Workers of the world, unite!

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ALEXEI MAXIMOVICH GORKY, the great Russian writer, master of style, and fighter for the victory of Communism, died on June 18, 1936.

The Revolutionary writers of the world lost in him a teacher and leader, the toilers—a supreme friend.

Alfred Kurella

About "The Optimists"

Some Notes on the Story Which Follows

The author who seeks to give a literary portrayal of great historical events which he has himself taken direct part in, must display unusual strength in order to overcome the difficulties this involves.

The success of the undertaking depends on whether the events which the author knew or experienced effected the furthest depths of his social and spiritual being.

For the young Hungarian writer, E. Sinko, the subject of his novel *The Optimists* was not merely one theme chosen at random from among many others.

We learn from the author's recently published autobiography that the present novel was based on episodes in the author's own life, episodes which carried him almost to the limits of his spiritual existence—to the complete negation of that existence.

At the end of the World War the young student, Sinko, was one of those "ethical humanists" regarding whom Marx wrote that for them "Communism was a condition that must be created by an ideal which serves as a pattern for reality." *(Deutsche Ideologie,* I. Feuerbach, Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe Bd. 5, S. 25).

That was how Sinko came to the revolutionary labor movement and later, in the Hungarian "Kerensky period" joined the Communist Party. The contradiction between his abstract concept of Communism and actual Communism, which destroys the present and which is the product of existing causes, led Sinko to the negation of his revolutionary activity and consequently to the negation of the Communist movement.

In this fashion after the downfall of the Hungarian Soviet Republic he left the Party. But his effort to give a theoretical justification of this "solution" failed. The argument developed in one of his books, that renunciation of Communism must be absolutely non-political, was not only obviously incapable of withstanding the least logical criticism, but gave rise to new and even more perplexing contradictions, which clamored for a new solution. And such a solution in Sinko's case could only be the negation of the negation, that is, his return to Communism, endowed with a new and deeper understanding. He wrote *The Optimists* in the period of his struggle for this return.

This novel is therefore, autobiographical. It does not reconstruct a given event but participates in the course of its development. By writing this book, Sinko, in his creative work relived the decisive period of his life, but lived it differently. This circumstance has rendered the book extremely subjective. But it is precisely this that gives Sinko's work the significance of a social document.

Briefly *The Optimists* is the life story of the young Communist Bati, an intellectual who is an active participant in the Hungarian revolution. Round him are grouped the remaining characters whom the author portrays no less strikingly. The majority are Party members—intellectuals. There are however representatives of other social strata, for instance, the waiter Eisinger, or the former peasant Kozma, now a war invalid, and the worker Kozian. The last of these, a strikebreaker and thief in the beginning later becomes a devoted

and heroic Red Army man. The destinies of all of these characters are linked in the breadth of the historical composition. The unity and accuracy of this composition, the agreement between the details and the main theme are positive features of the work as a whole. The main events of the Hungarian revolution, which provide the background for the novel's action, are sometimes portrayed directly by the author, but for the most part they are implied in the actions and especially in the conversations of its heroes. Altogether conversations occupy an important place in the book. But in this instance, in contrast to many works of Western revolutionary literature, they do not serve to give a more or less detailed expression of the author's views. The latter are only expressed by the book as a whole. Only in the course of the action which gradually demolishes the "false ideology" of various heroes, especially the abstract theories of Bati, does the author, in his creative role lead us to recognize the victory of militant Communism in this bitter struggle.

The attempt to give a literary picture of the proletarian revolution by portraying a group of intellectuals runs certain dangers. It may appear that the mistakes committed by intellectuals who are in the forefront of events are treated by the author as mistakes inherent in the group portrayed. In order to avoid such conclusions—indeed if there is anything we should criticize Sinko for, it is only his failure to take sufficient measures against such interpretations—let us say directly, that the waverings and hesitations of these intellectuals who were not among the leaders of the Communist Party were obviously, according to the author himself, contrary to the wishes of the Party leaders, such as Bela Kun, Tibor Samueli, Otto Korwin and the remarkable revolutionary worker Herting. These mistakes as well as the mistakes of the Communist leadership, added to the treachery of the reformists and the superior forces of the imperialists, caused the downfall of the Hungarian commune. They were political errors that bore no relation to the social origin of a considerable portion of these leaders. The reasons for these errors are to be sought in the history of the young Hungarian Communist Party.

At the time the dictatorship was established this Party had only been in existence four months; it was nevertheless a real mass party, able to lead the masses, and for four whole months it led the struggle of the proletariat and its allies for power, causing the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party to lose much of their mass influence. Aware of this, the Social-Democratic leaders visited the leaders of the Communist Party in prison and proposed the joint organization of a government based on the political platform of the Communist Party. In accepting this proposal the Communist leaders committed what was a fatal error under the existing conditions. They agreed to combine the two parties and thus the Communist Party was formally and practically dissolved and merged with the Social-Democratic Party. But the principles of the fusion and of united action were not openly discussed with the masses. All of this occurred at a time when the proletariat and all the working people of the country were in urgent need of a far-seeing steadfast and disciplined leadership. To this capital mistake another was soon added: a wrong agrarian policy. By decree of the Hungarian Soviet Government all land belonging to the landlords was confiscated in revolutionary fashion without compensation, and without being divided up. But instead of winning the peasant masses to the revolution by distributing the land to the working peasants, the Hungarian Soviet Power transformed the property of the landowners and kulaks into "national farms," in many instances retaining the former managers and even owners in the capacity of "administrators." These mistakes deprived the proletariat at one and the same time of its most valuable ally and of a re-

liable and enterprising Communist leadership. In this way even the intellectuals who supported the revolution were mainly left to themselves, a fact which explains their confusion as portrayed by Sinko in the course of events. For the abstract metaphysical discussion of ethical problems in the environment depicted in the novel is unquestionably confused.

The literary treatment of that peculiar situation which caused the waverings of the main characters and their abstract conversations, must be regarded as the author's merit. The author reproduced the tragic details of the infancy of the contemporary Communist revolution in the West, and portrayed a whole section of the active participants in the Hungarian proletarian revolution. This achievement is even more striking in view of the fact that so far not one writer had treated the events of the first post-war years in this light. All of us who lived through those years are still under their peculiar spell even today and are inclined to idealize facts, and relate our latest political experience to the earlier time. It must however be pointed out that nowhere indeed was this state of affairs so sharply defined as in the Hungarian revolution. I, myself, experienced something similar only in Bavaria, in the time of the November revolution, before the Soviets. The analogy is indeed so surprising that when reading *The Optimists* I sometimes fancied that I saw the people and the events, that I heard the conversations of that peculiar period.

After the downfall of the Central European monarchies, the victory of the proletariat in the defeated countries was comparatively easy. The old enemy had suddenly disappeared and the new enemy had not yet materialized. It seemed as though it would be possible without any trouble to steer directly to Socialism. In Germany the disappointment was not long delayed. As early as January and March 1919 the nationalist bourgeoisie took the offensive against the revolutionary proletariat and used the social democracy as its standard-bearer and executioner. That was when the new enemy appeared. The revolutionary minority had to concentrate its entire efforts in attacking this new political fortress.

Things were otherwise in Hungary. Here in October, when the Hapsburg monarchy fell, the new enemy, the bourgeoisie, remained hidden and invisible for a longer time. Soon after the silent disappearance of the monarchy, the provisional bourgeois government which was formed by the bourgeois parties of the left and the Social-Democratic Party resigned, after four months in power. Social democracy which here had likewise served as the bourgeoisie's best support and which had fought the Communists as "bandits" for four months, "was converted" overnight to the proletarian revolution. Then it was that after four months of class struggle the dictatorship of the proletariat was established without recourse to armed insurrection (for the bourgeoisie and its main support the Social-Democratic Party, weakened in the struggle, did not dare accept an open combat). Also, in the beginning even a part of the officers and the bourgeoisie, disillusioned with "Wilsonism" and hoping to avoid the partition of Hungary by an orientation to the East, *i.e.*, a military alliance with Soviet Russia, hailed it with enthusiasm. Can one imagine a situation more likely to create illusions in the minds of the masses regarding the further successes of the revolution? And not only among the masses. We must also not forget that in 1919 the Communists of every land reckoned on the swift victory of the World Revolution.

This optimism underlies the action of the novel. It gives rise to that particular atmosphere which pervades all the conversations and reflections of the heroes.

Today, when we know not only from the further history of Hungary, but from world history, especially after the advent to power of the fascists in several countries, how cruelly the bourgeoisie took advantage of the underestimation of its forces and its hatred of Socialism, we appreciate the entire tragedy of this "optimism." We realize that the strange conversations which deal with strange problems are not simply the products of intellectuals minds, but that they reflect the thoughts and feelings of various social groups and thereby cease to be "strange." They become a fearful warning and give the concept of "class vigilance" a new significance for the West.

Undoubtedly in this environment of Communist intellectuals the treatment of certain questions is more abstract; but for all that they do not cease to be in a definite sense problems of the revolution as a whole. In the novel the worker's question "Why must I voluntarily give up my life if I get nothing out of it?" raises the problem of death in its different aspects: to die, to die for the revolution, and to kill. In Bati's mind as well as in the conversations with his friends this question soon acquires a general philosophical and abstract form. But it nevertheless remains a worker's question. This question was voiced by a worker for whom the dictatorship had been won in a fairly easy fashion, a worker who up to now had done nothing in its behalf, whose political education was at most that of the trade union movement and who, consequently, did not and could not feel the hidden danger of bourgeois reaction, because he did not understand the enemy's tactics. This worker, who did not understand the class basis of national defence, whose prejudices, inculcated and kept alive by reformist propaganda prevented him from appreciating the Red Army, and who finally was disarmed by social democratic defeatism, driven to desperation by the shortage of supplies and other difficulties of the period—difficulties for which he "blamed the dictatorship" —calmly, by a majority vote, supported the opportunists' proposal for a "return to democracy," never even suspecting that he had voted for the bloody terror of Hejjs and Horthy.

The muddled ideology connected with an incredibly tangled historical situation is mirrored in the minds of the intellectuals, the main characters in the novel. Along with the recreation of these reflections, which was indispensable to clarifying his own mistakes, the author had to give a picture of the moods and convictions of the broad masses as well as of the circumstances which caused them. All this transforms this "intellectual novel" into a novel of great historical significance.

We do not however maintain that all the ideological and ethical conflicts in *The Optimists* are of equal interest to the worker who consciously seeks to rid himself of the remnants of bourgeois concepts and feelings.

There are questions which only concerned intellectuals and were a reflection of their decadence. But such questions can in turn interest those intellectuals who are seeking the Communist way out at the present time. The fact that Sinko's book raises these problems and to some degree solves them, vouchsafes its success in capitalist countries.

If Sinko's book does not completely satisfy the readers; if it seems that the author, even as he writes it has not yet found the answer to certain questions, it must be remembered that in order to correct a profound personal error it is not enough to give it a literary expression. Sinko is now in the USSR. Life itself enriches him with new impressions and experiences which serve him as a stimulus to new creative work.

The chapter which we give below occurs approximately in the middle of the book which as a whole contains about a thousand pages. The action takes

place at the beginning of April 1919. This chapter contains the temporary solution of a number of problems which exclusively concern the personal life of Bati and which take up rather considerable space in the first part of the book. Even in the preceding chapters the centre of gravity in the novel has shifted more and more to the sphere of politics. In the tenth chapter Bati makes a tour of inspection in the country and this tour acquaints him with the attitude of the masses of the countryside to the dictatorship of the proletariat. He makes the appalling discovery of an utter lack of understanding of the simplest problems of the revolution. He is especially struck by his encounter with the worker who is uncertain as to whether he should join the Red Army and who asks him the question we mentioned above "what will I get out of dying?" Bati returns to Budapest with this question deep in his heart. Here he encounters the atmosphere of optimism which is in strange contradiction to his experience in the country.

Ervin Sinko

The Optimists

Excerpts from a New Hungarian Novel

". . . At the moment we are writing these lines, the Third International already has the support of three Soviet republics: the Russian, the Hungarian, the Bavarian. By the time these lines appear, no one will be astonished if there exist not three but six Soviet republics, perhaps even more. Old Europe recoils at a dizzy pace before the proletarian revolution. Perhaps in America capitalism will continue to survive for a few years in the face of a Communist Europe. The same applies to England after the victory of Communism on the Continent, but such a combination cannot last long. . . ."

Agatha Koltay read the Hungarian text in an improvised English and her blue eyes regarded General Smuts rather pityingly.

"It is unusual to find a foreigner who speaks English so well," said the general. "Who wrote the article?"

"Don't you know? Why the Chairman of the Third International, General."

General Smuts drew a notebook bound in black leather from his pocket and offered it to Agatha smiling.

"Will you please make a note of that too?"

A whole page of the general's notebook was already covered with Agatha's large sprawling handwriting:

"Tolstoi: *War and Peace*

"Tolstoi: *Resurrection.*

"Pascal: *Meditations.*

"Dostoyevsky: *The Brothers Karamazov* (at any rate the chapter on the grand inquisitor).

"St. Francis of Assisi: *Little Flowers.*

"Marx and Engels: *The Communist Manifesto.*"

To this list the above article was added.

"The Third International will certainly see to it that it appears in English," Agatha said reassuringly. Then she carefully ran her eyes down the list which she had thus compiled in the course of her talk with the general; this was the result of her activity up to now.

"I quite appreciate," she said, "that at any other time it would seem curious to discuss all that with the general of His Majesty the King of England. But I am convinced that the King of England himself although he doesn't yet realize it, will lead a more human life in the English Soviet Republic than on the throne of the British Empire."

"That's an exaggeration," ventured the general, "at any rate as regards the late Tsar Nicholas II."

Agatha shook her blonde curls, seriously.

"My dear General, you must admit that capitalism imposed a four-year war on us and that instead of peace brought us hatred together with famine, misery and anarchy. Capitalism is no longer bearable. Look at Michael Karolyi, General, everyone respects him, even though he was one of the richest men in the country. No one holds anything against him. Did he have less of a way to travel to reach socialism than you?"

Three days earlier the papers of the whole world had published an item stating that General Smuts had been sent to Hungary by the powers united at

the Peace Conference in Paris. He was to look into certain questions in connection with the Armistice.

This visit was the first official contact of the Entente with revolutionary Hungary and was regarded as a victory of the Hungarian Soviets' foreign policy.

Agatha Koltay was appointed to act as the general's guide and interpreter. She did not confine herself to this role. Talking English, taking the general to the Fisherman's Rampart, showing him the racetracks and the bourgeois amusement places transformed into model vegetable gardens was not enough. She had, she considered, another mission to perform. She was entirely certain that she had merely to dissipate his prejudices and his errors in order to win him over if not as an active fighter, at least as a sympathizer with the great goals of humanity.

The general proved most amiable in fact. He said he had never imagined Budapest was so European and so lovely. He had been most agreeably surprised by Mr. Bela Kun as well as by the apartment placed at his disposal. He said he never would have expected that a simple diplomatic mission would earn him the acquaintance of such an agreeable, pleasant and cultured lady as Agatha.

Agatha told the general that her parents belonged to the Hungarian aristocracy, that her father was a member of the High Assembly. She also told him that she was not a Marxist because she believed that every individual could cross the boundaries of his class, that everyone can experience the supreme moment when, like the heroes of *War and Peace* he glimpses his soul and the blue sky which opens to infinity.

"Most interesting," the general repeated and he promised to read Tolstoi's book just as soon as he had the time.

On his departure the general gave Agatha a beautifully bound copy of Browning's *Sonnets* with a friendly dedication and when Agatha together with several high functionaries of the Foreign Office accompanied General Smuts to the station he remained standing until the train left.

Agatha was the first person to greet Bati with the remark "I am so happy," and she showed him the *Red Gazette* carrying a declaration by Bela Kun: "Our conversations with General Smuts were most cordial. The Entente does not harbor any aggressive intentions whatever."

This joy on Agatha's part was natural and unalloyed. Pali Sarosi was saying in her presence that it wasn't such a bad idea to appoint such a pretty comrade to escort the representative of the British capitalists and Agatha gave him the same bright blue look she had given Bati and General Smuts. She did not notice that the more she exulted the more Bati was troubled by this general rejoicing.

Pali Sarosi gave an enthusiastic account of the procession from the Suspension Bridge to the Millenial Column. Magnificent! The sun shone, Chari Fodak sang to the accompaniment of hundreds of gypsies. She did not seem the least bit offended by this audience, was in fact far more appreciative than the habitual theatre-goers.

Doctor Seiden also shared the general good humor. "My young friend," he said to Bati, "never forget even for an hour how happy you are today."

Doctor Seiden had not become a Communist, as Doctor Licht had claimed, but he had made progress. If times were not so urgent one would have regarded Doctor Seiden's evolution with an astonishment equal to that of Doctor Seiden himself when the first decrees of the dictatorship appeared: how could people as old and corrupt as he was be rejuvenated and acquire new aims

in life? Formerly, at the outset of his career, Doctor Seiden had lost his illusions. In his eyes medicine was no more than a means of earning money, a simple means like every other. The money was the goal but it was only the goal because there were no other goals in life and because you had to fill in the dreary emptiness with something: "the horror of emptiness, is the most dreadful of all horrors," Doctor Seiden was fond of saying in his present happiness..

Doctor Seiden recalled his own youth with a smile that was first sceptical and then grew more and more perplexed. He recalled the time when as a young and pennyless doctor he had given up love for life in the capital, for freedom to indulge in his own pleasures and for a good medical opening. And now the world had become young, young like he himself was thirty years ago.

"You have no idea," he said, "how great and wonderful the triumphant will of this country now is! Tell me, what can the greatest physician in the world do at the bedside of a poor patient? It reminds me of a priest somewhere in England who led a man condemned to death to the scaffold in winter-time and in Christian fashion advised him, 'Button your coat or you will catch cold.' Today the physician can tend the poor man, it's worth it!"

And Doctor Seiden echoed Lanyi's remark: "All medicine, hygiene, sanitation, anesthaesia passed beyond the limits of bourgeois society long ago and concur with the social trend of the proletariat: avoid all human suffering that can be avoided."

Bati was somewhat dazed and uneasy at the sight of all these happy people in Pest, including even his former landlord the blind lieutenant to whom he kept his word. Bati had once promised that if the dictatorship of the proletariat took power he would get him a police dog trained to lead him about. The lieutenant had not forgotten the promise.

As soon as he learned that the Hotel Hungaria had become the House of Soviets the lieutenant had himself taken there every day at noon, because his lodger, the statistician, who led him around was free at that time. And every day until Bati's arrival he would inquire for him. His first remark was: "I was afraid you'd refuse to see me." Hadn't he turned Bati out of the house once when he couldn't pay the rent? And Bati realized that the unfortunate lieutenant was afraid he might want to get even with him. He felt uncomfortable in the presence of the lieutenant. The latter who was usually coarse in his language and careless in his habits had put on his dress uniform in honor of the occasion. The same uniform—Bati recognized it despite the absence of epaulettes and decorations—which he wore in the photograph that appeared in an illlustrated magazine, showing the blind hero with his patriotic fiancée on his arm. The uniform fitted in well with the flowery style of the speech he had prepared ahead of time.

"There are 256,000 war invalids in Hungary, 130,000 war widows and 240,000 orphans."

The statistician, a pleasant, threadbare, old chap who used to put his hand on Bati's shoulder when he talked to him, felt called upon to substantiate the lieutenant.

"Kindly do not forget," he said, "that the comrade lieutenant is a former bank employe. His memory is reliable when it comes to figures."

This remark encouraged the lieutenant who resumed:

"These 626,000 people are all of them dependent on the Commissariat of Public Welfare, there's lots of competition and that is why I venture to

ask my esteemed former tenant for his backing in the matter of the police dog and I venture to hope that the proletarian fatherland. . . ."

Bati exhibited his greatest politeness. The matter of the police dog was settled. Then the lieutenant, reassured, dismissed his guide and avowed another purpose of his visit, the more important perhaps.

When the old man was out of the room the lieutenant became more and more excited and mysterious. He felt his way towards the door, opened it to make sure that the old man was not eavesdropping and then came over towards Bati with the alarming air of a lunatic. He removed his black glasses as he was in the habit of doing at home, holding them in one hand while his other hand clutched Bati's arm. His face was tense, his head thrown back and nostrils dilated. He talked and talked. . . . His wife had deceived him with the student. They had wanted to rob him but he had turned his wife out in time and he had locked everything carefully . . . The railway engineer, his other tenant, was on friendly terms with the student . . . too friendly, and who knew whether the statistician who accompanied him and who read the papers aloud to him wouldn't also betray his vigilance at an opportune moment . . . So far he had prevented them from robbing him . . . As far as he knew at least.

He pulled some newspapers from his pocket and handed them to Bati. He wanted Bati to read him the proceedings of the revolutionary tribunals and Bati read:

"Jean Mezodi, for the crime of selling flour tickets, ten years of forced labor . . . for having concealed his stock of grain: five years of forced labor.

"The innkeeper, Nicolas Tot, for contraband sale of spirits: ten years of forced labor."

"Go on, go on," urged the lieutenant. Bati looked at him. The lieutenant's face was like that of a corpse but his lips were trembling.

"Nicolas Ivanics for having cheated at cards: ten years of forced labor.

"The woman, Frances Haidou, for having hidden her gems, confiscation of personal and real property."

"That's enough," cried the lieutenant. "So it's true about Frances Haidou! I still hoped that they'd reach some agreement. I shudder to think of it."

And with incoherent violence, with curses and imprecations the lieutenant gave vent to his fear, which had become an obsession, the fear of starving to death . . . He didn't even dare see his parents . . . He could not sleep nights . . . He locked up everything, everything save the ash tray . . . and now to this fear was added his fear of the revolutionary tribunal. . . .

Bati had always regarded this wretch as a victim. Regardless of what he did he could not be held responsible. He listened to him with a feeling of pity.

The lieutenant mopped his forehead. He ended by confessing that he had a sack of gold and rubies, a diamond necktie pin and a platinum bracelet which he had bought his wife as a wedding gift and which he had managed to get back from her . . .

And Bati, feeling very sorry for him, replied unthinkingly: "Don't worry, nothing will happen to you."

It didn't matter who said this as long as it was said in the House of Soviets. The lieutenant went off relieved and happy, to the momentary delight of Bati. But immediately after Bati grew uneasy. His eyes fell on the papers which lay still unfolded. . . . The woman, Frances Haidou . . . He, Bati had just encouraged someone to violate the decrees of the dictatorship . . . He had promised him impunity. Once again the sight of the man had made him forget the

law! It was the same as in Kozma's case—he hadn't gone to see the Kozmas since his return to Pest—it was like the execution of Ketchkeneth which haunted him so that his first question on reaching Pest was to ask what was known regarding the execution of Ketchkeneth.

He thought and acted unreflectingly, on an emotional impulse, as though the law was still that of a bourgeois state hostile and soulless. That was corruption, for one can be corrupt without any personal interest being at stake.

And yet what did all that amount to in the face of so much to be done, so many wrongs to be righted . . . The reports he had sent during his tour had vanished before they reached the proper hands . . . All the functionaries of all the peoples commissariats sabotaged their work, and so much had yet to be learned about the country . . . Yes, as compared with all that of what importance was the execution of an individual, sentenced by the Revolutionary Tribunal in conformity with the decrees of the Revolutionary Counsel of the government? Still Bati had a guilty conscience. He was astonished to find everybody so content in Budapest . . . In reality it wasn't as easy as all that.

These questions bothered him constantly. One day at the Peoples Commissariat of Home Affairs, while he was transmitting the reports from comrades in the country to whom he had promised the moral support of Pest—he suddenly asked apropos of nothing:

"Just what precisely is 'pillage'?" He had tried to make his tone seem casual, but his lower lip trembled.

The comrade who was carefully following Bati's report, answered:

"Pillage is robbery in some district, taking something from everywhere. . . . Why do you ask me that?"

"I didn't know the legal meaning of the term," Bati explained. "I thought it took several people to commit pillage. A whole gang." And he told what had happened at Ketchkeneth.

The comrade, he was the same one who had spoken on the Almassy Square during the Liebknecht—Luxemburg memorial meeting, made a gesture of impatience.

"It was either the excessive zeal of an imbecile or the influence of the rich bourgeois, for it is in fact strange that the first repressive measure of the dictatorship should be invoked for a crime against private property. But there is lots of excessive zeal too. Comrade Stein had had to write an article on 'The Dangers of Socialization.' There's a regular fever of socialization at present . . . Yesterday the dancing masters," he explained, "today the small artisans come and demand money for raw materials and wages and declare that their studios have been socialized . . ."

Bati spoke to no one regarding the blind lieutenant. He ended by convincing himself that he could not have acted any differently with a semi-lunatic, just as he couldn't allow a child to be hung. Hadn't the lieutenant said that he would hang himself? In spite of that every time he learned of penalties imposed on concealers of jewelry Bati felt like an accomplice and at the same time like a bad judge. He experienced a double uneasiness. The only person to whom he might have confided his trouble and his conflict was Ergy.

Ergy's reply came to him unexpectedly without his having to ask any questions . . .

It was after the lieutenant's visit. He entered the big restaurant in the House of Soviets somewhat late. Only a few tables were still occupied; Vertes and Lanyi were sitting at one of them. It was an admirable thing the friendship of these two men who now lived under one roof. For Vertes, Lanyi was the disciple who falters on the crossroads of his interrupted spiritual life and the

realistic necessities of politics. Thanks to Vertes, Lanyi in his editor's office at the *Red Gazette,* in the midst of the most humdrum trivialities lived an intense militant intellectual life full of the unexpected.

They were talking of Fredrich Adler when Bati took his seat. A declaration of Adler's had just been received in Pest: "A Soviet republic in Austria," Adler had said in reply to the Bavarian and Hungarian Soviets, "could not hold power for more than fifteen days," and he, Adler, was opposed to the least useless sacrifice. That same day the official dispatch from Germany told of 32,000 strikers in the Ruhr. This strike could give the Bavarian Soviets effective help against the Reich government. People in Budapest believed that once the Soviets were established in Austria, the Bavarian Soviet Republic on one side, the Hungarian on the other and the Austrian in between would provide a firm base for the emancipating proletarian revolution in Central Europe first and subsequently in Europe as a whole.

Why aren't such prospects more desirable in the eyes of the Austrian proletariat than the food trains promised by the Entente?

Bati, completely regaining his courage, took part in the conversation. In the face of these broad issues he felt relieved from the weight of his own questions. As compared with real comrades such as Vertes and Lanyi, who judged individual problems in their relation to the whole, his own scruples and ill-humor seemed exceedingly trivial and the enthusiasm of those who saw the regime from the outside became very superficial.

"It is strange," said Bati, "that back in October Gheza Toeroek asserted that Adler's gesture in killing Count Sturgkh, the Austrian Prime Minister, was the gesture of a desperate petty-bourgeois and not of a revolutionary."

"Not that of a Marxist revolutionary, but that of a revolutionary all the same. The revolutionaries of the Adler type—as we shall not point out in the columns of the *Red Gazette,*" Vertes said with a smile, turning lightly to Lanyi, "the social democrats à la Adler are on a moral level much higher than the Kaiser's socialists. They have a feeling of responsibility. The attempt against Sturgkh was prompted by this feeling. Adler said to himself: "I am responsible for the war if I do nothing, if I do not even make one effective gesture against it. Adler's attempt in fact demonstrated the possibility of fighting against war even under the monarchy. This same feeling which at that time made Adler a revolutionary hero today makes him a reactionary because he is unwilling to shoulder the responsibility for anyone but himself. He knows when to risk his own life but he does not dare risk the lives of others. He quails before responsibility for the lives of others. The philosophical and historical intuition which prompted his moral gesture against Sturgkh, fails him here. The supreme responsibility is not always confined to the limits of the individual. Let us take an example. It is bad judgement to hop on a moving train. The railway rules prohibit it and these rules are incontestable from the standpoint of individual safety just as they are from the moral standpoint. But if we are dealing with a single train which will not pass again for centuries, perhaps, wouldn't I jump in spite of the rules, in spite of the danger? In order to recognize the single train at a given moment one must not rely on morality, for morality like science remains general and abstract in the face of the given moment. It takes faith, which alone can provide the philosophic inspiration of history, in order to recognize the single train. And faith and morals can come into conflict. Take the case of the little Comrade Zinner . . . Could she have acted otherwise? Could she have retreated?"

As he talked, Vertes turned now to Lanyi and now to Bati. Though he was

absorbed in his ideas which took shape and developed in the course of his explanation, he was always aware when the intellectual contact with his listener was broken, and his observant eye noted the clarity and power of conviction in his words, from the faces of his listeners.

He turned towards Bati:

"Don't you agree?" he asked.

"Why, yes," Bati said hastily. "Only I don't know the case."

Vertes resumed:

"A rather usual conflict in revolutionary times." He made a gesture and turned towards Lanyi:

"Well . . ."

"Well," said Lanyi, "let us add the following to the apt metaphor of Comrade Vertes: those who do not want to jump on our moving train will be crushed beneath it, and the train will nevertheless carry us on to the future in spite of them."

Vertes departed, Bati did not have to press the matter. Lanyi blushingly told him the case of Comrade Zinner.

It happened while Bati was away. One evening around ten o'clock Vertes and Lanyi were accompanying Ergy Zinner home. They wanted some books and documents which had previously been seized by the police and which Ergy had brought back with some that belonged to her. They had just left some German comrades, one of whom had known Herting, and along the way Vertes spoke of Herting and of the tragic gulf which divided the new post-war working class generation from the old Social Democratic workers accustomed to the election campaigns and parliamentary struggles, especially in those countries where the Social Democratic organizations had a great past, Germany for example. To bridge this gulf was a dream dear to to the hearts of the Independent Socialists but this grew more and more impossible. Herting, standing face to face with his brother, killed in the battles with the Social Democrats, is the symbol of the inevitable internal combat between the Communists and those workers who have remained under the influence of the Socialists.

Reaching her house, Ergy offered Lanyi a piece of sausage, the rare and valuable gift of a young peasant comrade—Lanyi, who never had enough to eat and was always hungry, promptly accepted it. At this point Ergy suddenly noticed a letter for her lying on the table. She made her excuses and proceeded to open it, she suddenly paled. She sat down white as a sheet, slowly folding and unfolding the letter. Lanyi and Vertes did not venture to ask any questions. Without a word she got up, went to get the books and the documents. She brought out the sausage. "Take it," she said.

Four days later they learned of the letter's contents. It was from the tutor of Youtka Flamme and it informed Ergy of her father's arrest. He had violently resisted the requisition of grain from his stores. He had threatened the authorities revolver in hand, and afterwards had not ceased shouting his hatred for the government. His case was very serious. Youtka's teacher knew from the papers that Ergy's husband was People's Commissar and that was why he had written.

"Things must be pretty funny in the country," added Lanyi, "because the accused managed to escape twenty-four hours after his arrest and to find refuge with the Czechs. But in this case it's all for the best, especially on Ergy's account . . . Ergy learned what had happened four days after she received the letter. I believe," Lanyi added with a shudder, "that I also might have kept from doing anything under the circumstances, from saying any-

thing and from hiding the fact that it was my father, but I could only have done it at the price of suicide, and yet to interfere in such a case is to regard oneself as the assassin of all those condemned to death by the revolutionary tribunal, and not like a revolutionary who undertakes responsibilities."

"Yes," said Bati. "You have no idea, Comrade Lanyi, how right you are."

"Where are you going?" Lanyi asked. Bati had suddenly got up.

"I think," said Bati, "I think I'll go see Ergy. He gripped the back of the chair with such force that his hand hurt. The pain did him good, he gripped it still harder and went off with an unsteady gait, feeling a little dizzy. At the door of the House of Soviets, Bati ran into Alexander, already wearing a black leather jacket, the uniform of the "Lenin Guards."

"I saw Gheza Toeroek this very day," cried Alexander, "and on a political matter," he added with importance.

Bati shook his hand absent-mindedly and went off. Outside the south wind enveloped him in stifling heat. From time to time the sun shone with such a glare that his eyes involuntarily turned in the direction of the sudden burst of light, but at the street corner the houses, the young foliage and the pedestrians, again changed color. The clouds scudding before the wind blotted out the blue and gathered black and heavy.

Bati had reached a point of inner tension where he no longer felt any emotion, where he came and went in a state of mild drunkenness. His attention, like that of a child, was utterly absorbed in this April world, by the moving game of colors, light and dark by turns. He was roused by the sound of his name:

"Bati!"

It was Sarkadi, the dashing Sarkadi, who called him from the terrace of a cafe. He caustically inquired whether all Soviet functionaries deliberately ran about the streets like lunatics when they didn't happen to be riding in cars. Maybe this was their way of recognizing each other.

"But I wasn't running," said Bati, who had taken no notice of his own gait. Sarkadi was lecturing the waiter: "Your coffee, Comrade Waiter, never grew on its native plantation, it grew in the patented plantations of a Budapest dye manufacturer!"

Thereupon he paid and followed Bati. He held his cigarette between his long tapering fingers, raised it to his lips, narrowed his eyes and inhaled.

"What are you doing now?" Bati asked.

"Unlike the rest of you, nothing constructive. I would have liked to have warmed myself in the sunshine while I was drinking my coffee but you can't take a sunbath in Budapest in April."

Sarkadi seemed thinner than ever. His grey overcoat flung over his arm, his grey hat in his hand gave him a decided air of careless elegance.

"It's strange," he said, "that everyone I meet first asks me what I'm doing. I finally found the answer: I'm organizing the party of useless people. For the moment I'm the only member but I'm already drawing up the rules. Does it interest you to know? Each member must give public thanks for being what he is; he must enjoy being in his own shoes, he must be a man who can say 'I'm of no use to anyone.' Glory be to you, O Shiva, Vishnu, and all the others, for you have completely saved me from the conscience and self-righteousness of useful people. I don't believe, you see, that work ennobles man. I think that a walk somewhere in the sun under the magnolias makes him much nobler. Perhaps you too think you are doing something important because you belong to a district workers' council or else because you are, say, a member of the five hundred of the central workers' council?

"I am," answered Bati.

"I read about it," and Sarkadi began laughing bitterly, "I read that more than 500,000 workers voted in Pest. In fact the trade unions marched in back of a band to drop ballots which were drawn up and printed ahead of time by the government council. Do you call that voting? I wasn't written on any of the lists, but the Socialist-Democratic leader who turned a machine-gun on the workers at Chalgotaryan is sure to be on them; may be he's sitting beside you among the five hundred."

"Yes, he is on the central workers' council," said Bati, blushing because he remembered that after the elections to the workers' councils he himself had reacted the same as Sarkadi. And during the first session of the district workers' council, his thoughts were so bitter he had not dared confide them to anyone. While Sarkadi continued to criticize, exposing the gulf between the theory of proletarian rule and the reality: the grim reality of bodies which were nothing but hotbeds of bureaucracy—Bati remembered the first session of the district council which was taken up with personal questions and petty rivalries between the unions. He recalled the representatives of the unions and the factories, the union leaders, all of whom, bragged about their past record, competed for supremacy in the five hundred and judged every question from the narrow standpoint of their own unions.

"As for the elections," he answered Sarkadi, "if you had seen the kind of people that sometimes make up a village Soviet in the country, you would appreciate the precautions taken by the government council as regards the district workers' councils, including the central council. However, we had to make certain compromises with the more backward sections of the proletariat . . ."

Sarkadi whistled softly.

"What a funny kind of proletarian democracy. But formerly in the columns of *Communism* we wrote that the Party must lead the workers to the promised land, even in spite of themselves. For the time being all that such promises amount to is a new bureaucracy."

"No, no," Bati protested, "we have the proletariat on our side, for in spite of everything they realize . . . not all of them, but. . . ."

Bati did not continue. He began telling about a scene he had witnessed one morning shortly after his return to Pest. It was around ten o'clock; some fifty odd people were standing in a queue before a butcher's shop—women, men and children. At this point the Red militiaman who stood guard in front of the entrance informed the crowd that there was nothing more. This announcement was followed by a commotion. Bati stopped. He heard a woman say with a sigh, "I should have come earlier." She was a lean woman, one of those impersonal figures clad in the changeless uniform of poverty, one of those women who might be either 30 or 45, who wear a heavy brown shawl over their shoulders even on a warm, spring day. The others grumbled. They had waited a whole hour for nothing. In the face of the general discontent the woman in the brown shawl turned and said:

"During the war they could stand everything. It's only now that they lose patience."

She said that without any grandiloquent gestures, without even changing her voice, in the same tone she had used in expressing her own regrets a moment earlier. Her voice contained fully as much melancholy as indignation. She disappeared rapidly in the crowd, her brown shawl was swallowed in the nameless depths of poverty, in one of those hovels where most of the talk is about bread—the lack of bread.

Sarkadi followed the recital with close attention, but feeling Bati's eyes on him, he remarked,

"I'll bet my neck that that woman of yours in the brown shawl was a member of some council or of some workers' committee! I hate those official buildings," he added, for they were passing in front of the People's Commissariat of Public Education. "Have you ever noticed that those offices are always gloomy and bare like the barracks of the Hussars? What am I talking about? In the Hussars barracks there's at least a manure pile, which has a pleasant smell. Here there's nothing but the musty smell of old papers. I know what makes these buildings so horrible, it's because people don't live there but only work there."

In spite of that, Sarkadi knew what office Ergy worked in.

"I went there once or twice," he muttered, "but there's only work for the philologically inclined. In fact you have to wait more than a half hour in order to get in. It's on the left, over there," he said to Bati. He said good-bye with a smile twirling his hat. As he reached the foot of the stairs Bati fancied he heard someone crying behind him. He turned around, Sarkadi was standing alone in the doorway, hat in hand and smiling.

Bati climbed the stairs slowly. His temples were throbbing. He didn't quite know what it was he was trying to think of with such an effort.

"It's not my fault, comrades, I was delayed at the Esterhazy Palace, at the headquarters of the Young Communist League."

Bati overheard that as he entered a room where about fifteen people were gathered. He recognized the voice of a young comrade from Bimbo Street. This young comrade had just taken a seat behind a huge desk. His complexion was still yellowish from the air in the printing plant, his hair fell in his eyes as usual, but his fingernails were intact because he no longer had the time to chew them.

"I must ask you to be brief," said the breathless voice of the young man. "I know all about your case, comrade," he told a worker dressed in his Sunday best. "You saw Comrade Zinner this morning regarding the young workers of Aszod, didn't you?"

He continued for everybody's benefit:

"Can you imagine, in Aszod the school for apprentices begins at seven o'clock in the evening, just as it did in the time of Count Tisza . . . but the nightschool has been done away with."

He took a mimeographed form from a drawer and filled it in, stamped it, signed it and gave it to the comrade who had made a special trip on account of this matter.

"Give to the educational committee of the local soviet in Aszod a good calling down," he said. "If only all the adult comrades took as much interest as you do in the welfare of the youth! . . . By the time you get back to Aszod there will be a letter waiting from Comrade Zinner, addressed to the youth organization there."

At this moment Bati recognized the bearded painter. He had come to see Ergy personally. He organized lectures on the Beaux Arts for young workers and this time the instructions of a secretary were not enough for him.

The door of Comrade Zinner's office opened. A noisy group of young workers came out arguing about Marxist education in the high schools.

"You may go in, comrade," said the secretary. The painter explained to Bati that the Hungarian Soviets were running a competition for the design for the monument to Ady.

"I saw the drawing," said the painter. "I can tell you without exaggeration that I saw some that were worthy of Ady."

"There are others waiting besides you, comrade," interrupted the secretary, reminding the painter of his social duty.

"The bearded painter said good-bye to Bati.

"Would you like me to tell Comrade Zinner that you are here?"

"No, don't mention me," said Bati accompanying the painter towards the door . . . it was only on a personal matter and I see that. . . ."

The secretary turned around for a moment and said, "Comrade Bati you can see Comrade Zinner at home any evening at nine or ten o'clock, except when she has a meeting."

Bati thanked him. He left this place feeling surprisingly calm. Going downstairs he had the impression that he heard the same sobbing he had heard on his way up. He had felt beforehand that he wouldn't see Ergy. And it wasn't simply a hunch, it was because there were so many people and so much work going on around there. He realized suddenly that he would be unable to tell Ergy his thoughts, that he couldn't appear before her, feeling the way he did. He realized now that he had not come to help Ergy. What he wanted was to talk to her because she was still alive, because she continued working, because she had gone through the test, because she had stood the test and because he, Bati, envied her strength.

While he was talking to Sarkadi just now, he had begun confusedly to sense all the things which he now realized clearly. Just now Sarkadi in voicing his doubts had leaned on him, regarding him as the stronger and he, Bati, felt the same necessity of leaning on Ergy. He had not told Sarkadi how that morning, the day of the woman in the brown shawl, he had been wandering about aimlessly, when by accident he happened to stop in front of the butcher's shop, for it was the day after the first meeting of the workers' council. He had not told him how at that moment a feeling of exaltation had welled up in his heart, which had been so weak a moment previously and was so strong a moment afterwards. What, then, is the source of our weakness and strength? Who could define the limit where our own strength ceases and beyond which the strength of the strong is nothing but strength borrowed from others—beyond this limit one only lives by borrowing, the way he lived on what the clothing worker and the woman in the shawl had lent him the other day.

Our actions and our destiny, our very thoughts are not our exclusive private concern. They are the results of tender shoots, sprouting from a thousand roots and nourished from a thousand springs. The woman in the brown shawl would probably never again run in to the young man whom she hadn't even noticed. For him the fleeting silent poverty-stricken figure would grow ever more insistent, pointing the way like the radiant guardian angel in the old-time children's picture books.

The weakness of others is also sometimes a source of strength; it helps you to recover. How surprised Sarkadi would be, Bati reflected, if I told him that my encounter with him supplied me with a strong determination. I shall only go to see Ergy when I am in a position to appear before her with my answers thought out and a feeling of complete calm, in place of my questions and my doubts.

That evening when Bati told Lanyi he had seen Ergy, he did not feel that he was lying.

They waited for Vertes in his room. He was expected home later in the evening from a session of the government council. He wouldn't be back be-

fore ten o'clock but Lanyi wanted advice on writing an article on the bad news received from Bavaria, where the Soviet republic had fallen. Lanyi was amazed.

"There's also some good news," Vertes said, coming in. "The Soviets fell in Munich but there's been street fighting in Dusseldorf. The revolutionary soldiers killed the war minister in Saxony; we learn from Berlin—from Berlin the stronghold of revolution—that the government is threatened with a general strike for attempting to send the Reichswehr against the Bavarian workers. . . . It must above all be emphasized that the Hungarian government while it has no reason to feel discouraged must nevertheless prepare for struggle and not rely on anything save its own forces. It is my opinion," added Vertes, "that the *Red Gazette* makes a mistake in publishing such gay and optimistic summaries of events as those written about Szeged.

"But it's true, literally true," remarked Lanyi. "I saw Janboki, who saw it himself. The Serbian soldiers refused to close the bridge of Uj-Szeged. They burned their guns and went to Szeged. Janboki received them together with some Hungarian workers. They paraded through the village together, singing the *International.*"

Vertes did not look at Lanyi while the latter was talking. It was a sign of impatience.

"Thereupon," Vertes remarked, "the Serbian general staff withdrew its soldiers and the bridge was guarded by French soldiers. The *Red Gazette* barely mentioned this. Such dispatches do not scare the counter-revolutionaries very much but they make the workers overconfident and they worry about the Red Army even less. Why should they join the army when there's no danger?"

Lanyi asserted that the information about the French soldiers at Szeged had never appeared in the *Red Gazette.* It was necessary to show him the paper in order to convince him. He was most astonished that he had forgotten this sentence and only this sentence.

After Lanyi had left for his editor's office Bati said to Vertes that from his experience it would be very difficult to change the soldiers' attitude towards the Red Army.

"Admitting that by proper agitational methods we succeeded in drawing the workers into the Red Army, could we then lead them to battle if the occasion arose?"

This question had been bothering Bati for several days; he could not hold it back any longer. He explained: "The other day a worker asked me seriously 'What benefit would I get out of a victory? What's the good of a new system of production and distribution, even one a hundred times better than the present system, if I have to die for it ahead of time?' "

Vertes began laughing as Bati had never seen him laugh before. He was lying on the couch next to the stand on which Bati had propped his elbows. A vein bulged above his large clear eyes, forming a line on his uneven forehead, which cast a shadow over the rest of his face. He laughed for his own benefit, utterly disregarding Bati's presence, and it was only when he sat up, still laughing, that he turned towards his comrade and asked in great amusement:

"And what did you answer?"

"That's just the trouble," Bati admitted, annoyed by Vertes' hilarity, "I couldn't find any answer."

There was a knock on the door. Vertes did not shout, "come in!" he got up, reluctantly went over and opened the door himself, fully determined to get

rid of the visitor. It was Agatha Koltay who had been appointed secretary to the Hungarian Soviet Legation in Vienna and who had come to say good-bye.

"I'm hoping that when we meet again here I shall be coming back from a Soviet Vienna. I feel sure of it," she said in her contralto voice that was full of enthusiasm. She threw back her blonde head on the last words.

Bati as usual smiled good-naturedly at her big blue eyes. Vertes evinced a certain impatience and squeezed Agatha's hand with the tips of his fingers.

"Good luck," he muttered.

As soon as the door was shut he made a gesture of irritation. "In Vienna they are fighting before the House of Parliament. . . . People are killed and wounded and Agatha Koltay is bubbling with enthusiasm . . . she's so sure that she's chosen the best part!"

Then he resumed his conversation.

"So you couldn't find an answer? If most of the workers hadn't had the revolution handed to them as a gift, if they had to acquire personal devotion to it in the course of struggle and revolutionary demonstrations the question would not have arisen in this form. It did not arise that way for the Russian worker who had his list of scores to settle with the bourgeoisie."

"You already explained that to me," Bati murmured disappointed. He got up and walked over to Vertes.

"The Hungarian worker asks us this question. What are we to answer? We have to tell him something that isn't nonsense."

"I don't want to tell you nonsense. . . . Excuse me for a moment. . . ." He rang, ordered tea and continued, "Comrade Bati I was sure that I would find you grappling with this problem one of these days. Do you remember your article in *Communism* on 'Agitation Methods'?

"We were recent acquaintances then . . . if you think back you will admit that a link was missing in your argument. At the time you said—I believe I remember it quite well—that when the individual interest of a worker temporarily does not accord with the interest of his class, the class-conscious worker must always act in the interest of his class, for the momentary disagreement between what is good for him and what is good for everybody is only an external appearance. You also said that class-interest can demand something more than the sacrifice of interests whose transitory or fictitious nature it is easy to recognize, that it can also call on the individual to sacrifice his real interests, those of his person, those of his life. But you did not show what it is that can prompt the individual worker to make this sacrifice. And simply to call on the conscious worker, the most advanced worker is no answer. Class-consciousness is a rational matter at all its stages. It presupposes the consciousness of the identity of interests of each with the interests of all. But to risk one's life cannot follow from this argument: To lay down one's life without external constraint, for the triumph of an idea, is an illogical, non-rational act. That is where in your article you grazed a problem that you, the author, did not recognize."

The room-waiter brought the tea. He was an old man with a wrinkled face. Like all the other waiters in the House of Soviets, he felt it beneath his dignity to serve "the comrades" some of whom were shabbier than any waiter. The clients in the old days were so elegant! Comrade Lawrence, the room-waiter on Vertes' floor, had known the latter's father, in the good old days of the Hotel Hungaria. He was a distinguished gentleman who had often attended the banquets, and Vertes the son, in the waiter's eye, was a prodigal who had gone wrong, whom it was impossible to understand. The young man

had him rather worried. Every time he brought tea just as this evening, along towards midnight, he procrastinated, catching snatches of the conversation and trying to fathom this incomprehensible scion of a good family. Vertes did not feel discommoded by the presence of Comrade Lawrence this evening any more than other evenings. He was oblivious of everything save the person he was talking to and only once did Lawrence venture to comment on his "facial" resemblance to His Honor the counsellor, his father. Vertes had not caught the concealed reproach in this remark. Bati was annoyed by the waiter's presence. After the latter had left, when they were seated at the table and the tea had been poured, he asked:

"What is the problem which I did not see, or which I barely grazed?"

"Faith," answered Vertes.

"Faith? I don't understand," Bati declared. "What faith? Aren't we discussing the class-conscious worker, the worker who consequently can only have faith in the mission of the proletariat? The question is rather: what can render the individual capable of making sacrifices, sacrifices which, from the individual standpoint are contrary to common sense? Your tea is getting cold, Comrade Vertes."

Vertes picked up his teacup mechanically.

"In practice your question does not arise. The class-conscious worker who senses the injustice done to his class naturally reacts with bitterness and hatred. He enters a conflict with his exploiters and thus with their organs of repression. Like it or not in practice he is almost inevitably involved in a situation full of contradictions from the logical standpoint. Thus it happens that in the struggle for his right to live he is brought to the point of risking his life. But faith has nothing in common with all this, it is not his class-consciousness, not his scientific conviction; it is not a rational performance. To believe is precisely to adopt an irrational attitude in the face of life; all acts of heroism are irrational. A Shakespearian drama is irrational."

"But there's nothing irrational about Marxism and yet it has made heroes," shouted Bati.

"That's true," Vertes admitted. "But the complete acceptance of Marxism is not enough to make a hero. Knowledge alone has never 'made for' action. In politics, for example, the broadest knowledge cannot guarantee a correct estimate of the given situation and its consequences. To act means precisely to take this into account and to take sides in spite of this. It means formulating one's action in spite of the things one doesn't know, in conformity with what one believes. Hamlet cannot act because he only knows and does not believe. The Bolshevik leaders knew the revolutionary situation very well. They might on account of this very understanding have remained sitting in their library gazing out of the window like weather experts looking to see whether the storm scientifically predicted was arriving according to schedule. And in that case I can tell you with certainty that the storm would not have come, not the same storm at any rate. Knowledge alone makes man sceptical. With pure knowledge no one would dare lead a people to a revolution. In order to do this, in order to assume all the responsibilities, in spite of everything one knows and everything one doesn't know, one must have faith."

"But I thought that. . . ."

"Don't interrupt me now," said Vertes. Nevertheless he himself remained silent for a moment in the lamplight. His face grew hardened, life seemed to ebb from it and concentrate in his forehead which was now in full light, for he had thrown back his head. Bati regarded him uneasily and attentively.

"In order to think rightly," said Vertes, "all you need is the right theory.

But once you know good and evil—in order to be able to live—in order to be able to fight—you must in addition have faith."

Vertes paced up and down the room. His steps were muffled by the carpet and when he stopped in front of Bati, the latter shouted:

"Ah, if I could believe like Agatha Koltay!"

"Like Agatha Koltay?" Vertes snickered. "Then the kingdom of heaven will belong to you because it is promised to little children. Faith is not a childish performance. Confidence when one knows nothing and when one is carried away by pretty pictures is not faith. Faith is not the attribute of children; it belongs to Prometheus. Childish faith is a false candor, there can be no Ascension without a Mount of Olives."

"A positivist told me the same thing in other words," Bati said slowly. Then with a rush of enthusiasm he cried: "I'm very grateful, Comrade Vertes. Now I know that it's not a matter of conviction, but something altogether different. . . ."

"Something altogether different," Vertes repeated. "In acquiring conviction one resorts to the most exact methods possible, but that only suffices within the limits where two and two still make four."

"Within the limits?"

"Yes, so long as living still means living, but the irrational begins at the point where living means dying for something, when dying for something means living but by killing another . . . the limit is not the same for everyone. For your clothing worker, for example, it is the point where he has to risk his life."

Vertes again laughed, a short dry laugh, then he sat down and poured some cold tea.

"I have a plan," he told Bati. "I would like your help in carrying it out. We have to work for the formation of a new morality, because such tendencies as the legitimate desire for personal well-being and other primitive factors making for class-consciousness, factors which during the offensive struggle against the established strongholds, the struggle from below are strong revolutionary weapons, once the strongholds are taken and the defensive struggle begins from 'above,' along the rampart, these factors can become a source of corruption and discontent of a counter-revolutionary character."

"To say 'what will I get out of it?' is the first step in the struggle, when class egoism has not been completely recognized together with everything that goes beyond it—that goes beyond individuals and groups of individuals, identifying them with great human goals. This is a Communist ethic which must be taught together with the politic doctrine. It will then develop of itself together with the new society. For the time being we must plant certain paradoxes in the workers' minds. 'The struggle will destroy the struggle. The Red Army will kill militarism. The terror will create the new world where love will become a reality.' To accomplish this and not lose sight of the great goals—isn't that a fine task, Comrade Bati?"

"Why certainly, why certainly!" Bati shouted with enthusiasm.

He thereupon wanted to discuss the organization of the plan, choose the speakers, run through the list of those who might be suited to this work. But it was already half past one in the morning. Vertes thought it was time to go to bed. Every night he had to remind his young comrades of how late it was. This time it was harder than ever for Bati to go. He came back from the door.

"I'm going, I'm going . . . but I don't yet know . . . not by science! Not by a childish heart! How then does one arrive at the thing you call faith?"

Vertes began laughing.

"It's lucky that this question occurred to you again on the threshold. I think you're quite capable of coming and waking me up with it. The answer isn't easy. Since the question interests you read Kierkegaard. Faith? I don't believe that he had it himself, but no one realized its importance and the impossibility of acquiring it the way he did. But good night, for good this time."

Vertes stopped smiling. Weariness or rather sadness played across his features.

So that's his expression when he is alone, Bati thought, and he softly closed the door behind him. Bati lived on the floor below. The House of Soviets was already silent. Only from Bela Kun's room and from that of Comrade Kovatch people came out carrying papers or a napkin under their arm. The electric light was on in Bati's room. Gheza Toeroek was there sitting in an armchair, waiting for him.

"At last!" he sighed. "You'll excuse me, won't you my dear Bati, but it seems that this is visiting hours for you people, here at the House of Soviets. I called you up twice this afternoon without results."

"Is it an important matter? Have you been waiting for me long?" Bati asked by way of excuse.

"I amused myself with your books. My dear Bati you are a happy man."

"Why? Why am I a happy man?"

Gheza Toeroek laughingly pointed to the pile of books on the night stand. "This pile of books! Some appetite. And judging from your books you're in a philosophic stage, aren't you?"

Bati's head was still throbbing from his conversation with Vertes. The fact that someone was waiting for him at this time of night and that the someone was Gheza Toeroek was for him proof of the fact that everybody, even Gheza Toeroek was bitten with the same fever as he was.

"No, its not a philosophic stage, but . . . you most likely feel just the way I do since the dictatorship—we all had our ready-made answers ahead of time. But it's different when you stand facing facts. It's like the war, once you've been under fire you have to forget everything you learned in the barracks. Only the answers which you've lived, those which you've acquired through suffering, are genuine, the rest are simply instructions, am I not right?"

"As far as the barracks and the front are concerned, I don't know—in fact, I've no way of knowing," said Gheza Toeroek, "but as for the dictatorship I wasn't much surprised. . . . No, I couldn't say. . . ."

"I mean . . . unexpected, bewildering problems? . . . Of course," said Bati giving his companion a swift appealing look.

"But what is it you see that's so extraordinary?" Gheza Toeroek asked with curiosity.

"Oh, nothing," Bati remarked hurriedly. There was a moment's silence. Gheza Toeroek sat down again.

"What do the people here at the House of Soviets say regarding the fall of the Bavarian Soviets? Frankly, it starts me thinking."

And Gheza Toeroek's deep, black eyes gave Bati a meaningful look.

"What do you mean?" Bati asked in surprise.

"It's simple," said Gheza Toeroek, "one of these days the same thing may happen to the Hungarian Soviets. . . ."

It was the first time this possibility had ever been suggested to Bati as one to be reckoned with. Even in the periods of uneasiness which the ills and difficulties of the regime caused him he regarded these merely as ailments from which the patient would recover. The idea of the possible fall of the dictatorship was so remote from him that it could only frighten and astonish him.

"Well then, what do you expect would follow the dictatorship?"

"Don't pretend that I said what I didn't say," Gheza Toeroek began laughing. "I am not Stephen Farkas."

"Who?"

"Don't you know him? Didn't Alexander tell you about him?"

"Alexander merely told me that he saw you yesterday."

"Oh yes, and didn't you notice how ambitious the man is? He is looking for connections. Through the head of the 'Lenin Guards' he made the acquaintance of a certain Kilinyi who's got himself a job in the Commissariat of Public Health. This Kilinyi is a hard worker, I know that from Doctor Seiden and that's something, because all the old functionaries are secretly counter-revolutionaries and sabotage as much as they can. Well, this Kilinyi told Alexander confidentially that one of these old functionaries, Stephen Farkas, by name, was spreading rumors that the French and Czech soldiers had arrived and that the dictatorship would not survive another three weeks. Alexander gathered over ten witnesses and denounced this fellow."

"That's very interseting . . . it was I, so to speak, who sent Alexander to Dani, the leader of the 'Lenin Guards.' And what were the results of the denunciation?"

"By now it has surely appeared in the *Red Gazette*. The Revolutionary Tribunal condemned Stephen Farkas to death and the government council passed upon the plea for clemency this evening."

"This evening?"

Bati recalled Vertes' laughter. "It's not so much the problem of having to die as of having to kill," the latter had said. Bati said to Gheza Toeroek excitedly:

"Alexander has had no experience with such matters, none whatever . . . and as for Kalinyi . . . excuse me for a moment," he cut off shortly. He got up and went out.

Comrade Kovatch had a room on the first floor. Bati entered without knocking. A green desk lamp was the only light in the room. Kovatch, who was leaning on his elbow, the telephone receiver held to his ear, motioned him to wait.

"It's very urgent," said Bati.

"Call me back in five minutes," said Kovatch into the 'phone. He hung up. "You don't sleep either, Comrade Bati?"

Kovatch was always well-dressed, even to the silk handkerchief in his coat pocket. His face had grown thinner; his eyes were red from lack of sleep. Bati told him what he had just learned and how unreliable a denunciation made by a man like Kilinyi was . . . the man cultivated the friendship of terrorists, he displayed great zeal, he wanted to prove that he was a good Communist and make people forget that formerly . . . and Bati related what had happened at the propaganda commission.

"I know all about it, Comrade Bati," Kovatch interrupted. He leaned back in the chair. "I was at the Huvosvolgy Villa when you described your adventures with Kalinyi. Those were the good old days, weren't they?"

He laughed, like an old man speaking of his youth. After glancing at Bati he resumed: "No, the present is even better. I quite agree with you about Kalinyi. But what do you want? We, the political police of the proletarian dictatorship cannot recruit our informers only from among people of sterling character. The result will certainly be the cessation of counter-revolutionary agitation in the old ministries for several days. We must keep on a sharp lookout. At Sarospatak the peasants attacked the Red Militia. I have just

learned that at Nikitch, the rich peasants and the priest armed with clubs, assaulted a comrade who wanted to make a propaganda speech. . . ."

The telephone rang.

"Has Kalinyi's accusation been verified?"

Comrade Kovatch put his hand over the receiver. His reddish eyes stared at Bati. Then he gave a nod with his head, turned around and put the receiver to his ear.

"Go ahead. . . ."

Bati went out noiselessly. He re-entered his own room.

"What a madhouse," Gheza Toeroek said laughingly. "Are you going to rush off again? Is the matter so urgent? During one hour of the war there were more people killed than all the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries put together. To broach the subject," said Gheza Toeroek, in a more serious vein and sitting up straight, "since the frontiers were closed, at the beginning of the dictatorship, I have received no news of my property. . . . Now if circumstances made it necessary to continue living in a capitalist society . . . don't you know of some way of sending a letter through at least? It occurred to me that your parents are also there, my dear Bati."

"Comrade Toeroek, do you find it excusable to worry about such matters?" Bati said finally when he had grasped the question.

"If by so doing I should in any way harm the dictatorship I should not admit it," Toeroek answered, in turn astonished by Bati's surprise. "Fortunately nothing of the kind can happen. Will you help me out, my dear Bati?"

Bati agreed. He agreed that the fact that he had neglected his parents' existence up to the present time did not give him the right to criticize Gheza Toeroek. He agreed but he didn't understand.

Gheza Toeroek got up. Bati did not take his outstretched hand.

"I'm going with you," he said.

"Very good of you. What a man! At two o'clock at night!" Shaking his head Gheza Toeroek gave a sigh of envy. "What it means to be twenty! But take your coat, it's cold."

The empty streets were so silent that the tread of the "Lenin Guards" on armed sentry duty could be heard for a long distance.

"It's strange," said Bati, "how many ways there are of doing the same thing. Where, for example, one person needs faith, another is content with rational conviction."

"You'll never change, my dear Bati. Those psychological subtleties interest you as much now as they did during those bohemian days back home when we walked together to see Maurice Seiden."

"They are not psychological subtleties," Bati protested, he was more interested at the moment by Gheza Toeroek than by ideas. "See, you have adopted a more personal tone now that we're in the street, because two human beings cannot walk side by side in an empty street at night in a big city without the silence and the solitude arousing a desire to act less like strangers to one another. I want you to understand first of all that never before in my life was I so little interested in psychological subtleties. If I remarked that some people require faith it was because I was thinking of myself who requires a positive attitude as regards things science cannot understand."

"Don't be annoyed, my dear Bati, but I'll have to interrupt you. There is no such categorical unknowable as 'what science cannot understand.' There are things which science does not yet know, but it is impossible to prove that there are things it will always ignore. Remember what Engels said about the thing in itself."

"Wait," pleaded Bati, "I expressed myself badly. To make it more concrete, I want to say that Marxism has established the law of capitalist production, it has discovered the motive force of history, it has drawn conclusions from that as regards the future."

"Right."

"Well, now we understand each other. We know that all given scientific knowledge is corrected by additional knowledge. This is progress and in principle at any rate, one must always admit the possibility of a correction. Are not science and dogma mutually exclusive?"

"Right, go on."

"All knowledge has therefore only a relative certainty. In our case, for example, we are struggling against a given order for the construction of a new order, but neither you nor I are drawn to the struggle for a new system by economic necessity. We are acting on account of scientific conviction, the conviction that a new order must be established and the conviction that the dictatorship is the way to realize this order, the dictatorship is the way. You agree?"

"I agree, oh Socrates. I would like to know what are you driving at?"

"Be patient," said Bati. "From an absolute point of view. . . ."

"Stop there is no such thing. That's all drivel. Man cannot see anything from an absolute standpoint; his point of view is human, that is to say. . . ."

"Supposing it is," Bati interrupted in his turn. "Let us try to understand each other. All knowledge, all conviction is relative. The only absolute value. . . ."

"You're incorrigible! There is no such thing. Don't be angry but it's pitiful to observe your efforts to think consecutively. You always go off the track. There are no absolute values."

"Let me express my thoughts," Bati pleaded, "on the grounds of a scientific conviction, of a relative certainty, in the name of a will directed toward the future, by a solidarity freely agreed to, we deprive men of their lives. We are not acting under historical necessity like the revolutionary masses of the proletariat. Let's leave science out of it," Bati said emphatically and as though to cut off an objection by the other he raised his voice: "A human life is an absolute thing, which is irreplaceable and unique. It is the beginning and the end, it is the foundation and the culmination of everything. If human life were not an absolute value then there would be nothing in the whole universe worth the least effort."

"It's no longer Socrates but Plato who's talking! You're all tangled up in a jumble of words. All the same I think I understand what you mean. You're trying to say, aren't you, that since every human life is an absolute value a relative conviction does not justify bloodshed. This requires an absolute reason in addition and this reason is faith!"

"Exactly," cried Bati. "That's exactly what I feel."

"Don't get excited," Ghezo Toeroek said soothingly. "You see I understand you perfectly. But you don't follow me. All that would be true if there were not a mistake in the very premises of your argument. If I hadn't been dealing all day for ten whole hours with more prosaic but extremely important questions regarding chemical facts, and if I were less tired, I might perhaps be able to make you understand, my dear Bati, that those problems are utterly non-existent."

"Non-existent," Bati cried savagely. "I am burning up and you deny it, because your instrument cannot record my fever."

"I don't, I must say, see any reason for getting so excited. But your illustra-

tion will serve: no surgeon would ever dare treat a patient if he had to oppose an 'absolute certainty' to the 'absolute value.' "

"Yes, assuming we want to save Stephen Farkas like a doctor who performs an operation, but we are exterminating the Stephen Farkases. We deprive them of their lives in the interests of others, in the interest of those who have not yet been born and of those—it's a possibility and if so why should we kill Stephen Farkas?—of those who may never be born. Only the present is certain. Tomorrow maybe an earthquake will swallow the earth . . . don't you see the point?"

Gheza Toeroek was extremely tired. He made a gesture of weariness.

"If we meet fifty years from now we can take up the discussion at the same point and arrive at the same results. Have you ever been to Paris? Assuming that your catastrophe will probably not occur, you will go to Paris, if I know you, after the establishment of the French Soviets at the very latest, if for no other reason, simply because Ady wrote beautiful poetry about Paris. When you go there visit the Catacombs. I don't know why they call that huge subterranean cave the Catacombs. For the last 200 years they've been carrying the coffins there from the cemetery in order to make room for the recent dead. To save room the old dead are lined up against the wall like sawed wood in a shed. You can walk for miles between two close-packed rows of skeletons and skulls, cleansed and bleached by time. As far as nature is concerned we're the same as those bones, as undifferentiated, as insignificant. Can you discover any difference between the nuts which fall from a hickory tree? If you go to Paris some day, visit the Catacombs."

Before leaving Bati, Gheza Toeroek asked him to get in touch with him as soon as he discovered a way for him to send a letter home.

Bati promised. As he walked along alone he continued his argument with Gheza Toeroek in his imagination. He was in a strange lucid frame of mind, a state produced by the approach of the grey hours before dawn and by the tension of his nerves exhausted from lack of sleep and incapable of repose. He continued the dialogue making Gheza Toeroek discuss the most varied topics —"There are people," Toeroek was saying in his mind, "whose opinions you can surmise ahead of time without asking them for it. Such people are never surprised; they surprise no one by anything except the impossibility of surprising them. By contrast you, my dear Bati, are a trifle ludicrous. You live in the perpetual threat of tragic astonishment and sudden shocks. There's a volcano crater inside you. It's impossible to build anything on such ground, my dear Bati."

His feet were cold and heavy as lead. His head was on fire. In front of the House of Soviets he again asked himself, "Where could Lanyi have gone this evening?" When he went out with Gheza Toeroek, he had glanced up mechanically at the windows. Lanyi's room was dark; now the light was on. Bati longed for his own room, for his own bed, but he did not yet want to give up the sensation of restless wakefulness, which tingled in his every pore. "What could have happened to keep Lanyi so late at the newspaper office?" he asked himself. He entered Lanyi's room. Like all rooms in the House of Soviets, Lanyi's room had a double door. As soon as he opened the first door he overheard voices inside. He knocked nervously. Lenart was there. He saw him in strange astonishment. The imaginary voice of Gheza Toeroek resumed the thread of the argument. "You see, my dear Bati, take Lenart for example. You can have a definite opinion on thirty different questions and yet no one can foresee your opinion on the thirty-first because there's no system, there is no discipline in your thoughts. "In 'our' thoughts" Bati thought in surprise,

he was having some trouble recollecting himself. "That is why," he thought, "I feel so out of place in this hotel room, which is after all, just like my own room, with the same small bed."

Lanyi, who was usually so tidy, was lying on the bed with his hair rumpled, his shirt unbuttoned and his shoes still on. His gold-rimmed spectacles were on the nightstand. He half opened his eyes and promptly closed them. An embarrassed smile played around his lips. He invited Bati, who stood there motionless, to come closer. Without opening his eyes he stretched out his arms, grabbed Bati by the neck and murmured:

"The tower, the tower of Behemot, fie, fie!"

This gesture and his liquor-laden breath dissipated Bati's misgivings. Lenart was making cold compresses in the washbasin.

"They made him drunk," he told Bati with a smile.

Bati felt the shivers which ran through the young man's body.

Lenart freed Bati's neck. He changed the compress over Lanyi's heart, threw his coat over him and motioned to Bati to follow him outside.

Bati went out first and even before he had invited him. Lenart followed him into his own room. Outside day was already breaking. They did not turn on the light. Bati lay down. Lenart sat down in the armchair and told in broken sentences how he had gone to see Lanyi at the *Red Gazette*. There he had first encountered several professional journalists, who formerly worked on the bourgeois newspapers which had been banned by the dictatorship. "They aren't bad fellows," said Lenart, "but they are utterly bewildered. They have always written what their boss ordered them to write. All they knew was that one didn't have to know anything in order to say anything about anything. They aren't bad fellows, but they don't take anything seriously. They have no respect for the motto 'the word of a man of letters is sacred.' Obviously this doesn't hold for them! Lanyi was so different and so much younger in addition; he blushed when they used bad language in his presence. The short of it is they wanted to get even with him. They invited him to the house of one of them at midnight. They made him drink and when he was already soused they brought in a woman." Lenart continued with a laugh, "Lanyi couldn't always play the innocent. The others had a marvellous time. you can imagine. . . ."

Lenart talked softly in a low voice, "The sinners had their revenge all right," he ended. He gave a short, dry laugh.

"Why did you stand for this outrage?" Bati asked. But there was not the least hint of reproach in his voice. He wanted to make Lenart talk, something Lenart was not averse to in fact.

"The devil knows how it happened . . . it's so hard to play the spoil-sport. The others had invited me and I remained. There were five of them and Lanyi did not put up much of a resistance," he laughed again softly. "It won't hurt him much . . . do you know that he recited Ady while I hauled him home?

"Life is like a dirty shirt
How wretched and vile is blood."

Bati burst out laughing. From where he was each saw the dim contours of the other's face lost in the morning darkness. They both laughed.

"Don't you remember?" Lenart asked.

"Of course," Bati shouted. "His pride and virtue got under my skin."

They kept silent. Bati followed the thread of the recollection which had caused them both to laugh. It was a conversation with Lanyi. Lenart and Bati both were arguing against him, Lenart was saying that when the beggar

Lazarus was abandoned he had gratefully stroked the dogs who came to lick his wounds. . . . Lanyi was voicing his credo: he was all for the ancient buffalo of the River Thais, with its soul that knew neither complaint nor weakness. Lenart and Bati had understood each other well at that time. . . .

Lenart murmured in a voice that was barely audible,

"Sin is always a cry of anguish
Towards destiny. Why does man not remain
Always pure and always free?
Shoot of the noble rose grafted onto a wild flower."

Bati did not open his eyes. "It's early morning intoxication," he said. "But in one respect you were wrong, Comrade Lenart. You remember?"

"It's possible," answered Lenart.

"Do you remember? You answered my objection by saying that the whole world was a Gehenna and that because of this little individual hells had ceased to exist?"

"Maybe I was completely wrong, but I couldn't have acted any differently." Lenart answered drawing his armchair closer to Bati's couch.

"You awaited the revolution like a cataclysm. You expected everything would be destroyed and that everything would be solved!

"The world has made a big leap forward all the same!" Lenart said in a rather harsh voice.

"May be. But our little hells have kept right on existing nevertheless and I think that the time I ran into you looking so disappointed, sitting in an office on Baisegradi Street, you were perhaps disappointed because the miracle had not taken place."

"Who knows? Sometimes one feels like grabbing a comet by its tail and dashing it against the earth in order to transform it into infinite chaos, because everything is already in chaos—no not everything," said Lenart with repressed bitterness.

"Chaos or not, even if all the whole world were changed into paradise at sunrise there would be no miracle. We alone are responsible for what we do and what we fail to do. I know and you know that we alone are responsible for all those whom we draw into the orbit of our lives, or into whose orbits we ourselves are drawn."

Bati did not have to look at Lenart to know the latter understood what he meant

"Responsible!" said Lenart in a low voice, and it was like a cry. "I acted according to the dictates of my heart and only through the suffering of others did I realize that I had acted wrongly."

"Only through the sufferings of others?" Bati asked.

Lenart did not answer.

"Did Ergy tell you that I . . .?" Bati asked.

"Ergy didn't tell me anything!" Lenart answered hurriedly. He got up. "You want to talk to me? Go ahead. There's no avoiding it."

Bati folded his arms behind his head and opened his eyes. He sat up and looked at Lenart. The other got up, came over and sat down on the couch. Bati made room for him. Holding his head against Lenart's head, he felt his warm breath. Lenart leaned forward on his elbows.

"Someone who wants something big, something which exceeds the common measure, is likely to become unhappy. It's natural," he talked as though he were talking to himself. "But Madga doesn't deserve unhappiness. She would feel wronged. In this respect she may be right. But that's beside the point.

Whoever suffers is always in the right as against those who make him suffer. I can't make her suffer, I just can't do it. Sometimes on my way in, I think I'll tell her everything, I'll say, 'Let's separate.' But when I see her and see she feels unhappy I say; 'Why these worries as long as I love you?' She cheers up immediately. She looks at me and says 'How do you love me?' She wants me to tell her something nice, something pleasant. She waits, filled with happy anticipation. 'Like the baby pigeon loves a tender grain of wheat' I tell her. She laughs and I laugh. I am happy at seeing her happier on account of something I have said. And at such times—believe me—it would be lying to tell her what had been true a moment before."

Bati was lost in thought. Had Lenart suddenly felt himself deserted by the strange impulse that made him talk? He began chatting about various things until Bati got up a trifle nervously. Lenart stopped his chatter. He resumed:

"I recognized you at the Cafe de Paris. You recognized me too. We got along well together . . ." he laughed but with an obvious effort. "As for Youtka, I don't quite know . . . Lanyi said that he couldn't stand her which was rather mean. I can measure cloth by the yard but I have no external measure for the individual .Those who do have such measures are spared the things that happen to me. . . . All I saw was how unhappy this woman was . . . and when she saw how much I liked Ergy's society . . . why if Youtka thought that some monster was in love with Ergy she would go and offer herself to that monster. May be I am a monster. I realize what she expected from me and what she wanted to hear from me so I couldn't say anything else or act any other way. I was glad to see how pleased she was with me. Today I think that Youtka, even with her jealousy and rebelliousness—it's only her way, she couldn't be any different—loves only one person in the world and that's Ergy.

They remained silent and motionless, lost in thought. Bati held his breath to make the silence more compelling. He did not move; he felt nevertheless as though he were struggling with something. He asked.

"Does Ergy also know?"

"Everything. Ergy alone knows everything," said Lenart breathing deeply.

"Everything," Bati promptly heard another voice, Ergy's voice saying to him: "With all my heart and soul." Ergy knew everything and in spite of that could say: "With all my heart and soul."

"Magda and Youtka must be told the truth;" Bati cried, with Ergy's avowal still ringing in his ears.

"It's impossible. It's impossible." Lenart said defensively. "They are not as strong as Ergy. I know, don't forget that Ergy is unique."

"I too am not so strong and yet Ergy was right in telling me, so. . ." and Bati cleared his throat. He closed his eyes to keep from seeing the man regarding whom Ergy had told him that. Even with his eyes closed, however, he saw Lenart's red mouth which Ergy could kiss and his hand to whose touch her body was happily submissive. Lying there near him he felt like flinging himself on this man, throwing his arms about him. . . either to choke him or to hug him. If only one could do both at the same time. If life were only equal to human emotions!

"I don't know how all this mess happened," Lenart said. "I can't live without Ergy. The other two can't live without me . . . so I don't know what to do."

It was almost a sob.

"Decide for yourself."

Bati was silent.

"Don't be angry with me," said Lenart. He held out his hand. His fingers gripped those of Bati's. He gave him a rather frightened look as though he were afraid of him in the daylight which now flooded the room. The intoxication of dawn had passed. Bati withdrew his hand from Lenart's fingers and got up.

"There's only one thing you can do. Finish with Magda and with Youtka. Then go off with Ergy. It's the only possible way to put an end to this idiocy."

"You know what the end will be? In the end I'll be all alone," he said, as though he had just had a vision of a terrible threat.

Bati suddenly felt how close the room was. He opened the window and leaned out from the waist. The Danube flowed past flashing back the morning light, and on the hill of Buda the royal citadel stood clustered against the fiery disc of the sun.

"Good morning, Comrade Bati" shouted one of the "Lenin Guards," who was on sentry duty before the Palace of Soviets. "Up so early? The day hasn't begun well!" He held out a paper which had just arrived.

"Why?"

"It's no longer a mere rumor. The Rumanians have taken the offensive at Szinevaralja."

The hills and the Danube suddenly became shapeless blurs. Only the red flag stood out clearly and flapped its defiance to the pale sky. Bati closed the window. He did not try to resume the thread of what he had wanted to say to Lenart. Szinevaralja . . . Within the four walls where a moment before Lenart and Bati were alone, shut off, in their own little world, the name of Szinevaralja had suddenly intruded! Their present world was now that red flag, beneath whose folds one might be unhappy, but the loss of that flag would be the loss of life itself.

"Let's go," said Lenart, "let's go!"

He got up smiling. "We'll discontinue our conversation for the present. Good-bye."

"Where? When?" Bati asked, he held out his hand.

"Things are starting," said Lenart as they went down together to get the latest newspaper. Lenart, taking the steps several at a time, quoted Ady with enthusiasm; giving the words a new meaning, he recited:

"To the handsome proud Hungarian never
Shall heaven or hell give anything finer
Than being a man among the inhuman,
A Hungarian of the persecuted race.
A corpse that comes to life."

"Isn't it a gift of the gods to belong to the Hungarian proletariat at this time?" Lenart cried.

"All I regret is the section on Communist ethics, we shan't have the time . . ." said Bati.

In fact, they didn't have the time, because "it" began. It began with the news that the Rumanians had attacked at Szineveralja.

Euri Yanovsky

The Horsemen [1]

Excerpts from a New Ukrainian Book

The north wind—the *tramontana*—was blowing from the shore. It was the month of January—or February, perhaps, and for hundreds of yards out the sea was frozen. Far out at sea the stormy waves were black, crowned with white crests against the horizon, crests that were torn fiercely from them as they rushed ashore in the teeth of the wind. There had been a storm that had broken the ice near the beach; it had not been a heavy one, but now there was every indication that soon a real storm would be raging. On the shore stood the woman known as Polovchikha, wife of Polovets the fisherman. She stood like a stone statue, her clothes blown stark against her by the wind; tall she was and austere, like a figure in a ballad.

Across the bay Odessa was visible. The *tramontana* blew around the town, towering like the hulk of an old schooner from which the sails have been stripped and replaced by a Diesel or a steam engine. Odessa was going through the usual coastal winter, the winds from all directions did not forget her, sometimes fogs rolled in from the sea—wet, dense, grey fogs.

And now the fog suddenly crept in from the sea and hid Odessa from sight. Polovchikha stood motionless; nearby, the fishermen from the local association were busy with their wherries. The sea drove blocks of ice in shore, the cold penetrated to the very bone, the *tramontana* blew in a broad, even flood. It was a coastal winter; the winter fog drew in like a screen, behind it raged the storm, churning up waves ever larger and higher. The Odessa lighthouse flashed out red and green stripes, red and green rays

Polovchikha had seen her husband off to sea, and was now waiting for the return of his wherry. Round her heart which was ready to leap from her breast, blew the *tramontana,* while from the roaring sea came the bitter cold. The insatiable sea bellowed as it seized her Mussius. She did not show her fear to the sea, silent on the shore she stood, tall and austere, and it seemed to her she was a lighthouse of inextinguishable strength.

"Oi, you've gone out to sea, Museushka," she mourned soundlessly. "And your track's been washed away by the salt sea. If I'd have seen it and if I'd have known I'd have gathered that track together in my two hands and drawn you back ashore. Oi, the *tramontana,* blow—blow the bad weather and the fog out to sea; I'll stand waiting here till the end; if I were to turn into a tree, I'd wave all my branches over the sea and rustle all my leaves."

And after long ages, it seemed, the wherry came into view, a mere speck among the waves. Hidden for a long time behind the watery mounds, she reappeared for a second and then plunged again into the abyss. She fought the storm, breast to breast, while to the watchers on the shore only the murmur of the waves was audible; it was terrible to see the little vessel like a lonely human being among the piled mountains of water. The waves rocked it, flung it across the rollers, threaded it under and over, the cold splashes burned like fire, the wet clothes froze to his skin, but the fishermen did not give in. Mussius and a stranger were fighting their way to the shore.

Old Polovchikha never took her eyes from them. Her heart was out there with the wherry. Here on the shore the fishermen from Mussius' fishing gang

[1] See review on page 109.

were bustling about, the children from the settlement had run down to the sea. The crowd on the beach grew. Old Polovchikha, the steppe woman, stood apart, manfully watching her husband's struggle. Over the sea the fog billowed. The cold was cruel.

"They're rowing," said someone. "But what use is it in a storm like this?" The younger fishermen rushed towards their wherry, but the elders barred the way. "Don't act the fool, lads, the wherries will be smashed and the crabs will eat your bodies, and our fishing gang's a poor one. Mussius Polovets is the chairman, he'll knock our heads off if anything's happened to the wherries, if he gets ashore alive."

Old Polovchikha saw the oar break in two, and the wherry spin on the waters. All the watchers on the shore saw plainly the vessel turned about twice on the spot; then she was struck by first one wave, then another, flung away, turned again; then she went under. The fishermen rushed to the wherries, and pushed off the *Swallow,* the pride of the fishing gang. Four giants got into it, oars raised high in the air ready to leap on the next wave, a huge ragged one. The *Swallow* was tipped to one side, a big chunk of ice hit her in the seams, the water rushed in over the side, and the fishermen found themselves in the sea and had to set themselves to saving the *Swallow.* A rope was flung to them from the shore: they fastened one end of it to the boat and dragged the *Swallow* ashore.

Mussius' wherry came into view, floating keel upwards on the waves. The crowd of fishermen took off their caps. Just at that moment a human hand could be seen waving raised above the water. Someone was swimming that icy sea, swimming for the shore, swimming with strong powerful strokes, striking out evenly with his arms. The waves carried him out to sea again, back to the cold sea fog. He strove to reach the shore.

Then out from the crowd stepped a giant fisherman, bearing a hank of rope. Tossing off a glass of spirit, he strode into the water. He turned blue at once. On the shore they unwound the rope while the giant swam out to meet the man in the sea. The ice beat him, but he swam out into the clear, the rope trailing behind him. The man he had gone to save was already dead among the waves: he was floating on his back and they tossed him hither and thither. The giant swam and swam.

Then it appeared that the floating man was not drowned, he had only lost consciousness from the cold. When he came to himself again, he fought with all his might to reach the shore. The two swimmers met in the waves but for long they could not seize each other's hands—each time a wave would drive them apart—but at last they managed to reach each other. The rope stretched out from the shore like a vein, scores of hands drew it in at once. The swimmers were dragged ashore, choking with water, battered by the floating ice.

The stranger crawled out on the beach, but could not get to his feet. Polovchikha recognized Chubyenko. He was frozen, only his hot living heart beat in his breast. They seized him under the arms: "Comrade," said Chubyenko with a tremendous effort, "I'm weeping for a hero of the revolution—the man who released me from a French floating prison."

And they all left the beach, only old Polovchikha stayed behind, tall and austere as in an old ballad.

Out at sea the capsized wherry was still visible: out there her drowned husband, Mussius Polovets, lay. He had lived a long time in the world, he had never done her any ill, he had been a real fisherman of the Black Sea at Odessa, and was it not always so, that the young reached the shore and

the old were lost at sea? From Dophinovka a lad came running: "Granny, Grandpa dived twice and never came up again, and the fellow dived after him and hit his head on the boat, and so Grandpa Mussius won't come back any more."

The shore grew deserted. The fishermen had gone; no one was surprised that old Polovchikha had not moved from the spot. She was holding a funeral wake over him. The *tramontana* blew around her who seemed carved of stone, the storm did not abate, lumps of ice crashed against one another, the fog crept in close to the shore, the Odessa lighthouse twinkled with green and red lights.

Polovchikha remembered her youth, her girlhood in Ochakovo, the owners of the largest fishing smacks had wanted to make a match of it with her, and as to the owners of wherries, barges, motor-boats, and small yachts who had wanted her—there had been no counting them!

She came of a good fishing family, and had good steppe blood in her veins, and she had married Mussius Polovets, a fisherman from Dophinovka —a youth who was not much to look at, a head shorter than herself. But love is like that. Polovchikha had taken her place in the struggle for life, for fish, had taken her place beside Mussius, and they had bred a whole houseful of boys.

The boys grew up beside the sea; the house became crowded with their broad shoulders, but Polovchikha ruled the household with an iron hand; the mother stood at the head of the family, stood like a sail in a storm.

The sons grew up and drifted away from home. Andrei took after his Uncle Sidor, the same lazy, good-for-nothing. Panass brought his mother contraband shawls and ear rings, silk and cognac. Polovchikha laid them all away in her trunk and feared for Panass. His birth had cost her dear, and he had become dearer to her than the rest. She would go down to the sea of a night, always fancying she heard the splash of his oars, and that she must save him from his pursuers. Then there was Overko—he was an actor and played with the Greeks in the theatre and read books written in her own tongue. He was a poor enough fisherman, to be sure, but she yearned over him, too; nothing had been heard of him for a long time, nor of Panass, either; yes, and Andrei must have been killed, because she had dreamt she had seen him at his wedding.

Ivan was away making a revolution. Mussius had hidden rifles: the French were occupying Odessa. There were some of our own people among the French. They had come for the proclamations and once nearly frightened Mussius to death.

The overturned wherry rocked on the waves, the storm raged on without pause. It seemed to Polovchikha the wherry was coming nearer. The sea would drive it ashore, then she would have to drag it in and save it; the fishing gang would thank her for that: you could not catch fish without boats. The vessel came on steadily, unfalteringly, step by step, minute by minute.

Polovchikha waited for the boat. To save the property of the fishing gang she strode down to the water's edge. The waves splashed up to her knees. The boat was coming nearer and nearer, now the sound of the ice striking her wooden sides was audible, now her flat, tarred bottom was visible, and the keel stuck up out of the water. A wave dashed over the black, flat bottom, and Polovchikha's heart suddenly went cold; something was trailing through the water after the boat, something—and its rags were swollen out in the water.

The woman gazed and felt afraid of what she would see: the sea had brought her resignation, the sea was bringing ashore to her, very likely, the body of Mussius Polovets. That would be something to weep and mourn over and bury in the fishermen's cemetery where none but women and children lay, and men dreamed of lying, but had to lie in the sea in the end, down in the depth, under the green shroud of the waves.

Polovchikha gazed and was afraid of what she would see; she wanted to call out to her Museushka. The waves beat about her feet, the ice slid round her calves, the boat was quite near now, drifting, nose on, towards the beach. The waves crashed on the stones. Polovchikha wanted to drag out the vessel, and then wail over her husband awhile. She could already see his body in the muddy water, something caught her heart, her hands did not feel the weight of the boat. Then a voice called out to her, and she screamed, for it was the voice of her husband, a weary, familiar voice.

"Ours is a poor fishing gang," said the old man, "and it wouldn't do to lose a wherry at sea. I'm the chairman, so I'm the one that should save it. Chubyenko must have swum ashore all right; he's strong and stubborn. He didn't want to swim without me—not for anything—till I dived under the overturned wherry; even then, he kept calling out and diving down looking for me."

Old Polovets flung his boots down on the shore and started to look after the wherry. Polovchikha helped him. The cruel *tramontana* froze the very soul, the beach was deserted, stormed by the sea. Far away on the shore Odessa towered through the fog like the hulk of an old schooner.

And the two old folk turned homewards together. They went along, tenderly embracing each other, the *tramontana* blowing in their eyes, the sea roaring at their backs: they tramped on in calm assurance and friendliness as they had done all their lives.

A Letter to Eternity

It was when the Bolshevik rebellion against the Ukrainian *Hetman* and the Germans was expected. Someone reported that it would begin at Psel and spread down-river; the centre would be Sorochintsi, and the whole district would be up in arms as far as Gadyatch. The fathomless summer's day—it was Whit Saturday—burned in blue skies over the village. From the woods people brought cart loads of maple, walnut, oak and thorn branches, and fresh green grass to decorate their houses for Whitsuntide, the yards smelt of fading grass, the lovely village looked still sweeter, decked out in green, bowered in branches the houses were white and severe, the century-old yards hollow, clean and homely while the bluest of blue skies spread over the earth.

Under the trees in the valley, ran Psel of the beautiful waters. A detachment of the Kaiser's soldiers were poking about the valley, searching every bush, while one of the Hetman detachments searched the sands. The captain of the Wurtemburg regiment led the searches. Ahead of him gambolled his blood-hound barking at every tree. The Ukrainian officer lay on his coat under a willow, resting after the first few hours of arduous effort. Before him, in the River Psel, three lads were searching for a black oak that lay on the bottom of the river. The lads' search seemed to be confined to sitting under the water and rising to the surface at intervals.

A sleepy, lulling boredom lay over the banks of the Psel. The soldiers of both detachments were methodically searching every corner. A cart with two men in it drove up and stopped by the Ukrainian officer.

"If you please, your honor," said the men, "you aren't local people and you'll never in your life find anything hereabouts. Now them lads there are looking for a black oak, and black oak should only be looked for in autumn, not at whitsuntide. Those lads are watching you, sir, while you're searching—that's all the black oak they're looking for, sir. And we're local folks, we're for His Serene Highness the Hetman and ready to help you. We know best where to look for the accused postman, your honor, only—it's a secret; we'd have no life with the village poor if they got to know it: they'd burn the house down the next night."

The two men told the officer that in the meadows there were lakes surrounded by sedge and reeds. These lake creeks they could count on their fingers: there they had caught fish with dragnets, there they had hidden from the Revolution in their time, there the postman was hiding now, waiting for nightfall in order to escape across the steppe to Sorochintsi. In those lakes you could lie under the water with a reed in your mouth and breathe through the reed until the beating up party came close and started to shoot into the water and throw in hand-grenades to make you swim out. Your ear drums were ready to burst and you did not always swim to the surface like a stunned fish. One fellow might simply die on the bottom and never swim out, and another fellow might survive if the explosion was a long way off; but anyhow this was the best method of finding runaways in the creeks hereabouts, the men informed the officer.

The search was immediately organized in the proper way. The lakes were carefully examined, hand-grenades were flung into them and the fellows who had been searching in the Psel for the black oak gave up at once and rushed off to search for the houses of the two men and set fire to them. The men arrived home just as their yards were aglow with red branches after burning an hour or so. The men burnt their heads and dashed in to seek a speedy death in the flames. The German and Hetman troops methodically flung grenades into the lake and shot at all the suspicious clumps of reeds, but the postman was not to be found. Then in a glade they stumbled upon a waterhole.

It was shallow, around it grew young reeds. The captain's dog wandered into the water; the captain did not give orders to throw grenades. The lake was empty, they all moved on farther. Suddenly the dog barked madly at some sort of a log that lay in the water not far from the edge, among the water lilies and slime. The captain sent them to look at the log; it was the postman, who had lost consciousness. His bare feet, hands and face were black with leeches, and when they undressed him, there was not a clear spot on him; leeches clung in mounds to his body.

The German captain called his soldiers; they opened their wallets and sprinkled all the salt they had over the leeches. The leeches began to fall away, the postman was made to swallow the captain's rum, and gradually came to himself. Life and bristling hate glowed from his single eye. "So you found me," he said in an indifferent tone.

The postman was fed from the captain's table, his glass was filled with excellent rum, the cottage where he ate had been sprinkled with green, fresh-smelling grass, the corners decorated with green branches, the walls with flowers. It was quiet in the cottage until the postman had eaten his fill He felt his strength returning; drowsiness came over him, beautiful dreams visited him: he seemed to be carrying a great many letters that for some reason he could not deliver. Meanwhile the day was declining, evening was at hand, the appointed hour was drawing nearer, his wish would be ful-

filled. Again he was carrying a great number of letters that he could not deliver. Time was passing, the letters were not diminishing and no power on earth could touch the postman until he delivered the last letter.

The captain broke in upon his thoughts of sleep, speaking in kind, well meaning tones. He spoke of the wonderful summer and the quiet stars only to be found in the country of one's birth, he spoke of his—the postman's—life in those beautiful open spaces on the banks of the sweet Psel. The captain was eloquent, hoping to touch at last the man's soul; the interpreter repeated it all. But the postman sat apathetic, straining his will and gradually forgetting the information the captain was demanding from him.

He forgot that he was a member of a secret Bolshevik committee, that the rebellion was set for tonight. He forgot the place where the rifles and machine gun were hidden; that was the most difficult task of all—to forget and push back into the farthest corner of his memory, so far that no physical pain could penetrate to it. The memory of the hidden store of arms would lie there like a remembrance of faraway childhood to illumine and warm the lonely death and the last death agony.

And the captain went on talking to the postman, who was striving to forget his own name, to leave himself only his tempered, primeval will—to live till tonight and hand over the arms to the rebels. The captain spoke of distant, rich countries to which the postman could go, he could live there and travel on the money the Hetman government would give him; all he had to do was to say where the arms were buried, when the rebellion was fixed for and the address of its leaders.

The postman sat at the table, and within him flared up an overwhelming desire to die at once and not have to think of anything; he longed to plunge a knife into his breast, to lie down in his coffin under the earth with the realization that he had done his duty. The captain's words were gradually losing their gentleness; the Hetman officer went up to the postman, glared down into his one eye and caught a glimpse of a dark abyss of hatred and resolution. The officer started as if he had had an electric shock, and his fist struck the postman with full force in the temple.

The captain went into another room to have his dinner, while the Ukrainian officer remained with the postman. When the captain returned, the postman was lying on the floor, stuffing grass into his mouth so as not to groan and not to plead for mercy. The Ukrainian was staring out of the window with savage eyes.

"We do things in a civilized way here," the postman chuckled with a glance towards the German captain. The postman had no right to die, he had to drag his bleeding body through floods of time until night, to suffer all torments, save death. It was hard to fight in loneliness and not dare to die. Had he been among his comrades he would have jeered at the torture, and spat in the faces of tormentors, and drawn himself nearer and nearer to the death of an invincible hero. But here he had to guide his life like a glass canoe through black waves; the business of the revolution was linked up with his frail life. He was wondering if his hatred of the counter-revolution and the Germans was great enough to make him feel that he did not grudge his life for it, and then the blood of an oppressed class boiled in his veins. Oh, but it would be a great honor—to watch over his life!

The postman was led out to show the enemy where the hidden arms were. He walked through the silent village, feeling the sunny warmth on his body, his bare feet on the kind earth. It seemed to him that he was tramping alone through a fantastic steppe, moving like the shadow of his

own life, gaining in resolution and stubbornness. He saw people and knew who felt for him and who hated him, he moved on through this fissure between two worlds, and the worlds did not close together after his passing to death.

Now he reached a heap of sand outside the village and halted. The sun had passed its zenith, the earth lay quivering in silence and heat. The Germans started to dig in the sand. They wasted an hour over this. The postman stood gazing at the far horizon, the Psel and the other side of the river; a hoopoe called several times; there was a smell of corn.

The postman was flung down in the sand; on his shoulders and legs Germans seated themselves, maddened to think that he had fooled them. The postman lost consciousness after the twentieth ramrod and, upon coming to himself noticed that the sun was hanging low over the horizon; the Ukrainian officer was unfastening his holster; the Germans seemed to have turned away. Then the postman called out and admitted that the arms were hidden in another place; this time he would show them where exactly it was. "You'll have plenty of time to shoot me, I can't slip out of your hands."

They passed once more through the quiet streets. It was beyond human endurance to look at the postman who did not want to deliver up his life, like a letter, into the enemy's hand. The inhabitants peeped out from between the green branches decorating their houses, called out strange words to each other from their backyards, waited for evening and help to come. The postman was led about the village like a poor man's woe. He was beaten on the way and crippled with kicks, strung up to a crossbeam in the barn, scorched with a candle and forced to speak. He led them about (his tears scalded the sand) and showed them different places, but they found nothing. Then, with even greater fury they tore his body, and woe rose over the village and merged into despair and indignation, hearts burned for revenge. Night came down over the village; on the other side of the River Psel the herds were being driven home, and then the bells rangs out for evensong.

The postman could no longer walk or move: he felt a torch all ablaze, his heart jumping out of his chest. The blood oozed drop by drop from his wounds, agony had overflowed into one high piercing note. All the tortured nerves and cells vented themselves in that scream, the crippled joints looked numb, only the stubborn will was dying like a warrior—never receding a step, gathering its reserves, saving its resources.

The postman was believed for the last time, and, surrounded by a detachment of Wurtemburgers and mounted Hetman troops, carried across the Psel to the sands. Old bowed Vassilikha hobbled beside him—they had brought her along in the evening to see if she could persuade her obstinate son. The captain had said his last word: the mother and son were to be shot. The postman spoke to his mother, she kissed him on the brow as if for her he was already dead and mournfully wiped her dry eyes. "Do as you know best," she said. "What I was told I've repeated to you." His mother followed the postman across the river and to the sands. Her son even joked, knowing that soon it would all be over. The night was starry and dark, there was a silence of incredible emptiness.

They arrived at the sands, and started to dig; the Germans lay around, the postman rested on the cart and listened to the darkness. A single voice called out something, there was a clink of metal under the spades. "Halt!" cried the postman. "Can't you see them coming to claim my soul?" And away in the distant darkness myriads of lights were born. They resembled candle flames; it was as if a wave many times the height of a man was

sweeping in, bearing hundreds of candles on its crest. The flames flickered, rising and falling rhythmically, they moved in from three sides, and there was neither sound nor words to be heard. The Germans opened fire, but the lights came on, floating high above the ground.

"These are the people who'll take the rifles!" cried the postman. "Now shoot me, and put me out of pain: the villages will rise and the poor will come out. Farewell, old world—this dark night!" The officer of the Hetman troops went up to the postman and shot him as he lay there: thus was a letter from one of the rank and file of the Revolution delivered into eternity. In the villages above the River Psel all the bells rang out and they were heard for many a mile around; in the villages above the River Psel the highest bonfires were lit and they were visible for many a mile around. Out of the darkness the rebels rushed at the Germans and fought their way to the store of arms. Over them the candles floated in the gloom. The quiet air was a frantic clash of sounds, of distant conflagrations, revolt, storm and enthusiasm, revolt!

Chubyenko went up to the lonely cart with the dead postman in it. The peaceful oxen were chewing their cud nearby. The candle fastened to their horns glowed with a bright steady flame in the majestic stillness of the night air. Beside the postman sat old, bowed Vassilikha, her eyes riveted to the dead man. Chubyenko took off his cap and kissed Vassilikha's hand.

The letter to eternity had gone out together with life, like the light from a lonely star, long since extinguished.

Adamenko

In the second place I am not an expert, but simply an ordinary furnace man. Friedrich Ivanovitch is our expert, and, in the first place, he is an expert worth his weight in gold, an expert with a head, an expert I had to search a whole year for; experts such as Friedrich Ivanovitch are not born every day. He was trained in the old German way, perhaps he was licked into shape by Siemens, and it was from Siemens' drawings that Marten made his first furnace.

My Friedrich Ivanovitch is tender as an expert and tender as a man. You should see how he goes about the stove, anyone standing by would think he was a doctor, a little white doctor in steel rimmed spectacles, who has nothing to do with furnaces but should be going from one hospital to another, from one delicate operation to another. He stopped by the Marten furnace, right in the heat—a hundred and fifty degrees of heat. The old doctor halted by the window out of which hell itself is blazing. And he looked as though he thought it strange and wondered why people should live in so hot a place, as if he was terrified at the roar around him: there are trucks rolling up, the charging machine's turning, the gauge track's booming underfoot, a worker, pulling down his protective glasses over his eyes, comes up to look into the furnace.

It seems as if Friedrich Ivanovitch did not want to look at all this, but nevertheless, a steel expert like him you have probably never seen. I am not quite used to him myself yet, I, Chubyenko, the furnace man, am afraid sometimes yet: experts like these should be taken the greatest care of; I didn't even learn my trade just yesterday—I have seen experts in my time, and I can smelt any steel you like, steel of all sorts. I have smelted chromium-tungstic steel before now, that highspeed sort of steel you've got to be careful with. But beside a man like Friedrich Ivanovitch I just stand in sheer

envy, although that isn't the thing, I know, for a member of the Communist Party to feel.

This is what I want to say, comrades, at our meeting, here in the furnace shop, where we've done what is practically the first smelting of steel in the whole republic, the first in the Don coalfields, I'll warrant. You've seen how we poured out that steel into moulds, it was just the right temperature and poured easily, and its quality was the quality demanded by the customer, our only customer—the Revolution.

Steel for iron construction work and bridges—from ten to fifteen hundredths of one percent of carbon and from three-tenths to three-fifths of one percent of manganese, well, and then sulphur and phosphorus—a bit less; in a word—everything as it should be. The customer is going to build bridges, there are too few bridges all over the republic just at present; we must unite town and village, factory and land, all nations and all peoples: the tsarist regime was afraid of bridges, the foreign interventionists broke down our bridges, but we're going to build them—and so we've made the first smelting of steel.

Friedrich Ivanovitch is preparing the furnace for the second smelting. The furnace is being examined, in case there may be a pit sunken somewhere in the floor or maybe the threshold has got burnt or there is still slag left behind, the furnace will have to be heated up, limestone and cast-iron and steel, Republic, smelt steel of every kind, for plows, and arms, and machinery so that in a few hours' time we shall be pouring out again into the moulds—forty tons of finest hot revolutionary steel.

And so, little by little, shift by shift, smelting after smelting, one furnace campaign after another, we'll set all the furnaces in the republic going: Smelt steel, Republic, smelt steel of every kind, for plows, and arms, and machinery and railway lines, let's get all the furnaces going, and build new ones. Our Lenin is sick, comrades; we've got to get electricity and industry going at full speed.

I want to take this opportunity—the first smelting of steel since we came back from the front—to ask you to listen to a few of my reminiscences; I want to tell you how I, as one of the vanguard of the working class, won the right to pour steel—not into the ladles of the capitalists, but into our own—a worker's, toiler's ladle that has been fought for. And I shall take up very little of your time for I don't much care about evenings of reminiscences myself. Here in the workshop, we'll say to each other—for a beginning—a few hearty words, awkward and clumsy words, perhaps, but good and strong, and then we'll clench our teeth and set to work so that the very world will hum, work for a year, and for two and maybe for ten, till we come out on top of the hill out of the darkness, and lead others out, too. We've only one life—devil made it—but how sweet and painful it is!

I've been in the steel smelting trade since I was a little lad, comrades. I go on smelting and smelting: I've been laborer and runner-man and gas-man and worked hard for my masters before I became a smelter. They promised to make me a foreman, too. It was a bare country all around, nothing but steppe—endless steppe and collieries, there was more black oil than water in the pond-well, but you know our Don coalfield country down in the southern Ukrainian steppe.

I was just thirty: it was in pre-war days, a year before the World War, in fact. Ten years have passed over our heads already since then, and now Colonel Chubyenko's back at his furnace again, smelting steel. So, as I was saying, my thirtieth birthday passed and I was going on for thirty-one smelt-

ing at the furnaces—it goes to my heart even now when I think of all the wonderful steel I made for the capitalists in those days—! The country around, as I said, was bare of trees. It was our smoky, spacious Don coalfields country, the heat blazing out mercilessly through the furnace windows, heat that went right through me.

I was a strong chap and obstinate. I thought to myself—why should one life go just anyway while another's is soft as a featherbed. I wasn't studying revolution then, but still I wasn't ignorant either; I'd read some books: Chernyshevsky, and the *Communist Manifesto,* Tolstoi, Bakunin, and about "The People's Will" and the Decembrists. I loved Shevchenko. As I say, I wasn't so very ignorant. I went to the May Day demonstrations, ran away from the Cossacks, got a taste of their whips, liked reading secret proclamations and passing them on to others, but I never got into prison, so I can't have been a real revolutionary—what sort of a revolutionary are you unless you've been in prison?

Such was my youth: I'd been left without my father and my mother when I was little. My father was scalded by molten iron and died within two days, my mother had got consumption working in a chemical factory. So, an orphan boy, I went into the steel trade, and flew pigeons of a Sunday—I had every kind of pigeon under the sun. And then once, down by the pond—I purposely mention this pond for the second time—I met a comrade and felt revolutionary consciousness surging up in me. I seemed to boil up into a red bubble as the furnace men say when the carbon comes out of the iron. And this consciousness, this realization, burned so hot in me that I would have gone in for any expropriation or shot a minister or even Nicholas the Bloody himself.

You'll say that revolutionaries are not made that way, but allow me to mention this once that down by the pond it was my dear wife and comrade I met in the person of a dark-faced girl, the daughter of a factory clerk. She had been sent to her father in the wilds of the Don coalfields after a year in prison on suspicion of belonging to a terrorist organization.

To smelt steel is a delicate, difficult, tricky business, if you want to turn out steel of the approved standard. You can't either taste it or try it with your finger, yet it may be sour and brittle, it may smash to bits at a stroke, it may crack when it's stretched. You've got to get just the right amount of carbon, sour steel must be sweetened—ferro-manganese or silicon or even aluminum must be used; I'm saying, it's a very tricky business, indeed, but as regards girls, I must confess to you, you've got to be a still better smelter and metallurgical specialist. You've got to know at a glance how much sulphur there is in a girl, how she has to be sweetened or what special ingredient you must add so that she won't rust and get crusted over, if she's brought to a thousand degrees of heat. You've got to see that she's magnetic in herself but is not drawn to other things with magnetic properties. And then you have to pour the smelted metal into the mould, and obtain the beauty, the tenderness, the strength and richness that becomes the wife of every steel smelter of the proletarian class.

I love people that are untameable and cussed, people whose souls are not made of weeds, who look out over life from a height—these are people after my own heart, they keep me here in the world, I've sought them out and loved them. They burned with an enduring, transparent flame, warming those around them. A good gas man looks after their flames, and sees the gas burns and burns itself out without soot smoking.

I have always envied people like these; there are very few of them. We

need more. My wife was one: she's gone. Adamenko was one, and he's gone. We clench our fists and we want to sing and shout to the whole world: "Be born beautiful and untameable, people, take your places in the ranks of those who fight and conquer, fight and build the inexpressible beauties of socialism!"

Not long ago, while I was in charge of municipal affairs, the Party transferred me from there to be director here, my speciality being steel smelting. I found Friedrich Ivanovitch and we're doing a bit of smelting together. Not long ago, as I was saying, I ordered a stone monument from an Italian I know, an expert in that kind of work. He made such a noble thing out of stone—you can see it for yourselves in the local cemetery for the heroes of the Revolution.

Adamenko's monument stands on his glorious grave above the water, a stone eagle striking off stone chains with its beak, his biography in gold lettering, the Don steppe all around, heat and noise, the pond all spotted with oil where I met the girl who became my wife; we lived several years together without any fuss.

I got me a daughter, lived through the World War, met the Revolution, and waited for the Germans to make their way to us in the Don coalfields; then we went on strike and stopped the works. I began to gather together a miner's revolutionary detachment. Then this grew into a regiment and even a brigade. Now we've got up to this point let's stop a moment and look back into the past, the glorious and not very far distant past and listen to the plain words of the furnace man Chubyenko.

There were many parties in those days, a new party for every street: anarchists, communists, Bolsheviks, Mensheviks our own Don colliery life, the life of 1918. It was then that we became the subjects of a new state, ruled by His Serene Highness the Hetman of the Ukraine.

The Don colliery scenery is not cheerful; the Hetman state reared up on its hind legs; we were dreaming of our own coal republic of the Don. The Hetman had a machine for printing money and we envied him. About that time I got in with a fitter named Voroshilov from The Lugansk Locomotive Works. We had a drink and a bite to eat, and then I took it upon myself to form a partisan detachment. All power to the Soviets and so on. I looked a bit more terrifying in those days, I hadn't got these gold teeth in; and I wore a shaggy black cap like a Circassian of the old style. I looked stern and had a powerful voice into the bargain.

I took on both Bolsheviks and non-Party men so long as they were good strong miners or blast furnace men well tried, saw to it that they were grim fellows who'd get what they wanted, that they could boil, yet not boil over, that there would be no more than one percent of carbon, in a word, that at the test they would prove to be true steel. I took others into the detachment, too, as you might take aluminum—to bind the gases in the metal and prevent the steel from boiling in the ladle. I took them from all departments in the works, set them shoulder to shoulder—the dare devils, the difficult, the shockheads, the steady, sturdy proletarians of the great Don colleries, and that's how I collected a partisan detachment against the Germans. About twenty I got hold of altogether, afterwards they all became Bolsheviks, all Party men of the first water, who knew their Lenin and Marx and wanted Socialism, and took no interest in any other theory.

When it was found necessary to purge our Party ranks according to instructions received, we set up our own standards: if a man should try to tackle a machine gun alone, or attack, single handed, five men with excellent

rifles, or if you wiped out the staff with a hand grenade—then, you were a full-fledged Bolshevik: honor and the gratitude of the proletariat and a Party ticket with all the necessary seals were yours.

Sometimes we'd have some hard fighting, and then have to scatter in every direction, if reinforcements came to the Germans. We went all over the Don; escaped to the north, wandered up and down the Soviet frontier, got hold of a few arms, a few instructions, conscious hatred and returned to our own country in partisan style, by the devil's own tracks.

We lay in hiding till something new cropped up; then I got orders from the secret committee of three to fire on a troop train, give them trouble and take away their arms. "Ataman Adamenko and the poorest peasants are to help you, Comrade Chubyenko." My instructions were: prisoners are not to be shot, but officers to be finished off at once, and report when orders have been carried out.

I began to wait for that day, thinking what kind of a fellow this Adamenko could be, would it be all right fighting alongside him, or would his peasants clear out.

Having weighed and considered everything, I resolved to carry out the instructions of the committee of three but to go ahead with the job before Adamenko turned up and then wait for him. I did what was required of me with my Don colliery company and, hot after the fight, lay down on the grass to rest and wait for Adamenko. You know how it is, if you fight for five minutes, you've got to run about the whole day. You're worn out, you can hardly hold the soul in your body, you see the clouds chasing each other across the sky, there's the smell of the fields, the horses stand about grazing—it was only afterwards I found out I'd got pneumonia.

Adamenko was not late at all, he came up with his detachment in full battle array.

His horses were well fed, people well drilled, and the mare under him shone like gold. Where could he have hidden such a beauty from people's eyes? I asked him and he told us he painted her khaki. We all laughed, the meadow was filled with our laughter. I got up from the grass to laugh with the rest and felt pains like the colic, my lungs seemed to creak under my ribs and I couldn't laugh.

Adamenko got off his horse—he was tall as a telegraph pole—I don't know where they got the clothes to fit a fellow of his size—came up to me, listened to my cough, laid me on the ground and began to massage me. I don't know what kind of massage that was, but my ribs crackled like matches under Adamenko's hands. He nearly knocked the life out of me with his massage. He admitted afterwards that medicine was his speciality, that he had been a vet's assistant in the army.

I liked him at once, this Adamenko, he was a partisan hero. I transferred the command of my coal miners to him, and was laid up myself with pneumonia. They dosed me with various powders and pills, but nothing helped, the illness took a proper hold of my chest, and to make matters worse, I had to hide and stay in the saddle all the time with my lungs in that state. Adamenko said that not everyone could get over it, so we resolved to take drastic measures. We retired to a remote village that no German could have found. There they laid poor me on a pile of hay, on a hot stove and heated the stove all the week, and poured water over the hay.

Well, they made it so hot, and the steam went through and through me, and I lost so much blood that I felt better and decided I would not die yet, so I made Adamenko a present of my revolver. We began to think out a way

of uniting our detachments, only we did not know how to decide our Party affairs because my detachment was made up of Party men, while Adamenko's was not.

They did not know how to tell a Party man from a non-Party man. Adamenko confessed to me that they had wanted to brand themselves with stars on their foreheads, to show that this was no joke, but a real struggle for freedom, and so that anyone could recognize them from a distance. But afterwards Adamenko's men tattooed themselves with stars on the chest—this was a Party ticket of their own invention. We discussed whether the Party organizations would allow such jokes with tickets and resolved to regard them as temporary since one could not enter up any subscriptions for them and regard the fellows as having passed the Party purging and being fully fledged members.

Just picture to yourself the scene: Chubyenko lying on the stove, tossing from side to side, spitting out lumps of black blood, with the wet hay steaming and crackling under him on the hot stove, the steam so thick in the kitchen you could hardly breathe, and Adamenko sitting, looking downhearted, at the table, while his men tramped in and out, with stars on their chests. They were all fanatics about socialism, there were not going to be any renegades among them, *their* Party ticket could not be hidden, it would go down with them to their graves.

My head was all in a muddle, I was bellowing like a bull on the stove, fighting with blind nature for life. Through the tiny window I could see the street and the trees and the distant steppe and the endless road coiled before my eyes. I longed to see socialism, I longed to live to the beginning of it, at least, and at the thought of this I bellowed all the louder and tore at my breast.

Adamenko laid me on my back and held me down; I was shaken by visions, could see the daylight and people outside the window, then the window darkened and night fell, the planet bore me away through day and night and the whole house seemed to be shaking with it.

I felt them laying me on a stretcher, I looked through the window and saw the wooden village church burst into flames, and the bells dropped from the burning tower, the big bell boomed, then the smaller bells rang out a peal, then the little ones scattered with their high treble notes.

I woke up and heard Adamenko laughing, and I found out this was a bit of his anti-religious work. He had persuaded the parishoners at the meeting that they ought to take all the church property home with them, otherwise, who knew, the Germans might requisition it, any band of robbers could ransack it and take away all the sacred gold and then—you could whistle for it or go and pray to the parish priest's gate; there would be nothing else left!

Well, they took home everything there was; it looked more like a religious circus than a church. Some of the believers even took the banners; but afterwards there was a lot of talk in the village, everyone wanted to get hold of a gold cup or some other kind of gold vessel: to cut a long story short, it ended up with their burning down the church to cover up a multitude of sins.

Adamenko was roaring laughing all over the house, and as soon as I came round he was ready with some other invention. There was a devil in his head, a desperate and sharptongued devil of the first class.

Here am I smelting steel, and thinking all the time about Adamenko; you'll tell me those are just trifling incidents from partisan life, but around us were Germans, Hetman troops, enemies of our class, and we were standing against them; we were partisans to the last cartridge. We took our lives in our hands and carried them high and it is very difficult to walk thus. Few

of us returned alive. The Red Army grew up on the bones of the Red Partisans. We used all methods in fighting and now I'll tell you about a bit of strategy that Adamenko thought out.

Well, it so happened in that steppe village that there was a fair. People came pouring in from all four sides, the broad steppe roads were crowded with Ukrainian *tatchankas,* the heavy wagons of the German colonists and the four-wheeled carts with clanking steel plates—the vehicles of the steppe country. Different notes, different sounds, every man knew his own cart out of thousands by its voice, just as all of us here know the sirens of our factories, and the locomotive mechanic knows the whistle of his own engine out of all the others. There was the silence of the steppe over the broad, even Tauride steppe.

The steel plates on the axels rang out in different notes, cattle lowed from every corner of the market, people chattered, the German soldiers wandered about between the carts with interpreters, buying cattle with the money the Hetman had printed. Then a German band played their marches and songs, in the meadow a German battalion in steel helmets was being drilled, their major, in all full glory was shaking his belly on a horse, the sky was as blue as the Black Sea over us.

Then some late comers appeared on the horizon. They came from all directions, and their wagons were full of hefty women and girls. Red Moldavian shawls glowed in the sunshine, the wagons drew up and arranged themselves for the fair; out of them jumped the women, wrapping themselves in their shawls. Adamenko was so tall that his skirt was by no means a decent length, but his embroidered blouse covered his broad shoulders easily enough, it must have belonged to a fine girl.

The regiment of women hung about in the crowd—the peasants roared laughing at the sight of them—while we set the machine guns at the proper points, posted our best shots in the gardens and sent such a volley from all sides that in a little while the Germans were at our mercy.

It was a hard fight: these were not Hetman troops who might run away at a shot. The Germans fought through the whole program: at first they felt awkward about running away from women in skirts, and so we mowed them down with the machine guns. These were partisan tactics—to disguise ourselves as women, get close up to the enemy and act unexpectedly without giving them time to spread out for action. One or two of our fellows lost their skirts, but Adamenko fought through the whole battle in his feminine get-up and though he had necklaces and strings of coral and gold coins galore around his neck he never parted from a single necklace nor lost a single coin. They belonged to his girl, she had given up all her best clothes and trinkets to her boy to bring him victory—or, it might be, death.

Now I'll tell you about another fight, where Adamenko's talent for strategy came into play again, when we started the Red Terror against the Hetman troops. Adamenko and I were made orphans that time, all our nearest were wiped out—Adamenko's girl and my wife as well; they died for us. Someone amongst us betrayed them to the Hetman troops. I rushed to our place in the Don with my detachment, forgetting the danger. I thought I would be in time to save them. It was a terrible night: there was a steppe storm raging, the moon flying from cloud to cloud, dry lightning slashing the air.

I felt I wanted to jump off my horse. I could run quicker, I thought, but in the end I galloped up too late. By the pond spotted with oil I found my wife, shot dead. Everything was smashed and ruined in the house. My little daughter had run out into the steppe, and the steppe swallowed her up. I

dropped down on the floor of my house and sat there till morning, and I realized that there was to be no mercy for anyone, and I cursed this Hetman state of the Ukraine in my grief. Then I got on my horse and never left the saddle till we had destroyed that state and its German defenders.

The traitor who had given up our wives felt death coming nearer and nearer to him. He waited for it as for someone dear to him. Then came that second battle of Adamenko's inventing, when we fought hard and paid back what we owed. And the interest alone on the blood shed then would have been sufficient to drown that old Russian general, the Hetman, and his whole breed.

Perhaps some of you have been partisans, or in the Red Guards, or have, at some time or another, taken the law into your own hands on the spot. If one of you has ever done that, then he knows the kind of mood that prevailed at the time. We thought we were the centre of the Revolution, that the whole world was looking to us and expecting from us something—the like of which had never been heard of even in fairy tales —world heroism, true revolutionary mettle. The entire proletariat, we thought, would follow our lead; we did not grudge anything in the world: before us rose the red planet of socialism whose rays played on us like searchlights. So we marched along, in hot pursuit of our dreams.

Those were the beautiful years of the young idea; not one of us owned more than a pair of pants and a torn overcoat. Wherever we went—there the republic of the Soviets arose, although there were so few of us and our cartridges as often as not would not go off, and the Don Coalfields Republic stood in all its virgin beauty. The difficult years have passed over us and it is pleasant now to smelt steel and remember our fighters. We had not time even to wash ourselves then. Adamenko and I made up our minds to wipe out to the last man a hundred of the Hetman guards stationed in one of the Don villages, be quits with the Hetman of the White Guardist state for the grief we had not yet ceased to weep over, make Red reprisals for White Terror and so on.

And we did wipe them out, that hundred of His Excellency the Hetman Skoropadsky's regiment. We tracked them down for a long time, and the grass never rustled under our feet. We traveled by day and at night gazed at the stars and choked with hatred. Adamenko was waiting for a convenient opportunity, not every moment is suitable for battle.

Take metal, for instance, you will tell me it can't be taken out of the furnace any minute, the ladle must be in place and the moulds ready, and above all, the steel must be ready. To send people into battle is a very responsible thing: when you have to give the signal, you feel as if you're on fire, thousands of thoughts fly through your head at once.

It was in a Moldavian village we waited for our chance. It possessed a pretty big school house which the Hetman troops were occupying for the night. This was just what we wanted. That night we prepared a little entertainment for them, not one of them came out of there alive. We killed the sentries, blocked up the door and started to throw handfuls of burning straw in through the windows. From outside in the yard we could see by the light of the straw how the soldiers jumped up off the floor, and we baptized them from our rifles. You can't lie low for long when there are lumps of flaming straw flying about over your head; we would not have taken even as long as we did if we'd had some grenades.

So that was the second battle of Adamenko's planning. Ordinary battles there were plenty of, and Adamenko's third invention was the last, but we

had a year to wait for that. A revolution had started in Germany by that time and things were beginning to grow clearer in our heads. All Europe was ablaze with revolution. I left Adamenko in charge of the detachment, which had joined the Red Army by now, and went off myself to the wonderful town of Odessa, where I'd been summoned by the foreign occupation and the imperialist sharps.

It was 1919. The port was full of warships, the whole of Odessa was divided up into zones: there was the foreign one, the White Guardist zone of Grishin-Alamazov, further on were General Petlura's divisions, the Polish legionnaires pretended they were French troops, the White Guard divisions of officers were fighting with the Ukrainians, every zone had its own counter-espionage, and none of these organizations forgot us even in their dreams, life was hot and revolutionary and for all of us hung on a thread. And I forgot to say—Mishka Japonchik and his bandit army were in the town as well—several thousand armed gangsters. They found it profitable to pretend they were revolutionaries and carry out raids in the streets of Odessa. And we Bolsheviks had to pay for these raids, anything that happened in the town was put down to us.

The enemy intelligence services were frantically searching for us: it was in these kind of circumstances our Party life in Odessa went on in those days, but we didn't throw up the sponge. We formed a foreign committee, and the secret printing works was in the house of a fisherman, the father of my comrades, Palovets. We made our way on board the French warships. You've probably read in the papers about the mutiny aboard the cruiser. In short, we put in a bit of good work. It's not for me to boast of it and I won't ask you to listen to that. Well, many of our underground workers were killed, but I managed to escape, although I didn't hide and I didn't jump out of my skin with bravery. In secret work the two main things are discipline and restraint. There your life belongs to all, and you must only risk it in so far as the committtee allows you.

I remained alive and went back to my detachment, because the horizon had darkened again and the black clouds were drifting towards our Soviet shores. To put it plainly, the famous advance of Denikin's army on Moscow had begun. Our Red Army detachments shifted northwards, the bourgeoisie in the towns nearly broke the church bells with joy and thanksgiving, and we learned that there would be no mercy for us and that the White generals would turn Russia into one great tsarist prison.

I found my Adamenko at the front, commander of a grand regiment that hadn't any two men dressed alike. Our meeting wasn't a very cheerful one; we thought for a long time about what we should do and then got proper advice. We took the Don coalfields men we needed from the regiment and went on underground work to the Denikin side, to our dear, smoky Don coalfields, to its ravines and its steppe, and we had a good run round there.

How much coal we prevented the Denikin engines from getting, and how we kept the workshops from repairing the engines, and the whole of the Don coalfields was getting us arms. Every village coalfields' sun warmed us. There were a good many fights, and plenty of traps set for us at every corner, but at last they were forced to recall General Drosdov's officer corps from the front and send it against us. Then it was that the third battle of Adamenko's inventing was fought.

When the unsettled blood ferments in some of our lads and they want to write stories about our Civil War, and their pens and pencils go scribbling like mad—they see us, naked and barefoot, chasing the armed hordes of

our enemies, and the officer regiments flinging down their arms and begging for mercy—they see all this only because they are young writers and want it to be so. But we who have had a taste of it feel a contracting of the heart when we read their books, and we want to swear; we are angry because there's no glory in a victory over enemies of that kind. Happiness did not drop down from the sky to us, we had a long, hard fight for it and the officer regiments fought hard and desperately. It does all the more honor to our men that they beat such a strong enemy, and conquered such numbers of them.

Drosdov's regiment was in full uniform, the colonels in it were corporals and the captains and lieutenants fought in the ranks like ordinary privates, and in command of them was a Don Cossack cornet who was made a general in a year's time. It they had sent that regiment against us it meant we had got their backs up properly, and although we had reason to be afraid of an enemy like that, we were proud that they had noticed our ability and sent their best men against us.

Adamenko and I sat two nights in a salt mine, turning things over, arguing and calculating. Adamenko had a sharp mind, the plan of that campaign was born in his head. I only straightened it out and made it practical. Meanwhile Drosdov's regiment was nosing about the locality, the riff-raff of the place went to them, information came in from all sides and our fellows went, too, to denounce people and muddle up their game.

They were up to their necks in work at headquarters; they even tried to play with the workers. These were not the type of officers who stayed at the rear and got drunk and speculated and ruined their front. This was a fighting regiment of fanatical monarchists, crazy defenders of capitalism and a united Russia. If they got drunk they took care not to let the population see it, they destroyed our men in secret and without any fuss, they wore sheep's clothing though they were wolves, and they knew well how to serve their own class. We came face to face with them, with these men of Drosdov's and I must admit it was a very serious encounter.

You know the Don steppe and the steppe gullies, where sometimes a river runs between low banks, fringed with sedge and reeds, and there are giant metallurgical works, smoking furnaces and coke stoves, and waste dumps stand by the mines like monuments to the amount of human labor spent under the earth. What we had to do was to find in all that crowded place the valley we needed, a valley through which a stream would run and there would be reeds and other high grasses. And we had to lure to this place, by any wiles we could think of, the Denikin troops and there bring them into conflict with those whom we wanted them to clash with.

These were the highest guerilla tactics: a regular division could hardly have managed it. We split our detachment into two, went to our appointed places and began to kick up a row. Drosdov's men split into two as well and a three-day battle of guerilla tactics began. Science is right when it says that to draw up a plan is easy but to carry it out is difficult, and to cross an icy torrent, over sharp stones, with the water up to your neck reminds one a little of the difficulties a commander has to overcome while carrying out his plan.

Adamenko and I went with our separate detachment and arranged to meet later. For three days we retreated, fighting, taking care to retreat in the direction we wanted and not in the direction the enemy was driving us. Our plan was a very audacious one, and would have fallen through in any other circumstances.

Adamenko and I came closer, slowly, while the Drosdov men followed each

of us. Our detachments were diminishing, we were letting our men go—you soon see why. The tale is quickly told, but was not so quickly acted. One fine evening Adamenko and I met together with a handful of men from our detachments, at a certain spot. It was not the spot we had previously determined on, but it was fairly suitable.

It was a valley, there was a stream and reeds; you must understand, the Drosdov men were attacking from both sides and we were only a handful among them. We left a few volunteers to face certain death, while we ourselves retreated through the reeds and got out of the place just in time. About two kilometres away we found our men and help from the neighboring coal mine, and then waited for results.

The Drosdov divisions were attacking one another, each under the impression it had come to a clash with a big division of ours, while my machine gunners gave them hell from both sides. Dusk was falling and both sides started a bout of heavy firing; they were good shots, and they laid each other out by the dozen. It was evening, the sun had gone down and before they found out they were fighting their own folk we came up on their flank and added another drop to their cup of sorrow. Then night came down and the third battle of Adamenko's inventing was over. Adamenko himself had got a bullet in the mouth: it passed through the tongue and came out somewhere at the back of the neck. I took him to a doctor I knew in the local hospital, and I myself spent the night tramping round the hospital, waiting for morning and whacking the leaves of the trees with my whip—in my great delight over our victory.

Next morning I made my way to Adamenko: he was alone in the male nurse's room, and not in bed. I saw him walking up and down, from corner to corner. That was a giant of the future, none of your small specimens. His head was all wrapped in white, nothing to be seen but nose and eyes, and they made me shiver—they were so red and terrifying. On the bed lay a woman's blouse and skirt, strings of coral and necklaces, belonging to his dead girl. He saw me and tried to speak with his poor shot away tongue; then made a movement of despair, and something like tears welled up and sparkled in his eyes.

"Never mind," I said, "you'll be talking twenty to the dozen yet. We'll fix you up with a calf's tongue." But my heart was fit to burst, and my jokes didn't sound any too gay.

He went over to the wall and started to write on it with his finger—frightful words about that bitch, Death, that wanted to smother him in his bed. Only he was not going to stay in his bed, she could come to him while he was standing on his feet; then followed various curses. I wrote my replies on the wall and repeated the written words aloud, and as for what we talked about—it wouldn't interest you. Then we shook hands and I went out to speak to the doctor, and as I was coming back I heard a shot from the revolver I'd left behind and there was Adamenko standing in the middle of the room with blood spouting from his chest as if out of a burst barrel, and his eyes looked vacant, and he fell down on the floor.

Now you can go on with the meeting without me. Friedrich Ivanovitch has glanced in here more than once. I'm coming, Friedrich Ivanovitch, I'm coming to the furnace now, and may this be the last time I'll ever make a speech at work. We're going to smelt steel of all kinds, we're going to love our Lenin; long live steadiness and staunchness on the way to socialism, glory to our Don coalfields and may the memory of our dead heroes never die.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

By S. Krzhizhanovski

Bernard Shaw

Biologists ought to be greatful to the sea urchin. This is almost the only organism which has an embryonic cell as transparent as glass. This allows observation of the first movements of life, the division of the centrosome into two centers and the splitting up of the cluster of chromatic threads. The mind of Bernard Shaw worked with exceptional transparency; all its movements are naked, brought forth from the dark cellar to the brilliantly lighted window and even the plot confusions of his plays remind one of the merging of chromosomatic threads which are clearly seen through the envelope of the cell.

Shaw's clarity is due not only to nature. He has labored stubbornly to achieve clarity and accuracy in his work. As a result the best pages of the master remind one of a bee-hive with one side of glass so that every movement within the hive bears its own mental load which is clearly visible to the observer.

Shaw with the preciseness which is characteristic of him has given a name to the weapon which helps him in the art of precision: "common sense" pushed to the furthest limits. Shaw loves to recall a visit he paid to a famous occulist who having examined his eyes found that they were exceptionally normal. Shaw loses no time in generalizing upon this fact, pointing out that his physical and mental eyesight is normal, in other words not that of the great majority of mankind because most men have eyesight which almost always departs from the normal. Developing this thought a man proud of his healthy sight and common sense would arrive with half a step at the result: normal sight and thinking are so uncharacteristic of normal men that it is easier to meet a genius than a man possessing common sense. But Shaw none the less does not make this conclusion to which logical inertia would lead. He darts aside chasing after a paradox, his first paradox which is followed by an endless line of others. With tremendous pleasure Shaw breaks into little bits the lying word: "common" which promises for all access to the most inaccessible thing in the world: "common sense."

II

Although the fabric of Shaw's text is always clear, although the surface allows you to see the bottom, there are always at the bottom complicated combinations of images and coils of thought. The playwright builds his plays like a house which has its window curtains always drawn back, its windows washed clean or even opened wide apart but inside if you will look through the window there is an accumulation of things and the plan of the rooms is intricate. Objects are shown always under a bright illumination which serves to reveal their complicated structure.

Shaw's plays form as it were an unusual and dramatic village with forty-five edifices built of words. The architect is the same, the architectural style the same throughout, but the plan allows a series of variations and departures from the main style. The plays communicate with each other by means of

George Bernard Shaw at a Soviet children's exhibition

logical bridges and overlappings. There are often lean-to structures standing against the principal buildings. The critics and professional interpreters enter these buildings sometimes by the front door and sometimes by the back.

A Shaw play cannot be considered in isolation from the whole series of phenomena of which it constitutes a part.

Thus if we take such a famous play as *Man and Superman* or more accurately if we go inside this construction then we will see how many stories it has (super act upon act like the superman over man) and the system of covered galleries leading to other parts of the premises; the play is preceeded by an epistle dedicatory which develops into a complete pamphlet which philosophically states the theme lying at the foundation of the play; in the middle of the play there is wedged in by way of intermezzo another play which making use of a sleep which seizes all the characters, transfers the theme back by several centuries, raising for this purpose the dead who are made once more to play their lives out; the chief character of the main play John Tanner, whose character is logically sketched in the preface, himself in his turn writes a pamphlet *The Revolutionist's Handbook* on a theme complimentary to that of the epistle dedicated; attached to the sides of the whole complex are lean-tos in the form of a postscript and several "maxims for revolutionaries."

In the quite small one-act play *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets* it is necessary for anyone who wishes to grasp the significance of this semi-humorous drama to become acquainted with a series of short but numerous chapters of the preface on Shakespearian questions, a preface which exceeds the play itself in volume almost by twice.

Shaw never or almost never limits himself to the role of playwright; as we have already seen he himself is the critic of his own plays (see his *First Aid to Critics*) an historian (see the preface to *Heartbreak House,* the

Doctor's Dilemma etc.) and even parodist of himself. This is not all: his stage directions which sometimes take up several pages at once interfere with the work of the scene designer, take away all initiative from the producer and bind the hands and feet of the actor by invisible threads which measure exactly every one of his steps, the movements of his hands, the slightest turn of his head, the intonation of his voice and even his height. Within the parenthesis following the name of the character there is always concealed an exact indication of how the role is to be played. These stage directions in many plays take more than a third of the text.

Before "cutting out" his play Shaw "measures it up" on the scale of his preface, scientific sources and historical notes and after the dramatic production is completed he once more "measures it up" with a critical notice of his own and tests the durability of the material and the cement links by blows of parody upon himself.

III

Shaw combines in himself the qualities of a scientific investigator of humanity, a mathematician whose every phrase is exactly calculated and a showman who collects all the rarities of the fair.

What is his decisive experiment, *experimentum crucis,* his algorithm and the star turn of the program?

There is an old English turn of speech: "to upset the applecart" which means to turn everything upside down and to mix everything up. It is just this turn of speech that will help us to illustrate the basic method of our playwright in the form of a barrow which clearly and graphically illustrates his method of work. At the beginning of each play Shaw loads his barrow with apples. These are by no means ordinary apples—they are taken from the biblical tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which our pamphleteer-playwright-philosopher-parodist endeavors to strip clean. In the first act Shaw pushes the barrow in the direction of the nearest logical declivity; in the second he upsets it; "the apples of evil" get mixed up with the "apples of good" and roll off in different directions; the last act is devoted to the collection of scattered morality: the barrow is once more put on its wheels and good and evil return to their old places.

It is to the point to notice that looking over the list of Shaw's plays one comes close to the end of the chronological series (1930) upon this very proverbial applecart (*The Applecart, a Political Extravaganza*).

The action of the play moves along two ruts. The first rut: the King of England Magnus (the author declares that the action begins at that moment when the last of people now living has died) does not wish to sign a constitution which his prime minister is trying to force upon him; he puts forward his own counterplan against the plan of his ministers. Magnus decides to abdicate temporarily and put forward himself as a candidate for parliament, to talk down the "talking shop" and destroy the old cabinet along with its proposed constitution. After this the crown which it had been intended to place upon another head will naturally under the pressure of public enthusiasm return to its former place. The counterplan upsets the plan.

The second rut: the ambassador of the United States, Van Hatten, arrives at Magnus' court with a proposal calculated to upset all the political relations of the court: America which at one time broke away from the mother country is ready once more to enter the British Empire. Sam feeling himself a prodigal son returns to the arms of his father John Bull. Magnus on hearing this project

George Bernard Shaw in the Crimea in 1931

jibs and in horror says to him: "Jemima we'll have to live in Dublin. England is finished." And it is only by means of concessions and diplomatic maneuvers that the father is able to get rid of his son and to restore the status quo.

If the method of upsetting the applecart is really Shaw's basic method then we ought to find it not only in the construction of the play as a whole but in the structure of separate parts and details of it and also in the erection of the lean-tos which surround the main building.

Let us begin with the titles. As a matter of fact they are least of all specifically Shavian and rarely depart from the standard style of title. But take for instance the title *Arms and the Man.* The reader who is in the least familiar with Shaw's style will at once get that the arms to which man has given first place in the title will not wish to lose that place. And in actual fact the theme of the play comes to this that man is an instrument of his arms; in the first act a military expert demonstrates that after a cavalry charge it is the horses and not the horsemen which should be decorated with orders—after all many of the horsemen if they had had their way would have run in the wrong direction but the flood of horses, the mobile inertia of the attack, carries with it men for whom there is nothing left but to play the parts of heroes.

In *Captain Brassbound's Conversion,* and *The Showing up of Blanco Posnet* the conversation and the showing up consist in the fact that the moral tendencies and habits of thought of the hero though they have accumulated in the course of many years are as a result of unexpected obstacles turned upside down like a cart in collision with a stone.

Still more instructive are Shaw's sub-titles: *Plays for Puritans,* puritans as is well known being the sect which in principle condemn the theatre or *Socialism for Millionaires, The Revolutionist's Handbook and Pocket*

Companion by John Tanner M.I.R.C. (Member of the Idle Rich Club). The man in the street visiting a theatre with the hope of spending a pleasant evening encounters the risk, if Shaw is being played, of coming across the promise: "an upleasant play" on the program he has bought; the sub-titles like black and white cards shuffled in the pack promise the spectator now pleasant plays, now unpleasant.

Within the play the applecart may run as we already know only upon some Philosophen Weg (as to this day certain suburban streets are called in German university towns because, according to legend, philosophers who made those towns famous used to stroll thoughtful along these lanes; the philosophers have long since died and only the street name is left) Shaw's usual course is from thought to image from logical contour to artistic color. Not to wander too far let us take the pamphlet we have mentioned above which is the forerunner of the play *Man and Superman.* Shaw takes the traditional English conception of the relations between men and women and with one push upsets the whole scheme made sacred by the centuries.

According to ritual a man who visits a house oftener than twice a week must (if there is a young lady in the house) announce his intentions; then follows the offer of his hand, heart and finally purse. The young lady at first refuses, then hesitates, then encourages and finally says yes. Only then begins the long complicated and scrupulous process of preparing the wedding cake.

Shaw's pamphlet begins with a decisive contradiction of the legend concerning the activeness of men and the passiveness of women in love affairs. The woman's organism needs a child, the man's doesn't. The woman is physiologically and psychically interested in defending her fruit both when it is "on the branch" and after it has fallen from the branch. Inasmuch as the woman needs a child he who can give it to her is also necessary. Therefore the initiative in love is always in Shaw's opinion the woman. His pamphlet does not spare similies: woman is the hunter, man the prey; woman is the spider, man the fly whose helpless struggling in the web he sincerely mistakes for "activity."

If it be admitted that this is so how does the pamphlet explain such a sharp divergence between the fly's opinion of his initiative and the actual state of affairs? The blame for this tremendous confusion, this logical mirage, Shaw lays upon the geniuses, the supermen who have got mixed up in the affairs of ordinary everyday people (to judge by Shaw himself they are indeed not a little to blame). Geniuses in the opinion of our philosopher are as it were spiritual women. They also give birth to children not of the body but of the mind: great books, symphonies and pictures. For this they do not require intimate relationship with women as does a woman seeking the embrace of a man. It was separation from Beatrice and not marriage with her which inspired Dante to create the *Divine Comedy.* But the creations of the great entering the minds of little people poison them. For the creator woman is only an image which he takes up only in order to throw it away for a new image. Little people reading great books, by virtue of their littleness interpret the relationship between the creator and the image as the vital relationship between father and mother.

Now let us leave the pamphlet and see the wheels of our applecart turning round in the play itself.

Octavius, who is brought forward in the first stage direction connected with his name as a person with apparently big chances of being the hero, very quickly loses his chances. Octavius is the fiance of the charming Miss Anne. So it would seem. But in actual fact Anne has designed the engagement ring for the friend of Octavius, the woman hater John Tanner, who is striving

to rescue Octavius from the silky embrace of the marriage web. But the charming spider Anne has her own calculations: giving the hand of help to the false fiance the rescuer may inadvertently steal away the engagement ring along with the engagee. That is what happens. Tanner the militant fly buzzes about not being answerable to the court of nature, writes articles defining marriage as a trap for men and finally allows charming Miss Anne to say her "yes" and become Mrs. Tanner.

The further we go the greater the speed of the applecart.

The Devil's Disciple: Richard is the devil's disciple, a man practically an outlaw; Anderson is a servant considered by all to be of god, a clergyman to whom all come for advice and spiritual direction. But suddenly genuine vivid life strikes the faded and muddy life of the hamlet where they both live. And what was on top goes to the bottom, what lay at the bottom is thrown to the top. The clergyman becomes the leader of the insurgents, the outlaw becomes a preacher of Christian truths.

The Dark Lady of the Sonnets: a writer of comedies who signs them with the name of Shakespeare and the author or regal edicts who signs them with the name of Elizabeth meet accidently at night at a gate separating the palace from the street. Their talk combines learned dispute with declarations of a love which does not yet exist but which might exist. Under cover of night and solitude the characters overturn the relationship of state and make them stand on their heads. The queen speaks of her power over her subjects, Shakespeare speaks of his more absolute power over words, in subjection to which are all the crowned heads of the world. The queen speaks of her royal ancestry. Shakespeare shows that the branches of his geneological tree go further, that the dynasty of shopkeepers has much better chances of antiquity and perpetuity than the dynasty of kings. The argument might go on and on if the approach of dawn and a century did not interrupt.

Androcles and the Lion: Roman soldiers are escorting "Christian martyrs" who are doomed to meet death in the arena the next day. But the soldiers are ill-tempered and gloomy whereas the candidates for martyrdom are very merry and pleased with themselves. One of the prisoners, following the traditions of Roman law, pictures to himself death on the arena as a profitable two-sided deal, *do ut des,* I buy eternal life by means of selling temporary life to God (if anyone is the loser he is certain it will not be he). No sooner will the lion's jaws have closed on the martyr, he reasons, then will the gates of heaven open. Inasmuch as there is a heavenly court there must be a heavenly method of legal proceedure operating with complete automatic exactitude. The inclusion in the number of characters of an exceedingly human lion allows the mimic problem to be solved not only on the plane of reason but also on the plane of action.

In one of Shaw's comparatively late plays—*Heartbreak House*—the scene is the interior of a building constructed on the model of an ocean liner. The people living in their cabin rooms and the gathering on the veranda deck of this ship which steams over dry land are capable of suffering shipwreck on firm earth because they are heartbreakers—persons whose fragile hearts break like the dyed shells of Easter eggs when they come into collision with each other. This race of fragile-hearted Anglicized Chekhov characters (to Chekhov as his teacher Shaw dedicates the preface) is put in contrast with the rudehearted breed of horse breakers. From the open or concealed struggle between these two psychic there arises in Shaw's opinion all the possible conflicts of life.

In actual fact the houses of all Shaw's plays are not sufficiently firmly

placed upon the earth. In each of them there is something which recalls a ship under the menace of sinking beneath the surface whether of the ocean or of the land.

Let us look at the cruise of all the flotilla of plays built in Shaw's yards; let them pass in front of us. We see that the column of characters does not move in good order—the clothes are motley, dwarfs march side by side with giants, they do not keep step. But all of them in their gait have one characteristic feature marking them as of the same family: they walk as if the earth like a deck were rolling beneath them. Or to return to our former comparison: it is as if the earth swinging on its orbit were ready at any moment to upset along with all its human load.

In Shaw's plays there is scarcely one man who is completely normal in respect of eyesight. Each character has a squint of some sort.

For instance: turning over the pages of one of the green Constable volumes taken at random I calculated in joking spirit that twenty-five per cent of the characters inhabiting this volume were alcoholics. Bernard Shaw is a member of the anti-alcoholic organizations of his country. But he is also an opponent in principle of vivisection which does not prevent him from carrying out ferocious scenic experiments on the souls of living man. The sharp blades of satire continually verify their polish by opening up interior motives and secrets hidden in the unconscious and the libido of the characters. It is just the same with people whose thoughts and feelings are close neighbors of delirium tremens. Why does Shaw, fighting the vice of drunkenness among actual people, carry on agitation for alcoholism among his characters? Simply because this is convenient for an author who has adopted the method of the upset applecart. From an author's point of view of course. The psychology of the alcoholic is the most simple and vulgar case of a certain confusion of consciousness, a squinting of thought in one direction which makes all perceptions dipsomanias. Observation on the drunken fourth of the characters gives the following simple results. The drunkard is usually presented along with the well-fed (two different methods of loading the stomach). The well-fed always votes conservative, the drunkards do not vote at all. The drunkards are capable of certain flights of thought, the well-fed keep their minds asleep along with their stomachs. The well-fed are practical people, the drunkards are theoreticians at least within the bounds of their vice. Thus the clerk in *Augustus Does His Bit* offers a theory of the advantageousness of drunkenness. Daniels in the *Showing up of Blanco Posnet* evolves the plan for the prevention of crime by means of the introduction of compulsory general Sunday drinking to prevent people in the free interval between two working weeks from thinking of the possibilities of earning their living more easily; the pilot of the landship invents a special "rum system" an explanation of which would take us too far. In general the staggering characters walk more straightly along their ethical path than the sober ones.

Shaw's imagination furnished a whole system of sloping surfaces upon which slide the actions and the fates of his characters. Here is still another of these slopes. Shaw met fame as a dramatist on the shady side of forty. It is curious that his characters are in the main people of his own age, they get old along with the author. His Caesar is already about fifty and has to wear a laurel wreath to hide the fact that he is bald. In *Candide* four main characters are aged respectively forty, thirty-three, eighteen and sixty. The figure of eighteen would seem to emerge from the shady side of forty into the sunshine. But it only seems to be so. In the last scene Marchbanks asked how old he is answers that although it is his eighteenth birthday he is as old as the world.

This introduction of youth into a group of middle-aged characters is typical of Shaw. His aim is to emphasize still more sharply that the people chosen by his thought are closer to death than to birth. The shade becomes thicker upon the slope which leads from forty downwards.

This liking for people on the downward slope of life continues to develop in Shaw along with the years. In one of his quite late plays *Back to Methuselah* he goes beyond the bounds of longevity permitted to men by nature. The play itself is drawn out into a pentology (its performance takes up several evenings) in order to give place to characters aged three hundred, four hundred and even five hundred years.

IV

Shaws stage directions provide the mental site of the reader with somewhat unusual material. For instance Tanner has a "restless blue eye just the thirty-second of an inch too wide open."

If one were to collect the series of stage directions with which Shaw's plays open there would result something in the nature of a book of short stories, uncompleted ones it is true. But I will take as an example a stage direction which has no plot. My aim at present is a narrow one—to show only the extraordinary steadiness, detailedness and exactness of imaginal impressions on the retina and brain of the writer.

"In a dentist's operating room on a fine August morning in 1896. Not the usual tiny London den, but the best sitting room of a furnished lodging in a terrace on the sea front at a fashionable watering place. The operating chair, with a gaspump beside it, is half way between the center of the room and one of the corners. If you look into the room through the window facing the chair, you will see the fireplace in the middle of the wall opposite you, with the door beside it to your left; an M.R.C.S. diploma in a frame hung on the chimney piece; a neat stool and bench, with vise, tools and a mortar and pestle in the corner to the right. Near this bench stands a slender machine like a whip provided with a stand, a pedal and an exaggerated winch. Recognizing this as a dental drill, you shudder and look away to your left, where you can see another window, underneath which stands a writing table with a blotter and a diary on it, and a chair. Next the writing table, towards the door, is a leather covered sofa. The opposite wall, on your right is occupied mostly by a tiny bookcase. The operating chair is close in front of you, with the cabinet of instruments handy to it on your left. You observe that the professional furniture and apparatus are new, and that the wall paper, designed, with the taste of an undertaker, in festoons and urns; the carpet with its symmetrical plans of rich, cabbagy nosegays; the glass with lustres; the ornamental gilt-rimmed blue candlesticks on the ends of the mantelshelf, also glass-draped with lustres; and the clock under a glass cover in the middle between them (its uselessness emphasized by a cheap American clock disrespectfully placed beside it and now indicating 12 o'clock noon) all combine with the black marble which gives the fireplace the air of a miniature family vault to suggest early Victorian commercial respectability, belief in money, Bible fetichism, fear of hell always at war with fear of poverty, instinctive horror of the passionate character of art, to destroy the whole plane of perception: from waking to sleeping and back. One must attentively look at every phrase of the master before drawing conclusions."

This quotation gives only the first half of the stage directions opening the play *You Never Can Tell* and even so I have not quoted it fully.

At first sight this style might be defined as extremely realistic and at times

even naturalistic. At first sight! But Shaw's sharp sightedness is worthy of being more closely examined.

Here is a short dialogue from the second act of *The Devil's Disciple* the peacful life of Anderson and his young wife Judith has been destroyed almost in an instant by unexpected misfortune. Judith's mind refuses to understand and accept what has taken place:

Judith (in a strained tone): Tony.

Anderson: Yes dear?

Judith: Do you think we are only in a dream now?

Anderson (glancing round at her for a moment with a pang of anxiety, though he goes on steadily and cheerfully putting fresh tea in the pot): Perhaps so, pet, but you may as well dream a cup of tea when you're about it."

One must follow not only the group portraits of characters but also the changing colors of the background as it moves along with them.

The Doctor's Dilemma; the third act. The artist Louis Dubedat. The third stages of tuberculosis. He is still working. On the stage when the curtain rises there is an easel in front of it, in a chair Dubedat. In the background costumed lay figures which he is painting: The figure of a man dressed in the rich costume of a Venetian nobleman alongside the bony figure of death with the scythe in its wiry fingers.

The fourth act. The same room. The windows are open—there is not enough air for the sick man. He is already unable to work and is lying on a divan. The wife and the embarrassed doctors. The forgotten lay figure of the man has fallen to the floor. The figure of death continues to stand as in the previous act.

The figure certainly might have been not done accidently by one of the servants. But all the same it seems to me that it was Shaw himself who nudged its elbow.

Conception and image always go in pairs in Shaw's work. The pamphlet lies side by side with the play. Monologues are so composed that beginning with the proof of some thesis they end by giving as it were a portrait of the thesis, an incarnation of it in image form.

Madame Dubedat comes to a famous doctor and beseeches him to save her sick husband. The doctor first of all in purely logical manner shows the impossibility of taking a new patient. He has only ten beds. The peculiarity of his method does not permit a large number of patients. All the beds are occupied. Madam Dubedat continues to insist. Then the doctor defends himself with an image: imagine he says ten men who have been wrecked at sea and to save themselves on a raft which is full of holes and can scarcely support ten. The least extra weight and they will sink beneath the waves. An eleventh man swims up and beseeches them to let him on. What must the man in charge of the raft do? Strike the hand which is endeavoring to fix onto the edge of the raft and abandon the eleventh man. Punctum.

After this Madame Dubedat is silent. But in a moment with purely feminine tenacity she adopts the doctor's method and also moves from conceptions to images. Untying a bundle she has brought with her she shows a portrait of herself done by her husband who is seriously ill. The doctor who until now has been speaking with someone asking a favor sees this person in the portrait as a woman and the image created by the hand of the master makes him fall in love with the original. As a result the eleventh becomes the tenth.

Images show what conceptions owe. Conceptions are discorsive, images are impressive.

VI

In old Indian philosophical works, written for the most part in dialogue form, a constant participant of these metaphysical disputes is Purvapakshin. Purvapakshin is a schematic person whose whole purpose in life consists in meeting any assertion with the word "no". Systems and doctrines succeed each other and unchangeable Purvapakshin throws his unaltered "no" to them all.

In one of the comparatively recent pamphlets of Shaw, which relates the story of a black-skinned girl seeking for a god, we find among the candidates for the post "the goddess minus" of whose existence the inquisitive colored girl learns from mathematics. Shaw himself states that "yes" has fifty shades of meaning, the word "no" can be pronounced in five hundred different ways. And it must be acknowledged that as a writer he is tireless and extremely varied in his utilization of the word "no."

In his work as pamphletist and playwright directing his negation against the bourgeois capitalist environment Shaw has done work of tremendous significance and high value. The grotesque style of his satire makes one think of those times at the beginning of the 16th century when Cellini was engraving dagger blades with the grotesque ornament which had been discovered then for the first time (ornament combining real details with fantastic ones taken from the columns of ancient grottos). Shaw is a master of the technique of dagger satire. Take but the group of his plays which concerns professions in capitalist society (*Mrs. Warren's Profession, Cashel Byron's Profession*—a novel transformed into a play—and a number of others which do not indicate the theme in the title).

There pass before us: an artist, a boxer, a musician, a waiter, a barrister, a member of parliament, a burglar, a preacher and a prostitute. The characters are well distributed over all the layers of society.

Acquainting ourselves with the careers of the professional from act to act we see that the boxer plunges his fist into the broken jaw of his opponent and observes the rules of esthetics of the ring like an artist dipping his brush in paint, with the aim of pleasing the backers and snobs, while the "talented" lackey (as he is called in the play) skillfully serves luncheon and tries to guess the brand of wine favored by his clients; his son who has risen to a barrister carefully chooses the clauses of the law for his speeches for the defense and tries to guess the legal taste of the people who employ him; the conscientious member of parliament, a member of the liberal party, tortures the depths of his soul in trying to make clear to himself what exactly distinguished liberalism from conservatism. The M. P., of course, can transfer from one party to another and in general in the world of professions the "open door system" is accepted. Making use of this, a man born to be a preacher, on being convinced that preaching is of no use, becomes a burglar. The Undershaft family (*Major Barbara*): the father supplies cannon for the army; the daughter works in the Salvation Army; the daughter distributes free leaflets in which you can find the ten commandments. The father has also worked out, for the purposes of his profession, the "seven commandments of a great armament maker."

Here are two of them: "Nothing is ever done in this world until men are prepared to kill one another if it is not done" and "unashamed."

Mrs. Warren also has rules, if not commandments. And it turns out that her rules have the widest acceptance inasmuch as—this is the inevitable logical conclusion of Shaw's images—in contemporary bourgeois society all professions are prostituted.

VII

Listening to the blows of Shaw's "No" we think after each one of them: "Yes, that's right." But listening to his "Yes" we almost have to strain our ears because it is whispered unclearly.

Boxer Byron, who does not wish his profession to be less honorable than any other, on receiving an inheritance and the hand of a lady changes his crude leather gloves for the delicate kid of a frequenter of drawing rooms and theatres; one of the lackeys at the end of the play turns out to be the nephew of a peer, which makes him worthy of a young lady belonging to "good society;" Candida gives the right of happiness to the (spiritually) "weakest;" the father who supplies the army with armaments and the daughter who is a major of the Salvation Army chat in friendly style at the tea table. In a word, as has already been shown by a series of examples, the apple cart is once more put right side up, with its rims in the accustomed ruts.

The endings of almost all Shaw's plays (up to the time he visited the USSR) are notable for a strange sort of slowing down of the thought, the flow of events is changed to stagnation, words become as powerless as stray bullets, the style crumbles, and the whole play comes to nothing, like a river which gets lost in the sand before it reaches the sea.

There was once in ancient times a warrior known as Fabius Cunctator. He was famous not so much for his strategic talents as for his slowness, as is indicated by his name. Even after his death Cunctator took a long time to leave the memories of men; he continued to exist until the foundation in England of the Fabian "socialist" society. Among the members of this society for a long time was Bernard Shaw.

The Fabians declare that they are going towards a socialist future but they go so slowly, with such Cunctatorish step and such a Fabian zig-zag, that even the most extreme conservatives of Great Britain do not accuse them of desiring to arrive at this "socialism."

It would probably be oversimplification to link the ideological fate of Shaw exclusively with the program and achievements of Fabianism.

Fabianism is too pale and anaemic a phenomenon to illuminate such a brilliant work as that of Shaw. And the image of the upturned apple cart is not sufficiently delicate to make clear, in the final account, such delicate thinking as that of Shaw. Not even the apples of good and evil will tell us what perhaps can be given in answer only by the apple of the eye.

The optician, if Shaw had wished to continue talking with him, might have related the mechanism of the visual process. The fact is that the eye (more accurately its crystalline lens) before throwing the reflection of the exterior world upon the retina throws all the content of space within its contours and colors turns it upside down but the brain, receiving the world upside down, once more upturns the upturned and everything falls into its proper place.

It would seem that all this simply confirms the correctness of Shaw's method; eye and brain behave with the reflection of the world exactly as does Shaw with his applecart plays. But Shaw makes a too hurried conclusion by transferring the normal work of his eyes onto the plane of intellectual vision. The physical world reflected in the physical eyes of the writer does not distort its natural relationships: clouds under capitalism and under socialism float and will continue to float above our heads and snow to crunch beneath our feet. But the world revealed by intellectual eyesight, the social, economic and cultural environment in which each of us finds himself, is liable to amazing changes and alterations.

What is the world which meets the mental gaze of the writer? A world in which the first in the production of the fruits of toil are the last in consumption; where the Salvation Army saves only souls but not bodies and the army from which there is no salvation piles up these bodies in the battlefield; where individuals live as if each of them had a million stomachs and the millions live as if they hadn't any at all. One asks what can this world be called if not a world turned upside down and perverted in its very essence?! And Shaw has made a mistake in his calculations, he has not taken into consideration the fact that the creative process begins from without, in the object, and that the individual only finishes the process in his mind. As a result, the extra movement, placing the apple cart once more on its wheels is an extra movement which would menace another less talented author with the transformation of all his work into superfluity.

And we see that the dramatist, having seen with his own eyes the grandeur of socialist construction, has already begun more firmly and more loudly to utter his "yes," putting the vital truth of the Soviet Union over against the deception of the old world (*Too True To Be Good*).

Translated from the Russian H. O. Whyte

Yuri Yuzovski

Problems of Socialist Drama

The quest of the contemporary Soviet playwright is the quest for such dramatic formulae as would to the fullest extent give an adequate expression of life. Our heroes of today, compelled by the playwright to walk upon the accustomed plot paths of the dramaturgy of the past, very often offer resistance, limp along these paths, and the playwright has to expend ingenuity on concealing this limp. At times he succeeds in smoothing the movement with a minimal sacrifice of truth. At times he closes his eyes and even approves his hero's departure from the appointed path. In the latter case, people usually say that the play departs from the traditional style of drama but that this is all to the good.

The individualistic fate of a man battling for existence with the surrounding world—such was the main pivot of old drama.

The playwright with such a character in view at once saw side by side with it suitable partners and situations. Furthermore, he did not by any means have to labor on devising an original plot, inasmuch as the plot was the expression of definite social relationships, common for different historical periods right up to the socialist epoch.

Private property yields to socialist, private property rivalry yields to socialist competition. In the most decisive and unparalleled fashion all is changed that gives interest to life and the very nature of that interest. Therefore, as a final result, all that lends interest to the play. People engaged in the construction of a factory or the preparation of rustless steel are gripped by socialist interests which become their private interests. That is what is decisive. Therefore the playwright fears to "fib," fears falsity, if he builds his play on traditional individualistic plot lines. (Individualistic, of course, not individual. The theme of personality and its fate remains.)

When in history could such a kind of situation arouse the interest of the audience? These situations do arouse interest today in the USSR not only because the play itself with all obviousness demonstrates the interest of the heroes in the situations. Such are the basic reasons for the questing of our dramaturgy, a questing which determines content, theme, material, reality.

That is why the question arises: how is the new hero, the new man, who is the center of attention of Soviet dramaturgy, to be placed in the play? Is it possible to do this in the scenic system of the old drama? That is the question.

The theme which interests us rests upon the problem of the private property, individualistic principle and the socialist, collective principle. Here is the basic causation. Hence we depart.

2

Private property was the spring from which the old world drew the motives of its behavior. In the final account it ruled the actions of men, commanded, directed, gave birth to their interests, gave the impulse to creative work. At times even in the most heroic deeds we can see the Achilles heel of property. It was the mysterious Fate which held in its unseen hands the innumerable threads guiding human actions. Stripped of its mystic mask and robes, that Fate was nothing but the private property system which the artistic leaders of the exploiting classes attempted to hide from the masses.

Is it not the tragedy of such artists as Tolstoi or Dostoyevski that they tore off the mask and discovered the hideous face beneath, despairingly tried to find a way out, doubting the rightness of that way and hiding that despairing doubt from their own selves? In *Resurrection* Prince Nekhludov resolves to abandon all and journey to Siberia with Katya. He is firm, he has decided, tears come to his eyes. And Tolstoi right away mercilessly strips off all masks, comments upon these tears of mercy, tears of rapture as items in a fanciful idealistic picture which Nekhludov is drawing of himself with Kayta as simply an excuse for personal magnification. Naturally Nekhludov abandons Katya. Prince Valkovski in Dostoyevski's *Despised and Rejected* (scene in the restaurant) with shameless cynicism discloses the motives of the noble thoughts of his companion. The latter scarcely restrains himself from wrath and does so not only because Valkovski is a cynic but also because he is often close to the truth and the companion fears to look this terrible truth in the face. Valkovski cannot fail to be close to the truth because he is Dostoyevski in other clothes, just as the companion is. This dialogue with himself is the eternal tortured dialogue of the bisected personality. Dostoyevski was unable to create characters as Shakespeare was able, he knew nothing of the Shakespearean objective outlook upon the world, all his heroes are himself in various hypostases. Dostoyevski seeks a way out, to fly from the "devil," from the "fate" he has unmasked, with decisiveness he names his best novel *The Idiot*. Yes, "the idiot," yes, unlimited naivete, yes, refusal to look at the world from the point of view of "profit." Tolstoi develops what is essentially the same philosophy of non-resistance and "the kingdom of fools." This is the philosophy of abandonment of reality, struggle and conquest of the world, of practice, inasmuch as the "fate" which truly rules the world is repulsive.

The socialist overturn has led to the abolition of private property, to the substitution for it of socialist property. The centers governing human action change. Following upon the grandiose changes in economy there take place revolutions in the psychology of people. Socialist productive relationships give rise to qualitatively different motives for human behavior. Labor was a heavy and shameful burden, it has become an affair of honor, valor and heroism. Socialist competition is the formula determining the new mutual relationships of people. Our dramaturgy must grasp this decisive conception of history and prehistory, socialist and private property. Under our eyes there is taking place a transformation of the motives of human behavior. And the task of our drama is the rooting out of the old, private property, accumulative motives of behavior, education for and strengthening of new motives.

In connection with this it will not be amiss to put forward the following type of problem.

Classic literature, arising in a society founded on private property, in considerable degree served the class interests of this society, the interests of private property. Consequently, this aim was served in some degree or other also by the artistic methods by which old literature worked. We are the inheritors of this great literature. But does it not happen quite often that at the foundation of a revolutionary play there lies a form or plot or method which by the essence of the business struggles against those very revolutionary ideas which the author is honorably defending? Is there not very often a contradiction here? Does it not happen that the Soviet author, himself often not being aware of the fact, provides a "sub-text" which is unnoticeable to the naked eye but which penetrates deeply into the subconsciousness of the audience and is alien to his own aims just because he uncritically adopts the old forms?

And does not the problem at present lie in this: that the author should get to the bottom of this treacherous sub-text, fight it and change it for a true and real one?

Let us make the matter clear with examples from our dramatic practice.

One young dramatist set himself the task of writing a play which would overcome certain survivals of capitalist psychology in the minds of people. He proposed very interesting material. He brought upon the stage two families. One: a young Komsomol couple, a joyous lad and lass, their relationship, friendship, love, interests, life founded on the new principles. And alongside them in the same flat another family: two philistines of the Nepman kind. The playwright does not wish the audience to experience any drama over this couple. Let the proletarian audience laugh at this couple, mock them. Laughter, says the Latin proverb, corrects manners; laughing at this couple the audience will laugh at itself and dig out the survivals of capitalist psychology which it still has. This couple should provide a laughably repulsive picture. Let there come forward upon the stage an old, unpleasant, cantankerous, intriguing wife and along with her a venerable spouse who trembles before her. No drama, I repeat, but a satiric pamphlet, humorous depiction.

Well, you may say, splendid, let your dramatist write his play as quick as he likes and we'll be glad to look at his revolutionary production? Revolutionary?! We assert that underneath this attractive surface there is energetically at work a contrary principle, which unnoticeably but quite definitely will influence the audience and penetrate its subsconsciousness. Our playwright will achieve the opposite effect. Why?

The elementary method of the comic is dissonance, breach of law, departure from the norm. Therefore a favorite subject of world literature, a favorite spectacle of societies founded on private property was the subject of the husband tied to his wife's apron strings. The husband as master, breadwinner, lord, head of the household—that was natural, normal, understandable, proper. The upsetting of the norm, the reverse was funny. Therefore the playwright proposing this plot, even in the most effective and imposing revolutionary costume, is in the essence giving a hidden, underground reinforcement to private property survivals, which is exactly what he did not wish to do.

The question of the mastery of the classical artistic heritage arises before the writer not only as before a reader of classical productions but as before a specialist and producer. Today we read the classics in a way different from that of their contemporary readers. In our theatre the audience reacts differently to Ostrovski and Shakespeare than the audience did in the days of Shakespeare and Ostrovski.

In this connection there arises the following sort of question. The artists of past epochs also had before them an inheritance. The artist of the rising bourgeois class created his own style. This artist had before him a tremendous artistic inheritance which he also had to master critically. What was the class principle of this mastering? We know that plots wandered and travelled from century to century, from epoch to epoch. A tragic subject of Euripides was reworked many centuries later and in quite different social conditions by Voltaire. The comic theme on Philemon wandered from Greece to Terence in Rome and Lessing in Germany. The German dramatist Karl Gutzkow wrote a play on the life of the English aristocracy: *Lady Micklesfield.* The Russian playwright Ostrovski openly took the plot from Gutzkow and wrote a play on the life of the distant Russian province: *Guilty Though Guiltless.*

What was the principle of adaptation? What class factors guided the alteration of the plot?

And in connection with this, still another question: can our playwright with the same lightness and truly enviable coolness take a plot from Ostrovski as Ostrovski did from Gutzkov?

Shakespeare freely borrowed plots from romances, epics or dramas of preceding epochs just as did Molière, Corneille or Racine. The Soviet dramatist will not experience this freedom and the greater an artist he is, as socialist artist, the more will he reflect upon the wisdom of such borrowing. True, if he be no subtle thinker, he may embark upon such a business but in the end all his tailoring virtuosity will not conceal the fact that the dress belongs to some one else. The Roman toga or the fashionable morning coat of the bourgeois family drama—are they unsuitable for the Soviet hero? Yet Ostrovski freely dressed the Russian provincial actor Neznamov in the dress suit of an English nobleman and under our very eyes the dress suit is magically transformed into a Russian blouse—a thoroughly genuine Russian blouse, without the least falsity. What is this: the light touch of a great master? If a Soviet Ostrovski with the same mastery of touch tried to place Neznamov's blouse on the shoulders of a Soviet hero—would he achieve success? It is doubtful. The plot of *Guilty Though Guiltless*, the story of a mother who lost and found her son, has a long history in world literature. But the Soviet playwright stops in doubt before such a plot.

The point is that all the artists who have preceded us, despite their adherence to different classes, classes which succeeded each other, were united by a certain sociological commonalty of a society founded on private property, what Marx and Engels called the prehistorical content of art. We have emerged from the bounds of this unity. Hence the many plots in numberless variations from Aeschylus to Ibsen depicting similar social relationships. Hence it is that before the Soviet dramatist there stand tasks considerably more difficult but more majestic than those which stood before Shakespeare.

And therefore the distance between Ostrovski and Lope de Vega is considerably shorter than that from us to Ostrovski. I say this, of course, from the point of view of the difference between private property and socialist property.

And may we not say that the episodic style, so frequent in our dramaturgy, (when the artist, unwilling or unable to bind the events of which he wishes to relate within the frame of a ready-made plot, gives these events "as they are" with an artistic presentation of them) is a phenomenon of the stormy period of the primitive accumulation of our dramaturgy?

3

Balzac is nowadays our protégé. The published letters of Marx and Engels have contributed to the popularization of Balzac.

Our dramaturgy cannot fail to derive enormous benefit from study of this great realist, investigating of his art of revealing social phenomena and portraying "typical characters in typical situations." But at the same time there is in the speeches and articles on Balzac a tendency towards a "non-Party attitude" to him.

The danger here is in transforming Balzac into a person standing above Party. The huge social beehive of Paris and France in the past century and above it the gigantic figure of Balzac dispassionately studying the beehive. No. Balzac superbly revealed the foundations of the beehive but himself was within it, at the center of it. Balzac was an enemy and at the same time an

ideologue of the bourgeoisie, he was inspired by property, individualistic principles; although he was a passionate pamphleteer against capital he was yet very often a fiery agitator of individualistic expansion. Could this fail to reflect itself in the structure and plots of his productions?

Let us consider *Père Goriot*. In it not only are the contradictions of the capitalist system revealed amazingly well but also through the whole novel there sweeps in stormy, gripping and dominating fashion a fiery preaching of individualism; Balzac with exceptional force stimulates private property, individualistic principles, educates, fosters and nourishes them in the reader. This preaching takes up the two themes of the novel, the Rastignac and the Père Goriot theme. The first is the theme of the hero who conquers for himself the right of existence in the struggle with others. The second is the theme of the bourgeois family as the basic unit of society.

The plot of the young man entering upon life, the theme understood as the opposition of two hostile forces, is developed by Balzac in such a way that the reader cannot remain a simply impassionate observer of the rise and fall of the heroes. On the contrary: the bourgeois reader so to speak is transformed into Rastignac, is incarnated into just such a young man and along with him or rather instead of him leaves Angoulême for Paris, to conquer the capital, lives, works, and dreams of glory in an attic, visits the *salon* of Madame de Beauséant to gain recognition there, win the heart of Madame de Nucingen and open up the path to the future, commits endless intrigues in order to succeed, get to the surface, make a career.

All of us, says Balzac, in greater or lesser degree think what Louis XIV said: "I am the State." Even the modest figure of the young printer, David Séchard, which is to a certain degree autobiographical, Balzac uses to instil this philosophy "I am the State" into the reader. He invents a new cheap sort of paper but the stimulus for this invention is not the desire to cheapen the production process in the interests of society, not passion for invention as creative self-expression; the basic stimulus, the basic passion is enrichment and accumulation and this determines the plot movement of the character, compels the bourgeois reader to grow along with the individualistic growth of the hero, step in his steps, struggle along with him against the whole surrounding world. Must we not say that Balzac by using these methods gave as it were a training to the individualistic principles?

Is it possible at the present day to construct, let us say, a dramatic production on similar artistic principles? Does not the artist influence the consciousness of the spectator not only directly by numerous monologues, speeches, meetings and conferences depicted upon the stage but also by means of the sub-text, by which we mean the significance lying behind not only the words but also behind the plot construction of the play? This sub-text unnoticeably penetrates the subconsciousness of the spectator and carries out there its positive or negative work. And there do happen cases when the direct words are contradicted by the hidden words, when the very character of the plot lines and intrigues contradicts the personages moving along these lines. If the Soviet author begins to follow the Balzac plot lines in their raw state there will be a contradiction between the ideas of the author and the plot lines, which will reinforce that with which the author intends to struggle.

It happens that a playwright introduces a saboteur into a cast which is otherwise exclusively Soviet. He is suspected, and his actions are investigated but in the heat of this investigation the author is suddenly seized by confusion. . . . Not without foundation he begins to fear that this contrast beween the lonely figure and the crowd of others may arouse feelings, which,

though they may be deep-seated, none the less do exist, of sympathy to the victim of investigation; the very loneliness of the saboteur may arouse "a defense reflex" reaction in the audience. And after all the spectator is still far from having overcome individualistic survivals in his psychology; will not these survivals here obtain support?

What does the author do? He supplies the saboteur with still further repulsive characteristics, by no means of a necessary kind, compels the positive characters to pronounce sharply condemnatory monologue against him, but all this cannot root out completely the "sub-text." Evidently it is necessary here to reconstruct the very skeleton of the plot.

4

One young dramatist wrote a play on the splendid theme of a shepherd who became an engineer. He unfolded the theme in the following fashion. The young shepherd lives in a village somewhere near Torzhok. He wants to go to Moscow to study. But the Komsomol nucleus of which he is a member puts obstacles in his way. The secretary of this nucleus is an enemy of the shepherd and the author dresses him in the corresponding ideological color of clothes—the secretary is a kulak agent who has wormed his way into the Komsomol. He leads the other members by the nose. The young shepherd struggles with the nucleus and at last achieves success. For dramatic enlivenment the author furnishes the shepherd with a document, or a communication from a third person or even an overheard conversation by means of which the shepherd can unmask the kulak origin of the secretary. He does so and soon afterwards receives a pass for a *rabfak* (workers' universtiy). He leaves for the city. Moscow! What hopes, what threats to the fate of a young man are hidden in these tremendous buildings, these noisy streets, thinks the shepherd to himself as he walks along Kirov street. In the students' hostel in an attic room our young man lives and spends day and night at his books. But in the *rabfak* and in the university there are bureaucrats and alien elements who hinder our shepherd, push sticks into the wheels of his triumphant journey. But he is full of energy, stubbornness, temperament, fieriness; he wins out in the struggle, overcomes the obstacles, becomes an engineer.

Here too, of course, all kinds of saboteurs and class enemies try to hinder him, but in the end he wins out. The curtain falls on the young man receiving a travelling scholarship for abroad. Europe. America.

It would seem to be a splendid socialist plot. It is however permissible to demand: why does our young hero come from the neigborhood of Torzhok when he really came from the neighborhood of . . . Angoulême? Why does not the attic bear its real French name of *mansarde*? Why he hurried along the Malaya Dmitrovka, when in reality he lived near the Sorbonne?

It would seem to be a splendid socialist subject. But what sort of sub-text is there here? We assert that this is a private property sub-text, a plot which in an underground, hidden, so to speak unconscious fashion reinforces, stimulates private property, careerist, acquisitive emotions in the audience and not socialist ones. Let the author put on the lips of his hero most revolutionary words, will that free the play from the reproach we have directed against it? These words may dampen the effect of the plot sub-text but all the same it will rise to the surface after the impressions of the play have settled in the consciousness of the spectator. Here not the playwright commands the plot but the plot the playwright. Ostrovski might calmly have borrowed this theme from Balzac. The Soviet playwright cannot be so calm.

How then—we may be asked—should the Soviet playwright approach such

a theme, how should he show a "socialist Rastignac?" We shall answer this question by examples from the practice of our dramaturgy.

For our thought the best plays will be on material of socialist construction, where the theme of the "young man" can be unfolded in its essence. Take Afinogenov's *Fear*.

Here we have a shepherd who becomes a scientist—a theme which might be developed as the theme already familiar to us of the Rastignac type. Afinogenov, however, took another path, in which he was greatly assisted by the actor Livanov who plays the part of Kimbayev at the Moscow Art Theatre. The point is that Kimbayev all the time feels and behaves as a master, a socialist master of the institution where he is employed. Kimbayev follows in his work the interests of socialist property, he is deeply moved by these interests, which coincide with his own interests and precisely because they thus coincide, because he does not separate himself from them, does not oppose them to his own personal fate, because he links and nourishes his private fate with the fate of socialism, he attains personal success. Because of this, rather only because of this, he moves forward, develops, overcomes obstacles, sees further and deeper than his comrades who are moved by other motives than his—property motives of behavior.

Kimbayev unmasked the counter-revolutionary designs of Professor Borodin and unmasked them—I beg your attention to this very important circumstance—precisely in the sphere of science. At the same time, Tsekhovoi, who is probably cleverer, more talented and more cultured than Kimbayev and certainly has a much greater scientific experience than he, is unable to see through Borodin. Why? Because Tsekhovoi moved on individualistic, private property lines, he in opposition to Kimbayev was limited in the sense that he saw only himself, he did not see the common aim, therefore he was shortsighted.

That Kimbayev, not Tsekhovoi, unmasked Borodin is decisive for our line of thought. The task of our dramaturgy consists among other things in this: in artistic images to show the young man of our socialist age the following: if he wishes to achieve his "aim in life," become a "man,"—and we do not suppose that our young men do not have such wishes—he can do so only on the basis of socialist motives of behavior.

Here an important observation should be made. This conception should not be confused with the conception of "sacrifice" which is absolutely foreign to our thought. The point is by no means that a man should sacrifice himself for socialism, for the common good and that in such heroism is a pledge of success. The very origin of the word hero involves a contradiction between the hero and the remaining mass of "ordinary people." But under socialism it is ordinary people who become heroes. Socialism has brought about "mass production" of heroes. The shock worker, the hero of labor—these are everyday words. The shock worker becomes a hero not because he denies himself, and his own proper interests in the name of socialism but on the contrary because, standing on the side of socialism, he asserts himself. The point is that the young man of the socialist spoch asserts himself, realizes his personality only when inspired by socialist motives, only in this case can he, crudely speaking, make "a career" for himself. He can make a career only if he doesn't make a career, he will become a Rastignac only if he ceases to be a Rastignac—such is the dialectics of it.

Dialectics—with which our dramaturgy still occupies itself but little.

Balzac pushed, developed, inspired, educated property emotions, he was a cunning tempter of the young bourgeois man. But he was not only a tempt-

ing demon; he was also a solicitous and wise father and he said as it were to his young man:

"Boris, be bold, conquer, achieve, push others aside till you get your place in the sun, otherwise you will be shoved aside and downed. But remember that the world is not as smooth as it seems to you in your rosy Angoulême dreams, be careful, be watchful, look out—here is a terrible pit into which you may fall, here is a sharp turn, there a chasm, be cunning as you avoid these dangers, be a strategist and a tactician, otherwise you will perish."

Other must be the teaching of our socialist Balzac for our young man:

"A tremendous world lies before you—you have only to act. You can attain all you wish for, all is yours if the interests of this world are your own interests. But if you try to be overcunning, to deceive or ignore the epoch, you will suffer defeat, you will perish."

Translated from the Russian by H. O. Whyte

HUMOR and SATIRE

Bruno Jasienski

The Nose

A Satirical Short Story on Fascism

> But the strangest, the most incomprehensible thing of all is that authors can choose such subjects.
>
> . . . whatever happens to come into one's head, whatever it may be, there is something in it. People may say what they like, but such things do happen, very seldom, perhaps, but they do happen.
>
> (Gogol, *The Nose.*)

Doctor Otto Kallenbruck, professor of eugenics, comparative ethnology and race psychology, life member of the German Anthropological Society and the German Society for Racial Hygiene, foundation member of the Militant League for the Improvement of the German Race, author of the much discussed *Advantages of Sterilization, The Race Origin of the Social Pathology of the Proletariat* and other works, sat in his study at Lichtenstein Allee 18 and, having drunk his after dinner coffee, carefully perused the proofs of his last book on the *Endogenous Negative Variations of the Jewish Race.* This book, which had appeared only a month previously, had been sold out in a week and had been given the most flattering reviews. Owing to the tremendous demand it was now being hastly brought out in a popular edition.

Nevertheless Professor Kallenbruck had reason not to be entirely satisfied with this outward success. Among the leaders of the Party the book had met with a favorable reception, but the approval had not been without reservations. Doctor Gross, chief of the racio-political administration of the Party had even openly condemned certain theses of Dr. Kallenbruck's last work for their excessive straightforwardness.

Dr. Gross' opinion was, of course, the last word. All the same the leader, owing to the press of state affairs, had not yet read the book and in the Reich Ministry for Public Instructions and Propaganda they had agreed to recommend it as an obligatory text book on ethnology for intermediate schools only on condition that certain corrections were made in the new edition.

Professor Kallenbruck was a man of convictions, and the new trend in German ethnological theory which had been started by the easygoing Dr. Gross and his colleague Professor Gunter and had lately taken on an almost official coloring, could not fail to evoke his lively opposition. Were they trying to deceive the people? These gentlemen wanted to deny all anthropological criteria for spiritual character. According to Professor Gunter, the shape of the skull and the color of the hair signified nothing and the only important thing was whether people had the Nordic spirit and the Nordic turn of mind "An erect military and college bearing, chest expanded and stomach drawn in"—that, according to Gunter, was the "essential mark of the Nordic race." [1]

[1] H. Gunter: *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes.*

Dr. Gross in his latest articles had gone even further and had said quite frankly that race diagnosis by outward appearance frightens off the masses and produces a bad impression abroad.[1] Quite recently he had gone as far as admitting in the *Völkischer Beobachter* the equal value of the different race substances, and had practically reduced to zero the leading role of the Nordic race. Why did not Messrs. Gross and Gunter go one step further and agree with Boas who had proved that in a number of anthropological characteristics the white man was more primitive than the Negro, or with Hart, who had denied all mental race differences.

No, Professor Kallenbruck was proud of his straightforwardness and in such an important question of principle was not willing to make any concessions whatever. He was ready to go up to the Leader himself and show him clearly the disastrous state into which German race theory was falling.

More important than all this, however, Dr. Kallenbruck, to be quite honest with himself, was not entirely satisfied with his last book. In the light of the valuable material which he had been able to collect during his two months scientific tour of the concentration camps of Germany for his new work *On the Favorable Effect of Sterilization on the Mental Capacities of Schizophrenics and Asocial Individuals* some passages of his book on the inherited negative variations of the Jewish Race appeared to himself somewhat unsubstantiated. The professor had chiefly in mind certain paragraphs from the chapter on the distinguishing features of the Semitic nose, as one of the most clearly marked racial negative variations and on the influence of the shape of the nose on the psychological traits of Jews.

Professor Kallenbruck was put on the track of this original idea, which was not thought of either by Gobino, Ammon, Lapouge or even G. St. Chamberlain nor contemporary ethnologists, by the researches of a number of German and English laringologists who, on the basis of data obtained in studying some thousands of school children proved conclusively the influence of pathological deformation of the nasal cavity on the mental capacities of adolescents.

In comparison with the ideal straightness of the Greco-Nordic nose the Semetic nose was an obvious pathological deformation. In the course of centuries it lost its subjective-pathological character and became a geno-typically determined racial trait. The influence of this deformation on the mentality and psychological pecularities of the Jewish people was a fact that was perfectly manifest and did not require any proofs. So far the perfect logic of the conclusions could not give rise to any doubts. The difficulties began when it came to making a more detailed classification of the varieties of prominent and bent noses in distinction to the straight nose characteristic of the Greco-Nordic race.

The marked curve in the Bourbon nose possessed by the French dynasty of that name and very frequently met with even to the present day among the French aristocracy could be explained without much difficulty as due to the historical influence of the Jews on French politics and the whole French people, whose racial purity was so doubtful. Matters were very much more complicated in the case of the so-called Roman nose with its characteristic crook. The Roman nose was also undoubtedly a pathological deviation from the classical straightness of the Greco-Nordic nose. However to explain this by the Roman's connections with the Jews would be extremely embarrassing from the political and hardly convincing from the scientific point of view.

[1] Gross: "Ein Jahr rassenpolitischer Erziehung." *National-Sozialistische Monatshefte*, H. 54, 1934.

A poetical description of the virile beauty of the Roman nose as opposed to the coarse distension and ugliness of the Semitic nose also failed to satisfy the enquiring and exacting mind of a man like Professor Kallenbruck accustomed to strict scientific demarcation. Such epithets as "sculptured" and "eagle" were criteria drawn from the field of esthetics rather than that of anthropology.

This weak spot in the book, which was otherwise undoubtedly a brilliant work, cost the honest professor many sleepless nights, both before and after its publication.

The more flexible distinction between the Greco-Nordic and Semitic nose which he had come to accept as a result of prolonged research had as its chief criterion not the elusive crook itself, but the crook in combination with hypertrophy of the triangular hyaline cartilages, so that without stretching the imagination the ill-starred Roman nose could be included among the numerous mutations of the Greco-Nordic.

After reaching this place in the proofs and reading it through again the professor fell into deep thought. Owing to the corrections which he had made it was clear that he would have to make a few alterations in the actual description of the Greco-Nordic nose. Without deviating from its ideal, antique straightness, he would have to make a few concessions in favor of its commoner, let us even say more vulgar mutations.

As a prototype of this commoner variety of Aryan nose one might take Professor Kallenbruck's own nose which was of irreproachable straightness, but a little fleshy and slightly thickened at the end. In order to keep, in his description, to the exact language of science, the professor took from a drawer a pair of sliding callipers such as is used for anthropometric work of the kind, and went up to the mirror with the intention of marking the necessary measurements.

But on looking into the mirror he recoiled in horror and the callipers fell noisily to the ground. He saw reflected his own somewhat flabby face, with his very sparse hairs brushed over his temples and his short moustache clipped in the national style. But above his moustache in place of the familiar, straight, slightly pimply nose a huge hooked protuberance of a shamelessly Semetic type reared itself up between his terrified eyes.

The professor put his hand up to his nose, hoping that it was the result of an optical illusion or a transitory hallucination. But alas, his fingers came in contact with a large fleshy hook. It was not even a Roman curve, it was a real hook, blatantly obtruding itself between his drooping eyes, a resilient mass of foreign flesh forming a solid layer over the tale-telling distension of the triangular cartilages.

Professor Kallenbruck was a religious man. There was therefore nothing shameful or remarkable in the fact that, after convincing himself that his senses were not deceiving him, he instinctively crossed himself and spat three times into the corner. When he again looked into the mirror he confirmed that one third of his face was still taken up by a huge Semetic nose of a red hue with faintly visible purple veins. Even the professor's face itself, which had always been open and good-natured and had breathed the pure-blooded nobilty of the German race suddenly took on a crafty Jewish expression. The professor again spat and turned away in vexation.

Without losing hope that it might still be only his imagination—perhaps he had a temperature—Professor Kallenbruck fetched a thermometer and put it under his arm. He closed his eyes and counted to a thousand. The mercury stood at normal.

The professor again went up to the mirror and in despair pulled with his two fingers at the unwanted nose which had sprung from God knew where. The nose did not budge, apparently unwilling to leave its chosen resting place on the professor's face. Moreover taking the contact of his fingers to be a perfectly natural gesture, common among the people, it very obligingly exuded two drops of mucous which the professor, from innate cleanliness, was obliged immediately to wipe with his handkerchief, and this he did with a perfectly natural fastidiousness such as any one of us would feel in having to wipe off the runnings of somebody else's nose. At this even Professor Kallenbruck's iron nerves gave way and the poor professor burst out crying, and noted with horror that his newly acquired Jewish nose sniffed as his own had done and that the tears ran along the nasal lachrymal duct into the nostrils, perfectly at their ease, as though they had been accustomed to taking this course from childhood and had not noticed any change.

Some one knocked at the door.

Professor Kallenbruck covered his nose with his hand and looked uneasily towards the door. At the sight of the man standing in the doorway he cried out with joy at his unexpected visit and rushed to meet him with profuse gestures of welcome. Providence could have thought of nothing more suitable to the occasion: at a moment of bitter trial it had sent him a friend.

Theodor von der Pfordten waved his greetings aside and laying his hands on Kallenbruck's shoulders gently turned his face to the light. He examined the professor's nose attentively like a doctor, putting his grey head first on one side and then on the other as though he wished to view the phenomenon from all possible angles. Finally stepping back a few paces and putting his hands behind his back he shook his head disapprovingly.

"Oh, Theodor," cried Kallenbruck swallowing the lump that was rising again in his throat. "You see what has happened to me. It only happened a moment ago just before you arrived. I could not believe my own eyes. Tell me how did it come about? Has anything like that ever happened to anyone before?"

Herr von der Pfordten threw himself into an armchair without waiting to be invited and crossing his legs tapped with a cigarette on the lid of his cigarette case.

"Yes-e-e-s," he drawled meaningly and meditatively pursed his lips. He then lapsed into silence and from time to time released from his lips smoke rings of perfect formation, the famous Pfordten smoke rings which youngmen at the club used to collect by the dozen on their billiard cues for a bet.

Professor Kallenbruck stood on tender hooks, his eyes fixed on his friend's rounded lips, waiting and hoping that some soothing balm of consolation would be poured on his agonized heart.

"You hadn't by any chance an ancestor on your mother's or your father's side who was a Jew?" the member of the supreme court pronounced slowly.

Professor Kallenbruck fell back into a chair at the unexpectedness of his friend's question.

"Theodor," he cried reproachfully, "how can you say such things? You know my family well. Wasn't my late father one of your late father's closest friends?"

"It might have been some grandfather or great grandfather that I had not the pleasure of knowing," suggested von der Pfordten coldly.

"You insult me," exclaimed the professor, puffing out his chest. The huge hooked nose on his pale Aryan face even reddened with indignation. I didn't expect that of you, Theodor!"

"Oh, you know, in these times . . ." his friend shrugged his shoulders.

"And anyway it is against common sense. As if at the age of fifty one's nose could suddenly change!"

"It is quite possible," said the greyhaired gentleman with ruthless conviction. "Most inherited characteristics do come out at an advanced age. It is all a question of genetic predisposition."

"But with me, I swear to you, it happened all in a moment. I had had my dinner with my family and had sat down with a cup of coffee to look over the proofs when suddenly. . . ."

"It is always like that," asserted the member of the supreme court inexorably. "Constitutional pecularities often show themselves at a later age than yours. For example when my grandfather Geheimrat Albert von der Pfordten, permanent ambassador for his Majesty the King of Prussia at the Turkish Court and a well known *bon vivant,* was sixty years of age, a large and forbidding eruption appeared on his forehead. And what do you think? In searching the family chronicles he found that his great grandfather, Knight of the Order of Malta, Gustav von der Pfordten, had had an exactly similar eruption over his left eye and according to the chroniclers of the time had been even obliged to order a specially shaped helmet."

"Yes, but an eruption is one thing and a nose is another," Kallenbruck objected weakly. "Not one of my ancestors ever had a nose like this."

"It can be easily proved," said the member of the supreme court obligingly. "Nothing could be simpler than ascertaining one's exact lineage from the register of births, deaths, and marriages." Herr von der Pfordten took out his gold watch and rose from his chair. "It is not too late. We can go and make certain straight away."

"All right, let us go," agreed Kallenbruck hastily but without much enthusiasm. "You will at any rate convince yourself of the absurdity of your insinuations. But look here . . . How am I to go out into the street with a nose like this?"

"Lift up the collar of your coat. It is getting dark anyway."

Professor Dr. Kallenbruck, his face wrapped up to the eyes in a scarf and the collar of his coat turned up, opened the door for his friend and followed him out on to the staircase. He no longer thanked providence for having sent him Herr von der Pfordten in his hour of trial. He would prefer to be rid of this inflexible individual who instead of consolation had sown the seeds of doubt in his mind.

He reflected with horror how this unprecedented misfortune which had befallen him, which might have been kept secret for a certain length of time would now become the common knowledge of the whole town. Pfordten would trumpet it abroad, and it would be easy for him to do so owing to his close connections with the leaders of the Party. If anyone else were to spread such an incredible rumor people might not believe him. But Theodor von der Pfordten, author of the first National Socialist constitution, legislator of the glorious Munich revolution of November 9, 1923, and participator in the never-to-be-forgotten battle of Feldeherrnhalle was a man whom every one would believe implicitly.

Here the professor was assailed by the strangest thought: "Wait a moment, if my memory does not deceive me, der Pfordten was killed at the battle of Feldherrnhalle. . . ."

Professor Kallenbruck stopped dead at the top of the staircase. He wanted to turn back and look up the National Socialist Directory where he would

find in the "Lives of Our Leaders" section whether Theodor von der Pfordten had really been killed or was still alive. But the greyhaired gentleman descending the stairs ahead of him turned round and also stopped:

"Perhaps you have changed your mind," he asked with unconcealed irony. "I don't insist."

"Not at all," said Kallenbruck, hastening after him.

He descended the stairs with mincing steps keeping an unfriendly eye on the nape of von der Pfordten's fat neck. In between the brim of his friend's, bowler hat and high starched collar he could catch a glimpse of a rosy fold of flesh.

There was a drizzling rain outside. In the moist twilight the street lamps suddenly lit up. The lamps stood in two straight lines like tall thin soldiers in steel helmets reflecting the rays of a searchlight in the darkness. Kallenbruck had a feeling as though he were running the gauntlet. At the cross roads two young men in colored caps were beating in a bored and methodical manner a small individual protecting his head with his hands. One of the young men, who had on a green velvet cap was shouting out:

"When you see us coming, confounded Jew, cross over to the other side of the street! Get out of the way of my legs."

A third young man in a red cap was standing some distance away in the pose of an impartial observer and confined himself to terse suggestions such as: "Give him one on the bridge of the nose," or "His left ear wants touching up a bit."

A policeman in an enamelled helmet stood in the middle of the street imperturable and motionless as a statue, with a rubber baton hanging down at his side.

Poor Professor Kallenbruck hid his face further in his scarf and slunk past the young men. He hastened his steps, desiring to catch up with Herr von der Pfordten who had gone on ahead, but the latter also hastened his steps and Professor Kallenbruck realized that his friend did not want to walk beside him.

After passing another block Herr von der Pfordten turned in at the gates of a large, dimly lit garden. Judging from its position it would seem to be the Zoo, although it looked more like a Botanical Garden, for there were trees of the most varied and fantastic shapes growing there. There were huge trees like baobabi trees, tall slender ones like cypresses, there were trees with branches down below and bare tops which looked as though they were growing upside down and there were others which were just the opposite—branchless down below and bushy at the top, there were some bent to one side and trees that were spherical as though they had been clipped by the practised hand of a gardener. On all the trees, from top to bottom there hung what might be cones or might be fruit but which one could not distinguish properly owing to the dim light.

In the middle of an open gravelled space there was a round kiosk with a number of windows. Herr von der Pfordten stopped at one of them and waited for the panting Professor Kallenbruck.

"Here they will give you any information you require," he said pointing to the lit up window through which could be seen the ugly face of an official with bright red hair, moustaches a la Kaiser Wilhelm and freckles on his face like half groshen pieces lying on a tray.

"What do you mean?" asked Professor Kallenbruck in astonishment. "You wanted to bring me to look up the register of births, deaths and marriages?"

"Exactly."

"But if I am not mistaken this is the Zoo," said the professor somewhat mystified.

"You are not in the least mistaken. The Zoological gardens used to be here but we turned it into a Geneological gardens."

"Gen-e-o-log-i-cal Gardens?" repeated Professor Kallenbruck in astonishment.

"Exactly, do you mean you have never heard of it? It is one of the most remarkable achievements of our municipality, a genuine triumph of our administration. Instead of hunting up birth certificates for each particular case scattered through dozens of different files you come to this place. Every Berliner can come here and find his geneological tree which represents his lineage, plastically, to the tenth generation. You have only to fill up this form." Herr von der Pfordten passed one of the printed sheets lying in front of the window to Professor Kallenbruck, and after wiping the pen obligingly handed it to the professor. "Look, you write your name here, year and place of birth, name of parents, mother's maiden name. . . . The next part you need not fill in. Lower down it asks you what information is required? Underline the first question: 'Has the above named any ancestors of Jewish origin?' That is all that is needed. You pay ten pfennigs for the enquiry. If you please, sir."

Professor Kallenbruck looked anxiously at the gaping mouth of the pneumatic tube into which the bored clerk with the flaming hair inserted his enquiry form. The tube gulped and closed. The professor fell back on to a bench, exhausted.

In exactly five minutes time the clerk called out his name. On the back of the enquiry form was written: "Paternal grandfather of enquirer Hermann Kallenbruch, son of Isaac Kallenbruch and Dvoira, nee Herschfinkel. Born 1805 in Solingen. In 1830 moved to Berlin. In 1845 joined evangelical communion and changed name of Kallenbruch to Kallenbruck. Vide genealogical tree No. 783211 (block XXVII, aisle 18).

"It is not true! It's a libel" cried Herr Kallenbruck, shaking the enquiry form under the impassive clerk's nose. The scarf in which the professor's face was hidden became unwrapped and angrily flapped in the wind. "How dare you! I knew my late grandfather personally."

The clerk looked at him with a bored expression:

"Don't get excited sir," he said sternly. "If you do not believe our information, buy a mirror."

Professor Kallenbruck hastily concealed his ill-starred Semitic nose and left the window without a word.

"Come along, let us find your genealogical tree," said Herr von der Pfordten plucking him by the sleeve. "It gives the number of the path here. There cannot be a mistake in the genealogical tree. Each month corrections are made on a basis of newly found documents."

He led off the hollow-cheeked and injured Herr Kallenbruck into the labyrinth of dimly lit pathways.

"Here we are," exclaimed the obliging member of the supreme court. He stopped under a huge tree like an ordinary fir tree laden from top to bottom with cones. "One moment, let's see, there ought to be a switch here down below by the label."

Herr von der Pfordten bent down. The switch clicked and the tree was suddenly illuminated by bright electric light.

"There you are, now look."

Professor Kallenbruck blinked at the sudden brilliance of the light. It was

like a real Christmas tree. What the poor professor had taken for cones in the darkness turned out, now that they were lit up, to be small human figures dressed in the fashion of their period with painstaking accuracy. On the branches and twigs to the left sat small burghers in yellow waistcoats like canaries and chequered matrons with high mob caps. On the topmost, twigless branch, all alone like an owl, sat grandfather Gregory, the incurable bachelor, a thin man with a huge head and luxurious grey whiskers. Aunt Gertrude, a dried up old lady with inevitable black skirt and bustle giving her the appearance of a wagtail, cast indignant glances from her twig at her husband Uncle Paul as though it was he who had put her in such an uncomfortable position. On the right hand side, Oh God be merciful! hanging on to the branches by the neck (apparently as a retrospective punishment for malicious contamination of the German race) were whole garlands of mournful little Jews in skull caps and one of them, the professor remembered it particularly, had on a real Rabbi's hat with fur trimmings.

Poor Professor Kallenbruck uttered a heartrending scream and covering his face with his hands fell back unconscious.

On coming to himself he seemed to be sitting on a bench. Theodor von der Pfordten was standing in front of him, gesticulating and had apparently been trying to convince him for some time of something extremely urgent.

"To come to the point, it seems to me that for the sake of the drop of German blood that flows in your veins you ought to decide without wavering. Remember your own magnificent words about the necessity of freeing the German people of impure elements. Was it not you who said of the heroes of the great war, who had been left cripples, that men who had once shown such courage and contempt of death in defending their fatherland, should do so again in taking their own lives so as to cease being a burden to the Third Empire?"

"No it was not I who wrote that, I swear it wasn't. It was Ernst Mann," the professor tried to object.

"All the better. I am glad that such brillant words came from a pure blooded German. But all the same in your discussion about defectives you were in total agreement with Ernst Mann, Professor Lenz and other true Germans. You even on many occasions advocated their point of view publicly. Is that not so?"

"Yes it is so" admitted Herr Kallenbruck dejectedly.

"I thought it was! Now just imagine how the enemies of National Socialism will rejoice, and what a howl they will raise on learning that one of the foremost exponents and ideologists of the race theory has turned out to be a Jew. You must understand yourself that you will have to disappear, and disappear as quietly as possible before the affair becomes publicly known. I could lend you my revolver, but such open suicide could not fail to be exploited by our enemies to make new attacks on the Third Empire. The best thing would be an accident. I would recommend throwing yourself in front of a train or drowning yourself in the Spree. Everyone knows that you are fond of fishing and it would not arouse any particular suspicions."

"But my wife, my children!" groaned the professor in despair.

"Oh we would not abandon them, you may put your mind at rest on that score. We would send your children after a while to supplementary schools."

"Supplementary schools? But they would be sterilized there!" Herr Kallenbruck cried in anguish.

"You know yourself that we cannot permit further contamination of the German race by elements of Jewish descent. In your last book you showed

the right approach to that question. As for your wife, as an irreproachable German and a comparatively young woman she is capable of giving her country more than one good Aryan offspring. After your death we will find a man who is worthy of her. By the way, Herr Regierungsrat Otwald von Wildau, who is a splendid example of a pure-blooded German has always shown her particular attention."

"Otwald von Wildau?" retorted the incensed professor. "But he is married already."

"That is a mere detail," said Herr von der Pfordten, shrugging his shoulders. "And who is it that has always said so, Professor Kallenbruck? Did you not yourself prove irrefutably in your last book, that in the interests of race purity the work of propagating the species should be confined to a small circle of chosen men."

"No, I swear it was not I! You're mixing things up! It was Mitthard who said that!"

"So it was. But you quoted him in your book. You are always citing his *Renewal of the German Race* as an authority."

The professor nodded his head meekly. He sat on the bench with a grim expression and seemed to shrink into the collar of his coat. It was not good trying to refute his own arguments. Moreover after what had happened he could not escape Theodor von der Pfordten.

Then suddenly he was struck by a last ray of hope. A strange thought again came into his head: "What if Herr von der Pfordten had really been killed at the battle of Feldherrnhalle?" The professor even seemed to remember having seen an obituary notice in some abominable opposition paper: "Member of the Supreme Court, Herr Theodor von der Pfordten, author of the famous Nazi constitution on a basis of which a third of the population of Germany were declared outlaws who might be killed by anyone who met them, has fallen, Oh irony of fate, at the hand of a police officer. He was killed during a beer house putsch by a stray police bullet before his bloodthirsty constitution had been put into effect."

Professor Kallenbruck strained his memory. Had he only imagined this or had it really happened? He no longer heard what von der Pfordten was saying as he continued to appeal to the drop of German blood in his veins. The professor decided to wait and spring a sudden question on his opponent to take him off his guard. If von der Pfordten was disconcerted he would know that he had really died and then his evidence and his wide connections would not be so dangerous.

"I think I have said all that I have to say," said Herr von der Pfordten taking off his gloves and bowing. "You will excuse me if I do not shake hands. You yourself will realize that that would be against my principles. Take my friendly advice and do what I said this evening. The sooner the better. I feel it my duty to warn you that if you have not the courage to die of your own accord, the Party will be obliged to give you its assistance!"

"It is easy for you to talk," the professor blurted out in one last attempt at self defense, keeping his eyes fixed on Herr von der Pfordten. "If I am not mistaken you yourself were once helped in a similar case by a certain policeman. You have been dead for ages Herr von der Pfordten!" and Kallenbruck looked round to observe the effect of the blow.

"Real true National Socialists never die," answered Herr von der Pfordten evasively, lifting his bowler.

He turned round and slowly disappeared down a dimly lit path, leaving Kallenbruck torn with doubts and in an agonized state of indecision.

Left to himself Professor Kallenbruck sat for a long time, tortured and irresolute.

"After all the Party might make an exception for me in recognition of my services," he said to himself after all kinds of contradictory thoughts had passed through his mind. "Perhaps I should try and get an audience with the Leader? Didn't the immortal Zarathustra of National Socialism, Friedrich Nietzsche, come of the Polish family of Necki? And Polish ancestry when one comes to think of it is not much better than Jewish . . And if one adds to his Polish descent Nietzsche's marked schizophrenia, the odds are about equal. "Ho God!" the professor suddenly checked himself, "I am even beginning to think like a Jew! Would I ever have dared formerly to think in such terms of our great teacher? No, von der Pfordten is right. The inherited Semitic virus is poisoning my German soul. I am no longer master of my own thoughts. No, there is only one thing to do! Unless I take my own life it will be taken for me."

He rose from the bench with a deep sigh and shuffling along with drooping shoulders left the fatal garden in the direction of the Spree. However from daily habit he turned his steps to the Löwenbräu beer house. The large clock at the corner showed seven. That was just the hour at which the frequenters of the round table at the Löwenbräu—foundation members of the Militant League for the Improvement of the German Race, gathered together over a glass or two of beer to talk philosophy and discuss current questions connected with the movement. Only yesterday he had sat here in his comfortable arm chair with Professor Sebastian Müller on his left and Dr. Fabricius Himmelstock on his right, editor of the *German Medical Weekly* and author of the much talked of *Eugenical Enquiry into the Family Composition of the Whole Prussian Police Force,* had sat here and calmly discussed with them urgent measures for putting to rights the catastrophic state of affairs where the families of the Prussian Police Force were propagating at a third of the rate of the families of the workers.

At the sight of the sign of the Löwenbräu Professor Kallenbruck was assailed by a swarm of obstrusive associations, which brought tears to his eyes. He was seized by the desire to give one parting look, even if only through the window, at the interior of the familiar beer house and at his unsuspecting colleagues sitting round the table.

Yes, there they were as usual around their favorite table with the permanent board marked "engaged" in the middle. The professor looked at his empty place with feeling. Knowing Kallenbruck's innate punctuality they were probably making guesses as to what had prevented his being with them at that moment. They were all there except the great Dr. Himmelstock who had probably been detained at the office. In large cut glass tumblers the amber liquid glittered. The poor professor could almost taste its bitter flavor on his tongue and involuntarily licked his lips. Herr Justizrat Noltke, holding a large uncut volume and slapping it with the palm of his hand, was trying to prove something to the round faced Professor Müller with his pastoral wreath of grey hair around the bald patch on his head. Professor Kallenbruck stood on tip toe and pressed his face to the window pane in an attempt to read the title of the book. Contact with the gold glass immediately recalled him from his reverie to hideous reality.

"What are you doing?" said a familiar voice behind him.

Professor Kallenbruck turned round. In front of him stood the great Dr. Himmelstock, as usual immaculately dressed with a new soft hat tilted slightly backwards.

"Are you blind?" he asked pointing to the notice in the window "Jews Not Admitted." "It seems to me quite clear."

"You don't recognize me?" murmured Kallenbruck with embarrassment.

"I have no acquintances, nor could I have any acquintances among representatives of your race," said Himmelstock with dignity, eyeing the other from top to toe. "Kindly move on and don't spoil the view," and he pushed Kallenbruck aside with his stick and disappeared into the beer house.

Professor Kallenbruck staggered back and bumped into a passer-by. The latter pushed him away with such force that he fell to the ground amid the approving jeers of some loungers. The professor struck the pavement with such force that his false teeth were knocked out. He was trying to crawl after them on all fours when somebody forestalled him and kicked them into the middle of the street under the passing cars. The professor reflected that he could drown himself without his false teeth and scrambling to his feet hurriedly turned in at the first narrow side street. Trying to attract as little attention as possible he made his way towards the Spree which he reached after a few minutes walk.

The street lights were swimming on the black surface of the river. The professor stopped on the bridge. Down below the water was champing and making distinct swallowing movements. The waves were crowding round the pier of the bridge as though they were waiting for Professor Kallenbruck and seemed to be smacking their lips, without any respect for his presence, at the prospect of his stoutish and relatively well preserved fifty-year old body. Such gross unconcern for human feelings struck the professor as downright insulting and he hurriedly left the bridge and decided to commit suicide somewhere else.

He descended on to the embankment and walked a long distance beside the river, stopping every now and then to look for a suitable place. The river flowed on ahead and seemed to be waiting for him with noisy signs of appetite at every turn.

After a long search he had just decided on a secluded spot, a regular suicides' landing stage, when he heard steps approaching and voices singing in chorus. It was his favorite song, the Horst Vessel song which was so often sung at the Löwenbräu not without Professor Kallenbruck's active participation. He noticed to himself the first lines.

Suddenly he noticed that the embankment, which up till now had been deserted, was rapidly becoming crowded. People were running about in all directions on the pavement and on the roadway. The doors and windows of houses banged. The Horst Vessel song could be heard coming nearer and nearer.

Professor Kallenbruck unexpectedly found himself surrounded by running people. Somebody shouted into his ear in Yiddish, "What are you standing there for?" The professor wanted to show his indignation at being taken for a Jew but he had not time. Seized with sudden panic he began to run after the others for all he was worth. The crowds of running people thinned out, being absorbed by the side streets and by-ways. Professor Kallenbruck did not know which way to turn, he was not even sure where he was. Painfully out of breath he leaned up against a lamp post and gasped.

"Run!" a man cried out to him as he flew past.

The professor obediently ran on a few paces and then collapsed on the edge of the pavement. The man, who was some distance ahead of him, stood for a moment undecided and then returned and throwing Herr Kallenbruck over his shoulder went on running.

They turned into a narrow side street and the man with Kallenbruck on his back darted in through a large dark gate smelling of garlic and cats. At the back stairs of the second block he set down Kallenbruck on the steps. Both of them panted hard for a long time, listening to the song of Horst Vessel, lover of poetry, wine and women, getting louder and louder. The song came quite close, passed by amid the din of whistles and breaking glass, and receded into the distance again.

"Come on," whispered the man and beckoned Kallenbruck to follow him.

They clambered up a steep narrow staircase to the fourth floor. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the professor managed the climb. He had never had to run so much since his student days. After passing through a dark passage, the man knocked at one of the doors. The door did not open immediately. The people behind it questioned the newcomer in Yiddish for a long time. At length the bolt grated.

In the room into which Kallenbruck was led by the stranger there was a long table. On the table candles were burning in two seven-branched candlesticks. There was also a telephone on the table, two plates of unleavened bread, a talmud of huge dimensions lying open and a heap of gold coins. At the table sat twelve ancient Jews in Rabbi's fur hats. They had grey beards reaching to their waists and long ringlets like drawn out springs. At the sight of Professor Kallenbruck all twelve Rabbis with a suppleness surprising for their years up and sang in chorus:

We're a dozen, we're a dozen
Wise old men of Zion,
When all the world is ours we'll have
A nice tid-bit to dine on.

When they had finished singing they made a few munching movements with their jaws and champed their teeth to illustrate what it would be like when they came to sit down to their cosmic dinner. Then after dancing a few steps where they stood the old men, as if at a word of command, sat down in their places again and were as silent as tombs.

"Who art thou?" said the most ancient Jew of all, turning to Kallenbruck after a while. Hairs were growing out of his ears and his nose, grey, like wormwood and thick white eyebrows falling down from his eyes seemed to be another pair of moustaches growing there by mistake.

"Who am I?" mumbled Kallenbruck bitterly. "Only yesterday I was a rich and respected man, the father of a family and a person my friends were proud of knowing. But now? Now I am just a poor Jew."

"What misfortune has befallen thee?" asked the old man with the two moustaches, solemnly, as though following some ceremony.

"Oh, Wise man of Zion," said Kallenbruck with a long drawn out sigh. "Such a misfortune has befallen me that if I were to tell you you would not believe me. I had a magnificent Aryan nose—what a nose! And it has been replaced by this . . . this pumpkin. I had a young, and by no means plain wife, and they have taken her away from me and ordered Herr Regierungsrat von Wildau to give her children. I had children. What children! And they are to be sent to a supplementary school where they will be sterilized so that they cannot propagate. I was honored and respected, and now I cannot show myself in the street that some rough does not come up and knock out my false teeth or dirty my clothes. Tell me, wise man of Zion, was there ever a man on earth more unfortunate than I?"

At this all twelve Jews shook their heads sympathetically and the old man with the face grown over with wormwood spoke for the third time and asked:

"Dost thou desire to be avenged of those who have effended thee?"

"Do I want to be avenged? Would you not wish to be avenged for your ruined life, for your dishonored wife and your sterilized children? But tell me, wise man of Zion, what can I do against them?"

"Very well," said the elder. "We will help thee. Swear only that thou wilt always remain with us and wilt never under any circumstances tell anyone anything. Here on the table there is a plate of unleavened bread. It has been mixed with the blood of National Socialists who have been shot by Herr Hitler himself. Break a piece and eat."

"They have all been brought to ruin!" cried Professor Kallenbruck, and breaking off a large piece of the unleavened bread swallowed it whole.

At this he suddenly felt his thoughts being permeated with a craftiness and cunning hitherto unknown to him and as yet indistinct but diabolically clever plan began to take shape in his mind.

"What revenge would you like to take against them?" asked the elder.

"Wait a moment, wait a moment, I have an idea," announced Kallenbruck in an inspired voice. "They have founded a genealogical gardens with the genealogical tree of every German showing his descent to the tenth generation. Every month, on the basis of newly found documents they make corrections in the trees. Let us bribe all the keepers of public records in Germany and enter up in the files a Jewish ancestor for every pure blooded German. Tomorrow everyone in Germany will know that Goering is not Goering at all but a common Jewish Hering and that there is not a single National Socialist whose grandfather, or at least great grandfather was not a Jew."

On hearing Kallenbruck's suggestion all twelve elders rose and executed a bolshevik dance. When the first outburst of enthusiasm had subsided, the old man with the double moustaches turned to the professor:

"Up till now there were twelve of us Zionist sages. Each one of us in our time has thought out a fair number of machinations for the ruin of the Christian world. But not one of us has ever thought of a more brilliant plan than this. Thou hast earned the honorable title of Zionist sage—*sapiens Zioni honoris causa.* From to-day on we shall be thirteen!"

At this the old men became so exultant that it was a long time before they could calm down. They threw a satin lapserdack over the professor's shoulders, put a large Rabinical hat on his head and made him sit in the place of honor. The professor noted, not without astonishment, that from his well shaven chin, like water from the rock at the touch of Moses' rod, long streams of silvery beard were flowing.

When order had been restored, the old men started to discuss the details of the plan.

"If in a single day every German finds that he has a Jewish ancestor, they will be bound to reconcile themselves to it whether they like it or not and no split will be caused in their ranks," said an elder with glossy black hair and long grey tusks of moustache giving him the appearance of a walrus. "Consequently it is my opinion that we should not do it for everyone at once, but gradually. We should do only National Socialists at first, and not all of them but only the most notable ones."

All were agreed with this amendment and a resolution was then passed to the effect that for a start Jewish ancestors should be given only to members of the National Socialist Party holding membership cards Nos. 1 to 10,000. It was decided to start the work of bribing public records officers immediately. The old men started hastily gathering in the gold coins that were lying on he table and jingled them into their pockets, singing in chorus:

Ho! Zion! Praise the skies!
Jewry's power is on the rise.
Another sage has joined our ranks
O Lord of Hosts we render thanks.

Then after making a few gesticulations and planting their hats further on to their heads they disappeared all together through the door and left Kallenbruck sitting alone at the empty table with the telephone and two seven branched candlesticks in front of him. The professor wanted to call out to the eye-moustached elder and ask him whether he should stay where he was or go with them, but the room was already empty. The candles were burning dimly and winking at the professor as they trickled waxen tears on to the deserted table, the plate of unleavened bread and a single forgotten disc of golden metal.

Professor Kallenbruck felt uneasy. The idea occurred to him that perhaps he had been enticed into a trap. This thought had become a terrifying conviction when suddenly in the corridor a bell began to ring, unremittingly, insistently. The professor started, and knocked over the candlesticks with his elbow. The candles spluttered and went out. He was left in complete darkness. It now seemed to him that it was not the bell in the corridor but the telephone bell that was ringing. With trembling hands he felt all over the table for the telephone. Suddenly he hit something which hurt his knuckle. It was the telephone. He lifted up the receiver and put it to his ear.

"Hello? Who's there?"

"Herr Professor Kallenbruck?" lisped a familiar voice. "Good evening! Doctor Himmelstock speaking. What has happened to you this evening? Why aren't you with us here at the Löwenbräu? We've been sitting waiting more than half an hour. We decided to 'phone to see what's up. Are you not feeling well?"

"I? What do you mean?" stammered Kallenbruck. "What number are you calling?"

"What number? Why your number of course. Your house 'phone. How is it you have such a sleepy voice? Fell asleep? I woke you up did I? A thousand pardons if I did. By the way though, its eight o'clock elready, it's time you were going . . . It is a great pity you did not come round here first. Herr Justizrat Noltke was in great form this evening and told us a lot of interesting things. By the way, congratulations on your book about the endogenous negative variations of the Jewish race. The Leader was greatly taken with it. Read it in bed last night till two o'clock in the morning. Well, when shall we see you? Tomorrow? Yes, you must. There is a lot of interesting news. Well, good bye for the present. If I can manage it I'll look in at the end of your lecture. . . ."

Professor Kallenbruck sat for a few minutes in the darkness with the receiver to his ear. Then he felt for the instrument and laid the receiver down. He groped for a switch and turned on the light. A table lamp flashed on. Blinking from the sudden light the professor looked round him at his old familiar study—his desk telephone, ash tray, cigar box and the proofs lying in front of him: "In contrast to the Roman nose and the many other variations of the classic Greco-Nordic type, the Semitic nose is characterized by a marked hypertrophy of the triangular hyaline cartilages forming in combination with a prominent curvature. . . ."

Professor Kallenbruck sprang up and rushed to the mirror. A loud sigh of relief shook his whole frame. Between his baggy eyes, above his moustache,

closely cropped in the national style, there was the perfectly straight nose of the Kallenbrucks with the slight thickening towards the end, about the Aryan contour of which there could be no doubts whatsoever.

The professor stroked his brow:

"Phui! What put such nonsense into a person's head?"

He turned to the table and looked at the copy of the *Völkischer Beobachter* that lay there with a notice underlined in red pencil.

"This evening at eight p.m. in the Friends of Militant Eugenics Club, Professor Otto Kallenbruck will give a lecture on the 'Semitic Nose as one of the Inherited Negative Variations of the Jewish Race.' The lecture will be followed by a discussion."

The professor looked at his watch. "Goodness me! Ten to eight."

"Bertha," he called opening the door into the pasasge. "Bertha, fetch me my black overcoat and ask Mizzi to heat a glass of beer as quickly as possible. Why did no one wake me up?" he asked in an irritated tone as he took his overcoat from his wife.

"You said you did not want anyone to come in and interrupt you, Otto."

"Turn on the light will you, dear."

As he fixed his tie the professor watched out of the corner of his eye his wife's lithe movements in the mirror and her plump hands shaking out his ash tray.

"Bertha," he said suddenly as he pinned his tie. "Just imagine for a moment an impossible situation: what would you do if your husband—it's absurd to think of it of course, but just imagine it for a moment, what would you do if your husband proved to be a Jew?"

"You do make strange jokes, Otto!"

"Well anyway imagine if for a moment," insisted her husband. "What would you do?"

"I would leave him at once of course."

"And you would not feel a bit sorry for the sake of the children or the long years we had spent together?"

"You are funny. Why should one feel sorry for a Jew."

"And where would you go when you had left him? To Herr Regierungsrat von Wildau?" he asked spitefully, unable to conceal the bitterness in his voice.

"You *are* horrid," answered his wife, blushing. "You ask me absurd questions just to give yourself the opportunity of saying something nasty. Are you really going to be jealous of Herr von Wildau for the rest of your life?"

"My dear, I was only joking," laughed the professor. "There is no need to get annoyed." He patted her cheek self consciously. "You answered as became a true German. Now go and ask them to hurry up with my beer, like a good thing."

For some reason he could not explain he was conscious of a feeling of irritation rising up within him against this stout woman, the mother of his three children, and the desire to be alone.

"Daddy, I've brought your beer," said a small voice from the doorway. It was the youngest offspring of the Kallenbruck family, seven-year-old Willi who was coming in with a tray on which was a steaming china mug.

The professor affectionately stroked the little fellow's fair head and drained the mug at a single gulp.

"Daddy, may I have that empty cigar box?" asked Willi, pulling at a large bow on his breast and keeping his eyes fixed on the decorated box.

His father nodded his head and smiled indulgently.

"Willi," he called out as the boy was running off with the cigar box. "Come here a moment. Now tell me, imagine to yourself an impossible thing happening—what would you do if you suddenly found that your father was a Jew?"

The boy looked at his father questioningly with the cigar box behind his back:

"I would call Freda and Truddi and then we would entice him into the yard and knock him over the head with a poker and then throw him into the dust bin," he said instantly, looking at his father with large and excited eyes.

He went on standing where he was, clearly expecting his well deserved reward.—His father was in the habit of giving him 20 pfennigs whenever he gave a good answer—but this time his father seemed to be thinking of something else. Instead of giving him 20 pfennigs he said with an absent look: "Yes, yes, that's the right spirit," and told him to run along and tell Mizzi to call a taxi.

In the Friends of Militant Eugenics Club many fashionable people had already gathered. Mounting the platform, Professor Kallenbruck was greeted on all sides with friendly handshakes. Everyone here knew already what a high opinion the Leader had of his book and he was overwhelmed with congratulations.

Professor Kallenbruck began his lecture with a practised historical witticism which he had already tried out on many previous audiences. He declared that a Portuguese Jewish scholar of the seventeenth century, Isaac de la Pereira (he laid emphasis on the Isaac) had affirmed that God had created Aryans and Jews on different days, and that he, Kallenbruck, found no reason, to dispute the statement. He was even ready to agree with Is-a-a-c de la Pereira that the Aryans had been created one day earlier than the Jews. Doubtless God felt tired after five days of continuous creation and the race which he created on the sixth day was not made of particularly high quality material, which would explain the inferior racial characteristics which modern Jews inherited from their ancestors.

With his usual wealth of imagery he sketched out before his audience the principle psychological traits of the Jewish race and explained them as pathological mutations which were not the result of natural selection. He pointed to the incontravertible fact, established by Lenz and Luxemburger that Jews were more subject to mental diseases than members of the Nordic race. He quoted Gutman's opinion that flat-footedness was a hereditary Jewish characteristic. And when finally he passed on to the main subject of his lecture, namely the Jewish nose and its influence on the psychology of the Jews, the whole audience was enthralled by his eloquence and could not take their eyes off his lips.

It was then that something happened which no one could have foreseen and about which there were bewildered reports for long afterwards among those who had been present at this remarkable lecture.

Having started to describe the Semitic nose with its characteristic hook in combination with hypertrophy of the triangular cartilages, the professor suddenly put up his hand to his own nose, stood transfixed, went white as a sheet and with a heartrending cry rushed out of the hall.

During the first few minutes everyone present took this to be merely a comic interlude. Then the rumor spread that the professor had rushed out into the street without hat or coat and had disappeared no one knew where. An interval of fifteen minutes was arranged. When in half an hour's time the professor had not returned all kinds of explanations went round and in order

to avoid undesirable complications the meeting was declared closed. The discussion which had been announced was not held.

Here ends the strange story of Professor Kallenbruck. In spite of all our efforts we could not obtain any reliable clue to his fate. Very scanty news penetrated into the outside world in those days from Nazi Germany. All accidents occurring to members of the ruling party were hushed up.

Of the fragmentary and contradictory rumors which might concern Professor Kallenbruck, mention should be made of a paragraph which appeared in the Berlin papers the second day after the lecture in the Friends of Militant Eugenics Club. It was there stated that the evening before, the watchmen of the Zoological gardens had detained an unknown elderly gentleman who had climbed a tree and chopped off all the branches on one side with an axe. The gentleman in question had shown symptoms of harmless insanity.

In German opposition papers published abroad shortly after the events described a short notice was published, without comment, to the effect that the well known professor and ethnologist Otto Kallenbruck, member of the National Socialist Party, had become insane, after making a scientific tour of twenty-three concentration camps in Fascist Germany.

However during these years official German statesmen and scientists, exponents of the law for compulsory sterilization like Wilhelm Frick (and before him the Nazi deputy in the Reichstag, A. Grotian) estimated the total number of persons in Germany who were defective in one way or another at exactly one third of the total population, that is to say twenty million.[1] A more cautious calculator, Fritz Lenz, estimated them at twelve million.[2] It is true that these figures apply to the first months of the Nazi regime, and judging by newspapers and official statistics the number of mental cases very greatly increased after the Nazis came into power. In the words of Professor Falthauser: "In order to fill the need for mental hospitals a huge building scheme would have to be undertaken the mere thought of which fills one with horror."[3]

The consternation aroused in Europe by these figures was greatly allayed by the admirable work by the German statistician, H. Stecker, entitled *Statistical Treatise on the Frequency of Mental Diseases Among Different Professions.*[4]

According to these statistics, the percentage of first cases of mental disorders for "businessmen living in tranquility" amounts to 1.6. For the more troubled profession of *rentier* it is 6.7. In the case of ordinary unqualified workers however, the percentage is 39.5. Thus, according to the authorative assurances of Stecker and other German statisticians, by far the greater part of the said twenty million is made up of mentally deficient proletarian elements, the low race qualities of whom have made them particularly prone to mental disorders. Professor Kallenbruck, according to all reports was one of the rare exceptions to this rule.

In confidential statistics of the German secret police, among the 56,000 incurable asocial elements, schizophrenics, epileptics and so forth who were sterilized in 1934 in the concentration camps, mental hospitals and supplementary schools of Germany, a certain Kallenbruck figures, but as the initials are not given it cannot be said for certain whether this is our Doctor Otto

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[1] A. Grotjan, *Social pathologie,* Berlin, 1923.
[2] F. Lenz, *Menschliche Auslese und Rassenhygiene (Eugenik),* Lehman.
[3] *Zeitschrift für Psychiatri Hygiene V. H.* 2-4.
[4] H. Stecker, *Statistische Darstellung der Belastung mit Psychische Erkrankungen verschiedener Fachgruppen, Psychiatr-neurologische Wochenschrift,* No. 1, 1933.

Kallenbruck. Even if it were, in spite of the well known attachment of authors to their heroes, we would refrain from any exclamation of protest or indignation, remembering the historical words of the German minister of health, Dr. Reuter, whom Professor Kallenbruck was so fond of quoting: "We must sort out the healthy and see to it that they propagate. The infirm may be left to themselves. They are only a burden to society."[1]

In order to exhaust all the information to be had we must mention one other rumor (which we have unfortunately been unable to verify) at one time current in Berlin medical circles, to the effect that Profesor Kallenbruck died of progressive paralysis. If one takes the point of view of such a scientific authority as Westhof (whose original opinion is however now less and less frequently quoted by German eugenists) it cannot be denied that this version is extremely plausible. As is well known Westhof held the opinion that the higher an organism has reached on the evolutionary ladder the more prone it is to disease. Regarding progressive paralysis as a mark of spiritual culture, Westhof took it to be actually a privilege and proof of the superiority of the German race. "All peoples," in his opinion, "begin to suffer from progressive paralysis in proportion as they have contacts with the German. Even in the case of Jews the frequency of progressive paralysis is due to the same. . . ."

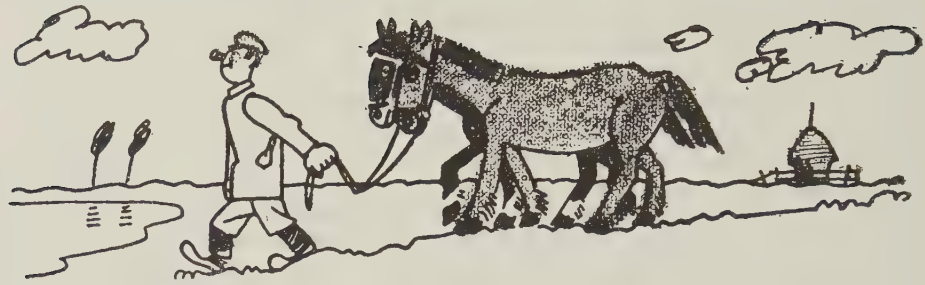
Finally, quite recently a very strange piece of intelligence came to our notice and recalls to our mind Professor Kallenbruck and his unusual experiences. According to absolutely confidential information, a great sensation was caused in leading Nazi circles by the astounding disclosures of a certain little known advocate, a member of the Party, who proved on documentary evidence in a confidential memorandum addressed to the Leader himself that a large number of very notable Nazis had Jewish ancestors. A special commission, formed to investigate the truth of such a serious accusation, not only confirmed the disclosures but each month the list of prominent National-Socialists whose Jewish origin was almost proved by documents newly found by keepers of public records became more and more formidable. In order to avoid panic, reports of the commission's work are kept strictly confidential.

Translated from the Russian by N. Goold-Verschoyle

[1] From Dr. Reuter's speech at the Congress of National-Socialist Medical Practitioners at Nuremberg (1933).

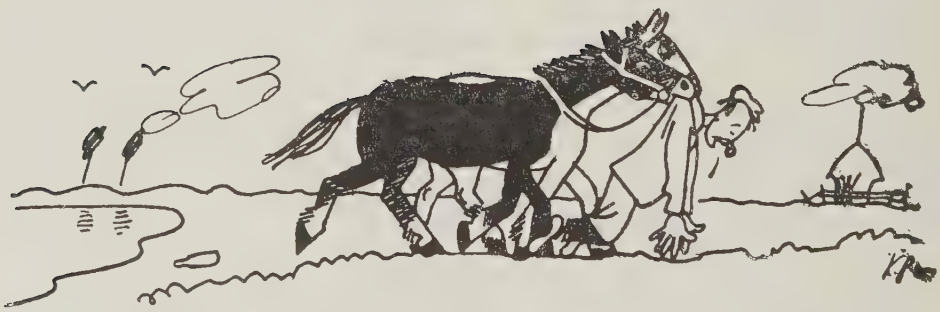
MUTUAL AID

Drawn by Rotov



They came

They drank



They left

Mikhail Ko tsov

A Chat in the Night

"Pasha, are you asleep?"

"Yes, I'm asleep."

"Pasha, I'm awfully hot."

"Well, kick off the blanket."

"Pasha, is it cold in the Arctic?"

"Depends where. The temperature round about the North Pole keeps on falling and falling and then it disappears altogether."

"Funny, where does it get to, and who lives there?"

"All sorts of things live there. Bears, wolves, parrots. The climate's bad there. The climate only begins in June."

"And will tomorrow be the first of May?"

"Yes, you get to sleep. Tomorrow we'll be going around in motor trucks all day."

"Pasha, why aren't you a hero of the Soviet Union?"

"No time. We've got an awful lot of lessons now, doesn't leave any time for flying."

"But why do pilots wear goggles?"

"The air is very thin up there and without goggles you wouldn't see anything."

"And why is it called Franz Josef Land?"

"Because they live there all the time. I expect they're twins."

"Are you a twin?"

"Of course not. I haven't got time even to breathe, far less be a twin. So many lessons nowadays! They've raised the teachers' wages and they're ready to squeeze the juice out of us. But all we get for working is thank you. Arithmetic alone is worth paying for. Or natural history. You know how far a kangaroo can jump? Thirty-two feet."

"You're kidding."

"Fact. The teacher said so. And, after all, it's only got two hind legs or else it would jump still further."

"Pasha, I'm going to be a kangaroo too. Yes?"

"You can't. It's an animal and you're a baby. It's quite impossible."

"Pasha, how is it you know everything?"

"Well, I'm in the third class already you see."

"Pasha, have you ever seen the tsar?"

"Yes, I did happen to once."

"Is he frightening?"

"Not very. At first when he comes on everybody is afraid and I can tell you I was a bit upset myself. He has a terribly big beard. But afterwards when he started running round in a circle with The Spinner, The Cook and Grandmother Babarikha after him and the bee stinging them all and everybody sings and music plays on the drum and he catches hold of his beard it's very funny."[1]

"But is it true what grandmother said that in Leningrad there used to be a lot of tsars?"

[1] The references are to a Pushkin fairy tale which Pasha had doubtless seen at the Children's Theatre.

"Well, if you listen to everything that granny says your ears will fall off. What tsars could there be there? It's not as if this were before the Revolution. We don't need them any longer now except in theatres and the big shops to open the doors."

"And were there children Before the Revolution?"

"Not many. . . . Yes and Pioneers didn't have neckerchiefs."

"You're kidding."

"Fact. In general what went on Before the Revolution—it's enough to make you die with laughing. There were no demonstrations, no mandarins, no airplanes, the workers had to hide, Uncle Bubnov was in jail and Uncle Schmidt didn't have a beard. There was just Pushkin writing poetry and he was cut up to death by a fascist."

"Oh, you're just kidding."

"Fact. What would I make it up for? Lots of people told me."

"When was all that?"

"Four hundred years ago. I suppose I wasn't born yet when that happened. I was born on the sixth of August, bang on my birthday."

"But could it happen that Before the Revolution would start again?"

"Of course not. What do you think: that mandarins would fall back into the earth? Uncle Bubnov won't go back to jail. And Uncle Schmidt's beard, even if a barber cut it off, would grow again just the same."

"Where's Uncle Bubnov?"

"That's our Narkompros."[1]

"Have you seen him?"

"No. And I'm not going to pretend I have."

"Pasha, you asleep?"

"Yes. And why aren't you asleep? It will strike ten o'clock any minute for it's more than half an hour since it struck a quarter to."

"Pasha, will they buy you a bicycle?"

"Don't know. Afraid they won't. Things are in a bad way with me and I just can't do anything right. There's going to be trouble over the arithmetic. It's all the same to me but mamma gets very upset if I get bad marks. . . . That's why I haven't been to the cinema for two weeks. You little ones are all right, nothing to think about, no work to do."

"When I'm big, I'm not going to work. Five days in the six-day week I'll go to the cinema, three days to the Palace of Pioneers, three days to play in the yard and the other days will be the First of May."

"Why is granny so angry with you?"

"Over the post. I told her how we played at postman, we went round all the flats and gave them all letters. She laughed and kissed me and then asked: 'And where did you children get so many letters from?' And I said: 'Out of your writing desk, grandma; there was a great big package there tied up in red ribbon, and then she started crying and scolding. But after all we only took the letters, not the ribbon."

"She's a funny old thing. . . . There aren't many old people nowadays. And if there are they're those that are left over from Before the Revolution."

"Pasha, is it true what's in fairy tales?"

"That depends. There are tales that are right and there are tales that the priests invented. They're not true."

[1] People's Commissar of Education.

"Is the one about the flying carpet true?"

"Yes. That's Vodopyanov."

"And the sleeping beauty?"

"That's one the priests thought up."

"And Jason and the Golden Fleece and the Medusa?"

"Yes. I think that's a true one. Just take our arithmetic teacher. She's a Medusa all right. After all I don't do anything to her. When the kids brought a dead mouse into the classroom I wasn't even there at the time. And yet she has to fix the blame on me. Even when I do a sum right, she looks at me just as if I were a thief and makes fun of me: 'It would be interesting to know from whom you copied this.' And she keeps on hissing, hissing . . . Here, have yon gone to sleep?"

"No, I'm thinking: s'pose it isn't the First of May tomorrow!"

"It will be, that's certain. I remember ever so many times and it always was. When I was very small, when I was just three, even then it was the First of May. And now it couldn't happen that it wouldn't be the First of May. It's not like the fascists have."

"But, really, don't the fascists have demonstrations?"

"Yes, they have, but it's not very easy for them. Every minute they have to run back to the jail to see that the workers haven't escaped."

"But don't they get fed up with that?"

"Yes, probably they get very fed up. They want to come here."

"Why?"

"So that we'll give them one in the jaw."

"How is it you know everything?"

"Well, there's nothing funny about that. After all I'm in the third class."

Translated from the Russian by H. O. Whyte

ART

The Mexican Murals of Grace and Marion Greenwood

Among the many young artists drawn to Mexico by the revival of mural painting there, are two American girls, Grace and Marion Greenwood, who have just completed paintings on the walls of two stairways in a new market house and civic centre known as the "President Abelardo Rodriguez Market."

The building, formerly a convent, covers more than a square block and is crowded every day with people buying fresh vegetables, fish, meat, flowers, baskets, pottery—all the enticing wares usually offered for sale in the largest in-door and out-door market of Mexico. The decoration of the patios, stairways and walls of this public building were turned over by the Mexican government to a group of Mexican and American artists who had been students of, or greatly influenced by the two leading fresco painters of Mexico, Jose Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera. While some of these artists chose to portray Indian legends or Mexican history, most of them took their subject matter from the life of the people, in the past and the present.

This is particularly true of the walls painted by Marion and Grace Greenwood. Marion's first wall depicts the Jamaica terminal of the canal system leading in from Xochimilco and other nearby villages, which for centuries was the main source of fresh vegetables for the capital. The second wall shows a scene in the market place of the city today, portraying the economic forces at work transferring the products of the farmers to the hands of the speculators; the profits to the hands of the bankers, while the farm worker is empty-handed and his wife and baby go hungry. The third panel shows the farm laborer joining with the city factory worker in the fight against war and fascism, and against his exploiters.

In Grace Greenwood's panels the theme is the life of the workers in silver mines. She spent several months in the mining area, getting to know the people and their terrible conditions of labor; going down in the mines and watching the men at their dangerous tasks. Her last panel, of which the sketched wall is shown, portrays an injured worker being carried out by his friends, a scene which the artist saw was a common one under the conditions in these silver mines. Her central panel gives the story of silver: mined by the penniless and starving worker, turned into coins in the mint, raked in by the bankers who allow a few pesos to be handed out to those who have done the work. A group of striking workers is shown urging their comrades to action against this exploitation.

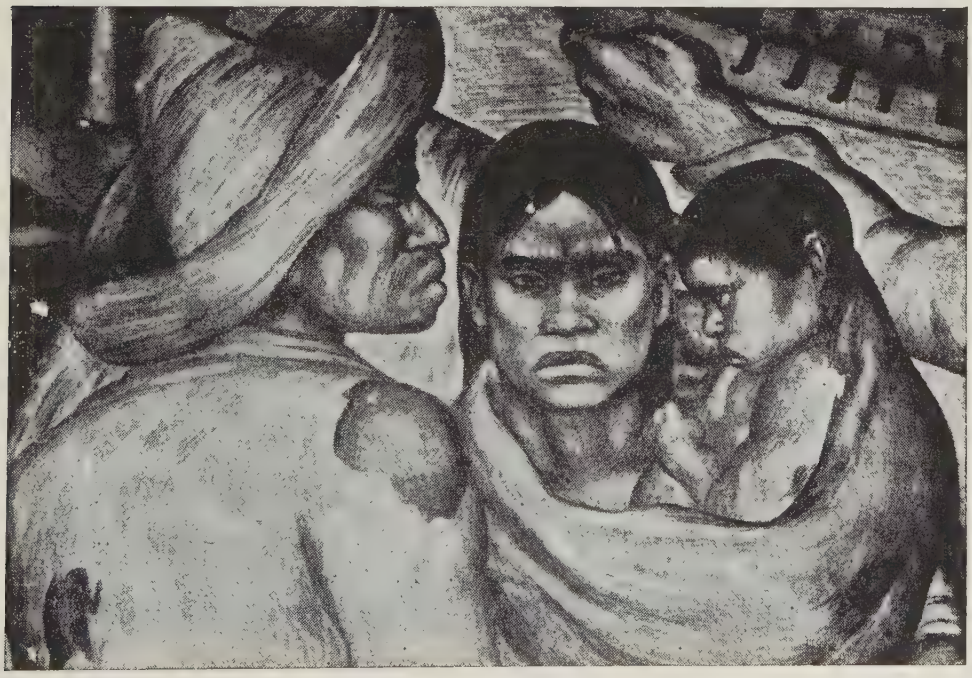
All the people in these paintings are real Mexicans, the same workers you see in factories and villages every place; people whom the artists met and talked with during their preliminary studies before they began painting. Both sisters had previously worked in fresco at the State University of Michoacan, in the city of Morelia, where they did seven large panels composing an entire side of one of the patios of this historic building. Here the subject is the native life and traditions of the people of Michoacan, avoiding the "picturesque" characteristics which have been used by so many foreign painters in Mexico.

It was because of the excellence of this first mural that they received the Mexican government's invitation to participate in the group mural decoration of the Abelardo Rodriguez Market. They had come to Mexico primarily because of their interest in fresco and had been assisted in acquiring the technique by Paul O'Higgins, a young American painter who studied for several years with Rivera and who has been active in the Mexican art renaissance, and in its present organization of left-wing artists.

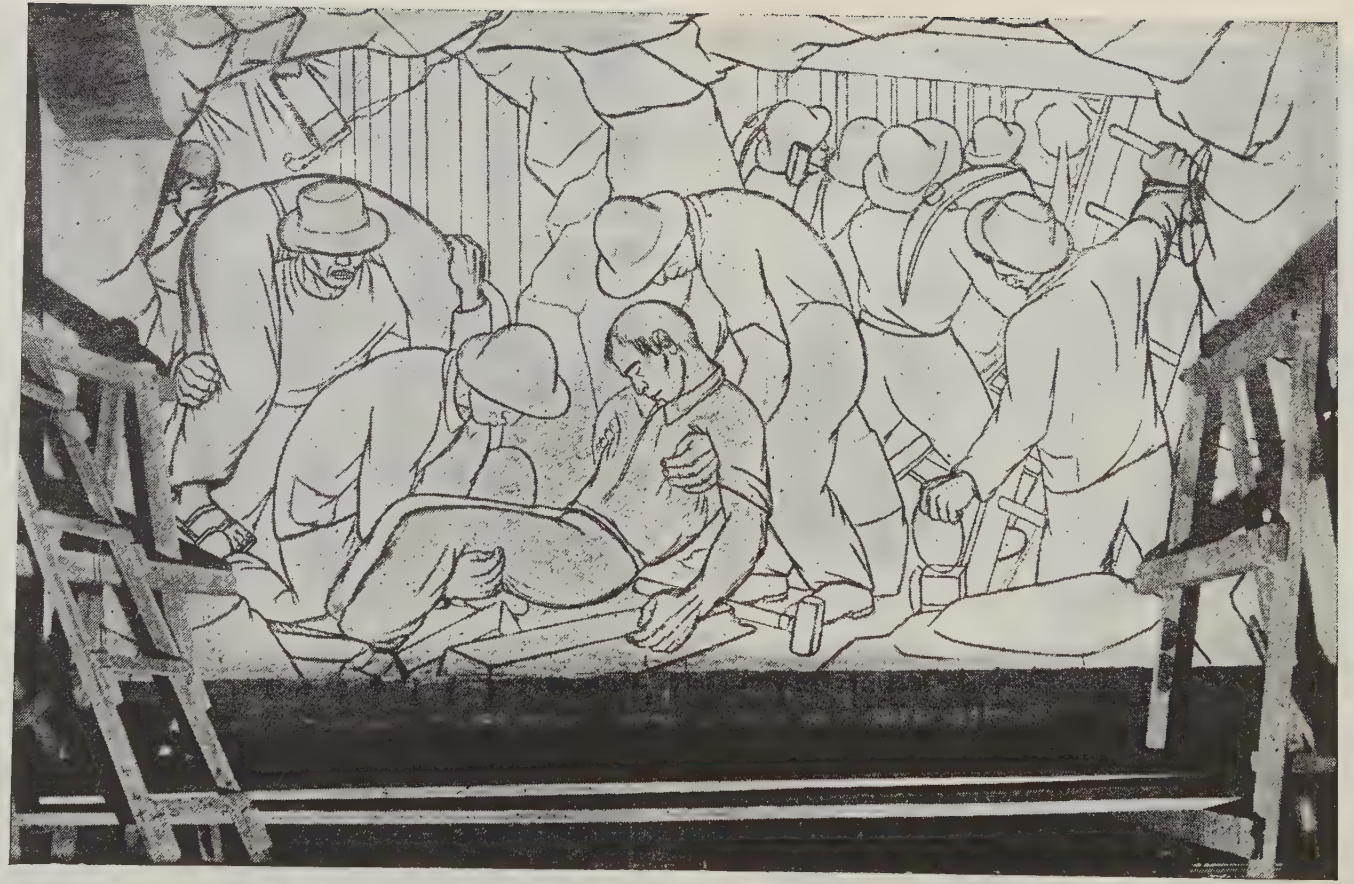
The Greenwood sisters are probably the first women to work in fresco, which is an extremely difficult medium. A tracing, the full size of the wall, must be made from the design. This tracing is placed over wet plaster and a slight indentation and then painting is begun. It must be completed before the plaster dries which takes about eight hours. Colors are limited to earth colors, which will not sink into the plaster; yet in spite of this mechanical limitation there is a surprising difference in the palette, as well as the designs of Grace and Marion Greenwood.

With the completion of the market murals, the sisters have returned this spring to New York, where their art studies started. Both were born in Brooklyn and studied in the United States and Europe. They had exhibited in a number of galleries, and Grace had specialized in portraiture before they went to Mexico. Now their interest is primarily in fresco and they are at work on designs for a new apartment house being erected in Camden, New Jersey, for members of the Hosiery Workers Union of Philadelphia.

Marion Greenwood (back center) Grace Greenwood (right) "Chuchu", the master-plasterer who did the walls as the Greenwood sisters painted their murals

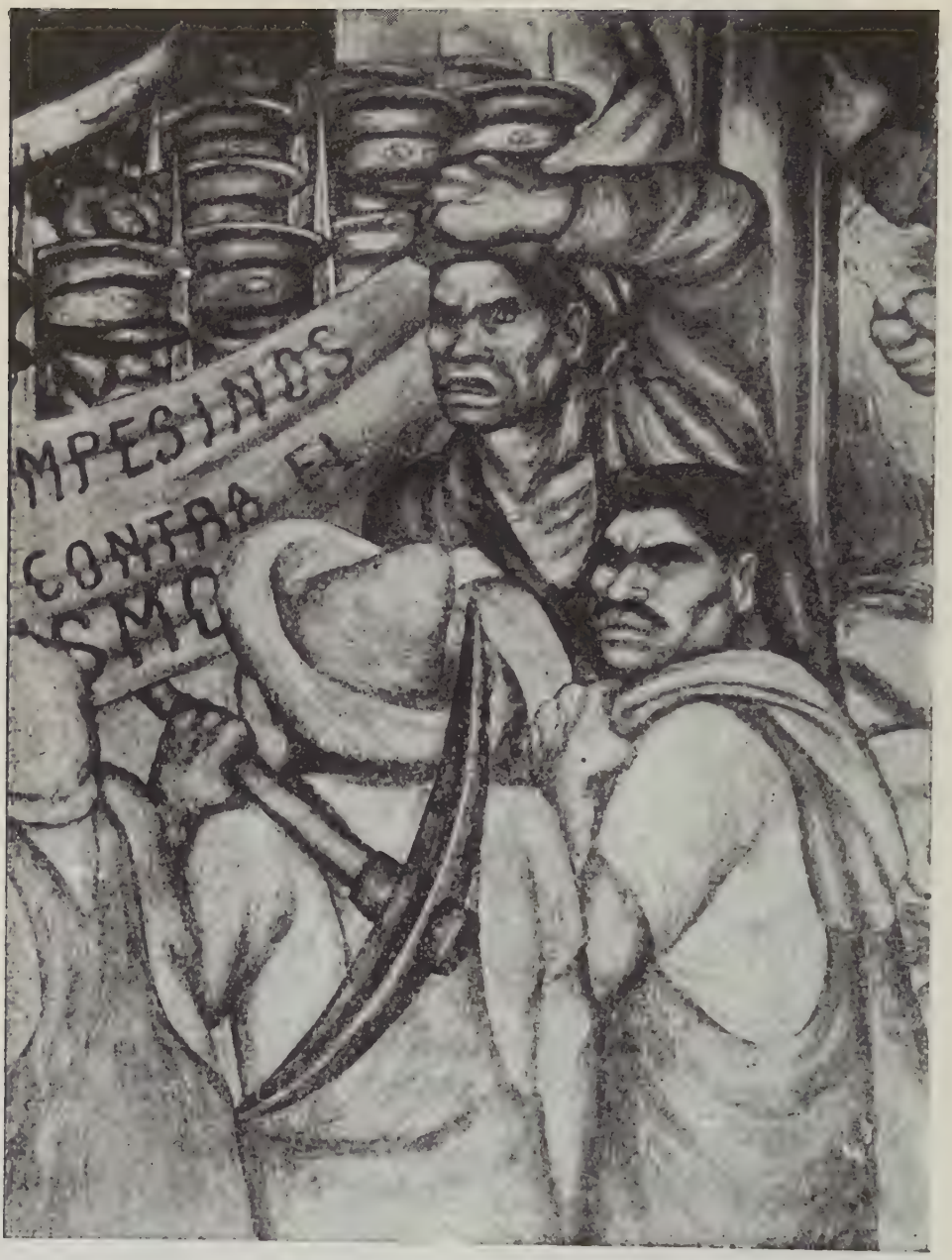


"Peasant Family" Detail from fresco mural on landing of stairway, N. E. entrance of "Mercado Rodriguez Mexico City, Mexico



Tracing for th last panel of Grace Greenwood's mural in the Abelardo Rodriguez Market, Mexico City. The drawing shows an accident in a silver mine.

The Story of Silver: Silver being turned into money at the mint, and the money going to the capitalists and bankers. At the right the workers are receiving their pay. The worker to the center looks at his meagre wages with dismay; then looking at his starving family joins the striking workers shown behind him.



Detail of fresco mural—"Workers Protest." From the mural on landing of stairway N. E. entrance "Mercado Abelardo Rodriguez." Mexico City—Mexico. By Marion Greenwood

THE LITERARY WORLD

Jean Freville

Literary Life In France

The Congress for the Defence of Culture which took place in Paris in June, 1935 met with a wide response and strengthened the anti-fascist front throughout Europe, and especially in France. The writers who gathered together from all corners of the world united to form a wide front and declared that, in order to save civilization, the intelligentsia must work together with the toiling classes, particularly with the proletariat. The warm applause that greeted the Soviet delegates was clear proof that the best sections of the French intelligentsia had chosen their course: they greeted the October Revolution as the beginning of a new era in man's history. The chief lesson of the congress was that civilization and culture, which are threatened by the barbarian forces of fascism, can be defended only by those who look into the future and are fighting for a new culture, by those who have realized that humanism will either be proletarian or will not exist at all.

This congress for the first time impelled the writers of France—hardened individualists who had often taken refuge behind the "white page" of Mallarmé, to approach one another, unite, organize, and throw the whole weight of their talent, their knowledge and their names on the scales of the class war—on the side of the proletariat.

That was the beginning of the movement. Even Barbusse's death could not check its progress although he left us at a time when we greatly needed his advice and activity. The French anti-fascist writers rallied around Andre Gide, Jean-Richard Bloch, Andre Voilis and Jean Guehenno. They began publication of a literary weekly called *Vendredi.* The first number, which appeared in November, 1935, was sold out to the number of 100,000 copies.

Without exaggeration, one may say that all of the most distinguished and most important writers of France have come over to the side of the revolutionary proletariat. From now on, the proletariat will really move forward the intellectual life of the country. For some time, nothing of any worth has been written that was not a reflection and an echo of the great social conflicts. That is a sign of the times, and a proof that the class struggle in France is becoming more acute.

In the face of such poverty, such uneasiness, under the huge grimacing shadow of war and death, writers cannot remain indifferent. One way or the other they must make up their minds.

In French literature at the end of last year three main tendencies made their appearance.

The first is a revolutionary tendency, a reflection of the revolutionizing of the masses. It has been embodied particularly in *Les Nouvelles Nouritures, (New Fruits)* by Andre Gide, *Sang Noir (Black Blood)* by Louis Guilloux, *Passage a Niveau (The Event at Niveau)* by George David, *J'ai Vingt ons (I am Twenty)* by Belanger and finally in the books by Moussinac, *Manifestation Interdite (The Forbidden Demonstration)* and Paul Nizan, *Le Cheval de Troie (The Trojan Horse).* Since most of these books have already been discussed in *International Literature,* the tendency they represent is known to our readers. No further elaboration is needed here.

The second tendency is an attempt to expess the horror of the times. Whether it leads to revolutionary conclusions as in *Zone Verte (The Green Zone)* by Daby or to catholic conclusions as in *What Was Won in 1914* by César Fobra, to bitter repugnance as in the case of Luc Dietrich in *Bonheur de Tristes (The Happiness of the Sad)* or gloomy obedience as in Clair Saint Soline's book, *D'une Haleine (In One Breath)* everywhere we see an indictment of a society which gives rise to too much unhappiness not to disappear from the face of the earth.

Finally, the third tendency is an entirely bourgeois one which seeks to forget the hardships of life and the unhappiness which is caused by the regime it tries to justify. The most typical book belonging to this class is the novel by Joseph Peyre *Sang et Lumiere (Blood and Light).* We may cite also *Jours sans Gloire (Days Without Glory)* by Francois de Roue and the police novel *Benediction (Blessing)* by Claire Silve (pseudonym of an aristocrat, daughter of Count Levisse-Mirois) The last-named novel is an

apologia of society life and idealizes—which is really being a little out of touch with the times!—the faded and hackneyed delights of the Faubourg St. Germain.

Books in which the tendency to escape from reality or to falsity found expression were the very ones awarded prizes by various judges at the end of the year. Rival publishers carried on the most assiduous intrigues and were ready to make any bargain in order to get the literary prize for their protégés.

The Goncourt prize, most sought after of all, went to Joseph Peyret, the candidate of the monarchist, Leon Daudet, who nominated him for the award in an article published in the right-wing literary newspaper, *Candide*. The voting had to be repeated five times before the palm was handed to Joseph Peyret; and even then he received only five votes, (against five given for Van der Meersche's book *What Was Won in 1914* and against the vote of Roland Dorgelesse which was cast for *Black Blood*).

For the Theophraste Renodeau prize, three years ago awarded to Seline for *A Journey to the Land of Night* (a book to which the Goncourt Academy refused its prize this year), a truly unworthy choice was made. It was handed over to *Days Without Glory* which will soon pass into oblivion. The Prix Femina, which was awarded to *Blessing* will also hardly be blessed by those who on the recommendation of the judges, buy the book.

What can one think about these selections? Were there really no better books?—Of course there were. But faced with an intensification of the class struggle in France, the Judges rigidly rejected anything that was an indictment of the bourgeois system.

It is, therefore, useless to expect to find in the decisions of judges a picture of the present situation in France. It must be sought in those books which met with hostile criticism from the bourgeoisie or were passed over in silence. These books are the ones which reflect the social evolution of France.

André Gide's book *New Fruits* which was awaited with impatience by all, aroused tremendous interest. This book shows that the author, starting from *Earthly Fruits* has now finally joined forces with the proletariat.

The writer explains the aim of his work as follows: "I write so that an adolescent such as I was at sixteen years of age, but freer and more perfect—may some time find in my book an answer to his passionate questioning."

Gide gives this answer. He demands a struggle against idols, against everything that humiliates man. To-day he realizes his happiness because he knows that it is inseparable from the happiness of other people But he knows that men can only attain this happiness if they have the courage to "break the integument." Only at that price can the emancipation of men and what Gide so aptly describes as "the unbounded expansion of love" be attained.

"Rise up bowed heads. Eyes looking down into the tomb lift yourselves up. Do not lift yourselves up to the empty heaven, but to the horizon of the earth. To where your steps are leading you, comrade, reborn and venturesome, ready to leave these places that are poisoned with corpses, let your hope carry you on. Do not allow your love of the past to hold you back! Push on into the future. Enough of finding poetry in your daydreams; learn to find it in reality. And if there is none there, create it yourself."

Advancing to the period of life when one's acts and experience are passed in review and a lesson derived for the future from what has been lived, Andre Gide draws his conclusion:

"O, You, for whom I am writing, whom I once called by a name that now seems to me too mournful—Nathaniel, whom I now call comrade—do not allow anything mournful to enter your heart.

"Learn to attain what makes complaint useless! Do not ask another for what you cannot attain yourself.

"I have lived; your turn has come. In you, my youth will persist. I hand over full power to you. If you feel yourself to be my successor it will be easier for me to die. I place my hope in you.

"If I feel that you are venturesome, I shall relinquish life without regret. Build up your own happiness by creating happiness for others. Work and struggle and accept nothing bad that you cannot change. Learn to go on repeating: everything depends on myself. It is only from cowardice that people bow before evil that has been caused by men themselves. Cease thinking—if you ever did think it—that wisdom is in obedience, or cease laying claim to wisdom.

"Comrades, do not accept the life which others give you. Go on persuading yourself that it could be better—our life and your life and the life of other people, not another future life which people say will give us solace from the life on earth and will help us to endure misfortune. Do not accept it. From the day that you begin to realize that not God but men are responsible for nearly all the evil in life you will cease giving in to that evil.

"Bring no more sacrifices to idols."

Louis Guilloux in *Black Blood* (it was preceded by the *House of the People* and *Companions*) describes the horror and deformity of petty bourgeois life in the French provinces. Louis Guilloux is a son of the

people. He has practised many trades, is familiar with poverty, has suffered from the injustice of the social system, from its everyday cruelty—and this gives his book a particularly striking character.

Dead men, dead men with black blood, that is what the petty townsmen of a small French town are to Guilloux; their pitiful and ludicrous antics remind him of the dance of death.

One of the characters in Guilloux's book, a Russian named Kaminski compares this French town with the provincial towns of tsarist Russia. This is how he speaks of the petty French townsmen: "Do you know what I think? Of course, I am not going to state it as an absolute fact, but . . . but in general direction, in social content, in psychology—one may say that we are here in the real Russian Empire, my friends And your peasants are real Russian muzhiks. Yes, yes, believe me," he continued, "I have seen here the best characters, let us say Chekhov, almost with a samovar on the table,"—he added in a tone that was nearer to anger than to irony.

". . . The only difference is that they do not possess that streak of madness which marks Gogol's most repulsive characters and prevents me from being able to utterly despise them. I understand Gogol and the others far better now since the Bolsheviks have triumphed. The revolution tore away all coverings and brought everything out into the light. Hm. . Yes this might be Minsk or Rostov, Novgorod or Yaroslavl. You see we have a choice. The houses would then be wooden instead of stone and there would be a few cupolas with orthodox crosses rising above them. But even here you are not badly off as regards churches and monasteries."

Guilloux confines his plot within very narrow limits: the action is unfolded in the course of twenty-four hours—twenty-four hours as frenzied as the characters of the book, twenty-four frightful hours of the year 1917.

A note of repressed anger runs through the whole book, a mute fury and exasperation with these marionettes who are drawn with such astounding truthfulness, like Goya's monsters.

The hero of the book, Marlin, a teacher of philosophy, is nicknamed Cripure by his pupils because he is always talking about Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason (Critique de la raison pure)*. This Cripure is a veritable monster. He is a shapeless giant with a tiny head and crippled legs who mumbles with an artificial jaw. He is unclean in his person and lives in an evil-smelling den with a dreadful cook on whom he is constantly showering oaths when he is not embracing her. He is a weak and violent man. Though sensitive, he despises his sensitiveness; though he realizes the aimlessness of the life he lives he is incapable of protesting in any other way than by continually grumbling. This is an extraordinarily fine caricature of the skeptical and timid-minded intellectual.

Cripure argues thus to himself:

"I was able to expose falsehood, but that was the limit of my enterprise. I was not able to act, I was not able to take anything, I was not able to keep Toinette. Now I am old, deformed, crippled, lonely . . . smashed to atoms. But indeed, have I the right to call myself broken when I did not accept battle? I have no right to anything. I am nothing. I am only one of them."

He cast a melancholy glance at his audience. He whispered, "I am one of them."

Half-closing his eyes, he repeated the phrase of one of his favorite teachers: "Amor fati—let that be my love from henceforward. I do not want to war against my deformity.

"I do not want to judge anyone, I do not want to judge even those who judge. To turn my eyes away, that is for me the only means of denial."

Professor Nabussé is the direct opposite of Cripure. He is a real bourgeois who has risen in the academic world by means of cunning, artfulness and meanness. He is indifferent to men's sufferings, curries favor with those in high places, is outwardly charming but insolent to those he regards as his inferiors.

To the Lycée concierge George, who has been wounded in the war and has lost both legs, Nabussé gives the following consolation:

"—A great philosopher has said that every sorrow is a diminution of the self. So, young man, there is no need. . . .

"To lose two legs is also a diminution of the self."

"Yes, he thinks!" cried Nabusse. "He has a head on his shoulders. What a jester"—he said, breaking out into a hoarse unpleasant laugh, as though all this was a delightful joke. "You argue quite correctly," he added, sententiously—"that's very good, very good indeed. . . . But you must remember one thing: Life is within us. Within us. . . ."

The repulsive traits of the bourgeois are evident in Narbussé's every word and every action.

With Cripure he attends a demonstration of soldiers against war:

"In the pelting rain, the Lamps threw patches of yellow light on the platform, in which indistinct silhouettes appeared and disappeared, running from all directions. A threatening clamor arose from their cries and the noise of their tread on the asphalt, from the clang of helmets breaking furiously into the carriages, from the sound of glass being broken underfoot. Death to Poincaré! Death

to Ribeau! Peace! Peace! We'll have no more of it! End the war! Long live Russia!"

"We pacified them. . ." said Nabussé.

"You cheated them," cried Cripure, beside himself with rage. "You rotter!"

Death is the chief personage in Guilloux's book. It mows down thousands at the front —soldiers fall under German rifle fire and French rifle fire; the son of the director of the Lycée is shot for taking part in a mutiny in the army. Death stretches out its tentacles to the small town of the story and claims Cripure. The life of the petty bourgeoisie is nothing but slow decay. They crawl about each in their own crazy way in their hateful little world concerned with nothing but their petty ambitions.

Guilloux described the real life of the town not by making a photographic copy of reality, but by creating a gloomy and monstrous world which is, as it were, the quintessance of the real world. That is great art.

Such people as Cripure with their irresolute, wavering, half-hearted revolt must be swept away and relegated to the infamous past. "Cripure will disappear. He has a right to our sympathy. But then all that must end."

But even in these horrible convulsions there would seem to be a faint ray of light, a secret promise of a means of escape for the suffocating world.

"One ought to have remained, agreed and died with them, or rejected it all and gone to work to alter everything, that included." says one of the characters of the book.

"It is not so important to know what is the meaning of this life. The important thing to know is what can we do in this life."

Guilloux answers his own question. Lucien the son of the Lycée censor, becomes a revolutionary and goes to Russia, in order to take part in the great epic of liberation.

The Green Zone by Eugène Daby describes the suburbs of Paris. The proletarian Legan, who goes to live there, falls into the society of owners of brasseries, building contractors, small landowners full of hatred for Paris, and miserly petty rentiers. These are the dregs of a large town, a world in itself, torn with hatred, slander, quarrels about money and petty rivalries. Legan dreams of forgetting the threat of war, the thousands of people herded together in the towns and all the inventions each time urging people forward along the path to hell. But he soon notices that he is beginning to become blunted under the influence of the people who surround him, he feels himself being crushed by this miserable and aimless life. Can it really be that the cause of man has failed? "A voice seemed to answer him that it was time that he, a man from the town, in spite of all his misfortunes and follies, ought at any rate to make an effort to avoid such complete shipwreck." And Legan dreams about "other countries of the world where there is no nine-day-wonder Ile de France, about huge countries, and those lands again where a new race of people are being born who "Do not shirk their duty."

The book is filled with a deep sense of depression, an unbounded melancholy and gloomy despair at the aimlessness and inhumanity of contemporary bourgeois society.

Maxanse Van der Meersch in *What Was Won in 1914* writes of the war, or rather of life in the occupied areas. In order to give his readers a complete picture of the life of the French under the German army of occupation, he has tried to include in his book as many characters as possible of different classes and different convictions. It must be said that he has deserted them somewhat superficially and transitorily, and this makes his book rather resemble a collection of documents.

The action takes place in the neighborhood of Lille and Roubaye. The author's purpose is to explode the romantic legends with which official history tries to gild war and to show how false and unqualified is all the talk about war enthusiasm and heroism, most of which is manufactured by the press.

The mayor of the town, guided solely by his own cupidity, concludes all kinds of bargains with the victors; this, of course does not prevent him from welcoming the return of the French troops, or from receiving the order of the Legion of Honor after the armistice. Bernard David, a well-to-do shopkeeper of working class origin also sells out to the enemy, but consoles himself with the thought that his trade is feeding the hungry of both countries. Some of the factory owners of Roubaye start working for the Germans, while others, under the protection of German bayonets, plunder the populace. Only one man refuses to have any relations with the enemy and sets his factory on fire. For doing so he is put in prison.

French women accept the love of Germans, some for money, others for love. Nearly all use their relations with the German command in the interests of their fellow-countrymen, which does not save them from severe punishment after the arrival of the allied troops.

The novel shows bourgeois patriotism in its true light. We see French civilians infuriated at having to take in French soldiers fleeing from the enemy. We see tradesmen accumulating wealth from the misfortunes and poverty of their countrymen; we see how the fiercest egoism grows up and how informing on one another and sending

anonymous letters become the rule of the day. It is not true that the Frenchmen of the North faced the German army of occupation with unfailing heroism and with unswerving determination to resist. "There was nothing of that magnificent unity, that joyful heroism which people invented afterwards. There were only people hating one another, bound together with a single chain." At the end of the occupation some even forgot that they are Frenchmen.

War is a golden age for crooks and sharps and profiteers. But the masses are their victims. One of the characters says:

"Here is the conquered country—and they say also at the front—Germans and Frenchmen have come to understand one another. We have seen that we are all poor creatures who have fallen into the hands of the masters. We ought to have come to some agreement. But instead of that there is a sea of hatred and fanatical chauvinism!"

Frightful poverty and famine level the French inhabitants and German soldiers; together they kill a horse for food.

The inhabitants hate war and long passionately for it to end. They want to leave the struggle: "Let the French and Germans who started it perish together. We've had enough of this war, we want to live."

The German soldiers themselves shoot the officer who is nicknamed the "Long Leek" because of his height and his green uniform. Even the most ardent patriots yield in the end, fraternize and ally themselves with the soldiers against the authorities.

Van der Meersch has attempted to be "objective." He has shown the horrors of war and has given a portrait of social life in the naturalistic style of Zola. In other words, he has shown the immediate, external side of things without explaining their deeper causes.

Van der Meersch is a Catholic, an exponent of the "good employer and just wages." He puts the exploiter and the worker on the same footing, regarding them as both victims, and promising them paradise in heaven. He is a Christian for whom war is the great cause of all ills, who forgives man all his sins because he is the "image of God." He writes, "I have always thought that however low and mean a man may be there nevertheless remains in him something of the divine spark. And I seek this, and it is sufficient for me to find it, in order to love the man."

His novel is motivated by an attitude of the French bourgeoisie which is particularly widespread in the north—namely, the condemnation of capitalism and war from the point of view of Christianity, a demagogic criticism of society the aim of which is to combat the theory of the class war. Those are the author's views. But we have seen how very much truer, more trenchant and more decided than his views is his book.

Cesar Faubras, author of *The Black Sea,* a novel which received well-merited attention from revolutionary critics; gives in his novel, *Condemned to be Burned,* the diary of a man out of work. The excitement and picturesqueness of the story distinguishes Faubras' book from ordinary literature about the unemployed. Unfortunately, the purely anarchistic tendency of the book greatly weakens it.

The Happiness of the Sad by Luc Dietrich is a story of childhood and unhappy youth in which vividness of detail is combined with an unobtrusive lyricism. It is written in an individualistic spirit and its importance is extremely limited.

Finally, to conclude the discussion of books which instead of indignation express gloom and depression, we shall mention *In One Breath* by Clair de Solin, who began his literary work with the now well-known novel, *Day.* In his new novel, the author writes in the populist spirit about a woman of the people living in Paris. Nothing very remarkable happens to her. The heroine, educated in a convent, at an early age marries a coach builder, a coarse and cruel man whom she loves from a sense of duty. Shortly after the war he dies, leaving her a widow with children who are not at all kind to their mother. Her life is now spent in unremitting toil: first she is a dressmaker, then a factory worker, then a farm-hand working for relatives of her husband, then a charwoman. In every case, she does her work without quarrelling or complaining, with a calmness and serenity the grandeur of which the author strives to convey. The people around her, including her husband's relations, are sullen and cruel. She herself is patient and bows before her fate; she sees only the petty events of life, shallow everyday reality which hides all horizons from view.

This is a novel of inaction, obedience and utter submission, qualities which the populists consider heroic.

But for us there is another heroism, the heroism of non-acceptance, of revolt, of militancy. We require of a book that it shall help the masses to realize their destiny, that it shall guide them in their struggle. That is the part that revolutionary literature must play; it is one that will grow and develop as time goes on and the class conflicts in France become more intense.

GERMANY

Literary Items from Fascist Germany

"On the teacher's birthday both the chair and the blackboard were decorated with

wreaths. Didrich even wreathed the cane, the instrument of punishment."

Thus began the career of Didrich Gessling, the hero in Heinrich Mann's famous novel, *The Loyal Subject.* Buried, as it seemed, under the debris of Wilhelm's monarchy, Didrich Gessling came to life again under the "Third Empire." But not as the hero of a novel. Far from it, he himself is an author of books and dramas of the "Third Empire," commissary of the Berlin State Theatre since the first days of the "National Revolution," State Councillor, President of the Academy of Literature, and so on and so forth. Hans Jost ended where Didrich Gessling began. But he had to pay heavily for this laborious work of decorating the fascist bludgeon. He lost all that remained of his former talent. There was a time when Hans Jost was a promising writer.

During the imperialist war in 1917, when Germany was seized with chauvinist frenzy, he wrote his drama *The Dawn.* In this drama one read that "war meant honor for the aristocracy, profitable trade for business men and the decimation of every tenth proletarian. . . . Love for one's fatherland may be the product of a limited mind, but usually it is prescribed by law."

Jost's new book, just out, the *Masque and the Face, The Journey of a National Socialist from Germany Abroad and Back,* shows the sad end to which the "dawn" of his literary career has come. These travel notes of a literary huckstering agent of German fascism, who has made a propagandist tour through Europe, offer a rich collection of Byzantinism.

This is how Jost describes Hitler's hair: "Here is the hair. So far both portrait and sculpture fail to convey its air of indomitable command. . . . Neither steel helmet, nor head gear, nor comb, nor brush can hold in check what belongs to the elements of wind and storm. The hair, like clouds, now shades, now reveals the features of a face in radiance."

Here is a description of the "Leader's" temples: "The temples bear indications of a stony distance (!?). They are like sensitive membranes and rest between the ears and the eyes. They are the most peculiar temples that I have ever seen. Their command is—stand off!"

No wonder that with such supernatural hair and temples Hitler's face, according to Jost, "hovers over the vast country like a storm petrel."

Evidently in the "Third Empire" superfluity of Byzantinism serves to cover a multitude of sins against style and common grammar. If such is the literary style of "classics" like Jost, then what can one expect of the smaller literary fry? The *Volkischer Beobachter* in its issue of January 4, published a short story entitled "Hetty Bolkens' Decision" in which we find the following gems: "He was a son of the sea but the *gayety* of his character was not of *racial* origin since his parents were Frisians of an old stock of sailors, but from the virgin forests something exotic penetrated his *Nordic* soul," etc. This is no parody but a fair example of fascist literary style. Of such literature one may say with Ludwig Boerne: "Half a million books less and Germans will grow wiser."

To the greatest humiliation of Hitlerite writers, fascist literary production is ignored outside of Germany.

Das Schwarze Korps (The Black Corps), an organ which is controlled by the secret police and takes an interest in literary matters, writes: "We have taken the trouble to find out which books sell best on the Swiss book market. . . . We dipped into the book page of some of the important Swiss newspapers." The results of this deep study sent the police authorities on literature into a rage. They discovered that it was neither Jost nor Blunk that was in the centre of the attention of the Swiss reading public but Heinrich Mann with his new novel *The Youth of Henry IV* and Konrad Heiden with his biography of Hitler. The book of the anti-fascist Heiden, the former Munich correspondent of the *Vossiche Zeitung* and author of the *History of German Fascism,* has created a stir and has, moreover, surreptitiously found its way into Germany where it is passed from hand to hand.

While Germany's longing for an interesting work of literary art remains unsatisfied, the fascists are imposing upon the reading public a swarm of literary nonentities whom the administration crowns with laurels. The fascists are boasting that 70 writers were awarded prizes in the course of last year.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* is jubilant: "Never before was there such an abundance of literary prizes as there is today in the new empire. This is a result of the indefatigable exertions made to stimulate and develop literary art. Seventy awarded writers in the course of one year beats the record!" Nevertheless even this unified bourgeois newspaper has to admit in its report about the "successes" of fascist literature that most of the names of the awarded writers have never been heard of before.

While lavishly heaping honors on their literary hirelings the fascists deal peremptorily with talented writers who have no inclination to bend their knees before the brown barbarians. Recently a list of names of people who have been deprived of German citizenship was published in the fascist press. Included in this list are the names of Arnold Zweig, Wolfgang Langhof, Heinz Paul and Wolfgang Halgarten. Langhof is accused of "having published in pamphlets and in the emigrant press in-

formation which is nothing but a mean attack against the new state."

It is the same Langhof whose book *The Soldiers of the Swamps* describing the horrors of the fascist regime has run up to 27 editions in German and has been translated into eight foreign languages. Arnold Zweig's latest novel *Training Before Verdun* will shortly be issued by American, English, Russian, French, Spanish, Polish, German and Danish publishing houses.

The popularity of the anti-fascist writers shows how little weight the laurels bestowed by the fascists upon their literary nominees carry with the reading public. Engels, at one time, advised German poets of talent to leave Germany and settle in civilized countries. And this is precisely what many prominent German writers did upon Hitler's advent to power. To have been deprived of their citizenship by the fascist dictators is only an honor for Arnold Zweig and the other emigrant writers.

But while the heroes of the "Third Empire" anathematize and banish the anti-fascist writers, they are not averse to making money on them. Romain Rolland, as is known, is among the writers most hated by the fascists. The "offence" of reading or passing on his works in fascist Germany carries confinement in a concentration camp. Nevertheless the well known publishing house Three Masks of Berlin recently made so bold as to address a letter to Romain Rolland. But this rash act on the part of the unified fascist publishing house was prompted by considerations of a very material nature: it concerned money which never smells badly.

According to an agreement which the publishing house had at one time entered into with Romain Rolland, it undertook to publish and distribute the author's works and in consideration of this it was to receive a certain percentage of his fees. With the suppression of Romain Rolland's works in Germany the rights of the publishing house automatically reverted to the writer inasmuch as the publishers had ceased distributing his works. Nevertheless the Three Masks entered a claim upon "their" share of the author's fees. When in connection with the 70th anniversary of Romain Rolland's birth, the directors of the Basle City Theatre decided to stage his *Wolves*, the Three Masks demanded a share of the takings, threatening to hinder the staging of the play should their claim be refused.

A serious conflict also arose between the Three Masks and Oscar Maria Graf.

At the time when the fascists were burning at the stake the work of the best writers whom they condemned as "alien to the German spirit." the works of Oscar Maria Graf escaped this fate; they were considered by the fascists to be "thorough German." Stung by this undeserved dishonor, Oscar Maria Graf wrote his article "Burn Me!" which was reprinted in the press of the various countries of the world. Enraged by the publication of this article the fascists prohibited his works in Germany. Immediately after the suppression of his works Graf cancelled his agreement with the Three Masks publishing house which had discontinued the sale of his books.

The Three Masks, however, was bent on continuing to make money on the anti-fascist writer and applied for redress to the court at Brna in Czechoslovakia. This trial is of great importance to the emigrant writers since numerous conflicts of a similar nature have arisen between them and their former publisher.

The fascists know well that no money and particularly money in foreign currency is to be made on their home-bred "celebrities" whom no foreign publishing house cares to publish. That is why the fascists who are in great need of foreign currency endeavor to make money on writers whom they have banished from Germany.

Knut Hamsun as the Fascist Echo

When the news of Hamsun's disgraceful fascist attack against Ossetsky became known to the literary world of Scandinavia and later to the whole literary world of Europe, some people were inclined to regard Hamsun's hysterical outburst as a deplorable misunderstanding which was not to be exaggerated. It was, however, none other than Hamsun himself who hastened to dissipate all doubts that may have existed.

Taking advantage of Herman Wildeney's article in the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten*, Hamsun came out with an answer addressed to those who were inclined to excuse him or find mitigating circumstances in his favor. In Wildeney's article a request was made that the incident should not be taken too seriously and warning was given against passing a hasty judgment upon the venerable old man of Hoergolen, who, in his remote, out of the way place in Norway, is denied the opportunity of reading newspapers and evidently had fallen a victim to unscrupulous news spread about Karl Ossetsky.

However, with an obstinacy worthy of a better cause Hamsun repeated his tactless attacks against Ossetsky. In his new article he declared that he does not stand in need of being vindicated, that he reads the press regularly and is well informed. He once more recommended Ossetsky to do what he advised him to do in his first article, viz., to give up being in constant opposition to all German authorities and instead render positive help to his country (i.e., fascism) since by following his advice

Ossetsky would prove to be not only a better German but also a better man.

Servility to fascism is Hamsun's new creed which he preaches with cynical persistance. Needless to say the fascist cannibals burst out into a wild dance around Hamsun. One good turn deserves another. The German film company Ufa is releasing a film after Hamsun's novel *Victoria.* According to the *Zeit,* the well informed organ of Hitler's agents in Czechoslovakia, Hamsun's daughter, a beginning actress, has been invited to play in a film representing a type of "Nordic" woman. An accident, however, upset these arrangements. Hamsun's daughter was run over by a motor car in Berlin. However, as rumor would have it, the fact of such a big film company as Ufa inviting a young inexperienced actress to play so important a part is an undoubted gesture of the fascists in recognition of Hamsun's "action" in the defence of "New Germany."

Hamsun's behavior could not but give rise to the severest criticism. Thirty Scandinavian writers published a manifesto in which they protested against Hamsun's fascist escapades.

"The undersigned Norwegian writers," says the manifesto, "believe that the right of every creative work to fame in the final analysis rests on the fact that whatever one's attitude to the debatable questions of one's times the principle of freedom of spirit must be maintained intact. We admire Knut Hamsun's creative work. But at the same time we must regret that the greatest among us contemporary Norwegian writers, who enjoys full freedom and security, should attack a man who is confined in a German concentration camp solely because he had the courage to own his convictions and risk his life for them. We regret that Knut Hamsun should deem it proper to come out against a defenceless prisoner who is deprived of his freedom and speak in favor of an unrestricted political system which has condemned to exile the flower of German writers whose fame equals that of Hamsun."

The manifesto of the Norwegian writers is a dignified rebuff for Hamsun.

"Posterity," Schiller once said, "will pass by a writer who was not greater than his works. Knut Hamsun, far from being above his works is considerably beneath them. By his repeated attacks against Ossetsky he has lowered his name of a great writer.

In the light of recent information from the concentration camp Papenburg where Ossetsky is imprisoned, Hamsun's attitude is even more repulsive. Ossetsky's health has grown worse and there is reason to fear that he is in a state of extreme exhaustion.

Should the Nobel prize be awarded to Ossetsky the fascists may be compelled to release him. In view of this the fascists seem to be resolved to put Ossetsky to death before the award eventuates. Goebbels had the audacity to declare openly as much as that in one of his "election" speeches.

"High treason," thundered Goebbels, "was at one time in fashion and indulged in by the salons and even today there are people who demand that the Nobel prize should be awarded to traitors. Nevertheless we regard people guilty of high treason as criminals and deal with them accordingly. Everybody who values money more than his fatherland is a criminal and we will not release him. Let the head of one person guilty of high treason fall in peace time rather than hundreds upon hundreds of our countrymen should lose their lives during war time on his account."

Not satisfied with this direct request for the murder of Ossetsky, Goebbels, the fascist jester, who is well known for his bloodthirstiness, goes even the length of slandering his captive whose noble mind, disinterested and immaculate moral qualities have earned him recognition throughout the world.

Ossetsky, he alleges, values money more than his fatherland. But the allegations of this minister of lies will deceive nobody. All the world knows that since the advent of fascism to power Germany has become a prison for those who really and truly love the German people and fight for their freedom and felicity. With Goebbel's gang against the real representatives of the German people—to such a pass has Hamsun come. Alas, this only brings him into dishonor both as writer and man.

Ludwig Renn on His Experiences in a Fascist Prison

Neue Weltbuhne, the anti-fascist magazine issued at Prague, published an interview with Ludwig Renn, in which the writer relates his experiences in the fascist prison where he had spent three years.

When news of the maltreatment of prisoners in Germany began to appear in the press abroad, Ossetsky, Torgler and Renn were brought to the Polizei-presidium in order to be shown to the representatives of the foreign press. They were taken to the room of Dr. Diels, the chief of the secret police. Dr. Diels perched himself on his desk the better to observe his audience.

The "criminals" were distributed in the corners of the room and behind each of them were stationed police agents in plain clothes. The foreign correspondents entered the room. Renn gave a narrative of the tortures inflicted upon an old counsellor of the court. "You should take up this case," Renn addressed himself to the correspondents who were taking notes. The warder

ran up to his chief who began to gesticulate. "It should be stated;" he cried, "that the beating up was not done by the police. . . ." Renn and Ossetsky protested against the arbitrary rule to which they were subjected. Renn made complaints about the food.

"Mr. Torgler," cried Diels to his new ally, "Mr. Renn complains that the food is bad. Is that true?"

"No," replied Torgler, "the food is good." The correspondents surrounded Ossetsky and Renn. The police agents grew nervous and began to press the correspondents back.

"Gentlemen," cried Renn, "you have the opportunity of observing how free we are to converse with you. . . ."

There is good team spirit among the prisoners. Upon his arrival every new prisoner is questioned at great detail as to the happenings in Germany and in the world generally. Papers clandestinely brought into the prison pass from hand to hand. The economic sections of the papers are carefully studied. The prisoners know the condition of the mark and the extent to which it is covered by gold; they make calculations as to how long the gold cover will last. Nobody in the prison seemed to lose heart. Dimitrov's voice penetrates into the prison instilling new strength. News of the Soviet Union, of its growing output of steel, of the development of its foreign trade and its favorable balance of trade found its way even into the paper published by the prison authorities (Waldheim). Once the prison paper even published Tukhachevsky's speech: the fascists wished to raise the cry of the danger of Soviet armaments. However, on that day when the prisoners, during exercise time, marched along the narrow courtyard of the prison they were in mind with the Red Army.

During the war Renn made numerous acquaintances. When he was taken for an examination, one of the police officials whispered to him: "Herr Captain, do you recognize me? I was vice sergeant major. . . There is another member of our company here. Can we do anything for you?"

On the anniversary of the battle of Dinant the chief warder of the prison came up to Renn and asked: "Do you know what date is today?" "Yes," replied Renn, "it is the 23rd of August, the day of Dinant. I took part in that battle." "And so did I," rejoined the warder, "but we will have no more of that. Let those who shout most do the fighting if they like."

Renn, the author of *War,* who is a captain and of noble birth, was wooed by the fascists who wished to win him to their side and if possible to buy him.

"You personally might be amnestied and you could draw your officer's pension," he was told once. Another time he was asked whether a visit by Alfred Rosenberg would be agreeable to him. The revolutionary writer gave a dignified reply: "It would be disagreeable to both of us."

The Central Committee of the German Communist Party Congratulates Ludwig Renn

On the occasion of the liberation of Ludwig Renn from prison the Central Committee of the illegal Communist Party of Germany addressed him with the following congratulation:

"Dear Comrade Renn:

"On the occasion of your having regained freedom, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany greets you with an emphatic fraternal 'Rot Front!' Our Party has never for a single instant doubted but that you, the courageous fighter against war, who exposed the predatory nature of the imperialist war and in honest struggle found your way to the working class, would acquit yourself with honor of the severe revolutionary test in Hitler's prison. You, the exemplary fighter, worthy of the Party of our imprisoned leader, Ernst Thaelmann, of the Party of the murdered heroes Iona Scheer, Schultze, August Lutgens and Rudolf Klaus, are returning to the ranks of the German anti-fascist liberationist fighters.

"We regard your liberation as a victory achieved by the powerful liberationist movement, by the underground fighters in Germany itself and by the millions of freedom loving people beyond its boundaries. Dear Comrade Renn, your energy will be joined with the energy of our heroic Party and of all the anti-fascists for the purpose of forcing the prison doors for Thaelmann, Mirendorf, Ossetsky and all the opponents of Hitler so that we may move forward towards the emancipation of our toiling people and our country from the terrible infamy and barbarity of Hitler's dictatorship!"

Romain Rolland, Lion Feuchtwanger, Heinrich Mann, Emil Ludwig and Others Greet Thaelmann

Three years have elapsed since the leader of the German Communist Party was imprisoned by the fascists. On this occasion Romain Rolland addressed the following letter to Thaelmann in the Moabit prison:

"Dear Comrade Thaelmann:

"Three years you have spent in prison without any charge being made or court proceedings taken against you. The enemy wanted to suppress your voice that was powerfully rising and calling to a fight against war, in defense of freedom and peace, and democratic progress. But in that the enemy failed. True, today your enemies wield power in Germany and are able to

keep you under lock and key in the prison cell. But the response your enforced silence is awakening is all the greater. The name of Thaelmann, which formerly was known only to a limited number of people outside Germany, has today become a standard of struggle for the peace and freedom of millions of people in all countries.

"On behalf of these millions of men and women who are associated with your cause, which is also our cause, we send you our heartfelt fraternal greetings. On this day innumerable masses in all countries will repeat their solemn vow unceasingly to fight for your liberation and the liberation of all the political prisoners. The magnificent and powerful advance of socialist society in the Soviet Union, the grand victory of the people's united front in Spain, the rapid consolidation of the left movement in many countries is patent proof that the future belongs to the ideas, for which you, our Comrade Thaelmann, are fighting and suffering. And these ideas shall win!"

Lion Feuchtwanger, Emil Ludwig and the Spanish writers, Ramon Sender and Rafael Alberti, along with numerous representatives of science and social bodies, have attached their signatures to this letter of Romain Rolland.

Heinrich Mann in a letter addressed to a meeting of the Free German Youth in Paris, wrote:

"The prisoner, Ernst Thaelmann, is very strong, stronger than his torturers who would like to destroy him, but dare not. Thaelmann is a real working man with fists and common sense. The hero Thaelmann sticks to his guns despite the proposal which they certainly made him to betray his cause and his class and be accepted in their gang and gain wealth and power. But no, he snaps his fingers at their lousy power and their stolen wealth. With his common sense he realizes that the prison makes him stronger every day. Prison convinces many a man who otherwise would never believe in the justice of his cause.

"His name is now known to the whole world. The people of the whole world long to see Thaelmann freed from his cell by the victorious people. Proletarian youth, your heroes and you yourselves must be free!"

SOVIETIANA

The Soviet Housekeeper

In the Housing Section of the Moscow Soviet there works a modest quiet woman of middle-age. She was elected a member of the Soviet by the housekeepers of the Stalin District. At one of the meetings of the Soviet she raised the question of the coming Red Army Festival—and up jumped a young worker, also a member of the Soviet, who had recently returned from his short period of mobilization in the Red Army:

"Well, I think I'd better deal with that," he said smilingly to her, "I'm much better acquainted with the Red Army than you are. But you carry on with the question of housing repairs, plumbing, domestic problems. That's more in your line."

The woman deputy replied quietly and seriously:

"Well, maybe you're right!"

This woman is called Galina Medovnik. She is one of the heroines of the now legendary forced march of the Tamansky Red Partisan Army under the command of Kovtyuka, which Serafimovitch has written about in his famous book *The Iron Flood.* Galina Medovnik was taken prisoner by the Whites, sentenced to be hung. Escaped. Twice in cavalry battles captured guns and weapons from the enemy. Has fought in many battles. She participated in the Tamansky march with rifle in hand, on horseback throughout, under the direct command of the legendary Commander of the Tamansky Red Partisan Army, Comrade Kovtyuka.

She was awarded the Order of the Red Banner.

Academician and Fitter

Another evening in Moscow there was a meeting of the Academy of Science with the best workers and engineers of the factories in the Stalin District. A foreign journalist who was present asked that the famous Academician Bach be pointed out to him, as he wished to become acquainted and discuss certain questions of the cultural revolution. He was shown a table at which two greybearded bespectacled old men were sitting. The journalist made straight for the table. He immediately, journalist fashion, plunged into questioning one of the venerable old men. The journalist was charmed by the affability and humor of the old fellow, with his bright eyes gleaming through ordinary steel-rimmed spectacles. During the course of half an hour he discussed with him the questions of Soviet education, of the new generation, of schools. Finally he appealed to the highly respected academician to autograph his notebook. The old chap was astonished: "What academician? I'm no academician. That's him sitting opposite. As for me I've already worked forty years as a fitter, and at the moment I'm chief foreman."

And with pride he named his factory.

"That Would Have Been Terrible. . . ."

About six months before his death the famous plant-breeder and horticulturist—the Soviet Burbank—Ivan Vladimirovitch Michurin was visited by a black-eyed sunburnt boy and blonde curly-haired girl, dressed in blue shirts and red ties. They were delegates from the group of school children Pioneers who had recently completed an expedition to the Altai taiga (forest) under the leadership of the Botanist—Professor Nagibin. Ten Pioneers in the course of their summer holidays travelled on horseback, in boats, and on foot 900 kilometres of virgin forests. They were all participants in the school study-circle named after Michurin, and they call themselves Michurin's grandchildren. They brought to the famous old man their gifts. They succeeded in finding on the Altai twenty-seven forms of wild-growing currants, berries as large as the Crimean grape. They found a red currant of a frost-hardy form. They found an ever-green gooseberry, and a species of onion that withstood frost to 45 degrees. This onion is invaluable for collective farms beyond the Arctic circle.

Ivan Michurin, with hands quivering from emotion, accepted their presents carefully packed in cases. And finally asked:

"Well, tell me honestly, it was rather terrible, wasn't it? 900 kilometres in the Taiga jungle? That's no joke!"

The boy was silent. The girl, blushing, replied: "Yes, it sometimes was terrible, Grandpa Michurin. To think—suppose we found nothing? That would be a disgrace! That would have been terrible. . . ."

A Month in the Club

Here is the complete program of a month's work in the club of the "N" Red Fleet Division in Kronstadt:

— Results of the Diesel engine trial. Lecture.

— The Sixth Mendeleyev Congress. Lecture.

— Lecture by a Doctor of Chemistry.

— An essay on Geography.

— Lecture on the Congress of Soviet Writers and new productions of world literature.
— Play by the Moscow Kamerny Theatre.
— Play by the Theatre of Young Workers.
— Two lectures on Geology.
— Concert, "National Songs of the Republics."
— Reading of the novel *Tsusima* by Novikov-Priboy with the personal participation of the author.
— Lecture on the Paris Congress for the Defense of Culture.
— Five showings of new Soviet films.

Seventeen Order-Holders

List of professions of comrades recently decorated with Orders at one of the meetings of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, under the chairmanship of Gregory Petrovsky:

Four airmen.
Four engineers
Professor.
Draughtswoman.
Woman student.
Three scientific workers.
Newspaper editor.
Lumberman.
Carpenter.

What's On This Evening?

One of the responsible workers of the Kazan Soviet rang up the secretaries of the district committees and village committees and gave them one and the same question: "What's on this evening?"

Most of the districts replied that there was a meeting of Stakhanovites studying the speech of Comrade Stalin. From the Chistopolsky district they were informed that *Professor Mamlock* by Frederick Wolf was being played in the Tartar language. For the collective farms "Harvest," "Industry" and "Victory" the film *Chapayev* was being shown, *The Captain's Daughter* from the novel of Pushkin, and the comedy film *The Crown Prince of the Republic*. In the Bolshetolkishevsky collective farm there was a rehearsal of their orchestra of stringed instruments, for which the kolkhoz had received awards. In the village of Alpatova there were classes studying the English and French languages. In the kolkhoz "Way of October" an evening of western dancing (ballroom dancing). In the kolkhoz "The Way of Lenin" an evening of amateur dramatics. In the village of Kaybitsi celebrations on the completing of a local electric power station built on the kolkhoz's own means, and afterwards a kolkhoz ball. In ten kolkhozes amateur dramatic clubs were producing plays by the Tartar dramatists Tenchurin and Kamala. In Arske, Bulgume and Pestretsova weddings of kolkhoz members with a ball.

Overflow

The Odessa Public Library appealed to the Town Soviet to help it out of a critical situation. Its halls and rooms were unable to hold those wishing to read and study. For the year 1934 the library loaned 225,761 books. For ten months of 1935 it loaned 424,636 books. The library has existed for 106 years. For the first time in its existence it has been forced to refuse to serve numbers of library members.

R E V I E W S

E. Dobin

About Y. Yanovsky's Book "Horsemen"

Horsemen by the Ukrainian writer Yanovsky has at once and rightly taken a very prominent place in the Soviet literature of the current year. This book has revealed to us a talent full of original and concentrated energy, a special sort of explosive emotion. The heroics of 1919, the unrepeatable year of 1919 in the Ukraine—such is the theme of *Horsemen* and we will make no mistake if we say that in this concentrated passion with which the year 1919 is depicted there is an echo precisely of recent years. In this book there are ringing echoes of the struggles with the last remnants of counter-revolution who sought in the difficulties of collectivization an opportunity to stab the Soviet Ukraine in the back, the remnants which were mowed down by the forces of the Revolution.

The heroic is a characteristic stylistic feature of Soviet art. For this is the art of the Revolution, the greatest Revolution in history. The attention, however, fixes upon the fact that this general stylistic feature as it is incarnated in *Horsemen* acquires very original nuances. It will be worth while to examine these specific peculiarities both in order to give a proper appraisal of the book and in order that, having understood its place in our literature, put it in proper perspective.

I

"O dear ecstatic year!" *Horsemen* is penetrated through and through with such tensely passionate intonations, with ecstasy which at times becomes sheer exultation. Hence the solemn pathos, deriving from the style of the ode, of the author's exclamations: "O nineteenth year of defeats and victories, bloody year of historical battles, critical, invincible, stormy and gentle, sleepless nineteenth year, year of cornerstone and knot!" Or: "O unrepeatable year of the high men of the oppressed class, O earth of struggle!"

The author does not have an easy time of it with this tone, which is exalted to the extreme. His voice sometimes breaks. And then—alas!—there rings out simply bad taste. But it would be a mistake because of these lapses to overlook the convincing strength of artistic sincerity of the stylistic structure of the book which makes the beating of its pulse—revolutionary principle—felt so tangibly. Only the sincerity of the author's voice saves the book from a very great danger—the danger of seeming flowery.

Horsemen by virtue of its stylistic peculiarities takes us back in some measure to that line of Soviet literature which was characteristic of the first years of Soviet prose. Boris Pilnyak, Vsevolod Ivanov, Y. Libidenski (of *Weeks* and *Tomorrow*) and I. Babel, despite all the great inner differences between them were united in a tensely impetuous authorly speech which rang out all the time through the whole course of their works, rhythmicalness, even melodiousness which transformed prosaic speech into poetical. And this is just what is characteristic of Yanovsky's novel or rather poem.

There are writers for whom the absence of scenery is characteristic. In *Horsemen* however, the scenery has an exceptionally important significance. It is an essential component of the interior stylistic rhythm of the poem and in some measure a key to the understanding of its peculiarities.

There is something in common with the cinema producer Dovzhenko in the strength with which Yanovski depicts nature.

"And you can go on forever across the steppe and lie upon the earth, put your ear to the earth—if only you are able to listen—it is noisy and boisterous, and if you lie upon the earth and look at the deep sky where the clouds are swimming in blue air it seems that you yourself are flying, have broken free from the earth, move the clouds about with your hands, shoot up under the blue sky and, returning to the earth, see how many living friends you have upon the steppe.

"And the lark which is lost in the sky as it sings and the eagle which hangs upon the wind, scarcely stirring the tips of its wings as it seeks for prey; the stork walks upon the ground like a surveyor, the lizard, green as the blade of a scallion, has crossed the boundary, wild bees fly for honey, the suslik whistles, grasshoppers scrape on their violins like a village cobbler at a wedding.

"And you want to know where it is that the sun sets, you are drawn to go over the level steppe to the end of the earth and glance into the gulf where already not a few dying suns have gathered..." This is a triumphant hymn to the earth: a love song for its mighty creative forces. Scenery for Yanovsky has the purpose of creating a concentrated emotional tonality around the events of the poem. Nature as it were symbolizes the meaning of events.

"And the forest stood level all around, propping up the sky, it trembled and creaked like ship ropes, the detachment went on through this solemnity and gloom, a tragic action took place upon the sky, upon the sky glaciers moved from the mountains and covered whole mainlands, upon the sky mainlands broke up, dissolved in the ocean.

"There took place catastrophes which were millions of years old but the detachment went on and on, went on and on..."

The speech of the characters in *Horsemen* is uniformly stylized. The scenery and the author's voice and the dialogue and the speeches of the heroes—all are but variations of one singing rhythmic-emotional formula. The stamp of "tragic metaphor" lies upon all. And the form-determining role which it plays in the poem results in what is characteristic of *Horsemen*—the absence of the individualization of characters and, in the first place, the independence of their style of speech from their psychological and even social characterization.

Thus, for instance, the speech of the steel worker Chubyenko seems to be full of details of everyday life drawn from the steel industry, right down to such minute points as that steel for construction jobs must contain "from three to six tenths of one per cent manganese." This industrial detail, however, is fictitious in the same degree as the Marten oven and the glass blowing furnace in that passage of *Horsemen* where there is given a description of how the Red Army men from Chubyenko's detachment who were ill with typhus began to rave in delirium, one about a Marten oven and the other about a glass blowing furnace and where this emphasized exactness and individualization (*one* a Marten oven, the *other* a glass blowing furnace) still more sharply set off the fictitiousness of this detail of everyday life, its purely allegorical function.

In the monologue of the steel worker Chubyenko, steel, construction, alloys are not real but allegorical. And Chubyenko himself emphasizes this when he relates how he formed the partisan detachment and how he took into it only such men "as had boiled but had not overflowed, as had not more than one per cent of oxygen, in a word such men as would show themselves first class steel upon being tested."

This complete lack of correspondence with everyday life, the transference of the narrative onto some kind of different plane removed from everyday life, from the real features of environment and setting, is bound up in the closest fashion with that effacement of the individuality of the characters which is shown first of all in the monotonal structure of their speech.

II

Horsemen is not a novel by virtue of one feature alone: in it there are completely absent the lines of development of the heroes and their fates which are characteristic of the novel, together with the complicated interrelations of the lives and fates of novel heroes. *Horsemen* consists of eight chapters complete in themselves and with different heroes. It is true that these heroes reappear in different chapters. Danilka, the child in "Childhood", appears in the capacity of a battalion commander in "Shved's Battalion." Chubyenko who is saved from disaster in the waves in "A Wherry on the Sea" we see again as the commander of the Bolshevik detachment in "Chubyenko, Commander of the Regiment" and "The Way of the Army," and we see him again as the steel worker in "Adamenko". The unfolding of the fates of the heroes, however, is essentially conditionalized. In the episodes relating to one and the same personage there is no interior and inevitable connection, they are not necessarily bound to happen to this personage of all others. In just the same way there is no inevitability in the sudden, completely unexplained and uncaused appearance of Ivan Polovets who saves Chubyenko at the end of "Chubyenko, Commandre of the Regiment" or in the appearance of Chubyenko in the chapter on the rebels at the close of "A Letter to Eternity," appearances which strive to create interconnection between the fates of the different characters. This interconnection is completely conditional and even fictitious if we approach it with the measuring rod of prosaic narration.

We have already stipulated, however, that *Horsemen* is not a novel. Naturally it does not have that which ought to be in a novel and to reproach Yanovsky with this would be unjust.

Horsemen ought to be appraised as a production of a poetical kind.

Here, for instance, in "Childhood" we find a construction based on the resonance of two lyric images: the image of spring and the image of little Danilka... "The silver birch and the snowdrops are flowering, the golden pheasant's eyes and the fluffy dandelion, and the cherry orchards stand like a fantastic white foam on the warm steppe, rain falls in drops, soaking the light dust

and evaporating, and hungry and exhausted children run about in the rain.... 'Raindrops, raindrops, for us to make soup'..." etc. The contrast between the splendid joy of flowering nature and Danilka's hungry and exhausted childhood is the leit motif of this song in prose.

Among the other chapters "Childhood" occupies a special place. It is a lyric song in prose while the remaining chapters it would probably be correct to call heroic ballads in prose. The unusual and exceptional character of their tragic subjects—that is what distinguishes them.

We shall have to speak further of Yanovski's longing for symbolization and at times symbolization in a bad sense. Meanwhile let us relate a few more plots of the ballad type (they cannot be called otherwise).

"Chubyenko, Commander of the Regiment." Sick with typhus Chubyenko is captured by partisans. It turns out that they are sympathetic to the Reds. Their leader frees Chubyenko and agrees with him on a meeting to take place between both detachments. At the appointed place the partisans solemnly march forward with red banners to meet Chubyenko's regiment—and the Red Army men greet them with a hail of fire. The partisans were Petlurists and Chubyenko had seen through the treacherous cunning of their game.

"The Way of the Army." Shved, the commander of a Red Army detachment, dresses his men in Whiteguard uniform, encounters Reds and is obliged to give himself up to them.

In another instance, this very Shved meets with a Whiteguard detachment dressed as Reds. He does not see through the disguise and perishes with the whole detachment.

Finally, in the chapter "Adamenko" Chubyenko recalls a battle in which Red Partisans dressed up as women and destroyed a detachment of the German occupation.

Four battles with men in disguise! Is not this a bit too much in a book of 43 pages? Are we not entitled to speak of the excessive degree of unusualness in the plots of *Horsemen*.

We do not in the least wish to say that these plots and descriptions are false, that they lack lifelike verisimilitude. Such a reproach would be unjust. It was precisely in the Ukraine that the Civil War abounded in episodes not less wonderful and unexpected than those cited. But in Yanovski we have to do with an exceptional kind of concentrated, *consistent* unexpectedness and the important thing is that these unexpected events take place without sufficient motivation, without a genuine cause in what has gone before. Yanovski is far from always fulfilling the task of the artist of which Schedrin once wrote ("to trace the unexpected so that it ceases to be unexpected"). This arises from Yanovski's original plot structure—his events have only an end, without having a beginning. In his ballads for the most part plot as an unfolding chain of events is absent—there is only the culminating point of the plot.

The best of these heroic ballads in prose is the "Letter to Eternity." In it there is depicted the heroism of a Bolshevik postman who falls into the hands of the Germans. Very convincingly written is the scene in which the German captain gently, eloquently and benevolently persuades the postman to reveal where the arms are hidden and the names and addresses of the leaders of the underground organization; but the postman "sat apathetically, summoning up his will and little by little he forgot the information that the capain was demanding of him. He forgot who were the members of the underground Bolshevik committee and that the rising was fixed for that very night. He forgot the place where the rifles and cannon were buried and this was the most difficult thing—to forget and to push away his knowledge into such a far corner of his memory that no physical pain would ever reach it."

The theme of revolutionary heroism, manly inflexibility in the most terrible conditions is the dominant theme of *Horsemen*. The characters of *Horsemen*—Adamenko, Ivan Polovets, Chubyenko, the blacksmith Maxim, the commissar Danila and Shved—are variations of one and the same character, very little individualized as we have already said, variations of a generalized character of the revolutionary fighter. The character of the postman, although very sparingly drawn, stands out among all the others with the greatest degree of genuine artistic life. It would be truer to say that the characters of the postman and the boy Danila are the only human characters in *Horsemen* endowed with life and not with allegorical being.

Yanovski is a talented singer of the heroics of our Revolution and *Horsemen* is a production of great artistic value. But this does not free from, but on the contrary lays upon us, the duty of pointing out the Achilles heel of Yanovski's creative work.

The heroes of the Bolshevik underground and the Civil War were men, not supermen. Their majestic strength and courage came from the great aims of the Revolution, the great struggle itself, their comrades in the cause and in class. Men who were "ordinary," "frail" and earthly became genuine heroes. And the majesty of this transformation of "ordinary" men into revolutionary warriors capable of the most tremendous heroism is one of the moving themes of our art.

In distinction from, let us say, Furmanov and Fadeyev, the heroics of *Horsemen* is not brought in relation with the everyday, logical development of men and events, characters and their setting. Hence may rise the danger of transition to another plane, alien to the logic of the real and the everyday, a tendency towards symbolization. And in actual fact Yanovski in places has not escaped this danger. The iron rose which Maxim holds in his hands—"the gentle creation of an extraordinary hammer, the joy of metal, which budded and flowered and attained the fragility of the petals of live blossoms"—is a symbol of the Revolution of which Maxim dreams. Just as symbolical are the red sledge on which Chubyenko journeys and the red stars tattooed on the chests of the Red Army men of his regiment. This tendency to stylistic ornamentation with the aid of allegorical images is artistically disputable. And it must be said that it is precisely the pages "with the rose" which are artistically the weakest in the book and in them more than anywhere else does Yanovski's "tragically metaphorical" intonation suffer from being overstretched.

Translated from the Russian by H. O. Whyte

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