

**AN INTERPRETATION
OF THE
RUSSIAN PEOPLE**

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An interpretation of the Russian people by Leo Wiener

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BY

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PREFACE

Russian literature has for some time concerned itself with the discovery of the philosophical tendencies in the national life, but in the English language no such comprehensive work exists. The author of the present work does not pretend to give a complete account of the separate activities discussed in it, but confines himself to the ascertainment of those spiritual principles which alone can help the reader to comprehend and properly weigh the curious and frequently unique phenomena in the social and artistic life of Russia. The author has drawn his information not only from his own intimate acquaintance with the country of his birth and education, but also from the great store of special monographs accessible to the Russian scholar. He has attempted, without bias or rancor, to present all the sides of the national existence and to moderate the Russian spirit of self-abasement in the light of Anglo-Saxon objectivity and fairness.

A few words about the spelling of Russian names adopted in the following pages. It is the same as that employed in the author's translation of the works of Tolstoy, and is based on the precise

Preface

rendering of the Russian form, hence the ending *ov* instead of the senseless *off* indulged in by some writers. No attempt is made to give the Russian feminine forms of names, which would only be confusing to an English reader. Hence the title of Tolstoy's work is given as *Anna Karenin*, and not as *Anna Karenina*. The latter is as useless as it would be to mention Madame Tolstoy as Tolstaya.

THE AUTHOR

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION	1
II THE CURRENTS OF ANCIENT RUSSIAN LIFE .	18
III THE NATIONAL IDEALS OF RUSSIAN LITERATURE	39
IV ART FOR LIFE'S SAKE IN RUSSIA	68
V RUSSIAN MUSIC, AN EXPRESSION OF A PEOPLE	95
VI THE ESSENCE OF RUSSIAN RELIGION	116
VII THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE PEOPLE . .	142
VIII THE PEASANT	178
IX THE POSITION AND INFLUENCE OF WOMEN IN RUSSIA	199
X THE NON-RUSSIAN RUSSIANS	220
XI BIBLIOGRAPHY	239

