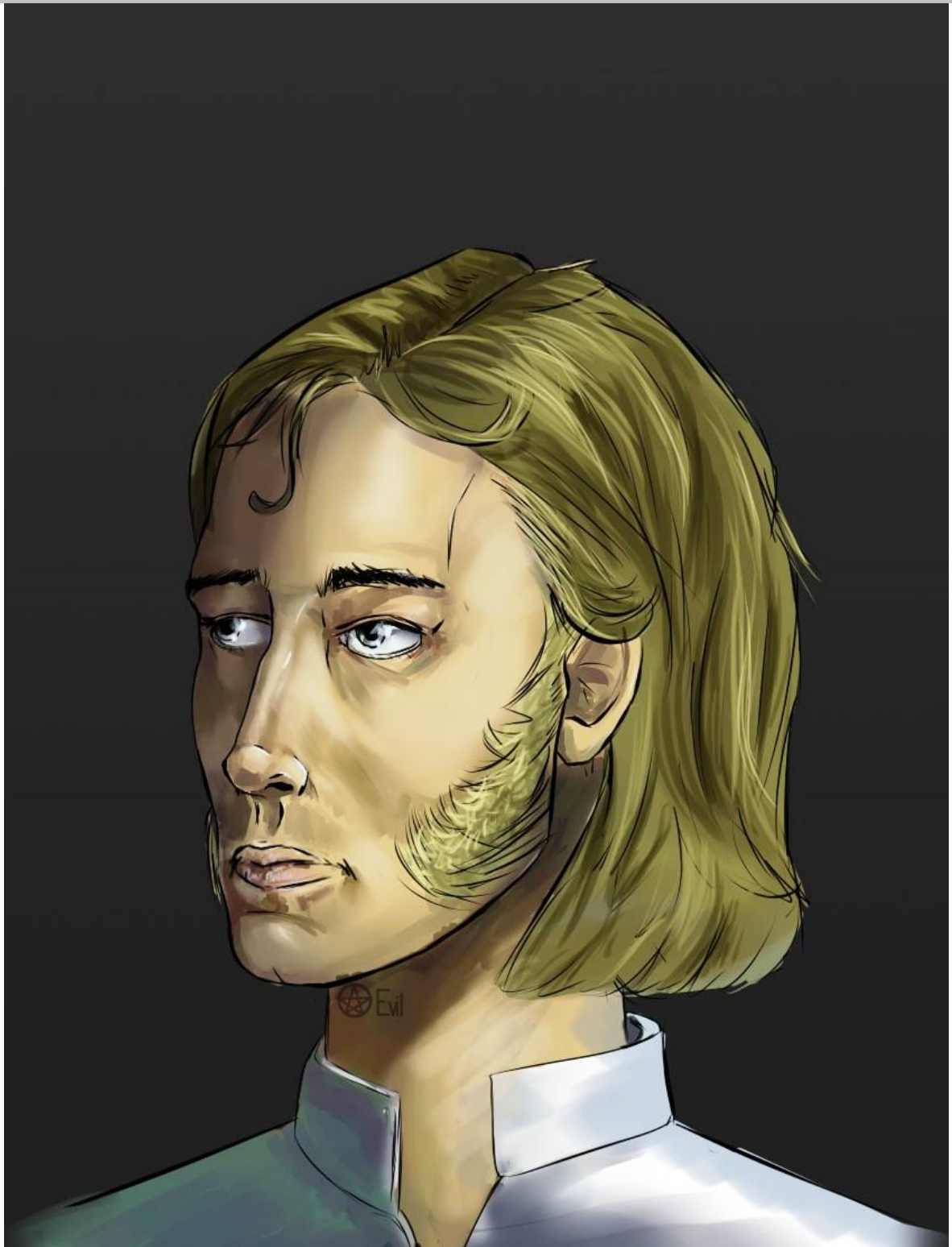


*Not a single tear of
hallowed love is fruitless*



With a tale forsooth he cometh unto you,
with a tale which holdeth children from play,
and old men from the chimney corner.

— SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

An excerpt from Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (more correctly, *Fathers and Children*), 1862, translated from the Russian by Charles James Hogarth. First published by the Everyman Library in 1921, by London & Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd; and in New York, by E.P. Dutton & Co. With Introduction by Ernest Rhys, herein reproduced. Reprinted by Wordsworth Edition Ltd., in 1996, with an Introduction and Notes by Dr Lionel Kelly of the University of Reading, added in 2003.

The protagonist in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* is Evgenii Vasilitch Bazarov, a young provincial doctor, habitually eristic, emotionally vacuous, more of a cynic than a seeker of wisdom and truth.

“Long and thin [face], with a high forehead which looked flattened at the top and became sharpened towards the nose; the face had large, greenish eyes and long, sandy whiskers.”¹

Dr. Lionel Kelly, in his Introduction to the Wordsworth Edition, says:

“Turgenev equips Bazarov with a full register of attitudes appropriate to the revolutionary, from his iconoclastic politics through to his code of sexual opportunism.”

Throughout his young and tortuous life Bazarov was afflicted by the pernicious fever of scepticism. He finally succumbed to typhoid fever contracted during the post-mortem examination of a patient:

“To-day I went to the village whence they brought the typhus patient the other day; and though they tried to conceal the body, I succeeded in discovering it. Not for a long time had I had a chance of doing that sort of work.”

We here present the last two paragraphs from Turgenev's influential classic, where Bazarov's parents, Vasili Ivanitch, a devoted father with “a heart of gold,” and Arina Vlasievna Bazarova, a loving wife and mother “with an overflowing heart,” are praying at their son's grave.

CAROL SHELBOURNE

Series Editor

¹ [Frontispiece by Art-by-Evil]

MYSTIC VERSE AND INSIGHTS SERIES
NOT A SINGLE TEAR OF HALLOWED LOVE IS FRUITLESS



Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev (1874) by Ilya Yefimovich Repin

Introduction to “Fathers and Sons” by Ernest Rhys

In this masterly unromantic novel, Turgenev drew a character, Bazarov, who served to express what he taught us to call Nihilism, and made a movement into a man. In Russia itself the effect of the story was astonishing. The portrait of Bazarov was immediately and angrily resented as a cold travesty. The portraits of the “back-woodsmen,” or retired aristocrats, fared no better. Turgenev had indeed roused the ire of both sides, only too surely.

The Petrovitchs, typical figures as he designed them of the Russian nobility, were intended he confessed to “breathe feebleness, nonchalance, narrowness of mind.” His sense of fitness made him paint with extreme care these choice representatives of their class. They were the pick, and if they were humanly ineffective, what of their weaker kind? “Si la crème est mauvaise, que sera le lait?” as he put it. The bitterest criticism came, however, from the side of the revolutionaries and incompatibles. They felt in Turgenev the sharper artistry and the intimate irony as if he had only used these qualities in dealing with the specific case of Bazarov; whereas they were temperamental effects of his narrative art. He was ready to assert himself one of the party of youth. He was at one with Bazarov, he declared, in nearly all his ideas, a chief exception being Bazarov’s ideas on art, which in truth are apt to be more crudely delivered than the rest of that iconoclast’s destructive opinions. Bazarov, he said once and again, was his favourite child.

It is nearly forty years now (in 1921) since the novel appeared in *The Russian Messenger*, a weekly which was the recognised exponent of the new movement. That proverbial period has lent a softer cast to the lineaments of the people in the group, as time touches the canvas of the pictures in an old country-house gallery. But the [viii] interesting thing is to find that history in the large has terribly and irresistibly confirmed the history in little that Turgenev drew, with a sure instinct, for the potential anticipations of his saga.

But we should be wrong if we mistook its clear pervading realities for those of a tract-novel, or a document of any one particular generation. It is as its title declares in a sense another fable of the inevitable coil and recoil of the two generations. The sympathetic power of Turgenev is shown in his instinctive understanding of them both. An aristocrat by training, he was saved as Tolstoy was from sterilising his imaginative and dramatic powers by any sense of caste and privilege. He loved the play of human nature, knew how to reckon with its foibles, its pride, habitual prejudices, and all tragic and comic susceptibilities. So he drew Bazarov, as a protagonist of the revolt against the old order and the protective habit of age. When Bazarov enters the house of Arkady’s father, he is like Don Quixote entering the inn of his direst probation. If the parallel seems a trifle fantastic, it was yet one that Turgenev would let pass, since he affirmed that Don Quixote himself was, in his inimitable extravagance, a type of the eternal spirit of revolution. And one would like, if there were room for it, to print as preamble to *Fathers and Sons*, the essay in which its writer has compared the deeper essentials of Hamlet and Quixote.

We must be satisfied instead to recall the direct event of the novel, as it falls in his own record. The present writer, some years ago, spent a spring at Ventnor in the Isle

of Wight, and found the house on the sea-brink in which he stayed had been occupied by Turgenev at one time. Then and there it was, in 1860 and at Ventnor, that he had the first idea of this novel; and it is scarcely being too fanciful to think that he imagined the home environment and the spacious vista of the Russian provinces more fondly and more freely, because of his being at a long remove from them in that small and confined seaside nook of Ventnor. Already, we must remember, the liberation of the serf had taken place; and the ferment of liberal ideas was working in the new generation. As we look back, [ix] we see in our wisdom after the event, having realised Turgenev for the novelist he was — an artist who was for ever adjusting the moment to the permanent in art — that it was inevitable he should write this book, this tragi-comedy of age and youth, of the old order and the new, the conserving fathers and the revolutionary sons.

E. R.

Note by Turgenev's Biographer, Edward William Garnett

The following passage is from Edward William Garnett's biographical study of *Turgenev*. London: W. Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1917; Chapter VII, pp. 109-110. — ED. PHIL.

Turgenev was the first man to detect the existence of this new type, the Nihilist. His own account of his discovery gives us such an interesting glimpse of his method in creative work that we transcribe a passage from his paper on *Fathers and Children*, written at Baden in 1869:

“It was in the month of August 1860, when I was taking sea baths at Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, that the first idea of *Fathers and Children* came into my head; that novel, thanks to which the favourable opinion of the younger generation about me, has come to an end. Many times I have heard and read in critical journals that I have only been elaborating an idea of my own. . . . For my part, I ought to confess that I never attempted to create a type without having, not an idea, but a living person, in whom the various elements were harmonised together, to work from. I have always needed some groundwork on which I could tread firmly. This was the case with *Fathers and Children*. At the foundation of the principal figure Bazarov was the personality of a young provincial doctor. He died not long before 1860. In that remarkable man was incarnated to my ideas the just rising element, which, still chaotic, afterwards received the title of Nihilism. The impression produced by this individual was very strong. At first I could not clearly define him to myself. But I strained my eyes and ears, watching everything surrounding me, anxious to trust simply in my own sensations. What confounded me was that I had met not a single idea or hint of what seemed appearing to me on all sides. And the doubt involuntarily suggested itself. . . .”

Fathers and Children was published in the spring of 1862 in Katkoff's paper, *The Russian Messenger*, the organ of the Younger Generation, and the stormy controversy that the novel immediately provoked was so bitter, deep and lasting that the episode forms one of the most interesting chapters in literary history.

Not a single tear of hallowed love is fruitless

IN A REMOTE CORNER OF RUSSIA there lies a little country cemetery. Like most cemeteries of the kind, it is depressing of aspect. Over its fences dense masses of weed have grown, its drab wooden crosses are rickety and turning mouldy under their blistered, painted canopies, its stone paths have lost their alignment, and look as though someone has displaced them from below, its two or three ragged trees diffuse only the scantiest of shade, and sheep wander unhindered over its tombs. But among those tombs there lies a grave which no man molests and no animal tramples upon: only the birds perch upon it and sing as evening falls. For around that grave stands an iron railing, and at its head and foot are planted two young fir trees. It is the grave of Evgenii Vasilitch Bazarov. Occasionally from the neighbouring manor-house there come two aged and decrepit folk, a man and his wife. Supporting one another with a step which ever grows heavier, they approach the railing, sink upon their knees, and weep long, bitter tears as they gaze at the dumb headstone where their son lies sleeping. Then they exchange a word or two, dust the stone with assiduous care, lay upon it a sprig of fir, and offer a last petition. Yet even then they can scarce bear to tear themselves from the spot where they can draw nearest to their son, and to their memories of him.

But are those tears, those prayers, all fruitless? Is that love, that hallowed, selfless love, of theirs to be wholly unavailing? No, no, and a thousand times no! For, though the heart which lies within that tomb may have been passionate and wild and erring, the flowers which bloom in that spot contemplate us with eyes of naught but peace and innocence, and speak to us of naught but the eternal, mighty calm of “unheeding” nature, as an image of the Eternal Reconciliation, and of the Life which shall have no End.



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The Landowner and his Serfs (1853) by Konstantin Aleksandrovich Trutovsky, Heritage Museum