

now dragging one back, now pushing another forward, laughing with the madness of their laughter and mingling his own agony with the screams of their despair.

If Tolstoi revered his own ideal of the peasant, Dostoevsky loved him as he was. If Tolstoi would sacrifice much (from the intellectual standpoint as well as the material) for his sake, Dostoevsky would sacrifice everything. When we read the works of this extraordinary man we feel a new and stifling atmosphere around us, to quote M. de Vogüé once more: "Les amans qu'il nous présente ne sont pas faits de chair et de sang, mais de nerfs et de larmes." It is no sickly sentimentality that he gives us lapsing into tears of unconscious self-pity. It is no comfortable cloak of melancholy or dull bewilderment giving vent to itself in words of smug resignation. He takes us, out of ourselves, all of us—even those superior beings who are beyond laughter and tears, and who only speak in order that they may stifle thought. What are they to him—the epigram of the wit, the platitude of the fool, the dogma of the superstitious or the satire of the sceptic? What are the truths of philosophy or the results of science to this wise man of the east, who, wandering listless over Europe, wondered only at the guillotine? Dostoevsky does not present certain characters and allow them gradually to unfold themselves before us in the manner of Tolstoi's. He seems more like one who in the public street cries out: "This man is a liar, look at him in the eyes! That one yonder is a coward and a cheat. Watch the adroitness skulking across the road"; and then in altogether another tone, "that child is starving, give her bread, bread." And so like a great wave of sin and madness this band of feverish men and women passes on, while in the midst of the curses and the groans we hear ever and again the half-articulate cry of pity from some pale wayfarer who is born onward in the rush. These at least are the kind of impressions which books like "Injury and Insult" leave behind them; but there are also others. If Dostoevsky drew from his own suffering his pictures of the horrible, he also drew from the tenderness of his own soul, some pictures of ineffable beauty.

"Injury and Insult" is a story of a young man who is passionately in love with a girl and who does his utmost to insure her happiness with his rival. Nathasha, the heroine, belongs to the past, she has no business to exist in this century of ours; produced by any other novelist she would be grotesque, in the hands of Dostoevsky she is almost sublime. "Nathasha felt instinctively that she would begin by being his sovereign, his queen, and end by being his victim. She had a foretaste of the rapture of loving to madness and of tormenting the one we love, simply because we do love him or her, and perhaps this is why she hastened to sacrifice herself first."

It is a story of self-sacrifice, and he for whose sake two lives are ruined is himself almost an irresponsible being whom we can neither hate nor scorn. "En France, au moins," says M. de Vogüé apropos of this book "nous ne prendrions jamais notre parti de ce spectacle, pourtant naturel et consolant, une créature exquise à genoux devant un imbécile." The same critic points out the absurdity of a man urging a rival to be happy with a girl whom he himself adores, and yet in "Notre Dame" Hugo has given us examples of both these "spectacles"—unreasoning love, and complete self-renunciation.

"The Gambler" is a powerful sketch of a certain type of the Russian mind; the very embodiment of that untranslatable *otchaitanie* which has been referred to in connection with Tolstoi.

"The Friend of the Family" introduces us to a group of people in a country house, a large proportion of whom would seem the more natural inmates of a lunatic asylum. In this book also we catch a glimpse of Dostoevsky's peasant, the muzhik as he is, dull and negative.

It is a curious thing, this idea of negation which we see so much of in Russian novels. This type of Russian, and it is a common one, sees that action includes necessarily the good and the bad; therefore he is simply negative—it is the philosophy of *laissez-faire* and yet it was Jean Jacques Rousseau who first voiced it—"Hereux les peuples chez lesquels on peut être bon sans effort et juste sans vertu!"

And now we will take a glance at that extraordinary book, the most curious product of this novel work-shop—"Crime and Punishment." A student commits a murder, and through the entreaties of an unfortunate gives himself up to justice and Siberia. The murderer is devoid neither of heart nor brains; the unfortunate is one of the purest characters in literature. Around Raskolnikoff and Sonia a strange medley of figures hover, but in these two characters the interest of the story is centred. It is a study in psychology, nothing more and nothing less, but he who reads its terrible pages can never efface it from his memory. Dostoevsky shows us the inward workings of this young man's mind. We see him lying on his bed, brooding over this crime which to him is only the passing over of laws binding upon ordinary men alone. Napoleon had murdered many, why should he not murder one? The idea takes root, grows, and is put into action. The student is a murderer now, without remorse but dissatisfied. It was nasty, ignoble, this butchering of two defenceless women. He broods upon the details of his crime and in the teeth of the police goes back to visit the room in which he had committed it, seized with an irresistible fascination. At last, urged on by Sonia, he confesses. The murderer loves the unfortunate, if that is the word to express his almost undefinable emotions. "It is not before you that I bow," he exclaims to her, "but before suffering human-

ity." Sonia follows him to Siberia, and there this soul, wayward and faltering but not wholly corrupt, becomes purified by that suffering which, in the author's opinion, is the first step to atonement.

The actual object of the murder was money for his only sister, but it was the idea of murder being actually allowable to men of a superior stamp that drove this diswrought mind to the accomplishment of crime.

Raskolnikoff has been called "The Hamlet of the mad-house," but if we for a moment compare the two we shall see that this is hardly just to either. Hamlet is the masterpiece of the greatest name in all literature, but Raskolnikoff is the creation of no boulevard novelist; this student is not borrowed from the pages of the *Police News* on the one hand nor is he a tragic parody upon the other.

We can hardly apprehend Hamlet, it is possible to comprehend Raskolnikoff. Hamlet at the supreme moment of his life rises above criticism, the other sinks beneath it. Hamlet is the intellectual slave to an idea forced on him from without and foreign to his nature, Raskolnikoff is mastered by a haunting impulse which springs from within and is incarnate in his very soul. Lastly, when Hamlet has put his idea into action, he dies; when Raskolnikoff gives himself up to justice (for this is the second overmastering idea which dogs him, following logically upon the first) he lives; and by allowing Raskolnikoff to live Dostoevsky is true to his own inexorable maxim—that of reducing the individual to subordination to the many—a maxim, we need hardly observe, not in accordance with the views of the great dramatist.

In reality Raskolnikoff is one of those mystic beings, introspective, self-torturing, who, seized with an idea, allow it to control their thoughts and become eventually mad-men, murderers or saints.

"A new Gogol is born to us" was the exclamation which greeted the first production of this remarkable man. A new Gogol, not a classic like Turgénieff nor a searcher after truth through the medium of philosophic abstractions like Tolstoi. No, a man without the veneer of the west, one to whom nothing was vulgar or common. A man who considered nothing in this world beneath him because he considered that nothing in it was above him. A man who arrived rapidly by intuition at conclusions arrived at by others through a process of long and careful induction. In short, a man who had pity for the wretched, for the lost, for all those for whom the rest had only scorn, or at best a calculated tolerance.

He was not a classic, but, as Mme. Bazan observes in reference to his first work, "The book is a work of art, of the new and the old art compounded, classic art infused with the new, warm blood of truth."

In one of Gautier's novels it is said of a poet that his true poem was his life, that the rest, what he gave to the world, was only the superfluous thoughts, while what was deepest and best within him was lived and not spoken. It might also be said of Dostoevsky that his true novel was his life. I do not allude so much to his health, to his poverty, to his sufferings in Siberia so much as to those terrible thoughts, which must have driven him well-nigh to the madness of despair, and of which, wild as they are, we only get but partial glimpses in his works. If it was not insanity, it was dangerously near to it.

But in spite of his suffering, physical and mental, there was in the man a depth of human love which transformed the curse of hatred against the oppressor into infinite pity for the oppressed. If Russian realism, starting with Gogol, reached its acme of classic elegance and taste with Turgénieff; if Tolstoi may be said to represent the intelligence of the school, Dostoevsky is the heart. It was his lot to suffer the most of all of them, but in return it was he whom Russia loved the best.

And now that we have peeped into this swollen current of literature which, leaving the ordinary course, has forced a passage of its own, let us ask ourselves what it all means. Is it merely empty babble "signifying nothing," or has in itself some deep significance? For my part I think it has. If these Russians have given us in their works no cut and dried "moral," if they have sounded the depths of no philosophy or established the tenets of no particular dogma, they have at least called out to the people of to-day that old world cry *γάρι σεαυτόν*, and for this alone let much be forgiven them. Without grovelling in the mire of human depravity, they have left the old groundwork behind them, and in the spirit of pity and not of mockery taken, in the words of Mrs. Browning, "for worthier stage the Soul itself."

J. A. T. LLOYD.

#### PARIS LETTER.

THE brother of the French ambassador at London is a large manufacturer and a distinguished legislator; his two sons run the cotton factory situated at St. Rémy, in Normandy. In honour of the centenary of the mills, a splendid banquet was given to 1,500 guests, and which coincided with the "Welcome Home" to one of the sons and his bride, daughter of M. Harpes, the Paris American banker. It is the patriarchal, labour and democratic side of the feast that merits not only to be studied, but to be imitated. All the hands without exception were invited; several workmen wore the good-service medal bestowed by the Government on operatives at least thirty years in the employment of the same master. The banquet was presided over by M. Waddington's eldest son and his lady; the latter had on her right the Minister of Justice, or

Lord Chancellor of France, and on her left the senior operative. No special places were reserved for local officials or the "Social Magnitudes"; they were blended with the factory hands. The Waddington firm pensions all its operatives at sixty years of age, on one franc per day; stands by them in sickness or accident, and encourages them to support in addition Old Age Benefit Societies. When the Conscription draws off operatives for military service, the conscript, if a bachelor, is allowed half his ordinary earnings; if married, full pay. Of course strikes are unknown, and no operatives are ever dismissed. Is that example how to solve the capital and labour difficulty not worth the tons of literature devoted to Utopian Socialism?

It may not be generally known that when the Pope grants an audience, ladies come in black dress material and mantle, gentlemen in evening costume, and they must leave not only their hats and overcoats in the vestiary, but also their gloves. The latter usage dates from the Middle Ages when conspirators concealed stylets and poison under their gloves. Ambassadors are not expected to unglove. In the throne room the armchair occupied by the Pope is a present from Barcelona; the slipper in white satin with a gold cross embroidered thereon, and which the faithful kiss, is a gift from a Sicilian convent.

The Antwerp International Congress for the regulation of working hours, and the intervention of the State as a factor in Socialism, does not at all trend to practical solutions. It has shown that Belgium, prosperous though she be, has one-third of her working population unable to subsist on their earnings, supplementing the deficit by legal relief, and that thirty-eight per cent. of the labouring classes work eleven hours a day. The next chief question handled was European McKinleyism; free traders have had to do yeoman's service to meet old foes. The majority of the Congressmen do not now accept as gospel Sir Robert Peel's maxim, that the only manner to combat hostile tariffs is to reply with liberty of importation, and so swell the volume of exports. The Congress illustrates that in economical science, as in religion,

What damned error, but some sober brow  
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,  
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament.

Opinion is still harping on Seine water. It is only a fortnight ago a Berlin guide-book writer had the audacity to tell Parisians their supply of river water was unrivalled in point of purity. Now a panegyric has been found, delivered by Parmentier a century ago, on the virtues of Seine water. It promoted appetite, favoured digestion, and induced embonpoint. One pint of it taken every morning calmed the nerves and refreshed the palate; further: dogs and garbage in a state of floating corruption did not effect the quality of water. It was well that Parmentier has to his credit the honour of having introduced the potato into France, or the citizens would debaptize the square they have called after him. A writer who claims to be up in the water supply of the chief cities of the world, pities London that depends solely for its supply on the Thames; of course that of Berlin is infamous; Vienna has drinking water as good as the Alps can supply. Paris is fit to rank in its potable water with any city; the Neva is as good as the Seine, which in a sense is lamentably true. Not only is the Franco-Russian alliance superior in the output of drinking water, but the union has discovered a "Franco-Russian vaccine," against cholera morbus.

Engineer Clermont and Dr. Fleury, of the hygienic department of the great manufacturing centre of Saint-Etienne, states that it is in the distribution pipes the drinking water becomes infected, due to the presence of decayed vegetable matter, fishes' eggs, frog spawn, etc. Engineer Bechman, of Paris, maintains that filtration has no effect on the microbes, while M. Bertchinger, of Zurich, stoutly asserts the contrary.

The city of Lyons employs in its factories 13,000 horse-power of driving force. It must be borne in mind that a large portion of the silk industry of Lyons is executed by manual labour. A society has been formed to utilize the momentum of "the swift and arrowy Rhone," by which hydraulic force, equal to 12,000 horse-power, can be distributed among the several factories to replace steam. A special canal will tap the Rhone at a point, to secure a 100 tons of water per second, having a fall of forty-three feet.

Disraeli was once quizzed for his quizzical allusion to the "American" language. That tongue exists. When visitors to the Eiffel Tower make the ascension by the north pillar, as soon as the guard has closed the carriage door, he draws from his pocket a guide, in French and "American," for the Tower, costing only three sous. The *Figaro* has another "Curiosity of Literature," in its statement that one of the youngest members of the new English parliament is Earl Beaconsfield's son "Coningsby," named after one of his papa's novels. The paper might have at least dubbed him "Sir" Disraeli, to pair with "Lord" Gladstone.

Theatrical critic Sarcey—a name to conjure with—has discovered the means to resuscitate the decadence of the French stage; let Parisian dramatists and actors study the theatrical representations given at the seaside penny gaffs! Thespis sung ballads from a cart, and Molière and his troupe served their apprenticeship at country fairs.

At a recent cyclist contest at Raincy, the first prize was won by a wheeler with a wooden leg; he never "shivered his timbers."