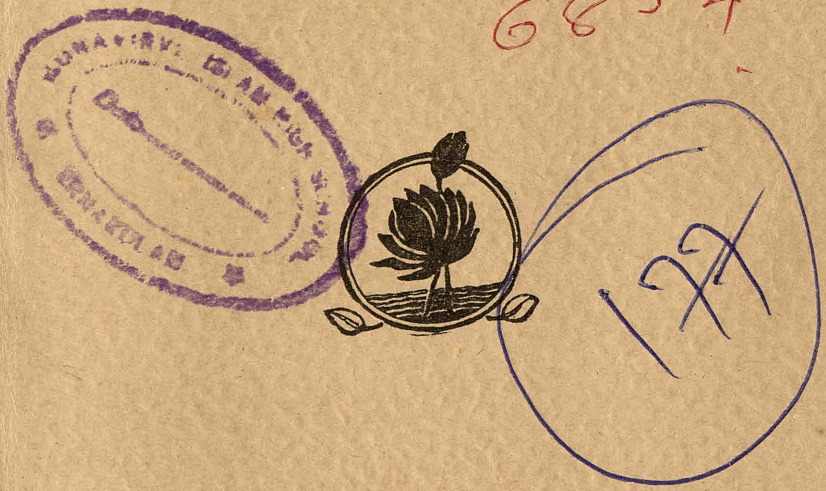
STORIES FROM TOLSTOY

BOOK II

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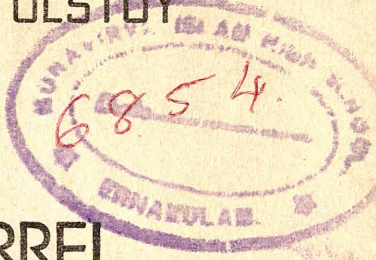
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THE QUARREL

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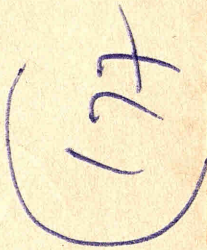
SIX FEET OF EARTH

BY

A. SANKARA PILLAI, M. A., M. Ed.,

Edited by

P. BROOKES-SMITH B A. (Oxon.)



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THE QUARREL

(A spark neglected burns the house)

1. THE BEGINNING

Once there lived in Russia a farmer named Ivan. He was a well-to-do[1] man, still in the full vigour[2] of life and strong and the best worker in his village. He had three sons all of whom were able to work. The eldest was married, the second was about to marry, while the third was a big boy who had learned to plough.

Ivan's wife was an able woman and their son's wife was a good and hard working girl. So Ivan and his family lived a very happy life.

Ivan had an old father. The old man had been lying ill with asthma for more than seven years. He could do no work and Ivan took good care of his old father.

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1. having enough to live on very comfortably.
2. vigour - strength, energy.

Ivan had all he needed. He had four horses, a cow with a calf and fifteen sheep. The women made all the clothing for the family. They helped in the field while the men cultivated the land. They always had enough corn for their own use and they sold enough to pay the taxes. So Ivan and his family lived quite happily, till there arose a quarrel between him and the man who lived next door. The man's name was Gabriel.

As long as Gabriel's father was alive and Ivan's father managed his household, everything went off well and they lived as neighbours should. If the women of either house wanted anything, they sent to the other house and helped each other like good neighbours. If the men required a sack or if a cart-wheel got broken, they got what they wanted from their neighbour. When a calf got into the other's garden, they would just drive it out and say, 'Don't let it get in again.' Such things as locking up the doors or hiding things from each other, were never thought of in those days.

That was in the father's time. When the sons became heads of families, everything changed.

It all began in a silly way.

The wife of Ivan's son had a fine hen which began to lay eggs early and she started collecting the eggs for Easter. Every day the hen went to the cartshed and laid an egg there. But one day she flew over the wall and laid her egg in the neighbour's shed.

The woman heard her cackling[1] and said, "I will go and get the egg later. I have no time to go now. I must clean the house for Sunday."

In the evening she went to the cartshed, but found no egg there. She went and asked the other people whether they had taken the egg.

"No," they said, "we have not."

Then one of the boys said, "Your hen laid her egg in Gabriel's yard. Then she flew back across the wall."

1. the noise that hens make after laying an egg.

The woman went and looked at the hen. She found her with the other birds.

Then she went to the neighbour's house and Gabriel's mother came out to meet her.

"What do you want, young woman?" she asked.

"My hen flew across this morning," the girl said. "Did she not lay an egg here?"

"We never saw anything of it," the old woman answered. "God be thanked, our hens began laying long ago. We take our eggs and have no need of other people's. And we don't go looking for eggs in other people's yards."

The young woman got angry when she heard this and said many things which she should not have said. The old woman answered back in the same way and the women began abusing each other.

Just then Ivan's wife who had gone out to bring water came that way. She heard their words and joined in. Hearing this Gabriel's wife ran out and began to say

nasty things about the young man. She said many things which were true, but added many more which were not true. Then a general quarrel arose and all of them began to shout at one another.

'You are this,' 'You are that,' 'You are a thief!' 'You are starving your husband's father,' 'You are a good-for-nothing', and so on.

'And you made a hole in the bucket I lent you, you fool! It is our pot that you are using to carry water! .... Give me back my pot at once!"

Then they caught hold of the pot and the water was spilt. Then they caught hold of each others clothes and began fighting.

Meanwhile Gabriel who had returned from the field stopped to take his wife's side in the fight. Then Ivan and his son ran up and joined in with the others. Ivan was a strong man. He drove off Gabriel and his people. He pulled out a handful of hair from Gabriel's beard. People from

the neighbouring houses came out to see what the noise was all about. They separated the fighters and sent them home.

That was how it all began.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the correct word from those given in brackets.

1. Ivan was a —— farmer.
   (French, Russian, English)
2. He had an old —— who was lying ill.
   (mother, father, uncle)
3. He had —— grown up sons.
   (two, three, four)
4. —— was his next door neighbour
   (Michael, Ivan, Gabriel)
5. They lived like ——— neighbours for a long time.
   (good, bad)
6. One day Ivan's hen flew into his —— yard and laid an egg.
   (daughter's, son's, neighbour's)
7. There arose a —— for the egg
   (fight, quarrel, case)
8. Ivan pulled out some hair from Gabriel's ——.
   (head, beard)

2. IN COURT

The quarrel that began in this way became more fierce as the days went by.

Gabriel wrapped up the hair torn from his beard in a piece of paper and went to the District Judge.

"You must punish Ivan," said he. "I did not grow my beard for Ivan to pull it out. I want Justice."

Gabriel's wife went about telling people that Ivan would be punished and sent to Siberia.'

And so the quarrel grew.

Ivan's old father tried his best to make them friends again. But Ivan and his sons would not listen to him.

"It is stupid for you to quarrel about such a silly thing," said the old man. "Just think. The whole thing began about an egg. The children might have taken it.

---

1. Northern Asia. very cold. The Government often sent prisoners there.

What is the price of one egg? God sends enough eggs for all. Even if your neighbour said an unkind word, why should you quarrel? Put the matter right; show her how to speak nicely! If there has been a fight, let there be an end of it. If you allow your anger to grow, it will be the worse for you yourselves."

But the younger men and women would not listen to the old man's words. They thought he was talking nonsense. Ivan would not ask his neighbour to forgive him.

"I never pulled out his beard," he said "he pulled the hair out himself! But his son tore my shirt to pieces—Look at it."

Ivan also went to law. They were taken before the Judges. While this was going on, something was stolen from Gabriel's cart. The women of his household said that Ivan's son had taken it.

"We saw him go past our window in the night," they said. "He went toward

the cart and people say he was seen trying to sell the thing."

So they went to law about it.

At home not a day passed without a quarrel and even a fight. The children too began to quarrel, having learned to do so from their elders. When the women went to the riverside to wash their clothes, their tongues did more work than their hands. Every word that was spoken was a bad one.

At first they only spoke ill of one another. But after some days they began to take and keep anything that lay about. Soon the children also began to do it. Life became hard for them.

Ivan and Gabriel went on quarrelling and going to law against each other. At last all the judges grew tired of them. Now Gabriel got Ivan fined or sent to prison. Then Ivan did as much to Gabriel. As the days went by they became more angry..... like dogs that fight and grow more angry the longer they fight. Again and again

they went to law and one or the other of them was fined or put in prison. But it only made them more and more angry with each other.

"Wait a bit," each said to the other "and I will make you suffer for it."

And so it went on for six years. Only the old man kept saying to them again and again, "Children, what are you doing? Stop this quarrel and keep to your work. It will be better for you and all. If you go on quarrelling it will be the worse for you."

But no one listened to him.

In the seventh year at a wedding, the wife of Ivan's son shamed Gabriel by saying that he had stolen a horse. Gabriel who was drunk grew so angry that he gave her a blow. The woman fell down and had to rest in bed for a week. She was big with child at that time. Ivan was glad and went to law against Gabriel.

"Now I will get rid of my enemy," said he. "He won't escape this time. He will be sent to Siberia."

But Ivan was not able to get rid of his neighbour as he wished. The judge dismissed the case. The woman was examined. She was up and about and there were no marks of injury on her body. Then Ivan went to the District Judge. He met the officers and gave them a party. There was good wine to drink and the officers promised to see that Gabriel was punished. In the end the Judge sentenced Gabriel to twenty cuts with a birch rod.[1]

An officer read out the sentence to Gabriel.

"The court orders that Gabriel shall be given twenty cuts with a birch rod at the District Court."

Ivan was also there to hear the sentence. While the officer read it, he looked at Gabriel to see how he would take it. Gabriel grew pale when he heard the sentence. Turning round he went out of the court. Ivan followed him and overheard Gabriel say,

---

1. birch rod—It is used for punishing wrong-doers,

"Very well, he will have me beaten. It will make my back burn. But I will make something of his burn worse than that."

Ivan heard his words and knew what he meant. At once he went back to the court and said, "Good Judge! Gabriel says he will set fire to my house. Hear me. I heard him say it and there are many who heard what he said."

The judge sent for Gabriel.

"Is it true that you said this?" the judge asked.

"No," said Gabriel. "I haven't said anything. Beat me; you have the power. God is against me. I alone am made to suffer and all for being in the right while Ivan is allowed to do as he likes."

Gabriel wanted to say something more. But he became so angry that he could not speak a word. Even the officers were afraid when they saw his looks.

"He may kill himself or he may kill Ivan," they thought.

Then the old judge said, "Look here, my men. You had better be reasonable and make up your quarrel. Was it right on your part, Gabriel, to strike a woman? Was she not big with child at that time? It was good that no real harm was done. But think what might have happened! Was it right? You ask Ivan to forgive you and he will be your friend again. Then we will change the sentence."

Then one of the officers to whom Ivan had given wine, said, "We cannot change the sentence under the rules. As the two people could not agree, the court gave the sentence and it must be carried out."

But the Judge would not listen to him.

"Keep your tongue still," said he. "The first law is to obey God who loves peace."

Then he tried to make Ivan and Gabriel friends again, but it was of no use. Gabriel would not agree.

"I shall be fifty next year," he said "and have never been beaten in my life. Now Ivan has got me sentenced to be beaten. Am I to go and ask him to forgive

me? No. I won't do it. I say, Ivan shall remember me!"

Again Gabriel grew so angry that he could not speak a word. He turned round and went out.

The judge saw that it was no use trying to make them reasonable. So he sent away Ivan and returned home sadly.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. Gabriel went to law against———
   (his son, Ivan, Ivan's wife)
2. Ivan also put in a case against———
   (Gabriel, his son his wife)
3. They kept on going to —— against each other.
   (church, school, court)
4. Once Gabriel struck the wife of———
   (Ivan, Ivan's son, Ivan's nephew)
5. The judge sentenced Gabriel to be given ———cuts with the birch rod.
   (ten, twenty, fifty)
6. Then Gabriel said he would set fire to———.
   (Ivan's beard, Ivan's house, Ivan's cowshed)
7. The judge tried to make them———but it was of no use.
   (enemies, friends)

3. THE OLD MAN

Ivan left the District Court and rode slowly home. It was seven miles from the court to his village. He got home late in the evening. He got down from his horse, stabled[1] it for the night and entered his house.

There was no one in the house when he came in. The women had gone out to call the cattle home. The boys were in the field. Ivan went in and sat down thinking. He recalled to mind how Gabriel became pale when he heard the sentence and his heart grew heavy. He thought how he himself would feel if he were sentenced like Gabriel.

Then he heard his old father calling out to him. The old man sat up and began to cough. He coughed for a long time and when he had cleared his throat, he asked, "Well, has he been sentenced?"

---

1. stable — a house or shed for horses.

"Yes," answered Ivan, "to twenty cuts with the birch rod."

The old man shook his head.

"Very bad," said he. "You are doing wrong, Ivan! It is very bad—not for him but for yourself. Well, they will beat him, but will that do you any good?"

"He won't do it again," said Ivan.

"What is it he won't do again?" he asked. "What has he done worse than you?"

"Why, think of what he has done to me!" said Ivan. "He nearly killed my son's wife. Now he says he will set fire to my house."

The old man sighed and said, "You go about the world, Ivan, while I lie here in the house. So you think you see everything and I see nothing. But it is you who don't see. You are blind with hate. Other's sins are before your eyes; but your own are behind your back. You say, he has behaved badly. If he were the only one

to behave badly, how could there be a quarrel? Quarrels are always between two. His badness you see. But your own you don't see. If you were good and he alone bad, there would be no quarrel. Who pulled the hair out of his beard? Who went to law against him? You put all the blame on him? You live a bad life yourself. That is what is wrong. It is not the way I used to live and it is not the way I taught you. Is that the way his old father and I used to live?

"We lived as good neighbours should. If he wanted some grain, one of the women would, come, saying, 'Uncle, we want some grain."

'Go to the barn,' I would say, 'take what you need.'

"If he had no one to take his horses out, I would say, 'Go, Ivan, look after his horses.'

"If I wanted anything I would go to him and say, 'Uncle, I want so-and-so.'

'Take it,' he would say.

"That was how it was between us and we had an easy time.

"But now? That soldier was telling us about the war between the Muslims and the Christians. Why, there is war between you worse than anywhere else. Is that right living? Isn't it sin?

"You are a man, master of the house. What are you teaching the children? To fight and quarrel. Why, the other day. I saw your son quarrelling with your neighbour's children. His mother looked on and smiled and did nothing to stop it.

"It that right?

"Think of your soul, Ivan. Is all this as it should be? No, my boy. Christ, when He walked on earth, taught us something different. If you get a blow, turn the other cheek saying, 'Here, beat me.' That is what our Lord taught..... Why, why don't you speak? Isn't it as I say?"

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barn—farm store house

Ivan sat silent and listened.

The old man coughed and cleared his throat again.

"Do you think Christ was wrong," he said. "He taught us for our own good. Just think of your earthly life. Are you better off, after quarrelling with your neighbour? Just see how much you have spent in all these cases—going to court and coming back and your food on the way. And why? All because you are proud and foolish. When you ought to be working in the field, you are off to the court. The ploughing is not done in time, nor the sowing. Why did your oats fail this year? When did you sow them?

"Well, my boy, think of your own business! Work with your boys in the field and if someone does you a wrong, forgive him as God forgives you. Life will be easy and the heart glad."

Ivan heard him, but said nothing.

"Ivan, my boy, hear your old father," he said again.

"Go out and take your horse. Ride to the Court, and put an end to all this. In the morning go and make up your quarrels with Gabriel, in God's name, and invite him to your house for to-morrow's holiday. It is the birthday of Blessed Mary. Have tea ready and put an end to this quarrel."

Ivan heard all this. "What he says is true," he thought and his heart was glad. Only he did not know how to begin to put matters right.

The old man understood his thoughts.

"Go, Ivan, don't put it off," said he. "Put out the fire before it spreads or it will be too late."

To make up a quarrel—to make peace.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the right word from those given in brackets.

1. Ivan went —— from the Court.
   (home, to church, to the judge)
2. His —— saw him and asked him about the case.
   (wife, father, son)
3. The old man was very —— when he heard that Gabriel was to be punished.
   (glad, happy, sorry)
4. He told Ivan to go to the Court and ——— the case.
   (take up, stop)
5. Ivan knew that the old man was ———
   (right, wrong, stupid)
6. But he———how to begin doing it.
   (knew, did not know)

To put off doing a things —— to delay, to what before doing it.

4. THE FIRE

As Ivan sat listening to his father's words, he heard footsteps outside.

'Who is coming?" he asked himself.

They were the women of the house. They had heard the news and knew that Gabriel had been sentenced to be flogged.[1] They also knew that Gabriel had said he would set fire to their house.

As they were coming home, they met the women of Gabriel's household and had a quarrel. Gabriel's daughter said she would write to the Emperor himself and that they would see to it that Ivan was punished. Ivan heard it and his heart grew hard again. He gave up the thought of making peace with Gabriel.

In a farm there is plenty of work for a man to do. As Ivan went out, he met his sons returning home from the fields. He asked them about their work and went

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1. flogged — severely beaten

to the cattle-shed to feed the cattle. Then he let out his horses for the night.

"Now," thought he, "I'll take my supper and go to bed."

By this time he had forgotten about Gabriel. Just as he was going in, he heard Gabriel saying angrily, 'What is he good for? He is only fit to be killed,' At these words Ivan's hatred for his neighbour reawoke.

Then he went in; his wife was getting supper ready. His eldest son was mending a shoe, his wife was spinning. The other boys were reading. Everything was bright and pleasant. Only they had a bad neighbour to trouble them!

Ivan entered the room and sat down. His wife gave supper to their youngest son and sent him to take out the horses for the night. Ivan rose up and went out to see his son ride off. The boy mounted his horse and rode away and Ivan stood there listening for some time. Then the thought of Gabriel came to his mind.

"Everything is dry," said Ivan. "Gabriel will come, set fire to the house and run off. He will escape completely. If I can catch him when he is setting fire to the house...."

So Ivan went down the steps and stood looking round. Just then he saw something moving at the other end of the buildings. Ivan stepped back and stood looking. Everything was still. He saw no one and there was only the wind.

"I will go round and see," said Ivan to himself. He walked round and came to the shed. As he came to the corner, he saw something bright, but it went out quickly. Ivan stopped to see what it was. Just then something began to burn and in the bright light, he saw a man with a cap, lighting a bunch of straw.

"He is Gabriel," said Ivan. "I'll catch him now and he won't escape this time."

So he ran to the spot but before he came near the light grew brighter. The edge of the thatch[1] of his house was

1. thatch—straw for a roof.

burning and the fire had almost reached the roof itself. And Ivan clearly saw Gabriel standing below it.

Like a cat jumping on the mouse, Ivan ran at Gabriel.

"Now I'll have him," said he.

But Gabriel heard him coming, turned and ran.

"You shan't escape," cried Ivan, running after him.

He reached Gabriel, but slipped and fell before he could catch hold of him. As he got up he shouted for help.

Gabriel had reached his own gate when Ivan caught him by the arm. Gabriel struck him hard and Ivan fell senseless to the ground.

When Ivan came to his senses, Gabriel was gone. It was as bright as day and he saw that his house was burning. The back-shed and the side sheds had caught fire and were still burning.

"What is this, friends?" cried Ivan. "Why, all I had to do was to pull out the straw from burning the thatch and put out the fire! What is this, friends?"

Ivan kept repeating these words again and again. He wished to cry out; but his voice failed him. He wanted to run; but his feet would not move. He walked slowly and went to the shed. Then he saw that the fire had spread to all sides. All the villagers had come, but they could not put out the fire. The neighbours were taking their things out of their houses and driving the cattle out of their sheds. After Ivan's house, Gabriel's caught fire. Then the wind rose and the whole village was on fire, for the wooden houses caught fire very easily.

At Ivan's house, they were able to save his old father. The family escaped, but everything in the house was burnt down. Only the horses were left. All the cattle and all the farm things were burnt!

At Gabriel's house the cattle were driven out in time and a few things were saved.

The fire lasted all night. Ivan stood watching the fire and went on saying, "What is this, friends? One need only to have pulled out a handful of straw and put out the fire."

Then the roof fell in and Ivan tried to run into the house.

"He is mad with grief," people said and pulled him away. But his clothes and hair were burnt.

When the sun rose, the night's fire was burning itself out. But Ivan went on saying, "Friends! What is this? I could have pulled it out and put out the fire!"

In the morning a boy came to Ivan.

"Uncle Ivan," said he, "your father is dying. He has sent for you to say good-bye. Please come along."

Ivan had forgotten about his father and did not understand what the boy said.

"What father?" he said.

"Your father is in our house," said the boy. "He is dying. Come along and see him."

The boy took him by the arm and led him to the house.

When Ivan came to his father, only the boy's mother was in the house. All the others were at the fire.

The old man was lying on a bench looking towards the door. When Ivan came in, he called him to his side.

"What did I tell you, Ivan?" he asked. "Who has burnt down the village?"

"It was he, father," Ivan said. "I caught him in the act. I saw him setting fire to the thatch. I could have pulled away the burning straw and put out the fire. Then nothing would have been burnt."

"Ivan," said the old man, 'I am dying and a time will come when you too will die. Whose is this sin?"

Ivan looked at his father and was unable to say anything.

"Now, before God, say whose is the sin?" he asked again.

Only then did Ivan understand the meaning of his father's words.

"Mine, father!" said he.

Then he fell on his knees before his father.

"Forgive me, father," said he. "I have sinned before you and before God."

Then the old man crossed himself.

"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord," said he and turned towards his son.

"Ivan, I say, Ivan," he said.

"What, Father?" Ivan asked.

"What must you do now?" asked the old man.

Ivan could not answer and began to weep helplessly.

"I don't know how we are to live now, father," he said.

The old man closed his eyes again and said, "You will live, Ivan. If you obey God, you will live."

Then he smiled and said, "Hear me, Ivan. "Don't tell anyone who started the fire! Hide another man's sin and God will forgive two of yours." His voice became weaker and weaker and a little later the old man crossed himself, fell back and died.

Ivan did not say anything against Gabriel and no one knew how the fire had started.

Ivan's anger against Gabriel passed away and Gabriel wondered why Ivan did not tell anybody that he had set fire to the house. The two men left off quarrelling and then their families left off also. While rebuilding their houses, the two families lived under the same roof. When the village was rebuilt they did not move apart. Ivan had his house next to Gabriel's and they lived like good neighbours.

Ivan never forgot his old father's last ommand. 'Obey God's law and put out

a fire as soon as it begins to burn.' If anyone does him any wrong, he tries to set matters right, If anyone speaks a bad word to him, he never answers with a worse word, but teaches him not to use evil words. So do the women, and children of his household. Ivan's farm is prospering again and he now lives better even than he did before.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. The —— of the house came in as Ivan sat thinking.
   (boys, women, children)
2. Ivan went out and heard Gabriel say that he was fit only to be——.
   (helped, killed, forgiven)
3. He saw Gabriel setting fire to the ——
   (cart, house, fence)
4. He could have put out the fire, but he ran off to catch ——
   (the straw, Gabriel, the thief)
5. Gabriel gave him a —— and he fell senseless to the ground.
   (straw, blow, food)
6. When Ivan came to his senses, the whole —— had caught fire.
   (shed, house, village)

7. Everything was —— down.
(taken, burnt; put)

8. Both Ivan and —— lost almost everything they had.
(his father, his son, Gabriel)

9. Ivan was —— for not putting out the fire as soon as it started.
(sorry, glad, happy)

10. Next day his —— died.
(wife, son, father)

11. The old man advised him not to tell anyone that —— started the fire.
(Ivan, Gabriel, his son)

12. Ivan had learnt to forgive his enemy and so he —— what he had seen.
(told, did not tell)

13. Ivan and Gabriel lived as good neighbours should and they.
(prospered, did not prosper)

FINAL TEST.

Complete the following sentences choosing the right words from those given in brackets.

1. 'A Spark ——Burns the House' is a story by Leo Tolstoy.
   (Unseen, Neglected, Taken)
2. It is the story of two——Ivan and Gabriel.
   (friends, neighbours, merchants)
3. They and their fathers had lived like——neighbours for a long time.
   (bad, careless, good)
4. Then they quarrelled about——
   (a cow, a hen, an egg)
5. Ivan pulled out some hair from Gabriel's ———.
   (head, beard)
6. They went to——and they had a number of cases against each other.
   (town, court, school)
7. Gabriel struck Ivan's —— and the Judge sentenced him to be beaten with a birch rod.
   (daughter, daughter-in-law, wife)
8. Then Gabriel said, he would ——.
   (kill Ivan, set fire to his house, beat Ivan's father)
9. Ivan's father heard the news and told him to ——.
   (punish Gabriel, put an end to the quarrel, go to court again)

10. Ivan——his old father.
(obeyed, did not obey)

11. That night Gabriel———.
(killed himself, set fire to Ivan's house, struck Ivan's daughter)

12. Ivan saw him setting fire to the house, but he did not ——.
(catch the man, put it out, tell his father about it)

13. He tried to catch Gabriel who gave him a ——.
(present, blow, horse)

14. Ivan fell senseless to the ground and when he came to his senses the whole —— was on fire.
(house, village, shed)

15. Ivan and —— lost everything they had.
(his father, Gabriel, his son)

16. Next day Ivan's father ——.
(punished him, died, went away

17. Before his death, he told Ivan not to tell anyone that —— had started the fire.
(he, Gabriel, his father)

18. Ivan had learned the good lesson and he —— about it
(told people, did not tell anybody)

19. Ivan and Gabriel rebuilt their houses and lived like —— neighbours.
(bad, house, good)

20 This story teaches us that a——neglected, burns the house down.
(fire, spark, burning straw)

SIX FEET OF EARTH

(How much land does a man need?)

1. TOWN LIFE AND COUNTRY LIFE

A woman who lived in town came to the countryside to see her younger sister. The elder one was married to a merchant in town while the younger was the wife of a farmer in the village. They sat talking and the elder began to say that town life was better than country life. People lived comfortably in town; they had good things to eat and drink and they had fine clothes to wear. Often they went to the theatre and they led a pleasant life.

The younger sister grew angry when she heard this and in turn spoke ill of the life of a merchant in town. She said that a farmer's life in the village was much better.

"I would not change my way of life for yours," she said. "We may live roughly

but at least we are not afraid of anyone. It is true that you get more money, but don't you know that loss and gain are brothers. A man may be very rich today, but to-morrow he may become a beggar. Our way of life is safer. Though a farmer may not become very rich, he will never become a beggar. We shall always have enough to eat."

The elder sister heard what she said and laughed.

"You say you have enough to eat," she said. "But how do you live? You live like pigs and cows. What do you know of the joys of life? You may work hard, yet you will die poor."

"We may be poor," answered the younger sister, "but we are free. We are not under the power of anyone. You may be rich today. But to-morrow the Evil One may get hold of your husband. He may begin to drink and lose all he has. Don't such things happen in the town?"

Pahom, who was the younger woman's husband heard her.

"She is right," said he "We in the village are always busy doing some work or other, so we have no time to sin. Our only trouble is that we don't have enough land. If I had plenty of land, I wouldn't fear the Devil himself."

The Devil who was standing behind the man, heard his words. He was glad that the man's wife had made him talk highly of himself. At once the Devil made up his mind to lead the man into sin.

"All right," said the Devil, "I will give you enough land and by means of that land, I will get you into my power."

TEST: Fill up the blanks choosing the right word from those given in brackets.

1. Two —— sat talking about country life and town life.
   (men, sisters, brothers)
2. The elder who lived in the —— praised —— life.
   (town, country)
3. The younger who was the wife of a —— said that country life was better.
   (merchant, farmer)

4. The farmer said that if he had enough —— he would not fear the Devil himself.

(money, oxen, land)

5. —— heard his words and made up his mind to get him into his power by giving him plenty of land.

(God, The Angel, The Devil)

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2. THE ESTATE

Near the village there lived a lady who had three hundred acres of land. She was good to the people of the village, but she had a cruel manager who began to trouble them. Whenever their cows and sheep got into dought land, he fined them. Pahom's cattle often gave him trouble; they would get into the lady's fields and he had to pay a fine every time.

Pahom paid the fine, but he was angry. He was angry with his wife and children. One day he heard the news that the lady was going to sell the land to the keeper of the inn. The people of the village were

afraid when they heard it. "If the innkeeper gets the land he will trouble us more," they thought. "We must buy the land from her."

So they went to the lady and requested her to sell them the land. The lady agreed to do so. At first they thought of buying the land and holding it in common. But the Evil One set one against the other and they could not agree about it. So each man had to buy land for himself.

Presently Pahom heard that a farmer was going to buy fifty acres from her. The lady had agreed to take half the price in cash and wait a year for the other half. "Look at that," said he, "other people are buying land and I shall get nothing. I must buy at least twenty acres of land."

He told his wife about it. They thought over it for a long time. They had one hundred roubles with them. They sold their horse and some of their bees. They got some money from a brother-in-law. In this way they had enough money to buy land for themselves.

Then Pahom chose out a farm of forty acres and went to the lady to buy it. They came to an agreement and she sold him the farm. He paid half the price down and agreed to pay the other half within two years.

So now Pahom had land of his own. He bought seed and sowed it on the land he had bought. The crop was good and within a year he got enough money to pay off the lady and his brother-in-law. In this way Pahom beame a land-owner with a farm of his own. When he went out into the field and saw the wheat, he was full of joy. He was delighted.

So Pahom had everything he wanted and was happy. But the farmers who lived nearby drove their cattle into his land to eat up his corn. Pahom turned them out again and again and spoke to the owners asking them not to let their cattle loose. But it was of no use. At last he grew angry. "I cannot allow them to destroy my crop," he said. "I must teach them a lesson."

He went to law aginst them and they were fined. It made them angry and they gave him more trouble. One of them got into his land one night and cut down five young lime trees. Next day Pahom saw his trees had been cut down. He was very angry but he could not find out who had done it.

"If I find the fellow, I'll teach him a lesson," said he.

He thought over it for a long time.

"It must be Simon," said he, "no other man could have done it."

So he went to Simon's house and there was a quarrel between them. Pahom went to law against Simon. The case was tried and retried; and in the end Simon was let off. Pahom could prove nothing against him. It made him angry and he spoke ill of the Judges.

"You yourselves are thieves," he said, "that is why you let a thief go free."

So Pahom grew rich, but he was not happy and the people of the village did not like him.

At about this time, Pahom heard that many people were moving to new parts of the country.

"I don't want to go from here," said he. "Let others go, I can buy their land."

One day when he was sitting at home, a man came that way. Pahom allowed him to stay with him for the night. The man told him that he came from beyond the Volga and many people were settling in those parts. Every settler was given twenty five acres of land. The land was so good, that wheat grew as high as a horse. One man who had brought nothing with him now had six horses and ten cows of his own.

When Pahom heard this, he wished to go and settle there.

"Why should I live here, when I can be better off there?" he said. "I will sell my land here and with the money buy a

big estate there. But I must go and find out all about it."

So he left his village and went down the Volga to Samara. Then he walked three hundred miles and reached the place. What the stranger said was true. There was plenty of land and the land was very fertile. Every man got twenty-five acres of land free and anyone who had money could buy as much land as he wanted for two shillings an acre.

Having found out everything about the place, Pahom returned home. He sold off everything he had at a profit and started with his family for the new settlement.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the right word from those given in brackets.

1. Pahom bought forty acres of land from the ———
   (manager, lady, farmer)
2. He became a———and began to cultivate his own ———.
   (farmer, landowner, —— estate, farm)
3. He soon paid off his——and grew rich.
   (money, debts)

4. But he quarrelled with——who, he thought, had cut down his trees.

(the lady, Simon, the manager)

5. A man told him that there was good land beyond the———.

(Thames, Volga, Indus)

6. He went to the place and saw that the land was very———.

(poor, costly, fertile)

7. He sold his land and went to the new———.

(country, settlement, port)

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5. THE SETTLEMENT

When Pahom came to the new settlement, the people there allowed him to join the commune. Five shares of land were given to him; one for himself and four for his sons. Each share was twenty-five acres, so he had 125 acres in all. But it was not all in one place, but in different fields. The soil was good and he had three times as much land as he had had before.

At first Pahom was very happy. He put up buildings and began to cultivate

the land. The first year he sowed wheat and had a good crop. He wanted to go on sowing wheat, but had not enough land to do so. In those parts wheat was sown only once in two years.

In the second year they let grass grow in the field and only in the next year did they sow wheat again. Pahom wished to get land to sow wheat and had to rent it from another man. He saved much wheat and had a good crop; but the land was too far from the village and the wheat had to be carted more than ten miles.

Pahom went on in the same way for three years, renting land and sowing wheat. The crops were good and he grew rich. Soon he grew tired of renting other people's land every year and in the third year there was some difficulty over the land he had rented.

"If it were my own land, there would be no trouble," said he.

So Pahom began looking for land which he could buy. Soon he came across a man

who had thirteen hundred acres of land to sell and he agreed to sell it for one thousand five hundred roubles. Pahom made up his mind to buy the land, and had a talk with the owner. Just then he met a man who was passing through the village. He drank tea with him and they had a talk.

The man said he was coming from the land of the Bashkers, far away, where he had bought thirteen thousand acres of land, all for one thousand roubles.

"All you have to do is to make friends with the chief. I gave away silk and carpets which cost about one hundred roubles and I got the land for less than a penny an acre."

Then he showed him the papers which the chief had signed.

"The land is near the river and the soil is very fertile," he said. "There is more land there than you could cover if you walked a year."

"There now," said Pahom; "why should I give 1500 roubles for thirteen hundred

acres when I can get thirteen thousand acres for one thousand roubles?"

When the man was gone, Pahom got ready to go to the land of the Bashkers.

He left his wife and children and set out taking his man with him. They stopped at a town, bought some silk, tea, wine and other presents for the chief. They went on and on until they had gone more than three hundred miles. On the seventh day they came to the land of the Bashkers who lived in tents near the river. They did have cattle, but they did not cultivate land.

As soon as they saw Pahom, they came out to welcome him. They did not know Russian, so a man who knew it was found. Pahom told them he had come to buy some land. The Bashkers were very glad when they heard it. They gave him tea. Pahom took the presents he had brought and gave them. The Bashkers were very much pleased.

"We like you," they said, "and when we are pleased with a man, we give him

everything we have. Tell us what you want so that we may give them to you."

"What pleases me best here is your land," said Pahom. "I never saw anything so good."

The Bashkers laughed when they heard this. They promised to give him as much land as he wanted. But he must wait, they said, till their chief came back. They had to ask him about the land, and they were sure, he would give him as much land as he wanted.

Just then Pahom saw a man coming towards him. He had a large fur cap on his head. When he came in, they rose up to welcome him.

"He is the chief," they told Pahom.

Pahom took the best silk he had and a box of tea and presented them to the chief. The chief took them and was pleased. Then the Bashkers told him why Pahom had come there. The chief knew Russian.

"Well," said he, "we shall give you land. Choose whatever piece of land you like."

"Thank you," said Pahom "Can't you measure out the land and give it to me? I also want you to sign a paper saying that the land is mine."

"It is easy," said the chief. "We have a man who will write it out. Then I will sign it and give it to you."

"And what is the price?" asked Pahom.

"Our price is always the same, one thousand roubles a day," he said.

Pahom did not understand.

"A day? What measure is that? How many acres would that be?" he asked.

"We do not know," said the chief. '*We sell land by the day. As much as you can go round on your feet in a day is yours and the price is one thousand roubles a day.*"

Pahom was filled with wonder when he heard it.

"In a day you can get round a large area of land," he said.

The chief laughed.

"It will all be yours!" he said. "But there is one condition. If you don't come back to the place from where you started by sunset, your money is lost."

"But how can I mark the way I have gone?" Pahom asked.

We will come with you," said he, "and mark the place from where you start. Take a spade with you as you go round. Make a mark wherever you want. At every turning dig a hole. Afterwards we will go round with a plough from hole to hole. You may go as far out as you like; but before the sun sets you must come back to the place from which you started. All the land you cover will be yours."

Pahom was filled with joy and he said that he would start early next morning. They sat talking for some time. Then they had food and Pahom was given a bed to sleep on. Then they went away saying that they would meet again the next morning.

TEST. Fill up the blanks choosing the right word from those given in brackets.

1. Pahom got:——acres of land in the new settlement.
   (twenty-five, one hundred and twenty-five, thirteen hundred)
2. But he wanted ——,
   (a house, horses, more land)
3. He wanted to buy 1300 acres for——roubles.
   (1000, 1500, 2000)
4. Then he met a man coming from the land of the ——.
   (Turks, Russians, Bashkers)
5. He said be could get——acres of land of one thousand roubles.
   (125, 1800, 13000)
6. So Pahom went to the land of the Bashkers and met the ——.
   (king, chief, queen)
7. He agreed to sell him as much land as he could go round in a——for a thousand roubles,
   (week, day, month)
8. But if he did not come back to the starting point before——, all the money would be lost.
   (sunrise, noon, sunset)
9. Pahom agreed to the condition and made up his mind to start——.
   (the next morning, next month)

4. SIX FEET OF LAND

Pahom went to bed, but he could not sleep that night. He lay thinking about the land.

"I will take as much land as I can," thought he. "I can easily walk thirty-five miles in a day. The days are long now; so I can cover a lot of land. I will choose the best and cultivate it. I will sell the poor land to others. I will raise cattle on the land which I don't cultivate."

Pahom lay awake all night and slept a little before sun rise. Then he had a dream. He thought that as he was lying there he heard somebody laughing outside. He wondered who it was and looked out. Then he saw the Bashker chief sitting there and laughing. Going out to him, Pahom asked him what he was laughing at. Then he saw that it was no longer the chief, but the man who came to him saying that he could get as much land as he wanted from the Bashkers. Pahom was going to ask him,

"When did you come here?" When he saw that it was not he but the man who came long ago to him in his old home and told him to go to the settlement beyond the Volga. Then he saw that it was not he either but the Devil himself. The Devil sat laughing by the side of a man who lay before him. Pahom looked at the man and saw that he was already dead. He looked at him more carefully and saw that it was himself!

He was filled with fear when he saw it and then he awoke.

"What things I have seen in my dream!" said he as he rose up.

The east was growing bright and Pahom knew it was time to set out. He got up, roused up his man and said, "Let us go. It is high time."

The Bashkers got ready and, they started. Soon they came to a very wide plain. There was a hill nearby. They climbed the hill and looked round. The sun was beginning to rise,

"See," said the chief, "all this, as far as you can see, is ours. You may take any part you like."

Pahom was greatly pleased when he saw the land that lay before him. It was very fertile soil!

Then the chief took off his fur-cap and placed it on the ground.

"This is the mark," said he. "Start from here and go round. Come here again before sun-set and all the land you go round shall be yours."

Pahom took out his money and put it on the cap. Then he took a bag of bread, a bottle of water and a spade and set out.

"I will go towards the rising sun," said he and walked towards the east.

Pahom walked quickly and when he had gone a mile he stopped and dug a hole. Then he went on and after a while he dug another hole.

Pahom looked back. The hill could be seen in the bright sunlight with the people

standing on it. He had gone more than three miles and was feeling hungry. It was getting warm. So he took off his boots and sat down. Then he ate his breakfast and started again

It was easy walking now.

"I will go on for another three miles," said he, "and then turn to the left." But the place where he then was, was so good that he did not wish to lose it. So he walked on for a mile and then looked round. The hill was far away and the people on it looked like small ants.

"I have gone far enough this way," said he. "It is time to turn. Moreover I am very thirsty."

He stopped and dug a hole. Then he opened the bottle and had a drink. Next he turned to the left and walked on.

It was very hot now. After a while he felt tired and looked at the sun. By that time it was noon.

"Well," thought he, "I must rest a little now,"

He sat down, ate some bread and drank some water. But he did not lie down fearing that he would fall asleep. After resting for a little while, he rose up and went on again. At first he walked easily; but before long it became very hot and he grew very tired.

"An hour of hard work now," said he, "and then a life-time of joy!"

He went a long way and was about to turn again to the left when he saw a fertile place.

"I must not leave this place out," said he. "It is the most fertile piece of land here.

So he went round it and dug a hole on the other side. Then Pahom turned round and looked at the hill. It was far away and could not be seen clearly. "Ah," said he, "I have made the sides too long. I will make the third side shorter."

So he turned again to the left and walked on. He looked at the sun. It was past three o'clock and he had not yet done

two miles of the third side. He had ten miles more to go.

"No," thought he, "I must go back quickly or I won't reach the hill before sunset."

So Pahom dug a hole and turned towards the hill. He walked straight towards it, but he walked slowly. He was very tired, his feet were cut and his legs ached. He wished to stop and rest. But he dared not stop as he had to reach the hill before sunset.

But the sun waits for no man and it was sinking lower and lower.

"Oh," said Pahom, "I should not have gone out so far."

He looked at the hill and at the sun. He was very far away from the hill and the sun was about to set. Pahom walked on and on. It was very hard walking, but he went quicker and quicker. Yet he was far away from the hill. So he began to run. He threw off his coat, his boots, his flask and his cap.

"What shall I do?" said he. "I have tried to take too much and lost all. I can't get there before sunset."

And this fear made him run still more quickly. His heart was beating fast and Pahom began to fear that he would fall down and die.

"After having run all this way, I can't stop now," said he.

So he ran on and on. The sun was setting. Pahom came near the hill and saw the people who cried out to him to run up quickly. He could see the fur-cap and the money on it. He also saw the chief sitting on the hill and laughing.

"There is enough land," thought he, "but will God let me live on it? I have lost my life. I have lost my life! I shall never reach that place."

Pahom looked at the sun; it had already gone down. Just then he came to the hill and looked up. The hill-top was still bright in the light of the setting sun.

"The sun has not set yet," cried Pahom and ran up the hill.

He ran on, bending forward. Soon he reached the hill-top and saw the cap. Before it sat the chief, laughing. Then the dream came back to his mind and Pahom trembled. His legs gave way and he fell on the cap.

"He is a fine fellow," cried the chief. "He has got much land."

"Pahom's man came running and tried to make him stand up. But there was blood on his lips.

Pahom was dead!

The Bhaskers pitied the poor man!

His servant took the spade and dug a grave long enough for Pahom to lie in. The Bhaskers helped to bury him.

Six feet from head to foot was all the land he needed!

TEST. **Fill up the blanks choosing the correct word from those given in brackets.**

i. **Pahom had a—dream that night.**
(good, bad, pleasant)

2. In his dream he saw the two men who made him go seeking for more land and ——
   (his wife, Simon, the Bhasker chief)

3. The chief was changed into the Devil and before him lay a ——— man.
   (sleeping, dead)

4. The dead man was ——.
   (the chief, his man, Pahom himself)

5. In the morning Pahom woke up and went to the ———.
   (river, house, hill)

6. The chief placed his ——— on the ground to mark the place.
   (sword, cap, kerchief)

7. Then Pahom went off to make his round saying he would come back before ———.
   (noon, sunset, morning)

8. He tried to get as much ——— as he could.
   (land, money, water)

9. He walked all day long and came back very——.
   (happy, tired, ill)

10. Just as he came to the spot, he ———.
    (cried, sang, fell dead)

11. ——— buried him there.
    (The chief, The Bhaskers, His man)

12. ——— was all the land he needed.
    (Ten acres, Six feet, Three miles)

FINAL TEST.

Complete the following sentences:—

1. 'How Much Land Does a Man Need?' is a famous——by Tolstoy.
   (poem, story, drama)
2. It is the story of a man named——who was very greedy for land.
   (Simon, Pahom, Peter)
3. Pahom was a poor——who had not enough land to cultivate.
   (landowner, farmer, worker)
4. One day he said that if he had enough land he would not fear even ———.
   (God, the Devil, the king)
5. So —— made up his mind to get him in his power.
   (the king, the Devil, the farmer)
6. He helped Pahom to get more ———.
   (cattle, children, land)
7. Pahom bought forty acres from a —— and became a landowner.
   (chief, lady, nobleman)
8. Then a man told him that he could get plenty of land if he went to a country beyond the——.
   (Thames, Rhine, Volga)
9. Pahom went to the new settlement and got——
   —— acres of land.
   (40, 125, 1300)
10. He grew very rich but he wanted more ———.
    (money, land, cattle)

11. Then a man came to him and said he could get as much land as he wanted if he went to the land of the ——.
(Nile, Bhaskers, Arabs)

12. Pahom went to their country and met their ——
(king, queen, chief)

13. The chief agreed to give him as much land as he could walk round in one day for —— roubles.
(100, 1000, 1300)

14. But he had to come back to the starting point before ———.
(noon, sunrise, sunset)

15. That night he had a ——.
(headache, dream, fever)

16. He saw himself lying dead before the chief who was changed into ——.
(the king, the Devil, a man)

17. Next morning, Pahom set out to walk round the —— he wanted to get.
(garden, land, field)

18. But he walked so far away from the —— that he was completely worn out when he came back.
(river, starting point, tent)

19. Just then the sun set and Pahom fell down and lay —— on the ground.
(ill, dead, senseless)

20. His man buried him there and six feet was all the land he ——.
(wished, needed)

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