INTRODUCTION

Since the earliest times men have tried to enquire from where did he come, for what was he living, and what would happen to him after death. The enquiry is such an enigma hidden in the bosom of enigmas that it has so yet defied all efforts by man to unriddle it satisfactorily.

Smaller minds either do not ask primarily questions concerning life, or if at all they do they commonly settle upon the traditional answers given by various religions. But there are men, born now and then, who try to understand and explain life anew. They make an effort to discover the truth. They try to do what the prophets do. Tolstoy was one of them.

Tolstoy was engaged in search for the meaning of life for the whole of his life, up to the very end. He was able to reach a certain understanding of life in his own way. Though he was never dogmatic about his conclusions - he was far too humble a man for that, and was always prepared to correct himself in the light of better understanding - he was able to make out certain fundamentals upon which he rested his understanding of life.
The true meaning of life was his predominant passion which was instrumental - directly or indirectly - for all his work, imaginative or otherwise, and for the conduct of his life. His understanding of life, which he tried his best to translate into the practical conduct of life, made him undergo many personal sacrifices and also brought him into painful conflict with his family. His certain convictions and acts were fiercely denounced by the contemporary government and Church, the Church going as far as to excommunicate him. He was looked upon as dangerous by the government and much of his writing was proscribed. Yet, despite all obstacles and opposition the truth which he proclaimed spread far and wide to all the four corners of the world. The light of his enlightened soul lit up the minds of the people with a new hope and vigour of life.

For his search of the meaning of life Tolstoy moved systematically. Firstly he made a thorough diagnosis of life, which provided him with certain clues to the fundamentals which constituted the basis of life. Taking up as base those fundamentals of life he built developed his whole argument on life. As he explained life primarily with the aid of religion - his own understanding of religion - he realised the fundamentals of religion