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战争与和平 (下)

WAR AND PEACE (II)

LEO TOLSTOY

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Leo Tolstoy

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战争与和平

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WAR AND PEACE

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BOOK THREE

PART ONE

1

FROM the close of the year 1811 an intensified arming and concentrating of the forces of Western Europe began, and in 1812 these forces – millions of men reckoning those transporting and feeding the army – moved from the west eastwards to the Russian frontier, towards which since 1811 Russian forces had been similarly drawn. On the 12th of June 1812 the forces of Western Europe crossed the Russian frontier and war began, that is, an event took place opposed to human reason and to human nature. Millions of men perpetrated against one another such innumerable crimes, frauds, treacheries, thefts, forgeries, issues of false money, burglaries, incendiarisms, and murders, as in whole centuries are not recorded in the annals of all the law courts of the world, but which those who committed them did not at the time regard as being crimes.*

What produced this extraordinary occurrence? What were its causes? The historians tell us with naïve assurance that its causes were the wrongs inflicted on the Duke of Oldenburg, the non-observance of the Continental System, the ambition of Napoleon, the firmness of Alexander, the mistakes of the diplomatists, and so on.

Consequently it would only have been necessary for Metternich, Rumyantsev, or Talleyrand, between a levée and an evening party, to have taken proper pains and written a more adroit note, or for Napoleon to have written to Alexander: 'My respected Brother, I consent to restore the duchy to the Duke of Oldenburg' – and there would have been no war.

We can understand that the matter seemed like that to contemporaries. It naturally seemed to Napoleon that the war was caused by England's intrigues (as in fact he said on the island of St Helena). It naturally seemed to members of the English Parliament that the cause of the war was Napoleon's ambition; to the Duke of Oldenburg that the cause of the war was the violence done to him; to businessmen that the cause of the war was the Continental System which was ruining Europe; to the generals and old soldiers that the chief reason for the war was the necessity of

giving them employment; to the legitimists of that day that it was the need of re-establishing *les bons principes*, and to the diplomatists of that time that it all resulted from the fact that the alliance between Russia and Austria in 1809 had not been sufficiently well concealed from Napoleon, and from the awkward wording of Memorandum No. 178. It is natural that these and a countless and infinite quantity of other reasons, the number depending on the endless diversity of points of view, presented themselves to the men of that day; but to us, to posterity who view the thing that happened in all its magnitude and perceive its plain and terrible meaning, these causes seem insufficient. To us it is incomprehensible that millions of Christian men killed and tortured each other either because Napoleon was ambitious or Alexander was firm, or because England's policy was astute or the Duke of Oldenburg wronged. We cannot grasp what connexion such circumstances have with the actual fact of slaughter and violence: why because the Duke was wronged, thousands of men from the other side of Europe killed and ruined the people of Smolensk and Moscow and were killed by them.

To us their descendants, who are not historians and are not carried away by the process of research, and can therefore regard the event with unclouded common sense, an incalculable number of causes present themselves. The deeper we delve in search of these causes the more of them we find; and each separate cause or whole series of causes appears to us equally valid in itself and equally false by its insignificance compared to the magnitude of the events, and by its impotence – apart from the co-operation of all the other coincident causes – to occasion the event. To us the wish or objection of this or that French corporal to serve a second term appears as much a cause as Napoleon's refusal to withdraw his troops beyond the Vistula and to restore the duchy of Oldenburg; for had he not wished to serve, and had a second, a third, and a thousandth corporal and private also refused, there would have been so many less men in Napoleon's army and the war could not have occurred.

Had Napoleon not taken offence at the demand that he should withdraw beyond the Vistula, and not ordered his troops to advance, there would have been no war; but had all his sergeants objected to serving a second term then also there could have been no war. Nor could there have been a war had there been no English intrigues and no Duke of Oldenburg, and had Alexander not felt insulted, and had there not been an autocratic government in Russia, or a Revolution in France and a subsequent dictatorship and Empire, or all the things that produced the French Revolution,

and so on. Without each of these causes nothing could have happened. So all these causes – myriads of causes – coincided to bring it about. And so there was no one cause for that occurrence, but it had to occur because it had to. Millions of men, renouncing their human feelings and reason, had to go from west to east to slay their fellows, just as some centuries previously hordes of men had come from the east to the west slaying their fellows.

The actions of Napoleon and Alexander, on whose words the event seemed to hang, were as little voluntary as the actions of any soldier who was drawn into the campaign by lot or by conscription. This could not be otherwise, for in order that the will of Napoleon and Alexander (on whom the event seemed to depend) should be carried out, the concurrence of innumerable circumstances was needed without any one of which the event could not have taken place. It was necessary that millions of men in whose hands lay the real power – the soldiers who fired, or transported provisions and guns – should consent to carry out the will of these weak individuals, and should have been induced to do so by an infinite number of diverse and complex causes.

We are forced to fall back on fatalism as an explanation of irrational events (that is to say, events the reasonableness of which we do not understand). The more we try to explain such events in history reasonably, the more unreasonable and incomprehensible do they become to us.

Each man lives for himself, using his freedom to attain his personal aims, and feels with his whole being that he can now do or abstain from doing this or that action; but as soon as he has done it, that action performed at a certain moment in time becomes irrevocable and belongs to history, in which it has not a free but a predestined significance.

There are two sides to the life of every man, his individual life which is the more free the more abstract its interests, and his elemental swarm-life in which he inevitably obeys laws laid down for him.

Man lives consciously for himself, but is an unconscious instrument in the attainment of the historic, universal, aims of humanity. A deed done is irrevocable, and its result coinciding in time with the actions of millions of other men assumes an historic significance. The higher a man stands on the social ladder, the more people he is connected with and the more power he has over others, the more evident is the predestination and inevitability of his every action.

'The king's heart is in the hands of the Lord.'

A king is history's slave.

History, that is, the unconscious, general, swarm-life of mankind, uses every moment of the life of kings as a tool for its own purposes.

Though Napoleon at that time, in 1812, was more convinced than ever that it depended on him, *verser (ou ne pas verser) le sang de ses peuples* – as Alexander expressed it in the last letter he wrote him – he had never been so much in the grip of inevitable laws, which compelled him, while thinking that he was acting on his own volition, to perform for the swarm-life – that is to say for history – whatever had to be performed.

The people of the west moved eastwards to slay their fellow men, and by the law of coincidence thousands of minutes causes fitted in and co-ordinated to produce that movement and war: reproaches for the non-observance of the Continental System, the Duke of Oldenburg's wrongs, the movement of troops into Prussia – undertaken (as it seemed to Napoleon) only for the purpose of securing an armed peace, the French Emperor's love and habit of war coinciding with his people's inclinations, allurements by the grandeur of the preparations, and the expenditure on those preparations, and the need of obtaining advantages to compensate for that expenditure, the intoxicating honours he received in Dresden,* the diplomatic negotiations which in the opinion of contemporaries were carried on with a sincere desire to attain peace but which only wounded the self-love of both sides, and millions and millions of other causes that adapted themselves to the event that was happening or coincided with it.

When an apple has ripened and falls, why does it fall? Because of its attraction to the earth, because its stalk withers, because it is dried by the sun, because it grows heavier, because the wind shakes it, or because the boy standing below wants to eat it?

Nothing is the cause. All this is only the coincidence of conditions in which all vital organic and elemental events occur. And the botanist who finds that the apple falls because the cellular tissue decays and so forth, is equally right with the child who stands under the tree and says the apple fell because he wanted to eat it and prayed for it. Equally right or wrong is he who says that Napoleon went to Moscow because he wanted to, and perished because Alexander desired his destruction, and he who says that an undermined hill weighing a million tons fell because the last navy struck it for the last time with his mattock. In historic events the so-called great men are labels giving names to events, and like labels they have but the smallest connexion with the event itself.

Every act of theirs, which appears to them an act of their own

will, is in an historical sense involuntary, and is related to the whole course of history and predestined from eternity.

2

ON the 29th of May Napoleon left Dresden, where he had spent three weeks surrounded by a court that included princes, dukes, kings, and even an emperor. Before leaving, Napoleon showed favour to the emperor, kings and princes who had deserved it, reprimanded the kings and princes with whom he was dissatisfied, presented pearls and diamonds of his own – that is which he had taken from other kings – to the Empress of Austria, and having, as his historian tells us, tenderly embraced the Empress Marie Louise – who regarded him as her husband though he had left another wife in Paris – left her grieved by the parting which she seemed hardly able to bear. Though the diplomatists still firmly believed in the possibility of peace, and worked zealously to that end, and though the Emperor Napoleon himself wrote a letter to Alexander calling him *Monsieur mon frère*, and sincerely assured him that he did not want war and would always love and honour him – yet he set off to join his army, and at every station gave fresh orders to accelerate the movement of his troops from west to east. He went in a travelling coach with six horses, surrounded by pages, aides-de-camp, and an escort, along the road to Posen, Thorn, Danzig, and Königsberg. At each of these towns thousands of people met him with excitement and enthusiasm.

The army was moving from west to east and relays of six horses carried him in the same direction. On the 10th of June, coming up with the army, he spent the night in apartments prepared for him on the estate of a Polish count in the Vilkaviski forest.

Next day, overtaking the army, he went in a carriage to the Niemen, and changing into a Polish uniform in order to select a place for the crossing, he drove to the river bank.

Seeing on the other side some Cossacks (*les Cosaques*) and the wide-spreading steppes in the midst of which lay the holy city of Moscow (*Moscou, la ville sainte*), the capital of a realm such as the Scythia into which Alexander the Great had marched – Napoleon unexpectedly, and contrary alike to strategic and diplomatic considerations, ordered an advance, and the next day his army began to cross the Niemen.

Early in the morning of the 12th of June he came out of his tent which was pitched that day on the steep left bank of the Niemen, and looked through a spy-glass at the streams of his troops

pouring out of the Vilkaviski forest and flowing over the three bridges thrown across the river. The troops, knowing of the Emperor's presence, were on the look-out for him, and when they caught sight of a figure in an overcoat and a cocked hat standing apart from his suite in front of his tent on the hill, they threw up their caps and shouted: '*Vive l'Empereur!*' and one after another poured in a ceaseless stream out of the vast forest that had concealed them and, separating, flowed on and on by the three bridges to the other side.

'Now we'll go into action. Oh, when he takes it in hand himself things get hot... by heaven!... There he is!... *Vive l'Empereur!* So these are the steppes of Asia! It's a nasty country all the same. *Au revoir, Beauché!* I'll keep the best place in Moscow for you! *Au revoir.* Good luck!... Did you see the Emperor? *Vive l'Empereur!*... *preur!* - If they make me Governor of India, Gérard, I'll make you Minister of Kashmir - that's settled. *Vive l'Empereur!* Hurrah, hurrah! hurrah! The Cossacks - those rascals - see how they run! *Vive l'Empereur!* There he is, do you see him? I've seen him twice, as I see you now. The little corporal... I saw him give the cross to one of the veterans... *Vive l'Empereur!*' came the voices of men, old and young, of most diverse characters and social positions. On the faces of all was one common expression of joy at the commencement of the long-expected campaign and of rapture and devotion to the man in the grey coat who was standing on the hill.

On the 13th of June a rather small, thoroughbred Arab horse was brought to Napoleon. He mounted it and rode at a gallop to one of the bridges over the Niemen, deafened continually by incessant and rapturous acclamations which he evidently endured only because it was impossible to forbid the soldiers to express their love of him by such shouting, but the shouting which accompanied him everywhere disturbed him and distracted his mind from the military cares that had occupied him from the time he joined the army. He rode across one of the swaying pontoon bridges to the farther side, turned sharply to the left and galloped in the direction of Kovno, preceded by enraptured, mounted chasseurs of the Guard who, breathless with delight, galloped ahead to clear a path for him through the troops. On reaching the broad river Viliya he stopped near a regiment of Polish Uhlans stationed by the river.

'*Vivat!*' shouted the Poles ecstatically, breaking their ranks and pressing against one another to see him.

Napoleon looked up and down the river, dismounted, and sat down on a log that lay on the bank. At a mute sign from him a telescope was handed him which he rested on the back of a happy

page who had run up to him, and he gazed at the opposite bank. Then he became absorbed in a map laid out on the logs. Without lifting his head he said something and two of his aides-de-camp galloped off to the Polish Uhlans.

'What? What did he say?' was heard in the ranks of the Polish Uhlans when one of the aides-de-camp rode up to them.

The order was to find a ford and to cross the river. The colonel of Polish Uhlans, a handsome old man, flushed, and fumbling in his speech from excitement asked the aide-de-camp whether he would be permitted to swim the river with his Uhlans instead of seeking a ford. In evident fear of refusal, like a boy asking for permission to get on a horse, he begged to be allowed to swim across the river before the Emperor's eyes. The aide-de-camp replied that probably the Emperor would not be displeased at this excess of zeal.

As soon as the aide-de-camp had said this, the old moustached officer with a happy face and sparkling eyes raised his sabre, shouted 'Vivat!' and, commanding the Uhlans to follow him, spurred his horse and galloped into the river. He gave an angry thrust to his horse which had grown restive under him, and plunged into the water, heading for the deepest part where the current was swift. Hundreds of Uhlans galloped in after him. It was cold and uncanny in the rapid current in the middle of the stream, and the Uhlans caught hold of one another as they fell off their horses. Some of the horses were drowned and some of the men, the others tried to swim on, some in the saddle and some clinging to their horses' manes. They tried to make their way forward to the opposite bank, and though there was a ford half a verst away, were proud that they were swimming and drowning in this river under the eyes of the man who sat on the log and was not even looking at what they were doing. When the aide-de-camp having returned and choosing an opportune moment ventured to draw the Emperor's attention to the devotion of the Poles to his person, the little man in the grey overcoat got up and having summoned Berthier* began pacing up and down the bank with him, giving him instructions and occasionally glancing disapprovingly at the drowning Uhlans who distracted his attention.

For him it was no new conviction that his presence in any part of the world, from Africa to the steppes of Muscovy alike, was enough to dumbfound people and impel them to insane self-oblivion. He called for his horse and rode to his quarters.

Some forty Uhlans were drowned in the river though boats were sent to their assistance. The majority struggled back to the bank from which they had started. The colonel and some of his men

got across, and with difficulty clambered out on the further bank. And as soon as they had got out, in their soaked and streaming clothes, they shouted 'Vivat!' and looked ecstatically at the spot where Napoleon had been but where he no longer was, and at that moment considered themselves happy.

That evening, between issuing one order that the forged Russian paper money prepared for use in Russia should be delivered as quickly as possible, and another that a Saxon on whom a letter containing information about the orders to the French army had been found should be shot, Napoleon also gave instructions that the Polish colonel who had needlessly plunged into the river should be enrolled in the *Légion d'honneur* of which Napoleon was himself the head.

*Quos vult perdere dementat.**

3

THE Emperor of Russia had meanwhile been in Vilna for more than a month, reviewing troops and holding manœuvres. Nothing was ready for the war that everyone expected and to prepare for which the Emperor had come from Petersburg. There was no general plan of action. The vacillation between the various plans that were proposed had even increased after the Emperor had been at head-quarters for a month. Each of the three armies had its own commander-in-chief,* but there was no supreme commander of all the forces, and the Emperor did not assume that responsibility himself.

The longer the Emperor remained in Vilna the less did everybody – tired of waiting – prepare for the war. All the efforts of those who surrounded the sovereign seemed directed merely to making him spend his time pleasantly and forget that war was impending.

In June, after many balls and fêtes given by the Polish magnates, by the courtiers, and by the Emperor himself, it occurred to one of the Polish aides-de-camp in attendance that a dinner and ball should be given for the Emperor by his aides-de-camp. This idea was eagerly received. The Emperor gave his consent. The aides-de-camp collected money by subscription. The lady who was thought to be most pleasing to the Emperor was invited to act as hostess. Count Bennigsen, being a landowner in the Vilna province, offered his country house for the fête, and the 13th of June was fixed for a ball, dinner, regatta, and fireworks at Zakret, Count Bennigsen's country seat.

The very day that Napoleon issued the order to cross the Niemen

and his vanguard, driving off the Cossacks, crossed the Russian frontier, Alexander spent the evening at the entertainment given by his aides-de-camp at Bennigsen's country house.

It was a gay and brilliant fête. Connoisseurs of such matters declared that rarely had so many beautiful women been assembled in one place. Countess Bezukhova was present among other Russian ladies who had followed the sovereign from Petersburg to Vilna, and eclipsed the refined Polish ladies by her massive, so-called Russian, type of beauty. The Emperor noticed her, and honoured her with a dance.

Boris Drubetskoy, having left his wife in Moscow and being for the present *en garçon* (as he phrased it), was also there and, though not an aide-de-camp, had subscribed a large sum towards the expenses. Boris was now a rich man who had risen to high honours, and no longer sought patronage but stood on an equal footing with the highest of those of his own age. He was meeting Héléne in Vilna after not having seen her for a long time, and did not recall the past, but as Héléne was enjoying the favours of a very important personage and Boris had only recently married, they met as good friends of long standing.

At midnight dancing was still going on. Héléne, not having a suitable partner, herself offered to dance the mazurka with Boris. They were the third couple. Boris, coolly looking at Héléne's dazzling bare shoulders which emerged from a dark, gold-embroidered, gauze gown, talked to her of old acquaintances, and at the same time, unaware of it himself and unnoticed by others, never for an instant ceased to observe the Emperor who was in the same room. The Emperor was not dancing, he stood in the doorway, stopping now one pair and now another with gracious words that he alone knew how to utter.

As the mazurka began, Boris saw that Adjutant-General Balashev, one of those in closest attendance on the Emperor, went up to him, and contrary to court etiquette stood near him while he was talking to a Polish lady. Having finished speaking to her, the Emperor looked inquiringly at Balashev and, evidently understanding that he only acted thus because there were important reasons for so doing, nodded slightly to the lady and turned to him. Hardly had Balashev begun to speak before a look of amazement appeared on the Emperor's face. He took Balashev by the arm and crossed the room with him, unconsciously clearing a path seven yards wide as the people on both sides made way for him. Boris noticed Arakcheev's excited face when the sovereign went out with Balashev. Arakcheev looked at the Emperor from under his brow, and sniffing with his red nose stepped forward from the crowd as

if expecting the Emperor to address him. (Boris understood that Arakcheev envied Balashev and was displeased that evidently important news had reached the Emperor otherwise than through himself.)

But the Emperor and Balashev passed out into the illuminated garden without noticing Arakcheev who, holding his sword and glancing wrathfully around, followed some twenty paces behind them.

All the time Boris was going through the figures of the mazurka he was worried by the question of what news Balashev had brought, and how he could find it out before others.

In the figure in which he had to choose two ladies, he whispered to H el ene that he meant to choose Countess Potocka who he thought had gone out on to the veranda, and glided over the parquet to the door opening into the garden, where, seeing Balashev and the Emperor returning to the veranda, he stood still. They were moving towards the door. Boris, fluttering as if he had not had time to withdraw, respectfully pressed close to the doorpost with bowed head.

The Emperor, with the agitation of one who has been personally affronted, was finishing with these words:

'To enter Russia without declaring war! I will not make peace as long as a single armed enemy remains in my country!'

It seemed to Boris that it gave the Emperor pleasure to utter these words. He was satisfied with the form in which he had expressed his thought, but displeased that Boris had overheard it.

'Let no one know of it!' the Emperor added with a frown.

Boris understood that this was meant for him, and closing his eyes slightly bowed his head. The Emperor re-entered the ball-room and remained there about another half-hour.

Boris was thus the first to learn the news that the French army had crossed the Niemen, and thanks to this was able to show certain important personages that much that was concealed from others was usually known to him, and by this means he rose higher in their estimation.

The unexpected news of the French having crossed the Niemen was particularly startling after a month of unfulfilled expectations, and at a ball. On first receiving the news, under the influence of indignation and resentment the Emperor had found a phrase that pleased him, fully expressed his feelings, and has since become famous. On returning home at two o'clock that night he sent for his secretary, Shishkov, and told him to write an order to the troops and a rescript to Field-Marshal Prince Saltykov, in which he insisted on the words being inserted that he would not make

peace so long as a single armed Frenchman remained on Russian soil.

Next day the following letter was sent to Napoleon:

Monsieur mon frère,

Yesterday I learnt that, despite the loyalty with which I have kept my engagements with your Majesty, your troops have crossed the Russian frontier, and I have this moment received from Petersburg a note in which Count Lauriston* informs me, as a reason for this aggression, that your Majesty has considered yourself to be in a state of war with me from the time Prince Kurakin* asked for his passports. The reason on which the Duc de Bassano based his refusal to deliver them to him would never have led me to suppose that that incident could serve as a pretext for aggression. In fact the ambassador, as he himself has declared, was never authorized to make that demand, and as soon as I was informed of it I let him know how much I disapproved of it, and ordered him to remain at his post. If your Majesty does not intend to shed the blood of our peoples for such a misunderstanding, and consents to withdraw your troops from Russian territory, I will regard what has passed as not having occurred and an understanding between us will be possible. In the contrary case, your Majesty, I shall see myself forced to repel an attack that nothing on my part has provoked. It still depends on your Majesty to preserve humanity from the calamity of another war.

I am, &c.,

(Signed) Alexander.

4

AT two in the morning of the 14th of June the Emperor, having sent for Balashev and read him his letter to Napoleon, ordered him to take it and hand it personally to the French Emperor. When dispatching Balashev the Emperor repeated to him the words that he would not make peace so long as a single armed enemy remained on Russian soil, and told him to transmit those words to Napoleon. Alexander did not insert them in his letter to Napoleon because, with his characteristic tact, he felt it would be injudicious to use them at a moment when a last attempt at reconciliation was being made, but he definitely instructed Balashev to repeat them personally to Napoleon.

Having set off in the small hours of the 14th, accompanied by a bugler and two Cossacks, Balashev reached the French outposts at the village of Rykonty, on the Russian side of the Niemen, by dawn. There he was stopped by French cavalry sentinels.

A French non-commissioned officer of hussars, in crimson uniform

and a shaggy cap, shouted to the approaching Balashev to halt. Balashev did not do so at once, but continued to advance along the road at a walking pace.

The non-commissioned officer frowned, and muttering words of abuse advanced his horse's chest against Balashev, put his hand to his sabre, and shouted rudely at the Russian general, asking: was he deaf that he did not do as he was told? Balashev mentioned who he was. The non-commissioned officer began talking with his comrades about regimental matters without looking at the Russian general.

After living at the seat of the highest authority and power, after conversing with the Emperor less than three hours before, and in general being accustomed to the respect due to his rank in the service, Balashev found it very strange here on Russian soil to encounter this hostile, and still more this disrespectful, application of brute force to himself.

The sun was only just appearing from behind the clouds, the air was fresh and dewy. A herd of cattle was being driven along the road from the village, and over the fields the larks rose trilling, one after another, like bubbles rising in water.

Balashev looked around him awaiting the arrival of an officer from the village. The Russian Cossacks and bugler and the French hussars looked silently at one another from time to time.

A French colonel of hussars, who had evidently just left his bed, came riding from the village on a handsome sleek grey horse, accompanied by two hussars. The officer, the soldiers, and their horses, all looked smart and well-kept.

It was that first period of a campaign when troops are still in full trim almost like that of peace-time manoeuvres, but with a shade of martial swagger in their clothes, and a touch of the gaiety and spirit of enterprise which always accompany the opening of a campaign.

The French colonel with difficulty repressed a yawn, but was polite and evidently understood Balashev's importance. He led him past his soldiers and behind the outposts, and told him that his wish to be presented to the Emperor would most likely be satisfied immediately, as the Emperor's quarters were, he believed, not far off.

They rode through the village of Rykonty, past tethered French hussar horses, past sentinels and men who saluted their colonel and stared with curiosity at a Russian uniform, and came out at the other end of the village. The colonel said that the commander of the division was a mile and a quarter away and would receive Balashev and conduct him to his destination.