

would like to reserve for themselves a place against emergencies? And Tolstoï sincerely acknowledges that without this foundation under his feet, he would no longer be able to live. He needed this quieting as to the outcome of things to be able to follow his poetic impulse to look at the world as it is. Only entirely barren, abstract natures find their satisfaction in the voluntarily limited logical sequence of science, confined as it is to the empirical. All men of imagination, including Goethe and Bismarck, have had their share of mystic confidence in that beneficent course of the universe which in popular language is called God or Providence. This poetic faith has of course nothing whatever to do with science.

Under-valuation of one's own qualities, however, and enthusiasm for the complementary ones are familiar psychological facts. The poet Tolstoï wishes to be a cut-and-dried philosopher. He repudiates his poetry, and likewise speaks coldly, indeed, even with hostility, of the spirits akin to him, of Goethe and Shakespeare. There is only one opinion among lovers of art, and that is that Tolstoï, in the natural spontaneity of his characters and incidents, is to be compared with these two alone, and, in the abundance of his psychological traits, with Shakespeare only. Yet at present Tolstoï is engaged in writing a book, soon to appear, against Shakespeare and the study of Shakespeare. In our conversation he came back to the indefensible over-estimation of this artist.