CONCLUSION

When we trace the history of novel we find a thematic progression from sociology to psychology in treatment by the novelists. For instance first English novel, *Pamela* by Samuel Richardson and the novel by his contemporaries were sociological in content and treatment. But in modern novel we find psychological treatment having an upper hand. James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and many other novelists marked this shift. In Malayalam novel too we find this difference theme as time passed. Pioneers in Malayalam novels like Appu Nedungadi's *Kunthalatha* and Chandumenon's *Indulekha* are more sociological than psychological in treatment. But modern Malayalam novels by writers like Mukundan and M.T. Vasudevan Nair are more psychological than sociological in treatment.

Writers who created a balance between these two aspects became classics in the world of fiction. Vaikom Muhammed Basheer is always a well read writer in Malayalam Literature as he is noted for this fine balance. In the Western scenario Tolstoy can be positioned as the one writer with this kind of a balancing between social and psychological elements in the stuff of fiction. As he is popularly known to be, he is the master of psychological realism in European fiction.

As the novels *Anna Karenina, War and Peace* and *Resurrection* thematically progress we find Tolstoy bringing about a psychological probe into these novel's heroines Anna, Natasha and Maslova respectively and the

social conditions that design their destiny and the response of these heroines to such a social destiny. Marriage as a social institution has been problematised in these three novels, the pros and cons of the system have been put into the readers attention in a detached objectivity by Tolstoy. Though the author's personal experiences have contributed much to the composition of these novels, he maintains a detached treatment in the explication of the characters in the novel.

This detachment has been exploited by Tolstoy as an artistic device and Shklovsky the formalist critic in Russian has pointed out that Tolstoy's writings have permanent air of surprising and the unfamiliar. Tolstoy's descriptions' said Shklovsky, "Make it strange". That is to say we are present as readers at a party, or at a ballet, as a child might be present, seeing everything not in its conventional familiar shapes as an adult sees, but as a primary phenomenon ,strange or wonderful or terrifying.

Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina, War and Peace* and *Resurrection* abound in illustrations of these defamiliarizations through out, and sometimes in his didactic way he makes a special point out of it. When Natasha in *War and Peace* goes to the ballet for the first time she cannot find the point of a man in comic tights waving his legs about; it all seems to her affected and ridiculous. But from other people's reactions, and from what she hears and is told, she soon comes to accept the normal evaluation and appreciation of art. In this context she has learnt quickly to be no longer natural or child like.

As it is mentioned above marriage becomes a major concern in any analysis of Tolstoy's fiction. In *Anna Karenina, War and Peace* and *Resurrection* he shows himself as an expert on marriage, and all the marriages he describes so well are based on his own direct and indirect personal experience, not even excluding the loveless marriage of Anna and her husband in *Anna Karenina* and her long and finally fatal liaison with Vronsky. Tolstoy knew it all from the inside. For writers in the midst of 19 century marriage was virtually an unexplored territory, and it was Tolstoy's greatest strength as a writer to be an inflexibly curious explorer of what such things in human life were really like.

In *War and Peace* too, the role of love and marriage in shaping the design of the novel. *War and Peace* as everyone knows, is the archetypal nineteenth-century blockbuster. It is an epic study of birth, marriage, life and death set against the background of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, the sacking of Moscow, and his tragic retreat in 1812. Tolstoy does a very good job of depicting war as a shambolic mess, and he is successful in undermining the idea that historical events are shaped by Great Men.

In the light of Tolstoy's novels we see marriage as the career goal of the Russian woman, though she would find it ultimately a restrictive, confining institution. Among nobility, matches were often arranged through parents, who chose husbands from the same class or better, seeking aristocratic backgrounds that would add to a family's social and financial status. Character was of lesser importance, if considered at all. It was not

uncommon for women to select their own husbands, though they were expected to choose from upper class men they met at social occasions such as parties and balls organized by relatives for that purpose. Once married, a wife's duties were to take care of her husband, preside over the household, and bear children. The 1836 Code of Russian Laws stated, "The woman must obey her husband, reside with him in love, respect, and unlimited obedience, and offer him every pleasantness and affection as the ruler of the household." Husbands determined when their wives traveled, conducted business, studied with tutors (perhaps French or literature, though not in academic terms), or gained employment (extremely rare). Many dictated daily activities, such as deciding when wives could leave the house. Children were the property of a woman's husband, even if she had a child with another man via an adulterous affair.

Tolstoy argued out his stance in contrastive frame work in his fictional universe. He contrasted Anna's search for meaning in life with that of Levin, the Tolstoy stand in character. And Tolstoy did something shocking for his time: He made Anna , an adulteress and a sympathetic character. Anna wasn't unhappy because she disobeyed her insufferable, stifling husband and had to be punished; she was unhappy because she didn't find, in Tolstoy's eyes, meaningful love. Tolstoy believed, at the time he wrote *Anna Karenina*, that true love and happiness could be achieved only through a marriage of equals. Anna finds temporary happiness outside marriage; ultimately, however, her lack of independence and social inequality within an adulterous relationship

causes her grief. Tolstoy contrasts Anna's story with his character Levin, an enlightened man who succeeded in his quest for meaning in life by choosing a wife he considered his partner rather than his subordinate. Throughout the book, Tolstoy shed much light on hypocrisy in society, particularly the double standard under which men could stray in marriage without punishment whereas women could not. He also described a "don't ask, don't tell" policy among many high born adulterers, including discreet women who cast Anna out of their circle for actions similar to their own.

Though the Russian male writers like Tolstoy were the most public voices arguing for legal and social equality between the sexes, female reformers began to organize around mid-century. The groups that emerged are often divided by historians into three categories: feminists, nihilists, and radicals. Most members of all three groups were from the upper class, though the growing stream of women into the workplace after the liberation of the serfs and the start of the industrial age saw a slow but steady change in social status among female reformers.

Feminists sought not revolution, but legal equality and reform by women on behalf of women. They achieved much: charity for poverty stricken women, the eventual opening of universities and medical schools to women, and self-direction in a country that saw little. Mostly nobility, they believed specifically in greater independence for women of their own class, with assistance to women in lower classes. The resistance of women

characters in Tolstoy has been lauded to be feminist in a conceptual plain though not ideological one.

Such a social problem we find in *Anna Karenina* more powerfully than in *War and peace* and *Resurrection. Anna Karenina* is, perhaps, considered as a whole, a more artistic work than *War and Peace*; the very fact that its scope is less gigantic permits Tolstoy to make it clearer and more concentrated; everything is directed towards the one end the tragic death of Anna and though the novel has an under plot, that is very skillfully blend with the main plot, and is everywhere kept subordinate. Anna Karenina is much less distinctively Russian and rational than War and Peace; it shows very plainly the influence of the French novel, and its plot is of the type that French novelists are fond of selecting, though the moral intensity with which Tolstoy invests it is unusual with them. Notwithstanding the power and beauty of its telling, it seems, however, somewhat restricted when compared to the vast spaces and terrific issues of *War and Peace*, where individual tragedies, however great, are forgotten in the crisis of a nation.

Anna Karenina is a great novel, but no one would dream of saying that it suggested Homer. It is a domestic tragedy only, but, like Shakespeare in Othello, Tolstoy has known how to make his domestic tragedy a revelation of the heights and depths, of the passionate potentialities of the human soul. Tolstoy openly refrains from judging his heroine, and it is a mistake to consider *Anna Karenina* as being essentially a protest against the breaking of the marriage bond.

Tolstoy does believe in the indissolubility of marriage, but the book is just as much a protest against the dangers of marriage without love or the cruel injustice of society. The truth is that it is a picture of life, and expresses, as Tolstoy acutely says an artistic work always should, a moral relation rather than a moral judgment. Anna Karenina, is, of all Tolstoy's heroines, the most perfect human being; she is a mature woman, possessed of wit, grace, and beauty, and above all, the gift of sympathy; she is one of those people who have strong affections, who love profoundly and appreciate readily all that is best in others, who are also possessed of keen intellectual powers, but who live mainly from impulse and not from principle. Such people are, perhaps, the most attractive characters in the world, and their impulses, springing from a warm heart, are usually right: but it is their peril that, in moments of moral stress, their emotions may be too much for them, and may fatally mislead them. There is a certain resemblance, though not too close, between Anna and Natasha Rostov; both possess the poetic and emotional temperament; they add, wherever they are, to the romance of life; it may be noted too that, though Natasha's fate is happier, that is due mainly to accident, and not to her own achievement, for she twice escaped the ruin of her life only by the intervention of others, and she also came very near to death by her own hand. There is no surer proof of Anna's sweetness than the charm she possesses for members of her own sex. She appreciates the beauty of the young girl who is her unconscious rival, Kitty Shcherbatsky, and she can enter into the family griefs and troubles of Kitty's sister Dolly, who, although most virtuous herself, clings to Anna through all her ostracism. Even the frivolous and

immoral Betsky Tverskaia is grieved to the heart when her own cowardice compels her to desert Anna.

Even before the heroine enters the story the effect of her presence is felt. Her brother who, owing to a matrimonial infidelity, has quarreled with his wife, looks to her as his only hope; he and Dolly both love her dearly, and they hope that she may find for them a way out of the intolerable situation; she does, in fact, prevent the breakup of the home, though she cannot (and this is another example of Tolstoy's quiet ironic truth) either reform her brother or leave Dolly really happy. Tender and sympathetic as Anna at once shows herself to be, she has yet a void in her own life. When quite a young girl she had been married to a government official, Aleksei Karenin, who held an important position but who was twenty years her senior, stiff, dry, and cold; the marriage was entirely due to the intrigues of Anna's clever and unscrupulous aunt. Anna has one child, her son Seryozha, and in the effort to fill her life completely with her maternal affection, she has almost made it an affectation. Though she herself hardly suspects it, the real emotional capacities of her nature have never been developed. It is a stroke of tragic irony that Anna, who comes to Moscow to avert the destruction of her brother's home, should find there what is to prove the ruin of her own. She meets Count Aleksei Vronsky young, handsome, attractive. Vronsky has been regarded by everyone, including Kitty herself, as the suitor of Kitty Shcherbatsky, but he is not deeply stirred, and, the moment he meets Anna, he yields to her far greater charm. Had there been the slightest disrespect in

Vronsky's attentions, Anna would have known how to defend herself, but Vronsky is perfectly reverent. His family, on discovering the intrigue, considers Anna simply as an amusement for Vronsky, but he himself has never regarded her in that light; from the first moment he has loved her seriously and profoundly, with all the strength of his nature. Against all the ordinary infidelities, the light and cheap loves of the society in which she lives, Anna is immune, but she is helplessly ensnared by this love, so immediate that she has no tune to be on her guard, so tender and reverent that she cannot feel insulted. The reader is, at first, somewhat inclined to resent Anna's overwhelming passion, and to consider Vronsky as commonplace, he seems so much the typical military dandy, his whole life's aim (as he vows even to himself) being the desire to be come in fault in everything in dress, speech, manners, and sentiments. He attempts to make his passion for Madame Karenina fit in the conventional framework, but Vronsky is finer than he himself suspects; he really is what Anna had, at the first glimpse, divined to be her nature's destined mate; under the exterior of the St. Petersburg dandy, he conceals a nature capable of extraordinary generosities and the most enduring devotion. He realises all the charm of Anna's nature; he realises that her heart is as yet unawakened and that he has the power to arouse it; there is nothing in his moral code to hold him back; he and his society consider the pursuit of a married woman as being quite futile.. Our first real surprise with regard to Vronsky does not occur in his relations to Anna, but comes when we discover that he has, with almost quixotic generosity, sacrificed the greater part of his fortune in favour of his younger

brother, for no reason except that his brother wished to marry into a distinguished family, and the fortune would greatly aid. With the same generosity, Vronsky, when he discovers the need, makes real sacrifices for Anna. He had at first regarded his passion for her as being only an additional joy in life, entailing no responsibility; but Tolstoy, with his unerring accuracy, shows that the responsibilities of an illicit love are not only as great as those of a legal one, but far more difficult and galling, because society, having ordained the responsibilities of marriage, assists the individual to execute them, whereas, in the other case, it incessantly hinders and impedes. Vronsky is compelled either to leave Anna or to sacrifice his ambition, hitherto the dearest thing in his life, and he gives up his ambition.

Matthew Arnold, in his criticisms on *Anna Karenina*, remarks that it is difficult to imagine an Englishwoman yielding herself as readily as Anna to an illicit love. But we may doubt if this is not a piece of British Phraisism, for an emotional Englishwoman, living in a society as corrupt as Anna's (and many periods of English society have been as corrupt), would probably yield in the same way. Tolstoy, with his usual insight, has shown us how natural this yielding really is. Anna, though quite young, is well accustomed to marital infidelity; her own brother's, though it distresses, does not shock her ; moreover, in the character of this brother, Stepan, we have a subtle side-light thrown upon Anna's; Stepan is a far inferior type, but there is undoubtedly a family affinity. Stepan is affectionate, kind-hearted, and cheerful; wherever he goes he is thoroughly liked; but he altogether fails to realise his

obligations, even to those he loves, and in Anna's nature, incomparably more refined, there is, none the less, a touch of the same carelessness. Anna's husband is not the person to exercise any restraining influence. Tolstoy never agrees with the wife's conception of him as a mere official machine, but he makes us understand how inevitable it is that Anna should take such a view.

Karenin is cold by nature, and, in her sense of the word, he has never really loved her; her relations with Vronsky do not so much wound and grieve his affections (Anna could readily understand that), but they fill him with an overmastering fear for his dignity, his place in society, and, to an idealist like Anna, this very fear appears as contemptible. The course of the long, ever-changing drama between these three is traced with acutest psychological skill. Anna yields to her lover only after long solicitation, and with an instant shame and regret; for a tune she hides the truth from Karenin, but concealment of any sort is hateful to her candor, and soon becomes impossible; she is present at a dangerous steeple-chase when Vronsky is thrown, and her emotion is so manifest that her husband rebukes her; she gives way to her own passionate desire for truth, and, notwithstanding her bitter humiliation, acknowledges her infidelity. She hopes that the confession will end an intolerable situation, but her hope is disappointed; her husband simply forbids her to receive Vronsky in his house, and Anna finds that one insufferable situation has only given place to another still worse; to deceive Karenin was a torture, but to live on terms of cold hostility with him, seeing her lover by stealth, is even more wretched. Karenin meditates a divorce, but neither Anna nor he really desires

it; he cannot bear to yield her entirely to Vronsky, and Anna knows that it would mean a final separation from her son. In the meantime Vronsky is sacrificing his whole career in order to remain in St. Petersburg. Anna longs for death, and nature seems about to send it; her daughter Vronsky's child is born, and for a week she hangs between life and death. In her extremity her mind is oppressed by remorse for the suffering she has caused her husband; she entreats his forgiveness, and with great compassion he does, really and genuinely, forgive; he even consents to be reconciled to Vronsky, and, at Anna's bedside, they clasp hands. But destiny reveals its customary irony. Tolstoy, we may remark, is as firm a believer in tragic irony as any of the Greeks. The touching reconciliation is based really upon one condition that Anna dies and this does not happen. Moreover she, who had, for a moment, exalted her husband above her lover, soon finds the balance redressed. Vronsky discovers himself in a position for which his philosophy has no remedy; instead of being the triumphant lover he finds himself a humiliated offender, pardoned by the man whom he had most grievously injured; there was also the terrible anguish of believing Anna's death inevitable. Vronsky shoots himself, bungles it, and is wounded seriously though not fatally. His attempted suicide is, in part, a supreme sacrifice to his doctrine of come in fault an attempt to escape humiliation and ridicule, in part a manifestation of the feeling, so strong it amazes even himself, that life without Anna is impossible. But Anna recovers; Vronsky’s attempted suicide has turned her sympathies almost wholly to him, and when once she is convalescent (here again is the tragic irony) she finds her husband as tiresome and tedious as

before. Vronsky and Anna end the intolerable situation by taking flight. For a time all seems well with them; after so many brief and stolen interviews, so many harsh separations, they find it unalloyed bliss to be together without let or hindrance; they spend in Italy an ideally happy honeymoon. But Tolstoy's art is inexorable, as inexorable as life. Neither Vronsky nor Anna can remain content in isolation; they are both rich and generous natures, meant for fruitful intercourse with their fellows, and they cannot, in their position, obtain either suitable society or suitable duties. Vronsky has resigned his military profession, which he really loved, and for which he was admirably adapted ; he does his best to find occupation in other ways; in Italy he attempts art, but soon discovers that he is a mere dilettante, wasting his efforts and his time. They return to Russia, and he devotes himself to the duties of a landed proprietor, becoming quite reasonably successful. So far as he himself is concerned Vronsky could get along, but he is stabbed through his affection for Anna; the really intolerable burden of the situation falls upon her; men will associate with her, but not her own sex; she is ostracized from the society of good women, and even women who are, morally speaking, infinitely her inferiors venture to insult her ; moreover she knows that Vronsky's mother tries to enrich him away from her and get him married; she has had to resign her son, and the thought of his destiny, misunderstood, and perhaps neglected, tortures and grieves her. She attempts to obtain a divorce from Karenin, so that her position can be regularized, but her husband, fallen under the sway of a malevolent woman, refuses. Thrown, as she is, entirely upon Vronsky's honour, she is desperately jealous; every hour

that he spends away from her is an anguish, and she is continually tortured by the fear of desertion; conscious that her jealousy exasperates and alienates him, she is still unable to control it.

Vronsky is really a gentleman, and he has true and deep love; he shows great consideration, but the incessant scenes of jealousy followed by passion and passion followed by jealousy strain his patience to the breaking-point. At length, having tried, as he thinks, everything else, he believes that the only way left is to try indifference; Anna, however, is on the edge of the abyss, and his coldness drives her over. Vronsky is absent for the day; in terror at her own despair she sends him a note, beseeching him to return; he answers coldly that he will be back at the appointed time, and, yielding to her anguish, she flings herself beneath a train.

All Anna's feelings at this crisis of her fate are depicted with the deepest truth and tragedy. The unhappy creature herself knows whether she is tending, and struggles frantically, but her views of life grow ever more and more gloomy; hatred of herself, hatred of her lover, well up in her heart, and, at last, her only desire is to punish him". 'There,' she said, looking at the shadow of the carriage thrown upon the black coal dust which covered the sleepers, ' there, in the centre, he will be punished and I shall be delivered from it all ... and from myself.' “Her little red traveling bag caused her to miss the moment when she could throw herself under the wheels of the first carriage, as she was unable to detach it from her arm. She awaited the second. A feeling like that she had once experienced just before taking a dive

in the river came over her, and she made the sign of the cross. This familiar action awakened in her soul a crowd of memories of youth and childhood. Life, with its elusive joys, glowed for an instant before her, but she did not remove her eyes from the carriage, and when the centre part, between the wheels, appeared, she threw away her red bag, lowered her head upon her shoulders, and, with outstretched hands, threw herself on her knees beneath the vehicle, as though prepared to rise again. She had time to feel afraid. 'Where am I? What am I doing? Why? ‘Thought she, trying "to draw back; but a great inflexible mass struck her head and threw her on her back. 'Lord! Forgive me all,' she murmured, feeling the struggle to be in vain. A little muzhik, who was mumbling in his beard, leant from the step of the carriage on to the line. "And the light which, for the unfortunate one, had lit up the book of life with its troubles, its deceptions, and its pains rending the darkness, shone with greater brightness, then flickered, grew faint, and went out for ever". On Vronsky the terrible punishment takes effect; he rejoins the service a crushed and broken man, having henceforward only one desire to lose his life in battle.

Mingled with the main story of Anna and Vronsky is the companion one or "under plot" of Kitty and Konstantin Levin. We may notice that Tolstoy's method of construction differs essentially from that of Turgeniov; Turgeniov, making his work briefer and more concentrated, omits all that is not essential to his main theme, but Tolstoy amiss at giving, not so much the drama of life itself. He wishes to show us the slow, deliberate motion of

reality, and when in Anna's life there are no events, he fills up the space with the acts and experiences of his other characters. Kitty Shcherbatsky's story is very simple: she at first refuses Levin, believing herself in love with Vronsky; he, however, deserts her for Anna; she is cruelly mortified, passes through a period of ill-health and depression, but Levin ultimately returns, she marries him, and they are happy. Kitty is a charming girl, but her character seems slight and even common place beside the depth and richness and passion of Anna's ; the two heroines in this book do not balance so well as in War and Peace, though Tolstoy has most skillfully used them as foils to each other, and helped, by their mutual relations, to reveal then characters; thus there is no stronger proof of Anna's wonderful charm than the fact that Kitty, who has hated her, both from jealousy and because she thinks her wicked, has only to meet her in order to be overwhelmed by love and compassion.

Konstantin Levin is, in some ways, more interesting than Vronsky; he has a much more complex mental development. It is agreed that Levin represents, to some extent, Tolstoy himself points out resemblance are many and close; Levin works among his peasants just as Tolstoy did, mowing and reaping in the fields, rejoicing in the health and activity of such a life, and in the lovely pictures of nature that it reveals. Levin's proposal to his wife follows, detail by detail, Tolstoy's proposal to Sophie Behr’s; the death of Levin's brother from consumption is like the death of Tolstoy's even the name is the same Nicolas; Levin, like Tolstoy, is happy in his family life, but is, nevertheless, so greatly distressed by religious doubts and difficulties that he

is driven almost to suicide. The resemblance being so strong, it is noteworthy and significant that Tolstoy has painted Levin as a great egoist. He is a good fellow at heart, and the reader is thoroughly interested in his mental development, but his egoism is so strong that it continually exasperates and annoys. When Kitty refuses him, Levin is deeply wounded in his affections, but still more hurt in his pride; he cannot get over the fact that Levin has been "refused by a Shcherbatsky," and feels as if the whole world must be cognizant of his disgrace in fact he becomes really comic. Again, when he hears from her sister that Kitty's affection for Vronsky was really very slight, that her only real regret is the alienation from him, he will not even call at the house and this though he knows that the whole Vronsky entanglement was due mainly to his own eccentric behaviour. Even when he is married he is incessantly and unnecessarily jealous of his wife, and always, on the slightest pretext, tormenting her with this jealousy.

This irritable self consciousness is shown no less strikingly in his relations with men who, although they esteem his integrity and talents, find it exceedingly difficult to like him. The same self consciousness makes him clumsy in society, and, when he has to act with other people in public business, he grows caustic and angry because they do not agree with him in everything. The worst egoism of all occurs in his attitude towards his dying brother. When he sees his brother visibly perishing from consumption, he pities him deeply, but, none the less, his chief concern lies in the thought that this horrible and degrading misfortune of illness and death will one day befall

himself; he positively disturbs the invalid in the night how terrible to break that hard-won sleep of the consumptive by rising to look in the glass, dreading to find that he has wrinkles and grey hairs and is growing old. When he and Kitty attend Nikolai's death-bed we see the strongest possible contrast between the unselfish courage of the young wife, thinking only of the sick man, and doing everything possible for him, and the distressing egoism of Levin, who is filled with fear, disgust, and almost anger at the sight of death". Levin, though terrified at the thought of lifting this frightful body under the coverlet, submitted to his wife's influence, and put his arms around the invalid, with that resolute air she knew so well " : and again, "The sight of the sick man paralysed him; he did not know what to say, how to look or move about. . . . Kitty apparently did not think about herself, and she had not the tune. Occupied only with the invalid, she seemed to have a clear idea of what to do; and she succeeded in her endeavor". *Anna Karenina* shows already that fear of death which is such an obsession in Tolstoy's later works. In *War and Peace* he takes the soldier's view of it, as something almost trifling in comparison with greater matters; his noble Prince Andrei grieves over many things, but neither the utmost extremity of peril, nor the anguish of his gangrened wound, nor the immediate presence of dissolution can shake discourage or dismay his soul. It is different with the pitiful, almost animal terror of death shown by poor Nikolai Levin and it plays an increasing part in Tolstoy's mind until, as he describes in My Confession, it becomes an obsession which occupies the whole of his mind, and from which he can only shake himself free by an entire conversion. Even then, like a mediaeval

monk, he allows the thought of death to colour almost the whole of life. The truth is that he thinks too much of it.

Tolstoy had reached, more than once, the height of the heroic age. It is a pity his soul ever condescended to our modern and craven fear of death. The canvas of Anna Karenina is rich in minor characters, almost as excellently drawn as the main one. Stepan, Anna's brother, has been already referred to; he is an ironically complete portrait of the man of the world, drawn with a Thackerayan lightness and zest. There are not, as a rule, many resemblances between Thackerayand Tolstoy, for Tolstoy is so much the deeper, but the portrait of Stepan might have come from the same pen as that of Major Pendants. Stepan is always kind, but his kindness is as purely constitutional as a good digestion. He is faithless to his wife, not once nor twice, but habitually; he deserts the "adorable" women who confide themselves to his protection; he claims an excellent post, and thinks he has fulfilled all its duties by keeping himself invariably well-dressed; he is, of course, a connoisseur in meats and wines, and, however well-spread the table may be, must always show his fastidiousness by ordering something else. He is very generous, and pays all his debts of honour, but the money for this has to be found by his unfortunate family, who economies even in the necessities of life; one summer they spend their time in a miserable tumbledown house; next year, as the place is positively uninhabitable, they are driven to take refuge with the Levins. But it does not grieve Stepan that Konstantin Levin should support Stepan’s wife and six children; he doubtless thinks that Levin

enjoys that sort of thing as much as he Stepan the spending of money. Yet Stepan is invariably liked, for he will do a good turn for anyone if he can, and is always tactful and sympathetic. If Tolstoy has drawn a candid and unflattering picture of his own type of egoism in Konstantin Levin, he has drawn in Stepan a portrait of the other type of egoism the amiable, Epicurean type which is still more drastically complete. Stepan's wife Dolly, sister to Kitty Shcherbatsky is a thoroughly natural and lovable creature; terribly disillusioned by her husband's infidelity, she is yet persuaded, for the children's sake, to forgive him and reunite the family; she bears with endless patience the worries his extravagance entails, and copes single handed with the debts and the six children. It is hardly surprising if, at moments, she murmurs, and is almost inclined to think that the people who lead irregular lives (like Anna) have the best of it; it is only after a visit to Anna and Vronsky that she realises her own blessings, and understands that the tortures of a dissatisfied conscience are worse even than debts and a faithless husband. Dolly, however, stands by Anna in all her misfortunes; while women full of secret sins insult Anna in public, Dolly, the irreproachably virtuous, loves her to the end.

Aleksei Karenin, the husband of Anna is brought before us in all his reality. We see the ugliness which so exasperates Anna the ears that stick out straight, the habit of cracking the finger-joints and we realise his cold vanity. And yet it is impossible not to be sorry for Karenin; he suffers a veritable martyrdom; that which he dreads worse than death ridicule overwhelms him

at all points; he is crushed by the undeserved contempt of his fellows. Tolstoy shows us how little Anna's persecution was dictated by morality, for the cruelty accorded to the guiltless husband is just as great. For a moment, when Karenin pardons Anna and Vronsky, he rises to real heroism, but it is a height to which he cannot keep; the poor man really is, as Anna well knew, a pretentious mediocrity; he is found out as a husband, found out as an official, found out even as a martyr; for a brief space, after the scene of the pardon, the reader is inclined to feel as if Karenin had been all along misjudged, but he returns to his usual self. When Anna has left him he falls under the influence of the stupidly sentimental Lidia Ivanovna; he becomes a convert to the most foolish form of spiritualism, submits Anna's fate to the decision of a medium, and refuses her a divorce because the medium pronounces against it a course of procedure so extravagantly silly that it amazes even Stepan.

There are in the book many amusing and caustic portraits. One group Lidia Ivanovna, Betsky, the Princess Miagkaia, and Veslovsky might have come from the pen of some eighteenth century Tsarist; they have a Sheridan like keenness and lightness of touch. Lidia Ivanovna, especially, is excellent: she is a sentimentalist of the rankest type; having disgusted her own husband within a fortnight of marriage, she has ever since been incessantly conceiving romantic affections for one distinguished person after another; most of them are completely unconscious of her adoration, others ignore it, and the remainder are supremely bored; in poor deserted Karenin she finds at last a

responsive object for her sentimentality and brings about, indirectly, Anna's tragedy.

In *Resurrection* we are taken to the same social issue in a different angle. Throughout the novel is one of the most real women in Tolstoy's fiction. As the pages turn in Maslova, we see every detail of her appearance the white skin, the black curb over her forehead, the eyes black as sloes and slightly squinting, the expression of willingness with which she turns to anyone who addresses her. It is strange how Tolstoy insists on that detail of the "slightly squinting" eyes; it haunts us as it must have haunted Nekhlyudov. And her mind and heart are as real as her bodily personality. Tolstoy, as we have seen, always did possess a characters marvelous power of maintaining a consistent personality while permitting his to change and develop, but nowhere else has he shown it in a manner quite so magical.

From the pure romantic young girl to the prostitute, from the prostitute to the woman redeemed and sweetened and saved his heroine is still herself throughout. It is in the hero that Tolstoy's talent for once fails him, since Nekhlyudov is too obviously only a mouthpiece for Tolstoy's own reflections. We could understand him if the change in him were essentially a spiritual one similar to that in Maslova, but what Tolstoy has portrayed is rather a profound intellectual dissatisfaction, so deep and so far reaching that it could only have been experienced by a man of the greatest intellectual and moral power, a man of genius, while there is nothing in Nekhlyudov's previous life to suggest that he was in any way out of the ordinary. He is too slight to undergo the

tremendous mental experiences of a Tolstoy, and we cannot believe that he does; nevertheless, the experiences remain, and tremendous they are. *Resurrection* is an indictment of the whole of society as we know it now, and it is impossible to read it without the gravest searching of the heart.

It is true that some of the most serious counts in the indictment apply mainly to Russia. More than with the West, Russian society is divided into two great classes the rich who have everything and are idle, and the poor, who have nothing and labour; in England we have in the professional classes and the better artisans' numbers who possess a very fair share of the amenities of life and also do valuable work. Again, it is impossible to say of any large class in our prisons, what Tolstoy says of the Russian political prisoners: that they get there because they are the best members of the community, more intelligent, more unselfish, and more courageous than their fellows. Still, when all allowances are made, the greater part of Tolstoy's indictment lies good against the whole of modern society: in all countries there are classes ruined by idleness, leading lives which, as Tolstoy says, are "a mania of selfishness", consuming in senseless luxury the toil of thousands. Everywhere there are other classes, degraded by poverty and misery, which spend then: whole lives in labour, and reap for themselves hardly any of the benefits of their toil. Everywhere men permit many thousands of people to become criminals simply because they are helpless and defective, and then, when they have made them criminals, debase and torture them further by imprisonment. Tolstoy is convinced from the bottom of his heart that the

whole penal system is cruel, savage, and unjust, and it is almost impossible to read him without feeling the same. He is certain that the majority of men are naturally good, and that the so-called "wicked" are either the victims of our social system, or else of a physical and mental weakness they cannot control. It is easy to object to the "sordid realism" of *Resurrection*, and to declaim against its morbidness and misery, but this morbidness and misery are not Tolstoy's fault; they are inherent in the social system which we, all of us, uphold and, in wishing to escape from them, we are trying to escape from the consequences of our own acts and principles. To use one of Tolstoy's own phrases, he "rubs our noses" into the mess we have made of civilization; he makes us realise the horrors in which our depths abound the vice, the dirt, the foul obscenity, the vermin and people who think that great literature exists merely to amuse and soothe object with furious vehemence.

The great heart of the writer is stung with anger and pity and shame that men our brothers should be so debased and tortured. He is goaded to madness by this outrage on our common humanity, this insult to God. Tolstoy is a realist because he has the courage to face facts as they are, because he believes that the cause of true morality is never served by evasions and concealment, because this concealment is, in itself, one of the chief allies of vice. Though a realist, Tolstoy is not, in essence, a pessimist. There is more real pessimism in one chapter of Thackeray than in the whole of *Resurrection*, for Thackeray thinks men despicable, and despairs of their being otherwise. Tolstoy, like Rousseau before him, is convinced that human

beings are naturally good, and that, if human nature becomes base, it is only because it has slipped from the divine ideal, the spark of God, which exists in each one of us. Like his Master, Tolstoy is assured of the redeeming power of penitence and tenderness. Our redemption may come to us from within, through the struggles of our own soul, or by the aid of another, but it is always accompanied by sweetness and compassion; loving kindness is the true centre of our being; the supreme sin the sin against the Holy Spirit is to transgress, no matter for what motive, the law of love in our dealings with our fellows. Our so-called "principles" and “ideals" do not excuse us; any ideal, whether patriotism or justice or honour or religion, becomes reprehensible when it makes man.

His greatness as a writer came precisely from his quiet unusual power of personifying contradiction. He loved the society and he hated it. He believed in pacifism and non resistance, but could himself be the most arrogant and quarrelsome of men. He was in every way a profound conservative, and yet he was sure that the future must be transformed by a whole new philosophy of peace, progress and love.