

**THE GOSPEL OF THE  
POOR; THE CHRIST  
OF THE COMMUNE**

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The gospel of the poor; the Christ of the commune by Morrison Davidson

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**MORRISON DAVIDSON**

**THE GOSPEL OF THE  
POOR; THE CHRIST  
OF THE COMMUNE**



Fifth Edition. 1s. net. Cloth, 2s. net.

THE  
**OLD ORDER**  
**AND THE NEW.**

Savagedom,  
Slavedom,  
Serfdom,  
Wagedom,  
Freedom.

By **MORRISON DAVIDSON.**

Writing to Mr. MORRISON DAVIDSON, under date Aug. 23rd, 1894, COUNT LEO TOLSTOY says:—

DEAR SIR,—I got your two books, and thank you heartily for them. It is the greatest joy of my life to know persons such as you, and to see that the ideas which I live for are likewise the mainspring of life unto others, and are expressed in such beautiful and vigorous style as I had occasion to notice in your two books.

Both your books are remarkably good, and I cannot give the preference to either of them. In "The Old Order and the New" the Christian truth serves to corroborate the truth of the Socialistic tendencies; whereas in "The Gospel of the Poor" it is the Socialistic, Communistic, and Anarchistic theories that serve to corroborate the Christian truth, which occupies the most prominent part.

Though, while there is a censorship in Russia, the publishing of these books is out of the question, yet I shall get some of my friends to translate them, and will then spread them.

The enemies of the Kingdom of God have but one means left them: it is to hush up the truth and make believe they neither hear nor comprehend it—the fact of which was so strikingly acknowledged by the French when they prohibited to publish the processes (pleadings) of the Anarchists.

It follows then the chief struggle which lies before a labourer of the Kingdom of God is to frustrate this plot of non-believing and non-hearing of what is seen and heard of all.

I therefore wish you, as a strong and active labourer, the greatest amount of spiritual energy and entire success in it.

Yours truly,

LEO TOLSTOY.

LONDON:  
FRANCIS RIDDELL HENDERSON,  
26, Paternoster Square, E.C.

THE GOSPEL OF THE POOR.

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**THE  
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**BY  
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**FOURTH EDITION.**

*(Printed from Stereo).*

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26, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.



**THE  
CHRIST  
OF  
THE  
COMMUNE.**



TO

MY OLD FRIEND AND REVERED PASTOR,  
ROBERT BLAKELY DRUMMOND, B.A.,  
MINISTER OF ST. MARK'S UNITARIAN CHURCH,  
EDINBURGH,

*"An Israelite indeed in whom is no guile,"*

IN SLENDER TOKEN OF SINCERE RESPECT,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED

BY

J. M. D.

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## FOREWORDS TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

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Since this booklet was originally penned, some ten years ago, the Higher Criticism has largely busied itself with the four accepted Gospels or Biographies of the Master. With what result? Even *The British Weekly*, chief oracle of Orthodox Nonconformity, is constrained reluctantly to admit "the uncertainty that seems to hang round the whole story of His life":

"Who wrote the Gospels? It is not certain.

"When were they written? It is not certain.

"How close do they bring us in point of time to the events which they purport to record? It is not possible to give a precise answer.

"How far do they represent the mind of Christ as it was in itself, giving us the very words that He spoke, and how far the mind of Christ as it had come to be in the mind of His disciples, inflected, modified, adapted by and to new circumstances and experiences—interpreted by His Spirit perhaps, but really interpreted—and therefore not in the strict and literal sense historical? Once more it is impossible to draw a clear line.

"There are hundreds of such problems".

But, whatever may come to be settled expert opinion regarding the letter of the Gospel narratives—and it promises to be considerably more destructive than I had anticipated—the positions taken up in *The Gospel of the Poor*, I find on reperusal, are not appreciably affected thereby. For said not St. Augustine, and said truly?—

*That which is called the Christian Religion existed among the Ancients and never did not exist from the planting of the Human Race until Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true Religion, WHICH ALREADY SUBSISTED, began to be called Christianity.*

What the Christ really did was to focus in His own soul all the broken lights of Spiritual Truth in His day—lights ineffectively scattered abroad, for unnumbered preceding

## FOREWORDS.

centuries, among all the leading Nations of the Earth. Of these truths He made "current coin" by the spotless and unique example of His own life and death.

Christ's Religion, therefore, is not *a* Religion but *the* Religion, because His Gospel corresponds to the inborn capacity of man as revealed in the History of the Race. He is not *a* Master among Masters but *the* Master. "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him." Says Professor Harnack with rare penetration:

*What the first disciples received from Him goes far beyond the particular words and the preaching they heard from Him, and their mode of apprehending Him, exceeds His own self-witness. It could not be otherwise; these disciples were conscious that they possessed in Christ not only a Teacher . . . they knew themselves as redeemed, new men redeemed through Him.*

In other words the Religion of Christ is self-illuminating and, in the last arbitrament, it is as independent of written records as of hierophants of the altar. It can very well survive the complete elimination of the supernatural by Criticism, Higher or Lower. "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater* [more supernormal, *not* supernatural] works than these shall he do." "To as many as received Him gave He power to become Sons of God." In the *Contemporary* for June (1902), a writer (D. Joye) on "The Reformed Church in France" observes, and his Faith is mine:

*How has He (Christ) declared Him (God)? He has declared Him as 'Truth' and 'Love.' For all men God is undoubtedly Personal Being whose actions—almost entirely unknown—can only be epitomised in that double attribute, 'Truth and Love.' When a man's intelligence, in all its natural Reason and Will, fixes its desire exclusively on Truth and Love, I cannot free myself from the idea that God would communicate to such an Intelligence that Positive Revelation which Orthodoxy will only recognize as supernatural. The words of the author of the Proverbs ought to come home with all their force:*

'THEY THAT SEEK THE LORD UNDERSTAND ALL THINGS!'