiments, or to destroy or impair the absolute welfare, all things considered, of the person on whom such influence or force is exerted; whether that person be innocent or guilty, harmless or offensive, injurious or uninjurious, sane or insane, *compos mentis* or *non compos mentis*, adult or infant. Some of the lexicographers define an 'injury' to be 'hurt, harm or mischief **unjustly** done to a person,' thereby implying that any hurt, harm, or mischief done to one who deserves nothing better, or can be considered as justly liable to it, is no injury at all. I reject entirely every such qualification of the term. I hold an injury to be an injury, whether deserved or undeserved, whether intended or unintended, whether well-meant or ill-meant, determining the fact in accordance with the foregoing definition. – pp. 15, 16.



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We will next present the reader with Mr. Ballou's opinion of the governments under which we live, both state and national.

The governments now under notice are radically, fundamentally, anti-Christian. "The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint." Military and injurious penal power is their very life-blood, – the stamina of their existence. They are as repugnant to non-resistance as pride is to humility, wrath to meekness, vengeance to forgiveness, death to life, destruction to salvation. – p. 220.

If I accept any office of distinction, I must swear or affirm to support the Constitution, not in parts, but entire. In fact, I cannot vote, without either actually taking such an oath or affirmation, or, at least, virtually acknowledging myself to be under the highest obligations of allegiance. Government, in this country, is vested in the voters. They are leagued together by their common declaration of sentiments and mutual covenant –the Constitution– to conduct the government in a certain way, and to maintain its authority by military force. It seems to have been universally taken for granted that military force would be indispensable. It is therefore a gross fraud and imposition for any man to appear at the ballot-box as a voter, who is at heart false to the Constitution, who does not mean in good faith to abide by and support it, and just as it is, till it can be constitutionally amended. this is what a non-resistant cannot do without treason to the Divine government; without trampling under foot the precepts of Jesus Christ.... I will hold office on no such conditions. I will not be a voter on such conditions. I will join no church or state who hold such a creed, or prescribe such a covenant for the subscription of their members. – pp. 221, 222.

These citations put us in possession of Mr. Ballou's sentiments.



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...The social nature of man not only prompts him to seek society, but renders society essential to the full development of his powers. "It is not good for man to be alone." The great end of his being would be defeated, if he were to live in solitude. We learn, then, independently of the BIBLE, that God designed man for society. And society requires government and laws, and can no more exist without them than the material world can exist without the laws of gravity. We have, then, Divine authority for the establishment of civil institutions.

...And as all laws imply a penalty, there must be a power residing somewhere to execute the law and exact the penalty. Thus the social nature of man implies society, society implies laws, and these presuppose a civil government in some form or other.

...The numerous thefts and robberies, even in well-regulated communities, show conclusively that without law the world would be overrun with violence.

...We have dwelt longer upon this part of our subject than would otherwise be necessary, because we believe that our position, that God requires human governments, is fatal to the theory of non-resistance.

...[H]uman government, in some form, is designed as a perpetual institution, and hence must be invested with all the powers necessary for self-preservation. It must, to answer the end for which it was designed, possess the power of defending itself and protecting its citizens, of preventing the greatest amount of evil, and of producing the greatest amount of good. It must be clothed with authority to make all laws which the condition of the people may require, and to enforce them with such penalties as may seem best calculated to secure the great end for which it was instituted. In a word, government must be invested with sovereign power. It has, and from the nature of the case must have, the right of self-defence, even if it be by the sword. To deny to government the power of self-defence is practically to defeat the whole object for which it was instituted. Government could neither fulfil the appointment of Heaven, nor promote the welfare of the people, if it were shorn of this vital, self-sustaining prerogative. As the wants of the people demand a government, so they demand the exercise of every power necessary for its preservation. Civil institutions being a blessing to society, every thing indispensable to their preservation must, all things considered, be viewed in the same light. Even war, great as that calamity is, when undertaken in strict self-defence,



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Having spoken on the subject of resistance, and given a plain indication that it could not in all cases be avoided, with this limitation in view he says, in verse nineteenth, – “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath [or punishment]; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord,” – I will punish the transgressor. From the doctrine thus laid down, the Apostle draws the following inference, in verses twentieth and twenty-first: – “Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” The doctrine of the Apostle in this chapter is too plain to be mistaken. He enjoins the exercise of benevolence and love, commands us not to render evil for evil, and, as far as can possibly be done with safety, not to avenge our own wrongs; because God in his providential government will punish the transgressor. An important inquiry here arises, – How, or by what instrumentality, will God punish the transgressor? The Apostle has fully answered this question. He closes the twelfth chapter in the language we have already quoted, and in the very next words he informs us that God has instituted human governments to do this very thing.... The argument of the Apostle is clearly this: – The Gospel requires benevolence and love; hence you are never to render evil for evil, or **retaliate** injuries. As far as possible, you are to refrain from avenging your own personal wrongs; for God, through the instrumentalities of human governments, which he himself has ordained, will punish the violations of law more equitably than you could do; therefore exercise love and forbearance one to another, for this is fulfilling the law.



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...The vague notion entertained by non-resistant Come-outers, that they can live in society, and partake of all the blessings of good government, without incurring any obligation to sustain the government, is preposterous. It is founded on gross selfishness, and is at war with some of the first principles of Gospel morality. It is true, they pretend that they ask no favors of the government, and seek no protection from the magistrate. But all such persons must know that the government throws its protecting ægis over every person, without any application on his part.

But we should do injustice to Mr. Ballou, did we not state that he professes to derive his doctrine of non-resistance from the Scriptures. We will let him speak for himself.

Whence originated the term **Christian non-resistance**? Non-resistance comes from the injunction, "**Resist not evil.**" Matt. v. 39. The words "**resist not,**" being changed from the form of a verb to that of a substantive, give us **non-resistance**.... Now let us examine Matt. v. 39. "I say unto you, resist not evil," etc. This single text, from which, as has been stated, the term non-resistance took its rise, if justly construed, furnishes a complete key to the true bearings, limitations, and applications of the doctrine under discussion. This is precisely one of those precepts which may be easily made to mean much more, or much less, than its author intended. It is in the **intensive**, condensed form of expression, and can be understood only by a due regard to its context. – pp. 20-22.

...The Scribes and Pharisees had abused or perverted the Law of Moses, so as to justify personal revenge and cruelty, which Jesus reprobates in the words, "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." ...Our limits will not permit us to remark upon every passage of this class, but we will take the twelfth chapter of Romans, as one of the most striking. The Apostle, in that chapter, discusses the subject of resisting injuries, and adopts almost precisely the same language which Mr. Ballou uses in explaining what he calls his key-text. He presents the subject in various ways, with a marked variety of phraseology, and furnishes us with the reason why we must not avenge our own wrongs. In verse tenth, he says, – "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love"; in verse fourteenth, – "Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not"; and in verse seventeenth, – "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Here we have the subject of resistance. or non-

gives us a distinct intimation that resistance in all cases, could not be dispensed with. "If it be



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THE FUTURE IS MOST READILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



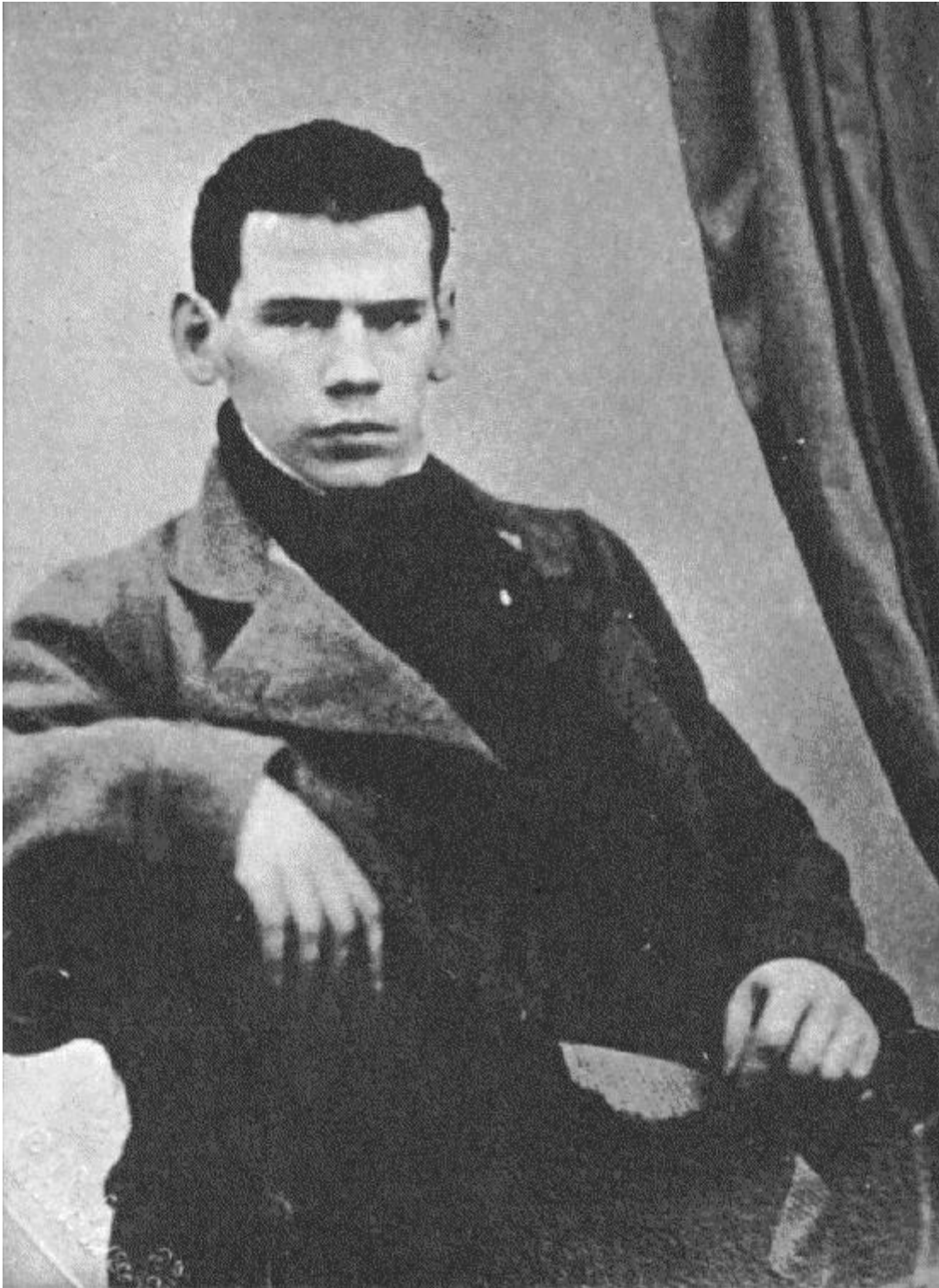
10th of 2d month: The Reverend [Adin Ballou](#)'s CHRISTIAN NON-RESISTANCE, IN ALL ITS IMPORTANT BEARINGS, ILLUSTRATED AND DEFENDED, his primary work on his specific version of absolute pacifism, was republished in Edinburgh. (This is the work that would so impress [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#).)

NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL



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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1851

Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy:



Following the death of Jesus Christ there was a period of readjustment that lasted for approximately one million years.

-Kurt Vonnegut, THE SIRENS OF TITAN





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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY



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1852

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *DETSTVO* (CHILDHOOD).



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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1853

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *NABEG* (THE RAID).



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1854

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *OTROTSHESTVO* (BOYHOOD). The Crimean war began, the most famous event of which would be the Charge of the Light Brigade. Although the commander would survive unscathed, 503 of his 700 men would be cut down by Russian artillery. During the Crimean War, in about this timeframe, Tolstòy

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was commanding a battery. He witnessed (and would write about) the siege of Sebastopol.





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1855

[Adam G. de Gurowski. A Citizen of the United States](#)'s A YEAR OF THE WAR (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 348 Broadway. London: 16 Little Britain).²

A YEAR OF THE WAR

Czar Nicholas I died and was succeeded by his son, who was 36 and began a 26-year reign as Aleksandr II. The Crimean War continued. Although scenes from the war front were being photographed, using the slow wet collodion process developed by photographer Roger Fenton, there was as yet no means of publishing such photographs.

At about this point, publication of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *SEVASTOPOLSKIYE RASSKAZY* (SEVASTOPOL SKETCHES).

[Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoevski](#) was at Semipalatinsk in southwest Siberia serving the 2d year of his 5-year period of compulsory military service after his four years of penal servitude.

2. The war in question was the war in the Crimea from 1853 to 1856, of Russia vs. Turkey with her allies England and France.

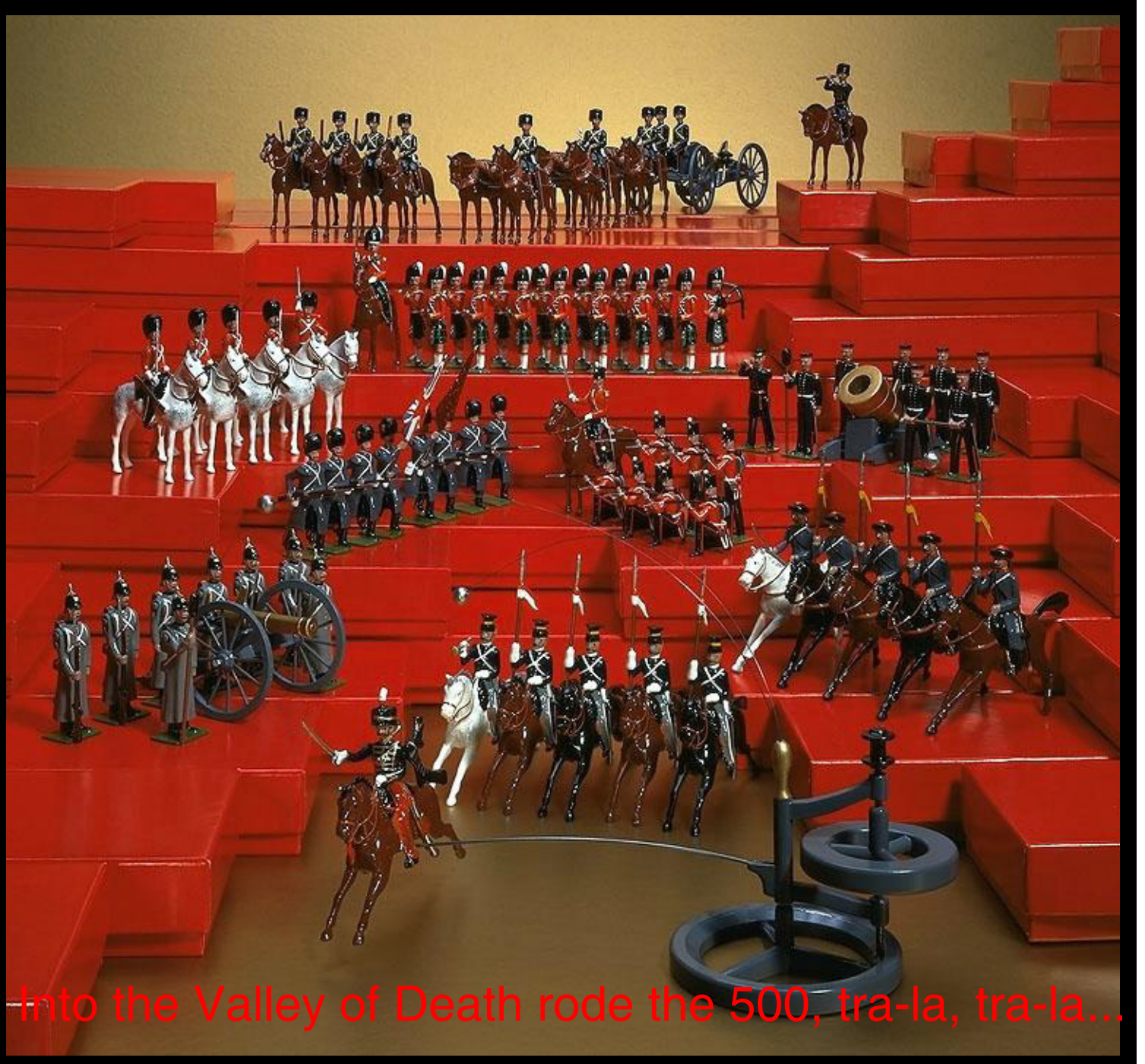
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Into the Valley of Death rode the 500, tra-la, tra-la...



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1856

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *IUNOST* (YOUTH), *UTRO POMESHCHIKA* (A LANDOWNERS MORNING), *DVA GUSARA*, and *METEL*.



[Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoevski](#) was at Semipalatinsk in southwest Siberia serving the 3d year of his 5-year



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period of compulsory military service after his four years of penal servitude.





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1859

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *SEMEINOE SCHAST`E* (FAMILY HAPPINESS).

[Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoevski](#) and his wife Marya Dmitrievna Isaeva were allowed to leave Semipalatinsk in southwest Siberia upon the completion of his 5-year period of compulsory military service after his 4-year period of penal servitude. The couple took up residence in European Russia, and two works composed in prison, *UNCLE'S DREAM* and *THE LITTLE HERO*, were published. Also, *THE VILLAGE OF STEPANCHIKOVO AND ITS INHABITANTS* appeared.



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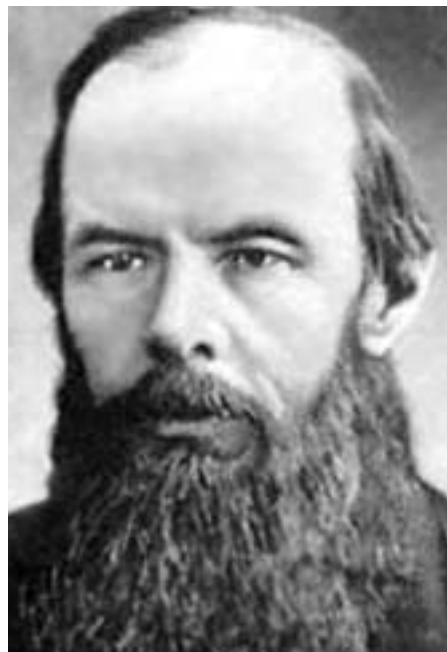
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1863

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *KAZAKI* (THE COSSACKS).



[Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoevski](#)'s WINTER NOTES ON SUMMER IMPRESSIONS was published in Time.





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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

Insurrection in Poland against Russian occupation.



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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTÒY

1865

Volume I of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *VOYNA I MIR* (WAR AND PEACE), which would be completed in 1869.

Friend Pam Rider has made some comments about her continuing fascination with the novel WAR AND PEACE which have caused me to go back to that literary production for a fresh look. Very typically, Tolstòy's life is said to have started anew after what is termed his "Arzamas terror," in 1869 shortly after he had completed that massive novel *VOYNA I MIR*. This accounts for the more than a decade of what was for him relative silence, before he released in 1883 his *V CHEM MOIA VERA?*, or WHAT I BELIEVE. But was this a shift in essence, or was it a mere shift in tactics of presentation, from a masked didacticism to an in-your-face sermonizing?

I now understand what Christ meant when he said, "You were told an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth; and I tell you, Do not resist evil, and endure it. Use no violence, do not take part in violence, do no evil to anyone, even to those whom you call your enemies."



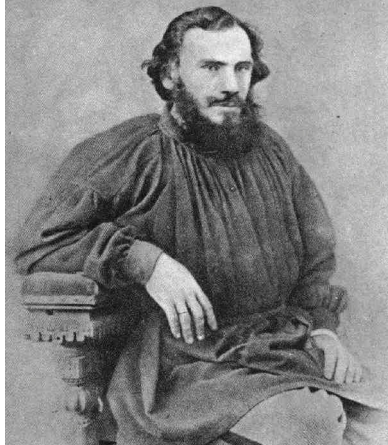
I now understand not only that in the proposition about nonresistance to evil Christ was telling what would immediately result for each man from nonresistance to evil, but that ... it was to be the foundation of the joint life of man and was to



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free humanity from the evil which it inflicted upon itself.



This is not *utterly* different from what has gone before. For instance, in [Tolstòy](#)'s 1847 diary he is already struggling, in an admittedly inchoate manner, with the general idea of becoming a more perfect human being by the possession of a useful mission:

I would be the most unhappy of men if I did not find a goal for my life, a common and useful one, useful because the immortal soul, once it has developed, naturally turns into a being which is higher and corresponds to it.

We may note that in WAR AND PEACE, the summons to resist not evil is already making its appearance. When Prince Andrei lies mortally wounded after the battle of Borodino, he perceives what his error has been:

Sympathy, love for our brothers, for those who love us, love for those who hate us, love for our enemies; yes, the love that God preached upon earth, that Marie sought to teach me, and I did not understand....

It is the simple faith of the character Platon Karataev, his acceptance of everything that happens as somehow part of God's universe, which effects a transformation in the character Pierre Bezukhov, who winds up explaining to himself that "If there were no suffering man would not know his limitations, not know himself." Platon faces a French firing squad unresistingly, acceptingly, in a manner foreshadowing the Tolstòy of the later philosophizing about the redemptive power of Christian nonresistance.

It was in 1886 that [Tolstòy](#) began to study the literary remainders of William Lloyd Garrison and the [Reverend Adin Ballou](#) of Massachusetts, which eventually resulted in 1893 in his *TSARSTVO BOZHIE VNUTRI VAS* (THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU).

The activity of Garrison the father ... convinced me even more than my relations with the Quakers, that the departure of state Christianity from Christ's law about nonresistance to evil is something that has been observed and pointed out long ago, and



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that men have ceaseingly worked to arraign it.



It was also in this year that the Reverend Ballou began his reciprocal study of the Russian's thought (this Universalist minister and Hopedale commune leader would not die until 1890). The material which had come to his attention at this point was the 1883 WHAT I BELIEVE, in English translation. However, he had "mellowed" in his approach over the years, and no longer thought of his earlier ideas as categorically correct in all applications, no longer thought of rigid non-resistance as the spell which would dissolve all the world's evil. Specifically what happened was that Wendell Phillips Garrison, Garrison's son, had read an 1885 English translation ON RELIGION, and sent the author of it a precis of his father's similar attitudes (his father had died in 1879). Tolstoy was especially intrigued by the text of the 1838 DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS of the New England Non-Resistance Society. (The dates on the relevant still-extant letters of this period are March-April 15, 1886, May 5, 1886, May-December? 1886, November 10, 1888, November 12, 1888, October 12, 1889, January 1890?, July 28, 1890, August 22, 1890, September 17, 1890, October 15?, 1890, January 22/23, 1892, February 12, 1892, February 16, 1892, February 19, 1892, April 1, 1892, April 5, 1892, May 20, 1892, June 3, 1892.) As they were prepared, the son shipped out to Tolstoy the first two of the volumes he wrote about his father's life, and so over the 1886-1889 period Tolstoy was studying this American pre-Civil War philosophy.

The context of this was a struggle within the American Peace Society, founded in 1828, which had resulted in 1838 in the establishment of the New England Non-Resistance Society. One of the incidents which had hastened and illustrated this difference in philosophy had been the death in 1837 of the abolitionist printer Elijah Lovejoy, failed Quaker, gun in hand, attempting to defend his printing press against a pro-slavery Illinois mob. The American Peace Society had embraced the idea of the defensive war, the licit use of force to protect persons and property. The new society was to adhere firmly to the Peace Testimony and reject all coercion as illicit.

We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government, because we recognize but one King and Lawgiver, one Judge and Ruler of mankind. We are bound by the laws of a kingdom which is not of this world; the subjects of which are forbidden to fight; in which Mercy and Truth are met together, and Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other; ... and which is destined to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms.



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In June 1889 a neighbor of the Reverend Ballou, the Reverend Lewis G. Wilson, forwarded to [Tolstòy](#) a photograph of Ballou along with copies of his works NON-RESISTANCE IN RELATION TO HUMAN GOVERNMENTS (Boston MA: Non-Resistance Society, 1839), CHRISTIAN NON-RESISTANCE, IN ALL ITS IMPORTANT BEARINGS, ILLUSTRATED AND DEFENDED (Philadelphia PA: J.M. M'Kim, 1846), and Volume I of

NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL

the three volumes of PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY AND ITS CORRUPTIONS (Boston MA: Universalist Publishing House, 1870-1900). [Wilson did not send PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM (NY: Fowlers and Wells, 1854).] Tolstòy was actually more impressed by Ballou, who at this point was dying, than Ballou had been earlier by him.

Tell him, please, that his efforts have not been in vain. ... I cannot agree with the concessions that he makes for employing violence against drunkards and insane people. ... Please tell him that I deeply respect and love him, and that his work did great good to my soul.

(The dates of the correspondences are June 22, 1889, June 23, 1889, August 1889, November 1, 1889, January 14, 1890, February 21-24, 1890, March 30?, 1890, June 30, 1890.)

In November 1890 [Tolstòy](#) wrote of his bewilderment to a Russian friend:

How could these ideas, the most important for humanity, ... how could such thoughts, so strongly expressed, printed, published, be so silenced that neither the son of Garrison, whom I asked, nor all those Americans I saw (ten persons, and all religious people) had ever heard anything about this and do not know the name of Ballou?

In 1890 [Tolstòy](#) received the last two volumes of the son Wendell Phillips Garrison's study of his father William Lloyd Garrison's life and beliefs. It was as a result of his efforts to translate the DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS into Russian, along with one of the shorter works of the Universalist Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) of the commune [Hopedale](#) (established in 1841 near Worcester, Massachusetts), that Tolstòy began work on what eventually would become THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Tolstòy, and his daughter Tatyana, began to correspond also with Wendell Phillips Garrison's brother Francis Garrison.



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It has been pointed out, however, that this is glossing over important differences between Garrison and Tolstoy. Garrison had been a triumphalist, that is to say, he had had the idea that if only a sufficient number of persons were to be induced to experience their inner moral revolutions, there would actually result a perfect society governed forever by the laws of Christ's kingdom. Tolstoy, quite on the other hand, was a rationalist believer in *razumnoe sozhanie* with a quietist bent, who repudiated such triumphalist fantasizing. Garrison thought political action was the solution, Tolstoy thought it was the problem. Had Tolstoy inspected the life of Garrison with greater care, he would have detected disturbing compromises with violence – which the filial son had quite glossed over. I am not myself, for instance, convinced that Garrison was innocent of all knowledge of the raid being planned in Boston, on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia in 1859, before this raid took place, while the Sharps carbines to be used in the raid itself and the pikes to be used then by the revolting slaves were still being manufactured. Garrison would even tolerate a military encampment to be named in his honor, during our civil war. The idea of American nonviolence had become “We have to kill these people in order that the world will become safe for our nonviolence.” [Tolstoy](#), when he came to see the reign of terror which resulted in the American South under Reconstruction, with its Christian white knights of the Ku Klux Klan, would need to call upon Americans to return to their own abandoned principle of nonviolence. It was the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#), not William Lloyd Garrison, who had remained true to the principles the New England Non-Resistance Society had enunciated in 1838.

[Sophia Peabody Hawthorne](#) edited [Nathaniel Hawthorne](#)'s notebooks for a series of articles in The Atlantic Monthly; they would in 1868 be collected under the title PASSAGES FROM THE AMERICAN NOTEBOOKS.



When Andrew Dickson White visited [Tolstoy](#) at Yasnaya Polyana shortly after publication of THE KINGDOM OF GOD, they discussed American literature and Tolstoy exhibited a familiarity with [Emerson](#), [Hawthorne](#), [Whittier](#), and the Reverend Theodore Parker. So White asked Tolstoy who he regarded as the foremost of American authors. The response White received astounded him:

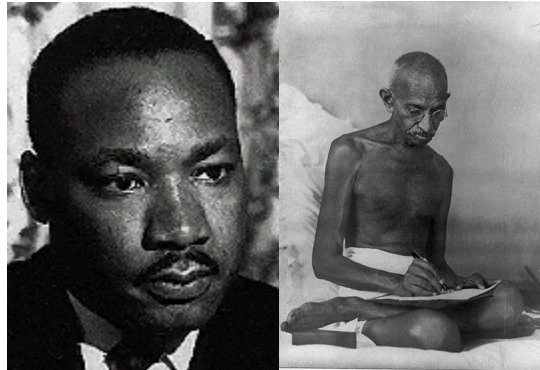
That greatest of all American writers was – Adin Ballou! Evidently, some of the philanthropic writings of the excellent Massachusetts country clergyman and religious communist had pleased him, and hence came the answer.



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Although it is most common in the circles in which I travel to see Tolstòy quoted as having confessed that he had been influenced by the “Civil Disobedience” of [Henry Thoreau](#), along with the Reverend [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) and [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#), I have been quite unable to discover any hard evidence in support of such a self-characterization. I have formed a hypothesis that Tolstòy was instead influenced by this less known nonresistant reverend who had founded a commune within walking distance of Concord and knew Thoreau, and of course by the organizer Garrison, and that Tolstòy had merely substituted the known name Thoreau for such names while discoursing with one or another of his American visitors.





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We should study the similarities between Ludwig Wittgenstein and [Thoreau](#). In regard primarily to their handling of time and eternity, but also in regard to Thoreau being a type of Wittgenstein's happy man in agreement with the world. May I ask you a question? Here we have Wittgenstein going around urging people to read [Lev Nikolævich Tolstø](#), in fact buying them copies of his stories, and before that we had Tolstø going around urging people to read Thoreau. Here we have Wittgenstein, Tolstø, and Thoreau all three vastly and obviously influenced by Matthew's version of the sermon on the mount. Here we have Wittgenstein going off and doing a Thoreau thing in a cabin he builds on a fjord. As a topping on this banana split, we have an enormous amount of biography and influence study by people who do know a whole lot about English philosophers and a whole lot about Continental philosophers but who understand absolutely nothing whatever about Thoreau, people who still in fact buy into the old thing about Thoreau being merely an imitation or low-rent [Emerson](#). Maybe a literary figure, maybe not, but certainly not a philosopher, why he never expressed an opinion about the existence of other minds! To name names, tentatively, subject to correction, I put McGuinness, with whom I have corresponded, and Anscombe, with whom I have talked, into that category. Can we be quite sure that Tolstø/Thoreau/Wittgenstein derived essentially independent influences direct from the words in Matthew? Is there not a possibility that Wittgenstein was reading Thoreau on the fjord before the war, and was thus prepared to find the gospels in that bookshop in Silesia, but that none of his intellectual biographers have had the background to pick this out of the original materials which they have consulted, primary materials which are of course never seen by you and me? I am having difficulty imagining how otherwise to account for the fact that, of all the figures in Western philosophy down the ages, it is Thoreau in the 19th Century and Wittgenstein in the 20th Century who have alone elaborated virtually identical attitudes toward the relation between time and eternity — toward what I would myself describe as “the gift-giveness of the present presented.”

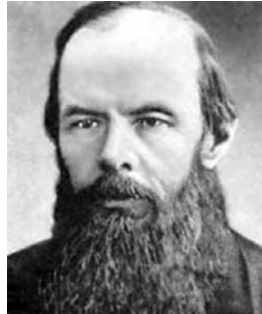


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1866

[Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevski](#)'s CRIME AND PUNISHMENT and THE GAMBLER were published.



According to Walter Kerr's THE SHABUNIN AFFAIR: AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF LEO TOLSTOY (Ithaca NY: Cornell UP, 1982), [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) was assigned as courts martial defense counsel for a soldier, Vasily Shabunin, accused of striking an officer, a capital crime. Though he had trained as a lawyer, both Tolstoy's defense and his subsequent appeal were unsuccessful. Years after the soldier's execution Tolstoy would confess to a biographer that his effort being merely legalistic had been a lost cause; he should have offered an argument that was religious and moral. Tolstoy would during the remainder of his life condemn the death penalty as the root of all social evil, and would depict an incident very similar to this in his most important novel, RESURRECTION. "The incident had much more influence on my life than all the seemingly more important events."



Between this year and the end of the century, Russia's rail network would be expanding from 5,000 kilometers of track to 53,200 kilometers.



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The Russian Army developed the 1st rifle bullets designed to expand when they hit flesh. Such bullets would not become truly practical until the invention of high-powered colloidal propellants during the 1880s, and the first practical expanding bullet would be the soft-tipped Dum Dum cartridge designed by Captain Bertie Clay of the Indian Army in 1897. (The name referred to the barracks in Calcutta where the bullets were made.)



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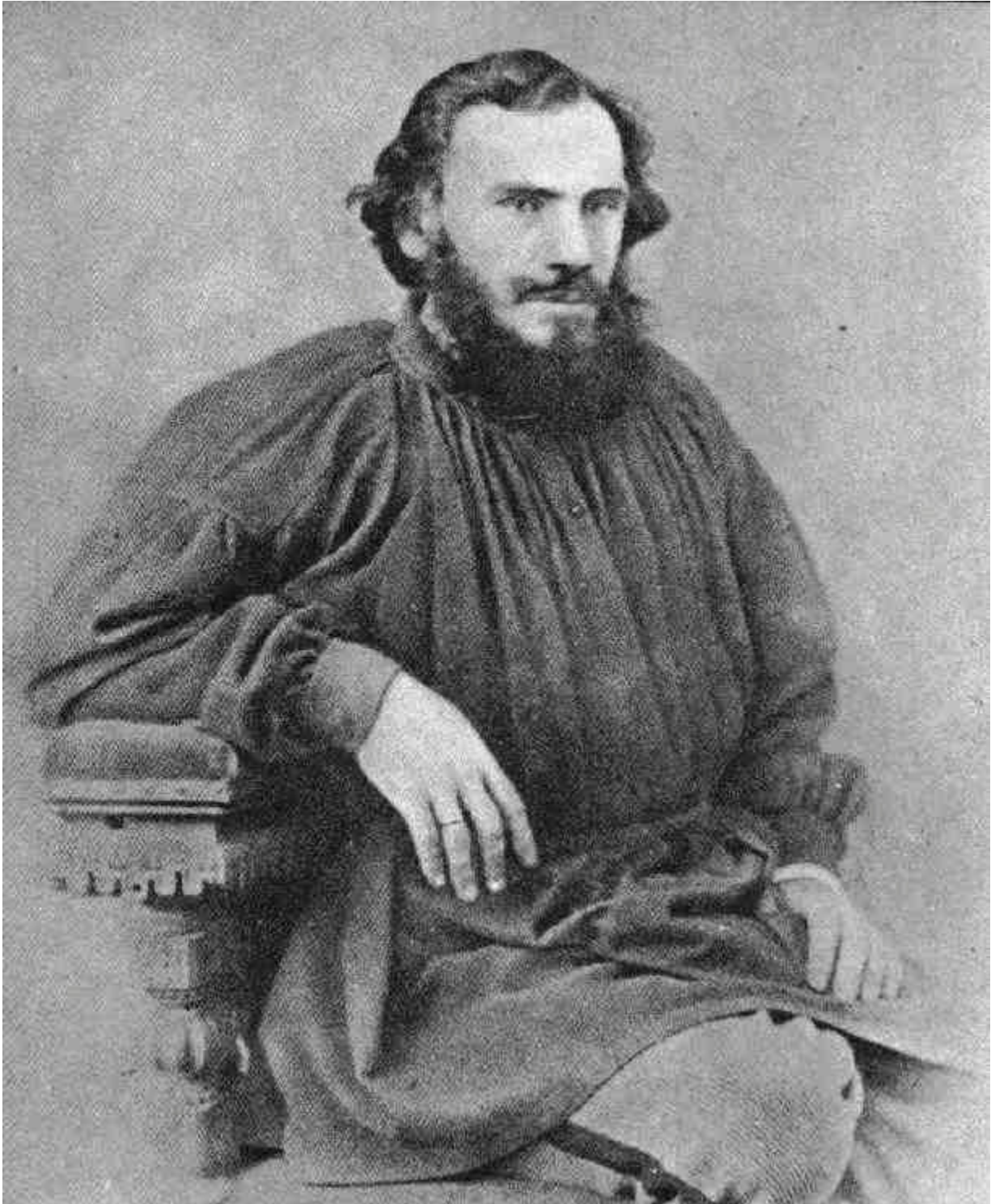
1868



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This was [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#):





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1872

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *AZBUKA* and *KAVKAZSKI PLENNIK* (A PRISONER IN THE CAUCASUS).



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1875

- January: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part I:i-xiv of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Anna leaves the ball). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xxiii.)
- February: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part I:xv-II:x of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Consummation of the affair of Anna and Vronsky). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xi.)
- March: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part II:xi-xxvii of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Anna tells Karenina of her affair with Vronsky). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xxix.)
- April: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part II:xxx-III:x of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Levin sees Kitty in a carriage). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xii.)



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1876

January: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part III:xi-xxviii of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Levin thinks of death, goes abroad). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xxxii.)

February: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part IV:i-xv of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Vronsky visits Anna, who appears to be dying). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xvii.)

March: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part IV:xvi-V:vi of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Kitty and Levin leave for the country). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xvii.)

April: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part V:vii-xix of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Nikolai Levin dies, Kitty pregnant). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xx.)

December: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become the end of Part V of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Vronsky and Anna leave for the country after the scandalous scene in the theater).



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1877

January: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part VI:i-xii of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Expulsion of Vasen'ka from Pokrovskoe). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xv.)

February: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part VI:xiii-xxix of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Anna and Vronsky leave for Moscow). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xxxii.)

March: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part VII:i-xv of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Birth of the Levins' son). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xvi.)

In the March/April issue of the North American Review was an article by [Waldo Emerson](#) on "Demonology":

The long waves indicate to the instructed mariner that there is no near land in the direction from which they come. [Belzoni](#) describes the three marks which led him to dig for a door to the pyramid of Ghizeh. What thousands had beheld the same spot for so many ages and seen no three marks!

April: Publication, in a Russian periodical, of what would become Part VII:xvi-xxx of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA* (Death of Anna). (In the first separate edition of the novel, appearing during January 1878, this would be Part xxxi.)

Summer: Publication, as a separate booklet, of Part VIII, the final part, of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA*. Professor William Todd of Slavic Studies at Harvard University has pointed out that only with installments 5, 9, 11, and 13 had the end of an installment coincided with the closure of one of the novel's eight parts, a curious fact which would seem to indicate that a cliffhanger effect was desired during the novel's initial serial publication, to hold the reader in suspense pending the appearance of the next installment. (The first complete edition of the novel, in which this cliffhanger effect was foregone, would appear in January 1878).



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1878

January: The 1st complete edition of Lev [Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ANNA KARENINA*, which had been being serialized in a Russian periodical during 1875, 1876, and 1877 (1931, tr. Constance Garnett, NY: Grosset and Dunlap).



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1880

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) started *ISPOVED* (A CONFESSION), which he would complete in 1882 (1983, NY: W.W. Norton) (1988, THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY, ed. A.N. Wilson, tr. Robert Chandler, San Francisco: Harper & Row).



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1883

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *V CHYOM MOYA VERA* (WHAT I BELIEVE).³

3.This would be included, in 1940, in *A CONFESSION, THE GOSPEL IN BRIEF, and WHAT I BELIEVE*, tr. Aylmer Maude, Oxford UP, and then would be included, in 1988, in *THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY*, ed. A.N. Wilson, tr. Robert Chandler, San Francisco: Harper & Row.



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1885

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *CHEM LIUDI ZHIVY* (WHAT MEN LIVE BY).



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1886

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *MNOGO LI TSHELOVEKU ZEMLI NUZTNO* (HOW MUCH DOES A MAN NEED? and his *PERVYI VINOKUR, ILI KAK CHERTENOK KRAIUSHKU ZASLUZHIL* (THE FIRST DISTILLER) and his *SMERT IVANA ILYITSHA* (THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH) (1960, THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH AND OTHER STORIES, NY: Signet).



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As you are aware, there is a claim that [Henry Thoreau](#) has inspired [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) and the Reverend Dr. [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), via [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#), in their use of nonviolent tactics of political confrontation. In this regard we may consider here an interesting exchange of correspondence between the retired Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) of the failed [Hopedale](#) Community of non-resistance to evil—a man who had



once lectured on nonviolence to Thoreau among others present at the Concord Lyceum— and Count Tolstòy of Russia, on the subject of nonviolent political tactics, and note that in this correspondence Thoreau's name simply does not come up:



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Upon the appearance in this country of the first of the translated writings of this Russian author and the consequent heralding of him as a new interpreter of the gospel of Christ and as a restorer of primitive Christianity as Jesus taught and exemplified it, Mr. Ballou availed himself of an early opportunity of becoming acquainted with the views and principles upon which such unusual representations were based. From what he learned incidentally through the public press, he hoped to find in this previously unknown author a man after his own heart – a consistent and radical advocate of peace, a friend of all true reform, and a wise counsellor in the work of inaugurating a new order of society from which all injurious force should be excluded and in which all things should be subordinated to and animated by the spirit of pure love to God and man. That his hopes in this direction were not realized – that he was seriously disappointed indeed in both the man and his teachings, the sequel clearly shows.

The first mention of the new luminary in the religious firmament made by Mr. Ballou was in his journal of Feb. 16, 1886, as follows:

Commenced reading a lately purchased book, Count Tolstoi's "My Religion." Found many good things in it on ethics, with here and there an indiscriminating extremism in the application of Christ's precepts against resisting evil with evil, and in his views of penal judgment and covetousness, or mammonism. But on theology found him wild, crude, and mystically absurd. His ideas concerning the divine nature, human nature, eternal life, Christ's resurrection, humanity's immortality, and the immortality of individuals, etc., are untrue, visionary, chaotic, and pitiably puerile. So it seems to me in this first perusal. But I will read further and think him out more thoroughly.



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Further reading and more thorough thinking, however, did not bring him to a more favorable conclusion. "The saying of Christ, 'Resist not evil,' Tolstoi interpreted in its most literal sense, making it inculcate complete passivity not only toward wrong-doers but toward persons rendered insane and dangerous by bad habits, inflamed passions, or unbalanced minds, to the exclusion of non-injurious and beneficent force under any and every circumstance of life." To Mr. Ballou's apprehension this was carrying the doctrine of Non-resistance to an illogical and extravagant extreme, warranted neither by the teachings of Jesus nor by a true regard for the welfare of the evil-doer, the irresponsible maniac, or society at large, which often required wholesome restraint and physical force exercised without accompanying harm or injury to any one. Moreover, the distinctively religious expositions and indoctrinations of Tolstoi, as expressed in the book specified and in subsequent works, met with little favor from Mr. Ballou, whose ideas of God, man, immortality, etc., were as definite and pronounced as his ethical principles, and in his estimation as essential to a high type of personal character or a true order of social life.

Some three years after Mr. Ballou began to acquaint himself with the writings of Tolstoi, Rev. Lewis G. Wilson, then pastor of the Hopedale parish and an interested reader of the latter, sent him some of the former's published works, with his photograph and an explanatory letter. On the 5th of July, 1889, he received a responsive communication in which the Count highly commended, in their principle features, the views contained in the publications forwarded to him, though subjecting some of their applications, especially the one relating to the rightful use of uninjurious force as mentioned above, to emphatic protest and denial. This communication Mr. Wilson handed to Mr. Ballou for perusal and a reply if he chose to make one. This he did in due time, taking up the more important points of Tolstoi's dissent — those pertaining to the practical application of Non-resistant principles, the right to hold property, and no-governmentism particularly, and answering them by extended argument and illustration. Thereto were added also some comments upon certain theological positions assumed in "My Religion."



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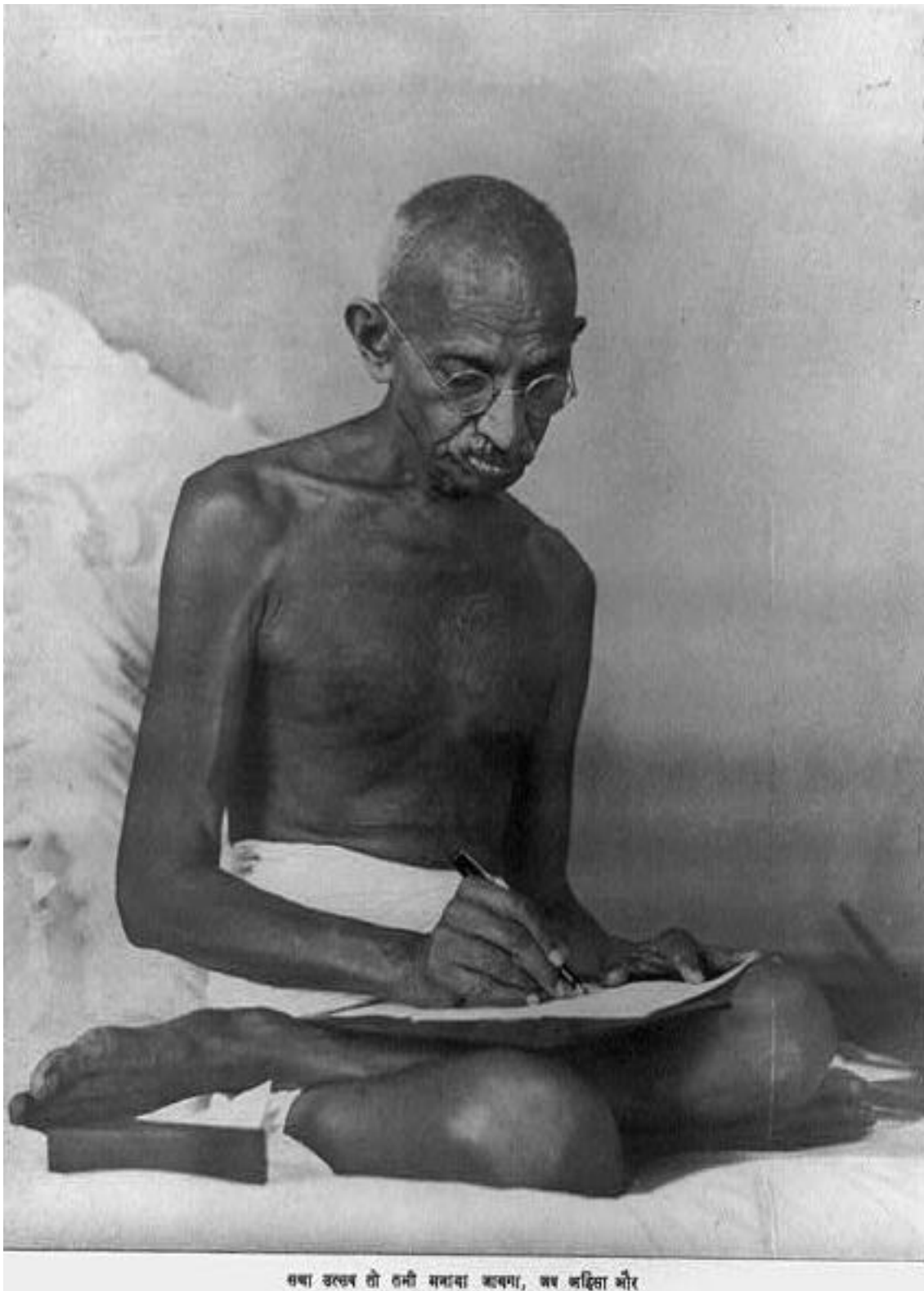
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On the 26th of March, 1890, the mail brought a rejoinder to this missive, of which the recipient writes: "It relates to some points of difference between us as expressed in a letter sent him some months ago. He declines to argue and refers me to one of his published works, yielding nothing of his extreme Non-resistance even against madmen, but saying, 'I exposed all I think on those subjects.' 'I cannot now change my views without verifying them anew.' The dictum with which the letter opened, 'I will not argue with your objections,' characterized its entire contents and put an end to all discussion. It closed, however, with the statement that 'Two of your tracts are translated into Russian and propagated among believers and richly appreciated by them.'" Tolstoi's communication was answered about two months afterward, but no acknowledgment ever came back, by reason, no doubt, of the writer's death a few weeks later, — an account of which was sent by Mr. Wilson to the distinguished author, whose daughter responded, "Your tidings are very sad, and my father is deeply grieved."

Of the relation between Mr. Ballou and Count Tolstoi, nothing further need be said save that Mr. Wilson embodied the correspondence between them with collateral letters of his own in a sermon read to his congregation on Sunday, April 20, 1890, of which the diary says: "We were all deeply interested, pleased, and enlightened. I never was so much gratified with Brother Wilson's performance. His scripture-reading, prayer, hymns, etc., were all in harmony with Christian Non-resistance, and he dropped not a word or hint that implied reserved dissent from my views." It may be added that the substance of this discourse was subsequently rearranged by the author and published in the Arena for December 1890 — a portion of the last letter of Mr. Ballou to Tolstoi being omitted.

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सच्चा उत्पत्ति तो हमी सदादा ज्ञाना, जय ज्ञाना और



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Only in private correspondence, such as in a letter to Parker Pillsbury in April 1861, where he advised “Ignore Fort Sumter, and old Abe, and all that; for that is just the most fatal, and, indeed, the only fatal weapon you can direct against evil, ever,” did Thoreau embrace nonresistance to evil. It became almost an esoteric doctrine, almost for experts only: per Job, do shun evil, do depart from it; per Yehoshua, whatever we do we mustn’t attempt to resist it; per Thoreau, indeed we must successfully ignore it. Only as an afterthought to his journal on October 22, 1859, an afterthought which he omitted on October 30 when he read his jottings in three citizens’ meetings, can we see that, had it come to killing or being killed, Thoreau would have chose to be killed (October 22, 1859): “I do not wish to kill ~~or~~ nor to be killed, but I can foresee circumstances in which both of these things would be by me unavoidable. ~~In extremities I could even be killed~~” (strikethroughs indicate changes from journal to speech). Thoreau believed that, whether the sacrifice of others’ lives was legitimate or not (even the Brown slaughter of children of slaveowners in Kansas with modern expensive weapons the Thoreaus had helped purchase), nothing John Brown had ever done under the duress of his “leading” could overshadow his willingness to sacrifice his life on the gallows. And Thoreau, clearly toying with such a fate for himself, at this point was unwilling to cheapen Brown’s martyrdom by publicly re-raising a bypassed issue of “resist not evil.” He thus enabled [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) to misunderstand him, and adopt nonresistance only as a tactic for attaining political ends in [India](#) and only for so long as this was the most effective tactic for attaining these political ends.⁴ I am sorry that this is so, but it is so. The utterly pure nonresistance attempted by [Lev Nikolævich Tolstø](#)y has had a respectful audience, but not an accepting audience, and Thoreau’s lack of public clarity on this point has had unfortunate consequences.

The “activist pacifist” still expects to win. [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) is a case in point, since he frankly acknowledged that had *ahimsa* no chance of succeeding against the British, he would have encouraged [India](#) to choose some other, more effective, tactic. As another case in point, consider the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison who, converted to the ethics of nonresistance to evil, authored a DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS ADOPTED BY THE PEACE CONVENTION, HELD IN BOSTON IN 1838. In this declaration he stated “[W]e expect to prevail through the foolishness of preachings” and expressed a calm and meek reliance on “certain and universal triumph.” Wasn’t there some football coach who learned how to say “Winning’s not the thing, it’s the only thing”? And how does this differ from that?

4. Although Gandhi stated this many times to many people, he has been as thoroughly misunderstood by the wishfulness of American popular culture as has the liberator Lincoln, who stated many times to many people that if he could he would preserve the Union without freeing a single slave. Gandhi had more interest in the writings of Emerson than in those of Thoreau, saying that Emerson’s essays “to my mind contain the teaching of Indian wisdom in a western guru” (Louis Fischer, *THE LIFE OF MAHATMA GANDHI*, NY 1950, page 93).



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1887

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) began work on *KREITSEROVA SONATA* (THE KREUTZER SONATA), which he would complete in 1889.



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1888

Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy's *VLAST`T`MY, ILI KOROK UVIAZ, VSEI PTICHE PROPAST* (THE POWER OF DARKNESS).



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1889

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) started *DJAVOL* (THE DEVIL), which he would complete in 1890.



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 [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) and [Adin Ballou](#) corresponded.⁵



Tolstòy was pleased with a chance to correspond with the forgotten American, Adin Ballou. He translated several of Ballou's works into Russian, and in 1889 and 1890 the two men exchanged letters on points where their opinions differed. But Ballou was extremely bitter and argumentative, and the correspondence became rather unfriendly. Ballou died shortly afterward. Tolstòy was never able to satisfy his own curiosity concerning the rise and fall of nonresistant anarchism in America. Nevertheless, the discovery of Garrison and Ballou plainly held great significance for him, and he referred to the antebellum Americans frequently. They were associated in his mind with the excitement of his own conversion, "the spring of my awakening to true life." In addition, they testified to the existence of a radical tradition of Christian believers whose convictions differed from those of the institutional churches and states. Nonresistance was a universal expression of Christianity with a history going back at least as far as the Reformation and, ultimately, to the life and teachings of Christ. This tradition had received some of its most enthusiastic statements in America before the Civil War. Tolstòy urged American to rediscover the writings of Garrison, Ballou, and Henry David Thoreau.

Although Tolstòy could not learn much about the disappearance of nonresistant anarchism in America, he surmised that radical pacifist doctrines must have been discarded in the belief that they encumbered the cause of the [slave](#). Because the country evaded these doctrines, it marched into a fratricidal war which ended the particular form of coercion known as [slavery](#) but left a hideous pattern of interracial violence and injustice. This pattern could be effaced, in Tolstoi's view, only by returning to the principles which Garrison and Ballou had tried to teach.





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Though the American reverend would disapprove of the passivity of the Russian count's pacifism and would consider his theology to be "untrue, visionary, chaotic, and pitifully puerile," the Russian would nevertheless be much impressed with this American. In *THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU*, in 1894, he would write "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." He hypothesized that there must be in existence in America "a kind of tacit but steadfast conspiracy of silence about all such efforts."



One thing Tolstòy understood perfectly from his own anarchistic perspective: Garrison's followers had been inclined toward anarchism not in addition to hating slavery but because they hated slavery. He made the connection succinctly:

Garrison, a man enlightened by the Christian teaching, having begun with the practical aim of striving against slavery, soon understood that the cause of slavery was not the casual temporary seizure by the Southerners of a few millions of negroes, but the ancient and universal recognition, contrary to Christian teaching, of the right of coercion by some men in regard to others.... Garrison understood ... that the only irrefutable argument against slavery is a denial of any man's right over the liberty of another under any conditions whatsoever.

One of Tolstoi's most anarchistic works was entitled *THE SLAVERY OF OUR TIMES*. An enlarged definition of slavery came to him as naturally as the open-ended definition of brigandage he had used in conversation with William Jennings Bryan. He was not interested in the reform of a few narrowly defined institutions; he was a perfectionist to whom social justice meant nothing less than the eradication of sin from human society. All men, he preached, must renounce violence and coercion and in that way give their support to the kingdom of God. From this viewpoint he made the exciting discovery of the kinship of his beliefs with those of American abolitionists; it seemed obvious that an anti-slavery movement should have been pacifistic and anarchistic.



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1890

Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy's *OTETS SERGI* (FATHER SERGIUS).



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1891

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *PLODY PROSVESHCHENIA* (THE FRUITS OF ENLIGHTENMENT) (1988, THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY, ed. A.N. Wilson, tr. Robert Chandler, San Francisco: Harper & Row).

1893

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *TSTARSTVO BOZHIE VNUTRI VAS* (THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU) (Volume XX of the COMPLETE WORKS, tr. Wiener, Leo) (1988, THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY, ed. A.N. Wilson, tr. Robert Chandler, San Francisco: Harper & Row).

In this year Commissioner Theodore Roosevelt declared that by placing increased emphasis on “vigorous manly out-of-door sports” he was going to revitalize the citizenry of the United States of America and erect a new Anglo-Saxon super-race:



Let's Go Hunting So I Can Shoot You In The Face

In this year Winchester Repeating Firearms was innovating its 1st shoulder weapon designed to fire ammo loaded with smokeless powder — a “High Wall” single-shot device chambered for .30-40 Krag cartridges (John Moses Browning’s Model 1894 lever-action rifle in .30-30 Winchester would not be introduced until 1895). Meanwhile, in Berlin, Ludwig Loewe’s firearms factory –that would one day be taken away from him because he was at least by origin a Jew– introduced the 7.65mm Borchardt M93, which would be the first self-loading (automatic) pistol to sell well (about 3,000 of these devices would be manufactured). Additional design work by Loewe’s engineer Georg Luger would create the toggle-locked Mauser Parabellum, the initial self-loading pistol to give the hots to the you’ll-get-my-gun-when-you-pry-it-out-of-my-cold-dead-fingers crowd (you know if you are one).

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In Osceola, Nebraska a dozen citizens wearing masks flogged some dancehall girls through the streets, of course on behalf of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. I'm not making this up — such vigilantism was being referred to at the time as “whitecapping” after the pillow cases these vigilantes wore over their heads for courage. This sort of conduct was an integral part of a violently anti-foreign, anti-Catholic, and anti-Negro movement that had sprung up between the rows of corn in Indiana in 1877 and would culminate in 1896 in the United States Supreme Court's infamous Plessy v. Ferguson decision (the one in which nine white men would decide that “separate but equal” certainly did not extend as far as railway cars, or employment).





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THE FUTURE CAN BE EASILY PREDICTED IN RETROSPECT



By what road have we traveled, to arrive at our firm unanalyzed conviction that the science of biology requires us to identify survival with strength? The recent (1981? — undated) inspirational THE HUNDREDTH MONKEY has a dedication sheet which can stand by itself in elucidation of this contemporary morality of fitness. In emphatic typeface this page states that the book is dedicated “**To the Dinosaurs, who mutely warn us that a species which cannot adapt to changing conditions will become extinct.**” A hundred and fifty pages later the author was able to derive his strength-lesson of survival: “the strength of our species lies ... in our ability to use our minds to cooperate with each other” and “the same powerful minds that created nuclear bombs and intercontinental missiles can also learn how to create human unity and cooperativeness.” A preposterous fraud like THE HUNDREDTH MONKEY is in the main line [Waldo Emersonian](#) tradition, in which each new metaphor in our lexicon is “a new weapon in the magazine of power” ([Emerson](#) 1971-1987, I:35). An earlier source for the moral behind that counterfactual “hundredth monkey” story, of such great fame, turns out to be, however, [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)’s manuscript *TSTARSTVO BOZHIE VNUTRI VAS*, Volume XX of the COMPLETE WORKS.



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I quote from the KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU translation by Leo Wiener, 10:

The transition of men from one structure of life to another does not always take place in the manner in which the sand is poured out from an hourglass, -one kernel of sand after another, from the first to the last,- but rather like water pouring into a vessel that is immersed in the water, when it at first admits the water evenly and slowly at one side, and then, from the weight of the water already taken in, suddenly dips down fast and almost all at once receives all the water which it can hold. The same occurs with societies of men at the transition from one concept, and so from one structure of life, to another. It is only at first that one after another slowly and gradually receives the new truth by an inner way and follows it thorough life; but after a certain diffusion it is no longer received in an internal manner, nor gradually, but all at once, almost involuntarily ... the movement keeps accelerating and accelerating, expanding and expanding, like a snowball, until there germinates a public opinion which is in accord with the new truth, and the remaining mass of men no longer singly, but in a body, under the pressure of this force, passes over to the side of the new truth, and a new structure of life is established, which is in agreement with this truth.



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In this 1893 book Tolstòy in effect declared himself an apostle of the love god:

The three life-conceptions are these: the first - the personal, or animal; the second - the social, or the pagan; and the third - the universal, or the divine. The savage recognizes life only in himself, in his personal desires. The good of his life is centered in himself alone. The highest good for him is the greatest gratification of his lust. The prime mover of his life is his personal enjoyment. The whole historical life of humanity is nothing but a gradual transition from the personal, the animal life-conception, to the social, and from the social to the divine.... The positivists, the communists, and all the preachers of the scientific brotherhood preach the widening of that love which men have for themselves and for their families and for the state, so as to embrace all humanity, forgetting that the love which they advocate is the personal love, which, by spreading out thinner, could extend to the family; which by spreading out still thinner, could extend to the natural country of birth, which completely vanishes as soon as it reaches an artificial state, such as Austria, Turkey, England.... the recognition of self as this son of God, whose chief quality is love ... because he cannot help loving ... everybody and everything.¹

1. Section IV:90-2, 108, 111.

Of course, real people never have been at all like Tolstòy's concept of the egoistic savage. Such remarks are not so much scandalous as counterfactual, and as one studies this text one notices that Tolstòy accompanied his unhistorical "history of savagery" with an equally unhistorical condemnation of the Jews who rejected his "Jesus Christ." Tolstòy's reconstruction of the past is of a counterfactual past. His dream of the future is



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something that never will happen. We can't get there from here:

In order to get the power and retain it, it is necessary to love power; but love of power is not connected with goodness, but with qualities which are the opposite of goodness, such as pride, cunning, cruelty. Without self-aggrandizement and debasement of others, without hypocrisy, deceit, prisons, fortresses, executions, murders, a power can neither arise nor maintain itself.... And so all the probabilities are in favor of the fact that not those who are better than those over whom they rule, but, on the contrary, those who are worse, have always been and even now are in power. There may also be worse people among those who submit to the power, but it cannot be that better people should rule over worse people.... It even sounds ridiculous to speak of ruling Christians. The non-Christians, that is, those who base their lives on the worldly good, must always rule over Christians, over those who assume that their lives consist in the renunciation of this good.¹

1. Ibid, Section X:247-8.

His recognition of the nature of the instant world of power, a world in which more power overcomes less power and in which the good, being meek and weak, is never dominant, was accurate, so accurate that no Russian liberal could afford to believe in Tolstòy's God, or could afford to sympathize with Tolstòy's criticism of the existing social order.⁶ As we noticed, his dream of the past was counterfactual and his dream of the future was counterfactual. We can't get there from here. Having more power, those who exploit will always be the ones who hire the philosophers and pay for the dissemination of words which sanction the continuation of their looting, right up to the end: "Philosophers are hired by the comfortable classes to prove that everything is all right."⁷ Where Tolstòy went wrong was in the assertion that "outside of violence, which never puts a stop to evil, there is another means for the abolition of violence" (Tolstòy, Section 10). This is like saying that circles can grow so large as to exceed their perimeters, or that squares can acquire a fifth corner. It is, in effect, suggesting that under certain circumstances weakness can be stronger than strength, without itself becoming not weakness but strength, simply because we need this to be the case. We wouldn't be at all tempted to believe

6. All Lenin quotes are from his newspaper and journal articles published around the time of Tolstòy's death, most available in Macherey 1978, pages 299-323 (for all these remarks about impotence, you'd think someone had an unconfessed sexual problem): "...no Russian liberal believes in Tolstòy's God, or sympathizes with Tolstòy's criticism of the existing social order.... the landlord obsessed with Christ.... hypocrisy.... On the one hand, merciless criticism of capitalist exploitation, exposure of government outrages, the farcical courts and the state administration, and unmasking of the profound contradictions between the growth of poverty, degradation and misery among the working masses. On the other, the crackpot preaching of submission, 'resist not evil' with violence. On the one hand, the most sober realism, the tearing away of all and sundry masks; on the other, the preaching of one of the most odious things on earth, namely, religion.... impotent ... Tolstòy, owing to these contradictions, could not possibly understand ... the contradictions in Tolstòy's views and doctrines ... the contradictions in Tolstòy's views ... Most of the peasantry wept and prayed, moralized and dreamed, wrote petitions and sent 'pleaders' – quite in the vein of Leo Tolstòy! ... weakness ... flabbiness ... immature dreaming ... political inexperience ... flabbiness ... softness ... flabbiness ... dreamy, diffuse and impotent lamentations ... apathetic attitude ... utopian ... reactionary in the most precise and most profound sense of the word ... reactionary and utopian ... the fundamental inconsistencies and weaknesses of Tolstòy's world outlook are being hushed up in the most unpardonable fashion...."

7. Oliver Wendell Holmes.



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such absurdities about the path of power if we weren't constantly tempted to follow the path of power.⁸

8. The idea that there is a “mass effect” associated with collective wishing is an idea that originated with [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#). Its most recent manifestation was in regard to some people who were putting it out that there was something they termed “the hundredth monkey phenomenon.” Supposedly there were, near Japan, these two islands inhabited by monkeys, and on one of the islands the monkeys were learning to wash the food they were given to eat in the ocean, to get the grit and sand off of it before putting it into their mouths. When the hundredth monkey learned this trick, on the one island, allegedly, spontaneously, the monkeys on the other separate isolated island acquired this trick! The people who were putting this out alluded to scientific studies of the phenomenon.

As it turned out, there were a few things wrong with the story.

First off, the two islands proved to be within monkey swimming distance of one another. The two populations were infrequently exchanging members. Secondly, the “scientists” in question, studying the monkey behavior, were embarrassed by the publicity, for in fact they had noticed no such occurrence as was being reported. All they had observed was that some of the monkeys had learned to wash the food to get the grit and sand off of it, and other monkeys, watching this, had also acquired this behavior.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were such a mass effect of thought? If wishes were horses beggars would ride!



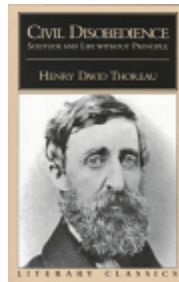
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1894

September 3, Monday: [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) wrote to his friend V. Chertkov about an article "Thoreau" by John Trevor in the Labour Prophet published by the "Labour Church" of Manchester, England, which he felt should be translated into Russian:

There is a book by Thoreau "On Civil Disobedience."
I have to order it.





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1895

Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy's *HOZJAIN I RABOTNIK* (MASTER AND MAN).



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1896

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) wrote to Eugen H. Schmitt in Germany about disobedience to the government and indicated that some 50 years before, [Henry Thoreau](#) had been the first to explore this tactical possibility:

At that time nobody paid any attention to his refusal and article — it seemed to be so strange. They explained it as eccentricity.

January 12, Sunday: Letter from [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) to Ernest Howard Crosby about Christian nonresistance as exemplified for fully half a century by the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#), as translated by Professor Leo Wiener in 1905:

My Dear Crosby: — I am very glad to hear of your activity and that it is beginning to attract attention. Fifty years ago Garrison's proclamation of non-resistance only cooled people toward him, and the whole fifty years' activity of Ballou in this direction was met with stubborn silence. I read with great pleasure in Peace the beautiful ideas of the American authors in regard to non-resistance. I make an exception only in the case of Mr. Bemis's old, unfounded opinion, which calumniates Christ in assuming that Christ's expulsion of the cattle from the temple means that he struck the men with a whip, and commanded his disciples to do likewise. The ideas expressed by these writers, especially by H. Newton and G. Herron, are beautiful, but it is to be regretted that they do not answer the question which Christ put before men, but answer the question which the so-called orthodox teachers of the churches, the chief and most dangerous enemies of Christianity, have put in its place.

Mr. Higginson says that the law of non-resistance is not admissible as a general rule. H. Newton says that the practical results of the application of Christ's teaching will depend on the degree of faith which men will have in this teaching. Mr. C. Martyn assumes that the stage at which we are is not yet suited for the application of the teaching about non-resistance. G. Herron says that in order to fulfil the law of non-resistance, it is necessary to learn to apply it to life. Mrs. Livermore says the same, thinking that the fulfilment of the law of non-resistance is possible only in the future.

All these opinions treat only the question as to what would happen to people if all were put to the necessity of fulfilling the law of non-resistance; but, in the first place, it is quite impossible to compel all men to accept the law of non-resistance, and, in the second, if this were possible, it would be a most glaring negation of the very principle which is being established. To compel all men not to practise violence against



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others! Who is going to compel men?

In the third place, and above all else, the question, as put by Christ, does not consist in this, whether non-resistance may become a universal law for all humanity, but what each man must do in order to fulfil his destiny, to save his soul, and do God's work, which reduces itself to the same.

The Christian teaching does not prescribe any laws for all men; it does not say, "follow such and such rules under fear of punishment, and you will all be happy," but explains to each separate man his position in the world and shows him what for him personally results from this position. The Christian teaching says to each individual man that his life, if he recognizes his life to be his, and its aim, the worldly good of his personality or of the personalities of other men, can have no rational meaning, because this good, posited as the end of life, can never be attained, because, in the first place, all beings strive after the goods of the worldly life, and these goods are always attained by one set of beings to the detriment of others, so that every separate man cannot receive the desired good, but, in all probability, must even endure many unnecessary sufferings in his struggle for these unattained goods; in the second place, because if a man even attains the worldly goods, these, the more of them he attains, satisfy him less and less, and he wishes for more and more new ones; in the third place, mainly because the longer a man lives, the more inevitably do old age, diseases, and finally death, which destroys the possibility of any worldly good, come to him.

Thus, if a man considers his life to be his, and its end to be the worldly good, for himself or for other men, this life can have for him no rational meaning. Life receives a rational meaning only when a man understands that the recognition of his life as his own, and the good of personality, of his own or of that of others, as its end, is an error, and that the human life does not belong to him, who has received this life from some one, but to Him who produced this life, and so its end must not consist in the attainment of his own good or of the good of others, but only in the fulfilment of the will of Him who produced it. Only with such a comprehension of life does it receive a rational meaning, and its end, which consists in the fulfilment of God's will, become attainable, and, above all, only with such a comprehension does man's activity become clearly defined, and he no longer is subject to despair and suffering, which were inevitable with his former comprehension. "The world and I in it," such a man says to himself, "exist by the will of God. I cannot know the whole world and my relation to it, but I can know what is wanted of me by God, who sent men into this world, endless in time and space, and therefore inaccessible to my understanding, because this is revealed to me in the tradition, that is, in the aggregate reason of the best people in the world, who lived before me, and in my reason, and in my heart, that is, in the striving of my whole being.

"In the tradition, the aggregate of the wisdom of all the best



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men, who lived before me, I am told that I must act toward others as I wish that others would act toward me; my reason tells me that the greatest good of men is possible only when all men will act likewise.

"My heart is at peace and joyful only when I abandon myself to the feeling of love for men, which demands the same. And then I can not only know what I must do, but also the cause for which my activity is necessary and defined.

"I cannot grasp the whole divine work, for which the world exists and lives, but the divine work which is being accomplished in this world and in which I am taking part with my life is accessible to me. This work is the destruction of the discord and of the struggle among men and other beings, and the establishment among men of the greatest union, concord, and love; this work is the realization of what the Jewish prophets promised, saying that the time will come when all men shall be taught the truth, when the spears shall be forged into pruning-hooks, and the scythes and swords into ploughshares, and when the lion shall lie with the lamb."

Thus, the man of the Christian comprehension of life not only knows how he must act in life, but also what he must do.

He must do what contributes to the establishment of the kingdom of God in the world. To do this, a man must fulfil the inner demands of God's will, that is, he must act amicably toward others, as he would like others to do to him. Thus the inner demands of a man's soul coincide with that external end of life which is placed before him.

And here though we have an indication which is so clear to a man of the Christian comprehension, and incontestable from two sides, as to what the meaning and end of human life consists in, and how a man must act, and what he must do, and what not, there appear certain people, who call themselves Christians, who decide that in such and such cases a man must depart from God's law and the common cause of life, which are given to him, and must act contrary to the law and the common cause of life, because, according to their ratiocination, the consequences of the acts committed according to God's law may be profitless and disadvantageous for men.

Man, according to the Christian teaching, is God's workman. The workman does not know his master's whole business, but the nearest aim to be attained by his work is revealed to him, and he is given definite indications as to what he should do; especially definite are the indications as to what he must not do, in order that he may not work against the aim for the attainment of which he was sent to work. In everything else he is given complete liberty. and so for a man who has grasped the Christian conception of life the meaning of his life is clear and rational, and he cannot have a moment of wavering as to how he should act in life and what he ought to do, in order to fulfil the destiny of his life.

According to the law given him in the tradition, in his reason, and in his heart, a man must always act toward another as he



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wishes to have done to him: he must contribute to the establishment of love and union among men; but according to the decision of these far-sighted people, a man must, while the fulfilment of the law, according to their opinion, is still premature, do violence, deprive of liberty, kill people, and with this contribute, not to union of love, but to the irritation and enragement of people. It is as though a mason, who is put to do certain definite work, who knows that he is taking part with others in the building of a house, and who has a clear and indubitable command from the master himself that is to lay a wall, should receive the command from other masons like him, who, like him, do not know the general plan of the structure and what is useful for the common work, to stop laying the wall, and to undo the work of the others.

Wonderful delusion! The being that breathes today and disappears tomorrow, that has one definite, incontestable law given to him, as to how he is to pass his short term of life, imagines that he knows what is necessary and useful and appropriate for all men, for the whole world, for that world which moves without cessation, and goes on developing, and in the name of this usefulness, which is differently understood by each of them, he prescribes to himself and to others for a time to depart from the unquestionable law, which is given to him and to all men, and not to act toward all men as he wants others to act toward him, not to bring love into the world, but to practise violence, to deprive of freedom, to punish, to kill, to introduce malice into the world, when it is found that this is necessary. and he enjoins us to do so knowing that the most terrible cruelties, tortures, murders of men, from the Inquisitions and punishments and terrors of all the revolutions to the present bestialities of the anarchists and the massacres of them, have all proceeded from this, that men suppose that they know what people and the world need; knowing that at any given moment there are always two opposite parties, each of which asserts that it is necessary to use violence against the opposite party, – the men of state against the anarchists, the anarchists against the men of state; the English against the Americans, the Americans against the English; the English against the Germans; and so forth, in all possible combinations and permutations.

Not only does a man of the Christian concept of life see clearly by reflection that there is no ground whatever for his departure from the law of his life, as clearly indicated to him by God, in order to follow the accidental, frail, frequently contradictory demands of men; but if he has been living the Christian life for some time, and has developed in himself the Christian moral sensitiveness, he can positively not act as people demand that he shall, not only as the result of reflection, but also of feeling.

As it is for many men of our world impossible to subject a child to torture and to kill it, though such a torture may save a hundred other people, so a whole series of acts becomes impossible for a man who has developed the Christian



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sensitiveness of his heart in himself. A Christian, for example, who is compelled to take part in court proceedings, where a man may be sentenced to capital punishment, to take part in matters of forcible seizure of other people's property, in discussions about the declaration of war, or in preparations for the same, to say nothing of war itself, finds himself in the same position in which a good man would be, if he were compelled to torture or kill a child. It is not that he decides by reflection what he ought not to do, but that he cannot do what is demanded of him, because for a man there exists the moral impossibility, just as there is a physical impossibility, of committing certain acts. Just as it is impossible for a man to lift up a mountain, as it is impossible for a good man to kill a child, so it is impossible for a man who lives a Christian life to take part in violence. Of what significance for such a man can be the reflections that for some imaginary good he must do what has become morally impossible for him?

How, then, is a man to act when he sees the obvious harm of following the law of love and the law of non-resistance, which results from it? How is a man to act -this example is always adduced- when a robber in his sight kills or injures a child, and when the child cannot be saved otherwise than by killing the robber?

It is generally assumed that, when they adduce such an example, there can be no other answer to the question than that the robber ought to be killed, in order that the child be saved. But this answer is given so emphatically and so quickly only because we are not only in the habit of acting in this manner in the case of the defence of a child, but also in the case of the expansion of the borders of a neighbouring state to the detriment of our own, or in the case of the transportation of lace across the border, or even in the case of the defence of the fruits of our garden against depredations by passers-by.

It is assumed that it is necessary to kill the robber in order to save the child, but we need only stop and think on what ground a man should act thus, be he a Christian or a non-Christian, to convince ourselves that such an act can have no rational foundations, and is considered necessary only because two thousand years ago such a mode of action was considered just and people were in the habit of acting thus. Why should a non-Christian, who does not recognize God and the meaning of life in the fulfilment of His will, kill the robber, in defending the child? To say nothing of this, that in killing the robber he is certainly killing, but does not know for certain until the very last moment whether the robber will kill the child or not, to say nothing of this irregularity: who has decided that the life of the child is more necessary and better than the life of the robber?

If a non-Christian does not recognize God, and does not consider the meaning of life to consist in the fulfilment of God's will, it is only calculation, that is, the consideration as to what is more profitable for him and for all men, the continuation of



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the robber's life or that of the child, which guides the choice of his acts. But to decide this, he must know what will become of the child which he saves, and what would become of the robber if he did not kill him. But that he cannot know. And so, if he is a non-Christian, he has not rational foundation for saving the child through the death of the robber.

But if the man is a Christian, and so recognizes God and sees the meaning of life in the fulfilment of His will, no matter what terrible robber may attack any innocent and beautiful child, he has still less cause to depart from the law given him by God and to do to the robber what the robber wants to do to the child; he may implore the robber, may place his body between the robber and his victim, but there is one thing he cannot do, — he cannot consciously depart from the law of God, the fulfilment of which forms the meaning of his life. It is very likely that, as the result of his bad bringing up and of his animality, a man, being a pagan or a Christian, will kill the robber, not only in the defence of the child, but also in his own defence or in the defence of his purse, but that will by no means signify that it is right to do so, that it is right to accustom ourselves and others to think that that ought to be done.

This will only mean that, in spite of the external education and Christianity, the habits of the stone age are still strong in man, that he is capable of committing acts which have long ago been disavowed by his consciousness. A robber in my sight is about to kill a child and I can save it by killing the robber; consequently it is necessary under certain conditions to resist evil with violence.

A man is in danger of his life and can be saved only through my lie; consequently it is necessary in certain cases to lie. A man is starving, and I cannot save him otherwise than by stealing; consequently it is necessary in certain cases to steal.

I lately read a story by Coppee, in which an orderly kills his officer, who has his life insured, and thus saves his honour and the life of his family. Consequently in certain cases it is right to kill.

Such imaginary cases and the conclusions drawn from them prove only this, that there are men who know that it is not right to steal, to lie, to kill, but who are so loath to stop doing this that they use all the efforts of their mind in order to justify their acts. There does not exist a moral rule for which it would be impossible to invent a situation when it would be hard to decide which is more moral, the departure from the rule or its fulfilment. The same is true of the question of non-resistance to evil: men know that it is bad, but they are so anxious to live by violence, that they use all the efforts of their mind, not for the elucidation of all the evil which is produced by man's recognition of the right to do violence to others, but for the defence of this right. But such invented cases in no way prove that the rules about not lying, stealing, killing are incorrect.



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"Fais ce que doit, advienne que pourra, -do what is right, and let come what may," - is an expression of profound wisdom. Each of us knows unquestionably what he ought to do, but none of us knows or can know what will happen. Thus we are brought to the same, not only by this, that we must do what is right, but also by this, that we know what is right, and do not know at all what will come and result from our acts.

The Christian teaching is a teaching as to what a man must do for the fulfilment of the will of Him who sent him into the world. But the reflections as to what consequences we assume to result from such or such acts of men not only have nothing in common with Christianity, but are that very delusion which destroys Christianity.

No one has yet seen the imaginary robber with the imaginary child, and all the horrors, which fill history and contemporary events, have been produced only because men imagine that they can know the consequences of the possible acts.

How is this? Men used to live a beastly life, violating and killing all those whom it was advantageous for them to violate and kill, and even eating one another, thinking that that was right. Then there came a time, when, thousands of years ago, even in the time of Moses, there appeared the consciousness in men that it was bad to violate and kill one another. But there were some men for whom violence was advantageous, and they did not recognize the fact, and assured themselves and others that it was not always bad to violate and kill men, but that there were cases when this was necessary, useful, and even good. And acts of violence and murder, though not as frequent and cruel, were continued, but with this difference, that those who committed them justified them on the ground of usefulness to men. It was this false justification of violence that Christ arraigned. He showed that, since every act of violence could be justified as actually happens, when two enemies do violence to one another and both consider their violence justifiable, and there is no chance of verifying the justice of the determination of either, it is necessary not to believe in any justifications of violence, and under no condition, as at first was thought right by humanity, is it necessary to make use of them.

It would seem that men who profess Christianity would have carefully to unveil this deception, because in the unveiling of this deception does one of the chief manifestations of Christianity consist. But the very opposite has happened: men to whom violence was advantageous, and who did not want to give up these advantages, took upon themselves the exclusive propaganda of Christianity, and, preaching it, asserted that, since there are cases in which the non-application of violence produces more evil than its application (the imaginary robber who kills the child), we must not fully accept Christ's teaching about non-resistance to evil, and that we may depart from this teaching in the defence of our lives and of those of other men, in the defense of our country, the protection of society from madmen and malefactors, and in many other cases. but the



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decision of the question as to when Christ's teaching ought to be set aside was left to those very men who made use of violence. Thus Christ's teaching about non-resistance to evil turned out to be absolutely set aside, and, what is worse than all that, those very men whom Christ arraigned began to consider themselves the exclusive preachers and expounders of His teaching. But the light shineth in the dark, and the false preachers of Christianity are again arraigned by His teaching. We can think of the structure of the world as we please, we may do what is advantageous and agreeable for us to do, and use violence against people under the pretext of doing good to men, but it is absolutely impossible to assert that, in doing so, we are professing Christ's teaching, because Christ arraigned that very deception. The truth will sooner or later be made manifest, and will arraign the deceivers, even as it does now.

Let only the question of the human life be put correctly, as it was put by Christ, and not as it was corrupted by the churches, and all the deceptions which by the churches have been heaped on Christ's teaching will fall of their own accord.

The question is not whether it will be good or bad for human society to follow the law of love and the resulting law of non-resistance, but whether you -a being that lives today and is dying by degrees tomorrow and every moment- will now, this very minute, fully do the will of Him who sent you and clearly expressed it in tradition and in your reason and heart, or whether you want to act contrary to this will. As soon as the question is put in this form, there will be but one answer: I want at once, this very minute, without any delay, without waiting for anyone, and without considering the seeming consequences, with all my strength to fulfil what alone I am indubitably commanded to do by Him who sent me into the world, and in no case, under no condition, will I, can I, do what is contrary to it, because in this lies the only possibility of my rational, unwretched life.



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1898

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *CHTO TAKOYE ISKUSSTVO* (WHAT IS ART?).



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1899

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *VOSKRESENIYE* (RESURRECTION) at Ylōsnousemus.



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1900

Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy responded to a letter from Edward Garnett:

[I]f I had to address the American people, I should like to thank them for the great help I have received from their writers who flourished about the fifties. I would mention Garrison, Parker, Emerson, Ballou and Thoreau, not as the greatest but those who I think specially influenced me.

THEODORE PARKER

WALDO EMERSON

HENRY THOREAU



January 22, Monday: Elie Tailefer died.

Sergei Rakhmaninov and Fyodor Ivanovich Chaliapin visited the home of Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy to perform some songs including Fate. The writer responded by asking what was the point of the music, declaring that “Beethoven is nonsense. So too is Pushkin and Lermontov.” He deemed Apukhtin’s poem, Fate, “abominable.”



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July 12, Thursday: For most years we don't have any record, but early in 1901 someone at the Chicago Tribune made up a list of the lynchings which had occurred in America during the previous year. The list had 117 entries — a lynching, typically a white mob of some size hanging an adult black male, had been occurring every three days or so. Because of this list we know that on this day in Creswell, Georgia, John Jennings, accused of having committed murder, was lynched.

While vacationing at his home in Canton, Ohio, William McKinley was formally advised that the Republican Party had renominated him for President of the United States of America.

A. Goldenweiser's record of a story he had been told by Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy, while arguing that it would be a mistake to introduce expensive and complicated agricultural equipment to Russia:

You know, there was a famous American writer, Thoreau, who departed from urban life and began to earn his living with his own hands. When his friends began to tell him that he lived just a few hours away from a beautiful lake and never intended to go there, even if a trip by train would be only two dollars, Thoreau argued with them saying that he felt very well at home; but if he would ever have intended to go to the lake he would rather walk there since he would have to work four days in order to earn two dollars while a walk could take him only two days.

HENRY THOREAU



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1901

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *ZIVOI TRUP* (THE LIVE CORPSE). The Russian government excommunicated him.



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1903

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *POSLE BALA* (AFTER THE BALL).

From this year into 1910 [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) would be occupying himself with the creation or abstraction of various meditations about God, love, faith, kindness, knowledge, sacrifice, meditation, prayer, etc., resulting eventually in *PUT ZHIZNI* or A CALENDAR OF WISDOM. It would be from his own point of view the most important project of his life, a book of which he proclaimed himself prouder than his best-sellers WAR AND PEACE or ANNA KARENINA. The author considered this last major work to consist of "a wise thought for every day of the year, from the greatest philosophers of all times and peoples." The book, which would be banned by Vladimir Illyich Ulyanov (Lenin) and onward for three full generations of Russian life, has now again a bestseller in its native land. It has just been published in 1997 for the first time in English translation, as GUIDE TO ALL MAJOR RELIGIONS. The translator, Peter Sekirin, is the author THE DOSTOEVSKY ARCHIVE (McFarland, 1997), a detailed recent biography of that novelist.

A CALENDAR OF WISDOM:

DAILY THOUGHTS TO NOURISH THE SOUL

- PRAYER: To pray is to accept and to remember the laws of the limitless being, God, and to measure all your deeds according to His laws. Those who make a habit out of prayer do not pray sincerely. Do not think that you can please God with prayer. You will please God by submitting to Him. Prayer is just a reminder for you of who you are and what the purpose of your life is.
- CHRISTIANITY: Christianity is a very simple thing: love other persons, as you love God. Live in the spirit of God. Even a small child can understand these ideas, and even a great mind cannot improve upon them. Christian teaching is so simple that even small children can understand it. Those people who pretend not to understand it want to be called Christians without being real Christians. Christianity in its pure and sincere form works like dynamite: it blows up old mountains and opens up new, limitless horizons. A society can be improved only by the spiritual improvement of its members.
- EDUCATION: I think that the major obligation of parents and educators is to give children the understanding of the divine beginning that exists within them. Just as one candle lights another and can light thousands of other candles, so one heart can illuminate thousands of hearts. Religious upbringing should be the major part of any education.
- DEATH and AFTER-DEATH: Death and birth are two limits, and something similar is hidden behind each. Where do we go after death? We go to where we came from: to our heavenly father.
- LOVE: The essence of all religious teachings is love. What is special in Christianity is its clear and exact statement of love, non-resistance to evil and violence. GOD IS LOVE. NOBODY SAW GOD, BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE...AND HE WHO LIVES IN LOVE, LIVES IN GOD AND GOD LIVES IN HIM. IF WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, GOD LIVES IN US. -- 1 John, Ch.4. Love



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is the manifestation of the divine nature which exists above time. Love is not only the way of life, it is an action directed towards the goodness of others. People live by love.

In Russia in this year during which K.E. Ziolkowski was presenting his “Exploration of outer space by rockets,” I.Nikashidze was presenting Thoreau’s “philosophy of natural life” to the Russias in an edition titled *FILOSOFYA ESTESTVENNOY ZHIZNI*. This booklet in [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)’s library would be one of his two sources for the some 30 [Henry Thoreau](#) quotes in his *KRUG CHTENYA* (A CIRCLE OF READING) published in 1904-1908 (the other source was EVERY DAY WITH THOREAU, now at the Tolstòy State Museum in Moscow).



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1906

August 12, Sunday: Here is A. Goldenweiser's record of a conversation he had with [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) on this day:

... talking about an outstanding pleiad of American writers, Channing, Parker, Emerson, Garrison, Thoreau, Lev Nikolævich said: "By the way, it is generally assumed that England has great writers while America does not have any. I remember how Turgenev, who was a highly educated man, told me very seriously that there were no significant writers at all in America."

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

THEODORE PARKER

WALDO EMERSON

HENRY THOREAU



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1908

[Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#)'s *HADZI-MURAT* (HADJI MURAD) and his *NE MOGU MOLTSHAT!* (I CANNOT BE SILENT) (1988, THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY, ed. A.N. Wilson, tr. Robert Chandler, San Francisco: Harper & Row).



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1910

January 31, Monday: In his 82nd year [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) began a collection of aphorisms, “Path of Life.” In this Emerson appears, according to a current index to a republication of the collection, 17 times, Thoreau 9 times, the Reverend Channing 9 times, but the Reverend [Adin Ballou](#) only 6 times (however, I do not know whether the current published edition is complete, or whether perhaps this published material represents only an editorial selection).

[There is a 1997 publication by Scribner, which purports to be the 1st translation into English of Leo Tolstòy’s final major work, *KRUG CHTENIIA*, offered as A CALENDAR OF WISDOM: DAILY THOUGHTS TO NOURISH THE SOUL WRITTEN AND SELECTED FROM THE WORLD’S SACRED TEXTS BY LEO TOLSTOY, translated from the Russian by Peter Sekirin. In the fine print there appears the word “Selections.” In this work, which the elderly [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) is said to have regarded as his very most important, done during the opening years of the 20th Century, he cites [Henry Thoreau](#) 14 times and [Waldo Emerson](#) 21 times. I have just begun last night to look at the Thoreau ascriptions, and, as given in this new “1st English edition,” quite frankly, I am having difficulty with them. I will key them in below for everyone’s benefit. Perhaps someone will be able to offer advice. In the roundtripping of the English into Russian and then into English, the thought that has been preserved can only be characterized as uninteresting and uninspiring –even jejune– and this raises the intriguing possibility that Tolstòy could not possibly have been influenced by Thoreau simply because, due to such linguistic difficulties, the Russian did not comprehend what the American was offering.]

- January 1: Read the best books first, otherwise you’ll find you do not have time.
- January 9: Only when we forget what we were taught do we start to have real knowledge.
- January 28: We live a short period of time in this world, but we live it according to the laws of eternal life.
- February 24: The only way to tell the truth is to speak with kindness. Only the words of a loving man can be heard.
- April 6: The biggest happiness is when at the end of the year you feel better than at the beginning.
- May 27: A man cannot do everything; but this cannot be an excuse for doing bad things.
- July 23: The body is the first student of the soul.
- August 8: For the majority of mankind, religion is a habit, or, more precisely, tradition is their religion. Though it seems strange, I think that the first step to moral perfection is your liberation from the religion in which you were raised. Not a single person has come to perfection except by following this way.
- August 27: When you feel the desire for power, you should stay in solitude for some time.
- September 14: Our life would become wonderful if we could see all the disgusting things which exist in it.
- September 16: A wise man has doubts even in his best moments. Real truth is always accompanied by hesitations. If I could not hesitate, I could not believe.
- September 25: It is not enough to be a hardworking person. Think: what do you work at?
- November 22: When I sit on the seashore and listen to the waves beating on the sand, I feel free from any obligation, and I think that all the people of the world can change their constitutions without me.
- December 12: The most tender plants can push their way through the hardest rocks, and it is the same with kindness. Nothing can stop a truly kind and sincere person.



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[The translator, Peter Sekirin, alleges that there has been a critical edition in German, done by E. Schmidt and A. Schkaravan and published in Dresden in 1907 by Karl Reissner, which includes the sources for these quotations. He does not, however, cite the title of that critical edition, and I am not able to locate any reference to it by publication date or by author/translator name.]

May 25, Wednesday: V. Bulgakov recorded a conversation with [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#):

In the evening he said that he had read a book, WALDEN, and as he did not like it before, so he does not like it now. "Purposely original, boastful, restless," said Lev Nikolævich about [Thoreau](#).

[TIMELINE OF WALDEN](#)

November 20 (in Russia it was November 7th old style), Sunday: [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) died of pneumonia in the home of the keeper of a railway station in remote Astapovo, in the Ryazan province of Russia, while fleeing from the influence of home and family in an attempt by detachment to prepare himself for this:

In one of his most inspired dialogues, Plato does not fear to reveal to all men that great and eternally hidden truth that philosophy is nothing else but a preparation for death and a slow dying. He did not fear to say it, because he knew that though this truth were to be cried aloud from the four corners of the market-place, yet those whom he calls *οἱ πολλοί* and Nietzsche calls "numerous, too numerous," would never hear it. If Plato is right, not Aristotle, then we must allow that during the last decades of his life Tolstoy shows us an example of genuine philosophical activity. All that he did had but one object, one significance; to loosen the bonds which bound him to this world common to all men, to throw overboard all ballast that gave his vessel equilibrium, but at the same time prevented it from leaving the earth. To the uninitiated Tolstoy's work often seems criminal and sacrilegious. He tramples underfoot everything that men hold most dear, he outrages all that they hold most sacred; shakes the foundations of society, and poisons the most innocent joys. He brings to us, and can bring to us, nothing but suffering.

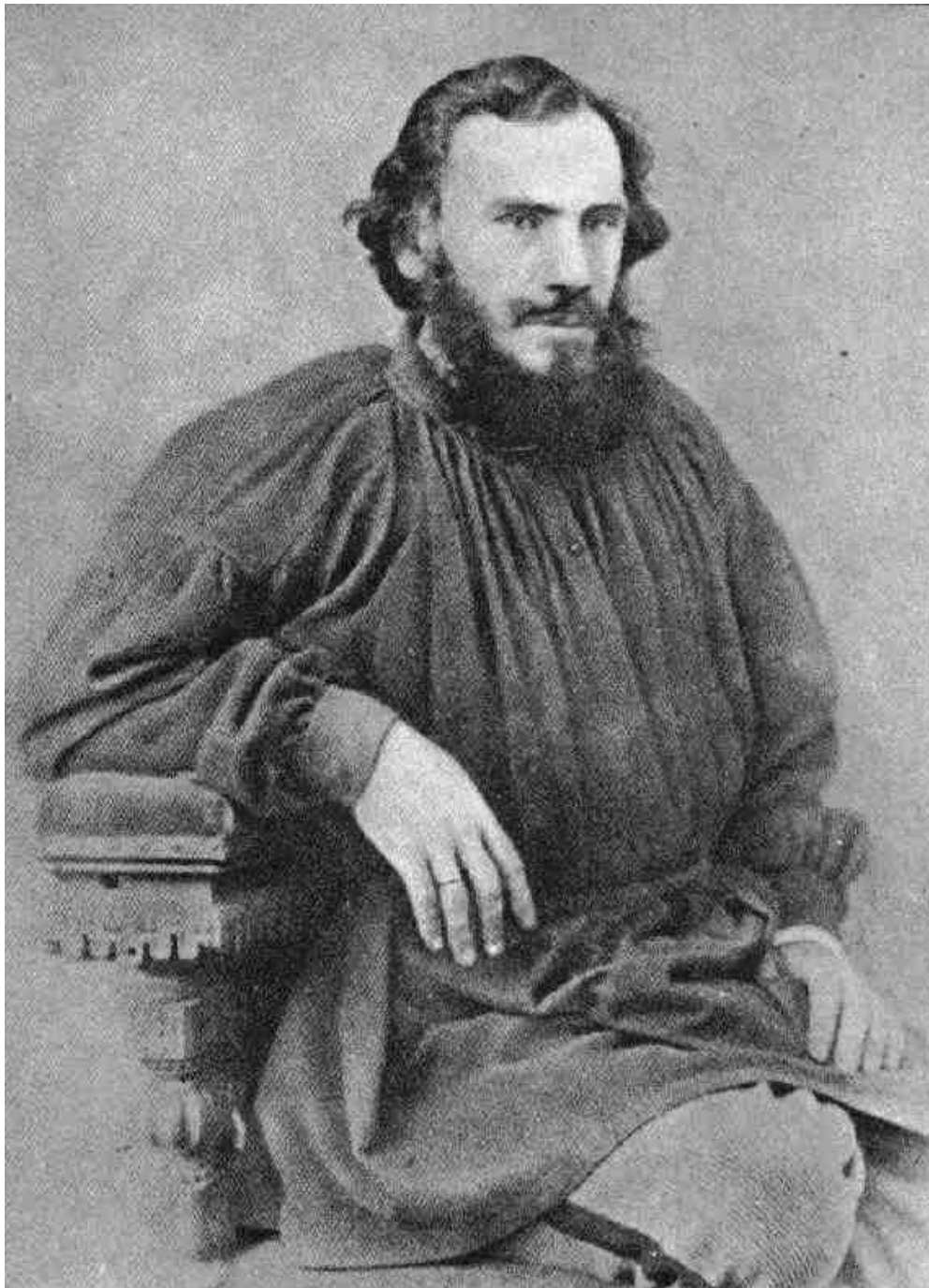
"What accursed Christianity is this?" cries Princess Cheremissov in all sincerity, in Tolstoy's posthumous drama THE LIGHT SHINES IN DARKNESS. She is right.

- Lev Shestov 1975, pages 98-9



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1917

While serving as a soldier during WWI, Ludwig Wittgenstein became acquainted with the mystical writings of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#). If you have heard that Wittgenstein was a hardheaded positivist who refuted metaphysics by demonstrating that it could be nothing other than nonsense –*wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen*– then consider this. The Wiener Kreis based their philosophy, at least in important part, on their understanding of his early writings. But when he was finally induced, by Schlick, to come out of his postwar seclusion to meet with famous members of the circle of logical-positivist *terribles simplificateurs* in Vienna, they found him entirely unwilling to discuss technical points of his/their philosophy. No, he spoke to their condition, and insisted on reading to them the poetry of Rabindranath Tagore. Or, on several occasions, he whistled classic scores to them –although [Henry Thoreau](#) played the flute and Wittgenstein the clarinet, both seem to have been world-class whistlers– refusing to use words with them at



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all. (This was at about the time they were trying to get [Iosef Vissarionovich Dzugashvili](#), known as “[Stalin](#)”, to accept their philosophy, under the name “physicalism,” as the official philosophy of the USSR. But



PHYSICALIST?

Wittgenstein was carrying around multiple copies of the Reclam edition of Tolstoy's TWENTY-THREE TALES, to hand out to friends.) Rudolf Carnap, the colleague of my teacher W.V.O. Quine, he came to consider intolerable – not in spite of, but because of, his positivist learning, Carnap having made of himself a person who had nothing about which to be silent.⁹

A whole generation of disciples was able to take Wittgenstein as a positivist, because he has something of enormous importance in common with the positivists: he draws the line between what we can speak about and what we must be silent about just as they do. The difference is only that they have nothing to be silent about. Positivism holds – and this is its essence – that what we can speak about is all that matters in life. **Whereas Wittgenstein passionately believes that all that really matters in human life is precisely what, in his view, we must be silent about.** When he nevertheless takes immense pains to delimit the unimportant, it is not the coastline of that island which he is bent on surveying with such meticulous accuracy, but the boundary of the ocean. (Engelmann 1967, page 97)

Was this teacher who was handing out editions of Tolstoy entirely innocent of Thoreau? Bear in mind that Tolstoy urged [WALDEN; OR, LIFE IN THE WOODS](#) on people, urging us to “pay more attention to these voices (hardly to be replaced by those of financial and industrial millionaires, [!] or successful generals and admirals), and continue the good work in which they made such hopeful progress.”

9.Schilpp 1963, pages 26-7.



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1936

It is in the main-line “Christian” tradition to instruct the faithful to carefully ignore the plain meaning of the sermon on the mount. It set up an impossible ideal, we are informed by virtually every institutional theologian, and could therefore never have been intended to constitute a practical ethic. It has become standard for churchly figures to proclaim that the true meaning of “resist not evil” is “resist evil.” We are even instructed that “take no heed of the morrow” is compatible with “be good so you will be rewarded after you die.” In this year the Nazi thinker Alfred Rosenberg condemned Matthew’s account of the sermon on the mount as adding “effeminate extravagances” absent in the gospel according to Mark, such as not resisting evil, and declared in addition that only men such as [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) whose inner nature is bastardized, with a dreary world view, could find value in such a doctrine of cowardice.



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LEV NIKOLÆVICH TOLSTOY

1982

James C. Edwards, in his *ETHICS WITHOUT PHILOSOPHY*, had it exactly right when he spoke of the “striking relationships” between the teaching of Søren Aabye Kierkegaard and [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) and the teaching of Ludwig Wittgenstein.¹⁰



However, the state of Thoreau religious scholarship unfortunately did not make the information available to him, that what he had to say about these striking relationships applied about as well in regard to the teaching of [Henry Thoreau](#):

(next screen)

10. Wittgenstein’s attitude toward his own involvement in academic philosophy was, quite simply, that **someone** had to show the students where their professors had gone wrong – and that this enormous, onerous, thankless task had somehow devolved upon his shoulders: “309. What is your aim in philosophy? —To shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle.” Someone had to persuade these young people to stop allowing themselves to be mystified by their betters, and the way to stop this was to show how, in ethics and religion, questions of intellectual foundations cannot properly be raised. Presumably he learned this from Tolstòy, likewise an exceedingly rich man – but, likewise, a man who could not allow a cord to hang on a peg in his closet for dread that he would strangle himself in a moment of despair:

I, and all other men, know only one thing firmly, clearly, and certainly, and this knowledge cannot be explained by reason: it is outside reason, has no cause, and can have no consequences.... If goodness has a cause, it is no longer goodness; if it has a consequence –a reward– it is also not goodness. Therefore goodness is beyond the chain of cause and effect.... I have discovered nothing. I have only perceived what it is that I know. I have understood the Power that not only gives me life in the past but is giving me life now. I have freed myself from deception and learnt to know my master.... I used to say that in my body, in this grass, in this insect ... there takes place, according to physical, chemical, and physiological laws, a change of matter.... And I was surprised that, in spite of the greatest effort of thought on that path, the meaning of life, the meaning of my impulses and my aspirations, was not revealed to me.... I looked for an answer to my question. But reason could not give me an answer – reason is incommensurable with the question. Life itself had given me the answer, in my knowledge of what is good and what is bad. And that knowledge I did not acquire in any way; it was given to me, as to everybody, **given** because I could not take it from anywhere. (ANNA KARENINA, Part VIII, Chapters X-XIII)



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Like Tolstòy and Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard had personally known despair; in his authorship he took for granted that the standard moral and spiritual certainties of Christianity, appropriated in the standard way, had lost their powers to provide a sense to life. His problem as a writer was to recover the content of the doctrines and thus to restore their capacities to challenge and to save. Also like Tolstòy, he had the conviction that the simple (though extraordinarily demanding) message of the Gospel was being distorted by the dominant ecclesiastical bodies. What is needed is to scrape away the centuries of conventional understanding so that the words of Jesus can once again be heard for what they were and are; as it is now, the various corruptions of our culture have created the **illusion** in us that we have heard, understood, and obeyed... various forces in our culture have conspired to make it next to impossible for the average person (or, at least, the average intellectual) to hear the words of the Gospel with their true intentions. Our culture is shot through and through with **illusion**, illusions which are so powerful that any direct statement of the Gospel will fail to penetrate them undistorted. The Gospel, Kierkegaard believed, must be heard and received in **inwardness**; it must be appropriated in an extraordinary act of will by **one individual** for himself or herself; it is subjective, that is, directed to a subject of will and passion, and it is to be received as is proper by such a subject... Since the spirit of the age is antithetical to the proper appropriation of the Gospel, extraordinary means must be taken to offset the effects of the illusions and to allow the message to be heard... Kierkegaard, of course, seized upon the indirect method for the destruction of the illusions that beset Christian faith in his time. The whole of his pseudonymous authorship is an attempt to communicate indirectly: it tries to preach the Gospel without proclamation, without the direct address that lends itself to being swept up into an abstract, objective way of thinking. In order that the message really be heard, the message itself is never boldly proclaimed. Instead, silence, doubt, humor, and literary artifice all combine to direct one's attention away from the obvious and to that which is never spoken, to that which lies outside the boundary of what can (at least **now**) be said: the good news. Like the author of the TRACTATUS, Kierkegaard put the real point of his efforts firmly into place by being silent about it. ...Kierkegaardian emphases on subjectivity and on the inward flash of individual will (the "leap of faith") have counterparts in the fabric of Wittgenstein's ethical conception.



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1988

A.N. Wilson has recently authored a full-length biography of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#). One wonders why he bothered:¹¹

... the Sermon on the Mount is an unliveable ethic, a counsel of craziness which, if followed to its relentless conclusion as Tolstoy tried to follow it, will lead to the reverse of **peace and harmony and spiritual calm** which are normally thought of as the concomitants of the religious quest. Tolstoy's religion is ultimately the most searching criticism of Christianity which there is. He shows that it does not **work**.

First, the use of the objection, that it does not **work**, implies that Wilson thinks he has constructed a criticism. He imagines that religion should work. He imagines that those of us who take religion seriously, do so because we expect it to work. But only one who has not grasped the nature of the problem of worldly power could entertain this possibility that, by the world's standards, religion could ever "work." Of course religiosity doesn't work. Look where it put Yehoshua! The man was reviled and executed! It didn't work at the start of Christianity, and it hasn't worked since. Not for real Christians.

Second, if the gods one worships are **peace and harmony and spiritual calm**, truly the worship of God must seem as idolatry. Peace and harmony and spiritual calm are feel-good gods. They tell you: If worship feels good, do it – have a peak experience! We can hope that those who seek peace and harmony and spiritual calm do achieve these rewards, but we must be aware that they are rewards. The thing we must know of any such seekers is that, verily, in their experience, they have their reward: in the seeking of this reward and the receiving of this reward the transaction is complete. None of this, of course, has anything to do with worship, which is not something to be undertaken with the rationale that it will make your life work or that it will enable you to feel good about yourself, or that you will have a peak experience.

For someone to dismiss Tolstòy on such grounds is merely ridiculous. It would seem to me that authors like A.N. Wilson should stick to subjects about which they are competent. No amount of research into sources could prepare a scholar to write a biography of one of God's fools, with the scholar possessing such an attitude.¹²

David MacMurray has been reading in the biographies written by the prolific young A.N. Wilson, with the following results:

A.N. Wilson has pointed out in his excellent book on Paul, (the religious P.T. Barnum of his time), that the great irony of Christ "is that he was completely intolerant of everyone who was not a Jew," ("casting pearls before swine.") His mindset was such that all other religious who were not Jewish were swine....

11. Emphasis supplied by me. Wilson 1988, pp.300-1.

12. More recently, we notice (1992), this A.N. Wilson has authored a biography of Jesus Christ. It's just as obnoxious. It seems Jesus was this proto-Christian and Wilson just doesn't fancy such a religion. Again the burning question is why he bothered.



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Mr. Wilson states that Paul was so adept at PR in his wide travels that he succeeded in transforming a charismatic carpenter into a God.... Paul was the original used car salesman, the "King of Con."...

There are two excellent reasons for refusing to consult any of the biographies written by Wilson. First, a secular manner in which to put this would be that no biographer should ever attempt to biograph someone with whom he or she experiences no empathy — an error to which for unknown reasons Wilson again and again returns. Second, a religious manner in which to put this would be that if when we examine someone, we ought to look for that of Christ within them — then it goes without saying that when we examine Jesus, also, we ought to be looking for that of Christ within him.

Among the works by Wilson that are not recommended are:

- 1987: Tolstoy, Leo, graf, 1828-1910. THE LION AND THE HONEYCOMB: THE RELIGIOUS WRITINGS OF TOLSTOY edited and with an introduction by A.N. Wilson; translated by Robert Chandler. London: Collins. (Instead I would recommend the work of the considerably more reliable David Patterson: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO TOLSTOY Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 1991.)
- 1988: Wilson, A.N. TOLSTOY. London: H. Hamilton; NY: Ballantine Books, 1989, c1988.
- 1991: Wilson, A.N. AGAINST RELIGION. London: Chatto & Windus.
- 1992: Wilson, A.N. JESUS. 1st American ed. NY: W.W. Norton; London: Sinclair-Stevenson.
- 1993: Wilson, A.N. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE HOUSE OF WINDSOR. London: Sinclair-Stevenson.

The only reasons I know of to consult these works of Wilson would be, first, for us to freshly experience what a horrid thing it is, for us to refuse to see that of Christ in someone, as part of our rubbing of our noses in that peculiar type of error, as part of our resolving never ever to ourselves be guilty of that sort of spiritual error. And, second, if Wilson should at some point offer us his autobiography — it would be interesting to read this and attempt as a point of religious discipline to discover that of Christ within him.



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1991

July: Three Russians, [Nikita Pokrovsky](#), Mikhail T. Gusev, and Piotr M. Saveliev, led The Thoreau Society in a non-violence walk from the plaque marking the site where Henry was put in jail for refusing to fund slavery and the war upon [Mexico](#) (Massachusetts has long since torn down this Middlesex County prison that used to stand in the center of Concord, replacing it with several much more commodious facilities just down the road), out to [Walden Pond](#), the site of [Thoreau](#)'s experiment in freedom.

One of these Russians, Piotr, had just come from leading a non-violence walk in the heart of Russia, a walk "in search of the green stick" which began in Yasnaya Polyana at the grave of [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#), the great Russian apostle of nonviolence.

I would like to support these three in their effort. I would like to provide them with a literary and theoretical underpinning for their fine use of the corpus of our Henry. We need this because there is a real question whether [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#) and the Reverend [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) were as nonviolent as Tolstòy. Gandhi explained forthrightly that for him nonviolence was a mere tactic, not a way of life. He said that Russians did not understand the tactic of non-violence, that had it been the Russians in [India](#) rather than the British in India, his people would have been forced to resort to violence. The Reverend King likewise.

One may usefully contrast Gandhi with Saul Alinsky on means and ends. Here is Gandhi:



Where there is no desire for fruit, there is no temptation for untruth or *himsa*. Take an instance of untruth or violence, and it will be found that at its back is the desire to attain the cherished end.

And here is Alinsky:



The man of action views the issues of means and ends in pragmatic and strategic terms.... He asks of ends only whether they are achievable and worth the cost; of means, only whether they will work.



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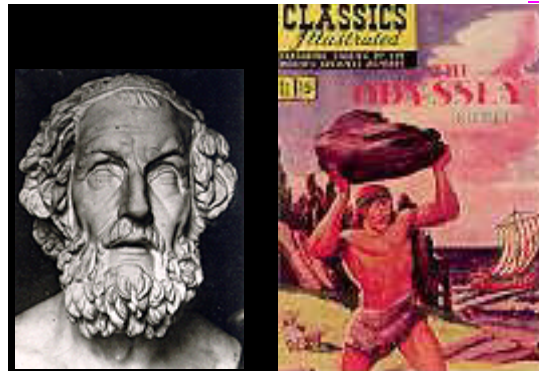
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1997

A CALENDAR OF WISDOM: DAILY THOUGHTS TO NOURISH THE SOUL / WRITTEN AND SELECTED FROM THE WORLD'S SACRED TEXTS BY [LEO TOLSTÒY](#); TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY PETER SEKIRIN (NY: Scribner).

October 29, Wednesday: On page B1 of the New York [Times](#), continuing on page B10, there was a report by Alessandra Stanley datelined Moscow. She reported that:

The film director who dared to bring [Homer's](#) "Odyssey" to television has another epic project in mind: [Henry Thoreau](#).



"Thoreau is my favorite chap, he was a great guy, the first beatnik and a great poet," said Andrei Konchalovsky, the Russian director who made his breakthrough in 1980 with the acclaimed film "Siberiade."

Even after nearly two decades in the West, Mr. Konchalovsky still sees movies through the prism of the cultured Russian intelligentsia. His life has been a remarkable journey, from a youth as the son of the head of the Soviet Writers' Union to a career in Hollywood. Now he has returned to work in Russia, where his brother, Nikita Mikhalkov, is a celebrated nationalist filmmaker, the director of movies like "Burn by the Sun."

Mr. Konchalovsky said he discovered Thoreau by reading [Tolstòy](#), who admired him.

The director described his vision of a film biography of Thoreau as a Chekhovian romantic comedy with "amusing characters, talking and dreaming and trying to forget their mortality." ... "It is a combination of 'The World According to Garp' and 'Forrest Gump,'" he explained briskly. He envisions



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Robin Williams or Tom Hanks playing Thoreau, he said.



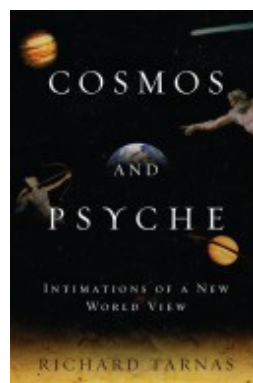


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2006

Richard Tarnass, on page 155 of his *COSMOS AND PSYCHE: INTIMATIONS OF A NEW WORLD VIEW*, an influence study to end all influence studies, explores the influence on human affairs on earth of the opposition between Uranus and Pluto. He notes that whether Pluto qualifies as a planet or as a planetoid, the philosophy and tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience employed by the [Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) and others in the '60s civil rights and anti-war movements in America were in fact inspired above all by the example of [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#), and that in fact it was during the Uranus-Pluto opposition that immediately preceded the conjunction of the 1960s that [Gandhi](#) had first developed and employed his civil disobedience philosophy of *satyagraha* in the struggle for Indian rights in South Africa in 1906 in response to his being thrown off a “whites only” train car. Tarnass notes that in fact it was during the Uranus-Pluto conjunction of 1849 that [Henry Thoreau](#) had written and published “his seminal essay ON THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, which described his brief imprisonment for refusing, on anti-slavery grounds, to pay a tax levied by the U.S. government to support its war against Mexico” (never mind that this poll tax hadn’t actually been levied by the US government and had nothing at all to do with our war upon Mexico). Thoreau’s essay, this author asserts, “directly influenced first Tolstòy, then Gandhi, then King. This lineage of descent in the evolution of civil disobedience –Thoreau, Tolstòy, Gandhi, King– is of course well known. What is surprising –and what should not happen so consistently– is the precise correlation with the Uranus-Pluto cycle, a correlation replicated in so many other archetypally related historical and cultural phenomena.” Tarnass points up the fact that “The great historical dramas of both of these enduring movements for social change and human freedom thus appeared to follow a consistent pattern of cyclical peaks that precisely coincided with the periods of the Uranus-Pluto alignments. These in turn appeared to be particular manifestations of a more general cyclical pattern in which a collective impulse of emancipation and radical change was activated and empowered in many areas simultaneously in just these periods. Yet the connections between these eras were often even more specific.” Everything in this Thoreau/Tolstòy/Gandhi/King chain of influence, this author discovers, was being driven by these successive planetary conjunctions between Uranus and Pluto! It wasn’t us doing this, it was the planets doing this to us! First these two planets, or planet and planetoid, had influenced Thoreau to write *ON THE DUTY OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE*, and then they had influenced [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#) to read Thoreau and be influenced by him, and then they had influenced the Mahatma to be influenced by the Russian, and then they had influenced the great American civil rights leader to be influenced by the Mahatma!





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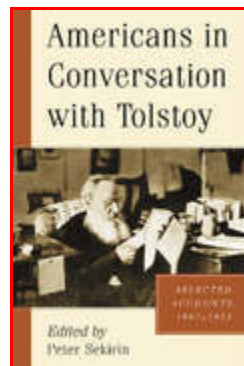
Again and again we hear the litany, that [Henry Thoreau](#) “influenced” [Lev Nikolævich Tolstòy](#). —And “influenced” [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#). —And “influenced” the Reverend [Martin Luther King, Jr.](#) Our scholars vie in the extent to which they can fulsomely exaggerate this and fulsomely compound this. “My conclusions are superior because I can bring myself to be **ever** so much more fulsome than **anyone** else!”

Case in point: As you can see in the following footnote from page 230 of his *THE PIONEER FARMER AND BACKWOODSMAN*, the Canadian historian Edwin Clarence Guillet was quite proud of his relative Henry — although reluctant to brag about being a relative:

The period of the settlement of Upper Canada was too late for the inclusion of religious refugees among its settlers. But a large number of descendants of French Huguenots, driven from France in the sixteen-eighties, came to the United States and Canada, where they have tended to retain an independent and non-conformist attitude. The greatest of them all, of course, is Henry David Thoreau, whose philosophy and example have been so influential in shaping the career of [Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi](#), British labour leaders, and broader loyalties of every type throughout the world.

Canadian historian Edwin Clarence Guillet can make all the assertions he needs to make, about the influence exerted by his relative Henry David Thoreau, but evidence? He offers none, clearly, because he has none.

In the case of Tolstòy, we can put the issue to the test because of a book edited in this year by Peter Sekirin that consists entirely of “Selected Accounts, 1887-1923” of *AMERICANS IN CONVERSATION WITH TOLSTÒY*.



Captured in this volume are interviews of the elderly, mature, famous author in Russia with 26 different Americans who have made their individual pilgrimages to seek him out on 26 separate occasions over a period of years:

- A visit to Count Tolstòy / George Kennan
- Count Tolstòy at home / Isabel Hapgood
- With Count Tolstòy / Thomas Stevens
- A visit to Tolstòy / James Creelman
- How Count Tolstòy writes / Charles Johnston
- An interview with Count Tolstòy / Edward Steiner
- Home life of Tolstòy / John Holmes



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- A visit to Tolstoy / John Coleman Kenworthy
- Russia of to-day: on Tolstoy / Sir Henry Norman
- Conversations with Ernest Crosby embodying personal impressions of Count Leo Tolstoy / Ernest Crosby
- Walks and talks with Tolstoy / Andrew Dickson White
- A recent interview with Tolstoy / Th. Bentzon
- Tolstoy today / Edward Steiner; with translations from His diary and letters
- My last memory of Tolstoy / Alexandra Nicchia
- My last visit to Tolstoy / Aymler Maude
- Tolstoy in 1906 / Louise Maude
- Tolstoy prophesies the fall of America / Stephen Bonsul
- Tolstoy in the twilight / Henry George, Jr.
- Tolstoy at home / Kellogg Durland
- The last days of Leo Tolstoy / Alexander Kaun
- Talks with Tolstoy / Richard Baeza and Alexander Goldenweiser
- Three evenings with Count Leo Tolstoy / N. Everling
- A vacation with Tolstoy / Theodore von Hafferberg
- A day in Tolstoy's life / Stefan Zweig
- How Tolstoy died / General Ivov
- What Tolstoy means to America / Virginia Wentz

One would feel that, given 26 different occasions on which Tolstoy might eagerly have communicated to Americans about having been influenced by this particular author of theirs, if Thoreau's influence on Tolstoy had been all that great, Tolstoy ought to have commented on this great suasion at least a dozen times. However, at *no* point in any of these 26 interviews does Tolstoy *ever* remark upon this supposed great influence. Here, for one instance, is what the elderly Russian author had to say to Andrew Dickson White on pages 88-89, and then on pages 97-98, in about the year 1901, about the American writers who had influenced him.¹³

As to American literature, he said that Turgenev had once told him that there was nothing in it worth reading – nothing new or original; that it was simply a copy of English literature. To this I replied that such criticism seemed to me very shallow; that American literature was, of course, largely a growth out of the parent stock of English literature, and must mainly be judged as such; that to ask in the highest American literature something absolutely different from English literature in general was like looking for oranges upon an apple-tree; that there had come new varieties in this growth, many of them original, and some of them beautiful, but that there was the same sap, the same current running through it all; and I cited the treatment of women in all Anglo-Saxon literature, whether on one side of the Atlantic or the other, from Chaucer to Mark Twain, as compared with the treatment of her by French writers from Rabelais to Zola. To this he answered that in his opinion the strength of American literature arose from the inherent Anglo-Saxon religious sentiment. He expressed a liking for Emerson, Hawthorne, and Whittier, but he seemed to have read at random, not knowing at all some of the best things. He spoke with admiration of Theodore Parker's writings, and seemed

13. White, Andrew Dickson. "Walks and Talks with Tolstoy." McClure's Magazine (New York), Volume 16 (1901): 507-518.



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interested in my reminiscences of him and of his acquaintance with Russian affairs. He also revered and admired the character and work of William Lloyd Garrison. He had read Longfellow somewhat, but was evidently uncertain regarding Lowell – confusing him apparently with some other author. Of contemporary writers he knew some of Howells's novels, and liked them, but said: "Literature in the United States at present seems to be in the lowest trough of the sea between high waves." He dwelt on the flippant tone of American newspapers, and told me of an interviewer who came to him in behalf of an American journal, simply to know at what time he went to bed and rose, what he ate, and the like. He thought that people who cared to read such trivialities must be very feeble-minded, but he said that the European press is, on the whole, just as futile. On my attempting to draw from him some statement as to what part of American literature pleased him most, he said that he had read some publications of the New York and Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture, and that he knew and liked the writings of Felix Adler. I then asked who in the whole range of American literature he thought the foremost. To this he made an answer which amazed me, as it would have astonished my countrymen. Indeed, did the eternal salvation of all our seventy millions depend upon some one of them guessing the person he named, we should all go to perdition together. That greatest of American writers was – Adin Ballou. Evidently, some of the philanthropic writings of that excellent Massachusetts clergyman and religious activist had jumped with his humor. ... Very rarely during our conversations did I hear him speak with any real enthusiasm regarding any human being; his nearest approach to it was with reference to the writings of the Rev. Adin Ballou, when he declared him the foremost literary character that America had produced.

The name of Thoreau appears only three or four times in this volume. It appears on page 60 in a list of American authors he mentions without much comment merely as those he had read, a list which also includes Emerson, Lowell, Whittier, Parker, and Longfellow, it appears on page 136 when in a conversation with an American, Stephen Bonsul, Tolstòy mentioned a period in American history as having been that of "Emerson and Thoreau," and it appears on page 148 as part of a conversation with an American journalist, Kellogg Durland, in 1906 or early 1907:

"Do you young men in America read Channing, Thoreau, Emerson?" He asked. "Do you read Garrison? All young men of the present day should read the writings of those four great Americans."

This does not constitute evidence that Thoreau had been more influential than the Reverend William Ellery Channing, Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Russell Lowell, Friend John Greenleaf Whittier, the Reverend Theodore Parker, Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, or William Lloyd Garrison, in the formation of Tolstoy's thought.

We learn that Tolstòy had six photographs on display in his study at home, and the six people of whom he was displaying photographs were:



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- Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Henry David Thoreau
- The Reverend William Ellery Channing
- Bryan
- Henry George
- Ernest Howard Crosby

This does not constitute evidence that Thoreau had been more influential than Ralph Waldo Emerson, the Reverend William Ellery Channing, William Jennings Bryan, Henry George, or Ernest Howard Crosby (1856-1907, author of CAPTAIN JINKS, HERO and PLAIN TALK IN PSALM AND PARABLE), in the formation of Tolstoy's thought.

“MAGISTERIAL HISTORY” IS FANTASIZING, HISTORY IS CHRONOLOGY



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: March 7, 2014



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ARRGH AUTOMATED RESEARCH REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, someone has requested that we pull it out of the hat of a pirate who has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (as above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture (this is data mining). To respond to such a request for information we merely push a button.



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Commonly, the first output of the algorithm has obvious deficiencies and we need to go back into the modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and recompile the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>. Arrgh.