

# TRUTH.

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## WHAT TRUTH SAYS

Count Tolstoi, the distinguished Russian novelist and instructor in morals, whose fame and influence have extended far beyond his native land, has lately been giving to the world his notion upon the question of marriage. As might be expected from a man so eccentric as Tolstoi, these views differ widely from the generally received opinion. In order to give greater apparent reasonableness to his position he begins by making several very serious charges against the present social order. "Conjugal infidelity," he says, "has become more common and is considered less reprehensible; the birth of children has lost its pristine significance, and modern marriages are conceived less and less from the point of view of the family; children are educated, not with a view to the problem which they will be one day called upon to solve, but solely with an eye to the pleasure which they may be made to yield to their parents; and, owing to the exaggerated and erroneous significance attributed by society to love and to the idealized states that accompany and succeed it, the best energies of our men and women are drawn forth and exhausted during the most promising period of life; those of the men in the work of looking for, choosing and winning the most desirable objects of love, for which purpose lying and fraud are held to be quite excusable; those of the women and girls alluring men and decoying them into liaisons of marriage by the most questionable means conceivable, as an instance of which the present fashions in evening dress may be cited." These propositions, which he does not stay to prove, lead him to conclude that an undue importance has been given to marriage, and that love in its various developments is not a fitting object to consume the best energies of men; and therefore "to contract marriage is, from a Christian point of view, not a progress but a fall. There is not," he continues, "and cannot be such a thing as a Christian marriage which never was and never could be. Christ did not marry, nor did he establish marriage; consequently, a Christian cannot view the marriage relation otherwise than as a deviation from the doctrine of Christ—as a sin."

This teacher of a new gospel does not shrink from the logical consequences of his theory. He foresees that the carrying out of his principles means the extinction of the race, that it means wreck and ruin. This he does not regard, however, as any great calamity, for the race is doomed anyway, and it would only hasten the inevitable. "Even suppose," says he, "the Christian ideal of perfect chastity (that is, celibacy) realized, what then? We should merely find ourselves face to face on the one hand with the familiar teaching of religion, one of whose dogmas is that the world will have an end; and on the other, of so-called science, which informs us that the sun is gradually losing its heat, the result of which will in time be the extinction of the human race;" that is to say, if according to the Bible the world must come to an end sometime, and if according to science the sun is gradually cooling, we may as well do what we can to make the catastrophe complete. It may be presumed that the admirers of this famous writer and would-be teacher of morals will feel greatly disappointed at the means proposed for curing the ulcers with which society is affected. For it must be confessed that his criticisms though harsh are not altogether unmerited.

It is true, as a contemporary remarks that the prevailing ideas of marriage are loose; that many young men are more anxious to fall into a fortune than to fall in love; that young women frequently look more eagerly for an establishment than for a home. It may also be true that romance has largely given way to finance, and that Cupid, suborned rogue, is using his arrows to pierce a bank account instead of a heart. The oath taken at the altar has sometimes no higher significance than the big seal on a civil contract and binds both parties to the transfer of certain personal property or real estate. But the remedy proposed is condemned alike by nature, common sense and the plain teachings of Scripture (Count Tolstoi to the contrary); while it proves its advocate to be less a philosopher than an anarchist. As the New York Herald remarks: "The most disheartened pessimist shrinks from his proposed plans and the practical man spurns them as nonsense. They mean dynamite and destruction, as though one should say: 'The vase has a spot of dirt on it; don't wash, but rather break it.'" And so leaving you in the mire irretrievably and hopelessly, your teacher becomes a crank and his former eccentricities have developed into something like drivel. Evidently the prophet who is to regenerate society does not live in Russia and does not call himself Tolstoi.

Latest advices from Australia encourage the hope that the union movement among the provinces of that island-continent will ultimately result in the success of the Confederation scheme. A few weeks ago a convention, held at Melbourne, was attended by representatives from all the colonies interested. The question of union was freely discussed, and though formidable practical difficulties were recognized, such, for instance, as the existence of hostile tariffs, the delegates did not consider these difficulties absolutely insurmountable, or of such a nature as to discourage all further efforts in the direction of union. That they still have confidence in the success of the movement the following resolution, which was unanimously passed, will serve to show: That in the opinion of this conference the best interests and the present and future prosperity of the Australian colonies will be promoted by an early union under the crown; and, while fully recognizing the valuable services of the members of the convention of 1883 in founding a Federal Council, declares its opinion that the seven years which have since elapsed have developed the national life of Australasia in population, in wealth and in the discovery of resources and in self-governing capacity to an extent which justifies the higher act, at all times contemplated, of the union of these colonies under one legislature and executive government and on principles just to the several colonies." Since the Melbourne conference another step has been taken towards confederation by the passage of the new western Australian constitution bill, which grants all that the western Australians ask in regard to the government of the great northern territory of that continent, and hands over to them more than one third of Australia, with great mineral resources, large gold fields and pearl fisheries, and coast line of 3,500 miles.

As is generally known the plan of confederation which our relatives in the South Pacific are contemplating is one somewhat after the pattern of our own constitution. Naturally, therefore, Canadians will feel interested

in its progress and will rejoice in its consummation. And all the more seeing that the earliest settlers in this new land were not of a kind to inspire great hopes of future national greatness. At first the colony was used for penal purposes only, whither from the year 1788 England transported 120,000 convicts. In 1837, at the time of the accession of Her Gracious Majesty to the throne, the attention of the honest emigrant was directed thither, and the first serious attempts were made towards colonization. Since then more than a million Englishmen have gone out to seek their fortune in that sunny land. That so many honest, industrious men should manifest a desire to settle in a country whose primitive population had given it a bad renown can only be explained by the crowding at home, the fertility of the Australian soil and the discovery of its rich gold fields. Fifty years ago Australia offered exceptional advantages to the emigrant of small means to engage in the sheep raising industry. The unlimited stretches of country furnished him with abundant pasture, while the auspicious nature of the climate caused the flocks to multiply with remarkable rapidity. A ready market was always found in London for the wool, and at a remunerative price. Consequently many of those who went out poor, in a few years found themselves immensely wealthy. And this explains the fact of the enormous numbers of flocks of sheep and herds of cattle found in the colony, numbers out of all proportion with the population. At present, though there are only 3,000,000 colonists they are said to possess 8,000,000 cattle and 78,000,000 sheep. But besides the sheep-raising industry, which gives an annual export of about \$60,000,000 worth of wool, gold mining has done much towards making Australia what it is. In forty years they have taken from their mines \$1,400,000,000, or an average of \$35,000,000 a year. At present the trade of the colony is very great, the yearly imports exceeding \$200,000,000, and the exports, \$240,000,000. It will thus be seen that our Australian cousins, though numbering only about three-fifths of the population of Canada, and possessing a country not quite equal in area to the Dominion, have the material elements which go to make up a strong nation. Now with just and wise laws faithfully administered, there is no reason why this southern confederacy should not soon take her place among the foremost nations of the globe. The worst wish that Canadians have for their antipodean relatives is, that they may soon find a way to settle their differences, and uniting in a Dominion of Australia, may continue to abound in all those works and virtues which constitute a nation truly great.

The man is not to be envied who can exult in the down-fall of another, no matter what his position or offence. Such rejoicing always betrays the spirit which inspires it as coming from beneath and not from above. All right-hearted men will therefore sympathize with General Middleton, ex-commander-in-chief of the forces in Canada, in the humble manner in which he has resigned his position.

was purchased by efficient and faithful service at a time when the grim visage of insurrection and war stalked through the land. Mantling with charity his fault our uppermost thought of him should be, a daring officer who generously exposed his life for our country's good.

The Rev. Sam Jones, whose advent in Toronto nearly four years ago created such a widespread religious sensation in the city and throughout the province, has apparently lost none of his power to attract and move the multitudes. A recent report from Richmond, Virginia, states that a most remarkable religious awakening has occurred under his preaching. Speaking of a meeting for men only at which it is estimated 14,000 or 15,000 persons were present the report goes on to say:—"The sermon had a powerful effect upon the congregation. At its close Mr. Jones asked all who would promise to live better lives and give up sinful habits to stand up. Not less than ten thousand men arose. It was a sight never seen here. The preacher then asked all who were not church members and who wanted to become Christians to come up and shake his hand. Hundreds pressed forward with tears in their eyes. Not nearly all could get to the preacher, as the crowd was so dense. It is estimated that not less than one thousand persons were converted, among them many solid and substantial business men. Some of them were people who had not before heard Mr. Jones and who had ridiculed his style of preaching." Bigots and sticklers for order, who would rather have men continue a godless life than be reformed in such an irregular way, and by one who cannot pronounce their theological or ritualistic shibboleth, will no doubt condemn the methods pursued by this remarkable revivalist; but practical men, accustomed to estimate methods and agencies by their success will be disposed to concede that the Georgia evangelist has purchased a right to a place among those who are engaged in lifting the world to a higher plane of moral excellence and goodness. Time enough has been wasted and men are nauseated over the contention that has gone on among would-be leaders of society and reformers of their fellows, as to the proprieties that must be observed in the work. Methods are of secondary importance, results are of chief moment. What the times demand is men who will be willing to step out of the old rut if by doing wanderers may be reached and fallen rescued. Men to whom popular applause is nothing, but to whom truth, righteousness and faithfulness are of chief thing.

"What shall we do for the night, and where shall we sleep?" are questions which have attracted attention in the city of Toronto. However, it is not the heat of the day that is the cause of the trouble, but the fact that the city is so crowded that there is no room for the homeless.

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