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Pushkin in a garden

Drawn by Serov

Writers' Speeches at the Eighth (Special) All-Union Congress of Soviets

V. P. STAVSKY

(General Secretary of Soviet Writers Union)

Capitalism is rotting, bourgeois culture has bred fascism, that terrible sore.

In Italy and Germany the bourgeoisie has placed political and physical power in the hands of its obedient hireling hangmen—the fascist politicians. The fascists are exterminating the proletarians. The fascist hangmen chop off the heads of fighters devoted to the cause of emancipation of mankind. Thus, the Communist, Edgar Andre, was recently murdered in Hamburg; thus they tried to murder Dimitrov, and thus they want to murder Thaelmann. The fascists persecute workers in science and literature and force them to flee from the country.

In the public squares of German cities bonfires were built of the books of the greatest human minds, Marx and Engels, and of the works of the great writers of humanity—Heine, Gorky and others.

German and Italian bombs in Spain are murdering defenseless inhabitants, and destroying the greatest cultural treasures.

The people of the Soviet Union know what fascist culture means, what fascism and its agency, the frantic Trotskyite Zinovyevite band are. They assassinated the unforgettable Sergei Mironovich Kirov. They hatched monstrous plots for the murder of the leaders of mankind. In the Kemerovo Mine, at the bidding of fascism, Stakhanovite miners died as the victims of the mercenary wrecking dogs!

Toilers throughout the world turn their eyes with feelings of tremendous joy to our Socialist culture.

In tsarist Russia only 20 per cent of the population were literate; the Soviet schools are attended by 27,000,000 children who are being taught in all languages of our U.S.S.R. Ten million adults are studying in various educational institutions.

In pre-revolutionary Russia there were: 54,200 churches, 23,600 shrines, 950 monasteries, 26,200 government liquor shops, 54,100 priests of various ranks, 15,000 deacons, 40,5000 sub-deacons, and 29,100 monks.

What a mass of superstition, ignorance and savagery was carried to the masses of the people by that army of obscurantists!

In the Soviet country there were founded: 673 theaters and circuses, 27,700 cinema houses, 2,700 clubs, 45,800 reading cottages, 768 museums, 50,600 libraries.

Peoples that were previously without an alphabet now have their own alphabets and are studying in their respective native languages. The toilers of our people are the legitimate heirs of all that is the best and of the cultural treasures created by mankind.

Thus the images of Prometheus of ancient Greece and of Amiran of the Caucasus, of the heroes of the Finnish Kalevala and of the Georgian *The Man in the Panther's Skin* of Shota Rustaveli, of the Vogul conqueror Madur Vasa and of the Kirghizian rebel leader Manas, as well as the images of the titans of Russian folklore, not of those titans that were invented and besmirched by Demyan Bedny and Tairov's theater, but of the titans of

the epic of the Russian people, of whom we are proud, become popular and are appreciated by the toilers of our country.

In the light of the monumental achievements of Socialism in this country, our men of letters have accomplished very little, and although our literature is the most progressive in the world as regards its theme, ideology and trend, as well as in the heroes which it portrays—people of the Soviet land —nevertheless our literary folks should by no means feel conceited.

"Books! More bright and good books!" such is the claim of our readers. And the writers should draw from this the proper conclusions.

Each one of them has before him the remarkable example of the life and activity of the great Russian literary genius, the great friend of the toilers, the fighter for Communism, the late Maxim Gorky. He, the dean of Soviet literature, had brought forth the idea of creating the history of factories and mills, the history of the Civil War, the history of villages, collective farms and state farms, the history of women, the idea of writing a book on the men and women of the two Five-Year Plans. He, Gorky, was untiring in urging the writers "to get closer to life, to study life!"

There is such a burning need to depict the remarkable, wonderful process of reforging people! It is a fact that one woman of a collective farm in the Mozdok District of the North Caucasian Territory declared at a meeting: "The state, that is I!" She probably had never heard that the very same words had once been uttered by the French king, Louis XIV. Yet these words had an entirely different meaning in the mouth of this collective farm woman from what they signified in the mouth of the French king. In these words she, a Soviet woman collective farmer, expressed the whole of her Soviet understanding of the community of her interests as a collective farmer with those of the state as a whole.

It is also a fact, comrades, that the old Cossacks, the veterans of two wars, and now members of collective farms, are saying: "Comrade Stalin has sensed our innermost thoughts! And now one is so eager to work, that one cannot express it in words!"

Our writers assure the Special Congress of Soviets that they will do away with their lagging, and in tendering ardent greetings to the Congress, they pledge themselves to work, as energetically as the whole country is working, under the leadership of Stalin. *(Applause.)*

Today [1] is the anniversary of the foul murder of Sergei Kirov. Kirov's memory will live in our hearts forever. From this very platform he delivered his fiery speech, and one would wish to reiterate from this platform those ardent words of his: "How I should wish to live on and on."

Long live the Party and its leader, the great and beloved Stalin! *(Applause.)*

A. N. TOLSTOI [2]

Comrades! The delegates to the Congress, who have been appearing on this platform, are living illustrations of the text of our Constitution. They separate the lines of the text, compressed to the terseness of a formula, and from between these lines there appears the blossoming countenance of our remarkable country.

With what emotion, expectation, envy, hope, do the millions of eyes

[1] This speech was delivered on December 1. *(Ed.)*

[2] Speech slightly abridged.

from there, from abroad, turn to us. I recently returned from a trip abroad. I saw and heard this.

Our life, our country are the center of attention of all oppressed and exploited. And they form the overwhelming part of humanity, and this part increases just as the fragments of stone increase when a building is crumbling. They want to know us, who we are, our ethics, how we live, work, enjoy ourselves, how we educate our children, how we love our girls. It must be remembered that we, people of the Soviet Union, are half unreal to the people of the bourgeois west, because we are creating things and such a life as those abroad can envisage only in their dreams, but even in their dreams they often fear "harmful" thoughts.

Our people, from whom the shackles of exploitation have been torn away, have with their own hands and blood, through deprivations and genius, created a life that has never before been known on earth. In the heat of battles they raised on their shields a great leader because the people are worthy of their leader.

We have here been summing up the results of the toil and creative effort of long and difficult years; here has been created and imbedded in a steel-like monolith, the last stage towards Communism.

People want to know us, comrades. We ourselves want to know ourselves, because we are young and—devil take it, even if one does have a bald spot on his head—we're young just the same! (*Laughter.*)

We want to know ourselves, and the entire world wants to know us even more, because it wants to see, in us, an example of courage, will power, wisdom, talent, fullbloodedness, optimism. How often, while abroad, were envious glances cast at me, how often did I hear the sigh: "Oh, you happy Russians!"

Do they know us there, abroad? No!

"Tell us, do they speak the truth when they say that with you there in Russia all the women wear the same uniform? For you have equality there . . ."

Or:

"Tell us, do they brew beer in Russia?" (*General laughter in the hall.*)

"They brew beer."

"Who is able to drink it? Surely, only the commissars?" *(General laughter.)*

They know very little about us, comrades. The impression of us is approximately that given in Pilnyak's novel, *The Naked Year.* This lack of knowledge about us is increased by the loud lies of the fascist papers and papers bribed by the fascists. Fascism makes use of this ignorance of us, it is just what fascism needs; in the dark waters of ignorance of us, fascism catches large sturgeon.

Now about the direct tasks of literature. Just as the text of the Constitution engraves and formulates the entire creative path of the Revolution, exactly so must Soviet literature imprint in architectonic finished forms and artistic works of novels, plays and poems, the countenance of the country, a new, strong, young countenance which, as I have already mentioned, appears as a colorful picture through the lines of the Constitution, which pushes itself into the foreground of the life of the world, in spite of the cawing of the fascist crows.

But why do we still lag behind the appointed goal? First, because we

literati and poets must reconstruct the very nature of our art. Our pre-revolutionary literature (like the literature of the West), was built upon class contradictions. In the main it was opposition literature (against the existing order). It proved by using the negative; it showed either the negative hero or a man tormented by the social or political order.

We are building up the literature of a classless society of the near future. We are formulating types of a positive hero, we are digging up the sources of art that have been forgotten and have been buried under the rubbish of thousands of years—a national art—a hymn to the sun and to life.

In order to write a musical symphony one must study music ten years. In order to master the art of the novel or drama a talented man requires much time. Give our talented people time; do not hasten hopelessly to wave your hand at the writer who has been silent for some time. Let him study in peace. Some one else issues a new book during this time. The quality of our literature cannot fail to be high—our Constitution is a guarantee of that—even the highest in the world. Worst of all is to hurry a writer. The writer must be placed in a position to struggle for his artistic existence. I think it necessary that our journals become the center of the struggle of the creative currents which concern them, a struggle for the heights of art.

We must put an end to the situation which, fortunately, is met less often now, when a writer wrote a dull novel in which there was nothing that one could find fault with: he took it to a publishing house: there they noticed that there was nothing condemnable in the novel and published it; the reader found nothing in the book except the absence of something condemnable, and everyone, except the reader, forgot about art itself.

The writer must be brought face to face with the reader, must depend entirely, throughout his artistic existence, upon our remarkable, clever, demanding, culturally developing reader who is unique in the world.

I say this with some tardiness. This is already being done. I only want the impatience of our millions of readers to be transmitted to such fortunate institutions as, for instance, the Union of Writers. It is necessary to take care of the everyday life of the writer, and that is all very well, but it is even better, without vacillation, to take up the organization of creative conditions for our literature, to remake the magazines, to call readers' conferences, to study library book circulation readers' comments, and so on. We know that all of this is being done, but we must begin to do it on a large scale, on a scale that does not lag behind the scale and scope of our life.

Comrades, Soviet literature has already contributed much. We are moving ahead so quickly that we have no time for recollections. Soviet literature is now faced with tasks that are incomparably more difficult and tremendous. Our reader has grown up, and there has arisen the necessity of our literature being represented throughout the world. We, writers, will be able to manage this task. We shall not only be able to cope with it, but we shall move ahead, and quicker than one thinks, into new, unknown fields of creative work. We, writers, are flesh of the flesh and blood of the blood of our great country.

We shall not fail you! (*Applause.*)

PUSHKIN—HIS LIFE AND WORK

Victor Shklovsky

The Story of Pushkin

Only a revolutionary head like M. Orlov's or Pestel's can love Russia in the same way that a writer can love her language. In this Russia, in this Russian language, everything must create.

Pushkin

On his father's side, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin came of a well-known but impoverished family of nobles.

The genealogies of the families of the Russian nobility are generally subject to dispute, and can seldom be traced with certainty. Pushkin traced his ancestry from the Prussian Radschi, who had come to Russia at the time of Alexander Nevsky.

Sergei Lvovich, the father of Pushkin, received a good education. He was at once a spendthrift and a miser. He paid no attention to his own affairs, but took a zealous interest in the affairs of others. Sergei Lvovich was ruined at an early age, and Alexander Segeyevich Pushkin was born in Moscow, on Nemetskaja Ulitsa, in a house that had once been some kind of office establishment. He was born into an atmosphere of poverty and confusion.

On his mother's side, Pushkin was of African extraction. Here is what the poet himself wrote:

"On his mother's side, the author is of African extraction.

"His great grandfather, Abraham Petrovich Hannibal, was kidnapped from the shores of Africa at the age of eight and taken to Constantinople. The Russian minister there ransomed him and sent him as a present to Peter the Great, who had him baptized in Vilna. . ."

Pushkin's mother was known to the society of her time as "the beautiful Creole." She was wilful, stubborn and hot-tempered. Nadezhda Ossipovna, as she was named, did not love her son Alexander.

French was the language spoken in the home. The poet's uncle, Vassily Lvovich, was well known as a poet in his day and had many connections in literary circles.

About that time it was decided to open an Imperial Lycée for 50 pupils in a wing of the palace in Tsarskoye Selo which had been vacated after all the Grand Dukes had married.

In a building adjoining the palace, sons of nobles received an education which prepared them to become important government officials. The Tsarskoye Selo Lycée was opened in 1811.

Through the connections of Sergei Lvovich and Vassily Lvovich, Pushkin was sent to this priveleged educational establishment. At the Lycée instruction was fairly good but unsystematic. Among the teachers were a number of young men who had recently returned from Göttingen University, the best university of the period. One of the teachers was a brother of Marat,

Monsieur Boudrie, who had taken part in an uprising in Switzerland and fled to Russia.

Copybooks and diaries of Pushkin's friends in the Lycée reveal the things that interested them.

Wilhelm Küchelbäcker compiled a dictionary of rules for the conduct of life. Here are two excerpts from his dictionary:

Slavery:

A hapless people suffering under the yoke of despotism should remember, if they wish to break their chains, that tyranny is like a noose which tightens with opposition. There is no middle way: either patiently suffer the rope to be drawn about you or struggle with the firm determination to break the noose or strangle in the attempt. Halfway measures lead most often to disaster."

Beautiful War:

How noble would be a war launched against despotic governments for the sole purpose of setting their slaves free.

It was the period of the Napoleonic wars.

A great highroad skirted Tsarskoye Selo. Tsarskoye Selo, residence of the emperor, was filled with alarms, hopes, failures. One then sensed the march of history.

The Lycée was stirred by the events of the war, and heatedly discussed the change of generals which took place in 1812.

The Lycée knew the Palace well, and many of the students could see through and despise their neighbors.

The Lycée had beautiful gardens adorned with monuments and statues.

In his poems Pushkin thought in fragments of mythology.

A perception of history unfolding, a knowledge of pre-revolutionary French literature and a knowledge of the classics conceived through mythology were the factors which influenced Pushkin's development and determined the character of his first poems.

In the middle of the lake is a marble column. If you take a boat and row over to the column you can read an inscription which relates how the ships of Count Orlov aided the Greeks in their revolt.

The inscription ends like this: "The fortress of Navarre surrendered to Brigadier Hannibal. There were 600 Russian troops and they did not ask 'are the enemy strong in number?' but 'where are they?' Six thousand Turks were taken prisoner."

Disputes between nations and questions about the destiny of his family and his country filled the mind of the young Pushkin.

He did not so much live in Tsarskoye Selo as engage in dispute with it.

Pushkin's teachers found that he had more cleverness than depth, his progress was fair, but at a public examination in the Lycée in 1815 he distinguished himself by reading a poem on Tsarskoye Selo before Derzhavin, the celebrated poet of that time.

The years Pushkin spent in the Lycée were the happiest of his life. It was here that he became a lover of poetry. To the end of his life, he remembered his Lycée friends, Küchelbäcker, Delvig and Pushchin. When just before his death he sought help, it was to the same Lycée friends that he turned.

On July 9, 1817, Pushkin received his graduation certificate from the Lycée.

At an early age, Pushkin began to publish his work in the magazines and win recognition. He spent three winters in St. Petersburg in poor circumstances. He lived with his father near Kalinin Bridge, a long distance from the center of the city.

In a letter to his brother Pushkin recalled how during the frost he used to run all the way home because he did not have fifty kopeks for a drozhky.

At this time, Pushkin began to work on his long poem, *Ruslan and Ludmila,* and was in the habit of frequenting the Arzamas Literary Society.

The St. Petersburg phase of Pushkin's life ended in disaster. He wrote an *Ode to Liberty.*

It is related that he wrote the poem in a house on the Fontanka from which could be seen the palace where Paul the First was killed.

Between two lines in the manuscript of this poem there is a pen and ink sketch of Paul's face in profile.

The ode was clearly directed against Alexander; it threatened him with the same fate as befell Paul.

It was written probably in 1819, shortly after the death of Ekaterina Pavlovna, the sister and mistress of Tsar Alexander.

The words "nature's shame" in the ode were a reference to incest.

It was proposed that Pushkin be sent to the monastery prison in Solovki or to Siberia.

Pushkin's friends, among them Zhukovsky, interested themselves on his behalf, with the result that he was handed over to General Inzov, who was in charge of the colonists in the South of Russia. This was done because the government did not feel sure of itself. The group to which Pushkin belonged—the future Decembrists—had strong influence. What is more, Pushkin was in high favor with the public, which already saw in him a great poet. At the same time, he was considered frivolous. A short while before he was banished, a rumor was circulated to the effect that he had been flogged in private. The circulation of rumors was a method of attack used against Pushkin up to the time of his death. While quite a young man, Pushkin was driven to think of Siberia as a means of winning back his honor; he felt that he had to choose between suicide and committing a crime. His friends calmed him and he went South.

At Ekaterinoslav, Pushkin fell ill. He was nursed by the family of General Rayevsky, with whom he was traveling on the then lengthy journey to the Caucasus. From the Caucasian spas Pushkin traveled to the Crimea.

One night on the boat he wrote his great poem, *The Light of Day is Now Extinguished.* The idea of escape ran through the whole poem. In the midst of his misfortunes, Pushkin was able to snatch moments of happiness. He got everything he could out of the life he was forced to live—that it was a very difficult one is evident from his dreams of escape.

After a visit to Bakhchisarai, Pushkin proceeded from the Crimea to Kishenev. In Kishenev he lived in poverty; he went around in rags, and began to frequent public houses. He was fond of writing down Moldavian songs. Throughout this period he also wrote poetry. Pushkin was surrounded by spies.

At this time, Pushkin wrote many lyrics as well as his poem, *The Prisoner of the Caucasus.* He did the first drafts of *The Robber Brothers* and *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and wrote the poem *Gavriliada.* Pushkin was then known to the entire reading public. His poems were read and discussed

throughout Russia. People admired them as poetry and used them as propaganda.

From Kishenev, Puskhin was sent to Odessa. Odessa was a big city with Italian opera; the inhabitants belonged to many different nationalities. For this reason, the change was for the better.

He still hoped, because the south was then seething with military conspiracies.

In the national revolutions which were then taking place in Europe, Pushkin was able to sense the Russian revolution, the revolt against the Tsar, and in spite of his seeming frivolity, he prepared himself for the role of poet of the revolution.

In Odessa, Pushkin came into sharp conflict with his superior, Count Vorontsov.

"I cannot, and will not curry the friendship, and still less the patronage of Count Vorontsov. All I crave is 'independence,' which I hope to gain through bravery and continual exertions."

Pushkin's thoughts again turned to flight. He said in verse what he would never have dared to say in his prose. In *Eugene Onegin,* Pushkin spoke of "sighing for Russia under my African sky."

Of course, it was not of Africa he was dreaming but of Europe, the waves of the Adriatic, the countries extolled by Byron; his thoughts turned to Greece, where a revolution had recently broken out.

Count Vorontsov became anxious and hastily made out a deposition. He wrote that Pushkin's chief failing was vanity and that he was a poor imitator of Byron.

"If," Vorontsov wrote, "Pushkin is sent to some other province he will find greater encouragement to pursue knowledge and will escape from the dangerous society here."

Pushkin received an order to leave Odessa. On the order he had to append his signature to the following:

"I, the undersigned, hereby undertake to leave Odessa forthwith, following the route indicated by the Governor of Odessa, to the city of Pskov, without halting on the way, and on my arrival at Pskov to present myself to the civil Governor. Odessa, 1824.

Alexander Pushkin"

These conditions of banishment were very severe. According to this paper, the poet had to travel 1,621 versts without stopping on the way.

When Pushkin arrived at Pskov, he was placed under the surveillance of his father in the village of Mikhailovskoye.

The village of Mikhailovskoye was situated near Svyatogorsk monastery in a remote part of what was then Pskov province.

The little house, old and poorly furnished, overlooked a steep river bank. A lake could be seen in the distance, and on all sides there were woods, not so big as they are now.

Pushkin quarreled with his father. Sergei Lvovich cried out that his son had attacked and beaten him. Afterwards, he declared that Pushkin had wanted to beat him. As a result, Pushkin was in danger of being imprisoned in a monastery.

The hills around Pskov, along the slopes of which little wretched fields ran in strips, receded far into the distance. Patched up sails glided over

the lake; in summer—dust, in autumn—the woods a golden tint and golden leaves strewing the road, over which no carts passed.

The sun went down in a mist. Pushkin wrote poetry.

In winter, everything was swept away by blizzards. Pushkin kept a grip of himself during his banishment in Mikhailovskoye.

But things were very difficult for him. Here are two letters, both written at the beginning of November, 1824. Pushkin wrote to his brother:

"I want to be left as I am until the Tsar decides my fate. Aware as I am of his firmness, and if you like stubbornness, I would not hope for an improvement of my lot except for the fact that with me he has dealt not only sternly but unjustly as well. Although not trusting to his condescension, I do trust to his sense of justice. No matter what happens, I do not want to go to St. Petersburg, and I shall never set my foot in my home there. Kiss my sister affectionately for me. Also my friends, especially yourself.

"Poetry, poetry, poetry.

"That is the food of the soul. Do you know how I spend my time? I write my notes up to dinner-time, I dine late, after dinner go riding, and in the evening I listen to tales—and thus make up for the deficiencies of my wretched education. How delightful these stories are! Every one of them is a poem in itself. My God!—I nearly forgot. I have a job for you: I want historical facts, dry facts, about Stenka Razin, the only poetical figure in Russian history."

Pushkin wrote at the same time to the governor of Pskov.

". . . His Most High Majesty the Emperor has permitted me to be sent to my parents' estate, thinking thereby to alleviate their sorrow and the lot of their son. But the grave charges brought by the government have affected my father's heart very much, and aggravated the hypochondria pardonable in view of his old age and his tender love for his other children. I have decided for the sake of his peace of mind and my own to request his Imperial Majesty to permit me to be transferred to one of his prisons."

His parents went away. Everything became quiet in Pushkin's place of exile. He dreamed of escape, and corresponded with friends. His hope of escape was not realized.

The old fable writer Khemnitser has a tale called *The Chained Dog*. It describes how each time a dog bit through his chain the two ends were tied together so that the chain got shorter and shorter.

One of Pushkin's friends, Prince Vyasemsky, wrote to him to Mikhailovskoye about this dog.

"Resign yourself!" wrote Vyasemsky. "Be sensible and think of Khemnitser's dog, which was put every time on a shorter chain, for there is a chain that immediately stills breathing."

In another letter Vyasemsky wrote:

"You delight in persecution; in our country it, like the author's trade, is not yet an honored profession. . . . *'ce n'est même pas du tout un état.'* It is a profession only for a few; for the people it does not exist. Persecution gives the persecuted sovereign power only when two divisions of public opinion prevail. But in our country one orthodox church is supreme everywhere. You can be strong in our country only in your fame, in the fact that you are read with pleasure, with eagerness, but misfortune counts for nothing with us. . . .

"Your place is empty among us, your friends, when we meet to talk, and in your parental home. But among the people you have no place awaiting you: here no one has a place of honor. In the libraries you have the first shelf, but we have not yet lived to the days of *personal respect.* In statesmen it is crosses and titles that are honored, in the author his books, and for that at least, thank God; but let the former be without crosses, or the latter without books, and they will be forgotten and unkown. In the oakwood we are not druids but swine: we do not bow to the oaks, but only devour the acorns that are scattered on the ground. . . ."

Pushkin himself, Pushkin as a man who has suffered through various vicissitudes counts for nothing among the Russian people; no one would contribute a kopek for his ransom, although each of his poetic effusions is sold for six rubles.

"It always seems to me that you serve one who does not exist in our midst. A Don Quixote of a new kind, you take off your cap, bow to the ground and perform your devotions before a windmill in which there is not only no God nor Saint, but not even a miller."

In Mikhailovskoye Pushkin wrote *Boris Godunov* and some chapters of *Eugene Onegin.* Before the Decembrist insurrection, Pushkin made up his mind to go to St. Petersburg, and wrote out a passport in the name of a serf belonging to a neighboring landowner. When news came of the failure of the uprising, Pushkin burned a lot of papers and letters. He was expecting to be arrested.

Of his notes, he preserved only a few pages. Pushkin himself was not involved in the conspiracy, but his poems were found on all those arrested. However, he had written a letter asking that his lot be changed. The letter was cold and lifeless. On Sept. 3, 1826, Pushkin was summoned to Pskov and sent straight from there to Moscow with a courier. Pushkin was convinced that he would be sent to Siberia. It is said that, counting on meeting Nicholas before the sentence was announced, he had written some prophetic verse in advance denouncing the hangman tsar—the final verses of *The Prophet.*

Pushkin was driven to Moscow in great haste. He was in Moscow by Sept. 8 and was immediately called before the tsar. By this time Nicholas had found it necessary to get rid of some of his enemies, and felt it advisable to come to terms with those who were still among the living.

Pushkin talked to the tsar with self-confidence, leaning on the table during the conversation.

Nicholas promised that he would be his censor and free him from the ordinary censorship.

In the theater, the public greeted Pushkin as a victor. But it soon became clear in what a trap he had been caught.

The poet had brought along his *Boris Godunov.* The drama was given to the tsar for censorship; the tsar, as we now know, turned it over to Faddei Bulgarin, a journalist and official in the third department.

Faddei made a report on the play on the basis of which Nicholas suggested that it be rewritten in the form of a novel.

For the next six years, Pushkin fought for the right to publish this work.

Pushkin spent 1826 and 1827 in Moscow. In the poem, he wrote stanzas beginning, "In the hope of fame and wealth, I look into the future without fear." We can see a reference to the conditions of the agreement he had

Illustration to "Gavriliada," published in English. Drawing by Rockwell Kent

made with the government. During the same period Pushkin wrote his *Message* which was addressed to the Decembrists.

In 1827, Pushkin decided to return to St. Petersburg. The city was deserted; all the places where he had talked and meditated were ruined. One hundred and twenty of his friends were in penal servitude. Pushkin departed for Mikhailovskoye, where he started to write a historical novel. In the winter, he returned to St. Petersburg.

It turned out that things were much worse than the poet had thought. He received reprimands from the Emperor through Benkendorf. Pushkin began to make efforts to get abroad, asked permission to go to China, and was refused.

Pushkin made another effort to get away. He left without permission for the army which was fighting on the Turkish front.

He traveled in a blue suit, without arms, to the front lines. En route he passed the remains of Griboyedov [1] who had been killed in Teheran during the uprising. Perhaps Pushkin was hoping that at the front he would

[1] Famous Russian writer, author of *Misfortune of Being Clever,* who was killed in Persia where he was sent as ambassador from Russia.

succeed in getting across the border. There is a work of Pushkin's called *Voyage in Erzerum.* This work in its day aroused the displeasure of the government. Here is what he said in it:

" 'And here is Arpachai,' the Cossack told me. Arpachai is our frontier. It is worthy of the Ararat. I galloped down to the river filled with inexplicable emotion. Never had I set eyes on foreign soil. The frontier had some strange significance for me: from my childhood traveling had been my favorite dream.

"For a long time afterwards, I had led a wandering life, traveling now south, now north, but never yet had I made my way beyond the boundaries of the vast land of Russia. I rode gaily into the river, and my trusty steed bore me to the Turkish side. But this territory was already conquered! I was still in Russia. . . ."

He was in Russia, he must marry in Russia, he must work in Russia.

The homeless Pushkin became a menace to the government. A man ought to hold a position and have a family. The distracted Pushkin made preparations for marriage. He wrote: "I am getting married, *i. e.,* I am sacrificing my independence, my improvident wilful independence, aimless wandering, solitude, and changeableness."

After a number of suits and fickle infatuations, Pushkin proposed to the beautiful Natalia Goncharova, a woman belonging to an impoverished family.

Here his suit was successful, and after the engagement he wrote a letter to his mother in which he foretold his future: "If she consents to give me her hand, I shall see in that only a proof of the placid indifference of her heart, but when she is surrounded by admiration, adulation, and allurements, will this placidity continue to be part of her? She will be told that only unlucky chance prevented her from forming other connections, more suitable, more brilliant, more worthy of her. . . . And will she not feel repulsion towards me?

"To be compelled to die in order to leave her a widow, captivating and free to choose a new husband—the very idea is torture."

His marriage augmented Pushkin's expenses, and he soon began to get into debt. Then another misfortune overtook him. Pushkin never wrote better than during this period, yet at this very time he lost his popularity. Belinsky points out that at this period Pushkin had already ceased to express the moral sentiments of the society of his time, and had already become the teacher of future generations. But generations spring up and are formed not in a day but in the course of long years, and so Pushkin was not destined to live to see the generations which, imbibing his spirit, were his genuine critics. *Gipsies* caused a certain waning in Pushkin's fame, which had been growing rapidly up to this time; but after *Gipsies* every new poetic success of Pushkin's decreased his popularity. *Poltava,* the two last and best chapters of *Eugene Onegin,* and *Boris Godunov* were received coldly by the public, and by a number of journalists with fierce and humiliating shouts of absolute disapproval.

This is reflected in the verses written by vaudeville writers about Pushkin.

We are bored with Pushkin
We are sick of Pushkin,
His verse has no music,
His genius has waned.

But having outpaced his time, Pushkin became a stranger to the world about him. Pushkin became a people's poet. Gogol realized this fact, and so did Belinsky.

Debts kept piling up. On some of the bills there were entries to the effect that 25 rubles had been paid on such and such a date, and that the same amount would be paid again on such and such a date.

Debts kept piling up.

Pushkin lived on the Moika, and Nicholas I used to ride past, enamoured of Natalia.

In order that Natalia Pushkin might be able to dance at the court balls, Pushkin was given the title of Kammerjunker.

He had to accompany his wife to the balls, he had to take money from the government and make himself believe that contempt is worse than official disgrace.

Pushkin tried once more to gain his independence.

Shortly before his death he published a magazine but it did not succeed. . . .

In 1833, Pushkin collected material for a history of the Pugachev revolt. He began at the same time to write the story *Dubrovsky,* which was not published during his lifetime. In *Dubrovsky,* he describes the fate of a young nobleman turned brigand. Without finishing *Dubrovsky,* and while still interesting himself in the history of the Pugachev revolt, Pushkin began to write *The Captain's Daughter.* In the first draft, the hero was not Grinev but Shvanvich—a nobleman who supported Pugachev. Later Shvanich was developed into two characters—Grinev and Shvabrin.

It does not necessarily follow that Pushkin sympathized with Pugachev. But he was big enough to see, though dimly perhaps, that the revolt was justified although at the same time he feared it. In order to collect material for the history of the Pugachev revolt, Pushkin traveled in wintertime to the Orenburg steppes.

Pushkin collected Cossack accounts of the uprising, many of which he embodied in his book. Here is one episode:

"The wives and mothers were standing on the banks trying to make out their husbands and sons among them. In Ozernaya, one old Cossack woman (Razina) used to roam every day along the Yaik drawing the floating corpses to the bank with a hook and saying to each: 'Is that you, my child? Aren't you my Stepushka? Aren't those your black curls the fresh water is washing?' Then seeing an unfamiliar face, she would quietly push away the corpse."

On the margin of the manuscript, just at this passage, Nicholas I wrote in his own hand: "Better let it pass as there is no association with the matter."

Pushkin could not be the tsar's historian because in depicting actuality he aimed at truth.

In the winter of 1834, Pushkin published his poem *Hussar* and *The Queen of Spades* in Smirdin's *Reader's Library.* They proved a success, but did not help to improve Pushkin's financial condition. At this time, Pushkin's family affairs became extremely complicated. Dantes, a runaway French whiteguard who had fled from the French Revolution of 1830, was paying attention to Pushkin's wife. A young cavalry guard, Dantes was equally popular with men and women. Baron Heckeren, the Dutch ambassador, had adopted the Frenchman as his son.

In June, 1834, Pushkin wrote: "I should not have entered the Tsar's service and, what is worse, got myself involved in financial obligations. The dependence which we impose upon ourselves through vanity or poverty degrades us."

Pushkin was then living a very uneasy life. He looked for quarrels, sought pretexts for duels. Dantes gave Pushkin every reason to feel jealous.

Pushkin challenged Dantes, who, however, made an unexpected change of face, disclosing that he was paying attention not to Pushkin's wife but to her sister. Pushkin became furious, but there was nothing he could do. Dantes actually married Pushkin's sister-in-law. The young cavalry guard could now meet Natalia Nikolayevna as a relative. Pushkin received anonymous letters. They came from circles close to the court. It is possible that Dantes himself was not Natalia Pushkin's lover, but merely a screen for her love affair with Nicholas.

There was a big celebration in St. Petersburg about this time. The guards erected the huge Alexander pillar. Pushkin fled to Moscow in order to avoid being present. It was on this occasion that he wrote his poem *Monument* in which he challenged the public opinion of his day.

On the morning of January 27, 1837, Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin rose at 8 o'clock; he was in good spirits.

Pushkin was isolated, hardly any of his friends were left.

His family affairs had been made known to the whole city; he had to fight.

An insulting letter which Pushkin had written to the Dutch ambassador, foster father of Dantes, became public property.

Each day it became more evident that the court circle made every attempt to create an unbearable moral atmosphere around Pushkin. His impetuous and passionate nature was well known to them.

It was easy for Dantes. A foreign subject, he could be banished only abroad, while his second would not have to answer to the Russian government.

Pushkin could not find a second. He tried to find one, one night at a ball, invited an Englishman he knew to act for him, but the request was refused.

But Pushkin chanced upon an old Lycée friend, Colonel Danzas.

In spite of the fact that he had taken part in many campaigns and, although wounded, had remained in the army, Danzas had made no career for himself, never getting beyond the rank of colonel.

Pushkin asked him to act as his second. Danzas agreed at once.

Pushkin awaited the arrival of his friend.

He had someone to go with him to decide this matter of life or death.

Early morning. Pushkin sat in his study, sorted papers, wrote a letter to Ishimova, a children's writer, prepared a book which he wanted her to translate, wrapped it up himself.

Then Pushkin went into the drawing-room. The windows of this room overlooked the Moika.

At this section of the Moika, a short winter drain ran down to the Neva, leaving the Moika water pure here; around the opening in the ice many people with pails and water carriers carried water up the steep incline on sleighs to the embankments.

It was a sunny, windy day.

At 11 o'clock, Pushkin saw Danzas from the window.

He went gaily to meet him and brought him into his study.

Danzas was youthful and high-spirited. They had a short talk, and Danzas went off somewhere for a while.

Pushkin was left alone. He undressed, had a rub-down with eau-de-cologne, washed, and put on clean underwear. If you are afraid of getting wounded, you must have a clean skin.

Danzas had probably gone for pistols.

Pushkin went into the drawing-room.

Through the window, against the winter sky could be seen the angel on the new and still rosy pillar erected to Alexander.

In the hall Pushkin put on a long threadbare overcoat, left the house, and then came back and put on a short sheepskin coat: it was easier to throw off.

From the house, he made his way to the embankment on foot; he reached the Nevsky and crossed the Politzeiski Bridge. Here at the corner in a house with columns was Wolff's confectionery, where Danzas awaited him.

The friends got into a sleigh and drove off in the direction of the Troitsky Bridge.

It has been established that the police knew about the proposed duel, but policemen were sent off in a different direction.

The sky was a golden-rosy hue, with blue clouds of smoke arising here and there from the chimneys. The rose-tinted sky in the direction of Viborg smoked with a blue haze, and the buildings on the Petersburg side of the river could be seen through the fog, which disguised their plain appearance.

On the other side, the low wooden Troitsky church looked as if it were mounted on a background of pink.

Only the spire of the Peter and Paul belfry stood out, clear gold, through the fog.

The weather had changed: in the morning there had been two degrees of frost, now it had become colder and the wind was not strong enough to clear the fog from the city streets.

They drove to the Palace embankment.

Pushkin and Danzas met a murmer of acquaintances.

Alexander Sergeyevich's wife, Natalia Nikolayevna, with her beautiful short-sighted eyes, rode past them in a carriage drawn by hired horses.

They drove across the frozen Neva past the low granite walls of the Peter and Paul fortress.

Familiar walls, familiar spires—Pushkin had often depicted them.

Here the Decembrists were executed, here his friends were imprisoned.

Here Alexander Sergeyevich himself might have been imprisoned.

The winter path led right up to the walls.

Pushkin asked Danzas jokingly: "You're not bringing me to the fortress?" "No," replied Danzas, "there is a short cut through the fortress to the Chernaya Rechka."

Now the snow-laden gardens of the St. Petersburg side began.

Along the road they saw a sleigh with Dantes and his second. . . .

They drove up together to the Commandant's lodge by the Chernaya Rechka.

Here they left the sleighs and continued on foot.

The wind had gathered force. For the duel they had to find a spot in the shelter of a small grove.

The day was bright and windy, the snow lay soft and thick on the ground. It was now half-past four.

The seconds cordoned off a space about an arshin broad and 20 paces long.

The combatants were to stand twenty yards apart, with five yards for each from the barriers, which were about ten yards apart.

Their uniform coats served as barriers.

Pushkin sat on a heap of snow and watched the fatal preparations with indifference.

Dantes' second, D'Archiak, and Danzas loaded the pistols and handed them to the combatants.

Pushkin speeded up the preparations.

Danzas gave the signal for the duel to commence by waving his hat.

The duelists began to walk towards each other. Pushkin walked almost up to his barrier immediately; Dantes took four paces and fired without advancing further. Pushkin fell face downwards on the military coat, saying: "I'm wounded."

His pistol stuck in the snow so that the muzzle became choked.

Danzas went over to Pushkin.

After a few minutes, without speaking or moving, Pushkin raised himself on his left arm and said, "Wait. I think I have enough strength to fire my shot."

Dueling weapons were primitive and of big calibre. They often missed their aim, but the wounds made by their enormous lead bullets were horrible.

When a duel was to be fought, two cases of pistols were usually brought along. Pushkin was given a second pistol.

Dantes stood sideways, shielding himself with his pistol, which he held muzzle upwards. Leaning with his left arm on the ground, Pushkin took aim and fired.

Dantes fell. Pushkin threw his pistol up in the air and shouted "Bravo!"

The bullet pierced Dantes' arm, and is said to have grazed the button of his coat.

The police report says that Dantes was wounded in the left arm and suffered a contusion of the stomach.

Pushkin had fired at ten yards, therefore Dantes' wound was a strange one. Either the charge was not loaded, or else Dantes was wearing some kind of metal shield.

The bullet should have driven the button into the body at this distance, for the diameter of the button was less than the diameter of a dueling pistol.

Pushkin lapsed into semi-consciousness.

The cordon was taken down; the sleigh drivers drove up through the snowdrifts to where the wounded man lay.

Alexander Sergeyevich was wounded in the stomach; a man with a stomach wound must lie absolutely still. These wounds are extremely dangerous but they heal if the patient is not moved too soon.

Pushkin was lifted and carried to the sleigh. He asked, "Did I kill him?" "No," he was told. "He is wounded in the arm and breast."

"That's strange," said Pushkin. "I thought I was to have the satisfaction of killing him, but now I feel that I have not.

"However, it doesn't matter—as soon as we are better we'll try again."

The sleighs drove off through the snow.

Pushkin was in great pain, but he did not murmur.

At the Commandant's lodge a carriage was waiting; it had been sent by Dantes' guardian, the Dutch ambassador, Baron Heckeren.

Pushkin was not told that this was his enemy's carriage.

On the way, Pushkin chatted with Danzas and related anecdotes to him. Pushkin realized he was seriously wounded.

On the way, Pushkin began to vomit. This is a very bad sign in the case of wounds of this kind.

At six o'clock in the evening, the carriage arrived at the house on the Moika.

Pushkin asked Danzas to go in first and tell his wife that the wound was not dangerous.

People came out. A footman lifted Pushkin in his arms and carried him up the few steps leading into the house.

"Do you feel sad carrying me?" Pushkin asked him.

He was carried into his study—not a very big room, with windows overlooking the courtyard.

The study was furnished with furniture of all kinds. The walls were lined with bookshelves, and bookcases ran out into the middle of the room, dividing it in two.

Amidst the books stood a divan on which Alexander Sergeyevich was laid.

Pushkin began to shout in a firm voice that his wife was not to come in, that his condition was not serious, that he was only wounded in the leg.

The family doctor came and he asked Pushkin if he did not want to take leave of his friends.

Pushkin raised his head and cast a glance at the walls.

His books stood arrayed there on their shelves.

Pushkin said to his books, "Goodbye, my friends."

The court doctor Arendt was summoned.

Pushkin asked Arendt to tell the tsar that Alexander Sergeyevich earnestly requested him not to take action against his second, Danzas.

His friends began to gather.

Arendt came during the night, brought a letter from the tsar, showed it and took it away again.

Pushkin looked through some papers, burned a number of documents, and drew up a list of his debts. By his side sat his friend Dal, a writer and a collector of tales.

Pushkin began to give way to his grief and pain.

Dal sat by his side and said to him, "Don't be ashamed of giving way to your pain, my friend. Groan; it will relieve you."

Pushkin answered jerkily: "No, I mustn't groan. My wife would hear me, and though it is ridiculous that such a silly idea should get the better of me, I don't want her to."

Pushkin was ordered to be syringed, which intensified his pain. He asked for a pistol to shoot himself.

Then they gave him opium.

Pushkin asked that his wife be told that his condition was dangerous. He was afraid that Natalia Nikolayevna would be too indifferent and that her reputation would suffer thereby.

The vestibule was now packed with callers, and a crowd of people had gathered outside on the street.

It became necessary to put up bulletins on the door reporting the state of Pushkin's health.

By noon on the 28th, the poet's condition had improved slightly. His hands were warmer, his pulse stronger.

Peritonitis did not set in as a result of the wound, but as a result of the wrong treatment: the administering of purgatives and probing of the wound.

The court did not want Pushkin to live. They only bargained with him as to how he should die.

The tsar sent word to Pushkin that he would provide for Pushkin's family if the poet died a christian. This was a final ultimatum to the poet.

Once again interrogators came to question a man broken on the wheel.

Zhukovsky distorted and added to Pushkin's words.

Pushkin was turned into a loyal Mikhailovskoye landowner, who should be buried in his family's vault.

Those who talk of Pushkin's servility, who say that he was a lackey, follow in the footsteps of those who carried off the body and distorted his dying words.

They are following in the traces of Dostoyevsky, whose comment on all of Pushkin's life was: "Submit, you proud man!"

This is what was said to Pushkin when he was alive.

But they lie who say that the poet submitted.

The embankment was packed with people—never had St. Petersburg seen such crowds. They were for the most part quietly dressed people; there were even some who wore sheepskin coats.

A guard from the Semenov regiment was put at the door to keep out strangers.

"Only friends of Pushkin are allowed inside," said the footman.

One poorly dressed man retorted, "All the people of Russia are Pushkin's friends."

Before he died, Pushkin asked for cloudberries. Someone was sent for them to a shop where the family was very much in debt, and the cloudberries were obtained on credit.

Pushkin's wife fed the berries to him with a spoon.

Pushkin stroked her head and said, "Don't worry, everything is all right, thank God!"

Dal sat by Pushkin's side.

He could do nothing to help. He had studied medicine, but he was a firm believer in homeopathy and knew nothing of surgery.

Pushkin was now delirious. He pressed Dal's hand and said to him, "Lift me up, and let's go. Higher and higher, come on."

Then he came to himself and said to Dal, "I was dreaming that we were climbing up those bookcases, and I became dizzy."

About five minutes before his death he asked to be turned round. They turned him.

"Good," he said. And then added: "My life is over."

"Yes, it's over," said Dal. "We turned you round."

"Life is over," Pushkin answered. "I can hardly breathe."

His hands were getting numb, his toes were cold, and his breath came more and more slowly.

Pushkin died.

His wife ran in, her wavy hair falling around her shoulders. She cried, "Pushkin, you are not dead."

She called him not by his christian name but by his surname. The police came, sealed papers, and closed up his study with black sealing wax.

The poet Vassily Zhukovsky, in tears, prepared a report of Pushkin's death for the tsar. He wrote that Pushkin had died reconciled, blessing the emperor.

Zhukovsky knew that Pushkin had a lot of debts, that there was no money in the house, and that his family had to be provided for. Only the tsar could provide for them.

Thus, even after his death Pushkin did not escape bondage.

Pushkin's strong muscular frame was washed, dressed in an old dinner-suit, and laid in the coffin.

This in itself was a crime in the eyes of the tsar.

The poet even in his coffin should have worn court dress and gloves—apparently he was still in the service of the tsar.

Instructions were given that the debts should be paid.

The narrow embankment of the Moika was crowded with people. Each day, for several days crowds had been waiting there.

One needed influence to get to see the coffin.

Beside the coffin stood Bruni, an old artist, making a drawing of the dead man.

There was uneasiness in the court. Nicholas wrote to his sister Anna Pavlovna, who was abroad:

"Please tell Wilhelm that I embrace him and will write to him in a few days. I have much to tell him about a certain tragic event which cut short the life of the famous poet Pushkin—but this does not bear being told through the post."

The tsar had a secret concerning the poet's death which he would not trust to paper.

The entire population of St. Petersburg with the exception of the court were thirsting to wreak vengeance on Dantes. They talked of a conspiracy; it was said that one foreigner had wounded Pushkin and that another had treated the wounded man in such a manner that he died.

Pushkin was a member of the congregation of St. Isaac's Cathedral, and it was there they wanted to hold the funeral service. But the Cathedral was an enormous building and a huge mass of people would have attended.

The coffin was brought to the little Konnyusheni church.

At 10 p.m. on the 3rd day of February, (old calendar) the body was stolen from the church.

The dead man was banished and deprived of funeral honors.

His friends were bewildered. They did not realize what was going on around them, why the city was in such a ferment, and why there were so many police about; they did not realize that something more than death came between them and Pushkin.

The police took the coffin, put it in a case and wrapped the case in matting.

The case was placed on a sledge.

Zhukovsky, the poet and courtier, ran out into the street.

It was midnight. The sledge went off at a trot.

Zhukovsky was left standing on Konnyushnaya Square.

It was a moonlight night. The sledge disappeared around the corner.

Police escorted the sledge with the coffin. They galloped to the city boundary, and came out on the high road where the verst posts looked like obelisks.

The sledge sped on: banished men are always borne swiftly into exile.

The coffin was covered with straw.

The police fussed about at the posting stations, making enquiries about post-horses.

The dead man was borne rapidly along the straight winter roads.

The coffin arrived at Svyatogorsk monastery in the night. In the night a priest was called out, in the night the grave was dug.

Early in the morning Pushkin's body was laid in the grave, and a cross erected with the one word *Pushkin.*

Thus was an attempt made to rob the poet of his fame, blot out his memory, turn him into a landowner, buried peacefully on an estate which the tsar had cleared of debt.

Lieutenant Baron Heckeren was sent abroad.

During the reign of Napoleon III he was a French Senator. In 1844, Natalia Pushkin married Count Lansky. Nicholas was a frequent visitor at her house.

Translated from the Russian by P. Breslin.

V. V. Veresayev

Pushkin As He Lived

The matter here published is a collection of records of contemporaries. We have selected passages, keeping chronological order and giving preference to those records which are most reliable, which give us the clearest impression of Pushkin the writer and the man, as he was in real life.[1]

From "Pushkin in the Reign of Alexander I," by P. V. Annenkov

The Yussoupov Gardens in Moscow are connected with a story about Pushkin when he was a year old baby. His nurse, while taking him to the gardens for an airing there one day, encountered the Tsar Paul. She did not take off the infant's hat or cap in time. The Tsar went up to the nurse, scolded her for her lack of gumption, and removed the infant's hat himself. Pushkin said, apropos of this incident, that his relations with the Court began in the reign of Paul.

From "Notes for a Life of Pushkin," by P. S. Bartenyev

According to his sister's account, the poet was a fat, silent, stolid child who had to be forced to play and go for walks and who liked best of all to stay at home with his grandmother. Here is a story from his early childhood. One day his mother, Nadezhda Ossipovna, took him out for a walk. Finding that he could not keep up with her, he dawdled behind and sat down to rest in the middle of the street. Then, noticing that people were looking at him out of a window and laughing, jumped up and said: "Well, there's nothing to grin at!" When he was in his seventh year he became freer and easier and his former stolidity gave place to a high-spirited, mischievous temper.

As told to P. I. Bartenyev by O. S. Pavlishcheva (the poet's sister)

At his lessons Pushkin was careless and lazy; but he early acquired a passion for reading. He was fond of Plutarch's *Lives,* the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* in Bitaube's translation and often found his way to his father's library, which consisted for the most part of French classics. The consequence was that he became a real connoisseur of French literature and history and thus acquired that superb mastery of the language, shown in his letters which the French themselves could not admire too much.

From the diary of I. I. Pushchin

(At the Entrance Examination held in the Lycée, Tsarskoye Selo, St. Petersburg, August, 1811.)

An official with a paper in his hand entered the room and began to call out our names. I heard "Alexander Pushkin!" A lively, curly-headed, bright-eyed boy come forward, slightly embarrassed . . . .

[1] For notes on names mentioned in this text see glossary on p. 64.

We all saw that Pushkin was far ahead of us; he had read a great deal of which we had never even heard, and all that he read he remembered. But the great thing about him was that he never dreamed of showing off or trying to lord it over us, as so often happens with boys of that age (we were each about twelve) who are precocious.... To anything that had to do with learning he attached no importance, but always seemed to want to show how well he could run or jump over the chairs or throw a ball, and so on. Sometimes there were very awkward conflicts over this sort of thing.

Count M. A. Korf

For six years we were not allowed to leave Tsarskoye Selo, not even to go to St. Petersburg, which was quite near. Only two or three boys were permitted to leave on account of the serious illness of their parents. A few days before their graduation boys were allowed home to be measured for the new clothes they would wear after leaving.

Extracts from a letter from S. D. Komovsky to F. P. Kornilov

Pushkin, having brought with him from Moscow a huge stock of his beloved French books, began his childhood's favorite pastime of writing French verses, and transplanting them to pure Russian soil cleared by himself. He had hardly grown accustomed to his own youthful muse, when he began to encourage his comrades to write: Yakovlev wrote Russian fables, Illichevsky—Russian epigrams. He listened patiently to the unwieldy hexameters of Baron Delvig and smiled kindly upon the Klopstockian verses of our gawky Küchelbäcker.

M. S. Piletsky, Educational and Moral Instructor

Pushkin (Alexander), 13 years of age. Possesses gifts that are brilliant rather than solid, a mind ardent and fine rather than profound. Application to his studies—moderate, since industry has not yet become one of his virtues.

Pushkin—"Mon Portrait," 1814

"Ma taille et celle des plus longs
Hélas! n'est point égale;
J'ai le teint frais, les cheveux blonds
Et la tête bouclée."

(My figure cannot compare, alas, with the figure of those who are tall; my complexion is fresh, my hair light and curly.)[1]

From "Pushkin at the Lycée," by V. P. Gayevsky

(At the celebrations held in honor of the victorious return of the Russian Army from Paris.) Pushkin was particularly amused by the triumphal gateway set up between the palace and the Rose-Colored Pavilion. Over it, as if mocking its smallness, two lines by the poetess Bunina had been inscribed:

[1] By his brother's account, P. had dark hair even in his childhood and the expression "cheveux blonds" was used by him simply because it rhymed with "plus longs."

"Too small this arch of victory
For thou returning from the wars today."

Pushkin thereupon made a sketch showing the confusion supposed to take place at the "Arch of Triumph": the people in the procession, as they approach the gateway, see that it is really too small for the Tsar, who has grown stout in Paris; some of his suite rush forward to hack it down. This clever sketch, which included several portraits, passed rapidly round the circle of Pushkin's friends. Eventually he gave it to K. A. Karamsina. The author of the innocent joke was sought for a long time, but was never discovered.

Pushkin, on Derzhavin

(At the public examinations in the Lycée, at which the poet Derzhavin was present) . . . I was called out. I read my *Memories of Tsarskoye Selo,* standing at about two paces from Derzhavin. I cannot describe the state of mind I was in: when I came to the line where Derzhavin's name is mentioned, my voice vibrated boyishly, and my heart throbbed with ecstasy. . . . I do not remember how I concluded my recitation; I do not remember how or whither I fled. Derzhavin was enchanted; he sent for me and wanted to embrace me. . . . They went in search of me but I was nowhere to be found.

From the Diary of Count M. A. Korf.

The circle in which Pushkin spent his leisure (when permission was granted to leave the precincts of the school, though not of Tsarskoye Selo) was composed entirely of the officers of a hussar regiment of Life Guards. After classes were over the boys would go to visit the director or other families, but Pushkin, who hated convention, would spend a rowdy evening with these officers. His favorite companion was a hussar named Kaverin, one of the wildest fellows in the regiment.

From "Memories of Chaadayev," by M. I. Zhikharev [1]

One evening at twilight, when it was difficult to distinguish one person from another, Pushkin encountered, as he was running along a corridor, a woman, whom he addressed in a very indiscreet manner and even, some gossips say, touched in a disrespectful way. The woman screamed and managed to make her escape, but she had had time to look at the culprit properly and recognized him. She was past her first youth, and very plain and of such a famous noble family that this trifling incident came to the ears of the Tsar. He gave orders for Pushkin to be whipped. Engelhardt (the director) did not carry out this order. As is well known, at that time it was quite possible to disobey commands of this kind occasionally and later receive Alexander's thanks for doing so. The rumors about the culprit spread throughout Tsarskoye Selo, whereupon the irritable young poet favored the old maid in question with the following French verses:

[1] The incident with Princess Volkonsky which occurred in one of the corridors connecting the palace with the school, was among the main reasons for hastening on the graduation of the elder pupils. . . . On learning of this prank, the tsar was very angry and observed that "the boys were much too free."

"On peut très bien, mademoiselle,
Vous prendre pour une maquerelle,
On pour une vielle guenon
Mais pour une grâce, — oh, mon Dieu, non!"

Opinion of Pushkin, by F. P. Kalinich (teacher of penmanship) in the School Register, IV

What did you see in him, he was a mischievous boy and nothing more!

Pushkin's signature to a letter written jointly by the pupils to the school inspector

"Pushkin-the-Fidget."

Pushkin, "Notes," November 19, 1824

On leaving school, I went almost directly to a place in Pskov belonging to my mother. I remember how delighted I was with country life, and the Russian-style bath-house, and the strawberries and so on. But that was only at first. I have always loved noise and crowds.

From "Pushkin in the South of Russia," by P. I. Bartenyev

Pushkin, on leaving the Lycée with the rank of a minor official in the Foreign Office, found himself in a position common to many young people returning from luxurious schools to their own homes.

From "Pushkin in the South of Russia," by P. I. Bartenyev

S. A. Sobolevsky recounted how Alexander Pushkin begged his father to buy him a pair of the new dancing pumps with buckles—then in vogue—and how his father offered him his own old ones, fashionable in the Tsar Paul's day.

A. I. Turgeniev to V. A. Zhukovsky, November 12, 1817.

I scold Pushkin-the-Cricket every day for his idleness and neglect of his own education. Added to these he has acquired a taste for a species of vulgar gallantry and the equally vulgar free-thinking of the eighteenth century type. Where is the food for poets in these? Meantime he is dissipating his energies. Give him a good talking-to, will you?

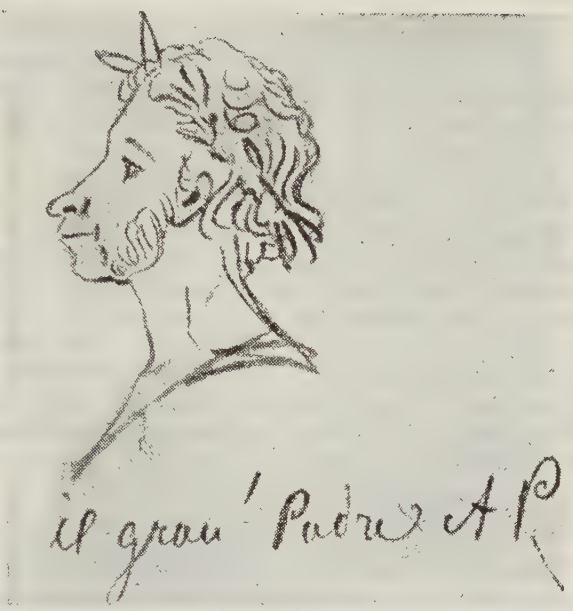
P. V. Annenkov, "Notes for a Life of Pushkin

Pushkin possessed an extraordinarily good memory; he could remember whole stanzas read to him by Zhukovsky and repeat them after some time had passed without halting. Zhukovsky made it a rule to alter any line that Pushkin forgot, because, he said, the fact of Pushkin's forgetting it proved that the line was faulty.

From the diary of I. I. Pushchin

Pushkin, upon seeing me after our first separation, noticed certain changes in me and began to suspect that I was hiding something from him. He bothered me particularly with his questions and demands to know

things (about the secret society[1]) which I turned off as well as I was able, comforting him with the assurance that, without any imaginary society, he was working in the best possible way for the good purpose. At that time his poems *The Village, Ode to Liberty,* and smaller things in the same spirit were being passed from hand to hand copied and learned by heart. There was hardly a living soul who did not know his verses. Not to mention his escapades, which were the talk of the town. For example, one day in Tsarskoye Selo the bear-cub belonging to Zakharzhevsky broke his chain and got loose from the post to which his kennel was attached and ran into the gardens, where he might have come upon the Tsar in some dark alley, had it not been for the fact that his little keeper roused himself at that moment and prevented this dangerous encounter. The cub was, of course, destroyed at once. Pushkin said of the cub that he was "the only man in the palace and even he was a bear." Another time he shouted out in the theater: "Now's the safest time of all—the ice is moving down the Neva"—which, being interpreted, means: "No need to be afraid of imprisonment in the fortress just now."[2]



Self Portrait — Drawing by Pushkin

V. A. Zhukovsky to Prince Vyasemsky, April, 1818

"He haunts me with his talent like a ghost."

K. N. Batyushkov to A. I. Turgeniev, September 10, 1818

It would not be a bad thing if the Cricket (Pushkin) could be shut up in Göttingen University and fed for three years or so on milk soup and logic. Nothing good will come of him unless he himself desires it. Posterity will not be able to distinguish him from the two other Pushkins, if he forgets that for a poet and a man there must be posterity. Prince Golitsin of Moscow squandered twenty thousand serfs in six months. No matter how great the Cricket's talent, he will dissipate it if . . . Well, may the Muses and our prayers save him!

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[1] Reference is made to the secret society which organized the armed uprising against the tsarist rule in December 1825. From this originated the name "Decembrists."

[2] The prison-fortress of Peter-and-Paul was situated on the opposite side of the river; when the ice was moving in springtime the bridges were up.

From Prince P. A. Vyasemsky's "Collected Works"

Pushkin always had some verse on hand that he was fond of repeating. In his youth, when he was subject to attacks of the tender passion, he was fond of reciting the lines from Gnedich's translation of Voltaire's tragedy *Tancred,* beginning: "It may be that some day you'll weep for me."

As told by Y. I. Saburov to P. V. Annenkov

Chaadayev, who had received an excellent education, not only on French, but also on English lines, was already twenty-six years of age, very wealthy and knew four languages. He had a wonderful influence over Pushkin. He forced the latter to think. The effect of Pushkin's French education was counteracted by Chaadayev, who already knew John Locke and had substituted research for flippancy. He made Pushkin thoughtful. Pushkin felt the need of self-control and cast off his frivolity whenever he visited Chaadayev, who lived at that time in Demuth's Inn, where they had many a serious talk together.

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince Vyasemsky, August 5, 1819

Picture to yourself a youth of nineteen who has been living for six years within sight of the Palace and with hussars for neighbors, and then blame Pushkin for his *Ode to Liberty* and for two diseases that have no Russian names!

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince Vyasemsky, August 26, 1819

To think of the things that head produces! It will be a pity if he cannot keep it on his shoulders!

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince Vyasemsky, November 12, 1819

I catch glimpses of that crazy Pushkin only at the theater, where he spends whatever time he can spare from the wild beasts. His life, by the way, is passed at the turnpike where the admission-tickets have to be shown by visitors desiring to see the wild beasts that have been brought here. The tiger is the mildest of them. Pushkin has fallen in love with the ticket-collector and become her *cavalier-servant*; incidentally he observes the nature of the wild beasts and the shades of difference between them and the beasts upon which one may gaze *gratis.*

P. V. Annenkov, "Notes"

Physically, young Pushkin was strong, muscular, lithe, and extremely well-developed by gymnastics. He could take long walks without fatigue, was passionately fond of bathing and riding and excellent at fencing.

K. A. Karamsin (wife of the historian) to Prince Vyasemsky, March 23, 1820.

Pushkin fights duels every day, and thank God, they are not fatal; the opponents always remain unharmed.

From the rough draft of a letter written by Pushkin to Alexander I, but never sent. May-June, 1825

In 1820 I was just 20 years old. Thoughtless criticisms, satirical verses . . . A rumor got about that I had been taken to the Secret Office and flogged. The rumor, which was already wide-spread, reached my ears at last. I saw myself disgraced in the eyes of society. Despair overwhelmed me, I was beside myself. I was twenty. I was wondering whether it would be better to commit suicide or assassinate (Your Majesty). In the first case I would have merely confirmed the reports that dishonored me; in the second—I would not have avenged myself, because there was no direct insult, and I would have committed a crime and sacrificed to public opinion, which I despised, a man who inspires me with respect against my will. Such were my thoughts. I communicated them to a friend who was entirely of my opinion. He advised me to endeavor to clear myself in the eyes of authority. I felt the futility of this. I decided henceforth to express in my writings and speeches all the indignation and insolence which I felt, thus forcing the authorities to treat me as a criminal. I longed for Siberia, for a prison, for that would re-establish my honor.

From the diary of A. I. Mikhailovsky-Danilevsky

Pushkin, sitting in an armchair at the theater, was showing his neighbors a portrait of Louvel, the murderer of the Duc de Berry, under which was written: "A Lesson to Tsars."

I. I. Pushchin, Diary

One fine morning the chief of the police invited Pushkin to accompany him to Count Miloradovich, the then military Governor-General of St. Petersburg. When Pushkin arrived, Miloradovich ordered the chief of the police to go to the poet's apartments and seal up all his papers. Upon hearing this order, Pushkin said: "Your Excellency, there is no point in your doing that. You will not find there what you are seeking. It would be far better if you told them to give me pen and paper, I shall write out everything for you here and now." Miloradovich, touched by this spontaneous frankness, exclaimed: *"Ah, c'est chevaleresque!"* and shook hands with him. Pushkin sat down and wrote out all his "illicit" poems.[1]

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince P. A. Vyasemsky, May 5, 1820

Pushkin's fate is sealed. Tomorrow he is leaving as special messenger to Lieut.-General Inzov and will remeain with him. He has grown quieter and even modest, *et, pour ne pas se compromettre,* avoids me in public.

Pushkin to V. A. Zhukovsky, May-June, 1825.

I have promised N. A. (Karamsin) not to write anything against the government for two years.

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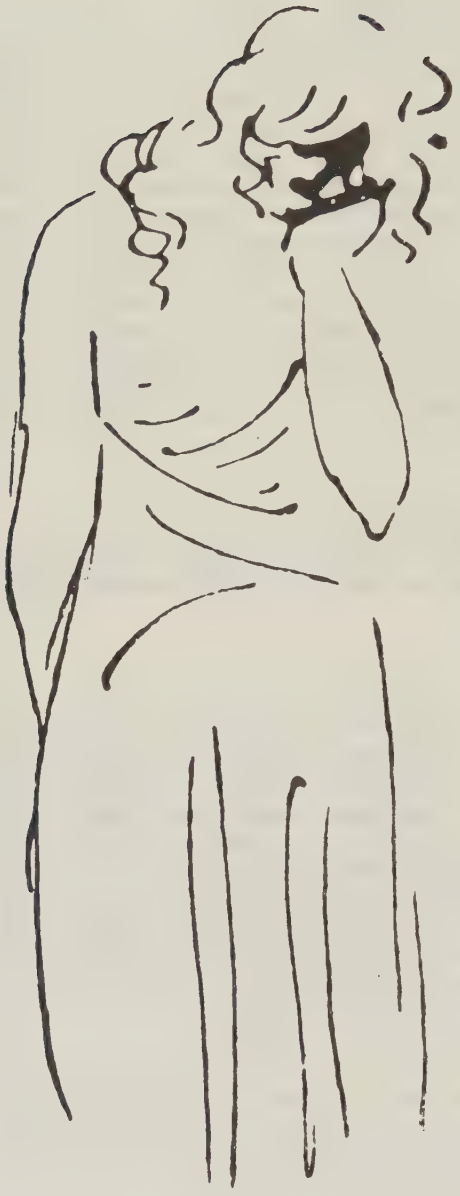
[1] With the exception, it was said at the time, of an epigram on Arakcheyev, for which he would never have been forgiven. *Pushkin in the Reign of Alexander I,* by P. V. Annenkov.



Drawing by A. S. Pushkin

Extract from a letter written by Count Nesselrode, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Lieutenant-General Inzov, May 4, 1820

There are no extremes to which this unhappy young man would not go, just as there is no degree of perfection to which he might not attain by the excellence of his gifts . . . A few poems, particularly the *Ode to Liberty,* have drawn the attention of the government to Pushkin. . . .

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince P. A. Vyasemsky, November, 1820

Baranov, the governor of Simferopol, informs us that he was visited by Pushkin and Rayevsky, and that he has dispatched the poet, who was ill with fever, to Bessarabia.

Excepts from V. P. Gorchakov's diary

(At the Kishinev Theater, about the beginning of November 1820.) My attention was drawn to a young man who entered the theater. He was of low stature, but broad in the chest and strongly built, with a quick observant eye. His manner was unusually lively, he laughed frequently, as if overflowing with high spirits and light-hearted gaiety, relapsing suddenly into a pensiveness that aroused one's sympathy. The contours of his face were irregular and not at all handsome, but his thoughtful expression was so appealing that one felt inclined, involuntarily, to ask: "What ails you? What sorrow is it that clouds your soul?" The unknown was dressed in a black frock-coat buttoned up closely, and trousers of the same color. I learned from N. S. Alexeyev that this was Pushkin.

M. M. Popov in "Russkaya Starina"

The south produced no change in Pushkin: he remained as clever, as frivolous, as mocking as ever and was constantly getting into scrapes like a child. Old Inzov was fond of him, but grumbled that Pushkin alone gave him as much trouble as all the rest of his work put together. Pushkin's head had been shaved during his late illness, and therefore he wore a skull-cap. Famed for his verses, feared for his effrontery and his epigrams, willful, wayward—and wearing a skull-cap into the bargain—he created a sensation.

From the diary of I. D. Yakushkin

Once, when he happened to be present at an evening gathering of young officers who were in sympathy with the subversive movement, and the conversation touched very closely on the question of founding a secret society, Pushkin became extremely agitated. He had been sure that the secret society either already existed or was about to be founded here on the spot, and that, naturally, he would become a member of it. But when he saw that it was all turned into a joke, he rose, flushed, and declared with tears in his eyes: "I was never so unhappy as I am at this moment; I saw my life ennobled and a high aim before me, and all this was merely an evil jest." At that moment he looked almost beautiful.

"Old and New," by Prince Vyasemsky

Although Pushkin was not in the conspiracy (of the Decembrists) the existence of which his friends concealed from him, he lived and glowed at white-heat in that scorching, volcanic atmosphere.

From the reports of the secret agents.

Pushkin abuses publicly—even in the coffee-houses—not only the military authorities but even the government.

I. P. Liprandi

At Izmail on a journey through Bessarabia, I returned at midnight and found Pushkin curled up on the divan surrounded by innumerable bits of paper. . . . He gathered them all up anyhow and stowed them away under his pillow. We emptied a decanter of Sistova wine and went to sleep. Pushkin awoke earlier than I did. Upon opening my eyes, I saw him sitting in exactly the same place and the same position as the previous evening. He was not yet dressed and scraps of paper were strewn around him. At that moment he was beating time with a pen to something he was reading, now raising, now lowering, his head. When he saw that I was awake, he collected his papers and began to dress.

I. P. Liprandi

I noticed that after an argument on any subject of which he knew little, Pushkin invariably sought out books that treated of it.

I do not know how it was subsequently but at that time he was extremely careless about the scraps of paper on which he was in the habit of writing.

From "Pushkin in the South of Russia," by P. I. Bartenyev

Pushkin brought some cherries with him to his duel with Zubov, and ate them while the other was firing. Zubov fired the first shot and missed. demanding that he should shoot, Zubov rushed up to him and wanted to embrace him. "That is unnecessary," Pushkin remarked, and went away without having fired a shot.

L. S. Pushkin, brother of the poet

Once Pushkin disappeared and for several days lived in a gipsy-camp.

Prince Vyasemsky to A. I. Turgeniev, April 30, 1823

A few days ago I received a letter from Pushkin in Bessarabia. He finds the hopeless position he is in extremely tedious, but according to someone who has just arrived from Bessarabia, he is writing a new poem *The Harem.*[1] And what is better still, has settled down and become much steadier.

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince Vyasemsky, May 9, 1823

Count Vorontsov has been appointed Governor-General of Novo-Rossia and Bessarabia. I do not know yet whether Pushkin will be transferred to his service or not. Apparently he was attached to Inzov's person.

A. I. Turgeniev to Prince Vyasemsky, June 15, 1823

With regard to Pushkin the matter was as follows: knowing politics and the caution of the powerful of this world—and, consequently, of Vorontsov —I did not want to tell him but told Nesselrode of my doubts as to whom he ought to be with: Vorontsov or Inzov. Count Nesselrode chose the first, but I advised him to inform Vorontsov of this. No sooner said than done. Subsequently I mentioned it myself to Vorontsov twice, explained about Pushkin and what it was necessary to do in order to save him. Apparently, it will turn out all right. There is everything that could be desired—a Mæcenas, a good climate, the sea, historic associations; things cannot go wrong for lack of talent, if only he does not over-reach himself.

From the diary of F. F. Wiegel

August 1823. In Odessa I put up at the famous Hotel Renault near the theater. . . . I had two small rooms over the stables. In the room adjoining mine lived Pushkin, the exile-poet. He had only just arrived in Odessa and had not yet acquired any cheerful companions. . . . Our talks and walks together grew longer daily. Pushkin's conversation acted like a touch of an electric wand on the dark thoughts that pressed upon my brain. It gave birth to thousands of gay, lively, young ideas, and bridged the distance between us in years. The lack of concern he showed over his own troubles often made me forget my own. . . . It sometimes happened that in the

[1] Afterwards the title was altered to *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai.*

midst of a light, amusing conversation, a bright new idea would emerge from the depths of his soul or his heart and show the full breadth of his judgment. Little by little the treasure of fine thoughts and noble ideas which had been hidden under a cloak of cynicism was laid bare before me.

From "Pushkin in Kishenev and Odessa," by K. P. Zelenetsky

. . . Pushkin was writing his *Onegin* on scraps of paper, while lying in bed half dressed. Once when he was describing the theater, someone asked him if he did not intend to make mention in it of his own habit of treading on people's toes as he made his way to his seat. He thereupon inserted the line: . . . "Passes between the rows, treading on people's toes."

L. S. Pushkin, "Biographical Notes on A. S. Pushkin"

Pushkin was ugly but his countenance was expressive and animated. He was short—a little over five feet five—but slim and of unusually strong build and good proportions.

Pushkin to Baron Delvig, November 16, 1828

You are bored and we are bored: shall I tell you the endless tale of the white bull-calf? Bored, my joy! That is the refrain to the song of my life.

Pushkin in a letter written to his brother Leo, about the beginning of January, 1824, from Odessa

You know, I have asked Ivan Ivanovich (the Tsar) twice, through the medium of his Ministers, to grant me leave of absence and twice received his most gracious refusal. Only one thing remains, to write direct to him—So-and-so, the Winter Palace, opposite the Fortress of Peter-and-Paul, or quietly pick up my hat and stick and go off to look at Constantinople. Holy Russia is becoming more than I can bear. . . .

K. P. Zelenetsky in the "Muscovite," 1854

Eye-witnesses have told us that sometimes after dinner or on moonlight nights, Pushkin would drive out to the villa that formerly belonged to Renault. It was situated about two miles from the town and commanded an uninterrupted view of the sea. At that time it was a wild and poetic retreat.

Told to K. P. Zelenetsky by Beryeza, an Odessa cabman

"But why did he go out to the Renault villa?" "Ah, God only knows! He'd sit a while, walk about on the shore an hour or an hour-and-a-half and then drive home again."

As told to Count P. I. Kapnist by his uncle Count A. V. Kapnist

Alexander Rayevsky was unintentionally the cause of Pushkin's exile from Odessa by Count Vorontsov. Rayevsky was distinguished by the Countess'

favor, but as not infrequently happens in high society, he employed as a shield his friend Pushkin the poet, who, though young, was already famous throughout Russia. It was upon Pushkin that the suspicions of the Count were turned.

Count M. S. Vorontsov to Count K. V. Nesselrode, Odessa, March 28, 1824

I have no complaint to make of Pushkin; on the contrary, he has become much steadier and more restrained than formerly, but the interests of the young man himself, who is not without gifts and whose deficiencies proceed rather from the mind than from the heart, oblige me to request his removal from Odessa. His principal fault is ambition. He has spent the bathing season here and has already a wide circle of adulators who praise his works; this encourages him in his harmful delusions. His head is completely turned with the idea that he is a remarkable writer, while as as matter of fact, he is merely a feeble imitation of a writer of whom little good can be said—Lord Byron. This circumstance keeps him from the thorough study of the great classic poets who would have had a good influence on the talent which no one will deny him, and would have made of him, in time, a remarkable writer.

Count Vorontsov to Count Nesselrode, Kishenev, May 2, 1824

. . . By the way, I repeat my request to relieve me of Pushkin; he may be an excellent fellow and a good poet but I do not care to have him any longer in either Odessa or Kishenev.

From the diary of F. F. Wiegel

. . . Pushkin ran in, very agitated, to tell me that a very unpleasant surprise had been sprung on him. At that time several of the lowest officials from the Governor-General's office, as well as from other offices, were detailed to exterminate the locusts which infested the steppe; Pushkin was included among these officials. Nothing could have been more humiliating to him. . . .

Extract from a letter by Pushkin to A. I. Kaznacheyev, chief clerk to Count Vorontsov, May 25, 1824

Being quite unaccustomed to ordinary office routine, I do not know whether I have the right to demur to his Excellency's order. I venture, however, on a frank explanation of my position. For seven years I have not carried out any duties, never written a single document, never been connected with any departmental superior. These seven years, as you are aware, are completely lost to me. Complaints from my side would be unbecoming. Versifying—my craft—affords me a living and domestic independence. I think Count Vorontsov would not wish to deprive me of either the one or the other. I shall be told that, since I receive seven hundred rubles a year, I am obliged to work for it. I look upon those seven hundred rubles, not as the salary of an official, but as the portion of an exiled prisoner. I am ready to give up the money if my time and choice of occupation is not to be at my disposal.

Copy of the report, alleged to have been sent by Pushkin to Count Vorontsov on returning from the expedition for the extermination of the locusts.

"In flew the locusts,
Down sat they,
Ate up all the harvests
And flew on their way."

Pushkin to A. I. Kaznacheyev, about the beginning of June, 1824. Rough copy in French

I deeply regret that my dismissal causes you so much anxiety,[1] and am sincerely affected by your sympathy .... I crave one thing only—independence: by courage and perseverance I shall win it at last. I have already overcome my repugnance to having to write and sell my verses for my daily bread. The most difficult step has been taken already. I still write under the capricious influence of inspiration, but I look upon verses, once written, as goods to be sold for so much a-piece. I do not understand the horror of my friends (and generally speaking, I am not at all clear as to what my friends are). I am tired of being dependent upon the good or bad digestion of this or that departmental chief, I am weary and sick of being treated in my own country with less respect than any English scamp who loafs about among us with his banality and his mumbling. I do not doubt that Count Vorontsov, who is a clever man, will be able to represent me as the guilty person in the eyes of the public; I am ready to accede him the pleasure of enjoying this flattering triumph to the full since I trouble myself as little about public opinion as about the panegyrics of the magazines.

M. I. Pogodin in the "Muscovite," 1855

An artillery company was stationed near Odessa and the cannon were set up in the fields. Once when Pushkin was taking a walk outside the town he went up to these cannon and began to examine them attentively, one after the other. His behavior appeared suspicious to one of the officers, who demanded his name. "Pushkin," replied the poet. "Pushkin!" exclaimed the officer, and ordered the company to fire a salute. It alarmed the whole camp. All the officers rushed out to enquire the reason for this sudden volley. "It is in honor of a famous guest," said the first officer. "Gentlemen, this is Pushkin!" The young people seized the poet by the arms and carried him off in triumph to their tents to celebrate this unexpected visit. The officer's name was Grigorov. He subsequently entered a monastery.

A. Y. Bulgakov to K. Y. Bulgakov

Princess Vyasemsky wanted to help Pushkin to run away from Odessa, tried to collect money for him and arrange for his passage on a ship.

[1] In his personal letter to Count Vorontsov, P. wrote that, after the use he had been put to he might at least claim the rights of ordinary officials and ask to be allowed to resign. The reply to this was that as he belonged to the Foreign Office, his request had been forwarded to the head of that office, Count Nesselrode.

Count M. S. Vorontsov to A. Y. Bulgakov, December 24, 1824

Illustration to "Angelo" — Drawing by Pushkin

. . . . We regard Princess Vyasemsky's efforts to help that crazy scamp of a Pushkin to escape, now that the order to send him to Pskov arrived, as nothing short of improper.

Count K. N. Nesselrode to Count M. S. Vorontsov, July, 1824

. . . His Majesty entirely agrees with your suggestion that Pushkin should be removed from Odessa, after consideration of the excellent reasons upon which you base your suggestion, reasons which are supported by other information received by His Majesty about the young man in question. The Emperor thinks that in this case it would be advisable not merely to suspend him, but regards it as necessary to send him to the estate of his parents in the province of Pskov, where he will be kept under observation by the local authorities.

Pushkin to A. I. Turgeniev, Odessa, July 14, 1824

Vorontsov is a vandal, a court boor and a petty egoist. He saw in me a small official, while I, I must confess, thought otherwise of myself.

Pushkin to A. I. Turgeniev, Odessa, July 14, 1824

A rumor was going around yesterday that Pushkin had shot himself.

P. V. Annenkov, "Notes for a Life of Pushkin"

It was between 1823 and 1824 that a desire to collect books awoke in Pushkin, a desire which he compared to that of a glazier who would ruin himself in order to purchase the diamonds he needed for cutting his glass. Most of his money went this way. . . . Pushkin had managed to learn English and Italian while in the South and read a great deal in both languages.

Towards the close of his sojourn in Odessa his acquaintances remarked a certain guardedness in his opinions, a cautiousness in making up his mind. The first flush of youth was over: Pushkin was already twenty-five years of age.

From the "Pskov Provincial Herald," 1868

In August 1824, in the presence of the Governor of Pskov, Alexander Pushkin signed a declaration in which he promised to take up permanent residence on his parents' estate, to observe the utmost propriety of conduct, not to indulge in improper compositions and opinions injurious to public welfare and not to assist in spreading these same.

Baron A. A. Delvig to Pushkin, September 28, 1824

Pushkin, you who are so great and at the same time but a little child! Go on as you have been going, that is, do as you like, but do not be angry with the measures taken by people who are frightened enough without you. Public opinion is for you and will avenge you. I have not seen a single decent person who, on your account, did not abuse Vorontsov, whom everyone blames. If you were to come to St. Petersburg now, I wager your rooms would be crowded every day with readers known and unknown to you. No Russian writer has ever touched our stony hearts as you have done. So what is it you lack? A little charity for the weak. Refrain from setting them by the ears for a year or so, for God's sake! Employ your exile to better purpose.... There can be nothing more dreary than St. Petersburg at the present moment. Just imagine, there are not even any ordinary common wags. No one to beat the police. All is dead and cold.

Pushkin to Princess Vyasemsky, October, 1824

The madness of boredom is devouring my stupid existence. What I foresaw has happened... Living with my family has only doubled the bitterness. I have been reproached for my exile, and accused of preaching atheism to my sister and brother. My father was weak enough to have taken upon himself a duty [1] which places him in an entirely false position with regard to me. Consequently, when I am not in bed I spend most of my time in the saddle, out in the fields. Everything that reminds me of the sea makes me sad, the splashing of the fountain is unbearable; I think a clear sky would make me weep from vexation, but thank God, our skies are leaden and the moon resembles a turnip.

Pushkin in a letter to his brother written from Mikhailovskoye, December, 1824

I find these Petersburg rumors about my escape devilishly unpleasant. Why should I run away? It is so nice here. When you come on a visit, we shall discuss the banker, correspondence and the whereabouts of Chaadayev. These are points on which you might be collecting information already. [2]

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[1] Pushkin's father assumed surveillance over his son.

[2] This letter contains references to the plans for his escape. The means by which money is to be supplied is called the "Banker," while communication abroad is called "correspondence" and the place agreed upon is referred to as "Chaadayev's whereabouts." Chaadayev was at that time traveling in Europe.

From the diary of I. I. Pushchin

(Pushkin's school-friend, I. I. Pushchin, visits him in his exile in Mikhailovskoye.) The horses could not be got to draw up at the door-step, they dashed past it and stuck in a snow-drift, for the yard had not been cleaned.

I looked round and caught sight of Pushkin, barefoot and in nothing but his nightshirt, standing on the steps with his hands raised. I jumped out of the sleigh, gathered him up in a bundle and dragged him into the house. It was terribly cold in the yard but at moments like these a man does not catch cold. We stood gazing at each other, kissed, but said nothing. He had forgotten to cover his nakedness, and I never thought of my fur coat and cap covered with hoar frost. It was about eight o'clock in the morning. The old woman who ran in found us embracing each other in exactly the same state as when we had first entered the house—the one practically naked, the other besprinkled with snow. At last, the tears forced their way through, we came to ourselves. We felt ashamed before the woman, but she understood everything. I do not know whom she took me for, but without asking questions, she darted forward to embrace me. I guessed at once that this was his old nurse, Arina Rodionovna, and gave her a hug that nearly suffocated her.

All this happened in a very small space. Alexander's room was just by the front door and his window looked out on the yard. He had looked out of this window as soon as he heard the sleigh-bells. The little room was furnished with a canopied bed, a desk, a divan, a bookcase and so on. A poetic disorder was to be seen everywhere, sheets of paper covered with writing were littered about, together with ends of chewed, burnt quill-pens (he always wrote, even in his school-days, with stumps of pens, almost too short to hold).

"Pushkin in the Reign of Alexander I," by P. V. Annenkov

From the picturesque platform of one of the hills upon which Trigorskoye was situated, many eyes watched eagerly the Mikhailovskoye road, visible from here, and many hearts fluttered when, at the turns where it followed the meandering Sorota, Pushkin appeared, either on foot, wearing a broad-brimmed hat and carrying a stout stick, or riding his Caucasian horse or perhaps on an ordinary peasant's hack.[1]

Pushkin to his brother, April 7, 1825

I ordered a mass for the repose of Byron's soul (today is the anniversary of his death). A. N. Wulf did the same, and in both churches, Trigorskoye and Voroniche—services were held. It was faintly reminiscent of the mass ordered by Friedrich II for the soul of M. Voltaire. I am sending Vyasemsky a piece of the communion-bread blessed by Father Skoda for the repose of the poet's soul.

[1] Adjoining the estate of Mikhailovskoye was another called Trigorskoye, with the owners of which—the Ossipovs and Wulfs—Pushkin maintained a close friendship.

From "The Town of Opochka, and Surrounding District, Past and Present," by L. I. Sofisky

From Mikhailovskoye Pushkin loved to walk to Svyatiye Gori... When fairs were held there, he would often stop at the sacred gates of the monastery that faced west towards the trading village of Tabolenets, and would listen to the songs of the beggars, who even up to the present day sing verses about Lazarus, the Archangel Michael, the Last Judgment and similar chants. Sometimes he joined in with their singing.

Pushkin to Zhukovsky, June, 1825

(In reply to Zhukovsky's repeated enquiries.) Here is a proper answer for you at last: I have had my aneurism for ten years and with God's help I can bear it another three. It follows, then, that the matter is not particularly urgent, but I find Mikhailovskoye oppressive. If the Tsar would permit me to go abroad until I am cured, it would show a benevolence for which I would be eternally grateful to him and to my friends. Vyasemsky writes that with regard to the authorities my friends have lost all faith. They should not do that. I promised N. M. Karamsin not to write anything against the government for two years and I have kept my word. *The Dagger* is not anti-government and although the verses are not quite pure with regard to style, their intention is blameless. Now I am tired of all that, and if I am left in peace, I shall very likely think only of rhymeless pentameters. Boldly relying on your decision, I am sending you a rough copy of a letter to the Whitest (Tsar): it seems to me that there is no baseness on my part, whether in my actions or words.

Extract from the Petition enclosed with the letter to Zhukovsky

...I beseech your Majesty to permit me to leave for some place in Europe where I would find the necessary medical assistance.

Pushkin to Baron Delvig, June, 1825

Have you seen N. M. (Karamsin)? Is the History [1] making progress? At what point did he stop? At the election of the Romanovs, perhaps? Those ingrates! Six Pushkins signed the charter for their election, and two more made their mark because they were illiterate. And I, their descendant who can both read and write, what am I? Where am I? ...

A. A. Voyekova to V. A. Zhukovsky, June, 1825

Pletnyev has asked me to tell you that he thinks Pushkin wants to collect fifteen thousand, in order to run away to America or Greece. Therefore, he ought not to be provided with the money.

Pushkin to Zhukovsky, June-July, 1825

The unexpected graciousness [2] of His Majesty has touched me indescribably, particularly since the local Governor had already offered to allow me

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[1] The *History of the Russian State.*

[2] Pushkin was granted permission to see the doctors in the town of Pskov.

to live in Pskov; but I sternly adhered to the higher commands. I have been making enquiries regarding the Pskov surgeons: a certain Vsevolozhsky was recommended to me, a very clever veterinary surgeon, well-known among *savants* for his book on the treatment of horses' ailments. In spite of this, I decided to remain in Mikhailovskoye; nevertheless I appreciate the paternal condescension of His Majesty. I only fear that my tardiness in taking advantage of the Royal favor may be mistaken for negligence or shocking stubbornness. But could such infernal ingratitude be imagined in any human heart? From the charitable heart of the Emperor I still expect that some day he will allow me to seek the places that suit me best and a doctor I can trust, and not one prescribed by the authorities.

Pushkin to P. A. Pletnyev, August, 1825

Here the rain is pattering down, the wind is moaning, the woods are moaning—noise everywhere and yet so dreary.

Told to Sergeyev-Remesov by A. N. Moshin

Pushkin liked to visit the cemetery and, sitting on a gravestone, listen to the traditional "laments" of the village women.

From "Notes for a Life of Pushkin," by P. V. Annenkov

In Pskov he wandered about the bazaars and rubbed shoulders with people, and some of the most respectful people of the town actually saw him disguised in the costume of a common townsman.

Pushkin to Prince Vyasemsky, October, 1825

My tragedy *(Boris Godunov)* is complete. I read it aloud to myself, alone, then clapped my hands and shouted: "Bravo, Pushkin! Bravo, you old son of a bitch!"

Pushkin to Pletnyev, December, 1825

If I have not disabused my friends of the habit of pleading for me, they will probably remember me. . . . Well, then, I might as well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. For God's sake, do not ask the Tsar for permission for me to live in Opochka or Riga—to the devil with such places—but ask that I be allowed either to come to the capital or to go abroad. It is on account of you, dear friends, that I want to come to the capital; I want to "swap yarns" with you again before my death. But, of course, it would be wiser to cross the sea. What am I to do in Russia?

Pushkin

At the close of the year 1825 I was living in the country and, on re-reading *Lucrece*—a rather weak poem of Shakespeare's—thought to myself: "Supposing it had occurred to Lucrece to give Tarquin a box on the ears?" —It might have cooled his ardor and he would have been forced to beat a shameful retreat. Lucrece would not have committed suicide, Publicola

would not have lost his reason—and the world and the world's history would have been quite different. This gave me the idea of parodying history and Shakespeare. I could not resist the double temptation and in two mornings (12th and 13th of December) I wrote the tale of *Count Nulin.*

Prince Vyasemsky to Y. K. Grot in 1824

On hearing of the death of Alexander I and the resulting confusion with regard to the succession, Pushkin, being very desirous of seeing his St. Petersburg friends and thinking that while such important events were happening his transgression would not receive very serious attention, resolved to set out for St. Petersburg.... He decided to visit his friend Ryleyev first and collect information from him. He had already set out, when a hare crossed his path; then he encountered a priest, and, impressed by these two evil omens, he returned home.

Had he gone that day he would have plunged into the very heart of the rebellion at Ryleyev's, the night of the 13th [1] of December.

Pushkin to P. A. Pletnyev, January, 1826

The late emperor exiled me to the country in 1824 for two irreligious lines, I do not know of any other misdeeds. Is it possible that our young Tsar will not allow me to go to some warmer climate, if I am not to show myself in St. Petersburg at any price—eh? Forgive me, old fellow, but I am so bored—I can't endure it.

V. A. Zhukovsky to Pushkin, April 12, 1826

You are not in any way implicated, that is true. But your verses have been found among the papers of every one of the participators (the Decembrists). That is a poor way to make friends with the government....Do not ask to be allowed to come to St. Petersburg. It is not the time yet. Go on with your *Godunov* and that sort of thing: they will open the door to freedom for you.

Pushkin to Prince Vyasemsky, May 27, 1826

You who are not bound, how can you stay in Russia? If the Tsar sets me free I shall not stay a month here. We live in a sad age; when I think of London, railways, steam-ships, English journals, or the theaters and brothels of Paris, this desolate Mikhailovskoye of mine makes me melancholy and mad. In the fourth song of *Onegin* I have described my own life; some day you will read it and ask with a sweet smile: "Where is my poet? His gifts are clear." And then you will be told, my dear—"He has fled to Paris and will never return to this accursed country." Bravo, that's a clever fellow! Farewell.

V. F. Shcherbakov, "Notes on Pushkin's Life in Moscow"

Pushkin told us that while he was in the country, on the eve of the execution of the five well-known conspirators (the five Decembrists who were hanged on July 13, 1826), he dreamt that five of his teeth fell out.

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[1] The eve of the Decembrist uprising.

As told to M. I. Ossipova by M. I. Semyevsky

(Pushkin's visit to Trigorskoye)

Well, Pushkin came and everything was turned upside down: laughter, jokes, and chatter rang out all over the house.... At that time we had a housekeeper called Akulina Pamphilovna, a terrible old grumbler. We used to sit and talk till late at night. Then, Pushkin would imagine he wanted an apple. We would go to Akulina Pamphilovna: "Bring us some pickled apples, do." She would start grumbling. Once Pushkin said to her, jokingly: "Never mind, Akulina Pamphilovna, don't be angry, I'll make a priest's wife of you tomorrow." And sure enough, he made her into a priest's wife in—if I'm not mistaken—it was in his novel, *The Captain's Daughter*—under the name of Akulina.

P. V. Nashchokin; written down by P. I. Bartenyev

A special messenger was dispatched to the governor of Pskov with orders to bring Pushkin from Mikhailovskoye to Moscow at once. Pushkin, who was greatly alarmed by this news and expected nothing good to come of it, seized all his papers and flung them into the stove. His diary and some plays in verse were thus destroyed.

Pushkin to P. A. Ossipova, September 4, 1826, written from Pskov

I imagine that my unexpected departure with the military guard astonished you as much as it did me. Yet it is a fact that here nothing can be done without a military guard. He has been given to me for greater safety.

As told to N. I. Lorer by L. S. Pushkin

Unshaven, crumpled after the journey, with fluff and feathers from the coach-cushions clinging to him, he was presented to the officer on duty, General Potapov, who took him straight to the Palace, where he was led into the Tsar's study.... "I allow you to live wherever you wish, write and write, I shall be your censor," said the Tsar, dismissing Pushkin from his presence.

"Pushkin at the Kremlin," by A. P. Pyatkovsky

A. V. Venevitinov told me that Pushkin, as he was leaving Mikhailovskoye with the military guard, slipped his poem *The Prophet* into his pocket. In its original form this poem concluded with a verse, which, (translated into prose), ran: "Arise, arise, prophet of Russia, put on the vestments of shame and with a rope about thy submissive neck, appear before the Tsar!"

While he was going to the Palace, Pushkin firmly resolved that should his interview with the Tsar conclude unfavorably he would hand Nicholas I this poem on parting. A happy fate preserved the author of *Onegin* to his country and the gracious way in which the Tsar received him made Pushkin forget his former intention.

Elena Kisselova, as told by her son

The impression produced on the public by Pushkin's appearance in the Moscow theater, after his return from exile, can only be compared with the

excitement of the crowd in the salon of the Gentlemen's Club when Yermolov entered it. [1]

Count A. Benkendorff [2] to Nicholas I, in 1826

Pushkin, the author, is in Moscow and speaks everywhere of Your Majesty with gratitude and the most profound devotion; nevertheless a close watch is being kept on him.

A. Y. Bulgakov, Director of the Moscow Post Office to K. Y. Bulgakov, October 5, 1826

I have met the poet Pushkin. His mug bodes little good. At the Vyasemskys' he read his tragedy *Boris Godunov.*

M. P. Pogodin

(After the reading of *Godunov* at Venevitinov's in Moscow, October 12, 1826).... It is impossible to describe the effect this reading produced on us. We who gathered to listen to Pushkin had been brought up on the verses of Lomonossov, Derzhavin, Kheraskov, and Osierov, which we all knew by heart...Instead of the high-flown language of gods, we heard plain, simple, common, and at the same time, poetic and glowing speech!

Count Benkendorf, Chief of the Gendarmerie, to Pushkin, December 14, 1826

I had the pleasure of presenting His Majesty the Emperor with your comedy of Tsar Boris and Grishka Otrepiev. His Majesty graciously read it: it gave him great pleasure and on the note with which I accompanied it he wrote with his own hand: "I think that Pushkin's aim would be attained if he re-wrote the comedy, with the necessary excisions, as an historical novel or romance, somewhat on the lines of Walter Scott's."

From Princess M. N. Volkonsky's Diary

When we were going into voluntary exile as the wives of the Decembrists who had been sent to Siberia, Pushkin was full of the sincerest admiration; he wanted to give me his *Message to Prisoners* ("in the depths of the Siberian mines") to take to them, but as I left that very night, he gave it instead to Alexandra Muravyeva. He said to me: "I want to write a work on Pugachev. I shall go to those parts, cross the Urals, travel on beyond them and then come and seek shelter with you at the Nerchinsk mines."

Count Benkendorff in a report to Nicholas I

He is quite a scamp. Nevertheless, if we can succeed in guiding his pen and speech, it will be profitable.

Prince Golitzin-Prosorovsky, as told to P. I. Bartenyev

Once Pushkin invited several people to the restaurant then known as Dominic's and treated them to a grand banquet. Count Zavadovsky came in and remarked to Pushkin: "Well, Alexander Sergeyevich, it looks as

[1] General Yermolov, the conqueror of the Caucasus.
[2] Chief of the gendarmery.

though your pocket-book was filled to bursting!" "Why, yes, I'm better off than you," Pushkin rejoined. "Sometimes you run short of money and have to wait for supplies from your country estates, while I receive a steady income from the thirty-six letters of the Russian alphabet."

From the diary of A. L. Wulf

(September 16, 1827) Yesterday I dined with Pushkin at his mother's estate, lately his place of exile. He returned to it a short time ago from St. Petersburg in order to rest from the dissipations of the capital and be free to write. Others say he has come here because he lost all his money at play. I climbed the rickety flight of steps that led to the tumble-down hovel of the foremost Russian poet. Clothed in a dressing-gown and a red Moldavian cap, he was seated at his desk, which was strewn with all the appurtenances of a fashionable fop's dressing-table: in friendly contact with these lay Montesquieu, a volume of the *Bibliotheque de Campagne* and the *Diary of Peter I.* Besides these, there was Alfiei, Karamsin's monthly magazines, and a dream-book, half hidden under a pile of Russian almanachs. Lastly, there were two exercise books in black leather bindings which drew my attention. Their gloomy appearance led me to expect something mysterious, especially as I noticed the Masonic triangle, half-rubbed out, on the back of one of them. Observing that I looked attentively at this book, Pushkin told me it had been one of the account-books of the Masonic Lodge, but now he wrote his verses in it. In the other he showed me the first two chapters of a novel in prose which he had just written and in which the principle character was his great-grandfather Hannibal, son of the Abyssinian Emir.

Military-Guard Podgorny, in a report to General-on-duty, October 28, 1827

On the 12th instant I was sent to the town of Dinaburg, with some state prisoners and on arriving at the stage Zalasi, a certain Mr. Pushkin, traveling from Novorzhev to St. Petersburg, suddenly rushed up to the prisoner Küchelbäcker and after kissing him, entered into conversation with him. Observing same, I dispatched both Küchelbäcker and the other two prisoners half-a-mile from the stage-house in order to give them no opportunity to talk, and remained at the stage myself to write out the traveling certificate and pay the bill for the horses. Mr. Pushkin asked me to give Küchelbäcker money; I refused to do so. Then Mr. Pushkin shouted and threatened me, saying that the very minute he arrived in St. Petersburg he would report me to His Imperial Majesty for not allowing him to say farewell to his friend, or give him money for expenses.

Pushkin to P. A. Ossipova, January 24, 1828

I must confess that my existence in Petersburg is rather stupid, and that I am burning with the desire to alter it in some way or other. I do not know whether I shall come to Mikhailovskoye again or not. Still, I should like to. The noise and bustle of St. Petersburg have become intolerable to me, I cannot bear them.

I prefer your lovely garden and the charming banks of the Sorota. You can see that my tastes are still quite poetic, in spite of the vile prose of my present existence.

From a report written by a secret agent in the Third Division, to M. Y. von Fock, February, 1828

Pushkin! a writer already well known! who, in spite of the kindness of the Tsar! has already published a great many compositions! both in verse and prose! containing spiteful remarks both about the government and the Tsar! Is acquainted with Zhukovsky! whom he visits almost daily! ! ! As an instance of the aforementioned, there is a composition which goes by the name of Tanya! which seems to have been already printed in the *Northern Bee!* And he is enabled to publish through the good will of Zhukovsky!!

A landscape—Drawing by Pushkin

The Grand-Duke Constantine Pavlovich to General Benkendorf, April 14, 1828

You tell me that Pushkin the writer and Prince Vyasemsky beg to be allowed to follow Imperial Headquarters (during the war with Turkey, which was just beginning). Believe me, dear General, that in view of their former behavior, no matter how they endeavor now to prove their devotion to the Emperor, they are not of those who may be relied upon in any way.

Prince Vyasemsky to Pushkin, July 26, 1828

I have heard complaints of you from the Karamsins; they say you have disappeared and that they have had no word of you except the rumor that you are gambling desperately. Is this true?

Pushkin to Baron Delvig, about the middle of November, 1828

(From Mikhailovskoye) I am very cheerful and gay here. The neighbors come to stare at me as if I were the dog Munito. The other day there was a gathering at a neighbor's and I was expected to be there. The children of my neighbor's relative are very pampered and demanded to be allowed to go with her. Their mother consoled them with currants and prunes and thought to escape quietly. But Peter Markovich (father of A. P. Kern) excited them by running in and saying: "Children, children,

your mother is deceiving you! Don't eat the prunes, go with her; Pushkin will be there and he's all made of sugar, and his behind is made of apples. They're going to cut him up and you'll all get a bit!" At that the children set up a clamor: "We don't want prunes, we want Pushkin!" There was no help for it, they had to be taken along. They all ran up to me, licking their lips, but when they found that I was not made of sugar, but of hide, they were completely dumbfounded.

S. A. Sobolevsky to M. N. Longinov

Alexander Pushkin had a surprising quality that I have never observed in anyone famous for anything anywhere, that is, an entire absence of professional jealousy, a charming, kind, true, and even rather comical desire to discern talent in any beginner, to encourage him both by word and deed and take a delight in him.

S. Shevyrev, as told to P. V. Annenkov

Pushkin could not bear anyone to talk about his verses to him or ask him to read them in public. Princess Zinaida Volkonsky held literary evenings on Mondays. At one of them Pushkin was pestered with requests to recite something. He was annoyed, but recited *The Mob* and when he had finished he said angrily: "They won't be so ready to ask me another time."

S. E. Raich in "Galatea," 1839

"My conscience pricks me cruelly," Pushkin told me in one of our frank talks, "every time I recall that I am, perhaps, the first of the Russians to commercialize poetry. Of course, I sold my *Fountain of Bakhchiserai* and my *Onegin* very profitably. But to what will this lead our poetry and, perhaps, the whole of our literature? To no good end, of course. I must admit, I envy Derzhavin, Dmitrev and Karamsin: they have followed their noble literary bent in the most disinterested and irreproachable way, while I?"

Prince Paul P. Vyasemsky, "Collected Works"

That winter—1828-29—Pushkin was captivated by the beauty of Natalia N. Goncharova. . . . Allowing for his affected cynicism and speaking humanly, one may suppose that Pushkin fell seriously in love about the beginning of 1829.

A. N. Mordvinov to Count Benkendorf, March 21, 1829

Let him roam about the world, and run after girls, seek poetic inspiration or gamble. One may assert with conviction that this journey of his (to the Caucasus) has been arranged by gamblers who have him in their clutches. They have probably promised him an El Dorado in the Caucasus and when they see money or a poem, they will grab it—and that will be the end of it.

From the list, kept by the police, of Moscow cardplayers for the year 1829

Pushkin—well-known in Moscow as a gambler.

Adam Mitskevich, "Biographical and Literary Notes on Pushkin"

Instead of eagerly devouring novels and foreign magazines which at one time had taken up his entire attention, he preferred nowadays to listen to folk-tales and songs and plunge into the study of Russian history. Apparently, he had quite deserted strange fields, and put down roots into his native soil. At the same time, his conversation, in which, very often, the germ of his future creations appeared, became more judicious and grave.

Pushkin to N. N. Goncharova, mother of Natalia Goncharova, April 6, 1830

... That very night I left for the army. You will ask why? I swear I cannot say myself. An unaccountable anguish assailed me and drove me from Moscow: I could not have borne your presence and hers in the town at that time.[1]

General A. P. Yermolov to Denis Davidov

(The beginning of May 1829). Pushkin came to see me. It was the first time I had seen him, so you can imagine that I looked at him with the liveliest curiosity. At a first meeting one cannot get to know a person well, but what power there is in great talent! I discovered in myself feeling, as well as involuntary respect.

S. V. Maximov, as told by Prince E. Palavandov

When he came to Tiflis he liked best the Armenian bazaar—a dirty, narrow, noisy street of traders.... From here the most astonishing rumors about Pushkin came: that he had been seen in one place walking about embracing a Tatar, in another he was seen carrying a whole pile of *chureki* (Caucasian bread). He used to come out in Erivan Square dressed in a coat thrown over his night-clothes, to buy pears, which he ate there and then, without the least embarrassment. . . . He darted from place to place, never sitting still for a minute, making everyone laugh and laughing himself, mixing with the dirty laboring folks in the bazaars and all but playing leap-frog with the street-urchins.

From "Memories of Pushkin," by M. V. Yusepovich

It seems as if I see him before me now—with his simple manner, his laughter, his liveliness, even fidgetiness, with his large, pure clear eyes, which reflected, it seemed, all that was beautiful in his nature, with his shining white teeth of which he took great care, like Byron. He was by no means dark-skinned, nor was his hair black, as some people assert; he had a white skin and curly chestnut hair.

From "My Meeting With Pushkin Beyond the Caucascus," by M. I. Pushchin

My surprise and delight were beyond description when Pushkin rushed up and kissed me. His first question was: "Now, then, tell me, Pushchin, where the Turks are and whether I shall see them: I mean, of course,

[1] Pushkin had made a formal proposal of marriage to N. N. Goncharova to which her parents had replied that the girl was too young yet and he must wait.

those Turks who rush out upon you armed and shouting. Do let me see, please, what I have gone through so many difficulties to get a sight of."

We had not yet finished dinner when word came that the enemy had appeared at the outposts. We all rushed to the horses which had been saddled. . . . No sooner had I ridden away than I got into a skirmish between Cossacks and Turkish horsemen, and here encountered Semichev, who asked me whether I had seen anything of Pushkin. We galloped off together to search for Pushkin and found him eventually: he had separated from the flank dragoons, and was galloping with drawn sword against the Turks who were flying at him full tilt. When we approached, followed by the Uhlans who hastened to our assistance, the Turks were forced to retreat.

From "A Journey to Erzerum," by Pushkin

Camp-life appealed to me. The cannon roused us at dawn. Slumber in a tent is astonishingly healthy. At dinner we drank English beer with our Asiatic *shashlik* (mutton-fried-on-the-spit) and also champagne cooled in the Tauric snows.

From "Memories of Pushkin," by M. V. Yuzefovich

While he was with us Pushkin wore a well-cut black coat and a shiny top-hat. The soldiers, who did not know who he was but saw him constantly with the Nizhni-Novgorod Dragoons commanded by Rayevsky, took him for the regimental priest and called him the "dragoon's parson."

. . . He had with him several books, including Shakespeare. Once, when he was in our tent, he translated several scenes from Shakespeare for my brother and me. . . . Pushkin's English pronunciation was so uncouth and curious that I had my suspicions of his knowledge of the language and resolved to call in an expert. Next day, I sent for Chernishev, who knew English like his own tongue, and after explaining things to him, invited Pushkin to come and bring his Shakespeare with him. He agreed most willingly to translate something for us. At the first words he read Chernishev burst out laughing. "Tell me first what language you're reading in?" he cried. Pushkin, in his turn, laughed too. He explained to us that he had studied English by himself and therefore pronounced it as he would Latin. The chief thing was, though, that Chernishev found his translation faultless and his understanding of the language irreproachable.

Baron Delvig to Prince Vyasemsky, August, 1829

We have had a letter from Pushkin who is in Erzerum. He writers that he is having a gay time. He has plenty to do: eats, drinks and rides with a whip on a Cossack horse.

Count Benkendorf to Pushkin, October 14, 1829

His Majesty the Emperor having heard the common talk that you, my dear sir, were traveling in Trans-Caucasia and visited Erzerum, commands me to enquire of you by whose permission you undertook this journey.

"An Old Lycée Boy" in "Novaya Vremya," 1880

Soon after my graduation from the Lycée in Tsarskoye Selo (in 1829), I met Pushkin on the Nevsky Prospect. He noticed my school uniform and

coming up to me, said: "You must have only just graduated, I think?" "Yes," I replied, "and I am to be sent to a Guards' regiment. And may I ask where you are assigned now?" "I am assigned to Russia," he answered.

P. V. Annenkov, "Notes"

Pushkin was an indefatigable walker and sometimes went on foot from St. Petersburg to Tsarskoye Selo. Leaving the city early in the morning, he would stop for a glass of wine at Staraya Rogatka and reach Tsarskoye Selo in time for dinner. After a stroll through the park he would return by the same route.

Pushkin to Count Benkendorf, January 7, 1830

Since I am not yet married, nor occupy any official position, I should like to make a journey either to France or to Italy. If this is not permitted me, then I request to be allowed to go to China with the embassy shortly leaving for that country.

I. V. Kireyevsky to A. Yelagina, January 15, 1830

Pushkin was at our house yesterday. . . . Zhukovsky read a child's journal to him and Pushkin laughed at every word, expressed his astonishment, gasped and capered about excitedly.

Count Benkendorf to Pushkin, January 17, 1830

In reply to your letter of January 7, I hasten to inform you that His Majesty the Emperor has not thought fit to concede to your request to visit foreign countries. He thinks that this would upset your financial affairs and at the same time distract you from your studies. Your desire to accompany the embassy to China cannot be fulfilled, since all the officials have already been appointed.

Told by Tanya the gipsy to B. M. Markevich

(With a party of friends at the gipsies'). . . . Three people we knew came in one evening and brought a friend with them, a rather short man with thick lips, and a curly head . . . As soon as he saw me, he laughed fit to split his sides—he had big, white teeth that gleamed when he laughed. He pointed me out to the gentlemen, saying: "Look, a little cook, a little cook!" Sure enough, I had a red print dress on and a white handkerchief twisted round my head, rather like a cook's cap. I laughed too, but I thought him very ugly. So I said to our folks in Romany: "Look, look, how ugly he is, just like a monkey!"—and they burst out laughing. Then he wanted to know: "What did you say?" "Nothing, nothing," I said. "It's you who are laughing at me, calling me a little cook." Paul Voinovich Nashchokin said: "You should hear how that little cook sings, Pushkin." By that time all our folk had come in: our troupe was quite a small one, only seven people, but very good voices. . . . I had the big song to sing: "Dear friend, dear friend, hasten from far!" When I sang this, Pushkin jumped down from the stove-top—he had climbed up there because that night it was so cold outside—and ran up to me. "My dear, my joy!" he shouted, "forgive me for comparing you to a little cook, you're a priceless treasure, not a cook!"

V. A. Nashchokina, "Novaya Vremya," 1898

Pushkin came back to Moscow intending to propose to Natalia Goncharova. As he was preparing to go to visit her he noticed that he had no dress-coat. "Lend me your dress-coat, please," he said to Nashchokin. "I have not brought mine, as a matter of fact, I don't believe I've got one."

Pushkin to Benkendorf, April 1830

I am about to be married to Mlle. Goncharova, whom you must have seen in Moscow; I have both hers and her mother's consent. Two matters had to be cleared up: my financial position and my position with regard to the government. As to my finances, I was able to say that, thanks to His Majesty, who has given me the opportunity to live honorably by my own labors, they are in a satisfactory state. As to my position with regard to the government, I could not disguise the fact that it was false and ambiguous.

Count Benkendorf to Pushkin, April 1830

As to your position with regard to the government, I can only repeat what I have told you so many times already; I find it entirely conformable to your interests. There can be nothing either false or ambiguous about it, unless you yourself render it so. His Majesty the Emperor with the most fatherly solicitude for you, my dear sir, has graciously commanded me, General Benkendorf—not as Chief des Gendarmes, but as a man in whom he is pleased to place his confidence—to watch over you and guide you with my advice. None of the police has ever received any instructions to keep you under observation. The advice which, as a friend, I have given you from time to time could only have been of benefit to you and I hope that in future you will always be convinced of this. Wherein, then, lies the mistrust that is supposed to be felt, in this respect, in your position?

Pushkin, May 13, 1830

The young people are becoming more formal as if I were no longer one of themselves; the young girls' behavior to me has become much simpler. Ladies praise my choice to my face and pity my poor fiancée behind my back. "Poor thing! So young, so innocent, while he is such a giddy fellow, and so immoral." I must confess I am beginning to tire of this.

Pushkin to E. M. Khitrovo, May, 1830

As to my marriage, your ideas about it would be perfectly fair if you regarded me in a less poetic light. Actually, I am simply a good fellow, who only wishes to grow stout and be happy.

A. Y. Bulgakov to K. Y. Bulgakov, July, 1830

I was told a story about Pushkin. Someone who met him after a long absence said: "What's this, my dear chap, I hear you're getting married?" "Of course," Pushkin replied. "And don't think that will be the last silly thing I shall do in my life." How do you like that? A nice thing for the fiancée to hear. I do not know why anyone should want to marry him!

N. O. Pushkina (mother of the poet) to her daughter, O. S. Pavlishcheva, July, 1830

He is full of his Natalia—he talks of her as if she were a goddess. He is hoping to bring her to St. Petersburg in October. Just imagine, this summer he made a sentimental journey alone to Zakharovo—for the sole purpose of seeing again the place where he spent several years of his childhood.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, August, 1830

Autumn is drawing nigh. It is the season I love best; I feel much stronger then—it is the time for my literary labors—and here I must worry myself about the trousseau and the wedding, which will take place God knows when. All this is not very comforting. I am going to the country. God knows whether I shall have the time and the peace of mind without which one can produce nothing except epigrams on Kachenovsky.[1] So that is the way of things, my dear soul. One might go farther and fare worse. What the devil possessed me to dream of happiness, as if I were made for it? I ought to have been content with independence.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, September, 1830, from the Boldino estate

Now my gloomy thoughts have been dissipated; I have arrived in the country and am having a rest. *Cholera morbus* is raging near me. You cannot conceive how cheering it is to escape from one's fiancée and sit down to write verses. A wife is not the same thing as a fiancée. Not by any means. A wife is like a brother. Write as much as you wish in her presence. But a fiancée is worse than Shcheglov the censor, your tongue and hands are tied. . . . From mine I received a very sweet letter today . . . she promises to marry me without her trousseau. The trousseau can wait. She asks me to come back to Moscow, but I shall not be there before the month is up. . . . Ah, my dear, how charming the country is in these parts! Just imagine nothing but steppe, steppe, steppe. Not a single neighbor; you can ride about as much as you like, stay at home and write whenever you think fit; no one to bother you. I shall prepare all sorts of stuff for you, both prose and verse.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, from Boldino, October, 1830

No verses come into my head, although it is a wonderful autumn with snow and rain and mud up to the knees.

Pushkin to N. N. Goncharova, from Boldino, November, 1830

I have lost my courage completely and since there is a fast on just now (tell your mother I shall not forget this fast for many a day), I do not want to be in a hurry; I am leaving things to take their own course while I wait with folded arms. My father keeps writing to tell me that my wedding is going all wrong. In a few days, perhaps, he will inform me that you have got married. There is plenty to lose one's head over.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, December, 1830

. . . I must tell you (in confidence) that at Boldino I have been writing as I have not written for a long time. This is what I have brought with me to

[1] A critic.

Moscow; the two last (8 and 9) chapters of *Onegin,* ready for the press. A tale written in octaves (about 400 lines), which we shall publish anonymously. Several dramatic scenes or small tragedies: *The Miserly Knight, Mozart and Saglieri, The Feast in Time of Plague* and *Don Juan.* Over and above these, I have written about thirty small poems. Is that all right? And this is not all (keep this a dead secret), I have written five prose tales, which will make Baratynsky champ and fret, and which we shall also publish anonymously; we must not print them under my own name, or Bulgarin will run them down.

S. D. Kisselyev to N. S. Alexeyev, December, 1830

Pushkin is going to marry Goncharova, who is, *entre nous,* a soulless beauty. And I have a notion he would be delighted to draw out of it.

Prince Paul Vyasemsky, "Works"

I have a lively memory of him at our family tea-hour, when he would pace up and down the room with a sort of gliding motion, like swimming or skating. He would rub his hands and recite with great emphasis: "I am bourgeois, a bourgeois—simply a Russian bourgeois."

Prince P. A. Vyasemsky, "Works"

He listened to me with the lively sympathy of a friend and discussed my work (the life of Fonvizin) with the authority of an experienced writer and of a shrewd, severe and fine critic.

P. V. Nashchokin, written down by Bartenyev

Pushkin's impatience, his craving for change and his, on the whole, impulsive character, were reflected in his desire to give up the idea of marrying and leave for Poland, simply because the wedding could not take place very soon, owing to money difficulties. Nashchokin had a rather warm conversation with him on this subject at Prince Vyasemsky's. Referring to his intention of going to Poland, Pushkin kept humming to Nashchokin: "Don't marry, my bold young man, but buy ye a horse with the money."

Pushkin to N. I. Krivtsov, February, 1831

I am over thirty. People usually marry at thirty. I am behaving, therefore, like other people, and will probably not regret it. At the same time, I am marrying without exaltation, without childish illusions. The future does not appear to me embowered in roses, but in all its stark nakedness.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, February, 1831

I am going to be married in a few days' time. I have mortgaged my two hundred serfs and obtained 38,000 rubles on them which I must distribute as follows: 11,000 to my mother-in-law, who is anxious that her daughter should have a trousseau at all costs—that sum may be counted as thrown away; 10,000 to Nashchokin to get him out of the difficulties he is in: this money is safe. Then there remains 17,000, to be devoted to setting up house,

and living expenses for a year. In June I shall be with you and can begin to live *en bourgeois,* but it is impossible to cope with all these aunts—the silliest and most absurd demands are made on me and there is no help for it. Now, do you understand what a trousseau means and why I was angry? I can marry a wife without a fortune but to get into debt an account of her fripperies I regard as a misfortune. However, I am obstinate and at least had my way about the wedding.

Portrait of Beaumarchais—Drawing by Pushkin

P. I. Bartenyev, "Stories about Pushkin"

On the eve of the wedding Pushkin invited all his friends to a bachelor-party. He was uncommonly melancholy, so that even the guests felt uncomfortable. He read his verses on bidding farewell to youth, verses which Kireyevsky never afterwards saw in print. Just before the evening drew he left us and went to his fiancée. Next day, at the wedding everyone was pleased to see the gaiety and joy of the poet and his young bride, who looked marvellously pretty.

Pushkin to Pletnyev, April, 1831

For God's sake rent rooms for me in Tsarskoye Selo. There are the two of us, three or four men servants and three women. The cheaper the place the better, naturally, but two hundred rubles or so extra will not break us. We will not need a garden since the park is right beside us, but we need a kitchen and a shed—that is about all.

P. I. Bartenyev, Russian Archives, 1899

. . . .During the first few months of their married life Pushkin frightened his young wife by going out for a stroll and not returning home until the third day. It appeared that he had met the palace lamp-men, who were taking the lamps and candlesticks from Tsarskoye Selo to St. Petersburg to be mended; he got into conversation with them, and made his way gradually to the capital, where he spent the night.

O. N. Smirnova (from the diary of A. O. Smirnova)

Once, when Pushkin was reading to my mother a poem which she was to hand to the Tsar that evening, Pushkin's wife exclaimed: "Lord, how sick you make me with your verses, Pushkin!" He pretended that he had not understood her and said, "Excuse me, but you don't know these: I have never read them in your presence." "What difference does it make; these or any others."

P. I. Miller, "My Meeting with Pushkin"

The many sentries posted about in the Tsarskoye Selo park stood at attention when he passed by and if he noticed this he nodded to them. When I asked him: "Why do they stand at attention?" he replied: "I really don't know; perhaps it is because I have a stick with me."

As told to P. Martyanov by Count A. Vassilyev

One hot summer's day Count Vassilyev happened to call upon Pushkin and found him practically naked. "Do excuse me," said the poet, laughing and shaking hands with him. "The heat is simply African today, and you know in Africa we always go about in these clothes."

I. S. Aksakov

Once, as Pushkin was strolling about Tsarskoye Selo, he encountered a carriage in which was no less a person than Nicholas I. The Tsar stopped the carriage and, beckoning to Pushkin, chatted very kindly to him of this, that and the other. Pushkin went straight after this to Alexandra Smirnova. "Whatever is the matter with you?" she asked him, looking at him closely. He told her of the encounter with the Tsar and added: "Devil take it, I could feel baseness in every vein."

P. I. Miller, "My Meeting with Pushkin"

Shortly after the publication of the *Tales told by Belkin* (in the middle of October, 1831), I dropped in for a minute to see Alexander Sergeyevich. A copy of the tales was lying on the table. I had not the slightest suspicion that he was the author of them. "What tales are these? And who is this Belkin?" I asked, opening the book. "No matter who he is, tales should be written like this: simply, briefly and clearly."

N. M. Yazykov, "Istorichesky Vestnik," 1833

During one of his visits to the English Club in Tverskaya Street, I. I. Dmitryev remarked that nothing could be more incongruous than the title: The Moscow English Club. Pushkin, who happened to be present, laughed and said he knew of some that were stranger still. "Which?" asked Dmitryev. "Why, the Imperial Charitable Society."

P. I. Bartenyev, "Russian Archives," 1889

At the court balls Pushkin was simply bored. L. D. Shevich told us how, as he was standing near her, yawning and stretching himself, he quoted two lines from an old song:

"Oh, bondage, bondage in the boyar's court
Standing while you eat, sitting while you sleep."

From "Bygone Days," by Count V. Sologub

(A meeting with Odoyevsky, who had recently published *Motley Tales* and who observed to the company that it was very difficult to write fantastic tales)... Pushkin gave one of his ringing, and what one might call "dental" laughs—since he exhibited a double row of white negroid teeth—and said: "But if it's difficult, why does he write them? Who forces him to do it? Fantastic tales are only good when they are easily written."

Pushkin to his wife, October, 1833

(Written from Boldino, on returning from a journey to the Urals in search of information about Pugachev). Do not bother me, do not bully me, keep well, look after the children and do not flirt with the Tsar. I am busy writing, I have a great deal to do, I see no one and I shall bring you a heap of all manner of things. Do you know what they say about me in the neighboring provinces? This is the way they describe my occupations: When Pushkin writes his verses, a decanter of the nicest cordial stands before him; he tosses off one glass, then another, then a third and then—he begins to write." That's fame for you!

Imperial Ordinance, December 31, 1833

We graciously appoint Alexander Pushkin, junior clerk in the Foreign Office, to the rank of Gentleman of the Bedchamber.

As told to P. I. Bartenyev by P. V. Nashchokin

His friends, Vellyegorsky and Zhukovsky, had to dash cold water over the newly-created Gentleman of the Bedchamber—so agitated was he by the new appointment. If it had not been for them he would have gone, for he was beside himself—in the heat of his anger, with flaming face, to the Palace and affronted the Tsar himself. (Nonsense! Pushkin was much too well-bred for that! *Marginal note by Sobolevsky.)* Many accused him of striving to secure this appointment. With regard to this rumor, he remarked to Nashchokin that he could not possibly have sought the office when, three years previously, Benkendorf had offered to make him chamberlain so as to bring him closer to himself and he, Pushkin, had refused, saying: "You want people to reproach me as they did Voltaire."

N. O. Pushkina (mother of the poet) to Baroness Brevsky, January, 1834

I must tell you a bit of news: Alexander has been made Gentleman of the Bedchamber. Natalia is delighted because this throws the court open to her. In anticipation of it, she goes to a ball every day.

From Pushkin's "Diary"

... Speaking of my *Pugachev,* the Tsar said to me: "What a pity I did not know that you were writing about him; I would have introduced you to his

sister, who died three weeks ago in a fortress-prison." (Where she had been since 1774!) True, she had been free and living in a suburb, but it was far from her own Cossack settlement on the Don, away in another part of the country—bleak and strange to her.

Pushkin to his wife, April, 1834

I report myself sick and am afraid of meeting the Tsar. I shall stay at home all the holidays. I have no intention of presenting myself to the heir with congratulations and greetings; his reign is a long way off, and I am not likely to see it. I have seen three tsars: the first ordered my hat to be taken off and scolded my nurse; the second did not care for me; the third although he has forced me to become a "Page of the Bedchamber" in my declining years, I do not wish to exchange for a fourth: one might go further and fare worse. I wonder how our Sasha (P's own son) will get on with his Imperial namesake. I could not get on with my namesake. God forbid that Sasha should follow in my footsteps and write verse and quarrel with tsars.

Sunday.—Today the Grand Duke took the oath. I was not at the ceremony because I have reported myself sick, and indeed I do not feel very well. (This letter was seized by the police and sent to the Tsar.)

Entry in Pushkin's diary, May 10, 1834

(Re: the incident with the above letter.) It was not to the Tsar's liking that I did not speak of my appointment with emotion and gratitude, but though I can be a subject and even a bonded slave, I would not be a lackey and buffoon for the king of heaven himself!

Pushkin to his wife, May 18, 1834

God grant I may see you well, and the children safe and sound, and then —Oh, to spit on St. Petersburg, and hand in my resignation, and escape to Boldino and live like a gentleman! Dependence is particularly unpleasant when a man has been independent for twenty years. I am not reproaching you, but grumbling to myself.

Pushkin to Count Benkendorf, June 25, 1834

Since my family affairs require my presence, sometimes in Moscow and sometimes in the provinces, I find myself obliged to resign my position and beseech your Excellency to obtain permission for me to do so. As a last favor, I would like to ask that I should not be deprived of the gracious permission to consult the archives.[1]

Count Benkendorf to Pushkin, June 30, 1834

Dear Sir:

Your letter of the 25th inst. was presented by me to His Majesty the Emperor, and His Imperial Majesty, not desiring to detain anyone in his service against the person's will, commanded me to inform the Vice-Chan-

[1] Pushkin was working at that time on a history of Peter I's reign.

cellor that your request has been complied with, which command I shall duly execute.

As to your request to be allowed, while in retirement, to retain your right to consult the state archives for any information you may need, His Majesty the Emperor cannot permit it, since this right may only belong to those who enjoy the special confidence of the authorities.

Pushkin to Zhukovsky, July, 1834

(In reply to Zhukovsky's reproach that Pushkin's letters to the Court were too dry Pushkin, acting on the advice of his friends, withdrew his resignation.) I really do not know myself what is happening to me. What is there criminal in wishing to retire when this is demanded by circumstances, by the future of my family and by my own peace of mind?—and how does it show ingratitude? The Tsar may see in it a suggestion of something I cannot understand. In that case I shall not resign, but ask to be retained in my office. Now, what is there dry about my letters? And why should they be maudlin? My conscience is perfectly clear with regard to the Tsar; his displeasure wounds me, but the worse my position grows, the more tongue-tied and cold I become. What am I to do? Ask for forgiveness? Very well! But for what? I shall go and see Benkendorf and explain to him what is on my mind; but I fail to understand in what way my letters are improper. I shall try to write another.

Told to M. I. Semyevsky by M. I. Ossipova

I think it was in 1835—yes, that is right—he came here again (to Trigorskoye) for two days—no more, the 8th and 9th of May. He was so bored and so weary! "Heavens," he said, "how good it is to be here with you! In St. Petersburg—a kind of anguish almost chokes me!"

P. A. Pletnyev, "Works"

In summer, bathing was one of his favorite pastimes which he would not give up until the autumn was well advanced. Thus he revived his physical powers, wasted by walking, of which he was passionately fond. He was of the sturdiest build, well-developed by gymnastics which he practiced at times with the patience of the athlete. No matter how long or how quickly he walked, he always breathed freely and evenly. He set a high value on the harmonious organization of the body and became quite indignant when he noticed in anyone some obvious and uncouth defect in anatomy.

Pushkin to his wife, written from Mikhailovskoye, September, 1835

You cannot conceive the liveliness and activity of the imagination when one sits alone, surrounded by four walls, or wanders in the woods, when there is none to hinder one from thinking and thinking till the head swims. . . . I took Walter Scott with me and am re-reading him. The weather is dull and grey. Autumn is beginning. Perhaps I shall settle down to work. I go for long walks, ride a good deal on the miserable horses, they are well-pleased when I do, because that means oats, to which they are not accustomed. I live on baked potatoes like a Maimist and soft boiled eggs, like Louis XVIII. That is all my dinner. I go to bed at nine and rise at seven.

Pushkin to P. A. Ossipova, October, 1835

. . . As for me, I am bilious and my head is going round. Believe me, dear Madame Ossipova, life—no matter how pleasant the habit may be—contains a certain amount of gall which, ultimately, renders it abominable, and society is a quagmire. I prefer Trigorskoye.

N. Tarassenko-Otreshkov, "Memories"

. . . Even in a multitude it was impossible not to notice Pushkin, because of the intellect that shone in his eyes, his expression, which showed a certain resoluteness of character, his inner restlessness and the signs of passions with difficulty controlled. Such, at least, Pushkin seemed to me during the closing years of his life.

P. I. Bartenyev, "Stories about Pushkin"

. . . Punch he nicknamed Benkendorf, because it had, like Benkendorf, the effect of "policing," subduing and bringing order into the stomach.

Pushkin to his wife, written from Moscow, May 5, 1836

. . . There are some rumors, my dear soul, about you. I have not heard all of them because husbands are invariably the last in the town to hear about their wives; it is clear, however, that you have driven someone (the Tsar) to such despair with your coquetry and cruelty that he has had to console himself with collecting a whole harem of orphans from theater schools. I can see that I must at all costs obtain a secure income of 80,000 rubles. And I will. I have not gone into these magazine-speculations for nothing; after all this is no different from being a scavenger; to cleanse Russian literature is to cleanse privies and depend on the police. It may just happen that—Devil take them! My blood is turning to bile.

Pushkin to his wife, written from Moscow, May 18, 1836

. . . The devil himself must have had a hand in my being born in Russia with talents and a soul! A cheering thought, to be sure.

P. Nashchokin, written down by Bartenyev

. . . Pushkin began to explain Martial to S. S. Maltsev, who knew Latin extremely well. Maltsev could not sufficiently admire the truth and aptness of his observations. The beauties of Martial were much more comprehensible to Pushkin than to Maltsev, who was making a study of the poet.

P. V. Bartenyev, "Stories of Pushkin"

When reading Shakespeare, Pushkin was captivated by *Measure for Measure* and wanted at first to translate it. Afterwards, however, he gave up the idea as he had no hope that our actors, with whom he was dissatisfied on the whole, would be able to play it. Instead of translating it, therefore, he wrote his *Angelo* in the Shakespeare manner, a method he had followed in the case of his excerpts from *Faust*. "Our critics," he declared to Nashchokin, "will pay no attention to this play and will think it one of my feebler efforts, whereas I have never written anything better."

As told to Y. Polonsky by A. Smirnova-Rosset

Pushkin said to me: "Everyone has his own wits: I am never bored with anyone, from a police-guard to the Tsar himself." And indeed he could spend the time happily with anyone. Sometimes he held long conversations with the footmen.

V. A. Nashchokina, "Memoirs"

On his return from St. Petersburg my brother told me that, when traveling, Pushkin would never wait at the stages while fresh horses were being harnessed, but would walk on ahead. He never let a single muzhik or country-woman pass without stopping to chat with them about their farms, their families, their wants; he was particularly fond of joining the conversation of working-gangs. He had mastered the common speech of the people to perfection.

Arcadi O. Rosset, "Russki Archiv," 1882

Even then, as early as the summer of 1836, there were rumors that all was not well in Pushkin's family. There were his wife's two sisters, some gossip and—Dantes' attentions were already being marked.

Levet-Weimars in an obituary notice on Pushkin in "Le Journal des Débats"

Pushkin had never been abroad... When speaking of London and particularly of Paris there was such wistfulness and suffering in his gaze.

P. N. Petrov, "P. S. Pimenov, Professor of Sculpture"

(At the October exhibition of the Academy of Arts)

After the first glance at Pimenov's "Boy playing a game of knuckle bones," Pushkin said: "Thank God! At last we have a native sculpture in Russia!"

The President, A. O. Olenin, pointed out the sculptor to him. Pushkin shook hands with Pimenov, calling him his colleague. After looking at the sculpture for a long time from every angle, the poet concluded by taking out his pocket-diary and writing an impromptu verse.

From "A. S. Pushkin," by P. Bartenyev

In the autumn of 1836 he thought of leaving St. Petersburg and settling for good at Mikhailovskoye. According to Nashchokin, his wife agreed to this, but he had not the means for moving there with his large family. Pushkin begged for the loan of five thousand rubles, which Nashchokin did not happen to have at that moment.

Pushkin, from "Unpublished Writings of Pushkin," collected by A. F. Onegin in the Atheneum, 1922

... Oh, will I soon be able to remove my household gods to the country —where I have fields, garden, peasants, books, my poetical labors, my family, love, religion and death.

M. A. Korkunov to the publisher of "Moskovskaya Vedomost" February, 1837

About a month ago, Pushkin was talking to me of Russian history; his fine explanations of the ancient *Lay of Igor's Host,* if they have not been preserved among his papers, will be an irretrievable loss to science. In general, during the last few years of his life, ever since he conceived the intention of writing an account of the reign and activity of Peter the Great, a love of historical knowledge and of researches in the history of his own country, has flamed up in him. Knowing him as a famous poet, one cannot but regret that in him we have lost a future historian.

A. I. Turgeniev to I. S. Arzhevitinov, January 30, 1837

I had often seen Pushkin of late and we had become very close friends; he came to care for me more and I discovered in him a rare, unique talent, observation and wide reading, especially about Peter I and Catherine...

From the diary of A. S. Suvorin, 1823

Nicholas I commanded Benkendorf to prevent the duel. Heckeren went to see Benkendorf. "What am I to do now?" the latter asked Princess Beloselsky. "Send the gendarmes in a different direction." The murderers of Pushkin were Benkendorf, Princess Beloselsky and Uvarov (Minister of Education). Yefremov exhibited their portraits at one of the Pushkin exhibitions. Gayevsky plastered them over.

A. Ammosov, "Last Days of Pushkin"

...Muffled in a bearskin cloak, Pushkin kept silence. Evidently he was as calm as he had been throughout the drive, but he seemed extremely impatient to begin. When Danzas asked if he thought the place chosen by him and d'Archiac quite suitable, Pushkin replied: "It is all the same to me, only please do everything as quickly as possible."

After measuring the distance, Danzas and d'Archiac marked the barrier with their overcoats and began to load the pistols. During these preparations Pushkin's impatience burst out again in his query:

"Well, are you ready? Have you finished?"

All was ready. The opponents were shown their places, handed the pistols and, at a signal given by Danzas, who flourished his hat once, they advanced on each other.

Pushkin was the first to reach the barrier and standing still, began to raise his weapon.

P. A. Yefremov in "Russkaya Starina"

For the first few days after Pushkin's death the press seemed as if struck dumb, so heavy was the tyranny exercised on it by the great poet's arbitrary guardian—Count Benkendorf... Only one paper—the literary supplement

to the *Russky Invalid*—Krayevsky, the editor of the supplement, published a few lines imbued with deep emotion. Here they are:

"The sun of our poetry has set. Pushkin is dead, dead in his prime, in the midst of his great career.

"... To say more of him is beyond our powers, and indeed there is no need; every Russian heart knows the full meaning of that irrevocable loss and every Russian heart will be rent. Pushkin, our poet, our joy, our national glory. Can it be that we have lost him? It is impossible to get accustomed to the thought!"

These few lines resulted in a very characteristic episode.

Next day Krayevsky was invited to appear and give an explanation to the Honorary Superintendent for Education of the St. Petersburg District, Prince Dundukov-Korsakov, who was also the chairman of the Board of Censors....

"I must inform you," said the Prince to Krayevsky, "that the Minister for Education (S. S. Uvarov) is extremely, *extremely* displeased with you! What is the purpose of this notice about Pushkin? What does this black frame mean around the anouncement of the death of one who was neither a great official nor occupied any important position in the government servise? That is bad enough in itself! But what expressions are these? 'The sun of poetry!' Good gracious, why so much honor? 'Pushkin is dead... in the midst of his great career!' What career, may I ask? As Sergei Simonovich (Uvarov) pointed out: 'It is not as if Pushkin was a great general, a minister or a statesman!' And, when all is said and done, he was still something under forty when he died! To write verses, as Sergei Simonovich expressed it, is not quite the same thing as to make a great career! The Minister has asked me to administer a stern reproof to you, Andrei Alexandrovich, and remind you that, as an official of the Ministry of Education, you would do well to refrain from such publications."

Y. N. Neverov to T. N. Granovsky

The general sympathy for the poet was shown by the fact that after his death in the course of a single day, 32,000 persons came to pay their last respects to him.

A. I. Turgeniev to N. I. Turgeniev, January 31, 1837

Smirdin the bookseller said that since the day of Pushkin's death he has sold 40,000 copies of his works.

V. A. Zhukovsky to Count Benkendorf

The church in which the mass for the burial of the dead was to be sung was changed. The body was brought to it by night, with a secrecy that struck everyone, without torches, almost without mourners; and at the moment when the body was being borne out—at which no more than ten of Pushkin's nearest friends were present—the gendarmes filled the room where the deceased was being prayed for. We were surrounded by a cordon and thus, under escort, as it were, we accompanied the body to the church.

P. I. Bartenyev

Contemporary witnesses have passed on to us the information that during the funeral service the wide square before the church resembled a carpet of human heads, and that when the body was borne out of the church, the procession was impeded for a moment: its way was blocked by the figure of a tall man who lay there sobbing. He was requested to rise and stand aside. It was Prince P. A. Vyasemsky.

Baron K. Lutzerohde (the Minister for Saxony to the Court of St. Petersburg) in his dispatch to the government of Saxony, February 8, 1837

The funeral of Mr. Pushkin was distinguished by extreme richness and was at the same time extraordinarily touching. The heads of all the foreign embassies were present with the exception of Lord Durham (the British Ambassador) and Prince Suzzo (the Greek Ambassador) who were ill, Baron Heckeren, who was not invited and Herr Liebermann, (the Prussian Ambassador) who declined the invitation after learning that the deceased writer was suspected of liberalism in his youth, which was, indeed, a very stormy one, like that of other geniuses.

Report of the Work of the Corps of Gendarmes, 1837

In Pushkin two creatures were united: he was a great poet and a great Liberal and hated every form of authority. Though Royal favors were showered upon him, he never changed his principles to the end of his life, and only during the closing years, became more cautious in the expression of them. His circle of admirers was formed in accordance with these two qualities. It was composed of literary people and all the Liberals of our society. Both the first and the second expressed the liveliest and most ardent concern at his death. The number of those who came to pay their respects to the dead was unusually large. It had been intended to arrange a grand mass for him, many people had proposed to follow the coffin to the cemetery in the province of Pskov. It was even rumored that in Pskov it was intended to unharness the horses and have the coffin borne by men. For this purpose some of the local people were being prepared. It was difficult to determine whether all these honors were not being paid rather to Pushkin the Liberal than to Pushkin the poet. Being in this quandary, and on the advice of many right-thinking people who asserted that such a public expression of grief at the death of Pushkin might be construed as an improper picture of the triumph of the Liberals—the higher authorities thought it their duty to make secret arrangements to do away with all ceremonial honors, which arrangements were duly carried out.

The night of Febuary 3 Pushkin's body was sent away secretly, accompanied by a gendarme and the only friend who was allowed to go, A. I. Turgeniev—to be buried on his father's estate, Mikhailovskoye.

From the diary of A. I. Turgeniev

We set out again—the gendarme and I—at 6 o'clock on the morning of February 6—for the monastery. . . . I flung a handful of dust into the

grave, shed some tears and returned to Trigorskoye. The people there suggested we should go to Mikhailovskoye and I went with the charming daughter of the house, in spite of the gendarme, who tried to persuade me not to go there but to hurry home. On the way Maria Ivanovna talked to me about Pushkin's life in the country, showed me the boundary of the estate, his favorite pines, and two lakes, now covered with snow. We entered the poet's little house, where he had lived out his exile and written his best poems. All was deserted. The only servant and his wife were crying.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

A Glossary of the Most Important Names Mentioned in the Pushkin Text

Annenkov, P. V.—the first biographer of Pushkin. He did not know Pushkin personally but his book *(Notes for a Life of Pushkin)* was compiled from clews that were still fresh and testimonials collected from Pushkin's most intimate friends.

Arakchayev, A. A., Count (1769-1834)—a great favorite during the reign of Paul I and Alexander I. An entire epoch of police despotism and brutal material law is associated with his name.

Bartenyev—historian, author of a biography on Pushkin *(Pushkin in the South of Russia),* compiled from the most authentic material.

Batyushkov, K. N. (1787-1855)—poet and contemporary of Pushkin, who influenced Pushkin's earlier works.

Benkendorf, A.—Chief of Police and head of the Third Department of "his imperial majesty's chancery" (supreme secret police). Was advanced for actively crushing the December Rebellion. Placed Pushkin under special observation and organized the murder of Pushkin.

Borotinsky, E. A. (1800-1844)—poet and contemporary of Pushkin. He was very highly esteemed by Pushkin.

Bulgarin, F. V. (1789-1859)—novelist, critic and publisher, author of a number of satires on morals and historical novels; representative of the so-called "safeguarders" of literature, agent of the Third Department.

Chaadayev, P. J. (1794-1856)—an eminent writer, philosopher, author of the famous *Philosophical Letters,* friend of Pushkin. Pushkin made his acquaintance in 1816. Later Pushkin noted in his diary that his friendship with Chaadayev was a "substitute for happiness."

Delvig A. A., Baron (1798-1831)—poet, school-mate of Pushkin at the Lycée, one of his best friends and literary colleague. In Pushkin's opinion, Delvig's most outstanding characteristics were his classical sense of balance and proportion and his "unusual feeling for harmony."

Derzhavin, G. P. (1743-1816)—a great Russian poet, forerunner of Pushkin. Influenced by his teachers (Karamzin and Zhukovsky) and contemporary (Delvig), who were entranced with Derzhavin's poettry, Pushkin expressed this feeling in a number of youthful poems.

Gorchakov, P. V. (1800-1867)—a friend of Pushkin during his exile in Kishenev.

Karamsin, N. M. (1766-1826)—writer (leader of Russian sentimentalism) and historian (author of a voluminous work *History of the Russian State);* Karamsin's house was the center of Russian culture of that time.

Khitrovo, E. M.—daughter of Field Marshal M. I. Golenischev-Kutuzov, admirer of Pushkin and his close friend.

Küchelbäcker, V. K. (1799-1846)—schoolmate of Pushkin at the Lycée, poet, who joined a group of archaists, "young big wigs" which was hostile in its literary tendencies to the group of adherents of Karamsin, "Arzamas," a group joined by Pushkin in his youth. After the Decembrist uprising, was exiled to Siberia.

Mitskevich, A. (1798-1855)—Polish poet, one of Pushkin's favorite poets. Pushkin met and became friends with Mitskevich during the years 1826-29 when the latter lived in Moscow during his exile to Russia.

Nashchokin, P. V. (1800-1854)—one of Pushkin's closest friends. Eccentric and unique, his colorful life served as interesting material for Pushkin. Their extensive correspondence is evidence of their unusual attachment to each other.

Ossipova, P A. (Wulf by first marriage)—landowner of the village of Trigorskoye which adjoined Mikhailovskoye, and friend of Pushkin. Ossipova, M. I., step-daughter of P. A. Ossipova.

Pletnyev, P. A. (1792-1865)—writer, poet and critic, later professor of Russian literature. One of Pushkin's closest friends. Their publishing dealings drew him especially close to Pushkin. Pushkin said that Pletnyev was "everything to him: relative, and friend and publisher and cashier."

Pogodin, M. P. (1800-1875)—historian and writer, professor at the Moscow University. Pushkin valued Pogodin as a man versed in literature. Attracted by his search for "people's" dramas, Pushkin overestimated the historical dramas of Pogodin.

Pugachev, E. I. (1726-1773)—leader of a peasant rebellion.

Pushkin, L. S. (1805-1852)—brother of the poet.

Pushchin, I. I. (1798-1859)—schoolmate of Pushkin at the Lycée, one of his closest friends, Decembrist, exiled to Siberia for an unlimited period of hard labor. He left very valuable reminiscences about Pushkin.

Pushchin, M. I. (1800-1869)—younger brother of I. I. Pushchin, Decembrist, exiled to the Caucasus.

Rayevsky, A. N. (1795-1868)—colonel, inspired Southern military circles with ideas of emancipation; Pushkin considered Rayevsky a man who was destined to lead the march of events. Pushkin was under the powerful influence of his brilliant and sarcastic mind.

Rileyev, K. F. (1795-1826)—poet-Decembrist, active participator in the Northern Society of Decembrists. One of the five Decembrists sentenced to death by hanging in the Petropavlovsk Fortress, July 13, 1826.

Shevirev, S. P. (1806-1864)—poet, critic, historian of literature, advocate of German romanticism. Pushkin sympathized with his work. However, he disagreed with him on the question of literary professionalism to which Shevirev strongly objected, contrasting it with the literary-philosophical salons with their closed circles.

Smirnova, A. O., native of Rosset (1809-1892)—maid-of-honor at the Palace, an outstanding beauty of Petersburg. Possessing a remarkable mind, wit, taste, she was on terms of great friendship with writers; Pushkin made her acquaintance in the summer of 1831, saw her frequently and read his new compositions to her. The so-called *Letters of Smirnova,* published by her daughter, proved to be a crude falsification. The genuine letters of Smirnova about Pushkin, and published at different times, where very few in number.

Sobolevsky, S. A. (1803-1870)—poet, epigrammatist, bibliophile, a great admirer of Merrimée, a somewhat unique *rentier* of that time and one of Pushkin's closest friends.

Turgeniev, A. I. (1784-1854)—a well-known literary man during the '20's and '30's, a friend of Pushkin, Vyasemsky, Batyushkin and others, author of *Chronicles of a Russian in Paris.* Took an active part in Pushkin's fate, beginning with his solicitations to get Pushkin into the Lycée and ending with his accompanying Pushkin's body to the Svyatogorsk Monastery.

Uvarov, S. S.—Minister of People's Education and head of the Censorship Committee.

Von-Fock, M. J.—Chief assistant of Benkendorf in the Third Department (supreme secret police).

Vorontsov, M. S., Count (1782-1856)—Governor-General of Novorossisk, to whose office the exiled Pushkin was appointed. Pushkin stigmatized Vorontsov in a number of epigrams ("Half hero, half boor," etc.).

Vyasemsky, P. A. Prince (1792-1878)—poet and critic, one of Pushkin's most intimate friends and literary adherent. Pushkin regarded Vyasemsky as one of the "most original writers" among his contemporaries and held his journalistic criticism in particular esteem, recognizing in it a "European quality."

Vyasemsky, Princess (1790-1886)—wife of Prince P. A. Vyasemsky, fell in love with Pushkin when they met in Odessa, before the poet's exile to Mikhailovskoye; remained a friend of Pushkin until his death.

Wiegel, F. F. (1786-1856)—wrote memoirs of the first half of the nineteenth century, had a large number of acquaintances in government and literary circles. His *Chronicles,* although not always authentic, contain many details of the life and manners of Russian society of that time.

Yanushkin, I. D. (1793-1857)—one of the most active participants in the Decembrist uprising.

Yazikov, N. M. (1803-1896)—poet, very highly esteemed by Pushkin.

Zhukovsky, V. A.—poet, one of Pushkin's oldest and closest friends and teacher. Pushkin called Zhukovsky a "translator of genius." In close contact with the tsar's palace, Zhukovsky constantly defended Pushkin before the tsars.

A New Pushkin Document

One of the most remarkable acquisitions of the State Literary Museum during recent years is the diary entitled *The Thirty Fifth Year of My Life or Two Fine days and 363 Wet Ones,* Kishenev 1822. The name of the author of this diary is carefully erased. Prof. M. A. Tsyavlovsky, who was given the task of working on this diary, established that it belonged to Prince Paul Ivanovich Dolgorukov, an important official in the service of the viceregent of Bessarabia, I. N. Inzov.

Dolgorukov noted in his diary all the incidents connected with the name of A. S. Pushkin during his forced stay in Kishenev.

"Dined with Inzov," writes Dolgorukov. "During the meal listened to Pushkin telling stories. He talked without a stop, drank wine continuously and when we had left the table, made a fool of the executor. I am sorry for the young man. He has talent, but it seems that reason will never find an appropriate place in that hot head of his and morality cannot even be expected. Can a man who repudiates the rules of religion and social order be truly virtuous? I do not think he can. Pushkin has been sent here, to put it simply, to live under observation. He has stopped writing poems—but that is not enough. He ought also to reform himself in the sense of showing the caution which his present position should instil into him, but to do this it seems, in view of the constant resistance offered by his eager and fiery nature, would seem to be beyond his power, or at all events will be until his youth is past. Instead of coming to himself and realizing how few of the rules accepted by him can be tolerated in society, he is always ready, at the viceregent's, in the street, in the square, to prove to all and sundry that anyone who does not want to alter the government of Russia is a scoundrel. His favorite conversation is based on oaths and raillery, and even his amiability develops into an ironic smile."

This first entry admirably describes Pushkin's behavior. He is under "observation," that is, he is a political exile, but even here he does not yield his position and with fiery, youthful vigor he gives frank expression to his views, which have been formed from observing the manners of tsarist Russia under serfdom and from books and pamphlets on the Great French Revolution.

The society in which Pushkin found himself in Kishenev deserved the young poet's most biting comments. He felt contempt and hatred for many of the Kishenev officials. He upbraided and taunted them and often made witty epigrams at their expense. He gave slaps in the face for impertinence and challenged to duels those who presumed to insult him with words.

One day a quarrel arose between the important official, Lanov, and Pushkin at table in the presence of the viceregent and Pushkin challenged Lanov to a duel. The latter, however, in Dolgorukov's words was "not having any pistols." Although he accepted the proposal and invited Pushkin to his rooms he had a number of soldiers waiting there to flog him with rods. Pushkin got wind of it and wrote his epigram. The viceregent threatened to put him in confinement. "You may do that," Pushkin answered, "but even there I shall compel people to respect me."

That was the kind of society at Kishenev! The officials were accustomed to punishing the soldiers in the barrack yard and Lanov thought he would compensate himself for Pushkin's righteous indignation by using brute force on him as he was still young and apparently defenseless. These vile tsarist

officials little realized that this mighty eagle of Russian poetry, who was just spreading his wings, was capable of smiting his enemies with such force that they would be able to find no refuge from him.

"The other day Pushkin wrote verses about my friend," Dolgorukov's entry for that day reads, "and they have already been passed from hand to hand." This is the way he abused Lanov:

Rant, rave and rage you dolt of dolts
To hit your face my hand revolts
Lanov, your solemn ugly mug
Looks like jelly, slimy as a slug

On frequent occasions Pushkin was put under domestic arrest by the viceregent Inzov who was, when all was said and done, tolerant with regard to his behavior and had a fairer attitude than the others.

"I went one day for a walk with Stoikovich, Khudobashev and Mandel," writes Dolgorukov, "and we went to see Pushkin, whom we found pacing up and down his room with long strides. He was glad to see us, kept on laughing and asking us whether they had shut him up for long. A sentry has been placed at his door, but they allow him into the garden and the yard and anyone, except Moldavans, can come to see him."

Pushkin expressed his opinion about things which agitated people's minds in those days, unhesitatingly and in most distinguished company.

Thus on April 15, Dolgorukov writes:

"Pushkin spoke at table about the morality of our day—why Russians are ashamed of their own language, why they do not know the worth of their country, censured the ignorance of the clergy—he spoke with heat but did not say anything new." "We all listened with attention," adds Dolgorukov.

It is exceedingly interesting to note that even this world of officials was all the time on the look out for new phrases, new ideas and new creations. The arguments used to get deeper and deeper and frequently concerned the most fundamental questions of the social life of Russia of that day. And on these occasions Pushkin expressed the most advanced views of his epoch and took up wholeheartedly the ideas of the Decembrists with many of whom he became close friends.

Pushkin and Eismont, colonel of the artillery, while dining at Inzov's, "argued at table about the slavery of our peasants. Pushkin stated with some heat that he would never have serfs because he could not be certain of ensuring their welfare, and that he regarded as dishonest every person who owned peasants, excepting his father, who although he was honest, had not the same rules in the matter as he had. Eismont tried to quibble, but could not hold his own against Pushkin. As for the viceregent, he also listened and tried to refute him, but weakly and jokingly rather than with forceful and convincing arguments.

"I, for my part, do not condemn such disputes, and even agree that many of Pushkin's remarks are just, and one may even say that a large number of well intentioned and enlightened people tacitly admit that the despotism of our petty landowners is a disgrace to humanity and the laws of the land, but I do not approve of the habit of discussing such matters in Russian. Pushkin rails against the government and the landowners, and speaks wittily and convincingly while all the time behind our chairs these seductive thoughts and arguments are being listened to and drunk in."

*

This postscript of Dolgorukov's to his entry for April 30 about speaking French is very typical. The explanation is quite simple. Dolgorukov does not approve of the habit of speaking out "seductive thoughts and arguments" in Russian, as people of simple calling, servants and serfs, may hear them. Dolgorukov is afraid of propaganda, but Pushkin carries on intense propaganda and takes every opportunity to spread free ideas. Flaring up and without sparing himself, Pushkin says straight out:

"Formerly one people used to rise up against another, but now the King of Naples is fighting with his people, the Prussian King is fighting with his people, the Spanish king also; it is not difficult to guess which side will come out on top."

And Dolgorukov writes: "Profound silence after these words. It continued for some minutes and was then broken by Inzov, who turned the conversation to other subjects."

The dumbfounded listeners could not help realizing that here a direct call had been made for the people's revolution, insurrection against kings and therefore also against tsars.

Then one day Pushkin dined with Inzov's household while the viceregent was away. Throwing all restraint to the winds the young poet spoke out his mind so frankly that he might have been sent straight to the Peter and Paul prison. That was on the night of July 20, 1822.

"The viceregent went hunting to-day with gun and dog," writes Dolgorukov. "In his absence the table was laid for members of the household and I and Pushkin dined with them. The latter, seeing that he had plenty of elbow room, began with his favorite subject—the government of Russia. Smirnov the interpreter took it into his head to argue with him, and the more he refuted him the more heated, enraged and out of patience did Pushkin become. Eventually abuse began to be hurled at all classes of people—government officials were scoundrels and thieves, generals were for the most part swine, only the class of soil tillers was honorable. Pushkin particularly attacked the Russian nobles. They ought all to be hanged, and if that were done, he would take great pleasure in tightening the rope."

Such were the convictions of Pushkin in those days: he hated serfdom, despised the clergy and looked upon civil servants and army men as scoundrels, swine and thieves. He looked upon the nobles as veritable villains and rotters who ought to be hanged, and in this revolt against all oppressors he was ready himself to take part with the one class whom he respected and regarded as honorable, "the soil tillers," that is to say, the peasantry. The peasant revolution, the ideal of the left wing Decembrists, was also the ideal of the great Russian poet, the genius of Russian literature, A. S. Pushkin.

Translated by N. Goold-Verschoyle

Evaluation of Pushkin by Russian Writers

V. G. BELINSKY [1]

Pushkin is unique and stands out from the poets who went before him, not only in the peculiar stamp imprinted on his works by his personality, but in the fact that, while their writings merely aspired to be poetry, his were poetry itself; they, so to speak, were candidates for the title of poet, but he actually was a poet—an artist in the full and complete sense of the word.[2]

. . . At last Pushkin came—a poet whose poetry bore the same relation to the poetry of his predecessors as achievement bears to aspiration. In it, the two currents of Russian poetry, which up till then had kept separate courses, joined in a wide stream. The Russian ear heard in it an intricate harmony and pure Russian sounds. Despite their pre-eminently ideal and lyrical quality, even Pushkin's early poems contained elements of real life, as is shown by the daring way in which, to the astonishment of his contemporaries, he introduced in his poetry, not the classical Italian or Spanish robbers, but Russian robbers, not with dagger and pistol, but with broad knives and heavy clubs, and made one of them talk in his delirium of the knout and menacing executioners. A gypsy camp with tattered tents pitched between caravan wheels, with a dancing bear and naked children in asses' panniers, was also an unheard-of setting for tragedy and bloodshed. But in *Eugene Onegin* the ideal made way still further for reality, or at least both were blended into something new, half-way between the one and the other, which ought by right to be regarded as the beginning of our modern poetry. Here naturalness no longer appears as satire, or as comic effect, but as a true representation of real life, with all its good and evil, with all its sordidness: two or three characters are poetized, and ordinary people are portrayed, not for comic effect, as grotesque creatures, exceptions to the general rule, but as individuals representing the greater part of society. And all this is done in a novel written in verse! [3]

. . . Pushkin came—and the Russian language acquired new vigor, charm, flexibility, richness, and what is most important, it became supple and natural, became a truly Russian language. [4]

. . . Pushkin drives me out of my senses. What a great genius, what a poetic nature! . . . I have now three gods of art, Homer, Shakespeare, and Pushkin. [5]

. . . One thing more than all this has gladdened me up till now and will always gladden me, and be cherished by me as my dearest possession—a few friendly words spoken about me by Pushkin. . . and I feel that this is not a petty vanity on my part, but rather that I realize what kind of man Pushkin was, and what the approval of such a man as Pushkin is worth.

. . . Pushkin belonged to that band of creative geniuses, of great historical figures who, while working for the present, pave the way for the future, and by this very fact can no longer belong to the past alone. . .

. . . Pushkin was destined to be the first poet-artist of Russia, to give her poetry that is art, and not merely the beautiful language of sentiment. . . all

other poets are to Pushkin what rivers, large and small, are to the sea, which is replenished by their waters. The poetry of Pushkin is such a sea. .

. . . Before him, we had not even a glimmering of this art of poetry which is essential to the spirit of man. Before him, poetry was only an eloquent expression of beautiful sentiments and lofty thoughts; these were not the soul of poetry, but poetry was to them an appropriate means to a worthy end, as powder and rouge to touch up the pale face of the old hag truth.

Our Russian poetry before Pushkin was a gilded pill, a sweetened draught. Consequently, genuine, inspired, and creative poetry flashed out only at intervals here and there, and these flashes were submerged in a flood of rhetoric. Much was done for the language, much was done for verse, something even was done for poetry; but poetry as poetry, that is the poetry which, expressing this or that, developing this or that philosophy of life, is pre-eminently poetry—such poetry we had not as yet possessed! Pushkin was destined to be the living revelation of its secret to Russia. And since his mission was to master poetry as an art and assimilate it forever to Russian soil, in such a way that Russian poetry would thereafter be capable of expressing any trend of thought, any conception, without danger of its ceasing to be poetry and becoming rhymed prose—it is natural, therefore, that Pushkin should stand out exclusively as an artist.

Once again; we had poets before Pushkin, but we had not a single poet-artist; Pushkin was the first poet-artist.

. . . A peculiar property of Pushkin's poetry and one of his chief points of superiority over the poets of earlier schools lies in the fullness, the completeness, the sustained quality, and the harmoniousness of his works. The poetry of sentiment, of nature, is not distinguished by these qualities: we can always see in it the effort to express the sentiment, and hence harmony and proportion are lost in over abundance. In artistic poetry, proportion, harmony and fullness and evenness are the natural consequence of the creative idea, of the artistic conception which lies at the base of poetical composition. In Pushkin there is never anything superfluous, anything inadequate; everything is just right, everything is in place, the end is in harmony with the beginning. In reading anything he has written, one feels that there is nothing that could be taken from it and nothing that could be added to it. And in this, as in everything else, Pushkin shows himself to be supremely an artist.

As a genuine artist, Pushkin was never at a loss for poetical subjects to choose from; to him all subjects were equally rich in poetry. . .

Pushkin's poetry is surprisingly true to Russian actuality, whether it describes natural scenes in Russia or Russian characters. For this reason, he is universally known as the Russian national poet, the poet of his people.

. . .No Russion poet can be an educator of youth, can mold the feelings of youth as Pushkin can. His poetry is alien to all that is fantastic, dreamy, false, deceptively ideal, it is permeated through and through with actuality; it does not coat the face of life with powder and rouge, but shows it in its natural, its real beauty; in Pushkin's poetry we see the heavens, but the earth is always there too. For this reason, Pushkin's poetry is not dangerous to the young as a poetic falsehood, which inflames the imagination—a falsehood which places man in hostile relationship to reality, upon his first encounter with it, and makes him exhaust his strength prematurely and fruitlessly in a fatal struggle

with it. And along with all this, apart from the high artistic merit of the form, what noble refinement of human feeling! Do we need to adduce proofs in confirmation of this? Nearly every one of Pushkin's poems can serve as proof. . .

. . . Pushkin was pre-eminently a poet-artist and by his nature he could not be other than that. He gave us poetry, as an art. And for this reason he will always be a great master of poetry, a teacher of art. One of the special qualities proper to his poetry is its capacity to arouse in people a sense of the aesthetic, a sense of humanity (signifying by this word a boundless respect for the dignity of man as man). Despite his inherited prejudices, Pushkin was by nature loving and lovable, ready in the fullness of his heart to extend his hand to anyone who seemed a "man" to him. In spite of his impetuosity, which was liable to carry a man of his strong and powerful nature too far, there was much in him that was childlike, mild, and gentle. And all these qualities were reflected in his writings. The time will come when he will be the classic poet of Russia, and when his works will serve to form and develop not only the aesthetic but also the moral sense. [6]

Translated from the Russian by P. Breslin

1. Belinsky, the founder of Russian criticism and its greatest representative was the first and best expounder of the significance of the poetry of Pushkin. The series of his famous articles on Pushkin, which embraced the genius of the Russian poet in all its breadth and variety, had a tremendous significance on the development of Russian social thought and has maintained its importance to this day.
2. A quotation from Belinsky's review of *Petersburg Collection.*
3. A quotation from Belinsky's article *A Glance At Russian Literature,* 1847.
4. A quotation from one of Belinsky's magazine reviews.
5. Addressee—Paneyev, I. (1812-1862) writer and journalist.
6. We have quoted here only small excepts from articles which were published in the magazine *Native Writings* from 1843 to 1846.

N. GOGOL [1]

At the name of Pushkin, one immediately thinks of a Russian national poet. And as a matter of fact, none of our poets stand above him or can with greater truth be called national; that is definitely his right. All the wealth and strength and flexibility of our language were concentrated in him. He more than all others, further than all others, expanded its boundaries and showed all its spaciousness. Pushkin is an extraordinary, and perhaps the only, manifestation of the Russian spirit. He is the Russian in the highest stage of his development, the stage he will reach perhaps in two hundred years' time. In him the Russian earth, the Russian soul, the Russian language, the Russian character were reflected with the same purity, the same refined beauty with which a landscape is reflected in the concave surface of a lens. . . No other poet in Russia had such an enviable fate as Pushkin, no one's fame spread so quickly. Everyone felt bound to quote striking passages from his poems, in season and out of season, and sometimes to distort them. His name had something electrifying about it, and an idle scribbler had only to put it on his production in order for it to be bought up on all sides.

Large numbers of the most fatuous verses were given out as Pushkin's. That is a common occurrence in the case of a talented person who is very famous. It is at first amusing, but later it becomes exasperating, when you leave youth behind you and see these stupidities continuing unabated. Thus, eventually people began to attribute *A Remedy for Cholera, The First Night* and similar works to Pushkin. *(Note by Gogol.)*

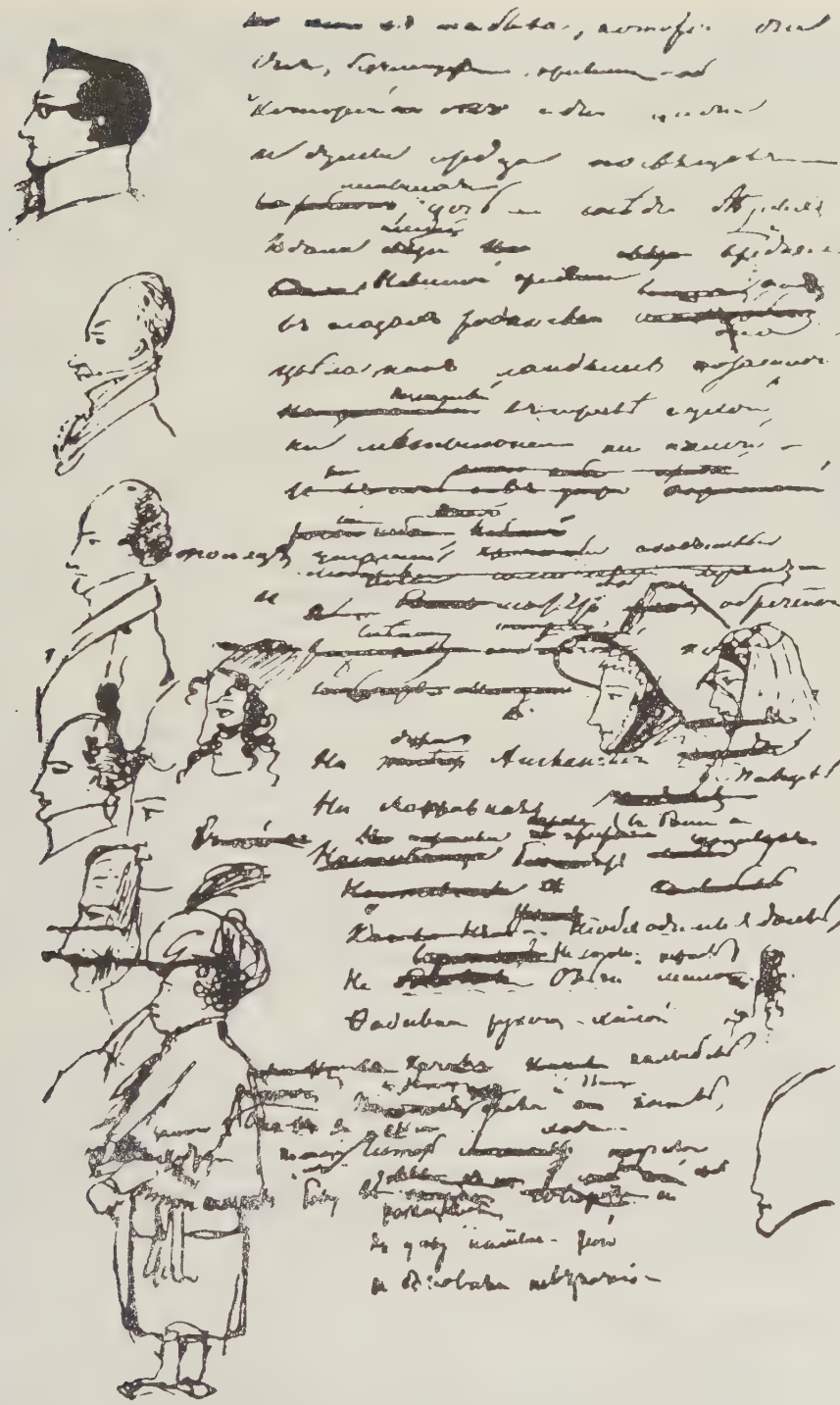
From the very beginning he was national, because true nationalism consists in describing not the *sarafan* but the very spirit of the people. A poet may be national even when he is describing quite another world than his, if he looks at it through the eyes of the national genius, through the eyes of the whole people, when he feels and speaks in such a way that it seems to his fellow-countrymen that it is they themselves who are feeling and speaking. If one asks what are the merits of Pushkin which distinguish him from other poets, the answer is that they are his extraordinary speed of description and his remarkable art of drawing a complete object with a few strokes. His epithets are so clear-cut and bold that sometimes one of them takes the place of a long description. His brush moves at lightning speed. Any of his small pieces is worth a whole poem. There is hardly another poet any of whose short pieces could be said to contain such grandeur, simplicity and power, as those of Pushkin. . . .

Pushkin's works breathing of the Russian countryside are as quiet and unperturbed as the Russian countryside itself. They can be completely understood only by him whose *soul* has within it pure Russian elements, who looks upon Russia as his native land, whose soul is so delicately constituted and has its sensibilities so developed that it is capable of understanding Russian songs and the Russian spirit, which have so little external glitter about them, because the more ordinary an object, the greater one must be to extract the extraordinary from it, yet to do it so that the extraordinary at the same time be true to life.

In his short works, that delightful anthology of his, he is unusually versatile and is even broader in his scope and even more outstanding than in his larger poems. . . . I refer to the collection of his smaller poems—a series of gorgeous pictures. Here we have that bright clear world abounding in features known only to the ancients, where nature is portrayed with the same clarity as in the stream of some silvery river in which flash out the reflections of dazzling shoulders and white arms or alabaster neck sprinkled with the shadows of dark locks, or transparent bunches of grapes or myrtle and shady trees which have been brought into being for life's sake. There is everything here: delight, simplicity and the momentary sublimity of thought which suddenly seizes the reader with the hallowed chill of inspiration. Here there is not that cascade of eloquence which attracts only because of its wordiness, in which each phrase has strength because it is combined with others and deafens by the impact of the whole mass, but where if one were to isolate any single phrase it would become weak and impotent. Here there is no eloquence, but only poetry; there is no external luster but everything is simple and appropriate, everything is filled with an inner glow which does not reveal itself immediately; everything is short and to the point, as is always the case with pure poetry. There are not many words, but what there are, are so exact that they mean everything. Each word opens out endless vistas; each word is as unconfined as the poet. That is why you read these smaller works several times, which is not the case with a work in which one main idea is too much in evidence.

From a letter by Gogol to P. A. Pletnyev (March 16, 1837, Rome)[2]

Not a month, not a week passes without a new loss; but no worse news could have been received from Russia. With him (Pushkin) all the joy has gone out of my life, the highest joy I ever knew. I never undertook anything



Facsimile of a page of a Pushkin manuscript

without his advice. I never wrote a line without imagining him before me. What will he say, what will he notice, what will he laugh at, to what will he vouchsafe his immutable and everlasting approval—that was what interested me, that is what heartened me in my efforts.

From a letter of N. Gogol to V. A. Zhukovsky (Rome, April, 1837) [3]

I must go on with the big work I have started (*Dead Souls*) which Pushkin made me give my word I would finish, the idea of which was his, and which has since become for me a sacred duty.

From a Gogol essay entitled "What is, After All, the Essence of Russian Poetry" (1846)

Since the death of Pushkin, our poetry has ceased to move forward. That does not mean that its spirit is dead; on the contrary, like thunder, it is collecting itself unperceived in the distance; the very dryness and closeness of the atmosphere bodes its approach.

People have already made their appearance who are not without talent. But everything is still strongly under the influence of the harmonious notes of Pushkin, and nothing is yet able to break through the magic circle he has drawn and demonstrate its own power.

From the same essay

The Captain's Daughter is undoubtedly the best Russian narrative work. Beside *The Captain's Daughter* all our novels and stories seem insipid. In this story, purity and unsophistication are to be found in such a high degree that reality itself seems artificial and exaggerated in comparison. For the first time, truly Russian characters were presented: the simple-minded commandant of the fortress, the captain's wife, the lieutenant; the fortress itself with its single cannon, the futility of the times and the simple grandeur of simple folk. All is not only the actual truth but is almost better than the truth. And that is just as it should be; that is the business of a poet, to take us out of ourselves and return us to ourselves in a purified form.

1. We have quoted here only an except from Gogol's long article, *A Few Worlds About Pushkin,* which appeared for the first time in his book *Arabesques* (1835).

2. Addressee—Pletnyev, P. (1792-1865) poet and critic, one of the most intimate friends of Pushkin.

From Gogol's letter it is apparent how deeply he was shocked by Pushkin's death who even in 1831 had greeted in the press the earlier stories of Gogol and later always carefully followed the development of Gogol's talent. It may be noted that the plot of Gogol's famous comedy *The Inspector-General* as well as the plot of *Dead Souls* were given to Gogol by Pushkin.

3. Addressee—Zhukovsky, V. (1782-1852) poet and friend of Pushkin and Gogol.

N. A. DOBROLYUBOV [1]

Pushkin is of immense importance not only in the history of Russian literature, but also in the history of Russian enlightenment. He was the first to teach the Russian public to read—that was a great service that he performed. In his verse, the living Russian language was made known to us for the

first time, the actual Russian world was opened wide to us. All were charmed and delighted by the mighty harmonies of this new poetry, the like of which had never before been known.

Previously, Russian poets had composed poems to order, with venal enthusiasm about illuminations, holiday-making and other events of which they had not the slightest conception themselves and which were utterly foreign to the whole nation. Subsequently, after having freed themselves from this jester's occupation, these worthy people turned to humanist ideas, but as a rule, understood them in a way that was entirely removed from life, and began to build the edifice of the golden age on rocky soil. In this manner, literature sank into sentimentality. Ignoring existing evils, they wept over imaginery sorrows; while bowing low before the prevailing vice, they punished nonexistent wickedness and crowned an idealized virtue. Having eventually become convinced of the futility of this sentimental course, at the beginning of the present century, our poetry decided to admit that the real world was not as good as it had been pictured. But then it found consolation in another ethereal, misty world, among shades and visions and other apparitions. It mourned over something obscure, and languidly hymned panegyrics It sought the misty distance, yearned for something unknown. Of earthly objects it deigned to honor only vague emotions or unbridled eroticism.

Pushkin in his early days paid tribute to all those tendencies but he soon liberated himself from them and created in Russia a native, original poetry. Through his family and other connections and, his education during the period following the events of the national war when the Russians were beginning to become nationally conscious, Pushkin, who had the opportunity to mingle with all classes of Russian society, was able to grasp the true needs and the true character of the national life. He contemplated the Russian countryside and Russian life, and found in them much that was genuinely good and poetic. Delighted by this discovery, he set about depicting reality, and the crowd accepted with enthusiasm his wonderful creations, in which they heard much that was familiar and their own, much that they had seen long ago, but in which they had never expected to find such poetic charm. Pushkin responded to everything in which Russian life manifested itself. He viewed all aspects of that life and followed it in all its stages, in all its parts, never giving himself up to any one thing exclusively.

We do not consider this multiplicity of interests, this absence of a well-defined attitude, as a particular virtue in the poet, as some have wished to do, but we are convinced that it was a necessary phenomenon appropriate to the times. The same thing occurred in science, for the first Russian scholar to show us what science is was himself a chemist, an orator, and a poet into the bargain. So was it in the early days of our poetry, when a single individual might be a writer of odes, a writer of fables, a satirist, an elegist, a tragic writer, a comic writer and so forth. So was it also here when reality was discovered. A new and unexplored world was opened up and it was difficult to make up one's mind to choose any one thing in it. Many different roads had to be tried out before one of them was decided upon. Everything attracted, everything seemed so delightful that melodious notes of enthusiasm and enchantment were drawn irresistibly from the poet's young breast. And the crowd listened to him with reverent love. For them his verses and imagery were a bright memory of what they had hitherto not dared to think about, as though it were vulgar prose or petty gossiping from which one had to keep as far away as possible. And it is in this that the great significance of

Pushkin's poetry lies. It turned people's thoughts to just those things with which they ought to concern themselves and turned them away from all those misty, ghostly, morbidly visionary things in which poets had previously found their ideal of beauty and perfection. It should, therefore, not seem strange that Pushkin was so strongly under the spell of our poor world that he was little troubled by its imperfections. At that time, it was still necessary to show that there was good on earth in order to make people descend to earth from their castles in the air. The time for strict discrimination had not arrived, and Pushkin could not usher it in before it was due. Moreover, it would have been useless had he been able to do so. A few choice spirits would have understood, but the vast majority would have still clung to their dreams. However, Pushkin evolved a poetic form fit for the highest creations of a later period, and his influence prepared the public to accept and understand those creations. The public realized the value of life through the melodious verses of Pushkin, and thenceforth the most bitter revolt against worldly meanness would only inspire people to put matters right, instead of carrying them away from earthly reality to celestial spaces.

That is what we regard now as the historical significance of Pushkin's poetry. But in his time, it could not be clearly seen and he was not himself able to carry out his mission fully. Indeed, the situation could not have been otherwise. As a poet, Pushkin had first of all to be aware how he charmed others, as a poet of a certain time and a certain people he had first of all to belong to his time and to his people.

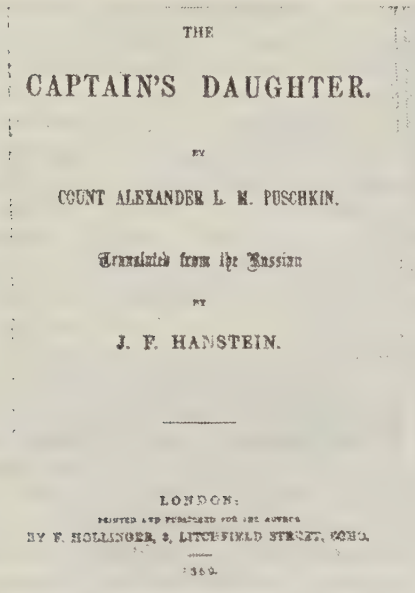
Pushkin was not one of those titanic natures who recognize themselves as intellectually superior to the crowd, who hold themselves aloof in proud isolation, refraining from stooping to its conceptions or arousing its sympathies, but resting content in their own strength. No, Pushkin marched with his time. In spite of his assurances that he despised the crowd, he nevertheless gave them what they wanted. On any other supposition, it would be impossible to explain his immense popularity with the general public.

1. The great Russian critic, Dobrolyubov, like his old, friend Chernishevsky was one of the leaders of the liberation movement of revolutionary democracy of the 60's.
We have quoted here only an excerpt from his article *A Few Biographical and Bibliographical Notes on Pushkin,* published in the magazine *Reports* in 1855.

N. G. CHERNISHEVSKY [1]

In speaking of the significance of Pushkin in the history of the development of our literature and society, we should not consider to what extent the various tendencies to be met with at other stages of society's development found expression in his works, but should take into consideration the most imperative need both of that time and even of the present—the need of literary and humanist interests in general. In this respect, the significance of Pushkin is immeasurably great. Through him literary education was disseminated to tens of thousands of persons, whereas before him literary interests had engaged only a few. He was the first to raise literature to the dignity of a

[1] Chernishevsky—one of the greatest Russian critics; a leader of revolutionary democracy during the '60's. We have quoted here only an excerpt from his important book *The Works of Pushkin,* written in 1855 and published at that time in the magazine *The Contemporary.*



THE

CAPTAIN'S DAUGHTER.

BY

COUNT ALEXANDER L. M. PUSCHKIN.

Translated from the Russian

BY

J. F. HANSTEIN.

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR

BY F. HOLLINGER, 9, LITCHFIELD STREET, SOHO.

1846.

Title page of an English translation of "The Captain's Daughter"

יעוועני אנעגין.

(1822-1831)

Title page of a Jewish publication of "Eugene Onegin" published in the Soviet Union

national cause in our country, whereas previously it had been, to quote the apt title of one of the old magazines, a "pleasant and profitable pastime" for a close circle of *dilettanti*.[1] He was the first poet who in the eyes of the entire Russian public achieved that high place which a great writer should occupy in his country. It was Pushkin who paved the way, and, to some extent, is still paving the way, for the further development of Russian literature.

A. HERZEN

Pushkin is preeminently a national poet yet he can be understood by foreigners as well. He rarely imitates the folk language of Russian songs, but expresses his thoughts exactly as they form in his mind. Like all other great poets, he is always comprehensible to his readers. He grows, becomes gloomy, menacing, tragic; his verses roar like the sea and the forests when shaken by storm, but at the same time he is limpid, bright, and sparkling and thirsts for enjoyment and emotional excitement. The Russian poet is always a realist; he has none of the morbidity, the exaggerated pyschological pathology, the abstract Christian spiritualism which one so often finds in German poets. His muse is not a pale creature with disordered nerves, and draped in a shroud, but a warm-blooded woman with a halo of health, too full of genuine emotions to seek fictitious ones, too unhappy to invent imaginary misfortunes. Pushkin had the pantheistic, epicurian nature of the Greek poets, but in his character there was also an entirely new element. Probing

[1] Chernishevsky is referring to the magazine, *A Pleasant and Profitable Pastime* (1894-98), which appeared under the editorship of Sokhatsky and Podshivalov.

his own nature, he found in the depth of his soul the bitter reflections of a Byron, the caustic irony of the new age.

Many saw in Pushkin an imitator of Byron. The English poet undoubtedly had a profound influence on the Russian poet. Contact with a powerful and attractive human being is bound to exert an influence, people inevitably matture in the rays of genius. Confirmation of one's innermost feelings, the sympathy of one dear to us inspires us and gives our thoughts new meaning. But this natural interaction is by no means imitation. Except for his first poems, where the influence of Byron is clearly evident, each of Pushkin's subsequent works is increasingly more original. Though full of admiration for the great English poet, Pushkin is neither his client nor his parasite, "traduttore" nor "traditore."

At the end of their careers, Pushkin and Byron diverge completely and for a very simple reason. Byron was an Englishman to the depths of his soul, Pushkin a Russian to the depths of his soul, and a Russian of the Petersburg period. Pushkin knew all the sufferings of the civilized being, but he had a faith in the future which the Westerner lacked. Byron was a great, free personality, isolating himself in his independence, more and more enveloping himself in his arrogance, in his proud, skeptical philosophy, and becoming more and more gloomy and unyielding. He could see no immediate future. Stricken by bitter melancholy, when the world became repugnant to him, he threw in his lot with a nation of Slav-Hellenic pirates whom he took to be Greeks of the ancient world. Pushkin, on the other hand, became more and more calm, buried himself in the study of Russian history, collected material for a monograph on Pugachev, wrote the historical drama *Boris Godunov* and became impregnated with an instinctive faith in the future of Russia. Glad and triumphant cries used to break from his breast such as those that had stirred him in his childhood in 1813 and 1814. At one time he was carried away by that Petersburg patriotism which liked to boast of the number of its bayonets and put its faith in cannons. This kind of pride was of course as unpardonable as Byron's cult of the aristocrat, which he carried to extremes, but its cause is obvious. It is sad to be forced to admit it, but Pushkin's patriotism was exceptional. Some great poets, we know, were courtiers (Goethe and Racine, for instance); Pushkin was not a courtier, nor was he a supporter of the government, but the brute force of the State appealed to his patriotic instinct and inspired in him the barbaric desire to answer arguments with shells.

Translated by N. Goold-Verschoyle

We have quoted here an excerpt from Herzen's great work "The Development of Revolutionary Ideas In Russia" (Paris, 1851).

I. TURGENIEV

. . . You cannot be more interested in Puhskin than I am. He is my idol, my teacher, my unattainable ideal, and, as Statius said of Vergil, I can say to each of my works: *"Vestigia semper adora. . .*[1]

And while our great artist (Pushkin), turning his back on the mob and drawing close, as far as he was able, to the people, was pondering his cherished creations—while he was revolving in his mind those characters the study of which involuntarily impels us to think that he alone might have given us both popular drama and popular epic—important, if not great

events were taking place in our society and in our literature. Under the influence of strange vicissitudes, of peculiar circumstances in the life of Europe of that time (1830-40), a conviction gradually gained ground among us—a just conviction, of course, but surely a premature one for that period—that we were not only a great people but that we were a great, stable and firmly established state, and that art and poetry were destined to be the fitting harbingers of this grandeur and strength. . . .[2]

Pushkin himself was a magnificent Russian artist.

Yes, Russian! The very nature, all the characteristics of his poetry coincide with the characteristics, with the nature of our people. Not to mention the manly grace, strength and clarity of his language—this really marvelous truth of his, this absence of falsity and phraseology, this simplicity, this frankness and honesty of feeling—all these good qualities of good Russian people in Pushkin's works strike not only us, his fellow-countrymen, but also those foreigners who have had the opportunity to read him. The opinions of such foreigners are often valuable; they are not swayed by patriotic sentiment. "Your poetry," we were once told by Mérimée, the well-known French writer and admirer of Pushkin, whom he used to call outright the greatest poet of his age, almost in the presence of Victor Hugo himself—"your poetry seeks for truth before all else, and beauty then comes of itself; our poets, on the other hand, take just the opposite course: they strive above all for effect, wit, glitter, and if, in addition to all this, they find it possible not to outrage truthfulness—well then, they will perhaps take this, too, into the bargain. . . ." "In Pushkin," he added, "poetry blossoms in a marvelous manner, as if of itself, out of the most sober prose." Mérimée constantly applied to Pushkin the well-known saying *"proprie communia dicere,"* recognizing this ability to say the commonplace thing in an original way as the very essence of poetry, of that poetry in which the ideal and the real are reconciled. He likewise compared Pushkin to the ancient Greeks, for symmetry of form and for content of image and subject, for absence of all commentary and moral conclusions. I recall how once, when reading *Antiar,* he observed after the last quatrain: "Not every modern poet would have refrained from comment here." Mérimée also admired Pushkin's ability to plunge at once *in medias res,* to "take the bull by the horns," as the French say, and mentioned his *Don Juan* as an example of such craftsmanship.

Yes, Pushkin was a central artist, a man close to the very center of Russian life. And it is to this quality of his that we should attribute also that mighty power of authentically appropriating alien forms which foreigners themselves acknowledge in us, referring to it, it is true, somewhat disdainfully as a capacity for "assimilation." The amazing synthesis in the poetic temperament of Pushkin is a peculiar blending of passion and calm, or, to put it more exactly, an objectiveness of talent in which the subjectiveness of his personality makes itself felt only by virtue of its inner glow and fire.

. . . But can we rightfully call Pushkin as we call Shakespeare, Goethe, or Homer a national poet, in the sense of a universal poet (these two terms often coincide)?

Pushkin could not do all. It must not be forgotten that he alone had to perform two tasks, tasks which took whole centuries and more to accomplish in other countries, namely, to establish a language and to create a literature. Moreover, he was overtaken by that harsh fate which pursues our chosen with almost malicious persistence. Before completing his thirty-seventh year,

he was snatched away from us. With profound sadness, with a certain secret though objectless indignation, one reads the words penned by him in one of his letters, a few months before his death. "My spirit expands; I feel that I can create."

In those periods in the life of a people that are called transition periods, the duty of a thinking man, of a true citizen of his native country is to go forward, despite the difficulty and, it may be, the dirt of the way—to go forward without for one instant losing sight of those fundamental ideals that form the basis for the whole life of the society of which he is a living member. Ten and fifteen years ago, the ceremony which has brought us together here would have been hailed as an act of justice, as a tribute of society's gratitude; but it may well be that at that time there would have been lacking that feeling of unanimity which all of us now experience, without distinction of calling, occupation and years. We have already mentioned the gratifying fact that young people are beginning again to read and study Pushkin; but we should not forget that several successive generations have passed before our eyes—generations for whom the very name of Pushkin was nothing but a name among other names doomed to oblivion.

. . . . Pushkin's services to Russia are great and deserving of popular acknowledgement. He gave final fashion to our language, which in its wealth, strength, logic and beauty of form is now acknowledged even by foreign philologists as holding almost first place after ancient Greek; he reacted in typical characters and immortal harmonies to all currents of Russian life. He was the first who with his mighty hand at last planted the banner of poetry deep in Russian soil; and if the dust of the battle that arose after him darkened this shining banner for a time—now, when this dust is beginning to subside, the victorious standard erected by him again gleams on high.

May this noble image of bronze, erected in the very heart of the ancient capital, shine forth like himself and tell future generations of our right to be called a great people, because this people gave birth, along with other great men, to such a man as he! And as it was said of Shakespeare that everyone who first begins to study letters inevitably becomes a new reader of his works, so we too will hope that each of our descendants, halting with love before Pushkin's monument and understanding the meaning of this love, will thereby prove that he, like Pushkin, has become more Russian and more educated, has become a freer man! Let these last words not surprise you, ladies and gentlemen! Poetry possesses an exalting and therefore *emancipating* moral power. Let us also hope that in the none too distant future even the sons of our simple folk, who do not now read our poet, may come to understand the meaning of this name—Pushkin!—and that they will consciously repeat the words which we recently happened to hear said by unconsciously prattling lips: "That is a monument to a teacher!"

Translated by H. Scott

1. From a letter to M. Stasulevich, (1826-1911) professor of history; editor (publisher of the magazine *European News*).

2. Quotation from a lecture on Pushkin given by Turgeniev in 1859.

From "Reminiscences of L. N. Tolstoy," S. A. Bers (1894) [1]

He (Leo Tolstoy) expressed his view of Pushkin's works and the difference between them and his own works. He said that Pushkin's best works were those written in prose, and the difference between their works was, among

other things, that Pushkin describes an artistic detail with ease and does not trouble about whether it will be noticed and understood by the reader; he (Tolstoy), on the other hand, importunes his reader with this artistic detail until he has brought it out clearly.

From a letter from Leo Tolstoy to P. D. Golokhvostov (March, 1874) [2]

Is it long since you have read through Pushkin's prose works? Do me a favor and read rst of all *Stories of Belkin*. They should be studied and studied by every writer.

I read them the other day and I cannot describe to you the beneficial effect they had on me.

And why is their study so important? The realm of poetry is boundless as life, and the objects of poetry have their place eternally assigned to them in a certain hierarchy, and the mixing of lower and higher or confusing the lower with the higher is one of the principal stumbling blocks. In great poets such as Pushkin, this harmonious arrangement of objects in their right places has been brought to perfection. I know that this cannot be analyzed, but it is sensed and assimilated. The reading of gifted but unharmonious writers (the same is true of music and painting) stimulates and, it would seem, urges one on to work and widens one's field, but it does so erroneously, whereas the reading of a Homer or a Pushkin narrows down one's field and if it rouses one to work it does so unerringly.

From S. A. Tolstoy's diary [3]

. . . . Lev Nikolayevich (Tolstoy) took the book (Pushkin's *Stories of Belkin)* and began to read passages from them beginning with the words: "'Guests were arriving at the L . . .'s country house . . . ." "How splendid, how simple!" said Lev Nikolayevich. "Straight to work. That is the way to write. Pushkin is my teacher." The same evening Lev Nikolayevich began to write *Anna Karenina* and read over the beginning to me; after a few introductory words about families, he started directly: "Everything was in a state of upheaval in the home of the Oblonskis . . . ." etc. This was on March 19, 1872.

From the reminiscences of A. Zenger (1904).

. . . . I should like to say further that Chekhov has another important trait; he is one of those rare writers who, like Dickens and Pushkin and a few others resembling them, can be read over and over again. I know that from personal experience.

From N. N. Gusev's diary, "Two Years With L. N. Tolstoy" (1912) [4]

. . . . I was feeling weak to-day, could not sleep and all the time read, no one will guess what—*Eugene Onegin!* And I recommend everyone to read it again. What amazing art, to be able, in two or three strokes, to draw a picture of the life of that period.

And I am not talking of such . . . . as Tatvana's letter . . . . But Pushkin's best work is his prose—said Lev Nikolayevich.

Translated by N. Goold-Verschoyle

1. A quotation from the reminiscences of S. A. Bers, brother of Tolstoy's wife. His

reminiscences about Tolstoy, from which this quotation has been taken, were published in 1894 in a separate book.

2. Addressee—Golokhvostov, P. (1839-1892) historian and research worker of the people's epoch.

3. A quotation from the notes of the wife of the writer. *Guests were arriving* — the beginning of the novel was worked out by Pushkin in 1828 but was never finished.

4. Gusev, N.—One of Tolstoy's friends and at one time his secretary.

M. GORKY

As early as 1907, Maxim Gorky proposed the compilation of *A History of Literature for the People.* The rough draft of this unfinished work, in which the great writer included a number of fragmentary passages devoted to Pushkin and his work, has been preserved, and these passages are being published for the first time. The manuscript was edited by S. Balukhati, who reconstructed a number of places difficult to read, as well as unfinished or crossed-out phrases and observations.

As long as Pushkin followed the trodden path of romanticism, imitated the French, Byron, Batushkov, and Zhukovsky, society recognized his extraordinary talent and appreciating the music of the verse, applauded the poet. But as soon as he stood on his own feet and began to speak in pure Russian, in the language of the people, as soon as he began to introduce everyday life and folk themes into literature, as soon as he began to portray real life, simply and truthfully, society began to treat him with scorn and hostility, feeling in him a stern judge, an honest witness to Russian vulgarity, ignorance, enslavement, brutality and servility before the ruling power.

It was said about him that he was exiled to Odessa instead of to Siberia because he allowed himself to be flogged. In Odessa he was slandered, regarded as an exile, a petty official, and his talent was ignored. Enraged, he was driven "to counterpose the table of ranks either by the democratic pride in intellect and talent, or by the 600 years of my noble ancestry."

His family treated him with suspicion and animosity; once his father even accused him of attempted violence, thus threatening him with penal servitude.

He was slandered by Bulgarin, distorted by the censor, and tormented by the reprimands of Benkendorf. The poems *My Forefathers, On the Recovery of Lukull,* and the satirical quatrains finally aroused an irreconcilable hatred of the poet among officialdom which, shrewd individuals skilfully fanned. At last, malicious accusations were set in motion against him—they shot shortly thereafter.

His fate entirely corresponds to the fate of any great man forced by historic circumstances to live among petty, vulgar and selfish people—remember Leonardo da Vinci and Michaelangelo. Pushkin occupies the same eminent position in Russian literature that Leonardo does in European art. We must know how to eliminate that which is accidental in him, that which is to be explained by the conditions of the time and personal inherited traits—everything aristocratic, everything temporary. These elements are not ours, are foreign to us and unwanted.

When we have cast all this aside, the great Russian poet of the people will rise before us as the creator of stories that enchant with their beauty and content; as the author of the first realistic novel, *Eugene Onegin,* and our best historical drama, *Boris Godunov*; as the poet whose verses have been unsurpassed either in beauty or in power of expression of thoughts and feelings, as the poet who is the great father of Russian literature.

But what does Pushkin give to the proletarian reader?

First, his creative work demonstrates that an author rich in the knowledge of life—surcharged with experience so to speak—in his artistic conceptions (the characters of Eugene Onegin, Count Nulin, Dubrovsky, etc.), breaks through the framework of his class, rises above its psychology and tendencies, and presents it to us objectively—from the outside an unsuccessful and unstable organization of a part of historical experience—from the inside the psychology of self-interest, full of irreconcilable contradictions,

Unquestionably, Pushkin is an aristocrat; at one time he himself took pride in this fact. But it is important for us to know that even in his youth he felt the constraint and oppressiveness of aristocratic traditions, understood the intellectual poverty and cultural weakness of his class, all of which—the life of the aristocracy, all its traits and weaknesses—he expressed with startling truth.

A clear cut class writer strives to present his class as the possessor, the owner of irrefutable social truths which have a binding authority for the masses, and like dogmas, demand unconditional submission. Such a writer portrays the ideas, feelings and beliefs of his class as the only honest, correct and complete expression of every angle of life—the entire experience of mankind.

In Pushkin, we have a writer, overflowing with impressions of life, which he strove to express in poetry and prose with the greatest fidelity, with the greatest realism; with his genius, he succeeded in doing so. His works bear the invaluable testimony of a man of understanding, knowledge and integrity to the traits, habits and opinions of a specific epoch, and are in essence inimitable illustrations of Russion history.

The class writer, analyzing his observations by the criterion of his class interests, declares to us: "Here is the truth I have arrived at from observing the life of man—there is no other truth, there cannot be!"

This is to convert the tendency of one class into a dogma binding upon everyone else, is to preach the necessity for the masses to submit to moral and legal standards advantageous only to the ruling class; herein art is sacrificed to the interests of warring politics, is degraded to an instrument of war—and does not convince us since we see or feel its inner falseness.

"Regardless of my origin," says Pushkin, "the expression of my thoughts would never be influenced by it."

These are the words of a man who felt that the interests of all nations were above the interests of the nobility alone; and he spoke thus because his personal experience was wider and deeper than the experience of the nobility.

Separate Remarks—Crossed out Phrases

I shall not attempt to demonstrate the esthetic value of Pushkin's poetry—to do so would require a comparison of his poems with those of the best writers of our time, a study of the language from the point of view of richness of vocabulary, simplicity, terseness, etc.

. . . You know that there is not a single poet who can or is able to write such a marvelous hymn of joy as Pushkin's *Song of Bacchus*.

. . . Pushkin loved freedom sincerely and passionately.

. . . At that time, he was not the only one to await the moment when the dawn of "intellectual freedom" would finally flare up over the father-

land; however, he awaited it with a longing and passion that no one had previously experienced.

. . . He keenly understood the significance of historical events.

. . . It is customary to accuse Pushkin of a contemptuous attitude towards the great unwashed, the demos, and this accusation has been urged by the foulest reactionaries who have more than once tried to claim the great poet as their own.

. . . The poems of Slepushkin appear in Russian literature in 1822. Slepushkin is a Yaroslavl peasant, a miller, a vendor of stewed pears,—then a shopkeeper, a self-made poet, and a portrait painter who was encouraged to write poetry by the Academy of Science, which presented him with a gold medal and 500 rubles. The tsar gave him an honorary caftan and a gold watch. His was a mediocre talent, although Senkovsky compared him with the famous poet of ancient Greece, Theocritus, and the poetry of Slepushkin was translated into English, French and German.

Pushkin's attention was immediately drawn toward him, he made his acquaintance and wrote to Delvig about him: "Slepushkin has real native talent, send him my poems, but instead of imitating me let him follow his own path."

Later when he learned that the success went to the poet's head and that he was being spoilt by it, Pushkin exclaimed: "It is you who have destroyed the man, forcing all kinds of rubbish down his throat. He should have been cherished, for he is from the people."

Translated by Selma Schwartz

A. V. LUNACHARSKY

Pushkin was the Russian spring, Pushkin was the Russian morning, Pushkin was the Russian Adam. Pushkin did for us what Dante and Petrarch did for Italy, what the seventeenth century giants did for France and what Lessing, Schiller and Goethe did for Germany. He suffered much because he was the first, although even those Russian "story-tellers" who came after him, from Gogol to Korolenko, by their own admissions bore no small burden of sorrow on their shoulders. He suffered much because his wonderful refreshing genius bloomed in a bleak Russia where winter was scarcely over, where it was still almost dark. But because of this he had a lead over all other Russian writers. He was first comer and by squatter's rights took possession of the greatest treasures of the whole literary field.

And he possessed them with an authoritative, skillful and tender hand. He expressed the keynotes of Russian nature in almost all spheres of inner life, with such fullness, melody and grace that gratitude fills the heart of every one who having learned the great and powerful Russian tongue, for the first time stooping to the fountain of sacred and true art, drinks from Pushkin.

If we compare this star of our remarkable literature with other creators of great literatures, with the priceless geniuses: Shakespeare, Goethe, Dante and so on, we are involuntarily struck by a certain complete originality of Pushkin's, an unexpected originality.

What, indeed, accounted for the richness and remarkableness of our subsequent literature? Its pathos. It is painfully sensitive, it is lofty and noble, it is tinged with martyrdom, it is prophetic.

And incidentally if we glance at Pushkin's work straightaway, without considering the details, the first thing that surprises us is the freedom, the clear

light, a kind of dancing gracefulness, eternal youth, youth that verges on frivolity. Mozart minuets are to be heard. The brush of Raphael moves across the canvas and produces harmonious figures.

Whence this happiness of Pushkin's, in view of the unhappiness of his own life? Is it, perhaps, an entirely individual feature? I think not. I think that here too Pushkin was an organ, an element, a part of Russian literature in all its historic organic unity.

A mighty hero rises and strength courses through his veins. There is already a forecast of bitterness and sorrow, there is already a presentiment of the full depth and torment of individual problems, but as yet there is no time for them and even they cause rejoicing. Everything rejoices, for the splendid youth is strong. In Pushkin the nobleman, it was not the class that awoke (although to some extent it placed its stamp upon him) but the people, the nation, the language, the historic destiny. Behold the seeds which finally resulted in our bitter and blinding revolution. Pushkin voiced the first greeting to life, to existence, personified by those billions of human beings in many generations who through his lips spoke articulately for the first time.

Even Dante, in the Thirteenth century, had a great culture behind him, his own native culture, scholastic and ancient. But the Russian people awoke late. To be sure Pushkin assimilated Molière, Shakespeare and Byron with amazing swiftness. In this sense he was cultured, but all this did not attract him, this was not in his own past, this was not in his blood. His past, that lived in his veins, was the youth of an awakening people, in the deep night of a cheerless historic destiny, of the heavy and mighty strength of the people which began to thaw in the dungeon days of Nicholas I. And his future was not the years that he lived on earth nor his sad end, nor his immortal fame. His future was the whole future of the Russian people, a great future which in itself determines the fate of all mankind.

With Pushkin we made a splendid start. We should know Pushkin well because he provides us with an extremely reassuring knowledge of our people's strength. Not patriotism leads us to this but the recognition of the necessity and inevitability of the special service of our people to its brother peoples. We should love Pushkin well especially in our times when a new spring is beginning, following directly, as it were, after a rather rotten autumn.

The life of the Russian bourgeoisie by swift stages lapsed into the spasm of epigonism, into decadence, and from decadence into that artistic morass that was bred by the culture of other people of the bourgeois west.

The new spring comes in with storms and flurries and we must pay to art the measure of attention which was possible for the best people of Russia at the time of the first Pushkin spring. But between the proletarian spring, such as it will be when the earth begins to deck itself in flowers, and the Pushkin spring, there is far more in common, as I already said on one occasion, than between that approaching spring and the many colored tinsel gold which covered the soil before the advent of the thunderous present.

A. S. Pushkin

The Negro Godson of Peter the Great[1]

"I am in Paris. I have begun to live, not merely breathe." (Dmitryev, *A Traveler's Diary.*)

Chapter I

Among the young people sent by Peter the Great to foreign countries in order to acquire the knowledge essential to a reformed state, was one Ibrahim, a Negro and the godson of Peter himself. He studied at the Military School in Paris, was graduated as captain of the artillery, distinguished himself in the Spanish war and, badly wounded, returned to Paris. The Emperor, in the midst of his vast labors, never failed to inquire after his favorite, and always received the most flattering accounts of the young man's progress and behavior. Peter was very pleased with him and frequently called him home to Russia. But Ibrahim was in no hurry. He excused himself on various pretexts: his wound, his desire to continue his studies, his lack of money. And Peter heeded his requests, urged him to take care of his health, thanked him for his zeal in learning and, although exceedingly parsimonious in his own expenditures, never spared for him his treasury, accompanying the currency with fatherly advice and admonitory warnings.

According to all historical records, nothing could compare with the frivolity, madness and luxury of French society of that time. There remained not a trace of the severity of the last days of Louis XIV, when the Court was distinguished by extreme piety, solemnity and the most rigid etiquette. The Regent, who combined many splendid qualities with every kind of vice, had, unfortunately, not a vestige of hypocrisy in his disposition. The orgies at the Palais Royal were no secret to Paris: the example was infectious. Then it was that John Law came into prominence; greed for money went hand-in-hand with the thirst for pleasure and diversion; estates dwindled and vanished, morals sank lower and lower; the French laughed and speculated, while the state crumbled away to the light strains of satirical vaudeville.

Meanwhile, society afforded a truly interesting picture. The spread of education and the craving for entertainment affected a reconciliation among the various cliques. Wealth, courtesy, glory, talent, eccentricity—all that provided food for curiosity or promised pleasure was welcomed. Literature, learning and philosophy deserted their quiet, secluded cloisters and appeared in the great world at Fashion's bidding, ready to shape her opinions. Woman reigned supreme, but no longer demanded adoration. Shallow politeness superseded profound respect. The scandalous conduct of the Duc de Richelieu, the Alcibiades of the new Athens, is recorded by history and gives an idea of the morals of that time.

"Temps fortuné, marqué par la licence,
Où la folie, agitant son grelot,
D'un pied léger parcourt toute la France,
Où nul mortel ne daigne être dévot.
Où l'on fait tout excepté pénitence."

[1] The Negro described in this novel is Pushkin's great-grandfather on his mother's side.

Ibrahim's appearance, education and keen intellect attracted a great deal of attention in Paris. The ladies showered invitations upon him, and vied with one another in ensnaring "*le negre du Czar*" as a guest. The Regent invited him more than once to his gay *assemblées:* Ibrahim was present at supper-parties animated by the brilliance of the young Voltaire, of old Chaulieu, the conversation of Montesquieu and Fontenelle; not a single ball, festival or first night at the theater did he miss; he gave himself up to this whirl of pleasures with all the ardor of his years and nature. But it was not only the dreary prospect of leaving this round of brilliant diversions for the stern simplicity of the court at St. Petersburg that dismayed Ibrahim. There were stronger bonds that held him to Paris. The young African was in love.

The Comtesse D., although not in the first flower of her youth, was at that time still famous for her beauty. Upon leaving the convent at the age of seventeen, she had been given in marriage to a man whom she had not learned to love and who, subsequently, was never in the least grieved by this fact. Rumor had it that her lovers were many, but the code of her circle was indulgent, and she retained her good name since she had never been involved in any ridiculous or scandalous incident. Her salon was the most fashionable of all. There the cream of Parisian society met. Ibrahim was presented to her by young Merville, who was said to be her latest lover and took pains to let everyone know it.

The Comtesse welcomed Ibrahim courteously, but otherwise did not pay him any particular attention, which he found flattering. Generally, people treated the young Negro as if he were a freak of nature, surrounded him eagerly, and showered greetings and questions upon him. This curiosity, hidden though it was under the cloak of goodwill, wounded his vanity. The agreeable attention of women—almost the sole purpose of all our efforts—not only failed to please him, but even aroused in him feelings of bitterness and indignation. He felt that for them he was some rare species of wild beast, a strange creature accidentally transplanted into a world that had nothing in common with him. He even envied people who had no distinction, and regarded their insignificance as a singular blessing.

The fear that no woman could ever love him, which prevented him from becoming conceited and a prey to his own vanity, imbued his bearing with a special charm for women. His conversation, simple and direct, pleased the Comtesse D., who was tired of the endless sallies and delicate inuendoes of French wit. Ibrahim visited her often. She gradually grew accustomed to the young Negro's appearance, and even found something attractive about that curly head, so black in contrast to the powdered wigs in her salon. (Ibrahim had been wounded in the head, and wore a band instead of a wig.) He was then twenty-seven years of age, tall and well-built; many a beauty looked at him with feelings more flatteringly tender than mere curiosity. But Ibrahim, who was on his guard, either saw nothing or thought it mere coquetry. Whenever his gaze met that of the Comtesse, however, his mistrust would disappear. Her eyes expressed so much sympathy; her manner toward him was so frank and easy that it was impossible to suspect her of a trace of coquetry or mockery.

He thought not of love—yet to see the Comtesse daily was already a vital necessity for him. He sought encounters with her everywhere, and every encounter seemed to him an unexpected boon from heaven. The Comtesse divined his feelings before he himself became aware of them. Say what you will, the sight of a love without hope or claims touches the feminine heart

sooner than all the arts of seduction. The Comtesse followed Ibrahim's every movement, hearkened to his every word; in his absence she seemed preoccupied and absent-minded.

Merville was the first to remark this mutual attraction, and congratulated Ibrahim. Nothing is better calculated to inflame love than an encouraging remark by an outsider, for love is blind and, mistrusting itself, clutches at any straw for support.

Merville's words awakened Ibrahim. Never until then had the possibility of possessing his beloved presented itself to his imagination; now hope illuminated his soul; he fell madly in love. In vain the Comtesse, startled by the fury of his passion, tried to stay it with promises of friendship and exhortations to be reasonable; she felt her own will give way. Incautious requitals of his love followed in rapid succession, and at last, swept away by the force of the passion she had aroused, and helpless in its power, she gave herself to the enraptured Ibrahim.

Nothing can be concealed for long from the eyes of the world. The new *"affaire"* of the Comtesse soon became known. Some ladies wondered at her choice, but to many it seemed quite natural. Some laughed, others regarded it as unpardonable rashness on her part. In the first transports of love, Ibrahim and the Comtesse noticed nothing; but soon the equivocal jokes of the men and the caustic remarks of the women came to their ears. Ibrahim's cold, haughty bearing had hitherto guarded him from such attacks; now he bore them with a bad grace, not knowing how to parry them. The Comtesse, accustomed as she was to the respect of the world in which she moved, could not bear to see herself the object of gossip and derision. She would turn to Ibrahim in tears, sometimes complaining, sometimes overwhelming him with reproaches, sometimes pleading with him not to defend her on any account, if he did not want to provoke more scandal and ruin her completely.

A new circumstance had arisen to compromise her still more. The consequence of this rash attachment became plain. Consolation, advice, recommendations—were all exhausted, and all proved equally futile. The Comtesse foresaw her inevitable ruin, and awaited it in despair.

As soon as the Comtesse's condition became known, gossip made fresh headway; delicate ladies threw up their hands in horror, men laid wagers on whether the Comtesse's offspring would be black or white. Hundreds of epigrams were composed about her husband, who, alone of all Paris, knew and suspected nothing.

The fatal moment was approaching. The Comtesse's state of mind was frightful. Ibrahim visited her every day. He saw her spiritual and physical strength gradually ebbing away. Her tears and her terror increased with every minute. At length, she began to suffer the first throes of pain. Action was taken at once. A way was found to get the Comte away for a while. The doctor arrived. Two days previously, a poor woman had been persuaded to yield her own new-born infant to the Comtesse; a messenger was sent for it. Ibrahim waited in a little room near the chamber where the unfortunate Comtesse lay. Not daring to breathe, he listened to her hollow groans, to the servants' whispers, and the doctor's orders. Her child was long in coming. Every groan rent his soul, every silence filled him with terror .... Suddenly, he heard an infant's faint cry, and, unable to control himself any longer, rushed into the bedroom.

A black infant lay on the bed at her feet. Ibrahim stood beside the child. His heart throbbed. With a trembling hand he blessed his son. The Com-

tesse smiled faintly and stretched out a feeble hand to him . . . but the doctor, fearful of the consequences of too great agitation for his patient, drew Ibrahim away from the bed. The newborn child was placed in a covered basket, borne away down a concealed staircase and out of the house. The other woman's child was brought and laid in the cradle. Ibrahim drove away from the house feeling a little more at ease. The Comte was expected. He arrived home late in the evening, and was greatly pleased to learn of his spouse's happy delivery. Thus it happened that those who were looking forward with delight to a scandal were disappointed in their expectations and had to content themselves with gossip. Everything appeared to be in perfect order.

But Ibrahim had a premonition that his fortunes were about to change, and that sooner or later his affair with the Comtesse would reach the ears of the Comte. In that event, no matter what happened, the Comtesse's ruin was inevitable. He loved her passionately and was loved as deeply in return; but the Comtesse was wilful and thoughtless. He was not her first love. Hate and loathing might come to replace the tenderest feelings in her heart. Ibrahim could foresee the moment when her ardor would cool, and although he had never, up to then, known jealousy, he could well imagine it, and the thought filled him with horror. He felt that the pain of parting would be less cruel, and resolved to break off this unfortunate affair. He would leave Paris and return to where Peter and a vague sense of duty had long since called him.

Chapter II

Days and months passed, and still the enamored Ibrahim could not bring himself to part with the woman he had seduced. The Comtesse's attachment for him increased with every hour.

Their son was being reared in a distant province. Gossip was beginning to subside, and the lovers were enjoying a period of calm. The storm had passed; they remembered it in silence, and endeavored not to think of the future.

Once it happened that Ibrahim was at a levée given by the Regent. The Regent halted for a moment before Ibrahim and, handing him a letter, told him to read it at his leisure. The letter was from Peter I. The Tsar, sensing the true reason for his godson's absence, had written to the Regent that he did not intend to curb Ibrahim in any way, he might return to Russia or not, as he willed, but that in any event he might rest assured that Peter would never forsake his godson. This letter touched Ibrahim to the heart. From that moment his course was clear. Next day he announced to the Regent his intention of leaving at once for Russia.

"Think well of what you are about to do," advised the Regent. "Russia is not your own country, nor do I think you are ever likely to see the torrid land of your birth again. Your long sojourn in France has rendered you a stranger to the climate and manner of life in half-savage Russia. You were not born a subject of Peter's. Take advantage of his generous permission; remain in France, the country for which you have already shed your blood. Be certain that your services and talents will not be allowed to remain without their just reward."

Ibrahim thanked him but remained firm of purpose.

"I deeply regret your decision," said the Regent, "but I think it is a correct

one." He permitted Ibrahim to leave his service and wrote the Tsar a full account of what had transpired.

Soon Ibrahim was ready for the journey. The eve of his departure he spent as usual with the Comtesse. She had heard nothing, and Ibrahim could not muster up sufficient courage to tell her. She was gay and unsuspecting. More than once she called him to her side and bantered him about his pensiveness. After supper all the guests left. Only the Comtesse, her husband and Ibrahim remained in the drawing-room. The unhappy lover would have given everything in the world to be alone with her a few minutes, but the Comte had settled himself so comfortably by the fireside that there was apparently no hope of getting him out of the room. All three were silent. At last the Comtesse wished them good-night. Ibrahim's heart contracted, and he suddenly felt to the full the agony of parting. He stood rooted to the spot. "Good-night," repeated the Comtesse. Still he did not move. . . .

At last everything went dark before his eyes, his head swam, he could hardly make his way out of the room. On reaching home, he sat down, well-nigh crazed with grief, to write to the Comtesse:

"I am going away, dear Lénore, I am leaving you forever. I write to you about it because I have not the strength to tell you in any other way.

"My happiness could not last. My enjoyment of it was contrary to fate and to nature. Certain it was that you would cease to love me; the enchantment would vanish forever. This thought tormented me constantly, even at those moments when it seemed that I had forgotten all, when I basked at your feet in your passionate self-denial, your unbounded tenderness. . . A frivolous society condemns mercilessly in practice what it permits in theory: its heartless gibes would, sooner or later, have been too strong for you, would have subdued your fiery soul—until at last you would have come to be ashamed of your passion.

"What then would have become of me? Better to die, better to part before that terrible moment. . . .

"Your peace of mind is dearer to me than anything in the world, but this you cannot hope to enjoy while the eyes of the world are turned upon you. Think of all that you have suffered, all the insults, all the torments of fear; remember the terror attending the birth of our son. Consider: ought I to subject you longer to these fears and dangers? Why strive to unite the fortunes of such a tender, beautiful creature with the misfortunes of a Negro, a pitiful creature indeed, scarcely accorded the honor of being called a man?

"Forgive me then, Lénore; forgive me, my dear, my only friend. In leaving you, I leave the first and last joy of my life. I have neither country nor kin: I am going back to Russia, where my only pleasure will be my complete solitude. Henceforth, I shall devote myself to studies which, if they do not alleviate my pain, will serve at least to draw my thoughts away from poignant memories of days of ecstasy and bliss. Forgive me, Lénore—to tear myself from this letter is like tearing myself from your embrace; forgive me, may you be happy—and think at times of the poor Negro, your faithful Ibrahim."

That same night he set out for Russia.

The journey did not seem as terrible to him as he had expected. His imagination triumphed over actuality. The further he was from Paris, the livelier and nearer appeared the objects he was leaving behind forever.

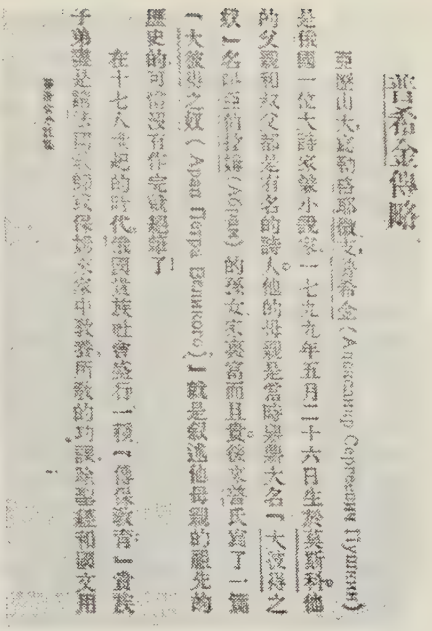
In this manner, scarcely noticing his surroundings, he reached the Russian frontier. It was already autumn, but in spite of the bad state of the roads,

the post-chaise drove like the wind. On the morning of the seventeenth day he arrived at Krassnoye Selo.

Only twenty-eight miles separated him from St. Petersburg. While the horses were being changed, Ibrahim went into the post-house to rest. In one corner sat a tall man. He was dressed in a green caftan and was leaning on the table, reading the Hamburg newspapers and smoking a clay pipe. He raised his head as he heard someone enter. "Bah, Ibrahim!" he exclaimed, rising from the bench. "Welcome, godson!"

Ibrahim recognized Peter, and was about to throw himself upon the Tsar's neck with joy, but remembered himself in time and halted respectfully. The Tsar embraced him and kissed him on the brow.

"I was informed of your arrival," said Peter, "and have been awaiting you here since yesterday."


彼得大帝的黑教子傳略

Title page of a Chinese translation of "The Negro Godson of Peter the Great"

Ibrahim could find no words to express his gratitude.

"Order the carriage to follow us with the baggage," continued the Tsar, "and let us drive home together."

A chaise was brought for Peter; they took their places in it and drove away. In an hour and a half they were in St. Petersburg. Ibrahim gazed with curiosity at the newborn capital which had arisen out of a marsh at an autocrat's command. Exposed dams, canals without embankments, and wooden bridges everywhere bore witness to the recent victory of man's will over the forces of nature. The houses appeared to have been put up hastily. In the whole town there was nothing grand to be seen save the Neva, which, though it had not as yet been enclosed in its granite frame, was already crowded with men-o'-war and merchant-vessels.

The Tsar's carriage drew up before the place known as the Tsaritsa's Garden. On the steps leading up to the entrance, Peter was greeted by a beautiful woman of about thirty-five, dressed according to the latest Paris fashion. Peter kissed her on the mouth and then, taking Ibrahim by the hand, said, "Did you recognize my godson, Katenka? I pray you, love him and be gracious to him as before."

Catherine turned her penetrating black eyes upon Ibrahim and graciously extended her hand. Two lovely young girls, tall and straight and fresh as roses, could be seen directly behind her. They now respectfully approached Peter. "Lisa," said he to one of them, "do you remember the little black boy who used to steal my apples for you at Oranienbaum? This is he!" The Grand Duchess laughed and blushed.

They all went into the dining-room. The Tsar had evidently been expected, for the table was already laid. Peter sat down to dine with his family

and invited Ibrahim to be his guest. At dinner the Tsar conversed with him on various topics, asking about the Spanish war, about domestic affairs in France, about the Regent, whom he loved, although there was much in that prince which he condemned. Ibrahim had a mind at once accurate and observant, and his replies afforded Peter much satisfaction. He recalled Ibrahim's childhood, and began to recount incidents from it with such good-nature and gaiety that no one would have suspected this kind, hospitable host of being the hero of the battle of Poltava, and the powerful and terrible transformer of Russia.

After dinner the Tsar withdrew, according to the Russian custom, to rest. Ibrahim remained with the Empress and the Grand Duchesses. He endeavored to satisfy their curiosity about Paris, described the life there, the festivities, the caprices of fashion. In the meantime, some of the Tsar's favorite courtiers and statesmen had arrived. Ibrahim recognized the splendid Prince Menshikov, who, when he noticed the Negro in conversation with Catherine, cast a haughty glance at him. Prince Yakov Dolgoruky, Peter's stern counsellor, the scholar Bruce, famous among the people as the Russian Faust; the young Raguzinsky, a former comrade of Ibrahim's, and several others had come to report to the Tsar and to receive his orders.

Peter appeared again in about two hours' time. Turning to Ibrahim, he said: "Let us see if you have forgotten your old duties. Take a slate and follow me."

Peter, as was his custom, shut himself up in the workshop and busied himself with affairs of State. There he received Bruce, Prince Dolgoruky and General Devier, Chief of the Police, while dictating orders and ukases to Ibrahim. The latter could not but admire the quickness and firmness of the Tsar's mind, his power of concentration, his flexibility, and the versatility of his nature. When the work was finished, Peter took out his note-book from his pocket to see if all the tasks he had set himself for that day had been accomplished. Then, as he was leaving the workshop, he turned to Ibrahim and said: "It is late; I fear you must be tired. Sleep here tonight, as you did in the old days, and tomorrow morning I shall come and wake you."

Left alone, Ibrahim could hardly collect himself. Here he was in St. Petersburg; he had seen again the great man under whose protection he had spent his childhood, years of the closest association, while as yet his unformed mind had not known how to value his patron. A feeling akin to remorse stirred in him when he owned to himself that the Comtesse, for the first time since their parting, had not been the only object of his thoughts all day. He saw clearly that the new mode of life awaiting him, life of activity and constant occupation, might revive a soul, wearied with passion, idleness and secret despair. The idea of becoming the constant companion of a great man and, together with him, influencing the destiny of a great people, aroused in Ibrahim for the first time a noble ambition for fame. In this state of mind he lay down upon the camp-bed that had been prepared for him, and was soon borne away on his usual dreams to distant Paris and the arms of his dear Comtesse.

Chapter III

Peter kept his promise and roused Ibrahim the following morning, congratulating him upon his appointment to the Preobrazhensky Guards. He was made lieutenant-captain of the Bombardier Company, of which Peter him-

self was captain. The courtiers now surrounded Ibrahim, each striving to worm himself into the good graces of the new favorite. The haughty Prince Menshikov warmly shook hands with him. Prince Sheremetev inquired after his Paris acquaintances, and Golovin invited him to dinner. Golovin's example was followed by the rest, so that Ibrahim received enough invitations that day to last him at least a month.

Though Ibrahim's new life was a monotonous round of duties, he was kept so busy that he did not find it tedious. As time went by, he grew more and more attached to the Tsar and came to understand his lofty mind better. To study the ideas of a great man is one of the most fascinating of sciences. Ibrahim could observe Peter in the Senate arguing with Buturlin and Dolgoruky and settling legislative matters; in the Admiralty asserting the importance of Russia's sea-power; in his hours of recreation examining, together with Theophanus, Gavriel Buzhinsky and Kopyevich, translations of foreign publicists, or visiting a factory, the workshop of a craftsman or a scholar. To Ibrahim, Russia itself seemed a great workshop, where only machines moved, where every man was busy with his own work in accordance with the ordered scheme of things. He regarded it as his duty to keep his nose to the grindstone and to think as little as possible of the gaieties of Paris. It was more difficult for him, however, to resist indulgence in other, dearer memories: he often thought of the Comtesse D., imagined her righteous indignation, her tears and dejection. . . . Sometimes a dreadful thought tore at his breast: suppose the Comtesse went back to the pleasures of society and there were to be a new affair, another fortunate lover. Then he would give a convulsive start; jealousy would cause his African blood to boil, and scalding tears were ready to flow down his black face.

One morning, as he was sitting in his study, busy over his papers, he suddenly heard loud greetings in French. He turned quickly and at that moment young Korsakov, whom he had last seen in the whirl of Parisian society, embraced him warmly, uttering exclamations of delight.

"I have only just arrived," declared Korsakov, "and have come straight to you! All your Paris acquaintances send you their regards and regret your absence! The Comtesse D. told me expressly to call on you; here is a letter from her!"

Ibrahim trembled as he seized the letter and saw the familiar handwriting. He hardly dared believe the sight of his eyes.

"What delights and astonishes me," continued Korsakov, "is that you have not died of ennui in this barbarous city! What can people find to do here? How can one pass one's time? Who is your tailor? Is there at least an opera here?"

Ibrahim answered in an absent-minded way that the Tsar was just now working in the shipyard. Korsakov laughed outright.

"I can see you are in no frame of mind to talk to me just now," he said. "Very well, we can do all our talking some other time. Now I shall go and present myself to the Tsar." With these words, he spun round on his heel and hurried out of the room.

As soon as Ibrahim found himself alone, he hastened to break the seal of the letter. The Comtesse wrote in a gentle, plaintive tone, reproaching him for his deceit and mistrust.

"You say," she wrote, "that my peace of mind is dearer to you than anything in the world. Ibrahim! If this were true, how could you have subjected me to the condition into which I was thrown by the sudden news of your

departure? Were you afraid that I would have held you? I can assure you that, much as I loved you, I would have found strength to sacrifice my love to your well-being and to what you regard as your duty."

The letter closed with passionate declarations of love; she begged him to write to her sometimes, even if there were no hope of ever seeing each other again.

Ibrahim read the letter over twenty times, kissing the precious lines ecstatically. He burned with impatience to hear more of the Comtesse, and was just getting ready to go to the Admiralty in the hope of finding Korsakov there, when the door opened and the young man himself appeared once more. He had already been to see the Tsar, and seemed extremely pleased with himself, as usual.

"Between ourselves," he confided to Ibrahim, "the Tsar is a queer fellow! Just imagine, I found him, dressed in some sort of canvas jacket, upon the mast of a ship. I had to scramble up there with my despatches. There I was—standing on a rope-ladder! I had not even room to make a decent bow. I was thoroughly embarassed, I can tell you, a thing that has never happened to me in my life. The Tsar looked me up and down when he had finished reading his letters and was evidently favorably impressed with the good taste and elegance of my attire. At any rate, he smiled and invited me to the Assembly this evening. But I am a complete stranger to St. Petersburg. During my six years abroad, I have quite forgotten local customs; therefore, be kind enough to be my mentor, call for me on the way to the Assembly and let me be your *protegé* for today."

Ibrahim agreed to this, and hastily steered the conversation to a subject nearer his heart.

"What news of the Comtesse D.?"

"The Comtesse? Oh, at first she was deeply grieved at your departure, naturally enough, and then—naturally enough—she found consolation by degrees and took a new lover; and do you know who he is? That long-legged Marquis R.! Now why are you rolling the whites of your African eyes at me? Do you think it very strange of her, then? Do you not know that it is not in the nature of man, and particularly of woman, to nurse grief for very long? Think this over well, while I for my part go and rest after the journey. Do not forget to call for me."

What were now the feelings aroused in Ibrahim's bosom? Jealousy? Fury? Despair? No, only a deep, heavy melancholy that weighed him down. He kept repeating to himself: "I foresaw this; it was bound to happen." Then he took out the Comtesse's letter and read it through once more. His head drooped; he wept bitterly. His tears flowed for a long time and eased his heart. Happening to glance at the timepiece, he saw that it was time to go. Ibrahim would have been glad to absent himself from the Assembly, but attendance was compulsory, and the Tsar sternly insisted on the presence of the courtiers nearest to the throne. He dressed, therefore, and drove off to call for Korsakov.

That young man was still in his dressing-gown, reading a French book.

"What, so early?" he exclaimed when Ibrahim appeared.

"But it lacks only half an hour of six o'clock," replied Ibrahim. "We must not be late. Dress quickly and let us go."

Thereupon Korsakov began to bustle and hurry and ring bells with all his might. Servants ran in and began to dress him in haste. The French *valet-de-chambre* handed him his red-heeled shoes, his blue velvet breeches, his pink

coat trimmed with gold spangles. His wig was hastily powdered in the hall, and brought in. Korsakov crammed it down on his close-shaven head, called for his sword and gloves, twisted and turned at least a dozen times before the glass, and announced to Ibrahim that he was ready. The footmen handed them their bear-skin cloaks and off they drove to the Winter Palace.

Korsakov showered questions on Ibrahim. Who was the greatest beauty in St. Petersburg? Who was known as the best dancer? What dance was now in fashion? Ibrahim replied to his questions with reluctance. They reached the entrance to the Palace. Hundreds of long sleighs, ancient coaches and gilded carriages were already drawn up in front of it. Crowding about the portico were liveried coachmen with heavy moustaches, runners decked out in gold galon and feathers and with maces in their hands, hussars, pages, ungainly footmen weighed down with the cloaks and muffs of their masters --the entire retinue regarded as indispensable to the boyars and noblemen of that time. As soon as Ibrahim made his appearance among them there could be heard whispers: "The Negro, the Negro, the Tsar's Negro!"

He drew Korsakov through this motley crowd as quickly as he could. The court lackey threw open the door to them and they entered the salon. Korsakov was struck dumb with amazement.... In a spacious hall lit by tallow candles that burned dimly amid clouds of tobacco-smoke, nobles with blue ribands across their chests, ambassadors, foreign merchants, officers of the guard in green uniforms, skippers in short jackets and striped trousers, moved to and fro to the sounds of music played by a brass band.

Ladies sat on chairs placed around the walls; the younger ones shone out in all the luxury and extravagance of the mode. Gold and silver glittered on their gowns; their slender waists reared like delicate flower-stalks out of enormous farthingales; diamonds sparkled in their ears, in their long curling locks, and around their necks. They glanced about and turned gaily right and left, waiting for cavaliers and for the dances to begin. Elderly ladies had endeavored to blend the new fashions with the now frowned-upon old style. Their caps were suspiciously reminiscent of the Dowager Tsaritsa Natalia Kirilovna's sable hat, while their gowns, with stiff, outspreading silk skirts and mantillas, were in a manner reminiscent of the old-fashioned sarafans and sleeveless jackets. They appeared to attend these new-fangled entertainments with feelings of astonishment rather than enjoyment. They cast vexed glances at the wives and daughters of the Dutch skippers, who sat there in their dimity skirts and red bodices, knitting away and chatting and laughing to one another as cheerfully and comfortably as if they were at home.

Korsakov was dumbfounded. A servant, catching sight of the new arrivals, approached them, bearing a tray with beer and glasses. "What the devil is all this?" asked Korsakov in an undertone. Ibrahim could not refrain from smiling.

The Empress and the Grand Duchesses, resplendent in their beauty and finery, moved about among the guests, greeting them pleasantly. The Tsar was in the next room. It was well-nigh impossible for Korsakov, who wished to pay his respects to the Tsar, to make his way through the restless, surging crowds. Those who were sitting in the same room as the Tsar were for the most part foreigners, smoking clay pipes and draining earthenware tankards. Bottles of beer and wine, leather tobacco-pouches, glasses of punch and chess-boards were strewn on the tables. At one of these tables sat Peter, playing draughts with a broad-shouldered English skipper. They saluted

each other heartily with volleys of tobacco-smoke, and the Tsar was so disturbed by his opponent's move that he never noticed Korsakov hovering about near them. At that moment a stout gentleman with a large nosegay on his chest entered fussily, announced in a loud voice that the dances had begun, and went out immediately. He was followed by a crowd of guests, including Korsakov.

An unusual sight met his eyes. The ladies and gentlemen stood opposite each other in two rows, extending the entire length of the hall. To the sounds of plaintive music, the cavaliers bowed low, the ladies curtsied still lower: first, before them, then, turning to the right, they curtsied again, then to the left, then to their cavaliers once more, then to the right again and so on. Korsakov's eyes grew rounder, and he bit his lip as he stood watching this elaborate pastime. The curtseying and bowing lasted about half-an-hour; after it had ceased, the fat gentleman with the nosegay announced that the ceremonial dances were now over. He ordered the musicians to play a minuet. Korsakov brightened; he had been longing for a chance to display his prowess. Among the young ladies there was one in particular who pleased him. She was about sixteen years of age, richly but tastefully attired. She sat beside a middle-aged man of stern and commanding appearance. Korsakov darted up to her and begged her to do him the honor of dancing with him. The youthful beauty glanced at him in evident confusion, and apparently did not know how to reply. The man beside her frowned still more sternly than before. As Korsakov was awaiting her decision, the gentleman with the nosegay approached him, led him into the center of the salon and, with an air of importance, said:

"Sir, you have committed a grave breach of etiquette: in the first place, by addressing yourself to this young lady without making her three preliminary bows; in the second place, by taking it upon yourself to invite her to dance, whereas in the minuet this right belongs to the lady and not to the cavalier. For this you shall be duly punished by being made to drain the Goblet of the Great Eagle."

Every moment was bringing fresh surprises to Korsakov. The guests now surrounded him and loudly demanded that the sentence should be executed at once. Sounds of laughter and merriment reached Peter's ears, and as he was always delighted to be present when punishment of this kind was being administered, he approached. The crowd parted to make way for him; he stepped into the circle, in the center of which stood the culprit and the Master of Ceremonies, who held a huge goblet filled with Malmsey.

The Master of Ceremonies was urging the culprit to voluntarily submit himself to the sentence.

"Aha!" cried Peter, when he caught sight of Korsakov. "So you've been caught! Be good enough, monsieur, to drink it off without further ado." There was no help for it. The unfortunate fop drained the goblet without drawing breath and handed it back to the Master of Ceremonies.

"Look you, Korsakov," said Peter, "your breeches are of velvet, which even I cannot afford to wear, although I am richer than you. This is extravagance. Look to it that we two do not quarrel."

After this reproof, Korsakov made as if to leave the circle, but staggered violently and almost fell, to the great delight of the Tsar and all that gay company. This episode, far from detracting from the harmony and pleasure of the entertainment, enlivened it even more.

The cavaliers continued to bow and scrape, the ladies to curtsey and tap

their heels good-naturedly without even troubling to keep time to the music. Korsakov was unable to take part in the general merriment. The lady he had chosen for himself was ordered by her father, Gavrila Afanasyevich Rzhevsky, to choose Ibrahim for the minuet. She approached the Negro and, casting down her blue eyes, shyly offered him her hand. Ibrahim danced the minuet with her and then led her back to her place. Then he went in search of Korsakov, whom he led away from the Assembly, assisted into his carriage and accompanied home. During the drive Korsakov indistinctly muttered something about "that cursed Great Eagle Goblet!" but soon fell into a deep sleep. He did not know how he arrived home, nor how his servants undressed him and put him to bed. He awoke next day with a headache, and a dim memory of a great deal of bowing and scraping and tobacco-smoking, of a gentleman with a nosegay and the Goblet of the Great Eagle.

Chapter IV

"No haste our grandsires showed at meat,
No haste they showed in passing round
The silver bowls and vessels feat,
With rich wines filled or ale-foam crowned."
(Ruslan and Ludmila)

I must now acquaint the gentle reader with Gavrila Afanasyevich Rzhevsky. He came of an ancient and noble family, owned a vast estate, loved falconry, kept open house and innumerable domestics. He was, in a word, a real Russian boyar of the old school. This new-fangled German spirit, as he called it, was abhorrent to him, and he endeavored to preserve in his home all the familiar customs of the olden days that were so dear to him.

His daughter, left motherless as an infant, was now seventeen years of age. She had been given an old-fashioned up-bringing, that is to say, she had been surrounded by devoted foster-mothers, nurses, playmates and maids from an early age, had been taught to embroider in gold thread, but neither to read nor to write. Her father, despite his horror of everything foreign, could not withstand her desire to learn the German dances. Her instructor was a Swedish officer, a prisoner-of-war, residing in the house. The worthy dancing-master was about fifty years of age, and had been shot in the right leg at the Battle of Narva. The right leg, therefore, was none too nimble in the execution of the minuet, but its deficiencies were made up for by the left, which performed the most intricate "pas" with astonishing grace and lightness.

His pupil did him credit. At the Assemblies, Natalia Gavrilovna was known as the best dancer. This fact had been partly responsible for Korsakov's breach of etiquette. He came next day to apologize to Gavrila Afanasyevich for his unseemly conduct at the Assembly. But the young man's foppishness and gallant airs displeased the haughty nobleman, and he nicknamed Korsakov, aptly enough, the French monkey.

It happened to be a holiday, and Gavrila Afanasyevich was expecting a few relatives and friends. A long table was laid out in the old dining-hall. The guests arrived with their wives and daughters, who had been set free at last from their household captivity by the Tsar's command and personal example. Natalia Gavrilovna carried round a silver tray laden with golden goblets, which each guest drank off, regretting that the ancient custom of accompanying it with a kiss had fallen into disuse.

Then they all seated themselves around the table. At the host's right hand sat his father-in-law, Prince Boris Alexeyevich Lykov, a boyar of over seventy; in the seating of the other guests the age of their family tree was observed. They sat down—the men along one side of the table, the women on the other—recalling the good old times when precedence had been a matter of course. At the foot of the table sat the nobleman's housekeeper, dressed in an old-fashioned jerkin and head-dress, between a tiny, prim, wrinkled dwarf of thirty and the Swedish prisoner in his threadbare blue uniform.

Around the table, which was laden with a great variety of dishes, numerous menials scurried. Only the austere, potbellied house-steward preserved a pompous, dignified calm. For the first few minutes, everyone's attention was absorbed by the productions of our old-fashioned cuisine, and the general silence was broken only by the clatter of active spoons on plates.

At length, the host decided that the moment had arrived to entertain the guests with pleasant conversation. He looked about him and demanded: "Where is Yekimovna? Call her in at once!" Several servants scampered off in various directions, but just at that moment the old woman herself entered the hall. She was thickly painted and powdered. She wore a stiff brocade skirt standing out all around, and tinsel and flowers in her hair. Her neck and shoulders were bare, and her appearance as she came mincing in, singing, was greeted with general satisfaction.

"Good morning, Yekimovna," said Prince Lykov. "How is it with thee?"

"Full well and heartily, Gossip! In goodness and in health, a-singing and a-dancing and a-waiting of my suitors."

"Where hast been, fool?" asked her master.

"Arraying of myself, Gossip, for our good company, for the holy-day, by order of the Tsar, for the pleasure of the boyar, in the latest German gown that's the jest of all the town."

A hearty laugh greeted this sally, and the fool took her place behind her master's chair.

"There she goes with her fooling and her babbling, but there's many a true word spoken in jest," said Tatyana Afanasyevna, the host's elder sister, whom he greatly respected. "And i' faith, the way people dress nowadays is a sight to see; they make laughing-stocks of themselves. Even you, my brother, have had to cut off your beard and wear one of these short caftans—so, after that, what can you say to the women's fashions? 'Tis the greatest pity the sarafan and the maiden's bright ribbons and the old headdress went out. The beauties of today are a shame and a laughing-stock—their hair fluffed up like felt and plastered with grease and covered with this French flour, their stomachs squeezed fit to burst, their petticoats stretched on iron hoops; they cannot get into a carriage but side-ways, they must stoop to go in at a door, they can neither stand up nor sit down in comfort, nor even draw their breath for that matter. Tortured like martyrs, they are, poor things, I declare!"

"Och, Mistress Tatyana Afanasyevna!" rejoined Kyril Petrovich T., the governor of Ryazan, where he had acquired three thousand serfs and a young wife (both, it was said, by doubtful means). "It matters naught to me how my wife garbs herself—be it like a country wench or as grand as the first in the land—if she would but be content and not order herself a new dress every month and cast them off scarce worn. There was a time when a sarafan was handed down to a woman's grand-daughter for her

dowry—and now, what do you see? The mistress hardly wears a gown and next day 'tis on the servant's back. What's to be done? It'll be the ruin of the Russian nobility! Ruin—nothing less!"

He sighed heavily as he looked at his Maria Ilyinishna who, apparently, was not in favor either of this praise of the old nor criticism of the new customs. The other beauties shared her opinion, but kept silent, for in those days modesty was still regarded as a young woman's greatest ornament.

"And whose fault is it?" asked Gavrila Afanasyevich, filling his tankard with foaming kvass. "Is it not our own? Young women's folly—and we bear them out in it."

"What then are we to do, if it be not in our hands?" rejoined Kyril Petrovich. "Many a husband would gladly shut up his wife in her bower, but she is sent for with drums—to call her to the Assembly, forsooth. The husband would take to the knout, but the wife takes to her finery. Och, these Assemblies! They're a punishment on us for our sins."

Maria Ilyinishna was evidently on pins and needles; her tongue itched. At last she could contain herself no longer and, with an acid smile, inquired of her husband what he found wrong with the Assemblies.

"What is wrong with them," rejoined her spouse heatedly, "is that ever since they began, husbands have had no peace with their wives. Wives have forgotten the words of the Apostle—'The wife must submit to her husband.' They think no more of their houses now but only of new finery; not of how to please their husbands, but how to attract the attention of officers and nincompoops. And is it fitting, I ask you, madame, that Russian noblewomen should associate with tobacco-smoking Germans and their serving-women? Who ever heard of such a thing: young women dancing and chattering with young men till late at night? Would that they were kinsmen even, but strangers, scarce acquaintances!"

"I would fain speak my mind," said Gavrila Afanasyevich, frowning, "but the very walls have ears. I own the Assemblies please me little. It is by no means a rare thing at these gatherings to encounter someone in his cups —or before you are aware of it you will be made drunk yourself—to amuse the company! And then you have to be on the watch to see that no young blade disgraces your daughter; the youth of today is pampered and ill-bred beyond hearing. For example, at the last Assembly Eugraph Sergeyevich Korsakov's son provoked such a scandal around Natasha that I was put to shame. Next day, what do I see but a carriage rolling up to my very door. Thought I to myself, who can the good God have sent me today—maybe 'tis Prince Alexander Menshikov himself? And who do you think it was? Ivan Eugrapovich Korsakov. He had not even the manners to leave his carriage at the gates and walk up to the door. No! He darted straight in, and the bowing! And the scraping! And the chattering! Yekimovna the Fool takes him off to the life. Yekimovna! Give us an imitation of the foreign monkey."

The Fool Yekimovna seized a dish-cover under her arm to represent a hat and began to bow and scrape to the company in a very affected manner, mopping and bowing and exclaiming: "M'sieu," "Ma'moiselle!" "Assembleé!" "Pardon!" Long and hearty peals of laughter greeted this presentation.

"Korsakov to the life!" said old Prince Lykov, wiping away his tears when the laughter had died down and quiet was restored. "And there's no sense in denying that he's not the first, nor yet the last to come back a buffoon from foreign parts to Holy Russia. What are our children taught there, pray? To bow and scrape, to chatter in God knows what uncouth tongue; to pay no

respect to their elders, and to pay court to other men's wives. Out of all the young folk educated in foreign countries, I declare (God forgive me) that the Tsar's Negro is about the best, and most resembles a man."

"God save us, Prince!" exclaimed Tatyana Afanasyevna, "I've seen him myself—I've seen him close, and what a countenance! It frightened me nearly into a fit."

"That's true," remarked Gavrila Afanasyevich. "A very dignified and worthy young man he is, not a feather-brain, anyway. Whose sleigh was that turned in at the gates just now? Is it that foreign monkey again? What are you about, you louts, gaping there?" he went on, turning to the servants. "Run and keep him out; and for the future. . . ."

"Are you raving then, old goat-beard!" broke in the Fool Yekimovna. "Are you blind or what? 'Tis the Tsar's sleigh; the Tsar himself is here."

Gavrila Afanasyevich rose hastily. Everyone rushed to the windows, it was indeed the Tsar himself who was mounting the steps, leaning on his orderly's shoulder. Confusion ensued. The host hurried out to welcome Peter; the servants scampered about like madmen; the guests were embarrassed and frightened, and some began to think of starting for home as soon as possible. Suddenly Peter's sonorous voice was heard in the hall, and there was silence as the Tsar entered, accompanied by his host, who was quite stupified with delight.

"Good-morrow to you, gentlemen!" said Peter cheerfully. All made low obeisances. The Tsar's quick eye sought out his young hostess in the crowd. He called her to him. Natalia Gavrilovna approached him boldly enough, though a blush spread to her ears and even to her neck.

"You grow prettier and prettier every hour," said the Tsar and kissed her on the brow as was his wont in these cases. Then, turning to the company, he said: "Why, I am interrupting you! You were at dinner. Pray, be seated, and as for me, Gavrila Afanasyevich," he continued, turning to his host, "I would have some vodka flavored with aniseed."

The host seized a tray from the hands of the pompous steward, filled a golden goblet and proffered it, with a low bow, to the Tsar. Peter drank it off, took a bite of one of the little white loaves shaped like a figure eight, and once more invited the guests to continue their meal. They all took their places, except the dwarf and the housekeeper, who did not dare to seat themselves at a table which Peter had honored with his presence. Peter sat down by the host and asked for cabbage soup. His orderly handed him a wooden spoon mounted in ivory, and a knife and fork with green bone handles. Peter never used any cutlery but his own. The feast that had been so gay and lively a few minutes earlier now proceeded in silence and embarrassment. The host, overcome by respect and pleasure at the honor accorded him, could eat nothing; the guests also refrained from eating and listened awestruck to their Sovereign, who was conversing in German with the Swedish prisoner-of-war about the campaign of 1701. Yekimovna the Fool replied to several questions put to her by the Tsar timidly and coldly, which (it should be noted), was by no means a proof of her natural weak-mindedness. At last, dinner was over. The Tsar rose, and all the guests followed suit.

"Gavrila Afanasyevich," he said to his host. "I would speak with you alone," and, taking him by the arm, Peter led him into the drawing-room and locked the door. The rest of the company remained in the dining-hall, exchanging whispered opinions as to the subject of this unexpected visit. Fearing to be in the way, they soon left for home without thanking the host for

his hospitality. His father-in-law, daughter and sister saw them quietly to the door, and then remained in the dining-hall, waiting for the Tsar to appear once more.

Chapter V

Half an hour later, the door opened and Peter came out. He acknowledged the thrice-repeated obeisance of Prince Lykov, Tatyana Afanasyevna and Natasha with a solemn nod of his head, and proceeded directly to the vestibule. The host helped him on with his red, fur-lined coat, attended him to his sleigh, and, standing on the steps of the house, thanked him once again for the honor of the visit.

Peter drove away.

When Gavrila Afanasyevich returned to the dining-hall he appeared greatly troubled in spirit. He angrily ordered the servants to clear the table at once, sent Natasha to her room, and anouncing to his sister and father-in-law that he had something to say to them, led them to his chamber, where he usually lay down to rest after dinner. Here old Prince Lykov reclined on the oaken bed, and Tatyana Afanasyevna settled herself in an ancient brocaded armchair and drew up a footstool. Gavrila Afanasyevich locked all the doors, sat down at the foot of Prince Lykov's bed and began the following conversation in an undertone.

"The Tsar had a purpose in coming to visit me today. Can you divine it?"

"How should we know, brother?" replied Tatyana Afanasyevna.

"Has the Tsar bestowed the governorship of some town upon you?" asked his father-in-law. "It's high time he did. Or maybe he desires you to go to an embassy? And why not? Not only scriveners, but sometimes noblemen are sent as envoys to foreign monarchs."

"No," replied his son-in-law, frowning. "I am of the old school; our services are not wanted nowadays, although maybe a Christian Russian nobleman is worth all these upstarts and pancake-vendors and heathens. But that is another matter."

"Then what could he have been talking to you about so long, brother?" asked Tatyana Afanasyevna anxiously. "God help us. 'tis not some trouble that is coming on you, is it?"

" 'Tis not such a great trouble but—I confess it vexes me not a little."

"What can it be then? Tell us!"

" 'Tis Natasha. The Tsar came to make a match for her."

"Now, God be thanked!" exclaimed Tatyana Afanasyevna, crossing herself. "The maid is ripe for marriage, and as the matchmaker is, so will be the match. God grant them long life, happiness and honor. And who may the bridegroom be that the Tsar has chosen?"

"H'm-eh," grunted Gavrila. "Who? That's the difficulty." "And who is it?" repeated Prince Lykov, who was just dropping off into a doze.

"Can you divine who?" asked Gavrila Afanasyevich.

"Indeed, my brother," replied the old woman. "How would we divine it? Are there so few young men at the court? Anyone would be glad to marry your Natasha. Is it perhaps Dolgoruky?

"No, not Dolgoruky."

"Well, God knows we care not for him: he's over-proud, to be sure. Is it Schein then? Troyekurov?"

"Neither one nor the other."

"They are not to my liking either; feather-brained and too full of this German spirit. Well, then—Miloslavsky?"

"No."

"God knows we want him not—rich and foolish as he is. Well, now, Yeletsky? Lvov? Raguzinsky—is it possible? I cannot think who it can be. Who is it, then, tell me, that the Tsar wishes Natasha to marry?"

"The Negro Ibrahim!"

At that the old woman threw up her hands and gasped. Prince Lykov raised his head from the pillows and repeated in astonishment:

"The Negro Ibrahim?"

"Brother Gavrila!" wailed the old woman. "You would not ruin your own flesh and blood; you would not give little Natasha into the claws of that black devil!"

"What can I do?" asked Gavrila Afanasyevich. "How can I refuse the Tsar—he promises in return to be gracious to me and to all our kin."

"What!" cried the old Prince, from whom sleep had now fled. "You would give my grand-daughter to a black slave to wed?"

"He is not of low birth," said Gavrila Afanasyevich. "He is the son of the Negro Sultan. The Turks took him captive and sold him in Constantinople and there our ambassador rescued him and presented him to the Tsar. And afterwards the Negro's elder brother came to Russia, offering a big ransom and. . . ."

"Gavrila Afanasyevich," broke in the old woman. "We've heard these tales of king's sons often enough. Tell us rather what reply you gave to the Tsar."

"I said that the power was in his hands and we, his slaves, could but submit to him in all things."

At that moment there was a noise outside the door. Gavrila Afanasyevich rushed to open it, but it resisted. He gave it a stronger push, the door opened, and he beheld Natasha stretched in a dead faint on the floor, which was wet with her blood.

She had become alarmed when the Tsar shut himself up in the room with her father. Some strange foreboding told her that the conversation concerned her. When Gavrila Afanasyevich announced that he must speak to her grandfather and aunt alone, she could no longer control her feminine curiosity. She crept back through an inner chamber to the door of her father's room and lost not a single word of the fateful conversation. When she heard her father's last words, the poor girl lost her senses, and fell, striking her head on the iron-bound chest in which her dowry was kept.

The servants ran up. They bore Natasha to her chamber and laid her on her bed. After a while she opened her eyes but did not recognize either her father or her aunt. She was, it appeared, in a high fever. Her mind wandered, and in her delirium she spoke constantly of the Tsar's Negro, and of her wedding. All of a sudden she gave a piercing shriek.

"Valerian, my love, my life! Save me! They are coming! Look! There they are!"

Tatyana Afanasyevna gave a terrified glance at her brother. He turned pale, bit his lip, and then left the room. He went down to Prince Lykov, who, unable to mount the stairs, had remained below. "Well, how is Natasha?" inquired the old man.

"Worse than I thought," returned her chagrined father. "She is rambling and raving about someone named Valerian."

"Who is this Valerian?" asked the old man in alarm. "Can it be that orphan, the musketeer's son, whom you brought up in your house?"

"The same," returned Gavrila Afanasyevich. "To my sorrow, it was his father who saved my life during the Rebellion. Devil knows what possessed me to bring this cursed wolf-cub into my house. Two years ago, when by his own wish we sent him to his regiment, Natasha wept at parting with him, and he stood as if turned to stone. I thought it strange then and I spoke of it to my sister. But from that time on, Natasha has never breathed a word of him. There was no news of him, either. I thought she had forgotten him, but it seems otherwise. My mind is now made up: she shall marry the Negro."

Prince Lykov did not gainsay him; indeed, it would have been useless. He left for home, while Tatyana Afanasyevna stayed at Natasha's bedside. Gavrila Afanasyevich sent for a physician and then shut himself up in his room. The house was silent and desolate.

This unexpected match-making had astonished Ibrahim no less than Gavrila Afanasyevich. What had occurred was that a few days after the memorable Assembly, while engaged in some work, Peter had suddenly said to Ibrahim: "I have remarked that you are often dejected of late. Tell me outright, friend, is there anything you lack?"

Ibrahim hastened to assure the Tsar that he was well content with his lot and desired nothing better.

"Good," responded the Tsar. "Then, if you are cast down without reason, I know how to make you merry."

When work was finished, Peter asked Ibrahim: "Did the girl with whom you danced the minuet at the last Assembly please you?"

"She is very sweet, Sire, and, it seems, a modest girl and good."

"Then I shall make you better acquainted with her. Would you care to wed her?"

"I, your Majesty?"

"Listen to me, Ibrahim. You are a man, alone in the world without kith or kin, a stranger to all save me. If I should die to-day, what would happen to you tomorrow, my poor Negro? You must make a place for yourself while there is yet time, form new connections, and link yourself with the Russian nobility."

"Your Majesty, you have been very gracious to me and I am happy in your protection. God grant I may not outlive my Sovereign, my noble benefactor—I wish nothing more than that; but even if I were to think of marrying, would the young girl and her parents be agreeable? My appearance . . ."

"Your appearance, fiddle-de-dee! Why, you're a fine fellow in every way! A young maid must obey her parents. We'll see what old Gavrila Rzhevsky has to say when I myself appear as your matchmaker."

Thereupon, the Tsar ordered his sleigh and drove away, leaving Ibrahim deep in thought.

"So I am to marry?" thought the African. "And pray, why not? Am I then fated to spend my life in loneliness and never know the sweetest pleasure and holiest duties of a man, because I happen to have been born in a certain latitude? Must I not hope to be loved? A childish thought! Can anyone believe in love? Can such a feeling exist in the fickle heart of a woman? Turning away from sweet delusions forever, I chose enticements of a more serious nature. The Tsar is right; I must make my future more secure. Marriage with the daughter of Rzhevsky will link me with the proud Russian nobility, and

I shall thus cease to be a newcomer in this, my second fatherland. I shall not demand love from my wife, but shall be satisfied with her fidelity, and win her friendship by constant tenderness, confidence and condescension."

Ibrahim tried to go on with his work as usual but his imagination was on fire, and he could no longer move in the old groove. He left his papers and went out to wander along the banks of the Neva. Suddenly he heard Peter's voice calling him. He turned and saw the Tsar, who had dismissed his sleigh and was following him on foot. Peter appeared to be in an excellent humor.

" 'Tis done, brother," said Peter, taking the young man by the arm, "I have made a match of it. Tomorrow you must go and visit your father-in-law, and look you—flatter his nobleman's pride a little. Leave your sleigh at the gate and go through the courtyard on foot. Talk to him about his services to the state and his pedigree and he will think the whole world of you. And now," he continued, shaking his truncheon, "accompany me to that rogue Menshikov. I have a bone to pick with him."

Ibrahim thanked Peter with all his heart for his fatherly care, conducted him as far as the splendid chambers of Prince Menshikov, and turned homewards.

Chapter VI

A lamp was burning dimly before the glass ark through which gleamed the gold and silver of the ancient family ikons. The flickering light scarcely served to illuminate the curtained bed and the little table on which a number of labeled phials stood. A servant sat by the stove with her spinning-wheel; its soft hum was the only sound that broke the stillness.

"Who is there?" asked a faint voice. The servant rose instantly, went up to the bed and drew back the curtain a little.

"Will it be light soon?" asked Natalia.

" 'Tis already midday," replied the woman.

"Then why is it so dark?"

"The curtains are drawn, Mistress Natalia."

"Help me to dress, quickly!"

"Oh no, Mistress, the doctor says you must not rise from your bed."

"What, am I then sick? How long have I lain here?"

" 'Tis a fortnight now."

" A fortnight? And it seems as if 'twas only yesterday I lay down."

Natasha became silent, endeavoring to collect her thoughts; something had happened to her, but what, she could not remember. The servant remained standing before her, awaiting her commands. Just then a dull noise could be heard somewhere below.

"What was that?" asked the sick girl.

"The ladies and gentlemen have finished dinner and are now getting up from table. Tatyana Afanasyevna will be here directly."

Natasha seemed pleased at that; she made a feeble gesture of dismissal. The servant drew the curtains together once more and went back to her spinning.

A few minutes later, a head in a broad white cap with dark ribbons appeared round the door and asked in a low voice, "How is it with Natasha?"

"Good-day to you, Aunt," said the sick girl faintly. Tatyana Afanasyevna hurried over to the bed.

"The young mistress is herself again," observed the servant, cautiously moving an armchair forward.

With tears in her eyes the old woman kissed her niece's pale, languid face and sat down beside her. The German doctor entered. He was dressed in a black coat and wore a scholar's wig. He felt Natalia's pulse and declared, first in Latin, and then in Russian, that she was out of danger. He then demanded paper and ink, wrote out a new prescription and left. The old woman rose, kissed Natasha once more, and went down to carry the good news of her recovery to Gavrila Afanasyevich.

In the drawing-room sat the Tsar's Negro, wearing his guard's uniform and sword and holding his hat in his hands. He was conversing in respectful tones with Gavrila Afanasyevich. Korsakov was sprawling on a soft downy couch listening languidly to their conversation and teasing a venerable borzoi hound. Tiring of this occupation, he strolled over to the mirror, his usual refuge in idle moments, and through it observed Tatyana Afanasyevna's reflection making signs to her brother from behind the door.

"I think someone wishes to speak to you, Gavrila Afanasyevich," said Korsakov, interrupting what Ibrahim was saying. Gavrila Afanasyevich rose and went out to his sister, closing the door behind him.

"Your patience astonishes me," said Korsakov to Ibrahim. "For a good hour now you have been listening to this old fellow rambling on about the ancient lineage of the Lykovs and Rzhevskys, and you actually respond in the same vein. In your place, I would have sent the old liar and his whole family to the devil—not excepting this Natalia Gavrilovna, who is as affected as she can be, pretending to be sick, indeed! Tell me the truth; can it be that you are in love with this little minx?"

"No," replied Ibrahim. "I am not marrying her because I cherish a passion for her, but for certain other reasons, and then, only if she does not find me positively repulsive."

"Listen, Ibrahim," said Korsakov, "take my advice for once. Believe me, I am wiser than I seem. Give up this folly; do not wed her. It strikes me that your bride has no great regard for you. You never know what will happen in this world. For example, though I myself am not ill-favored, of course, it has occasionally happened that because of me, women have deceived their husbands who were, by God, no worse than me. And you know yourself—you remember our Paris friend, Comte D.? Woman's fidelity is not to be depended upon, and happy the man who can reflect upon this fact with indifference. But you!—with your fiery temper, your gloomy, suspicious nature, your flat nose, thick lips and woolly head, is it for you to rush into the pitfalls of marriage?"

"Many thanks for the friendly advice," Ibrahim returned coldly, "but you know the old saying: 'It is not your affair to rock other men's children!' "

"Look to it, Ibrahim," replied Korsakov, laughing, "that your words do not come home to roost one day, and that you do not find yourself doing that very thing."

Meanwhile, the conversation in the next room waxed warmer.

"I tell you, it will be the death of her," declared the old woman. "She won't be able to bear the sight of him."

"But—judge for yourself," persisted her stubborn brother. "He has been coming to pay his respects for over two weeks now—and has never seen his bride. He may think that her illness is but an idle pretence, that we are

only inventing excuses in order to gain time and get rid of him. What will the Tsar say to this? He has already sent three times to inquire for Natalia's health. I have no intention of quarreling with the Tsar, I can assure you."

"God save us all!" declared Tatyana Afanasyevna. "What will happen to the poor child? Let me go and prepare her, at least, for the visit."

Gavrila Afanasyevich agreed and returned to the drawing-room.

"God be thanked, the danger is over," he said to Ibrahim. "Natalia is much better: were it not for the fact that I cannot leave my honored guest, Ivan Eugraphovich, alone here, I would have taken you upstairs to see your bride."

Korsakov congratulated Gavrila Afanasyevich on his daughter's recovery, and begged him not to trouble himself on his account. He had to leave immediately, he declared, and hurried out without permitting his host to see him to the door.

Meanwhile, Tatyana Afanasyevna hastened upstairs to prepare her niece for the unwelcome visitor. She entered the bedchamber and, sitting down breathless on the bed, took Natalia's hand in hers. Before she had time to say a word, the door opened. Natalia asked who was there. The old woman sat turned to stone. Gavrila Afanasyevich drew back the curtain, looked coldly at his sick daughter and asked her how she felt. The poor girl would have smiled at him but could not. Her father's stern look confounded her, and she felt nothing but alarm.

It seemed to her at that moment that someone else was standing at the head of her bed. With a great effort, she raised her head and suddenly recognized the Tsar's Negro. Then she remembered everything; the future presented itself before her in all its horror. But she was too exhausted now to be sensible of any great shock. Her head sank back on the pillow and she closed her eyes. Her heart throbbed painfully. Tatyana Afanasyevna made a sign to her brother that the patient wished to sleep. They quickly left the chamber, all except the servant, who sat down once more at her spinning-wheel.

The unfortunate young beauty opened her eyes again, and seeing no one at her bedside, called the servant and sent for the dwarf. Almost at the same moment, the little round woman rolled up to the bedside. Lastochka, as she was called, having climbed the stairs behind Gavrila Afanasyevich and Ibrahim as fast as her short legs could carry her, had hidden herself behind the door, thus proving she was no exception to the rest of the fair sex as regards curiosity. Natalia dismissed the servant, and the drawf sat down on a bench by the bed.

Never had such a tiny body been allied to so much mental activity. She interfered in everything, knew everything, busied herself over everything. Her cunning mind had won her the confidence of her masters and the hatred of the whole household, which she ruled as an autocrat. Gavrila Afanasyevich gave heed to her complaints and small requests; Tatyana Afanasyevna consulted her about everything and took her advice; and Natasha felt an unbounded attachment to her and confided in her all the thoughts and emotions of her sixteen-year-old heart.

"Lastochka, do you know that my father is going to wed me to the Tsar's Negro?" she now asked.

The dwarf sighed heavily, and her wrinkled face grew even more wrinkled.

"Is there no hope then?" continued the girl. "Has my father no pity left for me?"

The dwarf shook her cap.

"Would not my grandfather or my aunt plead for me?"

"No, Mistress Natalia. Whilst you were lying sick, the Negro has been able to put his spell over them all. Our master is crazy about him, the old Prince raves of nothing else, and Tatyana Afanasyevna herself only says:

"'Tis a very great pity that he is a Negro; otherwise it would be a sin to wish for a better husband for Natalia!"

"Oh, woe is me!" moaned Natalia.

"Do not lose heart, my beauty," said the dwarf, kissing her mistress's weak hand. "Even if you do marry the Negro, you will have your own way in everything. Things are not what they were in the olden days; a man cannot lock up his wife now. They say the Negro is rich. You will have a great house and live in grand style."

"Poor Valerian!" exclaimed Natalia, but so softly that the dwarf rather divined than heard the words.

"Ah, Mistress Natalia," she said, lowering her voice confidentially. "If you had thought less of the musketeer's son, your father would not have been so angry now."

"What!" cried Natalia in fright. "Did I speak of Valerian in my fever? And my father heard? That is what has angered him then?"

"That is the whole trouble," replied the dwarf. "And if you ask him not to wed you to the Negro, he will only think 'tis because of Valerian. There's nothing to be done now, but to submit yourself to your father's will. What must be, will be."

Natalia made no more objections. The thought that her secret was known to her father made a profound impression on her. One hope only remained to her—that she might die before the hateful wedding. The thought comforted her.

Weak and sorrowful, sick in body and mind, she resigned herself to her fate.

Chapter VII

To the right of the hall in Gavrila Afanasyevich's house was a tiny room lighted by one small window. It was poorly furnished. There was a plain wooden bed covered with a thin blanket, and a small table made of fir-wood, on which stood a tallow candle and some music. On the wall hung an old blue uniform and its contemporary, a three-cornered hat; above, a cheap print of Charles XII of Sweden on a horse was fastened to the wall by three nails. The sounds of the flute could often be heard in this peaceful abode.

The captive dancing-master, its lonely tenant, attired in a night-cap and a nankeen dressing-gown, was whiling away a dreary winter evening by playing old Swedish marches that brought back to him the gay days of his youth. After passing a couple of hours in this manner, the Swede took his flute apart, laid it carefully away in its case and began to undress.

At that moment, the latch of the door was raised and a tall, handsome young man in uniform entered the room. The Swede rose in astonishment.

"You do not recognize me then, Gustav Adamich," exclaimed the young visitor in a voice that betrayed emotion. "You do not remember the little

boy whom you taught the Swedish military regulations, and with whom you practiced shooting from a toy cannon? We nearly set this very room on fire."

Gustav Adamich took a closer look at him.

"A-ah!" he cried at last, embracing the young man. "Welcome home! Welcome home! When haf you arrife? Sit down, my goot lad, and we shall haf a talk." [1]

Translated by Anthony Wixley

[1] This novel Pushkin never finished.

The Laughter and Tears of André Gide[1]

The well-known French writer, André Gide, laughed a good deal and cried much when he was a guest of the Soviet Union last summer. He laughed from joy and cried from excess of feeling.

With these tearful smiles, André Gide traveled throughout the country, and everywhere the emotional response of the old writer was surprising and touching. His sentimentality and rather rapturous loquacity were readily forgiven. The loftiness of his words, rather florid to Russian taste but seemingly sincere, was condoned.

André Gide shed tears for the last time at the end of August on the border of the Soviet Union, which he was about to leave. He sent the following telegram to the *Pravda:*

"After our unforgettable journey into the great fatherland of victorious Socialism, I am sending from the border final heartfelt greetings to the splendid friends I am leaving with regret, telling them and the whole of the U.S.S.R.: until we meet again, André Gide."

But immediately afterwards, with eyes still wet from joy and love, André Gide wrote with inexplicable haste a small book entitled *Return from the U.S.S.R. (Retour de l'URSS)* in which smiles and tears are mixed with filthy calumnies on the Soviet land, on its peoples, on its youth. André Gide says that he had been "mistaken." But it is absolutely impossible to understand when he had had time to realize his mistake. At the beginning of September, he was still filled to the brim with unquestionable enthusiasm for the Soviet Union, but in October, he wrote his calumny.

Crying and Scandalous Contradictions

In haste, one is likely to appear funny (a Russian proverb—Editor). Persons who are in such a hurry involuntarily place themselves in a ridiculous position. Dexterous jugglers, quick-change artists possess the art of transforming themselves in the eyes of the public: one minute they are blondes, the next brunettes. André Gide, however, does not possess such dexterity. He carries out his conversion from Paul to Saul rather clumsily. He exposes himself by crying and scandalous contradictions which leave their mark on his book.

Thus in the opening pages, André Gide speaks with admiration, with enthusiasm of the splendid Soviet youth, of their healthy appearance, of their cheerfulness, energy, of their happy sentiments. He spent an evening in a train with Young Communists and says that he will not forget this meeting as long as he lives.

With similar rapture, shedding tears of emotion, he speaks of the Soviet children to whom, he says, belongs the future.

But a few pages further, in an entirely different tone, in an entirely new style, bitterly and querulously, Gide depicts Soviet youth and Soviet children as a herd of stupid people who can only repeat, parrotlike, words they have been taught.

"At first glance, it appears as if the individual is completely dissolved in

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[1] Taken from the *Pravda.*

the masses and is so effaced, that in speaking of people one feels like using an impersonal form and speaking not of people but of man," writes Gide.

All Soviet people are like one another. They are coarse and have no life in them. They walk with their heads down, afraid to raise them. It seems then that André Gide is not mistaken but tells deliberate falsehoods. Is it possible to spend a remarkable, unforgettable evening in conversation with young people who monotonously repeat one another and have no originality whatsoever?

His Statements Do Not Tally

André Gide rapturously describes how the Soviet public listened to *Eugene Onegin* in his presence, and how he met everywhere people who had read his books, while in France he is known only to a limited circle of the bourgeoisie. He writes about the flourishing condition of folk art in the Soviet Union . . . In the same book, however, he lies to the effect that in the Soviet Union the masses know very little of art and literature, and that "beauty has been proclaimed a bourgeois conception."

Thus, throughout the book he fails to make his statements tally. André Gide proves himself a very inefficient quick-change artist. He is neither a blonde nor a brunette, but a skewbald mixture of an old French writer and spirited Russian whiteguard.

But André Gide becomes particularly entangled in contradictions and deliberate untruths when he attempts to prove that freedom of speech and self-criticism do not exist in the U.S.S.R.

He writes that he "admired self-criticism from afar." But when he arrived in the Soviet Union he found that "this criticism consists in a discussion of whether this or that is in accord with the 'general line.' What is being criticized is not this line. The whole criticism consists in ascertaining whether such and such a book, such and such a gesture or such and such a theory correspond to this sacred line. . . . . Criticism of everything on the other side of the border—all you want. Criticism beyond that is not permitted."

André Gide was in the U.S.S.R. at the time when the nation-wide discussion of the draft of the new Constitution and of the draft law on care of the family (on abortions) was taking place. Was this criticism or self-criticism? André Gide does not dare to deny this directly. It would have been too ludicrous to deny facts known to the whole world. He finds an unworthy solution in speaking deliberate untruths, and writes that many people came out against the prohibition of abortions but that "the newspapers, of course, published only the favorable comments on the law."

Of course, André Gide lies. Everybody knows that the newspapers printed critical and unfavorable views of the law.

Gide Reveals His Roots

André Gide incautiously reveals the roots of his lie. He recognizes only such criticism as is directed against the general line of the Party and the Government. But the general line of the Party and the Government is the triumph of the proletarian revolution, the victory of Socialism, the complete abolition of the capitalist classes.

This general line does not indeed meet with criticism among the broadest masses of the Soviet Union. But it has been and is being criticized by all

those who would restore capitalism, by the agents of the Gestapo and Trotsky. This is counter-revolutionary criticism. What then does André Gide regret? The fact that he did not hear in the Land of Soviets the open voice of counter-revolutionaries, fascists, Trotskyites? But it was not necessary to make a trip to the U.S.S.R. in order to learn that simultaneously with the elimination of the bourgeoisie, the peoples of the Land of Soviets are eliminating also the agents of the bourgeoisie.

In his book, André Gide slavishly reproduces dishonorable calumnies against the U.S.S.R. made by the enemies of the working class. Here in the Land of Soviets he was enraptured by the devotion of all Soviet people to the Communist Party and to its leaders. He spoke a great deal about this devotion and always with enthusiasm. But now he declares that he was "mistaken" and explains the unity of the people of the Soviet Union by their oppression, fear and stupidity.

He accuses all Soviet writers of cowardice, of lack of individual opinions, of lack of talent. André Gide now asserts that a truly talented writer must always be in opposition to the government, to the leaders, must always call for a struggle against them.

André Gide would have been very pleased with the writers and all the people of the Soviet Union were they to fight against the Communist Party for capitalism. In that case he would not have been "mistaken."

"Writer No Longer an Oppositionist"

But at the solemn hour when the ashes of Maxim Gorky were immured on the Red Square, before many thousands of honest Soviet people, before the Soviet writers who were moved and shaken by Gorky's death, André Gide said:

"Today in the Soviet Union the situation for the first time is a different one. Though a revolutionary, the writer is no longer an oppositionist. On the contrary, he expresses the will of the masses, of all the people and what is most splendid, the will of its leaders."

André Gide subsequently repeated these words at the bed of the writer Ostrovsky, repeated them with conviction, with tears in his eyes. He then gave Ostrovsky a fatherly kiss. On his own initiative, through his own good will, as he admits in his book, Gide sent a telegram of greetings, after his visit to Georgia, to Comrade Stalin, full of rapture and admiration.

Was this a result of fear, stupidity, lack of talent on the part of Gide? In an attempt to slander Soviet writers, he betrays himself. This is ridiculous: as a Frenchman, André Gide must well know that the ridiculous has the power to kill itself.

But perhaps this was a deliberate, flagrant deception on the part of André Gide, a mockery of Soviet writers, of the trusting Ostrovsky, of the entire Soviet public, which received André Gide as a friend? Too ignoble is the accusation which André Gide prefers against himself when he describes himself in the book as a man who entered our country masked as a friend and deliberately lied here, concealing his true face, as is done by the counterfeiters in one of his own novels.

Gide's Unstable Emotions

We shall beware of drawing this conclusion for the time being. We are prepared to attribute this sudden and mysterious change to the unstable

emotions of André Gide. Indeed, stability never constituted the strong side of this writer. He has been and remains a true son of the French petty bourgeoisie.

By his origin, education, associations and taste, André Gide belongs to the bourgeoisie. True he rebelled against it like Henri Barbusse, like Romain Rolland. But different people are of different caliber. Barbusse and Romain Rolland, true revolutionaries of the spirit and courageous seekers of the truth, broke all the ideological threads which joined them to the bourgeoisie. They openly and sincerely joined the proletariat as the class which is destined to liberate humanity. They always strove towards the ideals of the revolutionary people and the great heart of Romain Rolland has always ached for the poverty, sufferings, humiliations and oppression of the toilers.

André Gide throughout nearly the whole of his literary life has been alien to broad social ideas and ideals. He is a typical representative of the decadent bourgeois intelligentsia, an individualist in love with himself. He is one of the most "refined" writers of France, who finds special beauty in perversity.

He revolted ostensibly against bourgeois morality. This is a very ordinary and a very cheap revolt of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. Under certain conditions, it may lead a strong man into the camp of the revolutionary proletariat. But it often leads a weak man into the camp of fascism.

Prefers a "Complex" Society

There can be no doubt that in the Soviet land, André Gide saw many things to which his bourgeois soul could not reconcile itself. Our society, bereft of exploiting classes, appeared to him to be too "simple" and "uniform." He prefers a "complex" society seething like a swamp with a multiplicity of various bourgeois types. He felt himself a stranger in a country in which parasites and reptiles of many stripes have disappeared.

André Gide brought with him into the Land of Soviets a great many inherited or acquired bourgeois prejudices. His idol was and remains Dostoyevsky; the Soviet land appeared to him in the image of a mystic "Slavic soul," in the image of a meek and dark slave, the "muzhik Marei." But he was forced to learn with sorrow that the meek Marei had become a collective farmer and had put an end to all kinds of slavery.

For this fact, André Gide upbraids the peoples of the Soviet Union, particularly the Russian people. He speaks of them as "indolent," "immobile." He explains the Stakhanov movement by the fact that it was necessary to awaken the entire people from its age-long indolence. . . . All this is extremely foolish. Behind the mask of a refined old Frenchman, there appears the face of an irascible, extremely narrow-minded French bourgeois-rentier who can not possibly forgive the Russian people their unprecedented historic victory, their industrial successes, their gigantic five-year plans, their mighty forward movement.

It was no accident that André Gide wrote with such irritation that everywhere, among old and young, he had met with a "superiority complex," that is, with a deep conviction of the masses that the Soviet Socialist country is finer, better, stronger than all the cultured countries of capitalism. Yes, this has indeed become the conviction of the peoples of the Soviet Union, and André Gide's bitterness reflects the impotent malice of the reactionary bourgeoisie.

Welcomed by the Fascist Camp

André Gide writes that he "made a mistake." He is now making another mistake. He thinks that by mixing smiles and tears of enthusiastic emotion with venomous froth of slander he can preserve the respect of the toilers and bear the honorable name of a friend of the Soviet Union. But he is already being welcomed in the Trotskyite-fascist camp as one of their own. The French weekly *Candide* calls him a Trotskyite, the *Emancipation National* a Doriotist, that is a fascist. The German and Polish fascist press has started a great to-do over Gide's libelous essentially anti-Soviet pamphlet. There his tears of rapture are being derided while much is being made of his poisonous anti-Soviet froth.

In the days when all honest people from among the bourgeois intelligentsia are greeting the Stalinist Constitution with warm sympathy, attention and love, seeing in it the dawn of the liberation of mankind, André Gide together with true friends of the Soviet Union attempted to extend his hand for a fraternal handshake. He signed the telegram which some of our friends sent to greet the Eighth (Special) Congress of Soviets. But André Gide's hand remained suspended in the air. One cannot simultaneously look for friends in the camp of the working class and in the camp of its worst enemies, the fascists and Trotskyites. To all appearances, André Gide in his book *Return From the U.S.S.R.* fell victim to dexterous anti-Soviet agents.

No matter how well André Gide may succeed in replacing genuine sincerity by good manners, this old man cannot help experiencing a sense of shame when he recalls the kiss imprinted by him on the brow of the Bolshevik writer Ostrovsky. An authority on the gospel, André Gide knows what such kisses are termed.

L. Aragon

An Appeal to French Intellectuals

No matter how remotely we listen to the heart throb of French poetry we still hear the reverberation of the great broken call of the Song of Rolland, which rises from the valleys of the Pyrenees. We lost the habit of turning our ear in that direction, towards the south-western gates of our country and harkening to the cry of suffering and heroism. And the sound of the old horn that broke the heart of the fair Alda of the white arms, for us retained only the faded value of a legend.

Spain! Spain! Perpetual land of French dreams, between her and us there have been centuries of intercourse, there are ties which we have ceased to notice through force of habit, and which mean that if she bleeds, it is we who are wounded. The false history they teach in the schools tells only of the queens whom Spain sent to sleep with our masters and of the kings that our kings gave to the Spanish people. But she like us has chased out the Bourbons, and we are no longer linked by common chains, but by the brotherhood of free men, by the great work to be done, that the goods of the earth and the light of the sky may be given to all men.

Our brotherhood is made of our works and our dreams. Everything that the best sons of the French people loved about Spain has come today to remind us of her, as of the songs that lulled us in our infancy. In the women of Spain we recognize our sisters and wives.

The women of a country are part of all its messengers and it is not the queens who came from beyond the Pyrenees that quickened French hearts, but Dulcinea of Toboso, who was only a servant. The young blood of French romanticism was warmed beneath the Spanish sun. What would Hugo have known of love without his childhood memories of these cities whose names rubbed out long ago by the creases in the lines, now acquire a strange bitterness when we pronounce them:

Burgos, its Cathedral with Gothic spires;
Irun with its wooden roofs; Victoria with its towers;
And you, Valladolid, your palaces of families,
Proud to let the chains rust in their courts.

Pick up our country's song books: for a century they have been full of Spain, like the great visions of our painters. Musset, Gautier and Merimée have made the youth dream of these women, who from Velasquez to Goya are the velvet eyes of a mystery, and indeed everything that nineteenth century France had to say about women is summarized in a picture by Manet and the four lines Charles Baudelaire wrote about it:

Between all the beauties one may see everywhere
I well understand, my friends, that desire may waver
But in Lola of Valencia there sparkles
The unexpected charm of a red and black jewel.

Where is she today, this Lola of Valencia? And what is the lesson of her beauty? Where is the Carmen who gave birth to the most valuable contribution of French music in the sphere of drama? The women of a country are first of all the messengers who tell the soldiers: "Lower your guns, do not shoot at us," those who bring peoples closer to each other and who recognize no boundaries, because they know love and because they know the songs and are the source of all life, because they bear the little children.

In the days of the great fight for bread and liberty, Paris who pretended to see nothing in Spain but its dances and castanets was deeply moved by the voice of a Spanish woman. And it seems incredible that after all the names which Spain has placed in the sun, the resources of popular genius should find a name for this admirable woman which would bring poetic freshness even to the names of women which men have muttered from the cradle to the grave. Yet it occurred to the people of Spain to call this Dolores among the other Doloreses by a word which excels the imagination of poets; la Pasionaria, who is the embodiment both of the land of Cervantes and of the working class. This inspired woman who derives her inspiration not from the clouds but from the living and martyred flesh of the people, the brown earth where the living rise among the dead!

Hail to you, Pasionaria, the passion flower of your people! Greetings to you, who combine the two meanings of the word passion, the meaning of sorrow whose name you also bear and the meaning of ardent

love which is the meaning of life itself! Hail to you, whose name evokes the death of a god and the life of men! Paris did not hear your appeal in vain, image of all mothers, image of the only struggle which is worth living for! It was not chance that this woman who is a burning flame, that this woman with a name so lovely that I cannot help returning to it, from being a mother among mothers, became a leader among men, a leader of men who is charged with saving a brilliant dream of men, all that there is of the poetry of the Cid and grandeur of the romanceros, the heritage of Lope de Vega, El Greco, of the songs that Columbus' sailors took with them to America, that sounded from behind the rocks when the armies of Bonaparte passed and which blend today with the accents of that song of the Siberian partisans which has become Spanish. For the cause of Spain is the same cause for which one may die even on the shores of the Pacific.

It is not by chance that this woman should be the leader of the struggle for bread, waged by the men who make the bread and who are tired of being deprived of this life, which leaves their hands golden and warm. It is no accident that the most beautiful name in the world should belong to this woman, leader of this vigorous and prudent, heroic and serene section of the Spanish proletariat which follows the example of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. It is not by chance that Pasionaria should be the symbol of Spanish communism. This name, like the woman who bears it, like the Party who bore this woman in its first ranks, was forged in the struggle. It is the carbon of the struggle which the struggle has transformed into diamond. This passion is not the sudden flare of a revolt, it is the light of the eyes of a people which rises in the fields, factories and mines, with the long history of centuries in their eyes. It is the passion of a people which has overthrown its kings, its police, its parasites, which has more than once broken the yoke in the course of a century, which stood the test of Asturias, and which nothing has been able to subdue, and which nothing, even though it should require another century of blood, nothing will subdue, regardless of the forces which press down upon it and the hideous alliances of the militarists and foreign powers. They cannot kindle a bonfire large enough to consume this passion and reduce it to ashes, though they were to set fire to the whole of Spain; this passion was born in the furnace and derives its strength therefrom.

I formerly traveled through Spain and I brought back an impression of misery and beauty. Nowhere do you feel the greatness and dignity of a people, nowhere is the genius of a people more directly perceptible, and its prodigious artistic wealth, than in unhappy Spain, in impoverished Spain. I recall, on the borders of Andalusia, the song of a child who walked the length of the train. This beggar boy sang better than those who are feted in the theaters of the whole world, who are given all the gold in the world for their songs. The poignant appeal of this childish voice "gave" with all the generosity of poverty what is not for sale and which has no price, to travelers who would not dream of giving anything but miserable pennies in exchange. The child was blind, clad in rags and covered with pock marks. The cold swept down from the mountains; it was early winter.

It is not without horror that I think of certain cities regarding which I have read in various newspapers, sandwiched between the stories of two crimes, that Franco's regulars have captured them. I think of Ronda, the round city. Ronda—the strangest and saddest town in the world! Ronda where I spent two days but which I love as though I had spent my youth there. The day will come when I shall be able to return to Ronda and see how pleasant the city has become; the Council of Workers and Peasants will have opened nurseries, schools and gardens for everyone. Then we shall descend into the ravine, oh, Andalusian comrades, and by the torrent you shall tell me of the regulars of Franco, of this nightmare, as though it were an old story and the children will open incredulous eyes, like the school children of the Urals and the Ukraine when they hear of Kolchak or Petlura.

But at the present hour, at the very hour of the Spanish passion, we French turning towards the bleeding southwest can not fail to experience a terrific shame and a remorse that our France has not done all she could do for the cause that is the cause of the whole of humanity and not of popular Spain alone. We French, who sometimes hear French applaud the massacre of our brothers in Spain with Hitler bullets and the bombs of Mussolini, in the twenty-franc motion-picture houses, must make it our main duty, our French task, to fight in our own country for the cause which unites the Asturian miner with the miner of the Donbas, the Castilian poet with the poet thrown into the concentration camp by Hitler, the Catalan peasant with the peasant of the Beauce, the Andalusian singer with the Neapolitan who mingles in his songs bitter words against the assassins of Mateotti.

And I want to say that in returning the other day from Montreuil where the Young Communists held a congress decorated with streamers that hailed the heroic youth of

Spain, at the Paris gate, where a sort of one-horse fair is held, I was struck by an extraordinary sight. Between two low and ramshackle booths, with displays of socks and notions, on the messy and muddy sidewalk, there was a table under an umbrella and over this umbrella, on a pole higher than the two stories of the neighboring houses, floated a huge Spanish Republican flag composed of three strips of soft bright new silk, red, yellow and violet. It floated in the wind like a great beacon of hope above poverty. It was Sunday. The proletarians of Montreuil and Eastern Paris passed in numbers. Many of them stopped, house-wives, young workers and old employees. Under the umbrella was a placard: "Contributions for Spain received here." The Spanish Republican flag flapped in the wind and seemed ironically to repeat the last line of Victor Hugo's poem "The Rose of the Infanta": "Everything on earth belongs to the princes, save the wind. . . ." and the wind gave the flag the appearance of a great sail and this sail lent an air of festivity and richness to this poor corner of the Paris suburbs, while the proletarians crowded under the umbrella. It was as though I were standing at the foot of the great mast of a ship named Humanity and all the earth was aroused by the wind that flapped the flag of the Spanish People's Republic. All the earth seemed attracted towards the glowing future, so unlike Montreuil and the Spain of today.

Then I thought of July 14,' 1935 when the red flag of the working class united with the tricolor of Republican France and I dreamed of the splendid alliance of the three Spanish colors and the three French colors which have the red part in common, the part which strikes the wind first—the wind that does not belong to princes. I dreamed of this splendid alliance of our fraternal colors, which has already been achieved in the red heart of the working class, and I thought that today, as formerly, as in all the history of the centuries, it is the role of poets to bring these colors close, to make the French love Spain, Spain on whose account we wake in the night as though we could hear in the distance the shells of fascism and the new song of the popular paladin, of Rolland beyond the mountains, whom we shall not allow to perish unarmed with nothing save his songs.

The impudent allies of Mola and Cabanella cry that they will not allow a crusade on behalf of Spain. And I wish to take this as a challenge. I appeal to my brother writers and artists of France, to those who are the masters of words, of sounds, and colors, and I ask them to enlist all the strength of their genius, all generosity of their talent and their hearts in a new crusade, the crusade of poetry and art on behalf of Spain. I call upon them to give their art and poetry to the Spain of Pasionaria which is their life too, and concerns the prestige of our country's culture. I call on them to oppose the French Hitlerites, to create a wealth of works for Spain, a medley of blue, white, violet, yellow and red, of works worthy of the cause of Spain, against La Rocque, Hitler and Franco; I ask those who are the masters of men's leisure to see to it that never for an instant shall the people of France forget the people of Spain.

CHRONICLE

GERMANY

The Abolition of Criticism

The third anniversary of the notorious "cells of culture" (in free translation "cells for cultural workers") of the board of control for literature, dramatics, music and fine arts in the Third Empire which was triumphantly celebrated at the Philharmonic Hall in Berlin in the presence of the Führer "himself," was commemorated with a new decree, to be more exact, with a masterpiece of fascist law-making issued by the minister of propaganda. In his long speech, which was full of absurd rhapsodies about the mythical "achievements" of literature and art in the Third Empire, Goebbels announced the introduction of the new law which officially and categorically *prohibits criticism in the field of art.* Truly, it is difficult to imagine a more sweeping method for removing the least possibility of disputing the assertions of the minister of propaganda about the "achievements" of literature and art. It was this same minister about whom M. M. Litvinov said he is a "man who, to give him his due as the author and disseminator of the most absurd inventions and the most bare-faced reports, is as the English say, the right man in the right job . . ."

The minister began by deploring the "destructive and deadly effects of criticism" which, according to *Herr* minister, is nothing more than a survival of the "criticochratic epoch which was of intellectual-Jewish origin." Goebbels chided the "twenty-two twenty-three year-old youths" for daring to pass judgment on the works of old masters and artists and writers of the "Third Empire" . . . "We attempted," declared Goebbels, "to guide them along the path of a positive criticism of the arts, but all our attempts have been in vain. The time has finally come when we are compelled to put an end to this intolerable state of things and we have firmly and unhesitatingly determined to abolish criticism in all fields of art and literature and to replace this useless and disintegrating criticism with descriptive reports of works of art."

In accordance with the new law, a new category of art functionaries is being established—"art reporter"—and the official title of "critic" is being abolished. From now on the "reporter" has the right only to report on the contents of a given work of art. Incidentally, various provisions limit the number of possible "art reporters"—for example, persons below the age of thirty are not permitted to "report" on art.

The aim of this decree is very clear and hardly needs any comment. Now, after four years of fascist dictatorship, Goebbels and Co. want to conceal the complete, crushing and catastrophic failure of all the efforts of fascism to create some works of value in any field of art. The ban on criticism, according to the fascist bosses, will remove the danger of art criticism growing into a criticism of their really barbarian policy in the field of art and literature, and its further development into a criticism of the fascist dictatorship as a whole.

Incidentally, a journalist has been discovered who greeted Goebbels' legal invention with an ecstatic salute. Kircher explains in the once so liberal and literary *Frankfurter Zeitung* that criticism is quite bad, and unworthy of a good German, that it is not necessary to "criticize" but to "describe," to be disciples of "phenomenalism" although, of course, "anticritics."

The third anniversary of the "cells of culture" has inflicted a modernized muzzle besides the "normal" straight-jacket on the German writers. Kircher's statement has proved once more Heine's deep insight. He once wrote in his aphorisms: "If you muzzle a dog, he will begin to bark through the other end. . . ."

Rust's Latest Decree

The German minister of "education," Rust, opened his latest campaign against "Bolshevik art," which designation comprises practically everything that, in the opinion of the rulers of the "Third Empire," does not serve their direct tasks. Rust issued orders to close the departments of modern art in a number of museums, including the following: Kronprinzenpalast in Berlin, Kunsthalle in Düsseldorf, Folkwang-Museum in Essen, Dresdner Gallerie, etc. As Paul Westheim writes in *Tagebuch,* the latest orders of Rust, which somehow crown all former orders of

this kind of the Hitler government, created a panic among the owners of private collections who have hastened to tear from their walls all the canvases of seditious artists since "better bare walls than to be denounced by the porter for Bolshevik culture painted in oils and water colors."

Schiller and . . . Hitler

The campaign against Schiller was begun shortly after the fascists came to power. The world press passed over in silence the report that the audiences in German theaters broke into applause in answer to the famous cue of Marquis Poz in his address to Philip II: "Your Majesty, give us freedom of thought." This campaign continues to this day. From the point of view of the interests of the "Third Empire" Schiller has become one of the useless writers. The following words, published in one of the German provincial newspapers and quoted by the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* with its approval, are quite characteristic:

"The very fact that Schiller's plays are so readily staged in other countries is evience that the works of this writer are worthless to us." Because, "everything that is taking place in the world can be of interest to us only in so far as it can be of service to our national and racial policy."

Incidentally, the "literary workers" of the Third Empire are making an attempt to adapt Schiller to the needs of Hitler Germany.

As noted by the magazine *Das Wort,* Hitler Germany paid its respects to the memory of F. Schiller with four literary-historical studies. The first, *Schiller—A Helpmate of Hitler,* is the work of an old fascist fighter, Hans Fabrizius. "Not overburdened with erudition," "by no means a philologist," and "a man completely indifferent to esthetics," "but" and "if"—this is the way the esteemed *Berliner Boersen-Zeitung* characterizes the esteemed critic of Schiller. Fabrizius gently reproaches Schiller because he only "foresaw the great people's hero, Hitler" but "did not accept him completely." Therefore, careful fascist editing in the interests of the national state is applied to Schiller's many mistakes. *Robbers,* after it was edited by Fabrizius, is an apology for national-socialism, plus the idea of a leader. The theme of *The Fiasco* is a people's (read fascist) state and the greatness of its leaders. *Cunning and Love* is a play devoted to the glorification of the "people (!) and the morals of the nobility." *Don Carlos* treats of the theme of an impotent leader, spineless liberalism and redemption attained with the help of man—a sovereign and a lord. . . . According to Fabrizius' interpretation Schiller is "hopeful material for fascist producers and directors."

Eugene Kunemann's work, *Schiller and His World,* does not arouse any particular delight in the fascist press. The book is written very smoothly and makes splendid reading—but . . . it is quite impossible to understand what purpose the author had in publishing it. In it there is not a single reference to contemporary life; "mutual outlooks" and "parallels" are not established—characteristics which indisputably indicate the inadequate political "preparation" of the author, if not his evil intentions.

Sources of Schiller by Prof. Herman Pongs is an attempt to impose on the creative works of Schiller the idea of the "spirit of paternalism" which mounts the steps of a single ladder—father, fatherland and love to it; the father is a leader and dictator and finally, god is father. According to the author of this abracadrabra, the spirit of paternalism "pervaded" the poetry of Schiller and "completed his poetic being."

Herman Schneider, the author of the last book about Schiller, is another "scholar" in the fascist style. He disposes of the works of the great poet very simply. In the chapter *Gifts from Strange Lands,* he accuses Schiller of too zealously "copying" from foreign poets and cites a number of unconvincing examples, supposedly plagiarism by Schiller. He also does not agree with the "operatic style" of his dramas and advises the fascist producers and playwrights how they can acquire in the easiest way the "stylistic gaiety" of Schiller.

The epilogue of Schneider's book explains clearly why the book was written. In it is propagandized the idea of hero-worship, the faith of the poet in the "Führer origin." Schneider continues the attempt begun by Fabrizius to fascicize Schiller, the attempt to adapt his creative works to the requirements of the cannibals of the twentieth century.

A Forbidden Name

The struggle of the Nazis against Heinrich Heine is continuing. The fascists are trying to wipe out his name from the history of German literature, and his immortal poems, set to the music of Schumann, are designated in concert programs as the work of an "unknown poet." However, in spite of all suppression, Heine, a master of political contraband propaganda, continues his sarcastic existence in literature. Not so long ago a German student took as his thesis

for a doctor's degree *The Style of Heinrich Heine*. The thesis was compiled with the necessary thoroughness and the student received the at one time high ranking (in the days before Hitler) of "doctor of philosophy." However, his glory was short lived: the organ of the "brown students," *Movement*, raised a hue and cry against the doctorate and the professors "who had forgotten their obligations." Apparently the thesis will now be repudiated.

Forced Suicide

"The Lessing Society" which endeavored to "preserve the living qualities of the creative works of Lessing for the German people, to further the understanding of his works and his life, and to help the growth of literature and scientific research," has committed suicide. Following its self-liquidation, the museum bearing his name has also been shut down. There is no place for the author of *Nathan the Wise, Laokoon, Hamburg Dramaturgy* in the Germany of Julius Streicher and Adolph Hitler. The prediction of Leon Feuchtwanger, of the fate of the "Lessing Society" has been completely vindicated. In his book, *The Oppenheim Family*, he vividly describes the unhappy fate of Gustav Oppenheim, the author of a large work on Lessing, and the unhappy fate of the material collected for this work.

A new publishing house, Kurt Reiss Verlag, has been founded in Basel for the purpose of publishing dramatic works for German emigrant theaters. The works of Leon Feuchtwanger, Henrich Mann, Karl Sternheim, Emil Ludwig, Ferdinand Brookner, Bruno Frank and others are being published.

The Latest Novel by Ludwig Renn

A new book by Ludwig Renn, *On the Eve of Great Changes* has been brought out by the publishing house Oprecht in Zurich. This is a story about those months and years which Renn spent in a concentration camp of the "Third Empire." (As is well known Ludwig Renn, the author of *War*, was recently released after three years imprisonment and left Germany.) At the present time, Renn, a former officer in the German army, commands one of the divisions of the International Brigade on the Madrid front. The critic Leo Lania gives the following appraisal of Renn's new book:

"In Renn's book what most arouses the reader is the concreteness and objectiveness with which this man tells about his terrible experiences. Quietly, without undue stress, Renn tells about the horrors and sufferings to which the prisoners are subjected in the torture cells... No hysterical cries... This unusual literary style gives the whole work that mark of truth which reacts irresistibly not only on the skeptic but even on the enemy himself if only the enemy has not lost the last glimmer of honesty and propriety. The fact that one who has seen and experienced all this, nevertheless retains faith in mankind, faith in the German people, makes this book an historical document, a vivid demonstration of the idea to which Ludwig Renn is devoted."

Lania points out a number of serious shortcomings in Renn's new novel. "In reality this book is simply a series of photographic sketches, the truth of which is absolutely unquestionable... Renn's sketches are deprived of that compositional unity which is essential for dramatic intensity... This failing, however, is compensated by the happy thought that Renn has returned to life and to work, by the admiration for a man who, with unhealed wounds, has taken his place with the fighters at the front, without any fuss, as if it were the most natural thing in the world."

Translated by Selma Schwartz

ARGENTINA

"Dialectics"—a monthly magazine

The publication of a monthly magazine *Dialectics*, edited by Anibal Ponce and Dr. Jose Ingenieros, was recently started in Buenos Aires. The aims and tasks of the magazine are defined by the editors of *Dialectics* as follows: "*Dialectics* strives to make it possible for those interested in political and economic science to acquaint themselves with the great treasures (literary, political, philosophical and economic) of the proletariat, and with the latest findings, which, based on the method of dialectical materialism, are invigorating science and culture.

"We are living in an epoch of struggle between two cultures and the study of the classics of the proletariat will help us to illuminate the path which leads to the freedom of mankind."

The first issue of *Dialectics* contains an article by Plekhanov on dialectics and logic, one article by G. Lukacs, *Zola and Realism*, as well as an article by A. Lunacharsky on Rimsky-Korsakoff.

Anibal Ponce, professor of philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires, Juan Marinello (Cuba) and Podal Rios (Argentina), Latin American delegates to the International Association for the Defense of Culture, recently paid a visit to Moscow.

In Moscow, Anibal Ponce visited the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute where a num-

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