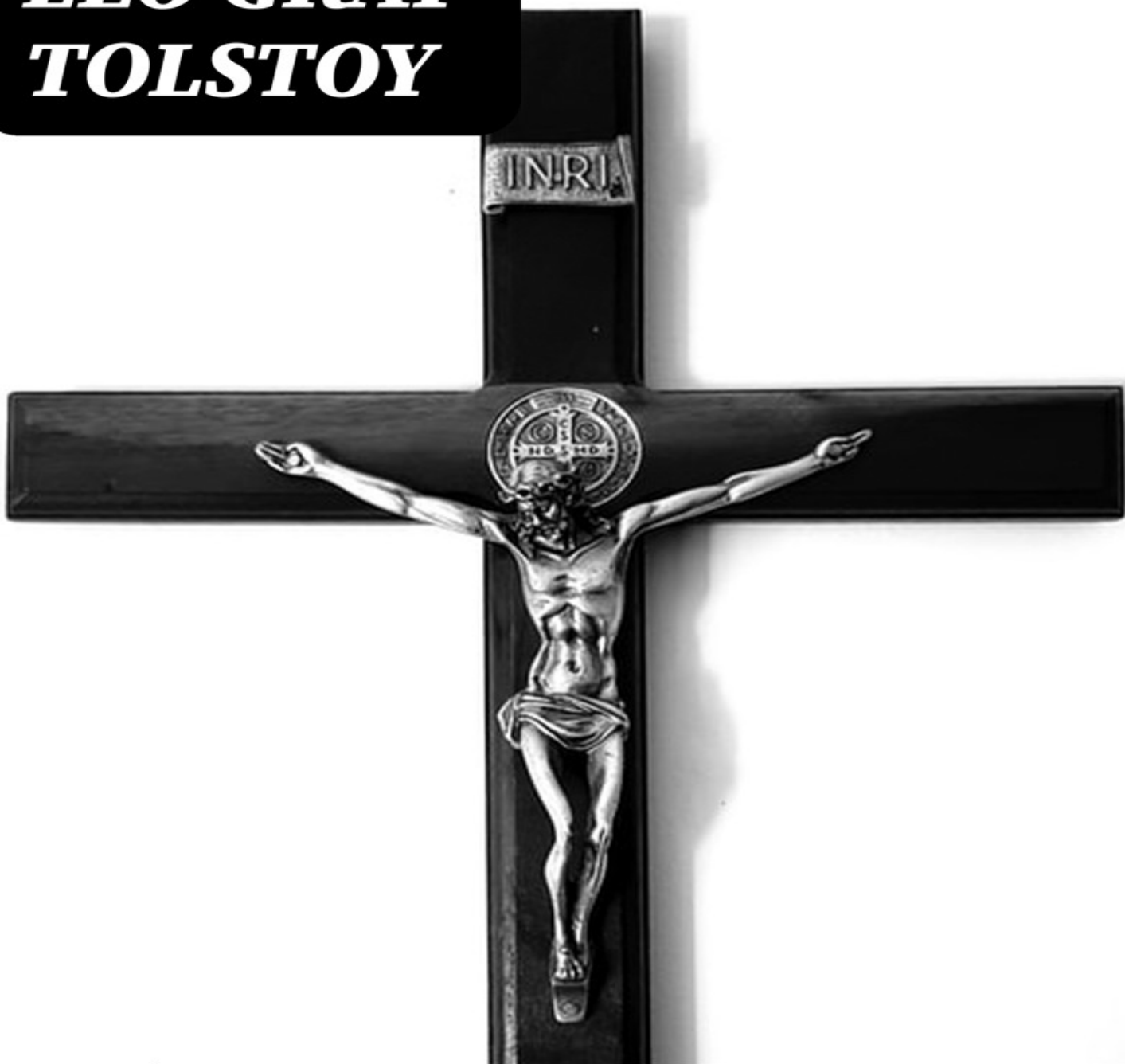
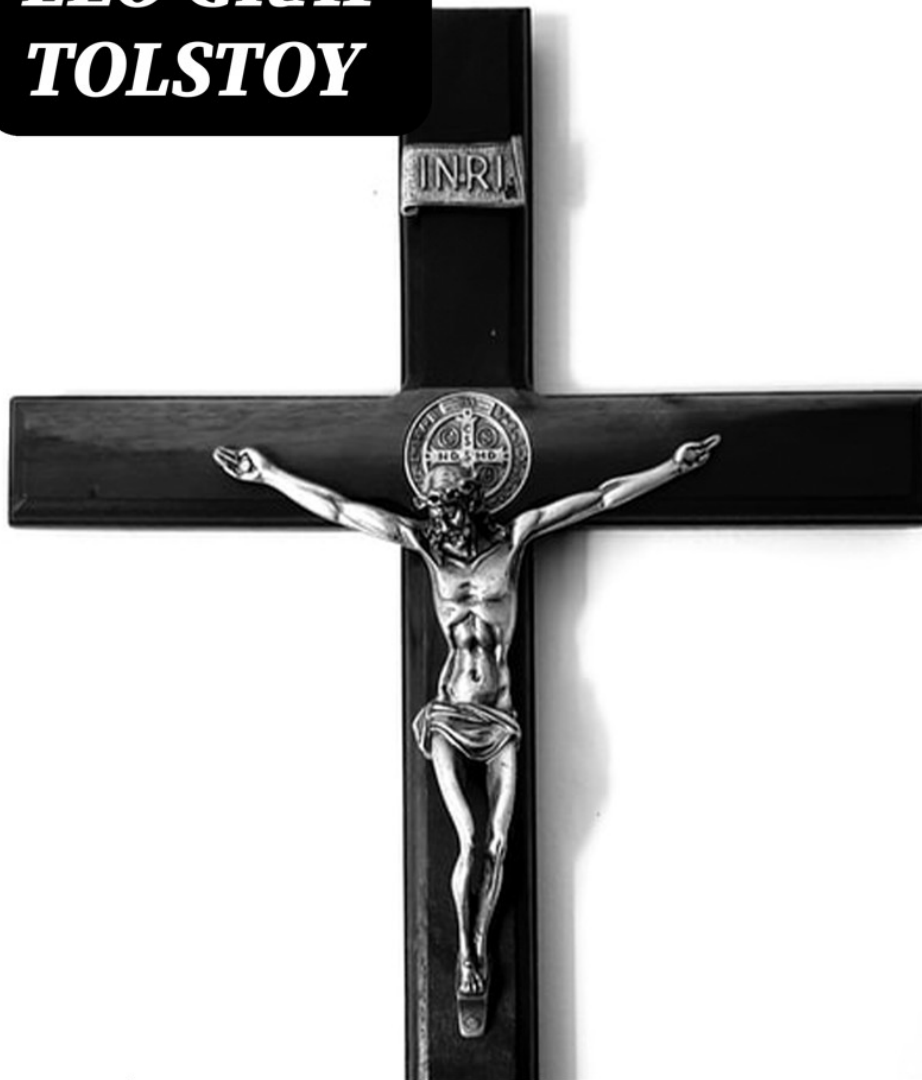


***LEO GRAF
TOLSTOY***



***THE KINGDOM OF GOD
IS WITHIN YOU /
CHRISTIANITY AND
PATRIOTISM /
MISCELLANIES***

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The Kingdom of God is Within You / Christianity and Patriotism / Miscellanies

EAN 8596547101314

DigiCat, 2022

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REASON AND RELIGION

PATRIOTISM OR PEACE

Letter to Manson

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On Non-Resistance

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I.

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Among the first answers to my book there came some letters from the American Quakers. In these letters, which express their sympathy with my views concerning the unlawfulness for Christianity of all violence and war, the Quakers informed me of the details of their so-called sect, which for more than two hundred years has in fact professed Christ's teaching about non-resistance to evil, and which has used no arms in order to defend itself. With their letters, the Quakers sent me their pamphlets, periodicals, and books. From these periodicals, pamphlets, and books which they sent me I learned to what extent they had many years ago incontestably proved the obligation for a Christian to fulfil the commandment about non-resistance to evil and had laid bare the incorrectness of the church teaching, which admitted executions and wars.

Having proved, by a whole series of considerations and texts, that war, that is, the maiming and killing of men, is incompatible with a religion which is based on love of peace and good-will to men, the Quakers affirm and prove that nothing has so much contributed to the obscuration of Christ's truth in the eyes of the pagans and impeded the dissemination of Christianity in the world as the non-acknowledgment of this commandment by men who called themselves Christians,—as the permission granted to a Christian to wage war and use violence.

"Christ's teaching, which entered into the consciousness of men, not by means of the sword and of violence," they

say, "but by means of non-resistance to evil, can be disseminated in the world only through humility, meekness, peace, concord, and love among its followers.

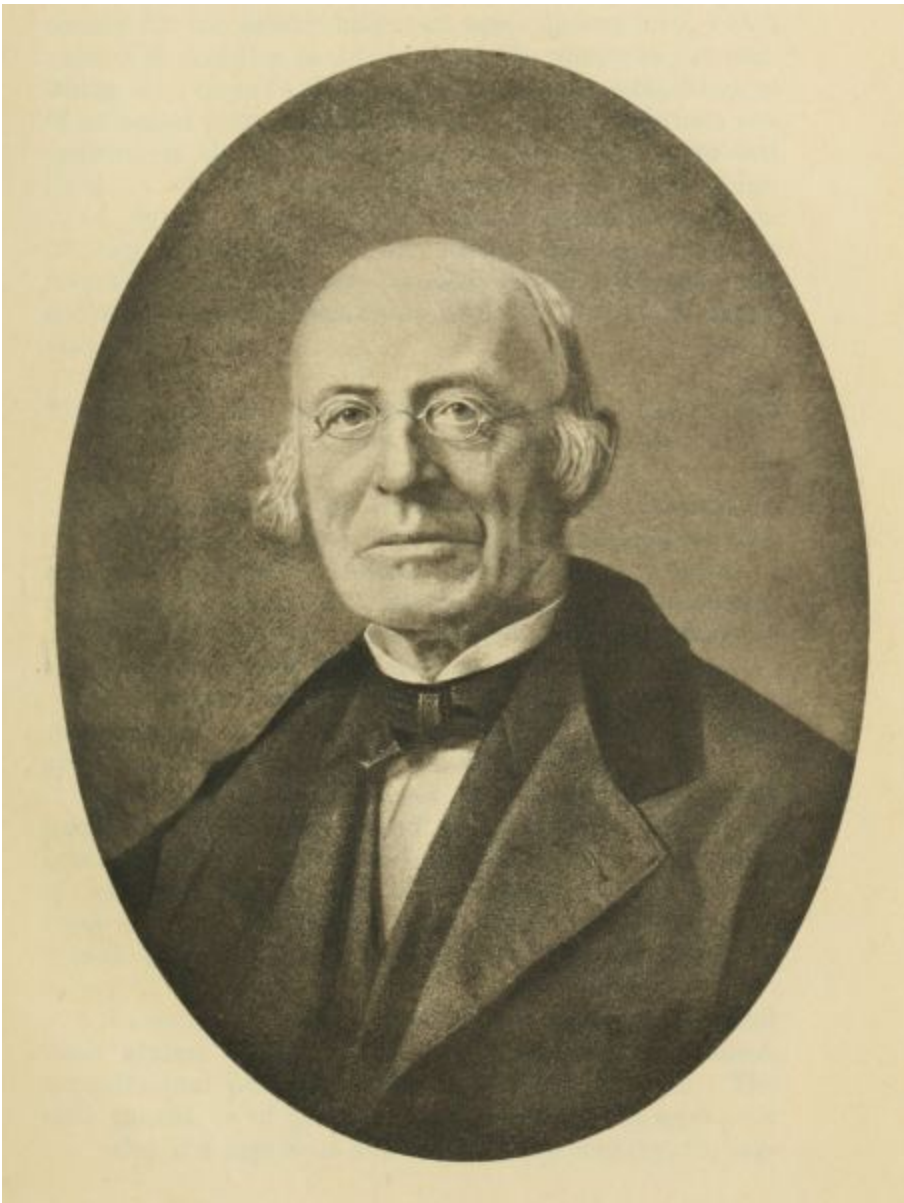
"A Christian, according to the teaching of God Himself, can be guided in his relations to men by peace only, and so there cannot be such an authority as would compel a Christian to act contrary to God's teaching and contrary to the chief property of a Christian in relation to those who are near to him.

"The rule of state necessity," they say, "may compel those to become untrue to God's law, who for the sake of worldly advantages try to harmonize what cannot be harmonized, but for a Christian, who sincerely believes in this, that the adherence to Christ's teaching gives him salvation, this rule can have no meaning."

My acquaintance with the activity of the Quakers and with their writings,—with Fox, Paine, and especially with Dymond's book (1827),—showed me that not only had the impossibility of uniting Christianity with violence and war been recognized long ago, but that this incompatibility had long ago been proved so clearly and so incontestably that one has only to marvel how this impossible connection of the Christian teaching with violence, which has been preached all this time by the churches, could have been continued.

Besides the information received by me from the Quakers, I, at about the same time, received, again from America, information in regard to the same subject from an entirely different source, which had been quite unknown to me before.

The son of William Lloyd Garrison, the famous champion for the liberation of the negroes, wrote to me that, when he read my book, in which he found ideas resembling those expressed by his father in 1838, he, assuming that it might be interesting for me to know this, sent me the "Declaration of Non-resistance," which his father had made about fifty years ago.



William Lloyd Garrison

Photogravure from Photograph

This declaration had its origin under the following conditions: William Lloyd Garrison, in speaking before a society for the establishment of peace among men, which existed in America in 1838, about the measures for abolishing war, came to the conclusion that the establishment of universal peace could be based only on the obvious recognition of the commandment of non-resistance to evil (Matt. v. 39) in all its significance, as this was understood by the Quakers, with whom Garrison stood in friendly relations. When he came to this conclusion, he formulated and proposed to the society the following declaration, which was then, in 1838, signed by many members.

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS ADOPTED BY THE PEACE
CONVENTION, HELD IN BOSTON IN 1838

"We, the undersigned, regard it as due to ourselves, to the cause which we love, to the country in which we live, and to the world, to publish a Declaration, expressive of the principles we cherish, the purposes we aim to accomplish, and the measures we shall adopt to carry forward the work of peaceful and universal reformation.

"We cannot acknowledge allegiance to any human government.... We recognize but one King and Lawgiver, one Judge and Ruler of mankind....

"Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind. We love the land of our nativity, only as we love all other lands. The interests, rights, and liberties of

American citizens are no more dear to us than are those of the whole human race. Hence we can allow no appeal to patriotism, to revenge any national insult or injury...

"We conceive, that if a nation has no right to defend itself against foreign enemies, or to punish its invaders, no individual possesses that right in his own case. The unit cannot be of greater importance than the aggregate.... But if a rapacious and bloodthirsty soldiery, thronging these shores from abroad, with intent to commit rapine and destroy life, may not be resisted by the people or magistracy, then ought no resistance to be offered to domestic troublers of the public peace, or of private security....

"The dogma, that all the governments of the world are approvingly ordained of God, and that the powers that be in the United States, in Russia, in Turkey, are in accordance with His will, is not less absurd than impious. It makes the impartial Author of human freedom and equality unequal and tyrannical. It cannot be affirmed that the powers that be, in any nation, are actuated by the spirit, or guided by the example of Christ, in the treatment of enemies: therefore, they cannot be agreeable to the will of God: and, therefore, their overthrow, by a spiritual regeneration of their subjects, is inevitable.

"We register our testimony, not only against all wars, whether offensive or defensive, but all preparations for war; against every naval ship, every arsenal, every fortification; against the militia system and a standing army; against all military chieftains and soldiers; against all monuments commemorative of victory over a foreign foe, all trophies

won in battle, all celebrations in honour of military or naval exploits: against all appropriations for the defence of a nation by force and arms on the part of any legislative body; against every edict of government, requiring of its subjects military service. Hence, we deem it unlawful to bear arms, or to hold a military office.

"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 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 honours, 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.

"It follows that we cannot sue any man at law, to compel him by force to restore anything which he may have wrongfully taken from us or others; but, if he has seized our coat, we shall surrender up our cloak, rather than subject him to punishment.

"We believe that the penal code of the old covenant, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, has been abrogated by Jesus Christ; and that, under the new covenant, the forgiveness, instead of the punishment of enemies, has been enjoined upon all His disciples, in all cases whatsoever. To extort money from enemies, or set them upon a pillory, or cast them into prison, or hang them upon a gallows, is obviously not to forgive, but to take retribution....

"The history of mankind is crowded with evidences, proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration; that the sinful disposition of man can be subdued only by love; that evil can be exterminated from the earth only by goodness; that it is not safe to rely upon an arm of flesh ... to preserve us from harm; that there is great security in being gentle, harmless, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy; that it is only the meek who shall inherit the earth, for the violent, who resort to the sword, shall perish with the sword. Hence, as a measure of sound policy, of safety to property, life, and liberty, of public quietude, and private enjoyment, as well as on the ground of allegiance to Him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, we cordially adopt the non-resistance principle; being confident that it provides for all possible consequences, will ensure all things needful to us, is armed with omnipotent power, and must ultimately triumph over every assailing foe.

"We advocate no jacobinical doctrines. The spirit of jacobinism is the spirit of retaliation, violence, and murder. It neither fears God, nor regards man. We would be filled with the spirit of Christ. If we abide by our principles, it is impossible for us to be disorderly, or plot treason, or participate in any evil work: 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 by meekly submitting to the penalty of disobedience.

"But, while we shall adhere to the doctrines of non-resistance and passive submission to enemies, we purpose,

in a moral and spiritual sense, to speak and act boldly in the cause of God; to assail iniquity in high places and in low places; to apply our principles to all existing civil, political, legal, and ecclesiastical institutions; and to hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever.

"It appears to us as a self-evident truth, that, whatever the gospel is designed to destroy, any period of the world, being contrary to it, ought now to be abandoned. If, then, the time is predicted, when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall not learn the art of war any more, it follows that all who manufacture, sell, or wield these deadly weapons do thus array themselves against the peaceful dominion of the Son of God on earth.

"Having thus briefly, but frankly, stated our principles and purposes, we proceed to specify the measures we propose to adopt, in carrying our object into effect.

"We expect to prevail through the foolishness of preaching—striving to commend ourselves unto every man's conscience, in the sight of God. From the press, we shall promulgate our sentiments as widely as practicable. We shall endeavour to secure the coöperation of all persons, of whatever name or sect.... Hence we shall employ lectures, circulate tracts and publications, form societies, and petition our State and national governments in relation to the subject of universal peace. 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 enemies.

"In entering upon the great work before us, we are not unmindful that, in its prosecution, we may be called to test our sincerity, even as in a fiery ordeal. It may subject us to insult, outrage, suffering, yea, even death itself. We anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, calumny. Tumults may arise against us. The ungodly and the violent, the proud and pharisaical, the ambitious and tyrannical, principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, may combine to crush us. So they treated the Messiah, whose example we are humbly striving to imitate.... We shall not be afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Our confidence is in the Lord Almighty, not in man. Having withdrawn from human protection, what can sustain us but that faith which overcomes the world? We shall not think it strange concerning the fiery ordeal which is to try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us; but rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings. Wherefore, we commit the keeping of our souls to God, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. 'For every one that forsakes houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for Christ's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.'

"Firmly relying upon the certain and universal triumph of the sentiments contained in this Declaration, however formidable may be the opposition arrayed against them, in solemn testimony of our faith in their divine origin, we hereby affix our signatures to it; commending it to the

reason and conscience of mankind, giving ourselves no anxiety as to what may befall us, and resolving, in the strength of the Lord God, calmly and meekly to abide the issue."

Immediately after this declaration Garrison founded a society of non-resistance, and a periodical, called *The Non-Resistant*, in which was preached the doctrine of non-resistance in all its significance and with all its consequences, as it had been expressed in the "Declaration." The information as to the later fate of the society and the periodical of non-resistance I received from the beautiful biography of William Lloyd Garrison, written by his sons.

The society and the periodical did not exist long: the majority of Garrison's collaborators in matters of freeing the slaves, fearing lest the too radical demands, as expressed in *The Non-Resistant*, might repel people from the practical work of the liberation of the negroes, refused to profess the principle of non-resistance, as it had been expressed in the "Declaration," and the society and the periodical ceased to exist.

This "Declaration" by Garrison, which so powerfully and so beautifully expressed such an important profession of faith, ought, it seems, to have startled men and to have become universally known and a subject of wide discussion. But nothing of the kind happened. It is not only unknown in Europe, but even among the Americans, who so highly esteem Garrison's memory, this declaration is almost unknown.

The same ingloriousness has fallen to the share of another champion of non-resistance to evil, the American Adin Ballou, who lately died, and who preached this doctrine for fifty years. How little is known of what refers to the question of non-resistance may be seen from the fact that Garrison's son, who has written an excellent biography of his father in four volumes, this son of Garrison, in reply to my question whether the society of non-resistance was still in existence, and whether there were any followers of it, answered me that so far as he knew the society had fallen to pieces, and there existed no followers of this doctrine, whereas at the time of his writing, there lived in Hopedale, Massachusetts, Adin Ballou, who had taken part in Garrison's labours and had devoted fifty years of his life to the oral and printed propaganda of the doctrine of non-resistance. Later on I received a letter from Wilson, a disciple and assistant of Ballou, and entered into direct communication with Ballou himself. I wrote to Ballou, and he answered me and sent me his writings. Here are a few extracts from them:

"Jesus Christ is my Lord and Master," says Ballou in one of the articles,[\[1\]](#) in which he arraigns the inconsistency of the Christians who recognize the right of defence and war. "I have covenanted to forsake all and follow Him, through good and evil report, until death. But I am nevertheless a Democratic-Republican citizen of the United States, implicitly sworn to bear true allegiance to my country, and to support its Constitution, if need be, with my life. Jesus Christ requires me to do unto others as I would that others should do unto me. The Constitution of the United States

requires me to do unto twenty-seven hundred slaves" (there were slaves then, now we may put the working people in their place) "the very contrary of what I would have them do unto me, viz., assist to keep them in a grievous bondage.... But I am quite easy. I vote on. I help govern on. I am willing to hold any office I may be elected to under the Constitution. And I am still a Christian. I profess on. I find no difficulty in keeping covenant both with Christ and the Constitution....

"Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evil-doers by taking 'eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blood for blood, and life for life.' My government requires the very reverse, and depends, for its own self-preservation, on the halter, the musket, and the sword, seasonably employed against its domestic and foreign enemies. Accordingly, the land is well furnished with gibbets, prisons, arsenals, train-bands, soldiers, and ships-of-war. In the maintenance and use of this expensive life-destroying apparatus, we can exemplify the virtues of forgiving our injurers, loving our enemies, blessing them that curse us, and doing good to those that hate us. For this reason, we have regular Christian chaplains to pray for us, and call down the sins of God on our holy murderers....

"I see it all; and yet I insist that I am as good a Christian as ever. I fellowship all; I vote on; I help govern on; I profess on; and I glory in being at once a devoted Christian, and a no less devoted adherent to the existing government. I will not give in to those miserable non-resistant notions. I will not throw away my political influence, and leave unprincipled men to carry on government alone....

"The Constitution says, 'Congress shall have power to declare war.'... I agree to this. I endorse it. I swear to help carry it through.... What then, am I less a Christian? Is not war a Christian service? Is it not perfectly Christian to murder hundreds of thousands of fellow human beings; to ravish defenceless females, sack and burn cities, and exact all the other cruelties of war? Out upon these new-fangled scruples! This is the very way to forgive injuries, and love our enemies! If we only do it all in true love, nothing can be more Christian than wholesale murder!"

In another pamphlet, under the title, *How Many Does It Take?*^[2] he says, "How many does it take to metamorphose wickedness into righteousness? One man must not kill. If he does, it is murder. Two, ten, one hundred men, acting on their own responsibility, must not kill. If they do, it is still murder. But a state or nation may kill as many as they please, and it is no murder. It is just, necessary, commendable, and right. Only get people enough to agree to it, and the butchery of myriads of human beings is perfectly innocent. But how many men does it take? This is the question. Just so with theft, robbery, burglary, and all other crimes.... But a whole nation can commit it.... But how many does it take?"^[3]

Here is Ballou's catechism, composed for his flock (*The Catechism of Non-Resistance*^[4]):

Q. Whence originated the term "non-resistance?"

A. From the injunction, "Resist not evil," Matt. v. 39.

Q. What does the term signify?

A. It expresses a high Christian virtue, prescribed by Christ.

Q. Is the word "resistance" to be taken in its widest meaning, that is, as showing that no resistance whatever is to be shown to evil?

A. No, it is to be taken in the strict sense of the Saviour's injunction; that is, we are not to retaliate evil with evil. Evil is to be resisted by all just means, but never with evil.

Q. From what can we see that Christ in such cases prescribed non-resistance?

A. From the words which He then used. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

Q. To whom does Jesus refer in the words, "It has been said?"

A. To the patriarchs and prophets, to what they said,—to what is contained in the writings of the Old Testament, which the Jews generally call the Law and the Prophets.

Q. What injunctions did Christ mean by "It hath been said?"

A. Those injunctions by which Noah, Moses, and other prophets authorize men to inflict personal injury on injurers, in order to punish and destroy evil.

Q. Quote these precepts.

A. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man (Gen. ix. 6). He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death, and if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe (Ex. xxi. 12, 23-25).

And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him: breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him again (Lev. xxiv. 17, 19, 20).

And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: and thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot (Deut. xix. 18, 19, 21). These are the precepts of which Jesus is speaking.

Noah, Moses, and the prophets taught that he who kills, maims, and tortures his neighbours does evil. To resist such evil and destroy it, the doer of evil is to be punished by death or maiming or some personal injury. Insult is to be opposed to insult, murder to murder, torture to torture, evil to evil. Thus taught Noah, Moses, and the prophets. But Christ denies it all. "But I say unto you," it says in the Gospel, "that ye resist not evil, resist not an insult with an insult, but rather bear the repeated insult from the doer of evil." What was authorized is prohibited. If we understand what kind of resistance they taught, we clearly see what we are taught by Christ's non-resistance.

Q. Did the ancients authorize the resistance of insult with insult?

A. Yes; but Jesus prohibited this. A Christian has under no condition the right to deprive of life or to subject to insult

him who does evil to his neighbour.

Q. May a man kill or maim another in self-defence?

A. No.

Q. May he enter a court with a complaint, to have his insulter punished?

A. No; for what he is doing through others, he is in reality doing in his own person.

Q. May he fight with an army against enemies, or against domestic rebels?

A. Of course not. He cannot take any part in war or warlike preparations. He cannot use death-dealing arms. He cannot resist injury with injury, no matter whether he be alone or with others, through himself or through others.

Q. May he choose or fit out military men for the government?

A. He can do nothing of the kind, if he wishes to be true to Christ's law.

Q. May he voluntarily give money, to aid the government, which is supported by military forces, capital punishment, and violence in general?

A. No, if the money is not intended for some special object, just in itself, where the aim and means are good.

Q. May he pay taxes to such a government?

A. No; he must not voluntarily pay the taxes, but he must also not resist their collection. The taxes imposed by the government are collected independently of the will of the subjects. It is impossible to resist the collection, without having recourse to violence; but a Christian must not use violence, and so he must give up his property to the violence which is exerted by the powers.

Q. May a Christian vote at elections and take part in a court or in the government?

A. No; the participation in elections, in the court, or in the government, is a participation in governmental violence.

Q. In what does the chief significance of the doctrine of non-resistance consist?

A. In that it alone makes it possible to tear the evil out by the root, both out of one's own heart and out of the neighbour's heart. This doctrine forbids doing that by which evil is perpetuated and multiplied. He who attacks another and insults him, engenders in another the sentiment of hatred, the root of all evil. To offend another, because he offended us, for the specious reason of removing an evil, means to repeat an evil deed, both against him and against ourselves,—to beget, or at least to free, to encourage, the very demon whom we claim we wish to expel. Satan cannot be driven out by Satan, untruth cannot be cleansed by untruth, and evil cannot be vanquished by evil.

True non-resistance is the one true resistance to evil. It kills and finally destroys the evil sentiment.

Q. But, if the idea of the doctrine is right, is it practicable?

A. It is as practicable as any good prescribed by the Law of God. The good cannot under all circumstances be executed without self-renunciation, privation, suffering, and, in extreme cases, without the loss of life itself. But he who values life more than the fulfilment of God's will is already dead to the one true life. Such a man, in trying to save his life, shall lose it. Besides, in general, where non-resistance costs the sacrifice of one life, or the sacrifice of some

essential good of life, resistance costs thousands of such sacrifices.

Non-resistance preserves, resistance destroys.

It is incomparably safer to act justly than unjustly; to bear an insult than to resist it with violence,—it is safer even in relation to the present life. If all men did not resist evil with evil, the world would be blessed.

Q. But if only a few shall act thus, what will become of them?

A. If only one man acted thus, and all the others agreed to crucify him, would it not be more glorious for him to die in the triumph of non-resisting love, praying for his enemies, than to live wearing the crown of Cæsar, bespattered with the blood of the slain? But one or thousands who have firmly determined not to resist evil with evil, whether among the enlightened or among savage neighbours, are much safer from violence than those who rely on violence. A robber, murderer, deceiver, will more quickly leave them alone than those who resist with weapons. They who take the sword perish with the sword, and those who seek peace, who act in a friendly manner, inoffensively, who forget and forgive offences, for the most part enjoy peace or, if they die, die blessed.

Thus, if all kept the commandment of non-resistance, it is evident that there would be no offences, no evil deeds. If these formed a majority, they would establish the reign of love and good-will, even toward the ill-disposed, by never resisting evil with evil, never using violence. If there were a considerable minority of these, they would have such a corrective, moral effect upon society that every cruel

punishment would be abolished, and violence and enmity would be changed to peace and love. If there were but a small minority of them, they would rarely experience anything worse than the contempt of the world, and the world would in the meantime, without noticing it, and without feeling itself under obligation, become wiser and better from this secret influence. And if, in the very worst case, a few members of the minority should be persecuted to death, these men, dying for the truth, would leave behind them their teaching, which is already sanctified by their martyr's death.

Peace be with all who seek peace, and all-conquering love be the imperishable inheritance of every soul, which voluntarily submits to the Law of Christ: "Resist not evil." In the course of fifty years, Ballou wrote and edited books dealing mainly with the question of non-resistance to evil. In these works, which are beautiful in their lucidity of thought and elegance of expression, the question is discussed from every possible side. He establishes the obligatoriness of this commandment for every Christian who professes the Bible as a divine revelation. He adduces all the customary retorts to the commandment of non-resistance, both from the Old Testament and from the New, as, for example, the expulsion from the temple, and so forth, and all these are overthrown; he shows, independently of Scripture, the practical wisdom of this rule, and adduces all the objections which are usually made to it, and meets all these objections. Thus one chapter of a work of his treats of non-resistance to evil in exclusive cases, and here he acknowledges that, if there were cases when the application of non-resistance to evil were

impossible, this would prove that the rule is altogether untenable. In adducing these special cases, he proves that it is precisely in them that the application of this rule is necessary and rational. There is not a single side of the question, either for his followers or for his adversaries, which is not investigated in these works. I say all this, in order to show the unquestionable interest which such works ought to have for men who profess Christianity, and that, therefore, one would think Ballou's activity ought to have been known, and the thoughts expressed by him ought to have been accepted or refuted; but there has been nothing of the kind.

The activity of Garrison the father, with his foundation of a society of non-resistants and his declaration, convinced me even more than my relations with the Quakers, that the departure of state Christianity from Christ's law about non-resistance to evil is something that has been observed and pointed out long ago, and that men have without cessation worked to arraign it. Ballou's activity still more confirmed this fact to me. But the fate of Garrison and especially of Ballou, who is not known to any one, in spite of his fifty years of stubborn and constant work in one and the same direction, has also confirmed to me the other fact, that there exists some kind of unexpressed but firm understanding as to passing all such attempts in silence.

Ballou died in August, 1890, and his obituary was given in an American periodical with a Christian tendency (*Religio-Philosophical Journal*, August 23d).

In this eulogistic obituary it says that Ballou was a spiritual guide of a community, that he delivered between

eight and nine thousand sermons, married one thousand pairs, and wrote about five hundred articles, but not a word is said about the aim to which he devoted all his life,—the word "non-resistance" is not even used.

Like all that which the Quakers have been preaching for two hundred years, like the activity of Garrison the father, the foundation of his society and periodical, and his declaration, so Ballou's whole activity does not seem to have existed at all.

A striking example of such an ingloriousness of writings intended to elucidate non-resistance to evil, and to arraign those who do not recognize this commandment, is found in the fate of the book by the Bohemian Chelcický, which has but lately become known and has so far not yet been printed.

Soon after the publication of my book in German, I received a letter from a professor of the Prague University, which informed me of the existence of a still unpublished work by the Bohemian Chelcický, of the fifteenth century, by the name of *The Drawnet of Faith*. In this work, as the professor wrote me, Chelcický about four centuries ago expressed the same view in regard to the true and the false Christianity, which I had expressed in my work, *My Religion*. The professor wrote to me that Chelcický's work was for the first time to be published in Bohemian in the periodical of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. As I was unable to procure the work itself, I tried to become acquainted with what was known of Chelcický, and such information I got from a German book sent me by the same Prague professor,

and from Pýpin's "History of Bohemian Literature." This is what Pýpin says:

"*The Drawnet of Faith* is that teaching of Christ which is to draw man out from the dark depths of the sea of life and its untruths. True faith consists in believing in God's words; but now there has come a time when men consider the true faith to be heresy, and so reason must show wherein the true faith consists, if one does not know it. Darkness has concealed it from men, and they do not know Christ's true law.

"To explain this law, Chelcický points out the original structure of Christian society, which, he says, is now regarded as rank heresy by the Roman Church.

"This primitive church was his own ideal of a social structure, based on equality, freedom, and brotherhood. Christianity, according to Chelcický, still treasures these principles, and all that is necessary is, that society should return to its pure teaching, and then any other order, in which kings and popes are needed, would seem superfluous: in everything the law of love alone is sufficient.

"Historically Chelcický refers the fall of Christianity to the times of Constantine the Great, whom Pope Sylvester introduced into Christianity with all the pagan customs and life. Constantine, in his turn, invested the Pope with worldly wealth and power. Since then both powers have been aiding one another and have striven after external glory. Doctors and masters and the clergy have begun to care only for the subjugation of the whole world to their dominion, have armed men against one another for the purpose of murdering and plundering, and have completely destroyed

Christianity in faith and in life. Chelcický absolutely denies the right to wage war and administer capital punishment; every warrior and even 'knight' is only an oppressor, malefactor, and murderer."

The same, except for some biographical details and excerpts from Chelcický's correspondence, is said in the German book.

Having thus learned the essence of Chelcický's teaching, I with much greater impatience waited for the appearance of *The Drawnet of Faith* in the journal of the Academy. But a year, two, three years passed, and the book did not appear. Only in 1888 I learned that the printing of the book, which had been begun, had come to a stop. I got the proof-sheets of as much as had been printed, and I read the book. The book is in every respect remarkable.

The contents are quite correctly rendered by Pýpin. Chelcický's fundamental idea is this, that Christianity, having united with the power in the time of Constantine and having continued to develop under these conditions, has become absolutely corrupt and has ceased to be Christianity. The title "The Drawnet of Faith," was given by Chelcický to his work, because, taking for his motto the verse of the Gospel about calling the disciples to become fishers of men, Chelcický, continuing this comparison, says, "Christ by means of His disciples caught in His drawnet of faith the whole world, but the larger fish, tearing the net, jumped out of it, and through the holes, which these larger fish had made, all the others went away, and the net was left almost empty."

The large fish that broke through the net are the rulers, emperors, popes, kings, who, in not renouncing their power, did not accept Christianity, but its semblance only.

Chelcický taught what has been taught until the present by the Mennonites and Quakers, and what in former years was taught by the Bogomils, Paulicians, and many others. He teaches that Christianity, which demands from its followers meekness, humility, kindness, forgiveness of sins, the offering of the other cheek when one cheek has been smitten, love of enemies, is incompatible with violence, which forms an indispensable condition of power.

A Christian, according to Chelcický's interpretation, can not only not be a chief or a soldier, but cannot even take part in the government, be a merchant or even a landowner; he can be only an artisan or an agriculturist.

This book is one of the extremely few that have survived the auto-da-fés of books in which the official Christianity is arraigned. All such books, which are called heretical, have been burned together with the authors, so that there are very few ancient works which arraign the departure of official Christianity, and so this book is especially interesting.

But besides being interesting, no matter how we look upon it, this book is one of the most remarkable productions of thoughts, as judged by the depth of its contents, and the wonderful force and beauty of the popular language, and its antiquity. And yet this book has for more than four centuries remained unprinted, and continues to be unknown, except to learned specialists.

One would think that all these kinds of works, by the Quakers, and Garrison, and Ballou, and Chelcický, which assert and prove, on the basis of the Gospel, that our world comprehends Christ's teaching falsely, ought to rouse interest, agitation, discussions, in the midst of the pastors and of the flock.

Works of this kind, which touch on the essence of the Christian teaching, ought, it seems, to be analyzed and recognized as true, or to be rejected and overthrown.

But nothing of the kind has happened. One and the same thing is repeated with all these works. People of the most different views, both those who believe and, what is most surprising, those who are unbelieving liberals, seem to have an agreement to pass them stubbornly in silence, and all that has been done by men to elucidate the true meaning of Christ's teaching remains unknown or forgotten.

But still more startling is the ingloriousness of two works, of which I learned also in connection with the appearance of my book. These are Dymond's book *On War*, published for the first time in London, in 1824, and Daniel Musser's book *On Non-Resistance*, written in 1864. The ignorance about these two books is particularly remarkable, because, to say nothing of their worth, both books treat not so much of the theory as of the practical application of the theory to life, of the relation of Christianity to military service, which is particularly important and interesting now, in connection with the universal liability to do military service.

People will, perhaps, ask: "What are the duties of a subject, who believes that war is incompatible with his