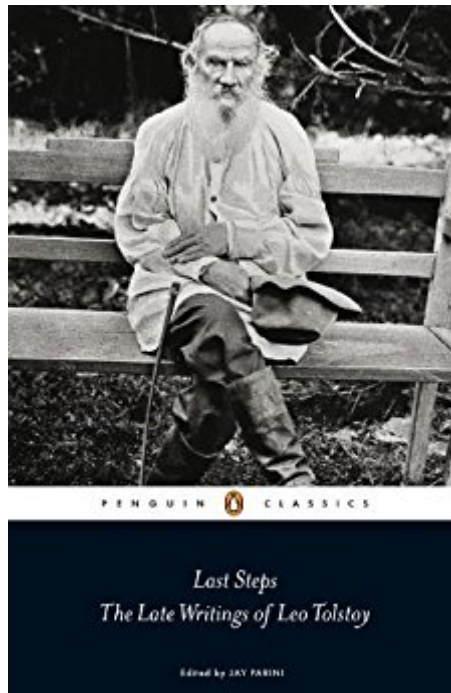


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Last Steps: The Late Writings Of Leo Tolstoy: The Late Writings Of Leo Tolstoy (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

1910. Anna Karenina and War and Peace have made Leo Tolstoy the world's most famous author. But fame comes at a price. In the tumultuous final year of his life, Tolstoy is desperate to find respite, so leaves his large family and the hounding press behind and heads into the wilderness. Too ill to venture beyond the tiny station of Astapovo, he believes his last days will pass in isolation. But as we learn through the journals of those closest to him, the battle for Tolstoy's soul will not be a peaceful one. Jay Parini introduces, translates and edits this collection of Tolstoy's autobiographical writing, diaries, and letters related to the last year of Tolstoy's life published to coincide with the 2009 film of Parini's novel *The Last Station: A Novel of Tolstoy's Final Year*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Last Steps is an excellent collection of short works by Count Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) compiled by Dr. Jay Parini and other editors. Parini has an excellent introduction to Tolstoy. Parini has written a fine novel "The Last Station" dealing with the final days of the Russian master; the novel has been turned into a fine film starring Vanessa Redgrave as Mrs. Tolstoy and Christopher Plummer as Tolstoy. In these final flashes of genius from Tolstoy's pen we see his views on a variety of topics. Tolstoy was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church since he hated church ritual,

tradition and superstition. His letter to the Church following his excommunication and advice to the clergy is contained within these pages. Tolstoy believed in Christ as a great teacher who taught humanity to live together in peace and brotherhood. Tolstoy's letter to Gandhi regarding the importance of nonresistance is included in the volume. Tolstoy also was against war and government. While an aristocrat he, nevertheless, championed the cause of the Russian peasant and felt land should be redistributed to them. He was against the use of tobacco and the eating of meat. His description of a visit to a slaughterhouse is vivid and one grieves for the plight of the poor beasts suffering under knout and knife. Tolstoy advocated chastity and kindness to one's fellows. The longest piece in this book is his analysis of Shakespeare focusing on the play "King Lear." Tolstoy thought Shakespeare was wrong to turn the attention of the audience from topics of morality to secular themes. His opinion while influential is very controversial. His letters to George Bernard Shaw are of interest.

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