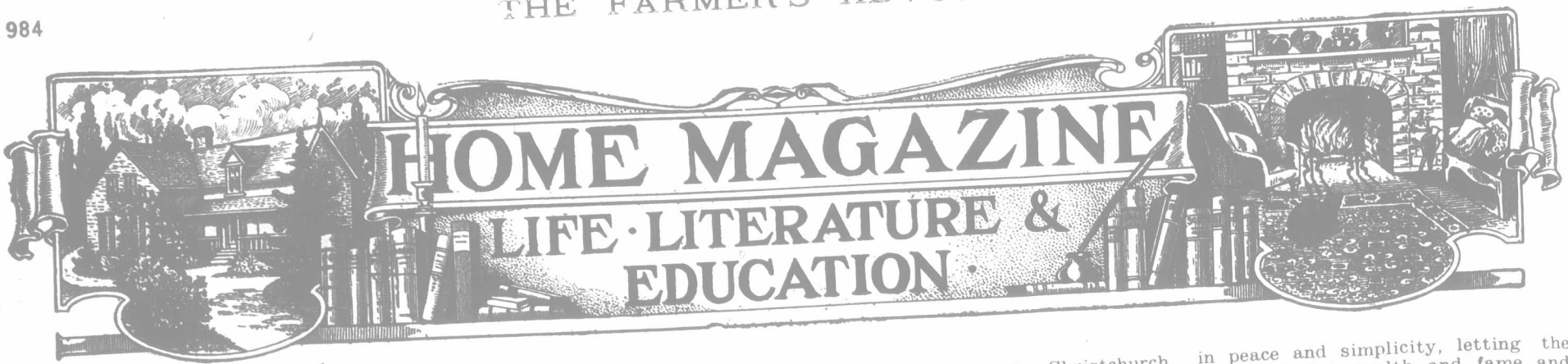




Little Trips Among Eminent Writers.

Tolstoi.

(Concluded.)

Tolstoi lived at his estate, Yasnaya Polyana, practically until the time of his death, last year, at the age of eighty-three.

Probably in all the history of literary men there has been no death more pitifully sad than his. It is known that he had been much displeased because his wife—to whom the estate had been deeded—had begun raising the rents of the tenants, and introducing cheap labor and modern "business methods"; there had been collision too because he insisted on receiving no royalties for his books; yet one wonders if the old man, by reason of age and illness, was wandering in his mind a little when he set off that cold autumn day, "wearing high boots, with \$17 in his pocket," to seek harborage with a community of his followers on the Black Sea. He had left an affectionate note of farewell to his wife, explaining that he could not live under such conditions at his home,—that was all.

Coming to a convent, he explained that he was the "excommunicated Count Tolstoi," and asked for shelter. It was given him, and off he set again on his lonely journey, only to be stricken down with pneumonia at the little wayside station, not many miles from his home, where, in a few days, surrounded by his family, he breathed his last.

As was inevitable, the strangeness and the pitifulness of it all set rumor flying, and even some reputable magazines cast the blame of that sad journey, which ended at so different a port, upon the countess. Probably the truth will never be known, yet there are circumstances which point to the possibility of the kinder conclusion. To all appearance Tolstoi had lived happily at Yasnaya Polyana. His wife, the daughter of a Moscow professor, whom he had married when she was but eighteen, had ever appeared devoted to him. Although she had not, at times, hesitated to adopt measures of worldly prudence when, to her practical and conventional mind, it appeared that her husband was acting foolishly; she had, nevertheless, ever helped and encouraged him in his literary work, herself preparing his almost illegible manuscripts for the press. He was an inveterate reviser of his writings, but she it was who made the copies after revision, making seven in all, it is told, of "War and Peace." In addition she made his clothes with her own hands, was a thrifty housewife, and a charming hostess.

The home, too, was one of culture and brightness. There were thirteen children in all, and for many years before the death of the great author, Yasnaya Polyana was the end of pilgrimages from all parts of the world. Few men of eminence, in either politics or literature, passing through Southern Europe failed to make a point of paying a visit to Tolstoi.

His literary career, moreover, had been singularly free from the worries and disappointments that usually beset the path of rising authors. Even as early as at the time of the publication of the Sebastopol Tales, Pissensky, the only leading writer of Russia at that time, had said, "This young officer will eclipse us all—one might as well give up writing!" And now, in his old age, his books were everywhere famous,—criticized

much, perhaps, yet everywhere recognized as the work of a genius.

He had many local interests, too, at Yasnaya Polyana. Beside the farming which he loved, there were the schools, in which he often taught; the most unique schools, perhaps, known since the days of Pestalozzi and Froebel; schools in which there was no compulsion, no homework, no machine-like discipline and precision of movement; just family gatherings, as it were, in which the teachers talked and worked with the children, who crowded round and asked questions as they chose,—the aim, as Tolstoi ever tried to impress upon the teachers in his district, to make "good men and women," who, above all things, should be capable of thought.

True the church refused him, and the landowners denounced and opposed him at every turn, yet there is much from which to conclude that Tolstoi was far from unhappy in his home, and that he was scarcely responsible when he set off on that last sad journey towards the Black Sea.

HIS WORKS.

There have been many pronouncements on the works of Tolstoi. Some eminent critics have declared them inartistic, many have denounced his theories in regard to social improvement as utterly impracticable, the ravings of a dreamer who meant well but judged poorly. So opposed to his ideas was the

also; one even at Christchurch, Hampshire, England.

When all has been said, it must be admitted that Tolstoi's influence, if only on individual lives and viewpoints, has been tremendous. Some have attributed this power, as did a critic writing in London Times, to his personality as a man rather than his power as a novelist or an apostle. It is pointed out that his development in character was one of the most remarkable on record. His struggle out from the toils of the fast and fashionable circles, his attacking and conquering of problems, his sincerity, his courage in denouncing what he considered wrong even in the highest circles of Russia, his coming down to the simple gospel solution for all evils, dating from his boyhood decision that "Happiness consists in living for others," and gaining every year in clearness and urgency,—all these are pointed to as reasons which may have captured the imagination of so many people in so many lands.

Yet others attribute his popularity to the fact that he has sounded real wrongs in the world, that he has expressed for people what they could not express for themselves.

His books perhaps are lacking somewhat in clearness and movement when taken in toto; although clear to bareness in many parts, it takes much reading of them to thoroughly grasp what the writer really means; he has a habit of arraigning, and arraigning and arraigning, and but

in peace and simplicity, letting the mad rush for wealth and fame and the tinsels that come thereby go by the board, no caste, no bitter rivalry,—each perfecting himself so far as he may according to his own talents, yet each, too, earning his own living by the work of his hands, that none may bear too heavy a burden because of him. No war. No nations. All men one great nation.

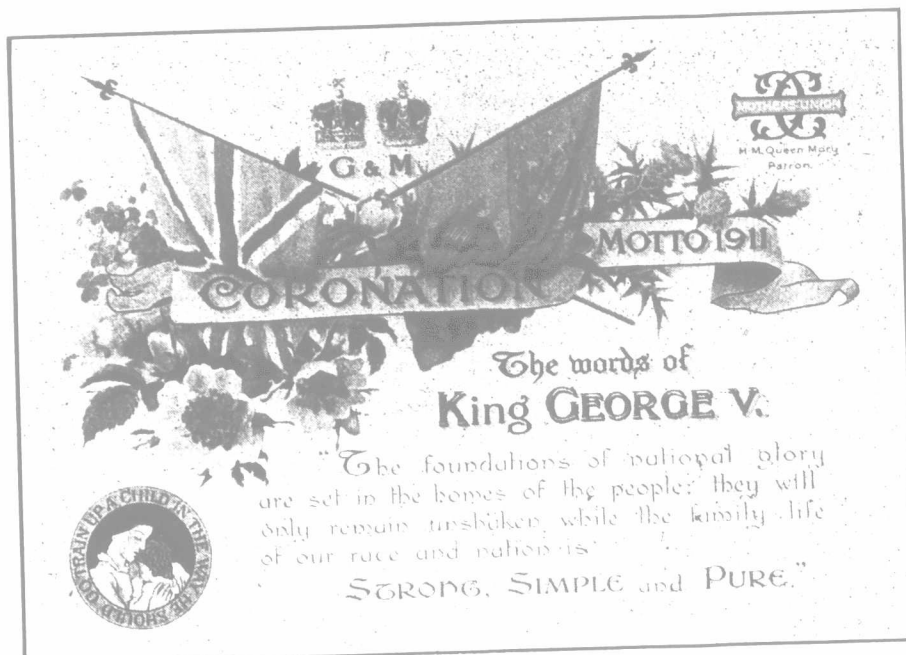
Impractical? A dreamer? Perhaps; and yet, even though one may think apart from him on many subjects, one cannot lose by thorough acquaintance with Tolstoi. One cannot end a thorough perusal of his books without feeling the beauty of this love to all men, without realizing more than ever before the real necessity of the command to "Love God and thy neighbor as thyself."

Gatherings Upon Coronation Topics.

I.

When the announcement was officially made last December that all the materials for her toilettes for the opening of Parliament, the Coronation, and the various Courts of the season, should be made of British material only, it was said to be the best Christmas gift the Queen could have made to her country. As the result of her Majesty's command, numberless looms in various districts have long since been set in motion, British workers of embroideries, British designers have been sought out and employed, and home industries for the supply of every detail, fostered and encouraged. With such a royal example before them, an example which is almost equivalent to a command, those whose position makes ceremonial robes and silk attire one of the indispensable conditions of their lives are bound to fall into line; and, in so doing, whilst in no sense losing anything of grace and beauty in their adornments, they will be taught to realize the power of the looms of their own country, the perfection of home methods, and, with the Queen for their instructress, it is probable that, except in those who are wedded to the old idea that only in foreign fabrics and foreign workmanship can excellence be found, the scales will fall from many eyes, and the personal lesson taught by England's Queen will bear rich fruit in years to come. There is no truer patriot, no more practical lover of her country, than the greatest lady in the land, who from the very first has been thoroughly consistent in her determination to have none but British goods and British workmanship in every detail of her attire, realizing the immense influence such an example from one in her exalted position would naturally have upon the womanhood of her country, not upon the rich only who would wear the fabrics, but upon the lives of the humble toilers who would be employed in their production. With her Majesty, the motive from first to last has been duty, and, as citizens and subjects of the Empire, we can hardly turn a deaf ear to the lesson she would teach us. What our Queen has done, we can surely all do. Where she has led, it is open to those who would be loyal to King and country to follow, for her inspiration and example need not surely be limited to the sea-girt shores of the British Isles only.

(Continued on page 988.)



church of his country that on his eightieth birthday, an encyclical was read in all the churches of the Holy Orthodox Russian Church, warning believers to take no part whatever in the celebration of the event.

This encyclical, however, probably produced no perturbation in the heart of the courageous old man, who had denounced that church solely because he believed that it had been unfaithful to Christ; and who knew that he had touched humanity by the fact that his birthday was cheered by the reception of thousands of telegrams of congratulation from all parts of the world.

For if Tolstoi had drawn upon him a horde of scorching critics, he had also won hordes of friends and admirers, to such an extent, indeed, that settlements of his followers have been formed, not only in Russia, but in other parts of the world

half explaining himself, until nearing the close of his volumes, when, invariably his opinions are given so clearly that there is no mistaking them. Yet throughout must be felt his contempt for injustice, his anxiety that equal opportunity shall be given to all, and that all men and women shall live the best and most natural and most noble kind of life.

His courage may fascinate; one feels that the Russian who will include, in his denunciation of war, the Czar and his officials as "murderers" is truly a hero; yet is it not the consciousness that this courage was begotten of a great love for humanity, the real reason of the appeal which Tolstoi makes to the great mass of men who, even while disagreeing with many of his conclusions, have learned to love and revere him?

Love for humanity—the love that would have all men brothers, living