

influence so powerful that you cannot shake it off; but you can always recognize the truth and refuse to tell a lie about it. You need not declare that you are remaining a landowner, manufacturer, merchant, artist, or writer because it is useful to mankind; that you are governor, prosecutor, or tzar, not because it is agreeable to you, because you are used to it, but for the public good; that you continue to be a soldier, not from fear of punishment, but because you consider the army necessary to society. You can always avoid lying in this way to yourself and to others, and you ought to do so; because the one aim of your life ought to be to purify yourself from falsehood and to confess the truth. And you need only do that and your situation will change directly of itself.

There is one thing, and only one thing, in which it is granted to you to be free in life, all else being beyond your power: that is to recognize and profess the truth.

And yet simply from the fact that other men as misguided and as pitiful creatures as yourself have made you soldier, tzar, landowner, capitalist, priest, or general, you undertake to commit acts of violence obviously opposed to your reason and your heart, to base your existence on the misfortunes of others, and above all, instead of filling the one duty of your life, recognizing and professing the truth, you feign not to recognize it and disguise it from yourself and others.

And what are the conditions in which you are doing this? You who may die any instant, you sign sentences of death, you declare war, you take part in it, you judge, you punish, you plunder the working people, you live luxuriously in the midst of the poor, and teach weak men who have confidence in you that this must be so, that the duty of men is to do this, and yet it may happen at the moment when you are acting thus that a bacterium or a bull may attack you and you will fall and die, losing forever the chance of repairing the harm you have done to others, and above all to yourself, in uselessly wasting a life which has been given you only once in eternity, without having accomplished the only thing you ought to have done.

However commonplace and out of date it may seem to us, however confused we may be by hypocrisy and by the hypnotic suggestion which results from it, nothing can destroy the certainty of this simple and clearly defined truth. No external conditions can guarantee our life, which is attended with inevitable sufferings and infallibly terminated by death, and which consequently can have no significance except in the constant accomplishment of what is demanded by the Power which has placed us in life with a sole certain guide--the rational conscience.

That is why that Power cannot require of us what is irrational and impossible: the organization of our temporary external life, the life of society or of the state. That Power demands of us only what is reasonable, certain, and possible: to serve the kingdom of God, that is, to contribute to the establishment of the greatest possible union between all living beings--a union possible only in the truth; and to recognize and to profess the revealed truth, which is always in our power.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."
(Matt. vi. 33.)

The sole meaning of life is to serve humanity by contributing to the establishment of the kingdom of God, which can only be done by the recognition and profession of the truth by every man.

"The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke xvii. 20, 21.)

THE END.