

WHAT I BELIEVE.

BY
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TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN

BY
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LONDON :
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1885.

PREFACE.

THE name of Count Leon Tolstoi stands high in the annals of his country's literature, as the author of 'War and Peace,' and of 'Anna Karenine.' His memory will be cherished and his works will be read by later generations, long after the author is no more. But none will remember him with such devoted affection as will the privileged few who have watched his life and labours during the last seven years. During this period he has withdrawn from the world and its vanities, and has devoted himself to the study of the teachings of Christ. Having become profoundly impressed with the Saviour's words concerning the duty of living a life of unselfish toil for the benefit of others, he has been endeavouring in a practical way to carry out his Master's commands, and has devoted himself to ministering to his fellows.

In these pages he sets forth the principles by which he is now ordering his life, and which he exhorts all men to adopt. The work has unfortunately been forbidden in Russia, but the manuscripts pass from hand to hand, doing their silent work of regeneration in the hearts of those who long for the coming of the kingdom of God on earth.

To English readers the construction of the work may appear somewhat strange, and occasional statements may even seem startling: but though they may not be expressed in the conventional language to which the nations of England and America are accustomed, the right principles are inculcated; and it is the translator's earnest hope that Count Tolstoi's words may find an echo in the hearts of all those who believe in the regeneration of humanity through the spirit and teachings of Christ.

C. POPOFF.

WHAT I BELIEVE.



INTRODUCTION.

I AM five-and-fifty years old, and, with the exception of the fourteen or fifteen years of my childhood, I have been until recently a 'Nihilist' in the proper signification of that term. I have not been a Socialist or a Revolutionist, but a Nihilist in the sense of being completely without faith.

Five years ago I began to believe in the doctrine of Christ, and in consequence a great change has been wrought in me. I now no longer care for the things which I had prized, and I have begun to desire things concerning which I had formerly been indifferent. Like a man who, going out on business, on his way suddenly becomes convinced of the futility of that business, and turns back; and all that stood to the right now stands to the left, and all that was to the left is now to the right; his wish to be as far from home as possible, is changed to the desire of being as near home as possible—so, I may say, the whole aim and purpose of my life has been changed; my desires are no more what they have been: for me,