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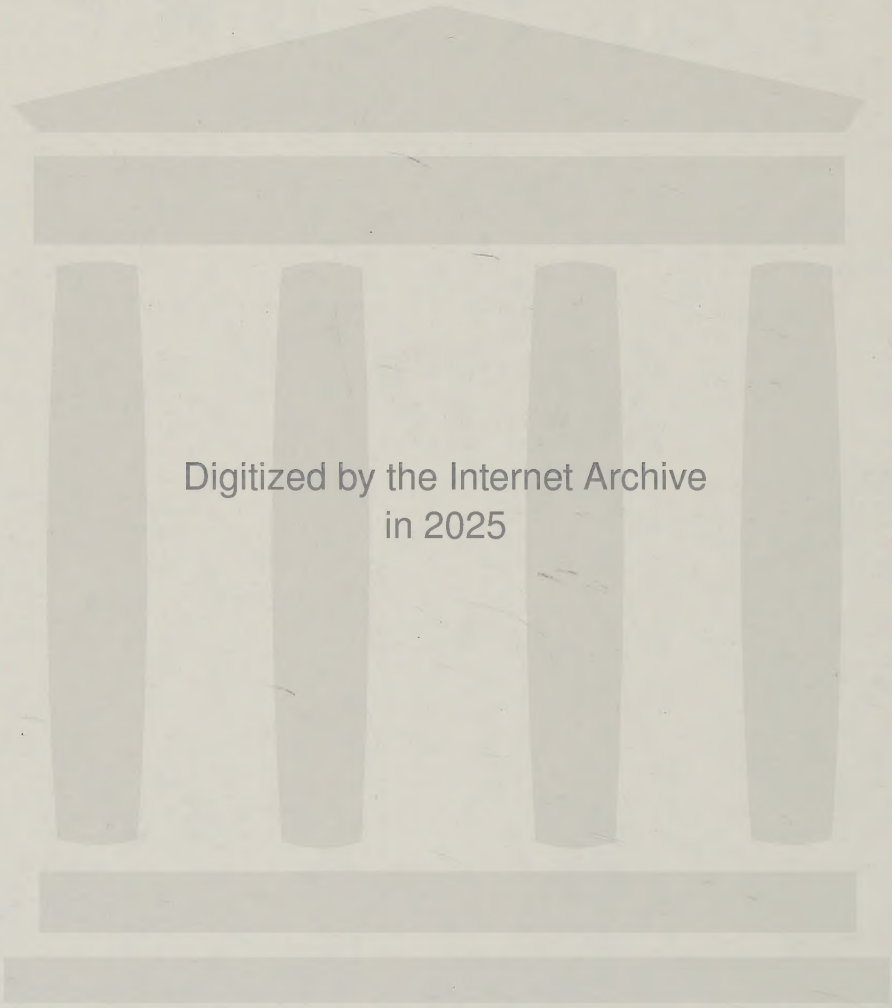

F I C T I O N

Antonio Garcia

Yanaconas

Antonio Garcia, the author of *Colombia—Anonymous Company* (proletarian short stories) is a little-known writer, at present at any rate. *Colombia—Anonymous Company* is his first book. It is all the more gratifying, therefore, to note the artistic merits of this book, which may be said to take a place in the high grade literature that has been produced during the last few years by revolutionary and radical writers in the countries of Latin America.

The book is prefaced by two articles in one of which he discusses a number of intricate questions, such as the origin of art, symbolism and realism, poetry and music, race principles in art, and proletarian art. Of course, one finds much that one cannot agree with in this article, but there can be no denying the fact that the author is well read and shows originality of thought; but his theoretical principles are none the less extremely shaky. In his second article, Garcia is more fortunate. He declares himself to be an enemy of "stereotype proletarian short stories." "I cannot and do not intend to invent revolutionary angels, or create ethereal beings, who smile as they are expected to, and who turn angry faces towards the exploiters." The basis of Antonio Garcia's literary work, he says, is "tendentious reality, not literature," that is, not literary invention.

"The personages of my stories are living human beings and I have known nearly all of them well, have shaken hands with them and fought alongside them," Garcia writes in the same article.

The author does not overcolor his writings. He simply describes the sufferings of "small people" (his heroes are all either proletarians or representatives of the poorest strata of the Colombian bourgeoisie). Garcia, however, employs fresh, vivid colors, and as a result, his stories have a distinctive exotic coloring of their own. His sure orientation on realism stands him in good stead here.

It is characteristic of Antonio Garcia that he sent his "proletarian short stories" to be read over by Maxim Gorky, the great teacher of the revolutionary writers.

I

The captain had the platoon drawn up on the parade ground and read out the order:

"Vice-Corporal Diógenes López is reduced to the ranks for showing disrespect to his superiors. Regimental Commander."

The soldiers dragged López out of the stuffy cattle shed and removed his straps and revolver. The prisoner's eyes seemed to stare vacantly at the leaden morning sky. He walked slowly as if he was trying to force his way through a barbed wire entanglement. There was a dry, metallic ring in his hoarse voice.

"Tell me, Parra," he asked, "why has the platoon been drawn up?"

"All on account of *this,* corporal."

"A-ah, on account of this dirty swindler and coward. Very well, let's go. You've been dragged into it, too, Castro?"

The good smell of the fields was borne on the wind. Above the pisé walls, the stalks of corn swayed gently to and fro; some children were lazily driving a herd of cows, raising columns of dust.

When Corporal López, his uniform soiled with fresh cow dung, appeared on the parade ground and stood in front of his platoon, the captain yelled:

"Tear off his stripes!"

Then the sergeant came over to Diógenes López, but the corporal gave him a vicious look and tearing the stripes from his uniform, shouted at the top of his voice:

"I earned them myself, you swine."

The captain, coming up to him, said in a stuttering voice :

"You are reduced to the ranks, and it is only because you are a vice-corporal that I am not having you put under arrest."

Diógenes López curled his lips in a cold sneer.

"Thank you, Captain." He was silent for a second and then spoke again.

"I ask permission to speak to my platoon."

"You have no longer anything in common with it."

"No matter, Captain, I want to tell the soldiers the reason why I have been reduced to the ranks."

"Silence, you blackguard!"

"This won't remain a secret, Captain. Let everyone know that"—he winced as the whip cut him across the face, but finished in a calm voice—"that you are a dirty swindler. It's all the same, they know it without my telling them."

He was bound in straps and sent to the prison, which adjoined the temporary barracks. It was a cramped hole, with a low zinc roof and a decayed earthen floor. The holes worn in it by many feet were full of water. But the bitterness of disappointed hopes was more unbearable than even the stench of the cesspool and the foul-smelling poisoned air.

A soldier brought him a bowl of rice and meat. A little later the drinking-pot was filled with salt water.

The soldier stood motionless at the door, looking at the prisoner, his huge square head prominent in the dim evening light. He began to speak in a jerky falsetto:

"I don't understand this, corporal!"

"But then I understand."

"Why, the matter . . . ."

"Is clear, isn't it?"

"Perfectly clear."

"So that means you understood."

"The captain sells our rations and punishes you for it. It's a bad look out for you."

"What makes you think that? If I were the judge . . . "

The soldier turned round and was leaving when Diógenes shouted:

"Listen here, Parra. Have you heard no news from Yanaconas?"

"Not a word. 'Husky' can only scrawl a few lines."

"Well, but the others?" The corporal's voice had a ring of alarm.

"No, they can't write."

The door closed. The foul stench rising from the ground made the prisoner's head swim. Diógenes stuck his nose through a crack between the boards, and gulped the fresh air.

When darkness came on, however, it seemed easier to breathe. He lit

a match. In the still air the flame looked like a piece of red glass. He rubbed his feet with his cap to keep them warm; then he went to the door and put his ear to the key-hole. He stood very still, listening to the sentry's footsteps.

"Hi! Ananias . . . "

There was no answer. He was sure that he was not mistaken and called a second time.

"Anan-i-i-as."

Someone approached, but slowly, as if he were groping his way.

"Why don't you answer?" asked López in a fury.

There was a suppressed coughing in the darkness. It was the hollow cough of a consumptive. Pressing his ear to the key-hole, López tried to catch every movement of the sentry. But he was so noiseless and quick that it was impossible to tell just where he was. López rushed here and there as though caught in a circle of spies.

The loud rustling of leaves mingled with the dry sound of moles burrowing under the ground. López stretched out on the dirty earthen floor, breathing loudly and heavily. He unbuttoned his shirt and rose, anxious to gulp the cool air through the crack in the wall. He stuck his fingers between the boards and stood for a long time, dizzy and weak, drinking it in.

When he felt a little better, he went over to the door again. Now his voice was softer, it had a coaxing note.

"Ananias."

He was calm; he went on whispering, for he was sure that someone was attentively catching his words spoken into the night.

"I feel very bad, you know! I feel a burning inside. Con't you bring me some aguardiente? . . . All right, you can't. After all, you're on sentry duty now. Well, let someone else go for it. Wouldn't I do the same for you if you were in the lockup?"

Then he decided that his voice was getting lost among the thousand pores of the pisé wall, and began to speak louder.

"Don't we both come from the same place? Aren't you also from Yanaconas? Surely you won't desert me! They'll be the death of us all by the time they're finished."

He heard a smothered voice say:

"Shut up, you brute, don't you know I'm on sentry duty?"

Diógenes López fell on the dirty floor again, panting like an animal at bay.

II

Forced marches. . . unbearable heat at noon, when the earth becomes scorched . . . a smoky haze hangs over the plains.

The Sibundoy valley. Everything had a translucent quality, as at dawn. The settlers, left penniless by the "Holy Missions," had built a number of miserable ranches, consoling themselves with the thought that they had the air and sunlight, the inalienable possessions of all humanity.

In the central mission-house the monks stirred up the patriotism of the soldiers, giving them little images of Saint Francis. The officers they invited to dinner.

The scent of the gardens called to mind biblical pictures of nature, and in the golden orange groves a dark throng humbly meditated on god and death, the gate through which man attains to perfection.

Diógenes López' feet were swollen; he marched with great difficulty as though every step were agony to him. He suffered most from the weight

of his equipment. Benito Parra, who was now in the same company, helped him from time to time. But this could not go on till they reached Mocoa. López sought out the director of the mission, a thick-set Basque with a fair beard.

"Your Reverence, could you let me have an Indian to carry my equipment as far as Mocoa. I am ill. Look, Father . . . " He bared his feet, which were monstrously swollen.

Father Anastasio gave a little smile, like a good brother.

"You should stay here and take treatment, my son!"

"That is impossible, Father."

"That's a pity, a great pity. It was cruel to send you. I shall look for an Indian for you."

Soon there appeared an Indian, a muscular fellow of middle height, with a stupid, surprised look on his face.

Before the column set off Brother Anastasio went up to López.

"I shall pray for you," he said.

When they reached Mocoa, the Indian handed him the equipment without a word. Diógenes clapped him on the shoulder; he wanted to share his joy with everybody around him.

With a guilty expression the Indian thrust a slip of paper into the soldier's hand. When Diógenes read it, the childlike trusting smile vanished from his face.

"Pay the carrier two Columbian gold pesos for carrying the equipment to Mocoa.

"Brother Anastasio, Director of the Holy Mission in Sibundoy."

Diógenes was outraged as if he were slapped in the face.

III

On the four soldiers from Yanaconas the first ray of sunlight fell, pale and feeble, but for them it held all the tints and colors in the world. The place where they had slept was as dark as the dome of heaven at midnight. The forest had become a gloomy, impenetrable, and hostile thicket, which held them in the thrall of strange visions. In the distance everything melted into indistinctness.

At this hour memories came flooding in on them with special force. They dreamed of Yanaconas, a little village with a single street, hidden away among the palms and banana fields, and rising above the fog as if on stilts. The square, which was cut across by ravines and overgrown with brushwood, rose to meet the clouds. And still higher up could be seen the green crops, given over to the dominion of the wind.

They all came out of their huts into the uneven, stony street: a pale, excited woman and a second one with a swollen stomach, a consumptive old man and a few curly-headed youngsters. Lying in the hammock Benito Parra closed his eyes so as to "join his wife in thought," as he himself put it. He could hear her soft singing voice calling him from a hole in the wall. His heart heaved. He muttered rapidly in his sleep:

"Now lie down, Husky."

Diógenes López, despite the strong tie that bound him to Yanaconas, became closely attached to the marshy thickets.

On Saturdays they used to gather in the small harbor public-house and drink aguardiente. The four men were nearly always together. That was why the little house with the zinc roof was called the "Yanaconas Hotel."

"Look here, Ananias, this is no life, it's only fit for dogs."
"It's time to end it with a bullet."
"I wouldn't mind a bullet myself."
"But you see we have officers . . . "
"Who would soil their hands with them?"
Benito Parra, who was drunk, would mutter between his teeth:
"Ah! Parrita, it will be damnable if that cursed life starts all over again . . ." And shrugging his shoulders: "Ugh!"

They talked of their native hills, of the harvest, of their wives and their flocks. And they interspersed their conversation with bitter complaints, like children who had been beaten for nothing.

"The lieutenants are real idiots. They don't understand that we are defending the common cause."

"That's right! It's the common cause, only it's not ours."

They felt how the red brown earth shook as if the trees were being torn up out of it by the roots, and they breathed so heavily that one would have thought that soon there would be no air left around them. They drank it in, in deep gulps.

The head of Mateo Zapata, a corpulent peasant with weak innocent-looking eyes, was motionless as if it was frozen in dull and heavy thought. Beneath his open shirt could be seen his fat belly and hairy chest. He spoke with a loud hiccough:

"What a night . . . hic!"
"It's a dog's life . . . hic!"

Once they brought a woman with them. She had a thin earthy face and when she perspired in the clutch of their eager arms, her dress clung to her sinister skeleton-like form. When López seized her by the arms to keep her longer near him, Mateo Zapata shouted out angrily:

"It's not his turn, you bitch!"

She sang songs that were filled with shamelessness, fear, and repugnance. And her head nodded to and fro like a pendulum that had been set lightly in motion:

"No matter, the earth will swallow us all."

IV

Diógenes López wrote on a clean page of his notebook:

"At last we hunted down the 'game.' Everyone was killed at the siding.
"A holiday.
"Soup and meat."

They secretly shared their rations with the sick and washed down their dinner with sugar-cane brandy, which they had hidden among the ammunition. On the doors of the "hospital" the inscription was written in pencil:

"He who works shall eat!"

Inside the door the voices of the sick sounded as weak as if they were seeking support in the air. The soldiers who were well would shout loudly to one another as if calling from a distance.

"Demetrio-oo-oo!"
"What?"
"Do you want meat?"
"Give it here!"

"There is ass meat and *cholo* [1] meat! Take your choice."

"I'll have a lieutenant in garlic soup!"

Inside the hospital longing and hope lived side by side. In the morning the chief doctor, dressed in a white coat, made his rounds, accompanied by a train of sisters. The whole medical equipment consisted of some quinine, some nameless pills and a few rolls of bandages. The only attendant in the hospital often had to wash the soiled bandages so that they could be used again. The soldiers did not complain. They said:

"Someone, I suppose, has got to take his chance."

Parra caught swamp fever. His befogged brain was obsessed by one longing—to sleep with "Husky." He became jaundiced, his heavy eyes yellow and sunken. Yet he never lost his good spirits. Apart from his memories the only thing that tormented him was hunger. During the night Ananias used to bring him some food wrapped up in paper.

When the Red Cross sisters appeared he would say with a roguish grin: "Well, as you see, we're not going to die yet." Once he received the answer: "Of course not. Your job is to get well."

Keeping a straight face, he rapped out, like a soldier on parade:

"Sure, aren't we being cared for like children?"

When he got better Benito Parra went to the "Yanaconas Hotel" for aguardiente. He was convalescent and no watch was kept on his movements.

It usually began with the owner saying:

"We are forbidden to sell aguardiente. Take yourself off."

"What the hell did I save up for?"

"All right, then, if that's the way it is."

And the soldier would go out with his little bottle of aguardiente in his pocket and no suspicions aroused.

One night, Parra took Mateo Zapata up to the hills.

"I want a word with you."

"Well, out with it!"

Benito pulled out the bottle.

"Here, have a slug!"

"Not now . . . "

"Go on, Mateo, drink!'

"No."

"Just one sip!"

Mateo shook his head slowly. He was obviously weakening. "No—better not . . . hic."

"What harm will a little sip do you, you silly fool?"

Mateo's fat hairy hands touched the bottle.

"All right, here goes!"

They drank the half liter. Parra did his best to get more. When the drink went to their heads they became maudlin, reeling about in the moonlight, and began lamenting the days gone by. Their bodies jerked convulsively; they talked in loud voices, trying to resurrect the past.

The upshot was that the sergeant sent them to prison for drunkenness, and from there to the disciplinary battalion, where they worked in full uniform and full equipment from four in the morning to nine at night. The officer on duty was replaced every hour. In their moments of rest they were drawn up before the company. Their sweaty uniforms exuded the stink of

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[1] *Cholo*—half breed.

the swamps. The officer, whip in hand, kept shouting out the words of command:

"Smile, blast you, you fools."

"Raise your left arm!"

"Now the right leg!"

"At last you seem able to hold yourselves erect."

"Shoulder—arms! The sweat is pouring from you devils as if you were made of water."

"Two paces left!"

"Three to the right!"

"Two back!"

"Three . . . "

The ground rocked in front of their eyes. Their legs felt like jelly, their heads were reeling from the unbearable heat. The savage command was borne up and was lost as in a blanket of fog. Everything spun before their eyes in a fantastic whirl and they had to lean on their rifles to keep from falling. When at last they went to bed their arms and legs kept moving automatically like those of clockwork dolls.

Embittered, Benito Parra made up his mind to seek consolation as before in aguardiente. He decided that it was not worth while abstaining.

"It makes no difference—the bastards will get me anyhow."

He even stopped trying to keep out of the officers' way. He became sullen and taciturn, only exchanging a few words now and again with his friends.

"You've changed, Parra," said Diógenes López to him one day.

"It isn't me who's changed, but other people!"

"I know what you want!"

Benito flared up:

"To kill them, that's what I want! We've got to make war on them. Yes, on them! Send the whole stinking lot to the devil."

Then after a moment's silence Parra began again in his old friendly tone:

"Tell me, Diógenes, isn't a *cholo* a human being the same as everyone else?"

López preferred to change the subject.

"Better think of her."

"Her? To hell with her! Look here, López, if I don't come back maybe you'll take her yourself."

"You know, Parra, she'll go the rounds in any case."

He was hauled drunk on to the vessel that lay at anchor in the harbor and thrown into the stuffy hold. The last thing he heard was the creaking of pulleys and the dull roar of the engines. He felt as if his whole body was being squeezed by red-hot pincers.

When they dragged him out of the hold, he was like some shapeless apparition. His whole body was as soft as wax, and kept slipping out of the soldiers' hands. His lower lip hung down, leaving the gums exposed. They took him under the arms to help him down the gangway, but his legs dangled limp in the air. His nostrils dilated and quivered. It seemed as if his one conscious thought was air, air. Diógenes López, Mateo, and Ananias shouted to him from the shore but Benito never even moved an eyelid. He panted like an animal, exhausted with thirst. In order that he might be able to drink he had to be put lying on the ground: he had lost the power of his muscles and the water poured down his face and over his dirty shirt. Then he was taken to the hospital and laid on a mat from the cook's gally, among about fifteen

half-naked patients who lay in sleepy oblivion, their emaciated faces covered with running sores.

Benito Parra's head seemed to have got bigger, while under their languid lids his blue sunken eyes were placid and had changed to a muddy grey. There was a growth of beard on his shrunken face, while his straight black hair clung to his temples as if it had been glued on. The sweat was streaming down his square forehead and sharp protruding cheek-bones.

For nearly three days he lay there unconscious, without moving hand or foot, like a corpse. Every part of him was lifeless and still. A week later they dragged him out into the sun. His filthy rags hung loosely on him. The bright colors irritated him and he bit his tongue with rage.

But some superhuman strength compelled him to conquer the flabby weakness of his body and overcome the appalling destruction of the tissues. He walked with a stagger as if he had been accustomed to wearing chains. He stumbled at every step, filled with a childish fear of seeing himself bleed. He was already able to talk coherently; but he could not dismiss the thought of those who, fighting side by side with him for the fatherland, had made a cripple of him.

"Ugh! the swine!" Mateo Zapata shook his bald head.

"That's right—isn't it true, Diógenes? There's nothing left for us but war."

"You mean between the officers and us? Last night the white officers had a fight with the *cholo* officers."

"Well, what of it, aren't they all the same?"

On Christmas Eve, they made a Christmas tree of leaves and mossy bushes. They celebrated the feast-day in the "Yanaconas Hotel." The table was leveled, and in the corner next to the bedroom door they set a table with food and drink.

The lieutenants went down the river in sloops laden with bottles of beer, filling the vast night with their loud shouts.

Some sergeants brought along cases with "Christmas presents" for the soldiers; half-dozen boxes of handkerchiefs, tins of sardines, pieces of scented soap, packets of chewing gum, and celluloid dolls. They all laughed and clinked glasses, but the expression of hidden melancholy and hostility still lurked in their hungry faces. There was a venomous irony in their comments.

"The idea of sending me bathing pants! I should ask the major for a pop-gun to kill flies."

"And I new guts."

The owner of the "Yanaconas," balancing himself on the rickety table, shouted out that the best presents should go to decorate the Christmas tree. There was a pungent smell of fusty pine cones and at times the smell of their native fields, their oxen and horses, seemed to rise up from the floor and fill the air.

Outside, among the low rushes and weeds, the wind made a noise like a blow-torch.

The soldiers went out on to the balcony. When they came back they saw a surprise had been prepared for then by Yàñez, the owner: a woman was sitting at each of the five tables. Yàñez winked slily as he pointed to them:

"I picked the gayest I could find to give you a treat."

The women had their hair in dank plaits, and through their transparent dresses, stained with beer and aguardiente, their bony hips and pedulous stomachs could be seen. The non-commissioned officers were dancing with earnest concentration, their elbows close into their bodies, while the soldiers

gathered round in a semi-circle, breathing heavily and drowning the music with their clapping. In the light of the kerosene lamp on the table one could see how their eyes widened greedily, with irrepressible animal lust. On the thick walls made of palm leaves mixed with clay the shadows, now magnified, now small, reached to the ceiling or dropped to the floor, where their vague outlines flickered dimly.

A few couples went out singing Christmas carols, and flung themselves on the wet grass. One could hear them puffing loudly as if their faces were smothered in mud. Afterwards, when the non-commissioned officers grew tired and went off for a drink, the women came over to the soldiers.

A Negro from Belalcazar, with drunken bloodshot eyes, was singing monotonously in a low dismal bass, his head bent as if he were trying to gaze into his soul. Mateo Zapata planted a pock-marked woman on his knees, covered her face with dry burning kisses and squeezed her as he whispered in her ear:

"Listen, sporty, a wonderful Christ will be born."

The woman mumbled, straining her hoarse voice and hardly moving her jaws:

"Leave Christ alone or I'll slit you open with a knife, you vagabond."

Ananias was dancing, taking wide leaps with his short neck sunk in his shoulders, paying no heed to the strands of hair which were clinging to his face. After dancing a wild "Bambuco" [1] he came up to the angry raw-boned woman.

"As soon as Christ is born you and I will go to bed," he said.

Then he finished the aguardiente she had left in the bottom of her glass.

Near the Christmas tree, away from the others, Diógenes López and Benita Parra were dreaming of Yanaconas, the little green village which god had visited this year with a worse famine than usual.

VI

Shortly after Christmas, Parra got typhus and died after a few days' illness. His disfigured face was mask-like in its deathly stillness and his prominent forehead stood out more sharply than ever. The tallow candle, burning beside the bed where the corpse was laid out, guttered, and rats began to scurry noiselessly to and fro. They lowered him into the lake in a wicker basket. Diógenes López, Ananias and Mateo saw the basket tossing on the water in the distance like a vessel buffeted by a storm seeking the harbor.

There were machine-guns everywhere.

Cross-firing in the woods in the middle of the night.

Endless drizzling rain, dripping trees, marches through the swamps without direction, guessing the way; corpses of comrades lying by the deserted camp fires.

When two airplanes appeared, the vessel at anchor in the harbor was cleared by order of the captain, who was expecting a bombardment. The hungry sailors passing through the hold cast angry glances at the cases of provisions.

The airplanes turned back without dropping a single bomb. The soldiers on the vessel laughed at the captain who had buried himself in a heap of leaves.

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[1] A native dance.

Fearing a mutiny, the captain had the soldiers disarmed. The rifles and bayonets lay in the store room near the officers' mess, guarded by sentries.

The enemy made a surprise attack just as the captain was examining the soldiers' finger-nails. Someone shouted in a hoarse, muffled voice:

"Look out everybody!"

But there was nowhere to take cover. With empty cartridge pouches, the soldiers waited in silence for the hail of lead.

Falling on the edge of the ravine, the captain shouted:

"Take me to the hospital, Private López."

Diógenes replied:

"Take yourself, captain."

"I am wounded."

"So much the better!"

The soldiers, their faces contorted, pressed against the ground. Cries of alarm inspired nameless fears. Tortured and worn out by waiting, men raised their heads to meet death. Others sought frantically a place in the ground where they could burrow down in order to take cover from the deadly fire. All were filled with one longing—to dig into the ground and feel an empty place beneath them. Thus they lay, holding their breath, making no attempt to defend themselves, surrounded by the taciturn solitude of the forest.

When they picked up the bodies of the slain, it seemed that they had grown into the earth like roots.

VII

The crops were stunted. The corn fields and the yards were overgrown with grass. Over the ditches, on loosely drawn lines, torn yellow rags that had been put out to dry were flapping in the wind, flashing in the sunlight. A watery dove-grey sky shone overhead above a dark-green ring of banana trees. Some grimy abandoned children were playing on the square.

Near a bamboo bridge on the outskirts of the village, was an arch decorated with garlands and flags. A few black heads looked out from among the coffee plants.

By the church Ana Luisa, known as "Husky," was smoking shag, sending out thin rings of smoke. She was a tall, swarthy, supple woman. The sleeves of her dirty flannel jacket were rolled up, showing a pair of hefty arms. Her smooth black hair barely reached the nape of her neck and her bright eyes were shaded by long lashes. A thick growth of hair covered her upper lip and her sharp prominent chin. The muscles rippled under the skin of her strong neck.

The people who had gathered on the square seemed to be waiting for something. Old women wrapped in percale shawls were lamenting in various voices, wiping their red noses with their sleeves.

A consumptive had laid down his crutches and was sitting smiling on the cement curb-stone.

Diógenes López, Ananias, and Mateo arrived on the scene, whooping and shouting, but they soon realized that their loud cries were out of place before the suffering, hunger, and rags of the people.

The people with the thin tanned faces watched in silence while the three soldiers frantically waved their khaki caps, crumpled in their brown hands. Then they surrounded them, and as though anxious to hide the poverty of the place from the newcomers, made them drink sugar-cane brandy that had just been poured out of the illicit stills.

Diógenes went over to "Husky," caught her hands and stroked them. In a drunken, hazy kind of way, he felt that he was Benito Parra come back to life. The blood tingled in his veins. He called her by her Christian name, an unusual thing for him.

"You know, I wanted to see you, Ana!"

"You've got quite thin."

"He was even thinner."

They were silent. Then Diógenes spoke again, full of enmity and a desire for revenge against the world which "Husky" did not know.

"He was killed by our masters, you know, the fellows on top . . . The swine!"

"Husky" took a sip of brandy.

The celebration developed into a drunken debauch. In the public houses, where guaropo was sold, the peasants danced, the place was in wild disorder. Everybody was bumping into everybody else and the dancers had to keep their partners from falling. Night inflamed the soldiers' lust and they flung themselves on the women as they had flung themselves on the muddy earth of the trenches.

VIII

The debauch lasted for a couple of days. The scene recalled a smugglers' den or a place where government brandy was sold. Looking at the full moon and the celluloid stars, Diógenes López realized that Yanaconas lived without thinking about the meaning of life.

"Husky" spent the whole day locked up in her house, but in the evening she went to him. She spoke to him, standing behind the hedge which came up to her forehead, and then brought him along almost by force to her own place.

"Tell me, Diógenes, did Parrita say nothing to you?"

Diógenes felt the voice of Benito Parra ringing in his ears.

"Yes," he said.

The woman closed his mouth with her thin hand.

"Stop."

She took off his boots, his revolver, cartridge pouch, and shirt and then wiped his feet and covered him with a sheet. Then, throwing off her dress, she leaned over him and whispered:

"Listen, I have been waiting for you."

Only once before had he experienced the same feeling; and that was one time, under a hail of lead, when he had wished that the earth would open and swallow him.

At day-break she wakened him. A noise was coming from behind the trees.

"Get up before your wife comes," said Ana Luisa.

"Leave me alone. I don't want to go back home."

He remained, and listened in a dull stupor to the hungry braying of the asses in the corral. The light came stealing through a chink in the wall, falling in narrow strips on the broken brick floor. The wind bore the smell of the stable to him—a mixture of stale perspiration, leather harness, cattle, and alcohol.

Through the chink of memories came flooding the life of the ravine, of his own native ravine. It was only then that López realized with horror that it was utterly impossible for him to go back to his former life.

He went out through the yard which was still in half light. The sky and the high peaks of the mountains glittered like blue porcelain. On the hills

red patches of poppies could be seen indistinctly. Just opposite the balcony swayed the white cups of campanulas.

With his head drooping, and without looking where he was going, Diógenes passed the ridges of the vegetable patch and turned down the lane, where the grass reached to his knees, and suddenly found himself in front of the corral of his own house. Two children were sitting on the threshold staring with wonder at the strange man and blinking their eyes with fear. Their dirty faces were smeared with grease, and when they breathed, a thick vapor escaped from their nostrils. Both wore white flannel jackets like grown ups and they were eating pies made from rice and corn with cold pork. He looked at them with envy, mingled with tenderness and regret, and, without speaking to them, went into the kitchen. A woman with her hair down was shelling cobs over a smoky pot. Tongues of flame were shooting up from the hearth stone.

Seeing Diógenes López looking at the pieces of pork, the woman said in a low voice, with a cold gleam in her eye:

" 'Husky' gave me this." Bursting into tears, she added: "For you, of course."

Then she said that she had been driven by hunger to sell the harness of the oxen and the sorrel which Diógenes had broken in before he was conscripted. She brought in black coffee and arepa. Then she furtively pressed her lips to her husband's powder-singed cap.

Diógenes hunted out his palm-leaf hat and put on an old ragged pair of trousers. He walked out with a slouch to the vegetable patch and began somewhat diffidently to turn up the earth with the end of a matchet.

The old clothes and the old life were both strange to him; he felt that he was an alien, a broken man, whom nobody needed.

The morning was just as clear as on the day he had left home. But then there was the hope that life was beginning for him. The familiar earth, the trees, and the native ravine, frightened him like an empty house in which nothing has changed after the removal of a corpse.

Feeling crushed, he went back to the room and, putting his foot on a heap of rubbish, said to himself:

"I must sweep that up."

Then all at once he burst out laughing, unable to restrain himself at the absurdity of the idea.

He wanted to go and get drunk. His weak legs refused to serve him. His tense nerves became still more strained. He suddenly had a vision of Benito Parra, all stained with machine oil, coming down the gangway.

The woman was plaiting her hair as she sat in the sun. She smiled, screwing up her dark eyes, but she was unable to conceal the fear that was obsessing her.

"We'll buy another horse."

Diógenes interrupted her without betraying the slightest surprise.

"You did right."

"What do you want," she mumbled in a voice that was barely audible, and began sobbing convulsively.

Diógenes López suddenly yelled, clenching his hands savagely. His copper-red face became distorted in a convulsive grimace as if a halter had been thrown over his neck and he was being strung up in the air. He yelled:

"To kill! that's what I want. To kill the people who have made us so miserable!"

Translated by P. Breslin

P. Pavlenko

In the East[1]

Introductory Note

In the East, the new novel by Peter Pavlenko, is characterized by Soviet critics as one of the best productions of Soviet literature last year.

The action of the novel unfolds in the Soviet Far East. The Far Eastern Territory covers a vast area, and the action of the novel carries its heroes over thousands of miles. The four years described in the first volumes of the novel—1932-35—were years of construction in the Far East, which thoroughly changed the countenance of the country. During these years large towns have been built in the impassable thickets of the taiga, and factories erected. At the same time, work was begun which ensured against any attack the peaceful construction of the Soviet Far East, and the construction of the whole Soviet country.

It is truly said in the novel: the Far East was constructed by the whole of the Soviet Union. In the front ranks of the builders stood the local people—Party and Soviet workers of the Far Eastern Territory. These are mainly participants in the Civil War of 1918-21, fighters, partisans, who heroically defended the Far Eastern Territory, smashing the heads of the Japanese interventionists and the Whiteguard fighters supporting them.

The excerpt of the novel which we present shows the meeting of old comrades from the partisan years, comrades because of their work in the Far East. It is not often that they are able to see one another; they live in various parts of the vast territory—secretaries of Party committees, chairmen of Soviets, directors of mighty trusts, commanders of armies and divisions, prosecutors, cooperators. Side by side with them, we also see the young generation—commanders, geologists, aviators, engineers.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Now that I see my book in print and go through it not as a writer but as a reader, I cannot help thinking that I have left out many important and interesting things. Thus a traveler in an unknown country, urged by a desire to visit its capital, its construction, its health resorts, would feel deeply grieved to find that time and route compel him to cut down his program.

Similarly this is what happened with my novel. I wrote it in a hurry, not being sure whether war would overtake my work or I would succeed in showing a glimpse of our East before the outbreak of war and before our East gave a better account of itself than the one I could give.

I wanted to present the people who are stationed on the frontier. I wanted to show our region which was once wild and neglected but now is one of the advanced regions of the country. I wanted to show the pace of the development of the Soviet people and the Soviet country. And finally I wanted to show how deep and powerful is our breathing.

In accordance with the complexity of my tasks (the more so that the second part of my book, not yet published, shows the beginning of the possible war in the East) I drew my plan.

However, even in mechanics, where efficiency in construction is solved much more simply than in art, the first question to be asked is—what for, for what purpose is the given construction being erected, and only when the answer is given may one decide whether the complexity of the machine is justified by the functional tasks with which the inventor was confronted.

I wanted to depict a flood, a powerful, awe-inspiring movement of human waves. We no longer grow singly but in waves, in crowds. I wanted to give a picture of this flood-like movement, of this stormy growth and development.

[1] See review by Shklovsky on page 130.

There is no harm even if the biographies of some personages were lost in this movement, because others remained in which the reader could see either a part of himself or a full picture of himself. "One does not know who are the small ones and who are the great ones," Stalin said about the flyers, while Chkalov upon landing in Moscow said: "We three? No, there are thousands of us . . ."

In our country one life passes into another. A man dies but his work is taken up by another; the work goes on as if there were no death although a biography of another man accompanies that work.

Is there any one of us non-flyers who does not consider himself as Chkalov's reserve? And you, non-writers, do you not consider art as your own business?

We breathe alike, in time. And I wanted to describe in a rapid pace which allows of no pauses the formidable storm raised by this one breath. Now if the people of any of our nationalities recognize themselves in the type of Mikhail Semenovich, Luza, Shershavin, Golubeva or Olga and if in their dreams they see themselves fighting against the Japanese occupying the country as Yu-shan did or searching for Japanese spies as Schlegel did, or better still should they desire to go to the Far East to give concerts in the Siberian jungle or gather sea-weeds, then all is well and my book has honestly done its work.

But why have I conceived the idea of writing about war? Because I can see what kind of a war it is going to be. First, any defensive war which our Union may be forced to wage will be the first just and beneficial war in the history of mankind. It will be a fight for happiness, the first in history.

The theme of a possible war in the near future attracted me also because it offers every opportunity of somewhat revealing the contours of the future when instead of "national" wars, wars of Germans against French or Russians against Japanese, we shall have the final class battles which the masses of the people will fight out with their enemies. In this hard and terrible war people of various nationalities will fight side by side, just as in the present case of the fight in Spain where Spaniards, Germans, Frenchmen and others are fighting in the ranks of the defenders of the Spanish democratic republic against the Spaniards and Germans under the command of General Franco. In the ruinous war which the fascists of all countries are preparing for the masses of the people and the world at large, the bonds of fraternity among the peoples will gain in strength.

The theme of war is becoming a theme of brotherhood. The Spaniards say: "It is better to die standing erect than to live crawling on your knees," and the Chinese say: "If it is necessary to die for unity we shall die!"

In accord with them I wish to say:

"If the whole people will breathe as one man—
there will be a gale.
"If they will stamp their foot—
there will be an earthquake."

May

One airplane flew eastwards from Moscow

Partisans from the whole maritime province gathered at the apartment of Nikita Polukhrustov, the prosecutor. Stepan Zaretsky had arrived from Nikolayevsk on the Amur with his wife and son. The Fedoroviches had come in from Kamchatka by boat. The Hungarian Vallesh had journeyed from Term Bay, accompanied by his son, an ocean pilot. The Pluzhnikovs, Zuyevs, and

Okhotnikovs, who fought in detachments that consisted of whole families, twenty people in a family, had come over from settlements in the taiga.

Mikhail Semyonovich unexpectedly flew in from the taiga where a new city had been laid out; he was like a grown up child, his hair combed, parted, and plastered down with water, while a girlish smile played along the edges of his mouth. In a rather high voice he greeted old comrades whom he hadn't seen for a long time, confined as he had been to the regional center, and everyone brightened at the sound of his voice. They had all heard it in battle and at work through many years. In that same voice Mikhail Semyonovich issued commands, or told anecdotes which required half an hour.

Grey-browed Yankov had flown over with Mikhail Semyonovich. Next, several commanders arrived, gay handsome fellows between thirty-five and forty. They were still expecting Vassily Pimyonovich Luza and Varvara Khlebnikova, and many other famous and outstanding comrades.

However, everyone immediately sat down to the table. The commanders ranged themselves around the head of the garrison, Vinokurov; the partisans around Mikhail Semyonovich. The young people were distributed everywhere.

"Happy holiday," said Polukhrustov, glancing at the table.

They drank, ate and talked. They recalled the snow and blizzards, torn felt boots on frozen feet, hand-grenades made from tin cans; and they drank to their army commanders, to dead and living comrades. They recalled how Varvara Ilyinishna Khlebnikova made over church vestments into a mantle for the October holidays, and how she opened the session of the revolutionary committee smelling of frankincense and myrrh and all decked out in gold brocade.

The very moment when they were toasting her she appeared, broad-beamed and heavy-bosomed, barely clearing the doorway. Now she was no more than a woman, the wife of the head of the district fisheries. But everyone remembered her back in 1920 when Varvara accomplished revolutionary miracles. In those years she had been strong and beautiful, naively bold and carefree; which was very touching. They had commissioned her with the most difficult jobs. She had been competant at all of them. First she organized education; then she directed finances. She made a success of everything.

She was a jolly woman, not over clever but simple and honest. At first glance there was nothing remarkable about her biography. She had worked as a laundress at the gold mines, together with her grandmother, her mother and two aunts. When she started telling about herself she would invariably mix up her own life with her grandmother's or her aunt's or would attribute to her aunt things that had happened to herself; for it was, in fact, hard to distinguish the lives of the five laundresses which were all equally drab. She loved to marry the young, baptize the new-born and bury the dead. She was proud of being a god-mother or a bridesmaid, and her narratives of her own life before the Revolution were chronicles of marriages, funerals, christenings, divorces and thefts. It was as though she had worked in the police department and not in a laundry. Her life would have seemed splendid, had it contained a single event which related directly to Varvara Ilyinishna. But she had had no personal life. She had lived absorbed in other peoples' lives and in helping them.

But then as a result, she had over three thousand "relatives" and acquaintances, all of whom she knew by name. She had an easy approach to people, understood them at first sight and was so sincere and truthful, that everyone loved and respected her without knowing why. Varvara Ilyinishna had long since stopped telling of marriages. Others now told stories about her, and she

listened with a smile, crossing her shiny red hands beneath her ample bosom.

Tonight she also came in smiling. Everyone feasted his eyes upon her, not noticing how heavy her figure had become. The entrance of Varvara Khlebnikova was the return of their youth.

She was accompanied by her daughter, Olga.

"Is she really yours?" Yankov asked, regarding the black-haired girl with her downy complexion. He lapsed into troubled silence, so vividly did every feature of the girl's naive intelligent face remind him of her dead father, Ovanes Shakhverdian. Everyone recalled how Varvara had given birth, how they had enjoined the doctor "by use of scientific methods to bring about the birth of the child no later than the 22nd instant, in view of the evacuation of the city."

They drank to Varvara Khlebnikova and also to Ovanes Shakhverdian, whom the Japanese had pushed under the ice, and they wished for their daughter Olga a life as exciting as her father's and as jolly as her mother's.

In the midst of the toast Vassili Pimyonovich Luza and Shuan-shen entered with his wife, along with six sailors, who had just arrived from the Baltic. The only one of the old friends who was missing was Schlegel. With the new arrivals people rose from the table. The division commanders moved towards the girls with the avowed intention of dancing; but Yankov barred the way.

"Well, Comrade Commanders, how about our having another scrap before we're through?" he said, with an air of hopeful pleading.

"Some folk will fight, but not you and I," the taciturn Mikhail Semyonovich remarked, promptly topping off his words with a glass of vodka.

"Why not?"

"Because we're crushed by the weight of responsibility, that's why. We've become very important people." And an argument started about old men.

The moment she came in Olga Khlebnikova had taken a seat at the piano behind Varvara Ilyinishna and she didn't budge from there. Never before had she seen so many decorations and so many military men. Olga immediately recognized the grey, blood-shot eyes of one man. Forty years had not erased the boyishness from his face.

That was Galikov. His division was famous. He now made his way in her direction through the group of arguers, and Yankov held him more firmly than the others.

One of the others—Guber—was dignified-looking, with large wavy moustaches like the picture of a hero of the Turkish War in old magazines. Next to him Shershavin, the commissar of the district fortifications, shifted his weight from one leg to the other. He was crisp and elegant, with the clever but oldish face of an actress. He regarded the arguers with silent tolerance, twitching his lower lip from time to time. The fourth member of the group—Kondratyenko—was a short man with husky shoulders, who in Olga's eyes was very like Leo Tolstoy's description of General Dochturov.

The leader of the local garrison, Vinokurov, towered above the others. He was a head taller and burlier than anyone else, a man three times the size of a Japanese. He had the pleasant, exceedingly good-natured face of a young soldier who has finished two academies, one here and one abroad, the face of a very clever young worker, which had lost none of its directness, which had not grown fat or disfigured by wrinkles; it was an amazingly healthy, clever and rough face. His fists were as big as the head of a three-months' old baby, and he exhibited them with great satisfaction. It was obvious that he was clever and smart, crafty and daring, but cautious as well. He was proving some-

thing or other to the commander of the cavalry division, Neumann, a huge blonde Lett, who eyed him sleepily without blinking, occasionally clicking his spurs.

The old men's argument was waxing hotter.

"Just take a look at who we are," Mikhail Semyonovich was telling Yankov. "Turn round and take a look."

Each scrutinized the other and the whole company. Seated around them were secretaries of district committees and chairmen of executive committees, directors of large trusts, prosecutors, cooperators—gray-haired old men, the fathers of October, the oldest of the living. Their only seniors were the pictures of the dead; none of the living were older than they.

"Now I see that responsibility is stifling us," Yankov agreed, and he enviously regarded the young commanders. "Let's drink to our children then," he said gloomily.

Thereupon the old men took stock of those who were to replace them—and bragged about their children who were engineers, flyers, doctors and writers.

"My Olga is an oceanographer. There's no one else with that profession," said Varvara.

"It's kind of strange," remarked Mikhail Semyonovich, "that nobody else has any oceanographers. But you, for some reason or other, happen to have one, Varvara. And what good to you, personally, is it, having an oceanographer for a daughter?"

"You've most likely read about it," Varvara answered with a wink; "a leading profession nowadays. And, besides, it's close to home."

Nikita Alexeyevich Polukhrustov called on everyone to fill their glasses and announced the main toast of the evening.

"Let us drink to Soviet power and what it has made us," he said.

And former shepherds, iron workers, hunters and laundresses drank to Soviet power and to what it had accomplished for people.

The dancing started. The first to step out into the circle were the division commanders and the sailors, closely followed by the business managers, who pretended not to know how.

In the Soviet Union people dance the fox-trot in many different fashions, like a waltz and like a polka, even like a Cossack or a Lezgian dance, resulting in the women's feet often getting trampled on. That evening nobody felt embarrassed; the music kept good time; the people danced not to the time of the music but to their own pulses. But that didn't spoil matters.

"I don't see the 11th cavalry division on the floor," Vinokurov remarked, shrugging his shoulders in surprise and glancing around for Neumann.

"There's no such thing as a cavalryman who doesn't sing, drink and dance," replied the brigade commander, "but today we don't sing and we don't dance and we're afraid to drink." He snapped his fingers and sat down by Varvara Ilyinishna.

Arching her eyebrows and clutching her hand to her throat Varvara was getting ready to sing a song.

"Why, what's happened to you?" she asked.

"We competed with the 9th," Neumann gloomily replied, "and how badly we competed!" He poured himself a glass of wine and drained it without finishing his thought.

"Don't bother him, Vinokurov," Varvara Ilyinishna said, with a knowing nod in Neumann's direction. "Both of us feel like crying today."

Her shrill peasant voice, whose sound was unlike any other, broke in on the dance music. The dancers lost time for an instant and trod on their partners' slippers, but they immediately righted themselves.

"Go to it, Varvara!" Yankov yelled, encouragingly.

Varvara Ilyinishna sang in Ukrainian, a token of an extremely sentimental mood, that blended with the sadness and melancholy which comes over singers who are completely engrossed in their song.

" 'Look, my son, in the evening light;
Are the Japanese in sight?'
'Father, Mother, I'm not sleeping:
On the border watch I'm keeping.
I'm not sleeping, here I stand,
Guarding o'er our native land.' "

Dazed by liquor and song, Luza regarded Varvara with gloomy admiration.

"Sing, Varvara," he screamed, sobbing.

Many turned round at the sound of his mournful womanish voice.

Olga danced the most with a mischievous division commander who had caught her fancy from the start. But the old men snatched her from him, and with contempt for the music, they described figures, treading on her feet.

The gray-haired geologist, Schottmann, gleefully wound the gramophone and directed the record music.

"A polka, let's have a polka!" suddenly shouted Fedorovich. "I'm a lyricist, the devil take you, and I like something lively."

But they put on a waltz.

"I'm a pure lyricist and I can't dance a waltz," Fedorovich said calmly.

And grabbing Olga he led her into a fearful gallop and then plunged into a squat-dance, stamping his feet on the floor with terrific vim. Abandoning all pretense of keeping to the music, the old men entered the dance by twos and threes, embracing, and pressing their foreheads together. Schottmann tried to join one of these dancing trios, but the trio wouldn't admit him.

"What are you looking for, Solomon?" Polukhrustov hissed at him. "I know, you're looking for cement."

Clutching at him tremulously, Schottmann pressed his cheek against his and wheedled in a despairing voice:

"Shh . . . ten tons, a mere trifle."

"Nothing doing," Polukhrustov said, turning away.

"Yes, hardly," Yankov said. He was in a trio with a woman.

"What do you mean, nothing doing . . .? I'll give you fats in return for it."

"Now you're talking business," all three remarked with sudden interest and Yankov casually asked him: "Are those fats of yours rationed?"

They circled and stamped in a group of four, whispering and swearing.

Others also danced, discussing various plans or questioning each other and changing from one trio to another. They involved Olga in one such conversation about rice, and when she broke away and hunted out her division commander with her eyes, he was already sitting fast astride a chair animatedly holding forth about a new system for training recruits which was simply a miracle. Neumann and the others agreed that the system was indeed a miracle and ought to be adopted.

Olga bustled around her mother, who wasn't feeling well.

"Shall we go home?"

"Yes, there won't be any more dancing, singing or anything else," Varvara Ilyinishna answered. "It's the third stage of drunkenness—they'll talk shop until dawn."

But at this point Luza came up. He recalled their encounter in the car and began telling about the little Chinese. Olga decided to stay.

The party was only beginning. Having eaten their fill, and danced their fill, people sat down for a heart to heart talk.

"Luza, you recall that little partisan as though it were yourself," said Shuan-shen, the director of the Chinese technikum. He received newspapers from Harbin and Shanghai and knew what was happening abroad.

"The misfortune of the Manchurian partisans," he said, "is that they have no proper leadership. I know their leaders—Chu Shang-hao, a former Hunhuz: it's hard to depend on him; Siao Dei-wan, first a preacher, then a tavern keeper, and finally an officer of Manchukuo: a brave fool, nothing more; Chen-lai, who set fire to two aerodromes and captured a boat on the Sungari, can only fight on the river; he wins when he has a hundred men and runs when he has a thousand; and besides, he's fifty-nine years old; Tai-ping is the ablest of the lot. I know him; he's brave, cunning and enterprising, but he's afraid to voice his program, and he doesn't attract many followers; Tsing-ling is cleverer and better educated than the others, but he's a petty agitator, and he lacks the qualities of a leader, although he finished the German University in Shanghai; recently there's been favorable talk of Yu-shan, but he's a coolie, as ignorant as a carp, and has never been in a city. He himself says: 'My job is to kill; let someone else worry about other things.' The little fellow you're talking about must belong to his detachment.

"The Japanese send picked people here and to Manchuria. Watanabe alone is worth a fortune. Old man Murusima, the Shakespeare of espionage, can substitute for fifty people. I encountered him as an orthodox preacher in Vladivostok, a surveyor on Sakhalin and a lecturer on cultural questions in Mongolia."

"Did General Orisaka get well?" Vinokurov asked, as though he were discussing an old acquaintance whom Shuan-shen had just seen.

"Almost," answered Shuan-shen. "Japanese rheumatism is a nasty business and the General's a frail man."

They were discussing the commander of the division of the guards who had recently come to the border.

"Two weeks ago they had a tour of inspection," said Galikov. "Orisaka's division took first place in marksmanship and the rascals are all set up about it."

The division commanders sat down in the circle.

"I dare say I, too, will take first place in marksmanship," said Kondratyenko, remembering that inspection wasn't far off from him. "But my stride, devil take it, is a bit wobbly. The fact is I have no stride."

"Why, not at all, what makes you say that? That 57th Regiment of yours doesn't march a bit badly," politely interjected Galikov, whose division had an excellent stride. "I always recognize their stride."

"Maybe I should hire a ballet master," Kondratyenko said with a sigh, glancing at his neighbors.

It was growing light, the sky was clearing.

"Shall we drink to the Russian battle cries?" Kondratyenko said, pensively.

"I don't second you," Vinokurov observed. "To battle cries?" he repeated. "Hm. You won't win first place in marksmanship, Grigory Grigoryevich. To

battle cries?" he shrugged his shoulders. "To silence in combat! That's my toast . . . to silence in combat!"

Meanwhile, the industrial managers were chatting of their own affairs. Having agreed during the dance on certain exchanges of favors, they were now roundly cursing the supply organs and in round figures calculating percentage of non-fulfillment of their plans.

"We can't make it," said Yankov. "It's absolutely impossible to stick to the dates."

Mikhail Semyonovich, who was politely gulping off everything within reach, also had his say. He listened attentively to everyone, smoked his pipe, and from time to time interjected: "Yes, extremely interesting . . ." He was incapable of saying anything lengthier. But when the dancing business managers clustered around him with the avowed hope of discussing estimates, plans and personnel, he sighed and slowly remarked as though he were just learning to talk:

"You fellows are used to handling big sums. If you received copper coins for your estimates you wouldn't squander them, but when you get big paper notes you don't feel their weight."

"Don't make fun of me," Zaretsky said. "By law am I supposed to make people? They gave me a construction job, laid down hard and fast time limits, put their finger on the map—that's how! And there isn't a damn thing there, fellows. Not even a kopek's worth of nature."

"I'll fix nature for you in a jiffy," shouted Schottmann. "Why, I'll find gold for you, and that will immediately please everyone. Only let me have ten tons of cement."

"Why the hell do you need cement?" said Polukhrustov, raising his hands. "All evening I've heard nothing but cement, and more cement."

"Why, I haven't seen any of you for a year," shouted Schottmann, beside himself with excitement. "And tomorrow back I go to the taiga for a year; again I won't see a soul, again lumber and gold. Give me ten tons of materials and I'll build a theater at the mines. I'm sixty years old and I also want . . ."

"Yes, it's extremely interesting," muttered Mikhail Semyonovich, "how the moment Schottmann appears from the taiga, everything disappears from my hands. Just as I've managed to accumulate something, I look round and he's carted it off."

"I'd like to see anyone cart off something of yours, you skinflint."

"I propose a toast," shouted Vinokurov, smiling at Mikhail Semyonovich.

"To construction?" Fedorovich agreed, half-inquiring. "To silence about construction!"

They all turned around, rather abashed and drank reluctantly.

"It's a pity. I still had one splendid story about fish," remarked Zaretsky.

"Well, that makes three stories," said Polukhrustov disagreeably. "Two lying on my desk at the prosecutor's office, and one in your hands. Let's stick to the toast."

"To silence, to silence!"

Again they drank to silence.

"You ought to notice how I," said Schottmann, embracing Fedorovich, "woo you as though you were a young girl of good family. It's a dirty trick to hang on to that cement. It's hard for an old man like me to be nice to a louse like you. Let me have ten tons."

"Who do I look like, Santa Claus?" Fedorovich muttered, angrily pushing him away.

"Why, am I asking you for a carload?"

The door opened and young Vallesh rushed in.

"Listen, Schlegel's been wounded!" he shouted. And in his embarrassment he bowed several times to the company.

Everyone suddenly started talking and stood up.

"Comrade division commanders! I ask you to come to me at eight nought," [1] said Vinokurov and with a glance at his watch, which showed six o'clock, he headed for the coat-rack in the hallway.

"There's a bureau meeting at nine-thirty," said Mikhail Semyonovich, following him out. "Only bureau members should stay. Fedorovich and Zaretsky must leave for home without delay. You go too," he shouted to Yankov. "We'll manage without you."

"I'll let you have it, and to hell with you," whispered Fedorovich, grabbing Schottmann by the sleeve. "Come round to see me after dinner."

"Who wounded him?" Olga shouted, and she ran across the room, looking for something and continually asking: "Who wounded him? Who did it?"

Vallesh kept silent. No one seconded Olga's question, and everybody crowded towards the street.

"When'll we see each other?" Zaretsky asked Yankov, saying good-bye in the doorway.

"In two years' time. Where are you heading?"

"Back north."

"Well, maybe we'll see each other there on construction job 34."

"On the construction job, yes. Regards to Schlegel."

"So long, old fellows."

"So long, comrades, regards to Schlegel."

Olga and Luza were left in the empty apartment. The dampness billowed in through the open windows. The dreary swishing of a street broom broke in on the oppressive morning stillness.

"And in my front room it's so quiet the clock stops," said Luza.

June

Two airplanes flew eastwards from Moscow

The Japanese spy, Murusima, disguised as a Korean peasant from the Soviet districts and carrying a bundle, got off the train at a small wayside station on the Ussuri railway. Hoisting the bundle to his shoulders, he set forth along a hunter's trail that ran uphill, frequently stopping to rest and look over his shoulder. He was a small frail old man and the going was hard for him. By sunrise, however, he had reached the edge of the taiga. Here he entered the dark, dilapidated hut of some long-dead hunter. Almost without resting, he lit a lamp, covered the window, locked the door and began writing a letter to Harbin.

"The ten days since I arrived here were quite enough for me to become familiar with what is happening. Things have changed little since 1920. At any rate, they have not changed to such an extent as to make us lose our bearings and find ourselves confronted with unfamiliar facts. Conditions for our work are almost ideal.

"The countryside is restless. The mood of the city-dwellers, as a result of events in Manchuria and Shanghai, is also one of uneasiness. At any rate, the general tone of remarks is in our favor, and I haven't yet encountered

[1] Russian military term signifying "eight prompt."

a single enthusiast who wanted to spend more than a year in these parts. The situation with regard to supplies is further complicated by the movement of "baggers," the local name for officials who are anxious to get back to the interior of the country as soon as their limited service period expires.

"The analysis of the internal situation which we made in Harbin in the main still holds good for today, except for certain changes to be observed as regards defense.

"I refer to last year's visit of Voroshilov, who placed the task of defending the Far East in a new way. In connection with his declarations in large meetings that the Far East is an inseparable part of the U.S.S.R., and will be defended at any cost, and so on in the same vein, Party elements have spread rumors of preparatory work for fortifying the frontier. However, I've been unable to find out anything definite, and am inclined to be skeptical. I attribute these rumors to a general uneasiness among the local leading circles, but I shall make it my business to investigate this part of the work more in detail.

"One more word about our Russian friends. Baron Tornau came to see me three days ago and gave me detailed information on the activity of the 'Brotherhood of Russian Truth' in the border district. You know my invariable caution, which has incidentally been justified by thirty years of work, and, I assume, you share my conviction that at the present moment the main task is not the organization of terror and depredations on the border, but the quiet accumulation of forces, the organization of people whom we could rely upon in case of decisive events. I asked you to exert your full authority upon those undoubtedly brave, but politically extremely naive people who even now are absorbed in archeological excavations for their old quarrels with the vanished political groups of tsarist Russia. In this case as in every other, I remain the advocate of work among the basic sections of the population which are not out of touch with the country and are an inseparable part of it, those sections of the population which are, as it were, the backbone of the state organization, which do not run off anywhere and which provide the best medium for our active forces, a medium which constitutes an inexhaustible fund of information.

"In the near future I shall head north for the gold district. By the next mail I hope to supply you with detailed information on the explorations of the Belgian engineer, Weber, which, as you remember, interested our banking circles.

"I shall be extremely glad if you deem it convenient to keep me posted regarding 'fish' questions. Although I am not working on them at the moment, I nevertheless prefer to be posted on parallel operations. I shall also write to my neighbor in this connection as soon as I find means of reliable and rapid communication. As regards the channel from me to you, everything is in order at this end. The border is quiet. There's talk of collective farms along the border, but it is fairly unlikely for the next three or four years at any rate. I am sending you a short report on transportation from which you will see that we have not been wasting our time here. Transportation is the Russians' weakest spot."

There was a noise outside the hut. Someone knocked on the window.

"It's I, Matvei Matveyich," said a hoarse cracked voice.

It was the "runner," Sharapov, the man who for the past five years had plied back and forth across the border for Murusima's purposes. He entered, gasping for breath, purple in the face from exhaustion.

"Is it ready?" he asked, without sitting down. "I plan to spend the night on the other side. Tomorrow you'll receive the signal."

"Well, may god help you," Murusima said, making the sign of the cross and regarding the old man's tired and troubled face in surprise. "May Christ preserve you. We'll live to see happy days yet," he added, accompanying Sharapov.

"Did you write anything about money?" Sharapov asked. "They haven't yet paid me for the last trip and now with this one it makes a total of 4,000 yen you owe me, don't forget."

"All right, all right."

"There's nothing all right about it. I've got to pay the insurance on the house in Harbin and the banks are after me. Otherwise, I'll stop making these trips. Besides, the Chekist's on the lookout."

Murusima did not ask what he was hinting at. It's bad luck to inquire about something else when one is engaged in important work.

It was long after sunrise but the mist was in their favor. Before the hut stretched a valley, where brush had partially been cleared and the mud huts of prospectors and wood-cutters stood in the clearings. And over everything there brooded the silence of an uninhabited, unutilized land, content in its idleness.

2

Varvara Ilyinishna and Olga returned to Posyet in June. The steamer sailed at night. A pale new moon floundered among the clouds. The Golden Horn, circled by the lights of two shores, was like a lagoon between reefs of stars.

The shorelights and shiplights, the stars and the lanterns of Chinese junks gave the night a holiday look. The rocks of Egerscheld glided darkly past the steamer. Ahead, sparkling in the moonlight, lay Russion Island, the Kronstadt of the Pacific. For some time it curved along the *Vyuga's* course as though it were following the steamer.

A pale silver light was burning in the distance, but the southern horizon was dark and gloomy and the sea to the south was grey and turbulent. Olga sat on deck for a long time. Varvara Ilyinishna had gone to bed, and the deck passengers had dispersed into warm corners, but Olga still sat listening.

In the damp and windy stillness of the night, the steamer was ceaselessly telling about its life. The steersman was cursing on the bridge; snatches of song drifted up from the engine. Astern, the boatswain was rattling chains Someone was washing clothes and whistling a foxtrot, and the cook in the galley shouted: "You're not washing to time. Snap it up and skip a beat." From time to time a porthole of the orlop deck was flung open and a peal of laughter burst above the clatter of games.

A flock of birds, which had overtaken the steamer, circled carefully over the deck and flew out to sea, immediately swallowed in the silvery air, as though they had never existed.

Olga sat and thought of things impossible. She shuddered from loneliness and from a feeling of melancholy, which the nocturnal shimmer of the waves aroused in her.

Nearby a foreign sea began. The partisans' war stories, the wounding of Schlegel, the search for a mysterious Matvei Matveyevich of whom no one knew whether he was one man or a hundred like him, now came to life and became especially terrifying, embellished by her visions. These visions merged

with her work, with the printed pictures of the sea in books. In her mind she recalled great scientific discoveries, problems of the fishing industry, and she fruitlessly sought to find a connection between her work and the affairs of Schlegel, Mikhail Semyonovich, or Yankov.

"It's necessary, merely necessary," she angrily told herself about her oceanography, which was unrelated to important affairs.

Unnoticed by Olga the sea grew more and more angry, the waves surged higher and higher. The wind rose. By now it lashed the port side of the steamer; it shrieked and groaned and whistled metallically in the dark recesses of the deck. It tore the clouds to shreds and scattered them. The blue enamel of the sky was scratchless, and the waves that rose to meet the sky seemed boiling hot.

Vachtenny ran into Olga by accident. Without hesitation, he asked sympathetically: "What's the matter, haven't you got a ticket?"

On learning that she had a ticket and even a cabin, he added:

"Not a very interesting pastime you're chosen, gazing at empty water; rather a monotonous picture."

Olga left him and went down to her cabin, and paced back and forth on legs that were numb and wobbly. She lay down in her berth without undressing. She kept dozing off and waking, until she grew very bored with the performance and rose and returned to the deck to continue pondering her fate.

By now the sea was incredibly cheerful. It danced almost noiselessly, effortlessly. Under the even delicate sky which had lost its power, the sea alone was live and behaved as it chose. To port, the humble shoreline appeared and disappeared. It looked uninviting and unreal; it was like a petrified crest of surf.

The sea behaved madly. The ship no longer rolled or pitched. It bounded like an athlete and swam like a swimmer, panting audibly. Everything rattled ceaselessly. Its iron body pounded on the water; the iron clanged and the blow staggered the wave. It pounded against the air, drawing swirls of it in its wake, and the blow echoed through the air.

The Gulf of Posyet opened unexpectedly. It was still the sea, but with a different, a tamer swell. The land rose reluctantly on the horizon and lazily waved to the ship with the cheerful smoke of habitations.

The Khlebnikovs lived at the fisheries on Expedition Bay, one of the most beautiful bays and one of the calmest and smallest. Varvara's husband, Demidov, managed the work; Varvara herself kept house and went hunting with a heavy Tula shotgun, and ministered as best she could to the Korean peasant women with ointments of her own concoction.

The days dragged slowly, and they were all of them as vast as in childhood.

Olga was on vacation after her studies in Moscow. She loitered about the fisheries' offices or took a rowboat and went off for the day on the bay. Romanticists among the old marine geographers had bestowed colorful names from literature on the bays and harbors of the Pacific coast. Between Patience Bay and Hope Bay lay Cavalry Bay, reminiscent of the enterprising sailing ships of yore which discovered these localities. Continuing the romantic tradition, Olga gave names of her own fancy to tiny bays and inlets along the shore. Sometimes it was Expectancy Harbor, at others, Onegin and Tatyana [1] Bay. Storm Cape even pleased Olga's father and was accepted by the fishermen. The summer fishing post was located on Storm Cape.

Beyond the fisheries, this side of Storm Cape, the Korean village began—

[1] Characters from Pushkin's poem, *Eugene Onegin*.

low, grey huts, with stovepipes which rose from the ground alongside, and made each hut look as though it were leaning on a crutch. The Koreans rode about on cows which they guided with a rope tied to a ring in the cow's nose. They fed the milk to the pigs and themselves lived on rice and wild grass. They were fond of song, and the nights were never silent. Someone invisible was always singing in the fields. They were good sailors and were handsome people, especially the women; and they were filled with modest pride.

South of the bay was the border, beyond lay Korea. People sometimes came over from there. At such times the villagers would crowd around and listen, and all work would be at a standstill till they had talked themselves out.

Around the bay lay localities remarkable for their wildness and fertility. But Olga saw only the sea. The sea inspired her with big roomy ideas. More and more frequently it seemed to her that the life she was leading was not simple enough and not quite practical, and that oceanography was an inordinately peaceful occupation. She wanted to achieve something, transport goods, cure people, and in general, do something which she could boast about unashamedly.

There were a host of pleasant occupations to which you might devote your life. All you need do was become momentarily interested in something, and it seemed that this particular thing was the most interesting thing in life, the very thing you ought to do. But in the end you had to decide upon some one thing. Thus in June Olga joined Professor Svyagin's group and went North to Tatar Inlet for the whole summer, with the firm determination to upset the academicism of her oceanography.

3

It had been raining continuously since May. They expected the rain to end in September. Grass slid down from the mountain-side together with sections of sod. The bridges bulged and beneath them white jackdaws, soaked to the skin, dragged their dishevelled wings along the ground.

Every day the rain was warmer and heavier. Every day the drops were larger, as though nourished by the juices of the sun. The grass grew higher and the flowers raised their heads to meet the rain. The hillocks were daubed with a riot of color, like the vases at country fairs. There were areas a hundred meters square of peonies, lilies and poppies. Patches of white alternated with blue patches. Elsewhere the crazy painter had splashed all the colors on his palette at random. All summer long the grass sucked the rain and climbed to the daylight around every puddle. It lolled over sideways from over-feeding, and the leaves and roots grew in length and breadth. The wormwood, like a wizened old woman, always towered higher than the sunflower. And feathergrass, reeds and lilies all grew and fought together.

Luza could never get used to this springtime warfare, even though he had witnessed it for many years. But the rain continued, and with constant variation: now a fine drizzle, with midget-like drops, now heavy with drops like transparent berries. And the grass sprouted to meet the rain.

It seemed as though every single inch of space was occupied, and that not one speck was left big enough for a fly to light upon. And yet, an unusual and lovely flower would edge its way through the green crowd, barely reaching the sunlight, and immediately plunge into the struggle with its neighbors. It bloomed in a hurry, crowding them aside, or itself suddenly disappeared, pushed back by the stronger, and was lost in the merciless struggle. Here

everything was superlative, the brightest hues, the strongest and the hardiest, the knights and heroes of the vegetable kingdom.

In the daytime a hungry bee rose into the air, and shaking off the moisture from its wings, buzzed slowly like a bombing plane and surveyed the field from above without alighting. The signal of this first scout had scarcely died away before the warm air over the hillocks was alive with the hum of bees. They swarmed over the flowers not to disappear till autumn, yet, strange to say, there was no honey anywhere and nobody knew where the bees found shelter and who was their master. The intervals between the rains grew longer now and everywhere the mowing began.

That summer even Luza at the "Twenty-fifth of October" mowed by machine and nowhere was the mowing season gayer and more exciting. They had finished cutting around Tiger field which lay between the collective farm and the frontier post, and as always Luza called on Tarasyuk to ask for frontier guards to help in the haymaking.

The brick house of the frontier post stood on the river bank. On the other shore stretched a drab Chinese town, so close that the shouts of the Chinese children frightened the chickens at the post.

Luza walked along, glancing at the familiar town where he had been hundreds of times without seeing anything worth mention. Two women in purple kimonos strolled along the river shore. Chickens clucked in the hedges on the very border. Three water carriers were swearing shrilly at the gardener, Wan Syun-tin, who smoked his pipe indifferently. He saw Luza and nodded to him across the river.

"Evidently he again caught them in the act," said Luza, climbing to the second floor where Tarasyuk was.

"Wan Syun-tin, you mean?" Tarasyuk asked. The whole scene was visible from his window. "He's unscrupulous, but a first class gardener, I can tell you. I watch what he does from my window, and then promptly do the same myself. But their cattle are worthless," Tarasyuk added, pointing to the pasture to the right of the town. "A catlike breed."

"Under their system it's easier to pull the plough yourself. Yesterday Wan Syun-tin hitched two women to the plough along with the donkey and off they went. They writhed and tugged like dogs and even sang while they were at it."

"Interesting agitation for our fellows," said Tarasyuk, taking his binoculars and training them on the hill beyond the town.

Luza, without needing any binoculars, gazed in the same direction. With the practiced eye of an expert he took in a hundred movements of the town life at a single glance.

"What do you say to that?" Tarasyuk asked, observing Luza's face and handing him the binoculars.

"Right you are. Is it long since you noticed it?"

"Yesterday."

"Well, what do you think of that?"

"It's obvious they aren't planning to take us by attack. They're concentrating on fortifications," said Tarasyuk, regarding the little black figures of the Japanese busy with construction work.

It was still morning, but to Luza, as he returned from the frontier post, it seemed like early evening. That is how old age comes on, unawares. Today he was annoyed by the danger from across the river. He filled his wheezy pipe, smoked it and refilled it.

But it was still morning. The bees buzzed and prodded the big clumsy flowers. Bedraggled clouds banked against the sun.

Luza strolled along the river by the sentinel path. The country ended at his feet. Never before had he felt so poignantly that he was walking, not in his own territory, not in his own neighborhood, but over the face of the world, and it troubled him.

The line which he was following was traced on all the maps of the world. Here there were neither villages, cities nor ploughland. It was the empty earth.

But when you stood here you saw how across the narrow river, across the road, or beyond the line of bushes and stones, there began a foreign land, and half a hundred meters away stood a foreign frontier guard while beyond him stretched foreign villages with a life alien to ours. You felt as though everything on the opposite side was different, that the clouds were different, that the air was different. And the narrow strip of land along the border became dearer than anything in the whole world. Everything about it seemed precious and important. And he felt sorry for this land of his, where he had stood these many years, like a living boundary mark.

And that night they unleashed the dogs and stationed a watchman at the bell beyond the firehouse.

Construction proceeded rapidly on the hill beyond the river. Buildings sprang up. A triple line of barbed wire was strung out. A Japanese sentry in white gaiters was stationed at the river ford where only a week ago the children went bathing.

Now it was no longer possible to run over from the other side to the Torgsin store for kerosene or salt.

At night the sky beyond the river glowed alarmingly. It was impossible to tell whether it was caused by bonfires, automobile headlamps looking for the road, or a searchlight pointed sharply downwards.

When they went to the fields, the women wore cartridge belts and carried a shotgun slung over their shoulders; the men carried revolvers strapped to their waists.

In June there were more visitors, this time from Moscow. Shershavin and Guber accompanied them as representatives of the local authorities. The eldest of the travelers was Zverichev, a tall, morose fellow with a smashed-in nose and a cleft chin. Shaking hands with Luza, he remarked:

"We've come to lock you up. We locked up the West and we'll lock you up here too."

"I'm curious to know how you'll lock up the daylight," Luza said.

"We shan't bother the daylight, but we shall lock up the land and the air."

"The air? Oh yes, we've heard that story before."

"Well, we'll set up various contraptions so no bird will be able to fly across and no airplane will get through."

There were ten in the party. At supper they discussed France, the Ukraine, the new morality and recalled women whom they knew. Division commander Guber was constantly breaking in on their conversation.

"It looks like we were too late," and he banged his fist on the table, "we won't have time to do anything. It's all of no avail."

"What's he talking about?" Luza asked Shershavin.

"You see it's this way. The commander of the fortified district sent him here as if it were to a fortress. He got here and found nothing but an empty field without a single brick in sight and it's made him nervous."

"There's plenty to make you nervous," Luza remarked, sympathetically. "That engineer fellow is only laughing at us. He threatens to lock up the air."

"He can do that," Shershavin said.

Guber rose from the table and folded his hands behind his back.

"Comrades, I can't possibly share your optimism. Fortification work is a serious business."

"Well, speak up and tell us what you want," Zverichev shouted. "I'll build you a fortified district to measure, to fit your form. That's little compared to what we did back West."

"I have no confidence in your optimism, comrades."

"Go tell that to your commissar, my friend. Believe it or not as you choose, in December we'll have a fitting. I'm telling you like an old tailor."

"And incidentally he really is a tailor," Shershavin told Luza, "even now he stitches his own trousers."

The visitors went to bed an hour before dawn, but Zverichev stayed up examining his notebook. On his chest he wore the order of the Red Banner which had become frayed around the edges. He read, whistling and humming to himself. At dawn he made his way to the stove and without asking, found the teapot and poured himself three glasses of cold tea. Then, with a cheerful yawn, as though he had overslept, he winked at Luza.

"We'll build all right. And fairly quick, Comrade Chairman."

"The fortifications, you mean?" Luza asked.

"*Etwas!* Something like that," the engineer said, describing circles in the air with his hand.

"It's a lengthy business, our country is empty, depopulated."

"I wanted to remind you, by the way, Comrade Chairman, that there'll be plenty for you to do in the near future—people will be coming, families with children and all that goes with it, you know. Meanwhile—the main thing is to stress the pigs. Pigs will be your salvation. Otherwise they'll eat you out of house and home."

"Three years it'll take you, won't it?" Luza asked, undressing and ignoring the remark about pigs.

"By winter, the orders say, Comrade Chairman," the engineer answered gaily, putting on his boots; and he repeated the remark about pigs.

That morning Tarasyuk rode by on horseback and knocked on the hut window.

"News for you," he told Luza. "The old partisan shouted greetings to you from across the river."

"Who's that?"

"U-shan, I believe his name is. The same little fellow who ran into your hut."

"Will they start something soon? The people complain that the Japanese are grinding them down."

"In the autumn they'll attack, I expect," Tarasyuk said, thoughtfully.

September

Few coastlines in the world resemble the Far East. The Soviet Union is washed by the Sea of Japan along the shores of myriads of bays and inlets. The coast is little like the descriptions written by poets because it is foggy, rainy and windy. Its beauty is invisible, it can only be imagined. Thus in the landscapes of old Japanese paintings, enchanting rains and mists are spread

over seven-eighths of the canvas and only the beautifully painted mannikins and gnarled pine trees in the one corner of the picture which is not concealed from us by the all pervading mist convince us that the whole of nature is beautiful and marvelous.

Rain, without which no picture of Japanese life is conceivable, has moulded everything, including art. Painting forgot how to see distances; and when it does happen to look into the distance, it does so as though through eyes half-closed. The artists only guess at the whole composition. The confounding mist has taught them not to believe in reality.

Everything in Japan is adapted to rain and mist. Japanese lacquers, which preserve wood from decomposition, are meant for rainy weather. They remind one of a laurel leaf glistening in the rain, and are intended to make the water run off walls more rapidly. Temples built of lacquered red wood look better in the rain than in the sun. Lacquer is used for painting rainy landscapes; it is the only dry spot in a damp and bleary world. The old Japanese shoes—*ghetas*—wooden sandals with raised soles, the umbrellas and country raincoats made of straw, the houses and the customs are all intended for the rain.

The Sea of Japan is stormy, but along our shores it has gouged out calm meandering bays. The gulfs are like lakes. Sails do not disappear from the surface till late autumn. All summer long the shores by the fisheries and villages smell of rotting fish. In autumn this odor is replaced by that of decaying seaweed which is not even borne off by the December winds.

The sea is industrious and productive. With Asiatic persistence, it hollows out new bays, feeds hordes of fish, and grows meadows of seaweed thousands of miles across—and the smell of fish and seaweed is like the worker's sweat of the sea and overhangs its animated shores, winter and summer.

In July Olga went with Svyagin's expedition. The object of the work was to study the flora of the Far Eastern seas and to chart the location of the seaweed.

Early in July the short period of the summer set in. Only two hues existed in life—golden light blue and golden dark blue—the hues of the sky and water. Shoals of fish swam northward accompanied by birds and pursued by fishing fleets. The fishermen were followed by expeditions. Indeed they not only journeyed northward from the south but also came down from the north and eastwards from the west, studying the sea, the mountains, the taiga, the fish, and the sparse settlements of the local peoples.

Olga was in the crew of a small sloop, the *Chaika*. The work was absurdly romantic. They got up at dawn like birds and did setting-up exercises in the sunrise, singing at the top of their lungs.

The morning bonfire never wanted to light right off, and they didn't kindle it but drenched it with kerosene till it sputtered and exploded, upsetting all the kettles and pans.

The boats put out to sea in the morning and till dark they poked the sea-bottom, found and recorded the currents, collected weeds, and made soundings. Submarine meadows stretched almost unbrokenly along the shore.

Life was like a repetition of childhood. Work was a game, or rather an amusement, and they were completely absorbed by it. In an access of professional enthusiasm, they even tried making cabbage soup from sea cabbage; but eating it was out of the question.

"It has a splendid vitamin content," Svyagin said, disappointedly laying aside his spoon, "but there's no denying it has a rather nasty taste."

There was a variety of work. It turned out that oceanography is a science

new in usage and that its scope is almost unlimited. The young people lectured at the fisheries on seaweed, vitamins, foods in general and living conditions They inspected dining rooms and told the directors about the laws of the currents and winds. In one place they opened a club, in another they helped to prepare a report, and elsewhere they organized a bureau of regional study. In a fourth place the chairman of the Soviet, a former Red Army man, came to them with a request to inform the Academy of Science that he had found oil. He gave them the following letter:

"To the Chairman of the Academy of Science, copy to the district committee:

"In reply to your scientific inquiry, I am sending a liter of oil which I discovered."

At Tern Harbor, Olga remembered the Zaretskys and ran over to see them on the day of her arrival.

Schlegel was there, thin, unshaven and slouching. With him was a little man with an aquiline face who was a stranger to her. He smiled continuously and looked ludicrous. He ate cautiously, as though with reluctance, hiding delicate, not very clean hands under the tablecloth. His Red Army summer trousers were as shiny as leather, but his jacket was neat, although decidedly too tight.

"We've built bigger things than that, Citizen Zaretsky," he was saying as Olga, having entered the room and kissed Zaretsky, held out her hand. He jumped up quickly and nimbly, darted a glance at Schlegel, and without giving his name, deferentially shook Olga's hand and made a low bow.

"You didn't expect to see me?" Schlegel asked. "It seems I'll be alive for some time yet."

Zaretsky made room for Olga at the table and belatedly replied to the thin little man:

"It doesn't matter what you built back there. Things were different . . ."

"Just so, and we invariably get good results."

"I'll have to check up on you," Zaretsky said, laughingly. "Don't take offense. I believe in being frank. You understand."

"No, Citizen Zaretsky, I don't understand."

Schlegel poured everyone a glass of vodka and they clinked glasses. The old man bit his lip and drank with a bow.

"Well, then, I'll sign you up at the office," Zaretsky said, feebly and reluctantly: "we'll see."

"What's your opinion on the subject?" Schlegel asked the thin old man. The latter rose and, neatly folding his napkin, declared, without looking at anyone:

"I ask to be left where I am. I wouldn't care to work here. There's no one here I can depend on. May I go?"

"As you please," said Schlegel.

The old man bowed to everyone at once and, without shaking hands, walked out, carefully stepping on the toes of boots that were too large for him.

"Who's that?" Olga asked.

"Ah ha, he's an interesting chap. Akhtyrsky. The transport engineers worship him."

"Can he do the job?"

"He can."

After dinner Zaretsky's wife motioned to Olga and led her off to her own room.

"You know Schlegel well, don't you, Olga?" she asked. "Talk to him, my sweet, and find out what he wants from my old man."

"Is he here on business?"

"Why, he's a Chekist. They even conduct inquests in their sleep. You never can figure them out. He doesn't give Stepan a minute's peace. 'It's all because of you that things are in a mess,' and he even tries to make out that it's our fault he was wounded. You know yourself we haven't been out of the taiga for seven years."

"How can I discuss it with him?" Olga asked, and was frightened by the thought that she might get involved in an important and strange business. "However, I'll speak to him and ask him," she added, without looking at her friend. "But how could it be your fault he was wounded?"

"That's what it comes to. You see, Stepan has a good many workers without passports, including two Koreans. So he's fastened on to that and keeps asking: 'Where are they from and who authorized it?' "

Over the teacups Olga again asked Schlegel how his wound was and whether the one who fired the shot had been caught.

"The wound is a trifle; but as for catching the culprit, his comrades won't give him away," he answered dryly.

"Don't go making wrong accusations, Semyon Aronovich," Zaretsky replied, with a good-natured smile. "Just you try and stick to the naked letter of the law and see how far you'll get. If you want, I'm willing to discharge them," he said excitedly, "but then you'll have to answer for the stoppage of work."

Schlegel was silent. Then he asked:

"How old are you, Stepan?"

"What's wrong? Do you think I'm too old?"

"Why no. It doesn't look as if you've grown up yet."

Under the circumstances Olga could not make up her mind to ask any questions, and she began to make her adieus. Schlegel accompanied her to the shore.

"I dare say Zaretsky's wife already delegated you to have a talk with me," he asked her on the way.

"You probably guess what it was she wanted me to ask?"

"I know. Nonsense. She thinks she's married to a business genius. Actually, he's a fool. He's no manager or much of anything else. Just a good-natured fool. A typical fool."

"He's an honest man."

"You mean he doesn't steal? Yes, in that respect he's honest. But what do you call it when he spends his whole life dreaming? That's a mess for you. Even back in the Civil War they pampered him like an offended genius. Afterwards he dreamed that he was an experienced and a remarkable constructor and that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cramped his initiative. They put him on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and he began dreaming that he was a great detector of thieves. They made him a director and now he has difficulties because the G.P.U. doesn't understand his noble soul."

They walked hand in hand along a narrow path at the edge of the sea. It was early evening and the air smelled of the open sea. A vast panorama of sky and water stretched before their eyes. To the left the line of a mighty forest stood out in bold relief.

"I can appreciate that," Olga said. "One feels so much like doing only the most important things."

"As I see it, there's no specializing when it comes to important things," Schlegel replied. "And generally speaking I only know one good speciality. Your dead father was a master in that field."

"What was that?"

"He was an amazingly practical revolutionary activist in whatever he did. He always looked for the new and seized upon it, and I think that in all the sciences there was only one thing that interested him—how to defeat the Whites with the least expenditure of energy. Varvara Ilyinishna had another speciality. She made people believe in her. People had confidence in her whatever she did. What is important work? It is greatness of character applied to cooperation, physics, icthyology, war or art. You can be a great janitor or an incompetent professor."

"But people must dream, Schlegel. People who have accomplished nothing important are more entitled to dream than others are."

"Up North, Olga, you'll run into Schottmann. You know him, don't you? A grey-headed old man. There's a dreamer for you! If he is attracted to music you can be sure that somewhere or other he is training a musician. If he is attracted to architecture, that means he's placed his hand on somebody's soul and is building there. And take a look at how many people flock around him.

"I myself wrote poetry," Schlegel continued, coughing from embarrassment. "I wanted to become a famous poet, but once I came across a young dolt who blathered about love. He had the shifty eyes of a pig and it was perfectly plain that he wanted to get big money for his illiterate verses. He'd been dreaming of patent leather shoes and steaks and not of laurel wreaths. And then I thought to myself: 'Am I a poet? Will I start writing verses about love, about the future? I?' And I shuddered. What a soul it requires to risk such a venture. From then on I became a Chekist, not because this requires less of a soul, but a soul of a different kind, one that is harder and dryer.

"When I poke my head out of my office where I am the oldest recluse, I myself, when I lift my eyes from the criminals, scoundrels and idiots, I want to see that someone has been dreaming on my behalf, that someone has made a city, written good books, staged excellent shows or found a new road in science. And it cheers me up. I sigh once or twice over my own poetry and again plunge into work. If I'm to work well, there must always be something pleasant outside my window."

He spat, took a deep breath, and added:

"But I can't sit and drink tea for two days and boast that I might be a great general, a poetic genius, or a musician, if only I'd graduated from the city academy. And the passports of Zaretsky's workers are not in order. His superintendant is a thief. The barracks are dirty and he himself has drooly lips because he doesn't know how to smoke a pipe." As he spoke Schlegel gasped and slackened his pace. He was still ill.

Gone were the sartorial nattiness and neatness of figure which had impressed Olga on the train the night of their first encounter. Schlegel was unshaven, carelessly attired, and gloomy and despondent from head to toe. His lean face looked as if he had powdered it.

"You ought to lie down for a while, close your eyes and not think of anything."

"Fellows like us can't stand that, Olga. Peace spoils a Chekist. Why, I stayed in bed and put on seven kilos and aged seven years. No," he said with a smile, "rest isn't in my line. I don't know how to rest. And it requires too much effort to rest. To hell with it."

But Schlegel was ill in spite of his attempts at gaiety.

"At present you look forty-five," Olga said.

"Yes, yes, I stayed in bed too long. I realize it," Schlegel repeated again, and changed the subject.

He remained with her for a long time. For a long time he led her along the quiet shore, asking about the expedition and the young people.

Schlegel accompanied Olga to the landing.

"I'd have gone North myself, but I can't. If anything happens, write me," he said, bidding goodbye. "I'll answer, I'm a good letter-writer; I give you my word for it! Bad poets always write good letters."

Svyagin had mustered a crew of fine young people, and they became so attached to each other that they formed one big family. They thought of the end of the voyage as though of a calamity.

Yes, it was one family. And if the young people had not been afraid of spoiling everything nice they would naturally have married and wandered about with their children, like gypsies.

On September 25, Svyagin reached the Amur Inlet, ahead of all the others. Olga found accommodation for everyone at the old bath-house of Zuyev, whose niece, Olympiada, was already the mistress there. She had come to get married.

Everything was quiet at Nikolayevsk on the Amur. The town hadn't yet returned from the taiga and the sea. Within two weeks they expected two hundred people from the gold mines and the prospecting and it was estimated that no less than a hundred weddings would take place. The girls of Nikolayevsk fretted on their evening walks, waiting for autumn to bring them suitors from the taiga.

While Olga was on her way North with the expedition, Luza received a telegram from Mikhail Semyonovich, inviting him to accompany him on a trip over the territory; and in spite of the fact that he was up to his ears in work at the border, Luza went to meet him at Nikolsk-Ussurisky.

There were three of them in the drawing-room car, besides the porter—Mikhail Semyonovich, the orderly Chernayev, and Luza. That is, there were three in theory. In reality at least twenty or thirty people jammed the car continuously. They climbed aboard at wayside stations and between stops reported on the grain crop, the soya bean, personnel, and then got off without having had time to say goodbye, and their places were filled by others.

They reached Vladivostok on a sunny windy morning. The drawing-room car was parked on a siding almost on the bay-shore. From the car you could see the hulls of steamers and listen to the songs of the stevedores and the laughter of the waves on the granite jetty. It was early and the city was still asleep. The linesmen set up two telephone apparatuses in a corner and connected the car with the outside world. Chernayev, wearing a blue cotton sweater, whispered into the mouthpiece.

"Hello, give me central, hello."

Having hastily gulped their tea, Mikhail Semyonovich and Luza went to the city on foot. They observed how the street cleaners swept the street and how the stores opened. They went to the post-office and the hospital and to the Millyonka, where thieves and smugglers lurk in the nooks and crannies while candy-sellers bake and boil some sort of sweetish mess that smells of garlic. They pushed back the door of an empty Chinese theater and went in. A boy of eight was strutting on the stage while a flabby old Chinese watched from a distance, shouting hoarsely. Then they sat down at the general table in a Chinese restaurant and, together with longshoreman and beggars, ate

some kind of pungent sauce with a sweetish-sourish taste, swilling it down with warm beer. They remembered the ready-made clothing store which had just opened and went in and priced things for a long time. At ten o'clock they returned to the car for a meeting.

Luza sat in the compartment next to the drawing-room. Reports on fish, gold, children, baths, and laundries drifted through his head like smoke. The orderly Chernayev whispered into the telephone mouthpiece, asking to be connected with the territory. The porter ceremoniously ushered in visitors and motioned them to enter or wait outside without uttering a word.

"Any news about dinner?" Luza asked him.

"You see, he's receiving people," the porter replied. "We won't get through before evening."

Luza returned to the compartment. In the drawing-room a young professor was talking to Mikhail Semyonovich.

"There's nothing more for me to do. The technikum has been organized; we have forces and I've got an unfinished work on history lying in my briefcase."

"How long have you been in the Party?"

"Ten years. Listen, Mikhail Semyonovich, I've done everything I could. As the saying goes, even the best girl can't give more than she's got."

"Nonsense. She can repeat."

"I can't, Mikhail Semyonovich, I can't. I've got myself to consider."

"You'll have plenty of time. It seems to me that it'll be hard for you to be a Communist all your life. One or two years more and you'll be through."

"Mikhail Semyonovich . . ."

"I speak frankly. All you've got left is two or three years. You'd better start thinking about yourself right now, only do your thinking about yourself with my head. There's nothing to get offended about when you're in the wrong. It's hard for some people to be Communists all their lives. It jars on their nerves and in five years time they go to pieces. You're a smart fellow, Fratkin. You'd better look at matters more strictly. Even proletarians fall down on us. Take Zaretsky, for example: once in his life he licked the Japanese and he can't forget it, and since then he's made trouble for us for twenty years, the louse. It requires ability, Fratkin, to be a Communist, a lot of it."

"If that's how things are, send me to the Central Committee. Let the Central Committee check up."

"That's an idea. Only we won't send you. We'll send a letter."

"I . . ."

"You, Fratkin, are a fellow without reserves, you lack inner resources. I tell you straight from the shoulder, within two years they'll throw you out of the Party on any one of a number of charges. You're liable to commit almost any transgression. We've kept you too long in a professorship, that's what the trouble is. In guiding a man one must always remember what he's good for and how long he can hold out. Enough said! In two weeks I'll go to the territorial committee and I'll raise your question there."

He rose from the table and paced the drawing-room.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to have dinner, Comrade Chernayev," he said irritatedly, and asked Fratkin: "Do you play dominoes? Have a seat. Vassya!" he called to Luza. "Climb out of the compartment! You sleep like a dope, you son of a bitch!"

They sat down to play dominoes, waiting for dinner to be brought from the station buffet. Mikhail Semyonovich played with Chernayev, Luza with the professor.

"Who has the 'Marat'?" Marat was the name given to the 6:6 tile.

Luza had the Marat and played first.

"Don't fall asleep, Chernayev, I'm relying on you," Mikhail Semyonovich enjoined, looking at his own hand which had scooped seven domino tiles.

The professor made the first mistake. Mikhail Semyonovich savagely struck the table with the palm of his hand that held a tile.

"You're a fool," he remarked in a thin, falsetto voice, "you mislead your own partner by such a play. The devil take you, you're even a fool when it comes to play! Look out for the professor, Vassya."

Then Luza distinguished himself. He closed the entries without himself realizing it.

"Why do you try to play if you don't know how," Mikhail Semyonovich banged the table with his fist. "He even has the face to challenge people, the fool."

"I didn't challenge anyone."

"Forget about it. Let's have dinner. Once you've sat down to play, play."

Dinner was over by three o'clock.

They went to see how the work on the shore fortifications, begun in April, was proceeding. The shore-line was cluttered with spools of wire, empty cement barrels, fragments of crates, and piles of crushed stone. Masons, ditch-diggers and electricians in blue overalls dodged between bonfires, portable furnaces, and concrete mixers. In the offing lay huge crates containing the parts of the future cannon. This would all go to make one piece. The cannon did not yet exist, but its plant had already been set up around the construction site.

In the clubroom a chorus was singing. Nearby they were erecting the power station, and the sort of chap who in the old days was called an artilleryman, a happy fellow in blue overalls, fondly strolled around the power turbine, which was also part of the cannon's equipment.

Beyond were the staff-headquarters of the cannon, the hut of the command, the gun crew cabin, a small hospital, a warehouse, barracks, cellars, a vegetable and flower garden.

"War is becoming a difficult speciality," Mikhail Semyonovich remarked with gratification. "In order to kill one man you must at least have a college education."

They entered the barracks of the Red Navymen. They were all workers, half of them had finished high-school.

"Komsomol members, raise your hands!" he shouted in another barrack, and every hand went up.

Afterwards Mikhail Semyonovich and Luza drove to a factory and inspected housing. They went to the port and inspected a whaler. Then they drove out of town to the aqueduct.

Evening found them on a hilly road far up the Amur Inlet. A mist overhung the woods. Long white shreds of it drifted down the woodcutter's paths from the hilltop and filtered through the trees. A damp, salty wind lashed their faces. They returned to the city by dark and without going to the car they headed for the pier where a barge awaited them, ready to sail.

"Shall we cast off?" asked the captain of the barge, Boyarishnikov.

"Go ahead," Mikhail Semyonovich answered, and he added, absent-mindedly: "As soon as you're free, drop around to the cabin. We'll have a game before going to bed."

"All right, I'll drop around," the captain replied, gaily.

Chernayev sat dozing in the tiny cabin.

"Wake up, Comrade Staff Commander, and show me the telegrams!" Mikhail Semyonovich said, good-naturedly.

Without opening his eyes, Chernayev mumbled:

"Everything's in order. Yours have all been sent off and there's nothing come in for you from the territory headquarters."

"I'm not on vacation," Mikhail Semyonovich observed, with annoyance. "How's that? You probably overslept."

"Honestly there wasn't a thing," Chernayev said, shutting his eyes still tighter.

He was all prepared to be sea-sick and waited tensely for the first symptoms.

Mikhail Semyonovich was free. There was absolutely nothing for him to do. The captain was detained on the bridge, so he began bothering Luza. He asked him at length and in great detail about the collective farm and life on the border.

"You're a fake activist," he said, in a sad voice. "An honorable faker even though you are chairman of a collective farm."

"Let me alone, I want to sleep," Luza angrily replied.

"Tell me a good story and I'll let you go."

And Vassily Pimyonovich Luza told stories, slowly and clumsily, making them up as he went along, but Mikhail Semyonovich rejected them all indiscriminately.

"What do your collective farmers use their heads for? I'd have thrown a fellow like you out long ago," he said irritatedly, and began telling a story himself. This wasn't a speech but a tale about cement of which there was always a deficiency in the territory. He liked to think out new methods of working cement, and dreamed of finding "adhesive earth." His clever mind was ever fascinated by the "magic tablecloth and flying carpet" of folklore.

"And now, supposing a fellow came to me and said: 'I found adhesive earth,' some form of oil, say, or natural rosin, or peat, and there was a reserve of a hundred thousand tons. I'd promptly take the whole hundred thousand tons from him, without a word to anybody."

"You'd take it all?"

"Right on the spot."

Now Mikhail Semyonovich was almost talking to himself. He little resembled a responsible executive, an old fighter and a teacher of men. He was merely a man with tired eyes and a wrinkled forehead whose life was made up of cement, cereals, drygoods and coal, just as other lives are made up of eternal passions and poetry. In brief, he wasn't concerned with anything save his own life, the happiness of which required more coal, more iron, steel, fish and bread.

The whole of his conduct was directed to combining separate motions of material. He listened to the noise of coal and logging as though it were his pulse, and then decided whether he should exert himself or take a rest. Chernayev, who knew Mikhail Semyonovich's character, could always guess the reasons for his gaiety or despondency. "That's sure to be coal," he would say, noting that Mikhail Semyonovich's voice was growing slower and louder and its intonations angrier and angrier. "It's fish that's cheered him up," he guessed another time, because he was in the habit of surmising from the expression and the wrinkles on Mikhail Semyonovich's face whether it was fish, coal, personnel, or grain.

The night roared outside the cabin walls. Mikhail Semyonovich placed his hands over his pale face end peacefully mumbled one story after another.

But Luza was not attracted to the things which absorbed Mikhail Semyonovich. Luza was a hunter, was chairman of a collective farm in name only. Actually he was no chairman. He was simply an honored man, a hero awaiting recognition.

The sea was becoming utterly impossible. The barge creakingly rose on the crest of the wave and then with a shake of its stern, it lurched into the trough. Luza fell over on the sofa.

"What's happened to the captain," yawningly muttered Mikhail Semyonovich, who was immune from seasickness. "It would be nice to have a game before going to bed. This is the sort of a rest I enjoy, Vassya. How about giving our bones a bit of fresh air. Vassya!" he called. But Luza lay motionless.

Luza didn't hear him and even if he had heard, he wouldn't have opened his eyes for anything. The rocking was so violent that the sideboard rose higher than the lamp and the fragments of crockery landed against the wall. Chernayev lay with his head wrapped in the sheet.

"You're nothing but a bunch of bums," Mikhail Semyonovich whispered. "You can't even travel by sea."

Weak from sea-sickness and mortification, Luza crawled from his bunk at dawn and thought darkly of suicide. But when he went on deck and saw the distant shore his strength immediately returned. Mikhail Semyonovich stood on the narrow bridge watching the fishing trawlers.

"They don't work so badly," he shouted to Luza. The beautiful clean bay of Slovyanka opened before them.

N. Virta

Loneliness

Part III

The Wolf

For close on three weeks now, Storojev had been roaming among the thickets and the outskirts of the forest. He spent his days, and struggled through the short summer nights, in the dells and ravines.

Summer lightning quivered in the evening sky, the universe whirled on and he sat by his camp-fire, his heart a desolate waste.

His horse moved heavily about, munching the grass with peaceful regularity. Somewhere in the distance a dog barked. The moon shed a chilly light over the earth. All was still, as if battles had never been fought; as if shots and alarm-signals had never been heard and the flames of burning villages had never been seen, and peace and goodwill had held the earth in close embrace for many a long day.

There were nights when Storojev crept up to the villages where the Reds were firmly established, and gazed long into the darkness, trying to make out what sort of a life was going on there, and what lay behind that profound silence and gloom. Sometimes, with grim, determined malice he would crawl quite close, and soon dry flames would crackle over the village, the alarm-bell would ring out, and shots would be fired.

But the next day darkness would descend upon him again, and the mild breeze rustled the leaves of the whispering aspens.

One day, as he was watering his horse, he caught sight of his gaunt, unshaven face reflected in the stagnant water. Grey hair gleamed at his temples and even higher.

"A wolf—that's what I look like," he said to himself. "Getting old."

It was true: Storojev had aged a great deal during the last three weeks; his cheeks had fallen in, his eyes, deeply sunken, gleamed evilly from beneath his brows. He lived on dry crusts, for his sons rarely brought food to the appointed places. He longed for milk. Once he came upon a herd of cows; the deaf-and-dumb cowherd waved him away, babbling and mumbling indignantly. Storojev struck him across the face with his whip, picked out a cow and drank his fill of fresh milk.

... Fires broke out in villages every night now. Like a shadow, Storojev crept past the sentries, made his way to the houses, the store-rooms, Soviets and cooperatives of the Communists, fired at people out of the darkness, and, hiding behind some hillock or other, watched the panic die down.

At a place on the line near Sampur, Storojev bound the sectional railway-guard and took away his tools. With these he took the rails apart and then watched the railway-carriages piling on top of each other, watched with frenzied glee as the sparks of the resulting fire flew skywards.

But he grew ever gloomier and the light in his black eyes died out. All around him was as still and deserted as ever. He found none of his comrades hiding in the thickets and gullies. Had they been killed, or taken—armed as they were—or had they surrendered to the Reds?

"No, that's not the thing," he thought, "that's not what I want."

New trains would pass by tomorrow, new houses would spring up beside those he had burned down.

Storojev grew anxious, suspicious, and would sit up nights listening to every sound, unable to sleep.

He was fleeing from his pursuers when a bullet pierced his mare's heart. She dropped to the ground, letting out her last breath with a deep sigh. Storojev looked at her and his face twitched as if in sudden pain. A dull tear slid down his cheek. Then, making a gesture of despair, he went on his way.

It was a faithful friend he had lost. He was used to her measured gait during hours of hopeless waiting; for Peter Ivanovitch was still waiting—waiting for the night to pass and the morning to dawn, when the world would be in an uproar and from their unknown, secret hiding-places the old *atamans* would appear again, and draw thousands under the banners of the Constituent Assembly, the banner of "Land and Liberty."

Land!

The cherished land at Lake Lebyaji lay before him: he often rode there to look at it. Rich land, and it might one day be his again, might yield its fruits to him alone, if only there were freedom to own it once more, so that he could plant his feet firmly on its boundaries and set up a strong fence around it.

If only there were freedom!

"I'm fighting not for my freedom alone," Peter Ivanovitch was thinking. "Let everyone take care of his land if he can, and stick to the fresh juicy clods. so long as he doesn't let go of it, or give it up to anyone else. But if you haven't got an iron grasp and wolf's fangs, then go to whoever is strong and powerful, go and be a farmhand for him, and water the sprouts of other men's crops with your sweat, and learn to be a master farmer—even though you're fated to die a fool and a beggar."

One evening a man came to look at the Lebyaji land. In his long white blouse he was visible a long way off. He shouldered his way through the rye, which was now a green wall breast high, and raising his bearded face to the sunlight, smiled. The breeze stirred his long hair. The day caressed his body with its summer warmth, the fruitful, harvest world was peaceful and glad.

Storojev saw him and hid among the pungent wormwood and burdocks growing luxuriantly by the roadside. When the man came closer, Storojev saw that it was Matvei Besperstov, whom he had twice ordered to be flogged. This was their third encounter. Matvei went towards the boundary, and the smile on his face, overgrown with grey bristles, glowed in the evening sun. He was barefoot, his shirt was open at the neck. The old man was talking aloud to himself.

"It's looking grand. The ears are fine and full, yes, that they are! It's good grain. It's good land the government gave me."

Matvei was unknowingly standing almost beside Storojev. He scratched his side and went off, walking lightly. "Good land, is it?" Storojev snarled through his teeth. "So it's you, then, you dog, who's got hold of my land? Stop!" he roared after Matvei, as he jumped out of the grass.

The old man spun around as if on springs, recognized Peter Ivanovitch and began to mumble and cross himself.

"That's right, cross yourself, cross yourself, you blackguard! Is this your field?"

"Yes," replied Matvei in a whisper. "It's a bit of good land, god be praised."

"Good land, yes," said Peter Ivanovitch. "Only it's not for you!"

"We're all people, aren't we?" retorted Matvei, regaining his self-possession. "The land is for everyone, isn't it, Peter Ivanovitch?"

"For people, yes, but not for dogs. You're a beggar. Even now that you've taken this land from me you walk barefoot, and when you had no land you went barefoot, too. A barefoot beggar, that's all you are!"

Matvei looked down at his black horny feet.

"My bit of land was a long way off, Peter Ivanovitch—yes, and it was very bad land the village community gave the poor. I had no horse either. No matter how long you dug at it you couldn't make a good living out of that land. We'll get on better now, though, won't we? Now we've got the government behind us!"

Matvei spoke quietly; he was standing before Storojev, nibbling a blade of grass.

All was still. In the distant village the bells rang out for evensong, and the sound carried faintly on the light breeze

"It'll never be yours, that land," shouted Storojev, beside himself with rage. "It's my land, do you hear, mine. Why have you taken it?"

"Better be off while you're safe, Peter Ivanovitch. They're after you. You're wanted. If they catch you, they'll never let you go."

"Well, catch me, then, catch me!" Storojev screamed wildly, with saliva spurting from his white lips, his eyes gleaming savagely. He jerked his rifle to his shoulder. A shot echoed across the fields.

Matvei dropped dead on the cool, dewy boundary of his land.

On the twenty-fourth of May, Red troops consisting of students from military schools, who had driven Antonov from his lair, encountered his regiments for the first time and drove them back southwards. Antonov's men fled through the woods and bogs, scattered, and then gathered together once more.

On the twenty-ninth of May, Tukhachevsky united Kotovsky's divisions and Dimitrenko's cavalry brigade into shock troops, and commissioned Uborevitch to scatter Antonov's main forces, collected in the village of Mojarovka.

After a long chase, Antonov finally realized that there was no chance of shaking off the Red troops. He hid in the woods by the River Vorona, rested awhile, and then made up his mind to fight.

The night after the battle Antonov, who although he had lost a third of his troops was still confident, gathered and led into Yelan, in the province of Saratov, the Fourth Special Parevs Regiment, the Third Nisov, the Naru-Tambov, the Verkhozensky, the Semenov, and others. He sent Boguslavsky, in command of two thousand men, to go up towards Sampur and strike at the rear of the Reds.

But Antonov had no success at Yelan, either. On the second of June, Uborevitch overtook him, drove him into the province of Tambov again and wiped out his best forces. This was a crushing blow; the army ceased to exist: it meant the end of the game.

For the first time Tukhachevsky was able to send a telegram to Moscow with the information that the bandit forces had been wiped out; Antonov's men had fled into the woods, the villages and bogs.

Two thousand five hundred men—all that remained of the rebels—weary and indifferent to their fate, remained with Antonov in the woods by the lake. He twisted and turned on one spot, as if chained to it, but the Reds

would not let him out of this tangle of bushes and trees. Antonov gathered the commanders around him.

The forest was full of threatening sounds, the sky hummed with aeroplanes, field guns thundered ceaselessly.

Antonov did not question his comrades regarding the mood of the moujiks; he knew what was happening in the villages and hamlets; he had seen how eagerly the people had taken to the plough, how they had risen long before the sun, as if afraid of being deprived once more of the chance of peaceful labor, of being forced to gaze with anguished longing at the mournful orphaned fields, of having to hide from detachments of armed men, and peer out through the windows to see whether they were friends or enemies.

The peasants were protected at their labors by Red Army men. Often these fellows would throw off their overcoats, spit on their palms, and take to the plough, with the same assurance and firmness with which they handled machine-guns.

Antonov knew, too, that the peasants were organizing, with Tukhachevsky's permission, bands of volunteers to assist the Reds and that no force could break the stubborn valor of these bands.

"Well, what are we to do, brother-commanders?" he asked his men. "Where are we to go?"

Antonov decided to fight, but suddenly changed his mind and gave orders to retire into the Chernev woods.

On the twenty-sixth of June the Red military students surrounded the woods, and opened an artillery-fire that was kept up all day; then the infantry advanced, bent on a search of the woods. Detachments of Communists and volunteers moved along the banks of the Vorona, and the military students went towards Lake Ilmen. That day two hundred and seventy of Antonov's men were killed. The Reds captured Santalov, the commander who had once visited Denikin, and several other commanders, including Popov, Mansurov, Dr. Tanayev and Antonov's adjutant, Koslov.

Antonov escaped with his brother Dimitri, and at night they made their way past the sentries. He was tracked to Ramsino marshes. For eight days, often without sleeping or eating, the student-divisions lay in ambush in the swamps, up to their waists in water. They surrounded Antonov as if he were a bear; he would never get away now, it seemed. Along the Vorona crept boats bearing machine-guns; the woodland tracks were guarded by experienced, daring scouts, aeroplanes circled over the marshes; but they seemed devoid of life. Not a soul was to be seen, not a reed stirred, the placid waters of lake and swamp lay unruffled, the woods were silent.

Then the Red divisions closed in towards the center. In the marshy undergrowth they discovered huge stores of provisions and arms, and captured Staff-Commandant Trubko, and Aleshka, Antonov's orderly, in the reeds. But Antonov had escaped again, with Dimitri, and they lost track of him altogether.

It was already the twentieth of July, when the Special Commission handed Vassiliev, the secretary of the Tambov Provincial Committee of the Party, a letter, the contents of which directly afterwards became known in all the villages.

"Antonov's bands of robbers are crushed, they are giving themselves up and handing over their leaders. The peasantry has finally become disgusted with the bandit Social-Revolutionary rule, and has joined in the decisive struggle against the robber gangs. The final collapse of Social-Revolutionary

banditry, the full cooperation of the peasants in the struggle against it, permits the Special Commission to repeal martial law."

The Commission reminded Antonov's men once more that all who surrendered voluntarily would save their own lives and receive a lighter punishment.

After the publication of this letter twenty-six thousand men surrendered to the Red Army and other representatives of the Soviet Government. They also surrendered three thousand rifles, fifty machine-guns, a hundred and seventy machine-gun barrels, swords and revolvers.

By that time nine thousand men had been taken prisoner and about a thousand had died in battle. Every day ragged, sullen men appeared at headquarters and at the Soviets, where they laid down their rifles and wiped their perspiring faces. They sat down wearily and asked for cigarettes, which they smoked greedily.

This was the end of the rebellion; the flame had gone out, the embers were growing cold.

One day, on a distant track in the woods, Storojev met Antonov's brother Dimitri, who informed him that Antonov was not far off.

By scarcely discernible tracks Dimitri led Storojev to a little lake in the depths of the woods. Here weeping willows dipped their green leaves in the clear water, down among the reeds wild ducks quacked, and great pines seemed to listen in dignified silence to the voices of the woodland creatures.

Near the lake, on a broad tree-stump, sat Antonov, absorbed in a book. He was lean, unshaven and ragged. The book he was reading was Gogol's *Tarass Bulba.*

One by one the commanders and leaders, the last remnants of his army, the last remnants of the rebellion, made their way to the lake.

They stood around him, leaning on their rifles. Their clothes hung in ribbons, the dirty rags with which they had bound up their wounds and scars stuck out of their broken boots. Many of them had their arms in slings. They formed a silent semi-circle around Antonov.

Looking at them, he thought: "But where is Plujnikov? What's become of our jolly Ishin, and poor Tokmakov? Where are Leonov and Bulatov, who were in this game with me from the outset? Where's that rowdy Hermann? And Fedorov-Gorsky? And sulky Shamov? Where's Aleshka, my daredevil orderly, and where's my wicked last love?" And he supplied the answers himself: Grigori Plujnikov had been shot, in a mud hut in Voloknishche Forest; Yegor Ishin the jolly tippler had fallen, along with Gorsky, into the hands of the Cheka; a bullet had found Tokmakov; rowdy Hermann had been shot by the moujiks for robbery and violence; Shamov had been drowned in a swamp; Aleshka, his orderly, had surrendered; Leonov and Bulatov had been shot by the Reds; a miner, named Pankratov, had caught Maria Kossova in the Kambar district.

And now the few who remained alive had gathered here. He looked at them; they stood silent with downcast eyes.

"Well?" he asked roughly. "So you have come?"

"What's this you have brought us to, Alexander Stepanovitch?" Storojev demanded. "We believed in you; you were our last hope!"

"I've been betrayed," Antonov replied. "The people at the top betrayed me. Chernov called me a murderer, did you hear that? And yet they knew what I was out for, the blackguards. They sent me themselves. You've betrayed me, too, you folk with the fat purses!" Here he shook his finger

threateningly at Storojev. "Wait, though, you'll remember me yet, when it'll be too late, and they grind you into powder."

"Never mind," said Storojev. "Ours is a hardy tribe; when we get our teeth into anything, we stick to it, besides, we've left children behind us in the villages."

"I'm clearing out to the woods," Antonov said, with a wave of his hand towards the depths of the wood. "I heard that Lenin's been saying in Moscow that Wrangel's preparing his troops for a new war. Wait till I get on my feet, I'll start the ball rolling again, and find new comrades.... You can do as you like, if you want to fight—fight, if you want to sell yourselves—it's all in your own hands. I'm going off by myself, I don't want anyone. I'm just taking Dimitri with me. You can go where you like."

"Well, goodbye, Alexander Stepanovitch," said Storojev. "Don't think too badly of me." He went up to Antonov and kissed him.

They all said their last goodbyes, and went up and kissed him.

"Goodbye," said Safirov. "I've served you honestly."

"Goodbye," Antonov replied.

Safirov was already disappearing among the thickets when Alexander Stepanovitch called after him:

"Yakov! Why didn't you kiss me?"

And when Safirov came back and embraced him Antonov whispered in his ear:

"How many pieces of silver have you sold me for, Judas?"

"What do you mean? You must be crazy," Safirov exclaimed, recoiling. "I'm not the man to be bought, you know that yourself!"

Antonov made a despairing gesture: his heart told him death stood before him; the end was drawing near. His friends departed with heavy, dragging footsteps, and Antonov remained alone, in the depths of the dark woods.

He wrapped himself in his ragged overcoat and lay down on the grass. This was the end.

For whom, and for what purpose had those thousands of lives been sacrificed, those torrents of blood and tears been shed, those villages set afire?

What use was his whole life, stained as it was with human blood? All his life people had hovered about him, yet he had been alone.

Antonov suddenly remembered the dreams he had dreamed, standing on the steps of headquarters, and watching the army passing before him.

"With armies like these, I'll begin," he had thought. "Hundreds will join me on the way to Moscow, and I'll lead millions of moujiks up to the walls of the Kremlin. The Bolsheviks are making a lot of fuss about the class struggle in the villages, but what class struggle is there here? Everyone who wears ragged homespun dreams of getting himself a new cloth coat, and grabbing a bit of land somewhere, fencing it off, keeping a watch-dog, hoarding his rubles, and sleeping alongside the pig and the calf all his life. There's the whole class struggle for you, there's the whole of the moujik's soul for you. From time immemorial he's only fought for his own skin, and tried to skin his neighbor as well."

"Well, now, what next?" Antonov had often asked himself. "What shall I do with the moujiks when I've got them to the Kremlin walls?"

But of what he should do next, Antonov had only the vaguest idea. He imagined that in Moscow all the people would bow their heads before him, and he would be chosen as leader—not by the army, but by the people.

"And then what? Well, supposing they do elect me, they'll stick some label on me, and then? What about the land, and what about the workers?"

No, Antonov had known nothing more, he could have given no answer had he been asked what he would do next.

He had imagined how his friends and comrades would divide the power between them; how Ishin and Plujnikov would bare their teeth savagely at each other; and the eyes of that grey wolf, Storojev, would gleam red.

"Yes, they'll eat me," Antonov had thought in alarm. "Petka told the truth, when he said they'd devour me first and then start to eat each other." He had waved away these frightful thoughts of the future, and thrown all the responsibility on the Constituent Assembly; let it assemble and discuss and wallow in this tangled web, and bring the workers and factory owners, the farm hands and the farmers, the sheep and the wolves—to an agreement. Let the Assembly do it! . . . And now there was no need for him to think of anything. He was alone once more; the army was no more; his comrades-in-arms were all gone and even the horse—on which he had thought to ride into Moscow—had been killed in battle. . . .

"Come along," said Antonov's brother, touching him on the shoulder. "It's getting late, and the damp's rising."

For several days, Storojev hunted for a new horse without avail, and finally drifted back to his native place. But it was known that someone was hovering round their camp-fire of a night, and lurking in the darkness, and they kept a strict watch over their horses.

Then Storojev gave up the hunt and went into hiding in the bushes. He was always on the alert now, sleeping in snatches, starting up if he heard so much as a rustle, or the cry of a night-bird.

One day he came upon Adrian, his brother-in-law. The old sergeant was sitting on the boundary of a field, binding the linen bands he wore around his legs in place of socks, when Storojev sprang out from behind the hay ricks. Adrian recoiled in fright. His fear lasted only a moment and when it had passed, he glared indignantly at Storojev from under his grey brows. Adrian had been an inveterate drunkard at one time, but had been permanently cured of the habit by an incident that had occurred in the Masur swamps during the war. Nowadays, wine and even the smell of alcohol was abhorrent to him. He had also ceased to eat meat, for some reason or other, and was stern and silent. For the last five years he had been looking after Storojev's farm for him.

"I've been looking for you. You're all shaggy and hairy, ugh, you devil's bandit!" Adrian always spoke in a rough, straightforward way to Peter Ivanovitch, although secretly afraid of him.

Storojev sat down beside him. The sunset was dying away. Night was drawing in from the east, veiling the fields from sight.

"You ought to give yourself up," Adrian continued, rolling himself a cigarette. "They might pardon you. You've neglected your house and farm and all, you old devil. Fighting is not for you, surely?"

Storojev made a scornful gesture. "Stop babbling! If it isn't for me, who is it for, then? Couldn't depend on you, could we? Well, how's everything going on at home? You've been robbed, I suppose, and had the house burned down over your heads?"

"No, they've only taken your property. They didn't touch your children's. They wanted to put Praskovia in prison, but then they let her go. They as

good as said: the Reds don't fight with women. The folks are tired of the war. They're working like devils, Peter Ivanovitch. And life is easier nowadays. A moderate grain-tax has been introduced; free trading has been started. Give yourself up, I'm telling you, maybe you'll save your life that way. And there's trouble, aye, great trouble in the family, Petya," Adrian's voice trembled.

"Trouble? What trouble?" Peter Ivanovitch's heart beat fast in alarm.

"It's Kolka."

"What's wrong with Kolka?" Storojev shrieked in a voice not his own. "Have they killed him or what?" He jumped up, and catching hold of Adrian, shook him crazily with his hard hands.

"Have you gone mad?" Adrian cursed him, and jerked himself free. "You devil's bandit! Who do you think would raise his hand against a child? What do you think they are, wild beasts?"

"Well, stop dragging it out, tell me, old fellow," Storojev covered his face with his hands. "Say what's wrong with him?"

"A horse kicked him. Devil knows what came over it but it kicked him in the forehead." Adrian scratched at his cigar-lighter and lit his cigarette.

"Was he killed?" Peter Ivanovitch asked breathlessly.

"No, the doctor says he may live yet." Adrian wanted to say more, but the rattle of a distant cart was heard at that moment.

"Clear out, else they'll kill you. Folks are mad at you. U-ugh—like a wolf, so you are! You ought to clear out somewhere."

"Where am I to go?" Peter Ivanovitch groaned in anguish. Soon he would be alone again, and the night lay before him.

"You ought to go abroad; in any case it's all up with you here."

The cart was noisily approaching. Storojev waved his hand and disappeared. Adrian glanced around, got to his feet and walked quickly away. Soon he was lost to sight in the dell.

That night Storojev lay with his face buried deep in the grass. He wanted to weep, but the tears refused to rise to his inflamed eyes. There was only a suffocating sensation, as if a great stone was weighing on his heart. He could not believe that Kolka had been killed by the horse: no, no, it could not have killed him. He remembered how, when his son was just beginning to walk, he had set him on the mare's back, and the child, clinging to her mane with his little hands, his face radiant with a smile of extraordinary delight, had ridden along, prattling eagerly.

"They've killed Kolka! Killed my heir. I wanted him to go to school, and make his way up in the world, so that he'd get rich and add his riches to his father's, add several hundreds of *dessyatins* to his father's land; so that all the folks for miles around would take off their hats to the Storojev family.... They've killed Kolka—my heir, my last born—but perhaps he's alive still?"

In weird masses the clouds glided soundlessly on, and the ravens croaked drearily, hopelessly.

Two days more Peter Ivanovitch spent in torment, wandering among the bushes, and returning, invariably, to his native village.

Then he made up his mind to force his way home, to drive the Reds out of the village, for an hour or two.

"Who knows?" he said to himself. "Perhaps there aren't many of them?"

He dug up the machine-gun that had been hidden away, and the cartridges.

and from the same hiding-place took the hand-grenades. That night he started for the village.

All was quiet. Tired out after their day's work in the fields—for this was the busiest season—the folk were fast asleep in their beds. The dogs were silent. Even the reassuring sound of the night-watchman's rattle was not to be heard.

Holding his breath, Storojev crept towards the threshing-yards. Two threshing-barns, scorched and dried by the summer sun, burst into flames, one after the other. A minute later and the brazen bells were choking themselves with incessant pealing, and the village awoke to the flames of the burning barns. At intervals the bells would die down, and then again their brassy din would fill the ears.

Suddenly, into the densest part of the crowd that had gathered around the fire—a bomb fell. It exploded with a blinding flash; then all was still. Someone uttered a long, complaining wail.... Two more grenades were flung. The crowd gasped and huddled close. Then, as if dealt a terrific blow, it broke and scattered in all directions.

Peter Ivanovitch's lips tightened as, without feeling, he directed deadly machine-gun fire into the streets.

From near headquarters, a peremptory order rang out. The panic-stricken running ceased. For a moment there was silence; then rapid rifle-fire commenced, and the machine-guns of the Reds rattled a reply to Storojev's.

A needle of fire penetrated Storojev's right foot. Instantly his boot felt wet inside, and his mind cleared. He ceased firing, dropped his machine-gun and rifle and, having lost the use of his wounded foot, crawled away into the night. He fell into a cellar in a yard. This was his salvation; for as he lay quietly there, he had time to pull himself together, while the Reds were scouring the more distant gullies, thickets, and swamps, in search of him.

Now he had nothing, neither horse nor arms—other than a revolver, two cartridges, and his sword which he used as a stick to help him walk. Hope? There was none. Nowhere could he hear the rattle of machine-guns, or the iron screech of field-gun fire. The rebellion had gone out, as damp logs go out, with a hissing and an evil-smelling smoke.

Reassured, the countryside was laboring in its threshing yards, for there was a grand harvest that year. Slowly the days drifted by. Invisibly the circle, within which Storojev was wandering, closed in upon him.

For almost a week he had felt feverish. The wound in his foot was very painful, and would let him neither move nor sleep. He could scarcely drag his body around. His flesh wasted away. He babbled and raved of battles and victories. But this broken, battered creature still burned with an insatiable desire for revenge.

He was starving. He prowled about in search of food and found none. Only rarely, nowadays, was he lucky enough to find a few potatoes or a little grain.

Once he met an old beggar-woman on the boundary of a field. She was frightened to death, and gave up all her scraps and hard crusts to him. For three days after that he had enough to eat. Then again came the days of hunting for food; days of tormenting, unavailing search. At last, hunger got the upper hand of fear. Storojev decided to try at the farmstead where his cousin lived.

It was a rich farm, standing on the hill, a long way from the village and the high-road. Evidently he had been observed, for as he came near the shad-

ows of people flitted rapidly away, and the huge black dog which was usually kept on a chain, met him by the threshing-yard.

Peter Ivanovitch draw his sword from its sheath. The dog seized it furiously with his teeth, cutting his mouth; this made him wild. At last, beside himself with rage, Peter Ivanovitch determined to cheat the dog. He pressed the sword to his chest and, when the dog flew at him, slashed it in the side. The dog set up a thin, piercing howl and rushed away, dripping blood. Storojev crept stealthily up to the house, and touched the door. It was bolted on the inside. He knocked. The knocks echoed quietly, hollowly. All was still behind the curtained windows. Storojev tried the granary and the threshing-barn. Heavy, forbidding padlocks hung on every door. He returned to the house, and thumped the door with his fists and the hilt of his sword. There was not a sound. He shouted, begged and prayed, sobbed in sheer exhaustion and impotence. It was of no avail: all was still in the farmstead.

Then, growing savage, he slashed a window with his sword. The glass clattered to the ground. The door was flung open and a burly, bearded moujik, with a shot-gun in his hand, appeared on the threshold.

"What do you want," he demanded.

"For the love of Christ," cried Storojev, "give me a bit of bread, Pantelei Lukitch, I'm starving."

"I'll fill your belly with shot, that's what a bandit like you wants," the man growled angrily. "Arisha, give us a crust of bread here," he called back into the passage. A hand, holding a piece of bread, was stretched out from somewhere in the passage. Peter's cousin evidently did not even want to set eyes on him. The man laid the bread on the railing of the front-door steps.

"Take it and clear out! And don't show your face here again. If anyone were to see you, it'd be as much as my life's worth."

"Yet we were friends once. So you've sold yourself!"

"Charity begins at home, Peter. Your number's up anyhow, but I want to live awhile, yet."

"You think you'll get rich under the Reds? You think they'll give you something?"

Pantelei Lukitch leaned over to Peter Ivanovitch's ear and whispered:

"It goes to our hearts, Peter, but we've knuckled down. Better to swim with the stream. We must bide our time, and sharpen our teeth; then, when our time does come, we'll be cleverer—we've learned how to fight now. Don't curse us, go away and keep quiet: lie low for awhile; you'll be needed yet! See what I mean? Now take the bread and God bless you."

Peter Ivanovitch looked at the bread and his mouth watered. But he tore his hand away from the crust, turned on his heel, and went off.

"Hey!" Pantelei called after him. "Hey, Peter, did you hear—there's been an amnesty declared for you fellows. Give yourself up, and you'll be let live. It's Monday today, and the amnesty'll last till Saturday, so hurry up!"

Storojev looked back, spat in the direction of the farm, shook his fist at Pantelei and limped away.

On a post at the cross-roads he saw a notice nailed up. It was the order proclaiming amnesty for all who surrendered voluntarily. Peter Ivanovitch tore off the notice and went on up the gully.

And now the end had come: for four days he had not tasted food. He lay in a sort of coma at a spot near his native village. Again and again, he read the notice of the amnesty. Tomorrow was Saturday, when the time appointed by the commission would be up.

And suddenly he remembered Pantelei and his words. "It goes to our hearts, Peter, but we've knuckled down."

Storojev laughed. "He's a sly old dog! Grown foxy now, see!" and he regretted that he had not taken Pantelei's bread, but had called him a traitor. "It looks as if Pantelei has taken the right track," he thought, "and perhaps that is the cleverest thing to do, perhaps he's reckoned right. Maybe I should become a turncoat, too."

"All right," he decided finally. "We'll see when we get there what's the best line to follow, to act the hare or the fox.

"Maybe the folks there will feel that somewhere, not far off, new forces are gathering, that other leaders are still alive, and getting ready to deal their enemies a last crushing blow. Perhaps it's all a fraud—the peaceful look of the village streets. Perhaps the folk are only waiting for bold fellows like myself to call them.

"Well, then, shall I go there and surrender, armed as I am? Shall I go and beg for pardon, and say: I've come here starving, do as you like with me, but give me a bit of bread, and a bit of life?

"Well, now," he wondered, "should I give myself up, or wait a while longer? What am I waiting for? There's only night before me, and then a day of hunger in the glaring sun—dozens of them, and then the autumn, the rains, the snow . . . and death, aye, death. Death one way or another. But there is always time to kill oneself. Wouldn't it be better to die with a full stomach, at home, where I could press my children to my breast, and my wife, and Kolka?"

At last Storojev made up his mind that he would surrender, but arrive at the office of the Revolutionary Committee a day later than the appointed time. "I'll go on Sunday, not Saturday. Anyhow, I wouldn't be able to get to the village in a day with my bad foot. Yes, and they might as well know I'm not afraid of their court-martial.

"They may shoot me," he said to himself, "but at least they'll shoot me with a full stomach. I'll see my family, and have people I know about me.

"But maybe they'll pardon me," the thought flashed through his mind. "Ah well, it's all the same to me."

"So, goodbye to the land by Lake Lebyaji. Goodbye."

Towards evening on Sunday, after washing himself in the swamp, and tidying himself up, Storojev limped off to the village.

Tukhachevsky left for Moscow, and Levandovsky took over the command of the troops that had crushed the rebellion. Now they were engaged on a no less important business: the obliteration of the last lingering doubts of the sincerity of the Soviet government, and the fostering and strengthening of love for it.

The peasants' horses—lean, exhausted and maimed in battle—could scarcely drag the heavy loads of rye from field to threshing yard. There had been an abundant harvest; village and hamlet rang with merriment, the odor of fresh rye-bread came from the houses.

To threshing-yard and field came Red Army men, strong and deft, and eager for work. They reaped and bound, threshed and winnowed. They harnessed their own horses to the ploughs, reapers, threshing-machines and win nowers; and the Red Army horses, refreshed now after battles and chasing the enemy, dragged the sheaves to the threshing-yard, and the grain to the granaries.

Every day Levandovsky received, through the commander of the troops,

a report of the number of horses and men helping the peasants; every day he received fresh information of hundreds of *dessyatins* of land harvested and ploughed afresh. He smiled with satisfaction: this work strengthened the friendly relations between the peasants and the Red Army, and their sympathy for the Party and the Government.

In Dvoriki, Storojev's native village, a small division of infantry was stationed. It consisted of two hundred Red Army men, who were billeted in the houses, and had gradually—almost unnoticeably—entered into the life of the village, had become friendly with the folk, had, in fact, been assimilated. Some of them were even thinking of settling down for good on this rich, black land.

Sergei, Peter Ivanovitch's sailor brother, arrived in June. He did not appear to have changed at all during the four years he had spent away from the village. He had the same black moustache, the same blue eyes with their cool, attentive glance that seemed to penetrate to the very soul, the same black, curling locks, escaping from under his hat.

Only the sailor's clothes were different. He wore a round, broad-brimmed brown hat, tan boots laced up to the knees, and grey tunic of a foreign cut. But under the tunic the old sailor's blue and white striped vest could be seen, and he had a small revolver, like a toy, stuck through his belt.

In the evenings the moujiks, their wives and the young folks used to gather at the Revolutionary Committee House.

The chairman, Sergei Ivanovitch, brought in the latest newspapers, talked to them of the tax and free trading, and read Lenin's speeches—Lenin frequently made speeches at that time—and reckoned up for the moujiks the amount each would have to pay in taxes. They would chaff each other and exchange winks and crack jokes.

When they had all gone home, Sergei Ivanovitch would shut himself up in the room, where he worked and slept, and draw out from under the straw mattress books on arithmetic, chemistry and physics, fill whole pages with formulae and figures, and sit far into the night, reading, writing and crossing out.

Before he went to bed he would go for a stroll around the village, and inspect the sentries, or sit on the steps of the house, smoking and watching the Milky Way paling slowly, as morning stole in from afar. Sergei Ivanovitch would stretch himself till his joints cracked, and linger a few minutes longer on the steps. Often the image of a captivating young girl rose before him. Then Sergei would laugh softly—laugh at the thought that the storm had passed over his native land, that its toilers were sleeping peacefully, and the girl was waiting impatiently for him in a distant town.

It was a clear, peaceful evening when Storojev returned to the village. There lay the familiar streets before him, the more distant lanes shrouded in cobwebby twilight. Along the crimsoning horizon heavy clouds were piling up. A cool breath came from the vegetable gardens and, in a cloud of dust, a herd of sheep was going home.

The same groups of little houses trailed downwards to the lowland, crept up the hillocks, and descended again to the stream. Their windows were aflame with the sunset, and the cross on the church glittered against the blue.

But the village was leading a different life nowadays. No longer was it secretively silent, as in the springtime. Then it had seemed that life was a

muffled sound behind the walls of the yards, and houses had no life; cheerful songs, and noise and laughter had never been heard, people had gone by back ways to the wells, and whispered of the dark, fearful times.

And now, as he drew near the village, Storojev heard the ripple of an accordion, somewhere; they were singing, friendly laughter rang out from time to time; the streets were full of life.

Storojev trudged along the road, and wherever he appeared, the singing and the chatter ceased, and children fled into the houses, peered out, and pointed at him. With downcast eyes, he limped along, leaning on his sword, and people gazed from a distance at this being from another world.

No one stopped Storojev, no one called him by his name, no one bade him the time of day. But the news that he had come spread immediately, even to isolated houses away in the distant fields.

The door of the Revolutionary Committee House opened and Storojev's brother Sergei stepped out to meet him. Blue smoke curled up from Sergei's short pipe; he wore his black blouse inside his breeches, and a revolver hung at his belt. Peter Ivanovitch reached the steps and sank down exhausted, helpless. His wounded foot was a torment, he was tired out, and longed for sleep more than anything in the world.

This unexpected encounter with his brother did not surprise him. It seemed to him that it must be so, that it was pre-ordained.

Sergei took the pipe out of his mouth, knocked out the ashes on the heel of his boot, put it in his pocket, and spoke to his brother.

"So you've turned up, after all?"

Peter Ivanovitch nodded an affirmative. He felt as if he were seeing for the first time this clean-shaven face with the chin that seemed chiselled out of stone, this man who was related to him by blood, yet seemed a stranger.

"You've come to give yourself up?"

Peter Ivanovitch said nothing. His head drooped, he seemed to be thinking of nothing.

"Are you tired, or what?"

Peter Ivanovitch muttered:

"Yes. I want to sleep."

"All right, we'll talk to you tomorrow." Sergei called a Red Army man over and said: "Take him to the barn." Peter Ivanovitch rose with an effort, unable to suppress a groan.

"Are you wounded?"

"Yes," Peter sighed. Then he unslung his revolver and handed it to Sergei. Sergei watched him as he limped after the Red Army man, and said to himself:

"So the wolf's come home at last."

Next morning, Storojev awoke early, as if something had pushed against his wounded foot. He opened his eyes. A ray of sunshine lay along the floor, and around it a column of dust-motes danced.

He had not yet come to himself, and was still half asleep. He heard low voices on the other side of the wall.

"Is he asleep?" asked a child's voice.

"Yes, dear, he's asleep," came a woman's voice.

"Where is Papa—in the barn?"

"Yes, dear, he's in the barn."

"Is he asleep?"

"Yes, Kolyushka, fast asleep. He'll wake up soon, and you'll see Papa

again. He's gone grey on us, dear, he's aged a lot," and the woman whimpered. The child was silent.

"He came too late, your Papa did, to give himself up," a voice very familiar to Storojev growled at the door. "Didn't come at the proper time, the bandit. And as for his being grey, well—all wolves are grey."

Peter Ivanovitch shook off his sleep.

"Who's there?" he called out.

"Pe-e-etya!" the woman called in a piercing wail. Storojev flung himself off the bench on which he had been sleeping, limped painfully to the door, and kicked it with his sound left foot.

The bolt was shot back and the door opened, letting in the sunshiny day. Storojev's heart beat fast: on the greensward opposite the barn was Kolka, his son and heir. So the boy was alive! Praskovia was sitting on a tree-stump, crying, with her face in her hands, while Kolka, barefoot and dressed only in a pair of pants, was staring in alarm at the man standing framed in the dark rectangle of the doorway. Peter Ivanovitch leaned against the doorpost to prevent himself from falling, for his head was spinning and he seemed to have lost the use of his legs.

In a moment, when he had regained his strength, he started towards Kolka, dragging his aching foot behind him. But the child, not recognizing as his father this grey-headed man with the tangled beard and deep-sunken eyes beneath overhanging brows, fled screaming to his mother. The Red Army man looked on curiously at this meeting, as he sat, carving elaborate designs with his Finnish knife on a willow-stick.

Peter Ivanovitch seized the weeping, trembling Kolka in his arms. On the child's brow there was a fresh, pink, sickle-shaped scar. He pressed his son to his breast, kissed the faded rye-colored hair, and the tear-filled eyes. Beside them Praskovia wailed.

When each had wept out his grief and quieted down, Praskovia told him of Kolka's long, tormenting battle with death; of those terrible, sleepless nights, before the child regained strength. She told him how good the grain harvest had been, that the rye had been threshed already, and that a new grain-tax had been introduced, that Adrian said life had become much easier, nowadays.

Then she wept again over this irremediable trouble. She was sure that now he had come too late for the amnesty. He would be shot; she reproached him for having forgotten his family and his farm, and having mixed himself up with things that were not his business.

Storojev listened absently to his wife's reproaches, and a strange feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment came over him. He had not expected this from her. She neither asked him to beg for a pardon, nor said that the farm was going to rack and ruin without him. She only reproached him.

"Oh, that'll do!" Peter Ivanovitch broke in roughly on his wife's wailings. "You don't understand anything about it! What's done can't be undone. And it looks like you didn't need me here so badly, anyhow," he added with a sneer. "You're managing without me. You might fetch me some under-linen and clothes, you see I'm in rags. It's early to think of death yet, we don't know whether I'll be shot or not. And anyhow it makes no difference: we've only got to die once."

Praskovia hurriedly undid the bundle she had brought. But the bearded Red Army man with the bandaged cheek, who had been sitting in silence until now, came up and took away the bundle.

"It's not allowed," he said quietly. "We'll pass on to him whatever is necessary. And anyhow that's enough for now. You can go home and come back

in the evening, if Sergei Ivanovitch gives you permission. And Sergei says we've got to take him to the bath-house for the present."

Praskovia went away, with Kolka clinging to her skirt, and glancing back at his father from time to time.

The Red Army man undid the bundle, took out some under-linen, a pair of trousers, a jacket and a cap, and handed them to Peter Ivanovitch. A large meat cake and some meat still remained in the bundle.

"Give me something to eat," Storojev demanded.

"You mustn't eat very much yet," said the young man, breaking off pieces of bread and meat. "Else you'll die, and you've got to be questioned first, before you die."

"Oho, aren't you strict. That's all that's left now, I suppose—the questioning?" Peter Ivanovitch was devouring the bread greedily. "And then what?—I'm to be killed." "That remains to be seen—whether you'll be killed or not," said the Red Army man, pushing aside Peter Ivanovitch's hand as he reached for the meat. "No, if you are told you can't have it, that means you can't! Do you hear? Do you know who's talking to you, Peter Ivanovitch?"

Storojev turned an astonished stare on this bearded fellow, in the khaki tunic, with the long overcoat flung carelessly over his shoulders. There was something strangely familiar about those eyes, those mocking, malicious lips, that turned-up nose.

"See how stuck up and proud you've got," said the young fellow with a sullen laugh. "You don't even recognize your own folks? Eh? Although we rode side by side for a year, and saw each other every day for twelve years before that."

Storojev recognized him at last: it was Lenka!

"Lenka, it's you!" he whispered, astounded.

"So we've met at last, Peter Ivanovitch? And I thought you'd been killed—and felt sorry for you. We haven't settled our reckoning yet. You owe me something."

"I owe you something?" Storojev queried. "What do I owe you?"

"You don't remember, eh? But I haven't forgotten what you owe me, Peter Ivanovitch. I remember it well."

The boy threw back a lock of hair, exposing a rough, red scar. "That's the mark your whip left. Do you remember? Out in the fields one day—in the winter?"

Peter Ivanovitch suddenly remembered: it had been bright and frosty, that day Lenka left him.

And now Lenka was standing before him, with sternly-compressed lips, and deep lines in his brow. This was no boy, whom he could shout at, and threaten with his whip. Lenka had grown older and sterner.

For four months,—since Natasha had been taken to the hospital—Lenka had thought of nothing but of how to find Peter Ivanovitch, and tell him of his furious hatred. Peter Ivanovitch was, in Lenka's opinion, to blame for everything. He wanted to get even with his enemy.

And now they had met. Storojev felt the inhuman rage in the boy's stare, a rage like that of a wild beast, and it made him shudder.

"So that's how it is, Lenka?" he said in a hollow voice. "Well, are you going to kill me, then? I'm in your hands. Kill me!"

"No, we can't do things that way. Our folks are very strict. But I can tell you, I'm so furious, it makes me grit my teeth—I want to settle my score with you—my own account and Natasha's and—for everything. Oh, well, I suppose it's all the same—they'll deal with you anyhow."

Peter Ivanovitch was roused from his sleep. Before him stood his brother.

Shaking himself, Storojev picked up an earthenware jar from the table and gulped down a few mouthfuls of the cold, slippery clots of sour milk.

"Slept well?"

"Very well," replied Peter Ivanovitch.

"All right, this evening after supper, we'll have a talk," Sergei Ivanovitch announced. "We're going to talk business."

Sergei looked sternly at his brother, who was sitting on the bench, leaning on it with both hands. His high forehead was knit in a frown. The thought of death was creeping into his heart once more.

"Well," he said, and there was a catch in his voice, "we're to have this talk, and then—I'm to be shot, is that it?"

Sergei did not reply until he had taken out his pipe and filled it.

"We'll talk about it this evening," he said, raising his thin brows over the steely-grey eyes. "Now you can go home. Lenka!" he called out, "take him home."

"You might let me off duty, Sergei Ivanovitch," said Lenka gloomily. "I don't trust myself, I hate your brother so; I'd like to kill him. Do you hear, Sergei Ivanovitch,—what I'm saying—I'm afraid I won't be able to hold myself back. It's like a fire inside me."

"I've forgiven you once, I won't do it another time. Understand?" Sergei raised his cold eyes to Lenka's face. "We're not bandits. Take yourself in hand! Now, then! You'll be free tomorrow," he said as he strode out of the barn. "You can go and work tomorrow morning. But now you've got to take him home."

Lenka raised his hand to his faded, almost white, cap, with the worn, raspberry-red star.

"What a time it's taking, how you drag it out, blast your soul!" he muttered angrily, when the chairman of the Revolutionary Committee had gone some distance from the barn.—"That brother of yours is taking too long over you. Waiting for an order. I'd like to knock the breath out of you this very minute . . . Oh, well, never mind, I'll knock it out of you tomorrow morning."

"Tomorrow morning," Sergei's parting words to Lenka kept returning to Storojev's mind. "You'll be free tomorrow morning."

So it was to be tomorrow? Tomorrow—! That meant a handful of short, cruelly exact hours, not to be driven apart, not to be overtaken, not to be delayed. Every heart-beat brought nearer that moment, when the beating would cease for ever, cut short by the hot, swift bullet.

Tomorrow . . .

It was just one night, his last in this warm, blissful world.

How good it was here! A dog stopped in front of the barn and wagged its tail, as if welcoming him. Tomorrow it would be sniffing his corpse.

A Red Army division marched down the road, the dust flying from the men's shoulders. Tomorrow they would shoot him through the heart . . .

"Come along," Lenka broke in on his thoughts. "Else it'll be night, and what's there for you to do at home of a night? Don't think I'm going to leave you to sleep with your wife."

Peter Ivanovitch rose and fidgeted about on the same spot, turning and twisting, as if he had lost something: he could not believe that he would soon be at home again, and see Kolka and his family. . .

His stone house, with the weather-cock on the porch, stood a short distance from the church. From the steps of Sergei's half of the house, a face peered

out for a moment and vanished. It was his mother. She did not come out to meet him: she too was angry with her son, and called him a wolf and a cur.

His dog barked and snapped at Storojev's leg. Lenka threatened it and it leaped away, yelping.

Storojev's heart thumped madly as he stepped over the threshold. The entire family was sitting round the table at supper. The door that had opened silently to admit Storojev closed as silently behind him. The room was in twilight. Storojev crossed himself.

"God bless your bread and salt," he said in a voice he hardly recognized as his own—it shook and broke. The clatter of spoons and the shuffling ceased.

"Papa!" cried Ivan, the eldest. They all stopped eating, but no one stirred, no one sprang up to greet him. He stood in the middle of the room; there was no place for him to sit down. At last Adrian wiped his moustache and, in a tone that seemed to Peter Ivanovitch to contain something very like alarm, asked:

"Have they let you out?"

Peter Ivanovitch made no reply. Praskovia, who had been sitting motionless, as if she did not understand, now began to cry. Kolka burst out crying, too.

"Now, then, what are you all yelping about?" Adrian cried roughly. "You're not burying him, are you? Sit down, Peter."

Adrian's tone, very much that of the master of the house, astonished Peter Ivanovitch. He came up to the table and wanted to sit down on the bench, but it was occupied by his sons. Adrian, Praskovia, and her sister Katerina were sitting on stools. There were no more chairs or benches or stools in the house.

"Move up!" Adrian bellowed at his nephews. Pushing and elbowing each other, they made room for their father. Now they were crowded and uncomfortable.

"Give him some porridge," Adrian commanded. "A fellow's come home and everybody's gone crazy."

Praskovia seized a basin and ran over to the stove, catching her foot in the stool on which she had been sitting. It crashed to the floor. Peter Ivanovitch started, Adrian growled out something about the clumsiness of women. Praskovia set a bowl of steaming porridge before her husband and rushed over to the shelf for a spoon. She made a good deal of clatter with the pots, but found no spoon. With a gesture of annoyance, she ran out of the house, returning a minute later with a spoon, borrowed from a neighbor.

The boys ate their supper in silence, without taking their curious gaze from their father.

"Well, anything new?" asked Peter Ivanovitch, breaking the awkward silence. "How's the grain crop?"

As if his sons and Adrian had been waiting for this question, they all began to talk at once, arguing about the tax, buying and selling, rye, oats; about some heifer or other that ought to be sold to Ivan Fedotitch. Apparently they had forgotten their father.

Adrian and the middle son, Alexei, were arguing loudly whether the heifer should be sold or not.

"What heifer is that?" Peter Ivanovitch asked. "What do you want to go and sell her for?"

Then they all remembered their father, that he was sitting here beside them, and a silence fell. After a while, Alexei said:

"The heifer ought to be sold. She's no good. Nothing'll come of her."

"She's a poor kind of heifer, that's a fact," added Ivan.

"Hold your tongue," roared Peter Ivanovitch. "What do you know about it? You only know how to sell things but try to buy."

"So we did," Adrian put in. "We bought her in Dubhovka in return for a load or so of straw, now she'll do for meat. Else we'll have to sell her. You know what, Vanka, you run round to Ivan Fedotitch's after supper. Tell them he should come round for the heifer."

The conversation about the heifer waxed warm again.

Peter Ivanovitch sat silent, an uneasy questioning at his heart and feeling greatly embarrassed. He would have liked to shout and send all their arrangements to the devil; he was master here after all—but somehow he did not rise to his feet and did not shout.

The argument continued. Only Kolka, who did not understand what his elders were arguing about, sat glowering at his father, like a little wild beast. Peter Ivanovitch tried to take him in his arms, but the child slithered away under the table like a snake. His father reached out after him but Kolka gave a heart-rending shriek, and rushed to his uncle for protection. Adrian took him on his knee and tried to comfort him, but the boy roared lustily, pointing at his father.

"It's a strange man," he whimpered.

"He's no stranger, Kolka, he's your papa," said his mother; she tried to take Kolka away from Adrian, but he kicked and bawled still louder.

"The stranger, the stranger," screamed the child.

Peter Ivanovitch felt upset and uncomfortable, and rose and went towards the door, saying:

"I want to have a look round the farmyard."

"Aye, go along, do," Adrian called after him. "Have a good look at everything. Go with your father, Vassya, show him how we work." Storojev, Vassili and Lenka went out into the farmyard.

In the clean, spacious cattle-sheds sheep were rustling, a cow turned at the sound of their footsteps, lowed, and turned away again.

"Where are the horses?"

"We've driven them out to graze for the night. A soldier comes with us now," Vassili boasted, "because there are a lot of bandits about, they say, and we're afraid of . . . "

"You puppy!" Storojev bellowed. "You want a good hiding, you young fool!"

Vassya stood blinking in fright and biting a wisp of straw.

"He would say bandits! . . ." Peter Ivanovitch tried to box his son's ears, but Lenka intervened:

"Now, now, that'll do! Think you're the boss again, don't you? Let's be moving on."

Limping and leaning on his stick, Storojev went sullenly round his farm. Purposely, it seemed, there was nothing, absolutely nothing, with which he could find fault.

On the way back, however, he stumbled in his haste over a stack of fodder, and nearly fell.

"So that's the way you look after things, devil take you!" he shouted, glad of an excuse to vent his spleen. "Leaving things scattered about under people's feet, you slovenly swine!"

Banging the door behind him, he was just going to shout all over the house, when Adrian caught him angrily.

"What are you bawling about? You'll wake Kolka! Fighting again! Better break yourself of that. Your time for shouting's over, brother, you've had your share."

Adrian's roughness sobered Peter Ivanovitch and he gave a frightened glance around. Praskovia was at the bedside, soothing Kolka who still whimpered in his sleep; the rest of his sons had left the house. Adrian was sitting smoking in the front part of the house. Lenka's face seemed to be looking out from the dark corner by the stove. A concertina was playing a rippling air in the street outside. A band of young folks passed by the window, singing.

"So that's that. You were warned you'd end badly," Adrian puffed at his cigarette. Peter Ivanovitch made a grimace and sat down by the window. A fly entangled in a spider web beat against the window-pane. He caught it and, pulling off its legs, flung it away. The fly still buzzed annoyingly. Peter Ivanovitch stamped on it. The house was very quiet. Only Kolka's even breathing could be heard.

"He's dozed off," Praskovia whispered, coming up to her husband. "What'll happen now, Petenka? They'll kill you, won't they?" She wiped away her tears with the corner of her apron.

Storojev said nothing, and clenched his fingers till the joints cracked.

"Well," said Adrian softly, "we've got to take the bad with the good."

Peter Ivanovitch remembered Kolka's shrieks: "The stranger!"

So he was a stranger, a stranger . . .

"They're not a bit sorry for me. Not a bit," he thought.

Ivan came in and asked Adrian something in a whisper; then, without looking at his father, he went out. Praskovia was crying quietly.

"Well," said Peter Ivanovitch, "I'll be getting along, now. Goodbye."

"Goodbye," Adrian held out a hard, horny hand to his brother-in-law. "Maybe it'll turn out all right, after all. They don't shoot everyone, perhaps they won't touch you. After all, you gave yourself up."

Lenka growled out something angrily from his corner. The noisy, singing crowd trooped past the windows again.

"Take care of the children," Storojev said, frowning. "And the farm—look after Kolka if . . ."

"You've made a mess of things, Peter Ivanovitch, aye, what a mess you've made," Adrian said, and sighed suddenly. "You reckoned all wrong."

"Oh, all right," there was a queer ring in Storojev's voice. "I knew where I was going."

"Ah, maybe you did know, but do you know now?" Adrian took a last puff at his cigarette, flung it through the window and spat. "Now you'll have to answer for what you've done, they'll ask you about everything . . . Well, I'll go and have a look at the sheep now. I'll drop in to see you tomorrow."

"Tomorrow . . . Tomorrow," flashed through Storojev's mind.

He left the house, banging the door loudly behind him. Praskovia thrust something into Lenka's fist, whispering through her tears:

"Give him these apples."

Storojev sat down wearily, smoothed back his hair and yawned. He felt, somehow, quiet and at peace: the thoughts of the frightful tomorrow melted away and ceased to pull at his heart.

His whole life, right up to this moment of meditation, seemed completely detached, as if it were the life of another man he saw before him. This feeling

of a divided personality sometimes comes to one when he peers into the most sacred corners of his feelings and desires. During this profound contemplation of the brightest or most loathsome recesses of his inmost soul, it happens—as with Storojev—that a man splits into two. His mind, freed from the froth and scum of his passions, assumes the role of a stern, determined, unbiassed judge, and observes the tangled skein of doubts, love, hate and fear; all the things that go to fill a human life.

During the long hours spent in wandering through the thicket, in the soundless fog of night, when bitter disappointment gave place to the phantom visions of the past, when hate got the upper hand of all other feelings, one spark of light had still remained for Storojev, and towards this he had directed the last of his vanishing hopes.

People had deprived him of the right to do as he would with the lives of the poor and weak. Along with his land, he had been deprived of his power —he who had known and tasted sweetness and bitterness, and the right to regulate the lives and fates of human beings.

No, he could not bear to give up power. His comrades had turned traitor and surrendered their arms, had gone into hiding, broken the oath they had made to be true and struggle till the end, under the pretense of being ready for future uprisings.

And he had cheated himself, roaming about like a hungry animal, hovering in the lurid glow of the villages he had set on fire, killing and maiming people.

He had been cheated by god: of what avail the impassioned prayers, the incense and the candles?

In this world of suffering, desolation, and black hatred, his own farm had seemed an oasis, where, as Storojev had imagined, people were waiting for him, where he was needed, where, without him, poverty and ruin would be sure to come tapping at the window.

When he resolved to surrender and face death, Storojev had never doubted that in the twenty-four hours at home before being shot, he, who had been cheated by all men, deserted and crushed, would meet his loved ones, and read profound sorrow in their eyes, and rest, forgetting all he had suffered and thought. Then, purified by the boundless grief of his own folk, he would pass quietly out of this life.

But all this had ended in nothing.

Little foolish Kolka, the best-loved of all, had put Peter Ivanovitch in his place with one word, a single word that expressed the secret, but unformed thought they all shared.

He was a stranger . . .

A stranger to all men, a stranger in his own house. Only now Storojev saw clearly and distinctly that he was not actually necessary to his family.

After all, it was a long time since he had left the farm, a long time since Adrian and the sons had taken over the management of the place, and managed it as well as he had himself.

Take, for instance, the case of the heifer. Storojev remembered that in the spring, his eldest son and Adrian had seen a cheap calf in the neighboring village, and thought of buying it. Peter Ivanovitch had made a row about it before he left, had cursed them all, calling them greenhorns, and forbidden them to buy the heifer. Still, they had bought it and done wisely, there was no use in denying it. They had given very little for her—ten poods of straw. She had been out at pasture with the rest of the herd all the summer, and now, just before the autumn set in, she could be sold with great profit to a butcher.

Storojev realized that during the years of rebellion, fighting and wandering,

he had lost his farming sense. The pivot around which his whole life had revolved, like a wheel on its axle, proved to be broken.

Let the wheel free, and at first it rolls boldly onwards carried ahead by its own impetus. Then, losing momentum, it skids, reels to the right and left, bounces awkwardly over unevennesses in the road, and at last drops motionless, somewhere far away from the path.

Thus had Peter Ivanovitch's life been torn away from its axle, from farming, from its usual settled precise routine, where everything revolved around the acquiring of new wealth, of new hundreds in the bank, new *dessyatins* of land, new horses, cows, sheep, laborers, and sons . . .

And life had begun to reel, and jump and dance, until it had ended in a strange man's barn, smelling of musty grain and mouse-droppings.

His thoughts were interrupted by a hand laid on his shoulder and a voice calling:

"Get up!"

He awoke. Long shadows were flitting over the walls of the barn. Peter Ivanovitch saw his brother standing near the bench; beside him stood a stranger, a tall, fair man, in high boots and a leather jacket.

"They've come to question me," flashed through his mind and he suddenly felt quite at ease. The end—fateful, inevitable—was approaching. Sergei sat down; the fair-haired man remained standing by the table.

"Well now," he began, "we'll have a straight-forward talk. There's no use hiding anything or beating about the bush. You're a clever fellow, and we've got a lot to do. You mustn't keep anything back."

"I've nothing to keep back," replied Peter Ivanovitch. "I'll tell you what I can, but don't expect me to tell you what I don't know. I'm not going to say anything about my comrades."

"Is that so? Well, let's talk about you. We'd like to know why you came to surrender a day too late for the amnesty?"

"I didn't surrender," Storojev cut in sharply.

"You didn't surrender?" his brother asked.

"No, Sergei, people surrender in battle, if they expect mercy. But although you are my own brother, it has never entered my head to ask you for mercy."

"It wouldn't be any use," Sergei replied coldly.

"I knew that."

"Then why did you come here?"

"I came back to die," said Storojev gloomily. "I came back to die in the place where I was born. I didn't want to die a dog's death."

Sergei glanced at the paper lying before him.

"Tell us, were you mixed up in that affair near Sampur, when a train was derailed? It happened about six weeks ago."

"Yes, I did that."

"Alone?"

"Alone," Storojev's voice sounded hollow. "I was alone then, just as I'm alone here."

"Did you know," asked the fair-haired man, before Sergei could speak, "that the train was taking grain to Moscow, for the starving workers and their children?"

"No, I didn't," Storojev replied, adding maliciously: "If I'd known that, I'd have derailed ten more."

His questioner started at the unexpected boldness of the admission.

"It's a good thing you speak the truth. Another question: wasn't it you

who made a raid on the village in July, when several threshing-barns were set on fire, three women were wounded, and two children killed?"

Peter Ivanovitch turned pale and seemed to shrink into himself.

"You're lying!" he shouted. "You're talking nonsense. You want to blacken my conscience before I die. I don't believe you!"

Sergei selected from the pile before him a paper covered with labored uneven handwriting and passed it to Storojev. By the smoky flicker of the lantern, he read the report of the evidence given by Matriona Savina. On that well remembered night her son and daughter, children whose ages together made fifteen, had been wounded by fragments of grenades, and died.

"Well?" Sergei sat smoking his pipe, apparently not looking at Storojev.

"I—I never wanted that," Peter Ivanovitch faltered. "I was going to see Kolka—my boy—he was dying."

"Was it you who killed Matvei Besperstov?" Sergei asked coldly.

"Yes."

"What for?"

"I won't tell you."

"There's no point in not telling us. Don't you understand, Peter, that your game's up, that even those who once helped you have thrown you over? There's not a soul in the whole country on your side."

"It doesn't matter."

"If it doesn't matter to you, then why don't you speak? What are you hiding?"

Peter Ivanovitch suddenly remembered Pantelei Lukitch and his whispered words and secret hopes. He gave a dry laugh.

"It'll be hard for you to root out our tribe, Sergei, it's a very tenacious one. Though I'm to die, there are plenty of others like me left behind. Only they're lying low at present and keeping quiet."

"So you're still hoping, you're still waiting for something? It's no use, Peter. Can't you see what's going on in the village?"

Sergei talked of the people, who had jumped at the chance of going back to work, who wanted only one thing—to live in peace. He spoke of the ocean of tears Peter Ivanovitch and his friends had been responsible for, and of the curses showered on them by widows and orphans, of the laborers and poor peasants who were at last beginning to see the brighter side of life.

Sergei spoke passionately, as though he wanted to be heard by those who still roamed the dells and thickets; he had forgotten, apparently, that there were only three people listening to him—a young farmhand, his former employer and the fair-haired man from Moscow.

Peter listened to these burning words with bowed head. It was his brother speaking; the same mother had borne them, the same blood flowed in their veins.

"Remember I told you once, Peter—either you break yourself, or we'll break you. Now we've met again, and you're broken."

Sergei, carried away by his own words, suddenly got to his feet.

"To put it in a nut shell," the fair-haired man said to Storojev, "there's only one class of exploiters remaining in Russia, and you belong to it. You'll die tomorrow, and your class won't outlive you very long."

Storojev stood up. His hands shook, he breathed quickly. He bent over towards his brother, and Sergei felt the scorching blast of his breath.

"To hell with you! I'll tell you why I killed Matvei Besperstov; because he set his foot on the boundary of my land. It's my land! Why did you take it from me? Let him rot there! Go away, I've told you everything."

He clutched at his chest, coughed for a long time, a heavy cough that racked his body. Then he sank exhausted on the bench.

Sergei slowly collected his papers, thrust them into a cardboard portfolio, and then into a worn, rusty-looking dispatch-case. His pipe had gone out and was hanging useless between his lips. He straightened the cap that had slipped to the back of his head, suddenly remembered his cold pipe, and stowed it away in his pocket. Then he pulled it out again and tried to draw at it, laid the dispatch-case on the other end of the table and stood still.

"You'd better have shot yourself," he whispered. "I'd have shot myself rather than have come to my enemies with thoughts like yours. Why did you come?"

Peter Ivanovitch raised his dull eyes to his brother's face, and seemed astonished to find that Sergei was still here, talking to him.

"What is it you want?" he asked in a weary, indifferent tone. Then he uttered a wild shriek:

"All I want is death!"

The lantern smoked. It cast a square of yellow light on the floor. Outside the barn the village was fast asleep.

It was the first time the chairman of the Revolutionary Committee and the fair-haired man had encountered a prisoner of this kind. They had seen some who, shaking with terror, had crept and writhed before them and kissed their hands, begging for mercy; others who had shown nothing but weariness, indifference and depression when they faced the bullet; others who had frankly and simply acknowledged their mistakes: it had been evident that they had either been cheated, or had been drawn into the rebellion as into a whirlwind.

But this prisoner resembled none of those. "He's a wild beast," the fair-haired man thought. "That's clear—a wild beast, and an enemy—undoubtedly. Or perhaps, he's simply out of his mind?"

"Well, supposing you were pardoned, after all; for we don't want your blood, we don't go in for revenge. If you were given the right to live, what would you do?" he asked.

"Yes, and for that matter," thought Storojev, "if I were to be set free tomorrow and told to go and work, what about it? How would I live?"

The problem was an entirely new one for Storojev, and he could find no solution for it. How was he to resume life in a village, where half of the people hated him, and half feared and avoided him? How would he live, after he had choked down all his hopes of ever becoming the first and foremost, when he owned only what he stood up in, and had forgotten words like "my land," "my farm," "my power"? Should he go a thousand miles away and leave his native place? But even there cold, steely eyes would probe him, eyes like those of the man before him, his brother; and people would point at him and cry: "Beware of him! He killed our folk and burned down our villages!"

Storojev said nothing.

Sergei and the fair-haired man stood for a long time waiting for an answer. The bell in the church-tower chimed ten. Sergei gave a heavy sigh: he felt a sharp pang of pity for his brother. He remembered, why, he could not tell, a dewy morning long ago. He and his brother were going to Lebyaji together. The sun was rising. Sergei was tired and stumbled along whimpering. Peter had picked him up in his arms and carried him, as a mother might, as far as the lake. And now he was to die—Petka, his own brother, was to die. He was an enemy.

Crushing down his pity, Sergei took paper and pencil out of his case, trimmed the wick of the lamp and said coldly:

"We're going now. Here's some paper for you. Perhaps you'd like to leave a message for us or for your family. Goodbye!"

"Should we strengthen the guard?" Sergei whispered to the fair-haired man, when they had left the barn.

"Oh no, it's not necessary," was the reply. "Lenka won't let him get away. There could be no better guard for him than Lenka."

The door creaked and banged. The last people who linked Peter Ivanovitch with life had departed . . . . He started up from the bench—and then made a gesture of despair. Why should he trouble to call them back? What could he say?

Lying on the floor near the bench was a newspaper dropped by Sergei. Storojev picked up the worn paper mechanically, and began, without the slightest interest, to read incomprehensible scraps of news, articles, notes, and telegrams.

Only when he reached the very end, among a medley of details about the everyday life he would never again live, he came across a mention of Nestor Makhno, the bandit, and "General" Petlura. These two names, especially Makhno's, were familiar to Storojev.

"Still alive?" he wondered wearily.

Then he forgot them. The newspaper dropped from his fingers, and he sat for a long time with his mind a complete blank.

Suddenly a crunching sound reached his ears from behind the wall. Peter Ivanovitch stole softly to the door. The crunching grew more audible. It was Lenka munching apples.

Peter Ivanovitch remembered that his wife had sent him some apples. Lenka had mentioned them on the way from the house, but had not given them to him. Storojev wanted one.

"Give me an apple," he called through the door.

"Where would I get apples?" Lenka said gruffly.

"You told me yourself my wife gave you some for me."

"Aha, you've just remembered, have you? Well, the boys have eaten nearly all of them. I've only five left and the whole night to get through yet. It's all right for you; you can go to sleep. But I've got to watch you. I'm dying for a nap but maybe I can keep myself awake chewing these."

"Give me a couple, anyway," Peter Ivanovitch implored.

"Oh, all right, I'll spare you two," Lenka said, opening the door. "Here you are, they're the last apples you'll be eating. You'll have to say goodbye to apples pretty soon."

Storojev slammed the door, swearing furiously. Lenka bolted it again.

The outburst eased the burden weighing on his heart, and roused Storojev from his apathy.

"Give me the apples!" he shouted loudly. "They're mine, after all, you swine!"

"Now, now, don't you start kicking up a row. Yours, indeed! Things'll only be yours for seven hours longer. You'd do better to pray instead of bawling!" Lenka retorted. He returned to slicing up the apples with his Finnish knife, and again the juicy morsels crunched between his teeth.

Seven hours. . . . So he was to be shot at dawn. In seven hours' time shots would ring out, and life would cease.

For the first time Peter Ivanovitch understood—and the realization pene-

trated to every cell in his body—that in seven hours' time he would cease to be.

"You'll die!" cried his blood, his heart, his reason.

Storojev closed his eyes; he could feel goose-flesh rising on his back, his knees turned to wood. Never before had he been prey to such ghastly fear.

He had felt fear in battle, but that was of a different kind. While fighting for his own life, he had destroyed scores of others. And then, death came unexpectedly in battle.

And here?

Here, he had seven hours to think about death, seven hours to listen to time crawling on and on. And then he would have to leave the barn, tramp off to some distant spot outside the village, ahead of armed men, his enemies, stand in front of them and wait a tormentingly long time while the company lined up, and listen to the command and then—die.

No!

Storojev, who, half-an-hour ago, had wondered how he could possibly go on with life, if it should be granted him, now understood that he had made a mistake—that he wanted to live.

Yes, of course he wanted to live!

To live!

To live and struggle—that was what he really wanted, not death! He had made a mistake; he had been too tired to realize what it meant; but now he wanted to live, only to live!

Peter Ivanovitch staggered about the barn, now standing still, muttering incoherently, then sitting down, only to jump up again and dash from corner to corner, and then to the door, behind which sat Lenka, serenely crunching apples.

His apples!

Then, with the insatiable thirst for life that had suddenly returned to him, a wave of ungovernable hatred surged up.

"Outside these walls," he said to himself, "people are living, people who've turned away from me. They seized my land, ploughed up the place where my new house was to have been, gathered into their barns the harvest of my fields.

"Outside these walls lives my family, and it's not in the least concerned about me," he thought. "Oh, devil take my family anyway.

"Our leaders turned traitor, but we'll find others. They're still alive. Still alive!" the thoughts that had died out half-an-hour before now blazed up anew.

Peter Ivanovitch picked up the newspaper Sergei had dropped, and crumpling it feverishly in his hands, read again the piece about Nestor Makhno and Petlura.

. . . "They're alive still . . . Perhaps Antonov's there, too. There are still some of our folks left. Yes, and there are some here, too. It doesn't matter if they look like turncoats at present. That's all right. That's clever—it's the proper thing to do, evidently. Looks as if Pantelei Lukitch had a head on his shoulders. Well, what about it! So we're still alive, there's still some strength left in us. All we've got to do is bide our time. . . . 'Lie low'—he remembered Pantelei's words,—'and keep quiet. You'll be needed yet.' Yes, bide our time, lie low—but where? Where is there to hide? Must I prowl about hungry in the gullies again—like a wolf?

"If you'd only go abroad," he suddenly remembered the advice given to him by Adrian, out in the fields one day. "Yes, that's what I ought to do, go

to some foreign country. Tramp day and night," the thought drummed in his head. "I'll make my way abroad, I won't die there; surely, someone will take me in and feed me. And one day I'll come back. I'll come back when it's safe. And then we'll settle our accounts."

Once again the delirious vision of how he would deal with his enemies rose before his eyes, once again hate overwhelmed Peter Ivanovitch, hate and the greed for life.

The bell in the church-tower chimed eleven, and the hollow notes sobered Storojev. Six hours till daylight. Even with his wounded foot he could make twenty miles in that time, or, if he found it impossible to go on, hide somewhere in the distant thickets, in pits that were known to him.

Then he remembered that fifteen versts from Dvoriki, in Pakhotny Ugol, lived Leo, the son of Nikita Kagardé, the teacher.

"I'll bring him a farewell message from his father," thought Storojev. "Surely he'll not refuse to hide me, his father's friend." The thought of pursuit flashed through his head. Well, supposing they did follow him?

"It doesn't matter," he decided. "If they follow me and find me, it's not so bad if death comes like that, in hot blood, so to speak. Anything would be better than this wearing night, creeping on to morning."

He quickly collected his scraps of bread and meat and stowed them in his pockets. Then he stood still, shook his fist threateningly at someone unseen, laughed soundlessly and blew out the lantern.

The pale, yellow light vanished. Peter Ivanovitch stood shivering as if in fever. Then, overcoming his weakness, he called out: "Hey, Lenka! My lantern's gone out, and I've got to write a letter. Light it again for me like a good fellow."

He took up his stand by the table. Lenka shot back the bolt noisily and opened the door. The clear starlight drifted into the barn.

In one hand Lenka held an apple, in the other his knife, wet and gleaming with apple-juice. He groped for the table, mechanically laid down his apple and knife on the corner of it, and pulled a box of matches out of his pocket.

Peter Ivanovitch stretched out his hand in the darkness, and as Lenka leaned over the lantern, striking a match, grabbed the knife and stabbed him in the back. Then, leaning with all his might on the handle, he turned the blade twice.

Lenka gave a hollow groan and crumpled up. His rifle slipped from his shoulder and fell to the floor with a thump. Peter Ivanovitch's teeth chattered as he stooped and picked it up, and tore off Lenka's cartridge-belt. And, as he did so, he seemed to hear the feeble beating of Lenka's heart.

Storojev froze.

Should he club him to death? He listened, holding his breath. A ringing silence reigned.

"It was only my fancy!" thought Storojev, listening once more. A dog yapped somewhere. Storojev gave a start and made haste to finish his job.

With trembling hands he fumbled in the pockets of Lenka's trousers, drew out some papers and matches. . . .

On the tree stump by the door, where Lenka had been sitting, he found his overcoat. Flinging it round his shoulders, he strode away into the darkness.

The End

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

DRAWINGS BY CHEN-I-WAN

Partisan

Partisan Woman

The Young Guard

Illustration to a Story by Agnes Smedley

The Flight of a Landlord

CRITICISM and ARTICLES

A. Angarov

Form and Content in Art

The ushering in of the Socialist age in the Soviet Union under the guidance of the great Stalin was marked by a tremendous rise of the productive forces of the country, by an unprecedented growth of all the industries, including agriculture and transport, and led to a great advance in the field of culture and art. The powerful development of culture and art is proceeding throughout the vast Soviet country, embracing every nationality inhabiting it.

The best brains of mankind regard our cultural growth as the dawn of a new culture, the dawn of a new civilization. In capitalist society culture and art have declined and cold calculation has replaced human feelings, but in the Soviet Union, the Socialist country which has been liberated from the shackles of class society, man has all that is necessary for the development of his faculties.

The ten-day display of Kazakh art recently given in Moscow served as a most brilliant manifestation of the flourishing state of culture in the Soviet Union. In the days of tsarism Kazakhstan was a backward cattle breeding country trodden underfoot by the tyrannical governors of the tsar. In conjunction with the native feudal lords of Kazakhstan the murderous government of the tsar did all in its power to keep the gifted Kazakh people in a state of darkness, ignorance and misery.

The miserable conditions of existence, the arbitrary rule of the officials and the most barbarous methods of exploitation hampered the development of the wonderful creative art of the people of Kazakhstan. Suffice it to say that in those days there were not more than three secondary schools and one small newspaper throughout the vast country of Kazakhstan. There was not a single theater or a single college or university to be found there. But now Kazakhstan is a country where new cities are springing up, where large industrial centers such as Karaganda and Balkhashstroy are rising, where the Stakhanov movement is assuming large dimensions, where model state stock-raising and dairy farms are being set up and where cotton, tobacco, rice and rubber plants are grown.

The economic development of Kazakhstan provided a solid basis for the building of schools, clubs, and electric power stations, for the opening of theaters and libraries, houses of culture, stadiums and parks of culture and rest. The following figures bear witness to the great cultural progress made by the Kazakh people. There are at present 135 newspapers published in the native language in Kazakhstan, 580 secondary schools, 57 technical colleges, 13 universities and 22 theaters, and works of fine literature appear in hundreds of editions.

The repertory of the Kazakh theaters is of a varied nature: it contains historical plays of the time of the Civil War (plays by Seyfullina, Mailin, Anezov, etc.), plays depicting the class struggle in the villages, collectivization, the struggle of the agricultural laborers and the poor peasantry against the feudal lords and landlords, the building of the great enterprises of Stalin's Five-Year plans, the growth and development of the working class under the conditions prevailing in Kazakhstan as well as the training of workers in the various branches of inductry and agriculture. The repertory of the Kazakh theater includes also plays by Soviet playwrights translated into the Kazakh language, such as *The Aristocrats, Mstislav the Brave,* as well as plays taken from the Russian classical repertory(Gogol, Ostrovsky). Pushkin and Gogol are being translated into the Kazakh language.

Among the fruits of this immense cultural work is a robust opera whose company has recently paid a visit to Moscow where it staged two pieces of its repertory, *The Silken Girl* and *Zhalbyr* (on the theme of the Kazakh uprising of 1916). The company met with great success in Moscow.

The Silken Girl is a musical play based on a great lyrical epic poem of the Kazakh people. The gentleness and warmth of this poem is free of the erotical element glorified by bourgeois art critics; the songs of love have the ring of simplicity and are vivid and emotional. The episodes of wiliness in the scene where one of the lovers kills the other are shown without crudity. The poem unfolds strong emotions and passions and is rendered by the cast with the utmost artistic simplicity and moving truthfulness.

The opera *Zhalbyr* gives a picture of the Kazakh uprising of 1916 when the tsarist government made an attempt to mobilize the Kazakh people for the imperialist war. Zhalbyr is a popular hero who raised the Kazakhs against their exploiters, the landlords and the tsarist officials. An intricate revolutionary drama is displayed on the stage and the intensity of the class struggle is shown in vivid picturesque form. The music of the play lends the performance organic integrity and a particularly touching color. The producer in his well made composition has drawn liberally on the rich fund of Kazakh folk songs and dances and introduced mass scenes.

There is no need to deal here with the rendering of these plays or with the merits of each of the artists. Sufficient has been written on this subject in the daily press. We only wish to emphasize the fact that the young Kazakh theater, which is only three years old, with its young gifted artists, has made use of the creative art of the Kazakh people and in a rich display of color, music and movement, has, at its Moscow performances, revealed a great and fine sense of art. The Kazakh artists were successful in both of the plays performed by them. What struck one most in these performances, apart from the richness of color, music and movement, was the fine acting of the artists and their fine artistic taste and simplicity. In their acting nothing was overdone and the audience was held captive notwithstanding the fact that it did not understand a word of the Kazakh language. All this is a great contribution to the culture of the peoples of the Soviet country who have been regenerated by the national policy of Lenin and Stalin. It is a culture, national in form and socialist in content.

We chose to deal with the art of Kazakhstan for no other reason than that the recollection of the richness and originality of its culture and art are more fresh in our mind. However, any of the other national provinces in the Soviet Union would have served our purpose of illustration just as well. All the nationalities of the Soviet Union are bending their efforts in an endeavor to develop their culture and art. The cast of the Ukrainian

opera on tour revealed the richness of the Ukrainian folklore which gave rise to the marvelous development of Ukrainian art. The Leningrad Little Opera opened great prospects for the creation of a Russian Soviet opera. Opera is a most intricate art. It is an indication of a high culture. The opera is now penetrating into the remotest corners of Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and is flourishing in the republics of Transcaucasia among the peoples of the Caucasian highlands, as well as in the cold North, in the Far East and so forth.

The powerful streams of Soviet art are fed by numerous springs of the art of the people. Lenin foresaw these processes and wrote:

"Proletarian culture does not spring from nobody knows where, it is not the invention of people who call themselves specialists on proletarian art. All that is utter nonsense. Proletarian culture must be a regular development of the funds of knowledge which humanity produced under the pressure of capitalist society, landlord ridden society, official ridden society." (Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXV).

Everywhere, in the various regions of the vast Soviet country amateur art circles are being founded and professional art is coming to the aid of amateur art. These two varieties of art should help each other. This will enrich professional art by imbuing it with the serious content of the creative art of the people while amateur art representing the best creative achievements of the people will be improved.

In the course of its practical struggle towards greater artistic achievement and cultural mastery, the U.S.S.R. has encountered many theoretical problems which clamor for solution: How best to organize the work of particular branches of art? Wherein is the difference between the artist of previous periods and the artist of the great Stalinist epoch? What should be the distinctive feature of artistic treatment under our conditions and how should an artist, having a true perception of the world, develop himself? Dozens of other questions have been raised during these discussions, initiated by some articles in the *Pravda* attacking formalism and naturalism in art.

Here we shall deal only with the most important and urgent problems: first, artist's treatment of image; second, form and content in works of art; third, significance of Marxist-Leninist world outlook in artistic creation of image or character. The final solution of all these complex problems cannot even be attempted in the brief space of a magazine article and we shall confine ourselves only to setting down the problems and outlining briefly the correct way of solving them,

II

The artist in any branch of art, whether it be painting, music, architecture, sculpture or cinematography, if he wishes to produce a real work of art, must carefully think out not only his entire work but all the detailed images.

There are of course no general formulas by which artists in the various branches of art may be guided in their work of rendering an image. The difference between the various branches of art, say between painting and acting, is so great that the rendering of the image in each of them will be distinguished by features peculiar to each. A painter's picture continues to exist even after it has been completed. The painter, moreover, may look at his work and once more analyze its merits and faults. The actor's product is the image on the stage. After the play is over, one can judge the player's acting only from memory. This feature cannot but have its effect on the creative work

of the actor as distinct from the work of the painter. However, notwithstanding the differences, there is a unity in the methods of creative work connected with the rendering of the image, in the methods of treatment as well as in the combination of means of affecting the spectator.

In this article we shall deal only with the work of the actor. In his pamphlet, *Paradox About Actors,* Diderot raised the question which is still being discussed in the theatrical world today. The gist of the question is this: What is of greater importance to the actor—craftsmanship or inspiration, technique or intuition. Diderot was for craftsmanship, for technique. In his pamphlet he wrote: "Hypersensibility produces mediocre actors, ordinary sensibility produces a host of bad actors, but only complete absence of sensibility produces excellent artists."

Thus Diderot saw the mastery of an actor in his technique, in his gesture, intonation, mimicry, make-up, timing, movement, etc. And since the actor's playing impresses itself on the mind of the playgoer chiefly by means of this outward mastery, Diderot's views found followers among students of the theater. A good many people are of the opinion that the famous French actor Coquelin, who maintained that there was no need for an actor to be moved himself in order to move an audience, was acting on Diderot's precepts, and substituted calculated gestures, cold self-possession and sober technical mastery, for ardent inspiration, temperament and passion.

Gordon Craig, the illustrious representative of the conventional theater, likewise demands that the actor should abandon feelings and avoid rendering the inner emotions of the part played by him. According to the tenets of the symbolical school founded by Craig, acting should be devoid of all passion, and every detail, even the minutest, should be well thought out and calculated in advance. Acting, according to these tenets, can do without elevated flights of inspiration or tense inner emotions. The adherents of this school are mainly afraid lest the actor's mood should affect his acting. Whatever his own actual mood, the actor should produce the desired impression on the audience by means of premeditated movements. This gave rise to the well known bio-mechanical method of acting, in accordance with which "the creative work of an actor consists in the creation of plastic forms in space." This formula of Meyerhold's is, however, too general, inasmuch as it may be applied to any artist; all artists do their creative work in space by means of plastic forms and there is no other way of doing it.

The tendency toward symbolism in the European theater is no doubt an outcome of the influence of the Chinese theater. The Soviet playgoer had the opportunity of acquainting himself with this theater during the well known Chinese actor Mei Lan-fang's theatrical tour in Moscow and Leningrad in 1935. The distinguishing features of Mei Lan-fang's Chinese theater are the conventionalism of movement, the absence of a stage, and the extremely rigid time-honored rules of patternization. In this theater everything is standardized in accordance with strict convention: types of actors, language, rhythm, order of movement, gait, gesture, mimicry, make-up and color. Thus, white signifies cunning and wiliness, red—devotion and faithfulness, black—honesty and justice, blue—strength and courage, yellow—audacity, green—robbers and rebels. Here theater convention is carried to its extreme, making impossible the further development of the theater.

The symbolists in the European theater, having borrowed the conventionalism of the Chinese theater, attempted to put it on a philosophical foundation, and turned to Kant in the hope of finding in his philosophy a basis for the justification of the conventional theater. Gordon Craig, the theoretician of

this tendency, believes that man is capable of perceiving only the manifestation of things but not their essence. Hence the actor's task is solely that of suggestion. At best the actor may reveal his own attitude to the character acted by him. All this leads to the negation of realism. The inner emotions of the character are destroyed; they are, as it were, replaced by a purely mechanical rendering of action conventionally symbolizing the inner emotions of the character.

As compared with the purely idealistic treatment of the actor's craft in working on character, this is no doubt a certain step forward. In our own experience the Tairov theater once held to an idealistic interpretation of the actor's playing. The leading people of this theater believed that "stage emotion must derive its strength not from real life (of the actor or anybody else), but from the created life of that stage character which from the wonderful world of fancy calls the actor into creative being." All this led to the affirmation that there was a particular mystery in the creation of an image, a mystery "as miraculous and inscrutable as the mystery of life and death." The idealistic treatment of the actor's technique in working on images has been theoretically overcome. The same Tairov in his recent utterings renounced his former idealistic views. It is to be regretted, however, that so far his theater shows little evidence of having really abandoned its former idealistic positions. [1]

However, partiality for a purely conventional, formalistic treatment of character represents the greatest danger. The formalist tendency connected with symbolism and its Kantian philosophy, inasmuch as it discards content in its treatment of character, leads to the establishment of the conventional theater. A certain conventionality in the theater is inevitable, but there is a great difference between the puppet-show and the acted theater. While developing theatrical art we must not neglect the puppet-show, but the theater must not be reduced to just a puppet-show. It would mean blotting the living soul out of the actor's playing and pushing the theater on the road of futile technical jugglery. The capitalist world in its period of decline has spoilt the taste of some people. There are many who either consciously or unconsciously try by some fine gesture to screen from sight the sores of contemporary life, and to divert the attention of the spectator from the current events that are dangerous to capitalism. The effect of this in the domain of art has been the establishment of the symbolic, purely conventional theater.

Lenin's criticism of the theory of symbols has a direct bearing on this tendency in the theater.

In criticizing the theory of hieroglyphs, Lenin in his *Materialism and Empiriocriticism* wrote that "a picture will never be wholly like a model. but a picture is one thing, while a symbol, a *conventional sign,* is another. A picture necessarily and unavoidably presupposes the objective reality of what is being depicted. A 'conventional sign,' symbol, hieroglyph, are conceptions which introduce a quite unnecessary element of agnosticism." Further Lenin pointed out that by his "theory of symbols Helmholtz paid a tribute to Kantianism." The formalists of the stage are without any doubt also paying a tribute to Kantian philosophy.

The realistic school in the theater is theoretically bound up with the criticism of the idea of the "passionless actor." The famous actor Rossi, who

[1] After the publication of this article Tairov produced the play *The Titans (Bogatiri)* by Demyan Bedny. Unfortunately this production confirms our apprehensions; Tairov not only failed to overcome his idealistic tendencies but in this play, by grossly distorting the history of the Russian past has proved that he still holds to his old position.

displayed a critical attitude to Diderot's precepts, stated that during dramatic moments on the stage "his heart beat faster and tears sparkled in his eyes, tears of passionate emotion." We quote these words of Rossi because in his acting he combined great passion and high inspiration with most refined craftsmanship and carefully thought out technique.

In this connection the utterances of Salvini, Shchepkin and other actors are very valuable. Their great desire was that the talented actor should devote himself, not only to the rendering of the outward appearance of the character by means of good technique, but also to the artistic rendering of the inner emotions, to the rendering of the character in its totality. For this purpose it is essential that the actor have control of his emotions, or, according to Shchepkin, preserve a harmony between emotion and technique. All this no doubt requires great will power, extreme emotionalism combined with a soberly thought out technique. In our opinion this idea was expressed most saliently by Salvini, the Italian tragic actor, who wrote that actors "should avoid the Scylla of uncouth, unbridled, disproportionate emotion, practically bordering on hysteria, and at the same time should steer clear of the Charybdis of cold, calculated, mechanical artificiality, which unavoidably leads to monotony of method and treatment. . . ."

Mochalov was no doubt the most brilliant representative of intuitive acting. There is a marvelous description by Belinsky of Mochalov's *Hamlet*. But while preferring Mochalov's great intuitions and criticizing the well thought out and high technique of Karatygin, Belinsky nevertheless had to admit that Mochalov's acting at times miscarried because, being too confident of himself, he failed to work sufficiently seriously on *Hamlet*.

If "intuition" stands for talent then, of course, every actor should be possessed of it. But talent means plunging deeply into character. Add assiduity and you get a swifter and more profound mastery of character. By applying himself to the study of his art and by painstaking and persevering work on the rendering of character, the actor will put his talent in the golden frame of real art, thus achieving the cherished dream of every actor—to give a brilliant rendering of character, and grip the audience.

The ways and means of this mastery have been fully elaborated by Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko. Without going into the technicalities of what is called the Moscow Art Theater "system," it is, however, important to emphasize the fact that this "system" requires that the actor should constantly and perseveringly develop himself, as well as work on the character and play as a whole: it requires that the actor possess a high degree of culture and combine technical mastery with inspired, talented rendering of character.

All the arguments current among the stage workers about "representation" and "emotionalism" (experiencing the emotion) will be utterly futile if the actor does not work on the development of his histrionic faculties. It is not a question of whether the actor should merely represent the character as is demanded by Gordon Craig and Vsevolod Meyerhold, or should innerly live through the experiences of the character, as is demanded by Shchepkin and Stanislavsky. The essential point is that the actor should gain a clear understanding of the character as a whole and of all its details, which means that he must both represent and deeply re-live the experience of the character he portrays.

The famous artist Pevtsov in one of his roles used to shed real tears. Once, when he was asked how he managed to do it, he disclosed the "secret" of his art. "There was an incident in my life," he said, "which made me weep

bitterly for a long while. That incident impressed itself on my mind. And now each time I wish to draw tears from my eyes I concentrate my mind on that incident, recalling all the details, and then all the emotions of those moments come back to me. This inevitably brings tears into my eyes again."

That is the way Pevtsov worked on the role of a weeping man. In other words, in order inwardly to go through the experience of a weeping man, Pevtsov had to picture himself in the character of that man. That incident in his life provided him with the necessary material, and his professional experience provided him with the necessary craftsmanship. As a result, the audience was carried away by the emotions of the great artist displayed on the stage. Naturally, not every artist is possessed of a sufficient fund of experience necessary for such emotion and representation. However, the experience we lack ourselves may be supplied by the experience of other people with whom we come in contact, by literature, observation, and so on and so forth.

In stage practice, the actor's ability not only to perceive but also at any given moment to concentrate his mind on what he is to represent, and to experience the emotions of the character to be represented, is of great importance. This requires in the actor a knack of reorientating himself on the spur of the moment, of having full control of his feelings, body and movements.

A well known stage manager told me an interesting incident from his experiences. Once he had to ascertain whether a certain actress was really talented. Half an hour before the actress was to appear in the part of a girl, full of joy, full of life and mirth, he placed her in a condition which put her into a mood contrary to the one required by her part. The actress, however, succeeded in reorientating herself, and played her part well. The stage manager thus convinced himself that she was a talented actress.

All these facts go to show that in the actor's creative work on character, his ability to master his feelings, to reorientate himself, to combine high technique with a deep understanding of character, to synthesize representation and intuition in rendering the required character, is of great importance. Such are the methods of training at the Moscow Art Theater, and hence their value. The weak spot in the theoretical arguments of the directors of the Moscow Art Theater is the inaccurate terminology they sometimes use. They attach great importance to intuition and subconsciousness in the creative work of the actor, but make the reservations that these conceptions are in no way related either to Bergson or Freud. If this is so, then what is the "intuition" in Stanislavsky's art? Obviously it is nothing but the actor's specially developed artistic sense, his distinctive passion and enthusiasm in working on character, a work from which nothing can distract him. The methods of work used by this theater "school" provide a basis for the struggle against the various formalistic and naturalistic tendencies in the theater as well as against the non-realistic methods of work in rendering character such as symbolism or "slobbering psychologism."

III

The conventional theater is endeavoring to find external forms for its plays. The director of the conventional theater, proceeding from the form of the construction, requires the actor in the first place to find an external form for his actions that would fit the preconceived design. The lovers of art among philosophers who consider the search for form to be the main task of the artist, render a bad service to the theater, and to art in general.

While dealing with this question we cannot pass over in silence the philosophical utterances on the problems of art which V. Asmus made in his article.

V. Asmus, in his desire to come to the aid of those working in the field of art, gives his views on the interrelation of form and content in art. In his opinion, the main task of the artist is to give the material at his disposal an artistic form. He considers the creative treatment of form as the artist's principal aim in life. He compares the artist's treatment of form with man's treatment of language. When suitable words for conveying a thought are lacking, man either invents new words or resorts to a combination of old words. In this conception of the interrelation of form and content the author proceeds from the assumption that there is a break between form and content. With him content is, as it were, "indifferent" to form. Ideological content is not to be the object of any particular attention on the part of an artist; the latter must devote himself entirely to the creation of form. In Asmus's opinion the creation of form is the whole work of the artist. "Form," says Asmus, "is neither a nightcap nor a vessel into which an idea may be poured like water." This is true, but further on the author contends that form is the whole substance of the artist's struggle.

Now what are the practical conclusions to be drawn from Asmus's arguments? Let us take the stage. Evidently, according to Asmus's idea, the theater should pay no attention to the ideological content of a play. The object of the theater is to give highly artistic form to the productions of dramatic works. But highly artistic productions may actually conceal the weakness and even the harmfulness of a dramatic work. According to V. Asmus, it would seem, there is no ground for criticizing bad plays, as long as the form in which they are rendered is highly artistic. True, along with this, the author justly states that it is impossible to separate the evaluation of form from the evaluation of content, and that the study of form alone is likewise impossible. However, these assurances only reveal the contradictory nature of the author's position.

In developing his theory, Asmus was actuated by a good wish: the artist should be a master of form, the process of giving things (performances, pictures, films, pieces of sculpture, etc.) artistic shape should be easy, the result transparent. The author was further actuated by a desire—in our opinion a wrong one—to assure the artist that his task was to offer the audience a work of art in which content, on account of the transparent form, takes foremost place. As if an audience is able to perceive content without form! The effect of it was a little theory which justified formalism (i.e., the ignoring of content and the negation of its great role in the craftsmanship of the artist). It made the harmful suggestion of a wrong method in the application of which the artist, while concentrating his attention on form, might develop a disdainful attitude to the content of works of art.

Equally wrong is the artist's endeavor to give all content a single predetermined form. Eisentein's attempt to reduce all forms of creative art to the forms of primitive man's thought should be regretted. Eisenstein proceeds from Levy Bruhl's views expressed in the book *Primitive Thinking,* in which the author maintains that with primitive man conception and image coincide. These ideas which form the foundation of Eisenstein's views of art led him to the conclusion that the Bushman, for instance, thinks in scenarios . . . that the narrative of primitive man is very nearly an accomplished dramatic work.

Undoubtedly modern society finds a great difference between a scientific conception and an artistic image. Man thinks in concepts, while creative art re-

presents, above all, images. However, this is not the only point. Eisenstein in his views proceeds from an erroneous theory. He believes that in the domain of concepts we have made great progress, whereas in the domain of images we still have to hobble along on the heritage left us by former generations.

In his opinion the coincidence of concept and image in the case of primitive man must serve as the starting point in an artist's creative work. Dragging dialectics in by the heels, he further attempts to formulate the "law of duality." "The effect of a work of art," he writes, "is based on the double nature of the process simultaneously going on within it: precipitous progressive ascent to the highest rungs of the ladder of consciousness, and at the same time penetration through the structure of form into the depths of sensuous thinking." (*Towards a Great Cinema Art*, 1935.)

Therein, in the author's opinion, lies "the remarkable tension of the unity of form and content," which represents the distinguishing mark of a real work of art. In his opinion the more profound images are hidden in the earlier forms of human thought. It is from that source that the artist must draw imagery for his work of art. As a result a theory is created with a universal law of the interrelation of form and content in which form appears as an extra-historical category. The defect of this theory lies not only in its universality; its main fault is the break between form and content which is so characteristic of the formalistic tendency in art. Later Eisenstein came out with a criticism of his own mistaken views. However, the theory launched by him is still alive, and many people working in the domain of art are studying it. For this reason the theory must be criticized and denounced.

The question of the interrelation of form and content has been dialectically solved by the Marxist-Leninist philosophy. By means of critical analysis, this philosophy absorbed all the outstanding achievements of bourgeois philosophy, the apex of which was represented by Hegel. In the question of form and content, more than in any other question, Hegel, according to Lenin, "with his mind of genius divined dialectics." While formulating the transition of form into content and the indissolubility of the two, Hegel described the outer and inner form and the transition of the inner form into "the law of the phenomenon itself." Hegel's dialectical propositions which were standing on the head were put on their feet by the founders of Marxism-Leninism. In the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, the objective process of interrelation of form and content, the unity, contradiction and struggle of both in reality, have been brilliantly revealed. There is no need for us to indulge in numerous illustrations of this, since the reader is sure to be well acquainted with them.

It should be emphasized that socialist realism in art takes the relation of form and content as it exists in reality. Every attempt to concoct such a relation is sure to avenge itself. The result is bound to be a break between form and content—either the concocted form will preponderate to the detriment of content, as in the case of the formalists, or the content will be presented in a formless shape, as in the case of the naturalists. In both cases art is the poorer for the break with life. The concocted, anaemic form will only irritate the audience, which is desirous of seeing the truth of life.

Some people devoid of talent, as well as artists who neglect to train themselves, are afraid of this truthfulness in art, and for good reason, since it discloses their lack of talent. The idea of influencing the "uninitiated" by means of some "secret" is very strong among these so-called artists. It is wrong to attempt to excuse them theoretically. Among those who are trying

to do just that are Eisenstein with his utterances on the cinema, Meyerhold with his utterances on the theater, Sternberg in the field of painting and Vesnin in architecture.

Form and content do exist in reality. They are indissoluble. Philosophical systems which deny the existence of form and content are incapable of showing the artist the right way to develop his creative faculties. They will inevitably lead him to jugglery, to the belief that it is possible "out of one's own self," without the study of reality, to create most original forms which will amaze the world.

With such an approach the artist, instead of carefully working on the image, endeavors to give an "original" treatment, which either distorts reality or leads the spectator away from the understanding of reality. In order to illustrate our idea we shall take Meyerhold's treatment of the character of the mayor in Gogol's play *The Inspector General.*

Gogol's mayor is an experienced artful dodger who has duped three governors and is not only capable of playing nasty tricks himself but could endure the villainies of others. He is one of the strongest types in Gogol's satire. He is the embodiment of all the wickedness of the tsarist administration of a small town. All the small people around him are just so much dirt under his feet. And naturally he does not expect them to be particularly honest with him. He is a ruffian, takes bribes, and is surrounded by people who are not averse to duping or betraying him. Gogol in his play gave a brilliant picture of this type.

And now this mayor—the strongest character in all of Gogol's satire—is represented by Meyerhold as a weak man, unable to bear the weight of Khlestakov's escapades—and who goes mad.... In the last scene of the play we can hear the mayor raving mad. And in order to leave no doubt in the mind of the spectator that the mayor has really gone mad and is in a state of delirious fury, the strait-jacket all the time looms behind his back on the stage. Is this treatment of the character of the mayor correct? No, absolutely not.

Gogol in writing his biting satire on the nobility and official-ridden regime accomplished a great thing. There were a good many people who wished to weaken the biting sarcasm of this satire and turn it into a harmless playful farce or mystical-symbolic play after the style of Merezhkovsky. In the period of his decline Gogol himself endeavored to give such an interpretation to his play. Why on earth was it necessary for Meyerhold to enroll himself in the ranks of those who cannot stand Gogol's slashing satire on the tsarist regime and are bent on removing its biting satirical essence? Indeed, if the mayor went mad on account of Khlestakov's adventures, then not all was lost in the case of the provincial administration of the tsarist times! And the officials were not so mean either; for after all there was something human still lingering in them that knocked them out of their ruts created by the conditions of the accursed tsarist regime. Gogol's satire is great precisely because the mayor is such a pig as will stand anything, even the escapades of Khlestakov. Moreover, according to Gogol's idea, the mayor was likely to dupe the real inspector-general or at any rate get around him so as to bolster up his own rule in the provincial town.

For the sake of a misconceived originality ("I shall stage it in a manner that nobody else does") Meyerhold distorted the course of events so typical of a small provincial town delivered to the mercy of corrupt officials by the tsarist regime. Gogol gave a brilliant picture of this typical course of events. For the sake of vain originality or, worse still, for the sake of mysticism

and symbolism, Meyerhold spoilt Gogol's brilliant play and lent the weight of his authority to those who would destroy Gogol's satire.

Let us further take Okhlopkov's treatment of the character of Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello*. This regisseur, too, was hankering after an "original" approach. The usual treatment of Shakespeare's *Othello* as a picture of human passions, through jealousy passing from love to hatred, did not seem to satisfy our regisseur, and he attempted to transform the play into a social tragedy by a vulgar sociological treatment of the struggle between Iago and Othello.

It should be noted that certain people, by the use of general abstract sociological arguments about the work of Shakespeare, throw a veil over the deep human emotions and passions portrayed by him. Under the pretext of fighting against the idealization of Shakespeare's work, they try in deference of Shulyatikov's adherents, to analyze each of Shakespeare's works in such a manner as to give a strict definition of the interests of the particular section of society depicted by Shakespeare in his characters. Taking to these arguments, Okhlopkov, in his treatment of the characters of Shakespeare's famous tragedy, tried to give practical effect to these theoretical propositions. According to this conception, in Shakespeare's *Othello* there is a struggle between two camps: the humanist camp including Othello, Desdemona, and Cassio, who sympathizes with them, and the clerical Jesuit camp represented by Iago. In conformity with this conception, Okhlopkov placed Iago side by side with Othello as the chief acting personage of the play, and endowed him with all the qualities of crafty wiliness and hatred.

The effect of it was the dwarfing of the character of Othello. The deep human emotions and passions began to disappear from the play, and the audience was treated to an undersized performance. The question arises, why was it necessary to produce, instead of Shakespeare's great tragedy *Othello,* Okhlopkov's concocted Iago? The reason is very difficult to find, and Okhlopkov himself will hardly be able to prove the need for such a treatment of Shakespeare. One is therefore led to believe that it was all done out of a desire to be original, a desire which led to an obviously wrong treatment of Shakespeare's characters. In this manner careful and serious work on Shakespeare's characters was replaced by concocted, light, pseudo-original, tricky manipulations.

All this "original" treatment of characters is far removed from the real work of rendering characters in the spirit of socialist realism. There is neither representation nor intuition in such a treatment. Nor is there a proper combination of the form and content of the character on which the theater is working.

All this lowers the quality of the artist's self-training and diverts him from the study of reality to the wilderness of scholiastic tricks which enrich neither the theory nor the practice of stage art. It should be emphasized that all these fallacious principles of an artist's work, all these mistaken notions of treatment of character, are in the final analysis bound up with faults in world outlook.

IV

An artist without a world outlook cannot do any creative work. A world outlook is essential to the artist, inasmuch as it gives him a key to the understanding of the process going on around him, so that out of the numerous facts and events, he may select what is most typical and exemplary; it is essential for his understanding of laws regulating the phenomena and events around him.

Marx noted the great influence which mythology exercised on Greek art. Mythology affected not only Greek epos but also Greek architecture and sculpture. So too, was influence exercised, only with less effect, by Christianity.

We shall not deal here with the role played by mythology and Christianity in the creative process of art, but we must note the great influence exercised by these world outlooks in moulding the consciousness of artists of past ages, of painters, architects, sculptors and playwrights. All this serves to prove that an artist cannot do without a world outlook, that he cannot live and do creative work without a more or less definite view of life. In order to reflect the style of the epoch in his creative art, the artist must embrace the material and intellectual culture of his time and must be imbued with the world outlook of his age.

Many advanced West European and American artists have realized the significance of the fact that in the Soviet Union a new culture of a classless society has come into being, and that the new social relations carry with them a new era of flourishing art. Many of them fully understand or are beginning to understand that Marxism-Leninism is the intellectual, ideological axis of our Stalinist epoch without which the creation of this material and intellectual culture, including art, is impossible.

This is clear to the mass of cultural workers in the Soviet Union. They understand that only the Leninist world outlook is the correct expression of the interests, point of view and culture of the revolutionary proletariat now engaged in rebuilding the world on new, Communist lines. What we need now is to master this world outlook and gain an understanding of the complex ways of putting it into effect in creative work.

The way the artist's creative work is derived from his world outlook is an extremely complicated matter; it passes through a number of gradations and along a meanderous course of interrelations. The vulgar mechanical conception of the way the artist's world outlook affects his creative work must be most resolutely condemned. A number of problems connected with such interrelations stand in need of careful theoretical study, but some general problems may be raised even now. In the sculpture of Phidias, in the architecture of the Parthenon, in the works of the great masters of the Renaissance, in the tragedies of Shakespeare, in the lyrics of Pushkin, in the symphonies of Beethoven, in the works of Leo Tolstoy, there is a great deal that affects us even now. We continue to react to it emotionally and intellectually. And that is because these great masters, the advanced champions of their class, have in their creative art expressed the hopes, interests, dreams and desires of the people.

How did this happen? No doubt it happened because these people went beyond the limits of their class outlook and reflected certain general interests of the social development of their time. It is also to be explained by the fact that at certain stages in the development of society the advanced classes in the main sometimes reflected certain interests of social development. In analyzing Tolstoy's works Lenin with good reason wrote: "When we have before us a really great artist, some at least of the essential aspects of the revolution are bound to be reflected in his works." Lenin, *Collected Works,* Russian Ed. Vol. XII, p. 331).

Now, in the period when Communist society is coming into being, when all sections of society are being transformed into conscious and active builders of socialism, the general problems in the creative art of Soviet masters are assuming particular importance. In the field of drama, however, the philo-

sophical problems of deep human feelings, passions and emotions are not raised with sufficient courage and resolution.

Stalin's warning against conceit and against resting on one's laurels is of particular importance to workers of art. We have achieved great successes. A tremendous mass of exceedingly interesting folklore is being brought to light; in various branches of art new heights are being attained. But all this is by far inadequate, because we are faced with immense tasks on a world scale, tasks of the further fruitful development of the new civilization. All these successes should spur us on to new strenuous efforts, to new great victories.

In the Soviet Union the people are creating their own culture. The theories of spreading culture among the people, of "going to the people" in order to inculcate in them cultural habits, seem to be reminiscent of times long past. Far into the past have disappeared the scanty dreams of the pioneers of culture. The development of powerful industry and mechanized agriculture is the basis of the rapid growth of culture and art in the Soviet Union. Now the people are no longer a mere object for the experimentation of an art concocted somewhere on the top. The people represent an active body creating their joyous art; and through the instrumentality of their gifted members, they are creating real works of art. "Art," Lenin said to Clara Zetkin, "belongs to the people. It must have its deepest roots in the broad masses of workers. It must be understood and loved by them." (Clara Zetkin, *Reminiscences of Lenin.* London, 1929, p. 14).

The art of the new civilization, the art of the Stalinist epoch, is marked by folk quality, simplicity and grandeur. In the present it already shows the first sprouts of the future. Simplicity, however, in no way signifies simplification. The great works of art are great because they are simple, because they influence millions of people. Lensky, an actor of the realistic school, wrote: "The most difficult thing in stage performances is *simplicity.* The more gifted the actor, the nearer he is to simplicity. And the nearer he is to simplicity, the clearer and more understandable does his art seem to everybody." (Lensky, *Articles, Letters and Notes,* 1935, p. 241.)

A work of art clarifies what ordinarily may seem intricate and incomprehensible. Art reveals the simplicity of things that seem to be or indeed are complex. Oversimplification savors of a disdainful attitude to the people. It springs from the desire to simplify things, presumably to adapt them to the people.

The founders of Marxism-Leninism were always against oversimplification. In their works Lenin and Stalin with great simplicity threw light on the most intricate and at first sight entangled propositions, and gave a profound analysis of current events in so simple a manner as to be understood by everybody. "Only Lenin could write the most intricate things with such simplicity and clarity, such conciseness and daring that each phrase does not speak out but has the impact of a shot." (Stalin, *About Lenin,* 1934, p. 23). We should raise to similar heights our treatment of the images of our struggle and victory.

This is difficult, but who said that art was easy work? Every creative labor requires accurate calculation and fine technique along with great heroism, genuine enthusiasm and inspiration; the more so is this required in the field of art. The images of our Soviet art will then live a more picturesque, ample and emotional life, profoundly reflecting the great reality of our heroic Stalinist epoch.

Translated by E. Levin

F. V. Kelyin

Spanish Folk Poetry

"Everything in Spanish culture that is valuable, immortal and of world significance—its great names, the masterpieces of poetry, painting, architecture, music and scientific and philosophic thought—belongs to the people. All of this lives in the people for it came from the people, was created by the people and is inseparably linked with the history of the people's aspirations, exploits and sufferings."

These words from the appeal of the general secretariat of the International Writers' Association, adopted at its meeting in Madrid on October 7 of the current year, provide the best possible answer to our observations in the sphere of the development of Spanish poetry. It may be directly asserted that the latter has issued wholly from the folk and that it is closely linked with it.

For a long period the church and the state—the kings and the popes—kept the people of Spain cut off from contact with culture except for what was implanted in the towns and villages by governors, feudal señors, tax-collectors and monks. But the poetic soul of the Spanish people always found an outlet in song for its exploits and sufferings. The people's memory preserved dozens and hundreds of couplets, romances, *serranillas,* etc., whose origins are often lost in antiquity. These souvenirs of the poetic tradition were transmitted from mouth to mouth. An event itself was forgotten but its poetical memory survived in song. Sometimes as the song was transmitted from generation to generation it became more "embellished" and varied, at other times it gradually lost its vividness and died away. A peculiar process of selection occurred. But it is safe to assert that a tremendous number, if not most of the songs have come down to our own times.

The influence of folk poetry on the Spanish revolutionary poets of our day is very great and is beyond all doubt.

Here is a general outline of the history of Spanish poetry. After the severe and plain epic songs of Castile (the so-called *Cantares de Gesta)* the most famous example of which is the song of *The Cid* (twelfth and thirteenth centuries), after the influence of the Provençal troubadors, the Gaelic-Portuguese school and the Arabian-Andalusian poets, the so-called "cultured poetry" made its appearance at the court of the Castilian kings. Its first phases are inseparably linked with the names of two poets—Garsilaso de Vega and Boscán (late fifteenth—early sixteenth centuries) who adapted the "old manner" to the new Italian patterns. At first sight this new poetical school seems to abandon the folk tradition of the greatest poets, who wrote in the old manner of Gitsca, Santilana, Jorge Manrigue, Jil Vicente and Cristoval de Castillo. But that is only an illusion. In its most extreme form, such as *Polifema* by the famous Cordovan, Luis de Gongora (seventeenth century), it retains its close connections with the masses. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Spanish theater is essentially popular; this applies especially to the "Phoenix" of the Spanish stage, Lope de Vega. Without the folk and the tradition of song, the theater of Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina and others of their great contemporaries is utterly inconceivable. Most of the subjects are derived from popular legends, from those legends (Moorish, historic *genre* and love stories) which appeared in Spain in such abundance on the boundary between two epochs, in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. In many of them

the oppression of the toiling peasantry by the ruling strata, the kings, the church and the feudal señors finds expression. When in the age of the Phillips, Spain entered the period of its national decline, the satirical vein in popular poetry comes to the surface with special force. The entire country sang couplets about the king and his favorites.

Neither the inquisition nor persecution by the civil authorities could crush the living and elusive poetry of the people's hatred and sorrow. From here popular poetical satire was transferred to the stage. Its presence is keenly felt in the best examples of the classical Spanish theater in *The Star of Seville* by Lope de Vega and in *The Alcalde of Salamanca* by Calderon.

If we turn to consider Spanish poetry in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we shall be struck by the same strong folk influence. We find it in the eighteenth century anacreontic poet Melenges-Valdes, the popular theater of Ramón de la Cruz and the romantics de Rivas, Espronceda, Zorrilla, Gustavo Adolfo Becker, Campoamora. It is retained in the early twentieth century by the reformers of Spanish poetry Ruben Dario, Antonio and Manuel Machado, Juan Ramón Jimenez and Valle-Inclan. It lives in our days among the representatives of the People's Front, where, together with the revolutionary poets Rafael Alberti and Pla-y-Beltran, we encounter the names of the greatest masters of the older generation, Antonio Machado, Juan Ramón Jimenez and Luis de Tapia.

Among the many existing forms of folk poetry, and there are many of them (such as Sevilliana, Segidilla, Bolero, Jota, etc.), the "romances" and couplets were of special importance in the development of revolutionary poetry. The first consists of a lyrical tale, occasionally with rhymed and more frequently with assonant verses. Its size is indeterminate and depends on the creative imagination of the poet. Romances and couplets are usually sung to the accompaniment of the guitar. Romances are a more complicated form and are usually composed after the events. Couplets spring up in the course of events themselves. They provide, as it were, the poetical commentary on Spanish history. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they were sung by peasants, artisans, soldiers, sailors, students, smugglers and robbers. There is a whole cycle of prison "verses." In our times couplets are born in the heat of revolutionary struggle.

We quote several examples which show how faithfully the couplets reflect the gist of historic events. Here for example is a comic couplet dating from the time of the Napoleonic wars when the national government at Cadiz successfully repulsed the attack of the French interventionists.

Let the braggarts lead disgorge
Today on us as yesterday
By the morrow we shall forge
Corkscrews from the leaden spray.

The execution of the popular hero of the people's movement, Riego, became the subject of a special anthem which is sung to the present day. A number of "couplets" tell, now in an ironic, now in an angry or mournful tone, of the events of the civil war in the nineteenth century. The following is a couplet devoted to the shooting in Granada of the heroic woman Mariana Pineda who refused to betray fighters for freedom:

On this day of grief, Granada
Let thy stone walls weep
A scaffold now awaits Pineda
Her secret trust she'll keep.

When in 1873-74 the short-lived republic was replaced by the Bourbon restoration, the population of Madrid met the event with the following ironical couplet:

The republic died, alas,
We come to bear her pall.
The crowd of mourners is so vast
No Pantheon can hold them all.

It is interesting to point out that Madrid greeted the fall of the monarchy of Alfonso XIII in April 1931 with couplets. Before the king had succeeded in fleeing from Spain, leaving his family in the lurch, the whole city was singing:

Alfonso you old scape-grace,
Why are you so sad?
I'm looking for a fast express,
I've got to leave Madrid.

Hundreds of such couplets have been composed in recent times. Spanish revolutionists locked in the Oviedo prison by the Gil Robles and Lerroux reaction told me that the cell-walls (especially the walls of the death cell) were covered with such verses.

The greatest master of couplets among the revolutionary poets of the present time is Luis de Tapia (born in 1871) who combines couplets into more or less complicated poems. During the thirty or forty years of his literary activity, Luis de Tapia has written hundreds, perhaps thousands, of such verses. His cycle on the April 1931 *coup d'état* deserves special mention.

We encounter the popular "romance" in the works of the greatest of modern revolutionary poets, Rafael Alberti and Pla-y-Beltran, who head two schools of revolutionary poetry. The best examples of this form are *Peasants from Estremadura* and *Song of Thaelmann* by Rafael Alberti and *Casas Viejas* and *Sergeant Sopen* by Pla-y-Beltran. However, we must not forget that the revolutionary romance has been greatly influenced by Soviet poetry, and especially by Mayakovsky. The extent to which Soviet poetry has penetrated the Spanish life is shown by the fact that *Granada* by M. Svetlov, translated into Spanish by Rafael Alberti, has become a genuine folk romance and is sung all over Spain.

A more complex form of popular romance is to be found in the work of the best of the young Spanish poets, Federico Garcia Lorca, who was shot by the fascist executioners in Granada. Here the popular romance attains the highest degree of its musicality and strength. The best known of Lorca's volumes of verses is entitled *Gypsy Romancier*. It is interesting to point out that all three of the poets we have listed have transferred their verse to the stage. *Fermin Galan* by Alberti, *Casas Viejas* by Pla-y-Beltran, *Mariana Pineda, Bloody Wedding,* and other folk dramas by Garcia Lorca are written in the romance form.

The inseparable connection with the masses accounts for the great victory which Spanish poetry has scored in the last five years. Spanish poets, having broken with the tradition of "pure art" which did not blind their mental vision for long, have gone back to the popular fountainheads of poetry. On the firing line, reading their verses, preparing leaflets, encouraging the fighters, the poets of Spain are now genuine representatives of the century-old poetic heritage of their great people.

Emi Siao

To the Memory of the Great Chinese Writer Lu Hsun[1]

On the morning of October 19, 1936, the great Chinese writer Lu Hsun died in his fifty-sixth year. In him we lost a great son of the great Chinese people, a brilliant writer, a profound thinker, a passionate public spirit and a brave revolutionary fighter. Stirred to the depths of my soul by this great loss, I am quite unable to write calmly about him. Nevertheless, I wish to explain, at least briefly, all he meant to us, to acquaint the reader with his works, to share the great grief of this loss to Chinese literature and to the Chinese people.

Lu Hsun came from a poor family, and suffered untold privations. His parents themselves taught him to read and write. At a very early age Lu Hsun lost his father. After tremendous difficulties Lu Hsun, in his eighteenth year, entered the Naval and Military Academy, to be transferred in half a year to the School of Mines, from which he graduated. He was sent to Japan to complete his education, but Lu Hsun decided to take up medicine. During the Russo-Japanese war Lu Hsun began his work of creating a new Chinese literature. However, this plan of organizing a group of writers did not materialize. On returning to China, Lu Hsun took up his pedagogic activities. He taught at a high-school, was the principal of a teachers' seminary, and later became professor of Chinese literature at the universities of Pekin, Amoy and Canton. As one of the most active participants in the Chinese "revolution in literature" of the period of 1917-20, Lu Hsun conducted a passionate struggle against military-feudal oppression, against foreign imperialism, against Confuscianism, and for democracy, for reform of the Chinese language, for a new revolutionary literature. Lu Hsun marched in the vanguard of literature and became the first revolutionary realist of China. In 1918 Lu Hsun published his first short stories in the magazine *New Youth* and in the newspaper *Chenbao*, attracting immediate attention to himself by his *History of the Righteous Life of Ah Q*. His *Diary of a Madman* and other works are masterpieces of modern Chinese literature. The character Ah Q is as famous in China as Goncharov's Oblomov or Turgeniev's Rudin are in Russia. This story has been translated into Japanese, English, Russian, French and Esperanto. The French translation was published in the magazine *Europe*. When Romain Rolland first read the abridged version of this story, his comment was enthusiastic, and he said he would never forget the image of Ah Q. Lu Hsun's stories, collected in two volumes under the titles of *Outcry* and *Delusion*, are exceedingly popular with Chinese readers. They depict the life and manners of people close to the masses of these readers.

Lu Hsun

The Chinese reader, who is fed mostly on feudal, religious or adventure novels, for the first time got a feeling of modernity, saw himself reflected in the stories of Lu Hsun. This is the reason Lu Hsun is so well liked in China.

Lu Hsun's language and forms are new to Chinese literature. Lu Hsun was the first in China to raise the short story to the heights of genuine art. Up to that time the short story was considered in China as a form unworthy of "real" literature. Lu

[1] His family name was Chow Chu-jen.

Hsun's language is simple, vivid and powerful. The so-called "revolution in literature" was essentially a reform of language, instituted under the slogan of struggle against old canons in language which made it available only to a narrow circle of people, struggle for a language more nearly like that of the people. Lu Hsun can rightfully be proclaimed the first writer who used this new language with great artistic power.

In his essay, *How I Began to Write,* Lu Hsun remarks that he did not design his stories for any "Palace of Art." "What I wanted was that they should become an instrument for rebuilding society." This passage is characteristic of Lu Hsun, fighter and realist-artist, who dedicated his life as well as his keen pen to labor "for the sake of life," for the sake of "rebuilding society." In his militant stories, novels, essays, pamphlets and feuilletons Lu Hsun relentlessly exposed all the rottenness and misery of the old society. All his lifetime, he fought passionately against every form of reaction and falsehood. He loathed baseness and insincerity and all double dealing. He despised cowards and opportunists of all shades. He loved life and he loved man, like the revolutionist he was. All that happened in China during the last fifteen to twenty years found its most vivid expression in his works. These are beautiful examples of revolutionary literature. From the very start of his literary career Lu Hsun said that "literature must serve life, must serve to better and to rebuild life. . . . That is why," he continues, "I have always selected my themes from the life of the unfortunate—I depict the diseases of society. In depicting these diseases, all this grief, I should like to call attention to them to help the struggle for their eradication." This was said at a time when the adherents of "art for art's sake" were most influential in China, when most writers tried to retire to their "ivory towers."

Foreign critics highly appreciated the work of Lu Hsun.

Younghill Kang in the *New York Times* wrote that "Tolstoy, Dostoievski and Chekhov exerted a great influence on Lu Hsun. In style Lu Hsun comes closest to Chekhov . . . only Lu Hsun is even bolder than Chekhov. . . . The ethical problems he deals with are more complex than Chekhov's."

In *Current History* (October 1927), R. M. Bartlett wrote: "Lu Hsun's writings are filled with an immense sympathy for the people. . . . Lu Hsun is a radical—he is a fearless writer. . . . He is independent and democratic. . . ."

Lu Hsun's closeness to the Russian classics is by no means hard to explain. Lu Hsun himself has said: "I feel that Russian literature and culture are richer than others. There is some sort of connection between the cultures and literatures of Russia and China, they have certain common features. Chekhov is my favorite author. I love Gogol, Turgeniev, Dostoievski, Gorky, Tolstoy, Andreyev—of the writers of other countries I prefer Schiller and Sienkiewicz." More Russian literature has been translated into Chinese and exerts a much greater influence in China, than any other literature. Elsewhere Lu Hsun writes: "I love books which are the outcry and protests of oppressed peoples."

Lu Hsun loved Russian literature to the last. He himself translated much of Gogol, Gorky and other Russian classics.[1] He translated, carefully edited and published at his own expense the works of Fadeyev, Serafimovich and a number of other Soviet writers.[2] ". . . The literature describing the struggle during the periods of the Revolution and the Civil War is exceedingly important to China now," wrote Lu Hsun in answer to a questionnaire of the magazine *International Literature.*

Lu Hsun was very much interested in Soviet literary citicism—especially the work of Gorky, Lunacharsky and others. He himself translated some of the decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on questions of literature. This book of his translations came out under the title *The Literary policy of Soviet Russia.*

A profoundly national writer, Lu Hsun knew Chinese life and the Chinese people thoroughly. His work is replete with images of Chinese life and is steeped in the life of the Chinese people. Lu Hsun was a faithful son of the great Chinese people, was supremely devoted to them and loved them immeasurably. If he was occasionally severe, or quietly and sadly mocking, it does not mean he was such by nature. Hot tears lurk in his humor and satire. He knew how to diagnose the ills of the people in order to "cure" them.

In the days of fierce reaction he was subjected to persecution, attacks, threats and calumny. When Chang Tso Ling was lording it in Pekin, Lu Hsun was threatened with arrest. In Canton and Shanghai they threatened to murder him, and he was compelled to wander back and forth all over the country. But he always said, "I must live." Elsewhere he wrote: "Youth must, first of all, live; secondly—have enough to eat and be warmly clothed; thirdly—develop. We shall always continue to struggle against those who prevent this, no matter who they are, and we shall finally crush them." "Of

[1] Gogol's *Dead Souls* in Lu Hsun's translation has already had four editions.

[2] Two collections of short stories edited by Lu Hsun contain stories by twenty Soviet writers.

Lu Hsun With a Group of Artists at an Exhibition of Wood-cuts in Shanghai

course," wrote Lu Hsun, "we are not satisfied with the world as it is at present, but this does not mean we should be looking backward. We have a wide road ahead. To create the world of the future, such as China in all its history has never known, that is the task of our youth." Lu Hsun abhorred the past and looked with confidence towards the future. He loved life so passionately!

A brave and uncompromising fighter, Lu Hsun always looked ahead and followed the road of progress. Writer and thinker, Lu Hsun spent his entire life in struggle. In the past a liberal and a democrat, during his later years he stood firmly on the position of the proletariat. From individual protest against all reaction, he went over in 1930 to the leadership of the movement for a Chinese proletarian literature.

A brave revolutionist and a great public spirit, Lu Hsun organized and later led the League for Freedom, the League for the Defense of Human Rights, and the League of Left Writers, as well as other national cultural organizations.

Lu Hsun was editor of no less than fifteen different magazines during his lifetime. He personally brought up dozens of young writers. The stand Lu Hsun took in all literary battles—in the fight against bogus national literature, in the discussions against "third-rate people," in the discussions for a mass literature, for a Latinized Chinese script—in all of these battles his was always a correct stand, and therefore the leading and decisive one. "China and Chinese culture will perish unless we do away with hieroglyphics and introduce a Latinized Chinese alphabet instead," wrote Lu Hsun in a posthumous essay.

An ardent friend of the Soviet Union, Lu Hsun wrote the following in reply to a questionnaire of the magazine *International Literature:* ". . I found out only after the October Revolution that the proletariat is the creator of the new society. . . . The existence and the success of the Soviet Union have given me the feeling of firm assurance that a society without classes will surely be built. This . . . instills more and more cheerfulness into my work and enhances my faith in the future."

The Chinese reading public considers Lu Hsun its "Chinese Gorky." And he does, in fact, recall Gorky in many respects. Like Gorky, Lu Hsun was fearless, uncompromising, strict, knowing how to hate and how to love greatly. Lu Hsun truly merited the unbounded authority, respect and love of the masses of the people of China. The Chinese

Young Writers Carrying the Coffin of Lu Hsun

peoples saw in Lu Hsun a great friend, a fighting revolutionist, who always stood for the people.

Lu Hsun was a staunch friend of the Chinese workers and peasants and of their Communist Party. In the Chinese Communists, he saw genuine fighters for the interests of the people, for the salvation of the country. During the period of the darkest reaction Lu Hsun warmly defended the Communist Party, the Chinese Soviets and the Chinese Red Army. He was a real non-Party Bolshevik.

At a time when the Japanese imperialists, after swallowing up Manchuria and North China, want to seize all China and destroy its people, at this strenuous time for China, Lu Hsun was one of the first to respond to the call of the Communist Party of China for a united People's Front against the external enemy, against Japanese occupation. "I support the call of the revolutionary party of China to the entire people of China for a united People's Front because I am not only a writer—I am also a Chinese. All as one, we must turn our rifles against the external enemy—that is the most important thing now," wrote Lu Hsun in the posthumous article published in the magazine *Author.*

A warm supporter of the new policy of the Communist Party of China, Lu Hsun exposed the Chinese Trotskyites—Cheng Dusiu and his ilk—in their role of agents of the Japanese imperialists in China. The latter, following the example of their teacher, the agent of the Gestapo, Trotsky, calumniate the new policy of the CP of China with all sorts of "Left" phrases. Already ill in bed, Lu Hsun wrote ironically: "...Your 'theory' is of course as much above Mao Tse Tung's theory as the sky is above the earth! But it is your 'high' theory that is approved by the Japanese occupationists..." And further: "Your 'high' theory is accepted with continually less favor by the masses of the Chinese people. Your activities are contrary to the aims of the Chinese people. That is what I want you to know," wrote Lu Hsun severely, as was his wont. "Those who conduct the bloody struggle for the cause of the Chinese people are my comrades. And I am proud of this." Lu Hsun recognized that in the struggle against the Japanese occupationists, the united People's Front is of the utmost importance, and that the Chinese Trotskyites only do the work their masters, the Japanese occupationists, bid them. Lu Hsun wrote this shortly before the trial of the Trotsky-Zinoviev gang in Moscow.

Lu Hsun once wrote: "It would seem that a time when I could speak out really freely, I shall never live to see."

But he could say very much and very ably even under most difficult conditions, because he was fearless. His every word mobilized people for the struggle in which he himself was a most active participant.

At the invitation of the Soviet writers, Lu Hsun was preparing to visit the Soviet Union in order to acquaint himself personally with that "new society" of which he had dreamed so long. The struggle in China detained him, and later his illness prevented the trip. Thus he never saw the Soviet Union. He only knew it from the books of Soviet writers, books he loved and prized.

In an article on the death of Maxim Gorky, Lu Hsun, himself already ill at the time, wrote: ". . . it is the death of his body only; his services in the most difficult struggle, his revolutionary spirit will live for ever. The work of an author, especially of the foremost, must be the property of the whole world . . . Gorky's death is the loss not only of the U.S.S.R., but of the entire world."

I would repeat these words now:

"The death of Lu Hsun is the loss not only of China, but of the entire world."

"We have lost one of the beacon lights that lit our way," said Lu Hsun when he learned of Gorky's death. These words one must repeat in grief now at the death of Lu Hsun.

But we must bear up under our grief. Because we are confidently following the road to freedom. The Chinese people will rise from under "the most horrible conditions of life and from under the iron heel of the imperialists." (Lu Hsun)

It is the death of his body only; his services in the struggle and his revolutionary spirit will live forever in our hearts.

Rest in peace our dear teacher, friend and comrade—Lu Hsun!

Translated by S. D. Kogan

A Chat With Sholokhov

The airplane alighted on the right bank of the Don, four kilometers from the *stanitsa* Veshenskaya.

It was with a special feeling that one moved through the shady groves, already touched by the frost. The *stanitsa* could be seen on the high river bank. Its ancient cathedral, its peasant huts, might have been taken straight from the novel *And Quiet Flows the Don*. A line of hay wagons was moving quietly along; Cossack women in black clothes were driving undersized bulls. And the one who, shouting angrily, was driving the second load, drawn by young straw-colored oxen, might have been Axinia herself. . . .

We arrived in the *stanitsa*. Not far from the cathedral, on the square described in *And Quiet Flows the Don* (now planted with young trees and protected by a fence) stood a blue house.

This was the house of Mikhail Sholokhov.

I knocked at the wicket gate. No answer. I knocked again—still no response. Then from the enclosure I heard the loud barking of a dog.

A few more minutes passed, and then from the other side of the door sounded the voice of the owner of the house:

"Who's there? Come right in!"

I firmly pressed the latch of the gate, but found that it was already open. The savage cur, in reality an amiable and harmless setter, accompanied me right up to the house. Mikhail Alexandrovich gave me a firm handclasp. He was wearing a green semi-military costume, and light boots; with his pipe eternally between his teeth, with his welcoming smile and frank open face, he seemed like a young student from an institute of physical training. We passed through the kitchen, where cartridge cases were lying on the table. In the hall, a hunting bag and case of guns hanging from the coat rack caught the eye.

On the invitation of the host I mounted the steep creaking stairs to the workroom.

"You sit down and I'll see about tea."

Mikhail Alexandrovich ran lightly down the stairs, and I sat down on the divan, covered with cushions and a plaid. Through the window, the silver ribbon of the Don was to be seen. The walls of the room were painted green, their only decoration a round barometer above the armchair. A door opened onto a balcony, from which one had a magnificent view of the Don. Two of the walls were hidden behind a simple book

M. Sholokhov

case tightly packed with books. Here one finds Vladimir Soloviev alongside of Nietzche and side by side with Marx—Goncharov, Aksakov and Thackeray. . . .

The whole of the not very large room was filled up by two big tables. A large kerosene lamp stood on the writer's work table, beside the electric lamp. Here there were pages of manuscript covered with a small handwriting. . . . I had seen just such closely written pages on this table eight months previously, fragments of *And Quiet Flows the Don*.

On the second table was the black cover of a portable typewriter and a manuscript with "And Quiet Flows the Don, Part 7" written on the cover.

We spoke at length and in detail about the events in Spain. Mikhail Alexandrovich is excellently informed. I remember how at our last meeting, a few days after the occupation of the Rhine zone by Hitler's troops, Mikhail Alexandrovich in that very room was studying keenly the newly-created situation, with the help of a map. And now again, I noticed the same keen interest in the Spanish situation. How ridiculous at that moment seemed the remarks of some of the idle Moscow litterateurs that "Sholo-

khov sits in Veshenskaya, cut off from life."

But even the many visitors, the mass of letters with which Sholokhov is swamped from all sides, his active Party-political work as member of the bureau of the Veshenskaya Party District Committee, his continual journeys through the *stanitsa* and collective farms—all these are nevertheless only a supplement to his painstaking work at the writing table.

Mikhail Alexandrovich works much and persistently.

"You want to know about the fourth volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don*? Today I received a letter from London, from my English translator, asking the very same thing. I can inform you that the fourth volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don* is at last finished. In a month and a half or two months I hope to hand it in for publication. At the present moment the fourth volume is absorbing my entire attention. . . . I keep revising it again and again. I continually travel through the *stanitsa,* always with the same object—to check up on what I have already written, to collect additional facts bearing on the end of the novel."

"And after *And Quiet Flows the Don*?"

"I shall immediately set to work on the second volume of *The Soil Upturned.*"

"What will it deal with?"

"I shall not bring it right up to the present day. It will cover only the period following that of the first volume, the setting up of collective farms."

"The complete change in Cossack life, the present-day *stanitsa*—are you not interested in these themes?"

"Naturally. But I am the author of two unfinished novels. Until I have finished with them I cannot start on contemporary themes. As you see, I am still in the past. . . ."

Our chat was interrupted; Mikhail Alexandrovich was called downstairs to the telephone. Returning, he told me that the Honored Artist of the Republic, M. E. Lishin, had flown from Rostov to see him, sent by the Zavadsky Theater.

In the neighboring room, sitting round the tea-table drinking tea with cherry jam, I was the interested witness of the interview between the writer and the actor.

M. E. Lishin had come to Sholokhov to ask permission for the Zavadsky Theater in Rostov to produce *And Quiet Flows the Don* for the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution.

"The Art Theater is making the same offer," answered Mikhail Alexandrovich. "But who will dramatize the novel? I cannot do it, I have no time. But I would want to supervise the work. Because . . ." And Mikhail Alexandrovich began to tell about the unsuccessful staging of *The Soil Upturned* in Moscow and Leningrad. Excitedly he jumped up from his chair and ran to the stove to beat out the ashes from his pipe against the cast-iron door. Then he continued:

"When I was with Simonov and heard how the actor pronounced the words *kuren* and *kubyt*[1] with different accentuations on different occasions I was beside myself. . . . Amazing how lightly people take their work! They couldn't even take time to find out how the Don Cossacks really speak. This takes away one's faith in the actor. And in Leningrad (I didn't see it myself—members of the audience wrote to me to protest, and I even received a collective letter from the military academy), Don Cossacks were dressed in Ukrainian trousers and Cossack women in embroidered Chernigov blouses. What the devil do they think they are doing! They do their job any way at all. . . ."

Mikhail Alexandrovich began to speak of the approaching journey of the Don Cossack chorus to Moscow to give a performance in the Theater of People's Art. It was with great eagerness that the writer spoke of the Don singers.

"I have misgivings about the composers who 'teach' them. . . . It is necessary to preserve all the spontaneity of the Cossack chorus. Therein lies its whole charm. They wanted all the Cossack women in the chorus to wear identical clothes. But do the Oblivsk and Bokovsk Cossack women dress alike? Let each one sew her own dress to suit her own taste—even if the difference is only in a ruffle, it will be different, something of her own, distinguished from the others."

The writer told us about the customs and songs of the Don. Listening to Sholokhov, it is easy to understand why he avoids literary circles. The author of *And Quiet Flows the Don* lives among his heroes and heroines, he is together with them every day and every hour.

This is the reason for the popularity of the writer whose works are eagerly read, deeply loved by millions of people not only within the U.S.S.R., but far beyond its borders.

In the room in which we were having tea there stands a book case containing all the editions of Sholokhov's books—in all languages, for all countries. . . .

Sholokhov is particularly loved in his own Don district. During both our journeys in the North-Don Region we never once met a person who had not heard of the author of *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Soil Upturned.* Adults and schoolchildren, old people and young—all smilingly and with great inward pride speak of Mikhail Sholokhov, although many of them have never read him. Once we were forced to

[1] Cossack words.

spend the night with an old wise Cossack at the Verkhne-Mityansky farm. In reply to our question as to whether he had heard of the writer Sholokhov, he said:

"Why—how could I help it?" and began to describe episodes from the third volume of *And Quiet Flows the Don.*

"And is it long since you read the book?"

"*And Quiet Flows the Don*? I've never read it at all. I heard about it from the villagers. . . ."

At midnight the electric light goes out. The village is plunged into darkness. It is easy to understand why a large kerosene lamp stands on Sholokhov's table.

The next day, the airplane carried a journalist and an Honored Artist of the Republic away from the banks of the Don. Already in the early morning Sholokhov had driven off in his car somewhere beyond the Don, taking a gun and cartridges with him. We circled above the house of the writer, in greeting, frightening away from the green roof a large flock of grey Don pigeons.

After an hour and a half, two hundred kilometers from the Don, on the platform of the station at Millerovo, we were giving money to a porter to buy our tickets. The porter, an Ukrainian called Kozak, asked us:

"You're coming from Misha? How is he? He always calls me Kazachok. . . ."

Translated from the Russian
by A. E. Manning

V. Shklovsky

Peter Pavlenko

Gorky told the writers of the Soviet country that they must beware of letting their time go by and allowing it to remain unportrayed.

However, in order to portray one's time one must know and remember it.

One must know its motive forces.

Leo Tolstoy said that novels usually fail to take the right motive forces determining the development of life.

Long before him Gogol, for the benefit of playwrights, pointed out the fact that the usual love plot could not tie into one knot the multiform interests of all the acting personages of a drama.

Life is rich. Life changes.

And how greatly does it change in our Soviet country!

When you write about some savage people, remember that tomorrow this people will write about itself or, at any rate, will read your book and write that you are wrong.

It is difficult to write about the man of the Soviet country because he changes so rapidly.

He changes in far-away Kamchatka, in Moscow and near Moscow.

New types require a new type of writer.

Gorky was endeavoring to create that new type of writer. That was the aim of all the collective literary publications launched by him, such as the *Belomorstroy, The History of Factories and Mills, The History of the Peasantry* and *The History of Woman.* One must learn to take up new material.

Peter Andreyevich Pavlenko is a newcomer in literature.

He was an agronomist, a commander of a partisan detachment and head of a frontier detachment on the Persian border.

He worked in the Soviet trade delegation in Turkey.

He saw many things and is an excellent narrator.

Oral narrative is highly developed in our literature.

Peter Andreyevich Pavlenko is an excellent story-teller.

He began with novelettes about Levantines and the people of the Mediterranean. Then he began to write about the remote deserts of Turkmenistan.

While Pavlenko wrote about the West he was traditional enough.

The stories of the desert were something new.

The desert was being changed, the desert was being irrigated.

The water was made to run along the old gullies as in the ancient times of Alexander of Macedonia.

The wild beasts of the desert flocked to the new water.

People, plants were migrating throughout the country.

The silk worker was moving to the North.

Grass was returning to the desert.

After his book on Turkmenistan, Pavlenko wrote *The Barricades,* a novel from the time of the Paris Commune. It is a novel that reveals knowledge and is filled with events; it shows a full understanding of the past.

At the same time Pavlenko worked with Gorky on the publication of almanacs: *The Year '17, The Year '18, The Year'19.*[1]

Every year several books were published.

The aim of it was to search for and train a new type of writer.

In these almanacs Avdeyenko's novel *I Love* made its appearance.

Makarenko's *Pedagogical Poem* also appeared there.

The almanacs played the part of a school for Pavlenko.

Having learnt to master new material without confining himself to the narrow limits of an individual biography and without limiting human life to the narrow bounds of the human dwelling, Pavlenko began to write his novel.

Humanity knows that it will have to fight again.

Maybe it will be a war by the side of which the old one will look very attractive.

Maybe we, the people over forty, will one day sigh for the comfort of the old trenches.

We are doing all we can to prevent war or delay its outbreak.

There are a great many war novels nowadays.

In these novels detailed description is given of how Moscow is bombed and Russian villages are destroyed.

From this aspect Pavlenko's novel is not a war novel.

It is a novel of defense.

It is called *In the East.* I will not relate

[1] *I.e.*, 1917, 1918, 1919, the years of the October Revolution and the Civil War.

to you its content for you are going to read it now.

Do not be surprised that in this novel you have to wait long for the fighting.

We fight in our own way.

The gigantic blast furnaces of Magnitogorsk were installed in the winter. It was a difficult and expensive task.

But our neighbors were spoiling our Five-Year Plan.

However expensive the first cast iron may be, it is cheaper than blood.

We must have iron in order to delay war.

Pavlenko's novel turned out to be a novel which depicts construction in the Far East.

At first there is a description of our frontier as it was a few years ago as well as of the growth of war danger.

Then the story is told of how men came to master the outlying country; of how cities sprang up in wild places, how the first poets appeared in these cities, what they wrote and how they lived.

The people who came here were trained by the Soviet Government. It is these people who built the new cities.

A great deal is being told in this book about the Soviet army men and how they have been changing the aspect of this country; how the frontiers were closed and the airways barred; how alien people tried to find their way to our country from across the frontier.

Murusima, the theoretician of the Japanese intelligence department, is exceedingly well described in the novel.

A description is given of Yakuyama, his rival.

Murusima is a man who calculates the injury which he may inflict on us for decades to come.

Yakuyama in his own way is cleverer than Murusima. He knows the importance of time and that it is therefore important not to lose it.

The dialogue of these two spies who belong to different schools is excellently rendered.

Yakuyama does not believe in the old Japanese system. He says that sometimes you sow spies and reap a harvest of mutineers.

Murusima in reply says:

"Listen, you wretched moth. You have untied your tongue because you work on the most stupid of our frontiers. There not much brains are required. But what would you do if you were sent to grow cotton in Persia near Soviet Turkmenistan and near Afghanistan? There we have our aviation base, within easy reach of the Turkomens on the one hand and of the Afghans on the other. What would you do on our Abyssinian concession where our airplanes threaten both the Italians in Cyrenaica and the English in Arabia? What would you do on our rubber concession in Borneo where our airplanes threaten both England and Holland? How do we know whom we are going to fight first? An intelligence agent at work hates and loves; but his work, like that of a microbe, for a time remains invisible."

I produce this long quotation because it shows that the Soviet Union frontier is not the only concern of Murusima's.

We have closed our frontiers better than those who have not yet thought of Murusima.

We indulge in no tricks in our defense but build up the particular region.

Soviet women go to that region and the novel depicts them. Mills and factories are being built there. New people are being trained there.

Each month an ever greater number of airplanes go to the East.

The chapters of Pavlenko's book bear an epigraph in which only the figures are changed.

An excellent description is given in the novel of the region and of the numbered cities as seen from the air.

The bonds of friendship binding the airmen are well described.

The Soviet novel of defense is above all a novel describing construction.

Pavlenko has mastered new material of unusual breadth before he began his novel.

Its purely military part is sometimes too general; one wishes to know more about our fortifications cut in the mountains and accomodating a number of military settlements.

But Mr. Murusima can read Russian and it is not only Pushkin that he reads.

At the beginning of the novel people drink the toast of silence in battle and silence on construction.

Notwithstanding its silence the novel is eloquent and full of events.

Translated by E. Levin

SOVIETIANA

How the First Poet was Born

"Of What Does My Bjami Sing?" is the title of an article published in *Izvestia* by the Kabardin folk poet, Kolchuko Sizhazhev, during the recent celebration of the Fifteenth Anniversary of Soviet Kabardino-Balkaria.

This item has significance as an expression of a folk conception of art. The legend handed down about the first music and the first poet on earth is distinguished by its fine poetic beauty. Behind the account of the singer's fate, we feel the changing destiny of his native land and people.

The literal text follows:

Our people have preserved the ancient legend of the *nart*[1] who was taught by the wind to sing.

Walking through the forest, the *nart* lay down to rest under a tree, and fell into a heavy slumber. While he slept, a thunderstorm burst forth. The huge tree under which he was sleeping snapped like a twig and covered him with leaves. Such commonplace things as thunder and lightning did not wake the *nart;* he was wakened by sounds which had never brushed his ears—by the first music on earth. It came from the shattered tree. The heart of the tree was decayed and the wind, filling the hollow, brought forth song.

The *nart* cut into the tree with a sword. Drawing a breath, he blew and the tree answered him, as it had the wind, with a melody. This was the first music of man on earth.

Thereafter the *nart* knew no peace.

His armor and sword became covered with rust, his friends laughed at him, but he wandered restlessly through the ravines, forests and mountains seeking something. His friends said that he had met a girl of amazing beauty whose name was Bjami. But this was not so. He was listening to life. Once near a river he heard a new song, when the stones, which the water carried down from the mountains, knocked against each other. He reproduced the voice of the stones by beating a small plank made of the dry stump of a plane-tree.

But a man without armor and sword forfeits his honor. His friends drove away his flock of sheep and his horses. They plundered his prosperous cave. And the man who had discovered music became poor. It is true that he was summoned to feasts—the sound of his wooden bjami was pleasant—but he didn't dare drink the booza[1] until the host had graciously offered him the bowl. He had to sing about the might of his host, about the beauty of his ugly daughter . . . Songs of his soul he sang concealed in the mountains with the strange herds, and these songs have not come down to us.

Since then the river Baksan, tearing away ravines, has borne away enough stones from Terksol to Kizburuna to equal many mountains, and the bjami sings in Kabarda, passing on the songs of heroes from generation to generation.

My grandfather related this legend in a herdsman's cave. Since then I have loved the simple instrument. It became my second heart. My grandfather taught me to sing about knights and heroes. He himself composed many pieces. And he taught me how to make pretty and melodic songs. They burned in my mind, which had not been enlightened by reading and writing.

When Prince Atazhuko heard of my ability to sing, he began to summon me to feasts. Then, standing by the door, I sang to him and to his guests. Sometimes he offered me a bowl of booza and I, taking it from his hand with a bow, had to move back to the door before placing it to my lips. Sometimes, during the harvesting season, I stood and entertained the prince without rest for four days and four nights. My heart boiled with shame and anger, but I had to sing merry songs about the feasts and combats of wealthy princes when I knew there was no flour for bread at home.

Now too, the bjami is singing in Kabarda.

About what does my bjami sing?

My age has dropped away, and my fingers are as nimble as those of a youth.

If you have never been to our kolkhoz[2] in the ancient village of Zayukova, then come and you will see why people are becoming young.

You will see what it is that is stirring my decrepit memory; you will see the source from which I draw golden words in order to sing about life.

My bjami sings of the Kirov Kolkhoz, and my bjami curses to eternity the enemies who

[1] Nart—A legendary folk hero.

[1] Booza—an ale made of home-made groats.

[2] Kolkhoz—collective farm.

sent the criminal bullet into the brain of this man.

If there is a kolkhoz richer than ours, tell me, so that we can learn from it. But our kolkhoz is very rich: it has thousands of sheep, cows and horses.

Our granaries are bursting with grain.

This year they will bring me corn, and I still have some from last year.

In the evening my home is as light as day. On the farm the sheep are shorn of their wool by electricity, and the administration is considering the purchase of a milking-machine.

My bjami sings about the son of the shepherd Ibrahim Abasov, our chairman, on whose breast glitters the medal of the Hero of Labor. Ibrahim was taught by Betal[1] whose mind was illuminated by Lenin and Stalin.

My bjami sings of my children. Of my daughter, who freely chose as husband the man she loved. I am happy that she loved the foremost udarnik. She was not handed over to a strange house like cattle.

About my son Ali—a future lieutenant. About my security in old age, and the future of the children. My weak eyes can clearly see into the future. At the foot of the mountain, new homes are already standing, and over each entrance I see the source of life—the hammer of the forger and sickle of the reaper.

About the people who love labor—of these do we sing. And the people shall never exhaust their love for Stalin—the golden sun—who sent warm rays into the homes of the workers.

In song my bjami will carry this gratitude down into the centuries.

Chapayev Lives in a Legend

A unique and poetic movement is taking place in the Ural steppes, native land of the famed Chapayev, with whose personality, conveyed fairly realistically, many are familiar through Dmitri Furmanov's book *Chapayev* or the film of the same title directed by the brothers Vasilyev.

Preserving the reality of Chapayev's character, folk fantasy is continuing the conception of its favorite hero in the spirit of epic poems and even fairy tales. Such a synthesis of realism and romanticism Maxim Gorky appealed for in contemporary Soviet literature and it is an organic attribute of all people's art.

People who remember the living Chapayev attribute to him phenomenal exploits which the artist who adheres to established facts would not claim for him.

About 300 stories, tales and songs about V. I. Chapayev were recorded by an expedition of writers of Kuibyshev region who covered the route taken by Chapayev's division.

The following excerpts from some of these stories give insight into the poetic fancy of the people.

Historically, it is known that Chapayev drowned, after having been wounded while he was swimming to safety across the river Ural. However, popular fantasy is not satisfied with such an end to the hero.

"Chapayev didn't drown at all in the gray Ural," states one of the stories. "This is an invention. He swam the Ural. It wasn't for nothing that he was considered a good swimmer. Chapayev was clever." Further, it is related how, when the Cossacks pursued Chapayev, an old Kirghiz helped him to hide, fed him, gave him a silver bowl, a golden rifle and a horse, "and such a steed—seldom did a tsar have such horses; all afire, a white star on its breast and eyes intelligent as man's."

"An old man approached Chapayev, kissed him three times, and said: 'Here is a horse, he will preserve you from all danger. Fly, swift falcon. Mount your horse and fly through the woods on the right . . . five nights and five days your horse will gallop, and he will carry you to a high mountain—Mountain Eagle. It will be your camp; there no one can take you.'

"No sooner had Chapayev jumped into the saddle and grabbed the reins, than the horse quick as lightning carried him along the woods, spreading a cloud of dust on the earth. At this moment, the sun sank behind the earth and a dark, dark, night came on, and the Cossacks had left the woods. They had searched everywhere, but Chapayev was not to be found. When they returned to their general they reported, 'Chapayev was drowned in the Ural.' "

Here is a story about how his soldiers beat the enemy in Chapayev's name, when he was no longer in their ranks.

"The detachment is perishing. Not enough men and no cartridges. Wherever one turns Chapayev appears. He is flying on a fiery steed, like a bird; he is brandishing his silver sword, and his cape unfolds in the wind. 'Follow me boys!' he cries and rushes headlong into the fray. Fear drops from the soldiers; their hearts are warmed; they hurl themselves into the attack behind Chapayev. And how they attack! Not a single soul of the enemy remains. And then, when they remember, look for him, Chapayev is somehow not there. It is hard to believe—was he with us after all? Of course, he wasn't. Someone called him to raise our spirits, everyone forgot that Chapayev was dead and they rushed forward as if he were there."...

Many stories are full of concrete details

[1] Betal—Betal Kalmykov. Secretary of the Kabardino-Balkaria Party Committee.

which not only supplement the historical conception of Chapayev but also serve as valuable material for the study of the Civil War.

The following quotation, for example, confirms the clear-sightedness of Chapayev:

"If you want Soviet power," declared Chapayev, "if you want freedom—come with me. If not—go against. It is impossible to be for no one."

A Prominent Georgian Poet

The works of Vasha Pshavela, one of the most original pre-revolutionary writers of Georgia, have been issued in the Russian language for the first time.

In the '80's, Pshavela was a known figure but following this decade, and especially during the years directly preceding the Revolution, he was pushed aside by the decadent tendency in literature.

Why does Pshavela's poetry now attract attention?

This Hevsor mountaineer, a former teacher who had studied in Petersburg university, gave up everything, and, stealing a bride from the castle of Prince Amilkhvara in accordance with an old Georgian custom, retired with her to an inaccessible mountain settlement. He read Hegel by the light of the moon, spent his days hunting for deer, and participated in the humble festivities of the inhabitants.

Of course, Vasha Pshavela was a person of originality and sincerity, but what is most characteristic is that in that pre-revolutionary period he alone turned away from bourgeois literature and found a source of inspiration in the poetry of the people, in legends, in the ideas of the people about spiritual qualities and interests of man. Pshavela created a poetry full of freshness, strength and originality by penetrating into the customs of the average peasant community. That is why, in Georgian literature, he stands out unparalleled, like a kind of "miracle."

At this time, when Soviet literature in its attempt to develop its main idea of Socialist humanism and to create a well-rounded and unswerving personality, turns to the literary heritage of the past, it cannot ignore the people's epic. In the popular conception of courage, beauty and goodness there are the elements of a socialist esthetic. From this point of view, the poetry of Vasha Pshavela is a legacy not only for Georgian literature but for all revolutionary literature.

In his poems *Gogotur and Aishina, Gost i Khozyain (Guest and Host), Zmeed (Snake Eater)* the reader finds side by side with songs of courage, beautiful lyrics of nature and inspired pantheism, a deference to old customs (bloody revenge, the attitude towards women as to an inferior being) springing from Pshavela's uncritical acceptance of the sacred customs of the average community.

The poets Pasternak, Tikhonov and Spassky have made inimitable and excellent translations of these works.

The publication of this small volume is just the first step toward acquainting Soviet and foreign readers with such powerful and vivid poets as Vasha Pshavela, who wrote more than 30 long poems, 400 short verses and a score of stories and articles.

Translations of French and English Classics

In the field of French literature, publication of the collected works of Diderot in ten volumes, two of which appeared last year, continues, and work has begun on the publication of the complete works of Anatole France and Balzac, with illustrations by old masters. An edition of Moliére will be completed and selected works of Zola, Maupassant, Verhaeren will be issued.

The collected works of Voltaire and Rousseau will appear as part of the series of Great Humanists.

English literature will be represented by editions of the works of Dickens, Walter Scott, Tennyson, Byron and Oscar Wilde.

An event of great importance for the Soviet reader is the publication of the complete works of Shakespeare in nine volumes. It will be presented in a new translation, with commentaries and illustrations by old masters.

The Great Northern Sea Route publishers have undertaken the publication of major and interesting works devoted to the Arctic. Besides accounts of the works of Soviet explorers of the North—Wiese, Samoilovich, Urvantsev and others—books by Soviet captains, Arctic workers, George Ushakov, heroes of the Soviet Union, Molokov and Vodopyanov, the flyer Alexseyev and others, publication of classic works on the Arctic has been undertaken.

The following books have been published as part of a series on pioneer expeditions to the Artic: *The Voyage of the Barents* by G. Le Ferre, *The Last Voyage of the Janet* by R. Barlet and *The Voyage of the Janet* by de Longue.

The works of the leading explorers of the Arctic—Nansen, Amundsen, Nordensheld—will also be issued. It is an interesting fact that the complete works of Nansen and Amundsen have never been published anywhere and are being issued for the first time in the Soviet Union.

Translated by S. Schwartz

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Editor-in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV