Workers of the world, unite!

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

№ 4

1937

THE STATE LITERARY-ART PUBLISHING HOUSE
MOSCOW — USSR

"Defend yourselves from the claws of FASCISM!"
A Spanish Republican war poster. Artist unknown.

See article p. 104

Egon Erwin Kisch

Landing in Australia[1]

The Way to the Antipodes

A king has been murdered. Alexander II of Serbia, who came to France yesterday on a visit, was shot on his arrival at Marseilles. And not only he, but the French minister for foreign affairs who was sitting in the car beside the king.

The assassin was sabered to the ground and in his pocket a Czechoslovak passport was found. Accomplices who had been with him in the hotel also had Czechoslovak passports.

Raids on Czechoslovakians and Yugoslavs: 418 brought before the Prefecture of Police in Marseilles alone; in Paris more than 300. French railway frontier stations and ports are under watch. Excitement runs high all over the world, especially in France, especially in Marseilles. The spot where the deed was done is besieged; ringed with people, pressing to get a sight of the puddle: royal blood, ministerial blood, assassin's blood.

Posters of the *Action Française* and other fascist organizations yell: the foreigners are to blame, France's unwelcome guests murder her welcome guests; down with the Red traitors, the agents of Moscow, out with foreigners.

Anti-fascist posters answer: the king's car was unprotected, just as the President of the Republic's car had been left unprotected three years ago. The Bolsheviks had been accused on that occasion of having killed Doumer. The fact that the assassin was a member of the White Guards and "avenged" himself on France for not making war on Red Russia, however, did not change the course of the bourgeois terror released by police habit against the Lefts. It is to be the same in this case.

There are groups of people everywhere standing about arguing; there are crowds outside every house entered by the police.

Through this handcuffed, suspicious Marseilles a man is walking with a feeling that is far from comfortable. He walks from the station to the quays of the P. & O. Company. He wants to leave France today. He has a Czechoslovak passport. He is neither a monarchist nor a fascist; he is just the opposite, in fact. Will the liner take him on board? Will she now?

The liner takes him on board. He is due to sail at midnight. That of course is only what is put on the timetable. When the hawsers have been loosed even the most superstitious of the passengers are asleep and do not notice that they have left on October 13, 1934 at five o'clock in the morning.

This does not worry the man with the Czechoslovak passport; he is glad to sail away from Europe. He knows that he will now have a long breathing spell before he enters another danger zone.

Nothing would be further from our purpose than to put our readers on the wrong track, so we shall say here, straight away, that our passenger has had nothing to do with the assassination of King Alexander and Minister Barthou.

However we shall have more to say about this man than pleases either us or him. Us, that is we who are writing this book. The man is the "hero" of this book. And yet "hero" is a word that we should prefer to avoid, although, of course, we are using it not in the "heroic" sense, but merely in the sense of "a literary figure." We do not by any means wish to present this man as

[1] This is an excerpt from a book of the same name.

a hero, but neither can we on the other hand, however agreeable it might be to us, stamp him as the opposite, for he is very close to us, a fellow countryman, with like ideas and so forth; we feel solidarity with him, in fact we identify ourselves with him.

As we have said the man is not pleased at being taken up by us. If he himself had to recount after the event the adventures which are now in store for him there can be no doubt that he would hold his breath and take much the same run as we have taken.

The *Strathaird* is an electric liner of 22,500 tons; a large vessel; a larger would be unable to pass through the Suez Canal.

"What does the name *Strathaird* mean?" our man asks a fellow passenger in the same cabin. He happens to be a Scotsman (it is not such a coincidence; nearly all the passengers are English, Irish or Scotch); he answers that Strathaird is a county in Scotland, so is Strathnaver which is the name of the sister ship. "In Strathnaver and Strathaird Gaelic is still spoken, a Celtic dialect, not the same that is spoken in Ireland, but Scottish Gaelic . . ."

"Very interesting," answers our man, for he is not in the least interested in Celtic, still less in the fact that there are subdivisions of it.

We, however, rub our hands. . . . Just you wait my boy, the time will come when you will take an interest in Scottish Gaelic. But we do not want to anticipate future events or let out any secrets either to the reader or to the man who now answers his neighbor in a bored fashion: "Very interesting."

The *Strathaird* has a long voyage before her. She is bound for the South Eastern quarter of the globe and all the passengers are well up in all the arts of long distance traveling.

They play deck tennis as though it were the only game they had ever played at home, they organize a tournament, elect a games committee, swing their golf clubs just as they should be swung, hit their mark with the deck quoits at a distance of ten meters, are connoisseurs of all the different brands of whiskey and fetch buckets of fresh water to rinse themselves after salt-water baths. In the evening there is dancing. After each dance the dinner jackets hold hands, form a ring and circle to the same old tune, ring-a-ring-a-rosy around an inner circle of evening dresses till the tumty-tumty-tum breaks off, and all come to a dead stop. Then each dinner jacket dances the next dance with the evening gown in front of which he happens to find himself.

The conversation is about Calcutta, Bombay, Peshawar, Lahore or Ceylon. People have acquaintances in common there, ask each other questions and exchange gossip. People discover that they happen to come from the same English county, and have lived in the same district in India, and now they get to know one another for the first time. How strange are the ways of providence. "Let's have a drink on it . . ."

Even the Greek shoemaker, who speaks only Greek, knows only the Greek alphabet, and cannot therefore read a word of English, is a British subject because he comes from Malta. The only foreigners are four Italians, who are experts at shuffleboard. One of them frequently wears a black shirt.

Of course the man about whom we are writing is not a British subject. It never turns out, with whatever passengers he gets into conversation, from whatever country they may come that he is their fellowcountryman. He has no acquaintances in common either in the Punjab or in Bombay, in Haidarabad or in Calcutta. He is a complete tyro at deck tennis, at shuffleboard, at ship's golf, at cricket. He does not drink whiskey as he has no money, and he does

not (oh how dreadful!) even possess a dinner jacket. He is therefore outside the social circle.

Only the children make friends with him as he knows some juggling tricks, and a little five-year-old friend comes up to him and asks: "Do tell me something about the death of the Serbian king?"—"What on earth do you know about that?"—"As you passed by, Mummy and Daddy said that you could probably tell a good deal about the death of the Serbian King."

Our man is not troubled much by the appearance of the other passengers. He is glad to be on board and on his way to Australia (because that is where he is going).

So far he is a long way from his goal. The *Strathaird* is now passing through the Straits of Boniface. On the right hand lies Sardinia and on the left hand Corsica. Straight ahead of them there is a smoking tent. On coming nearer the passengers see that it is a mountain. It is Stromboli and it is placidly puffing into their faces. In the bowels of the rock the god of wind and the god of fire are at work, *alias* the firm of Aeolus and Vulcan. But they are in no position to stand up against modern competition. The whole mountain could be quite easily brought down by the goods in a single shop of any up-to-date munition factory, and a modern poison gas plant could blow away the Aeolean lava bubbles with a single puff. But the chimney smokes away and the passengers all take out their cameras to snap this antiquated weapon forge.

Meanwhile we pass by the Lipari islands on the left, but they arouse no interest. Here Mussolini has kept Socialists and anti-fascists in prison for ten years.

Only four days ago our man was sitting in the cold of October in a small town on the north coast of France writing about the eighteenth century. Then he received a telegram from Henri Barbusse: "Can you come to Paris?" In Paris our man was asked whether he would like to go to Melbourne as a delegate to the World Anti-War and Anti-Fascist Committee.

When?

"Tomorrow evening to Marseilles, where you embark the next day for Australia; but you won't sail all the way to Melbourne as that would mean arriving late at the congress.

"From Fremantle, the first Australian port, you will take the train to Melbourne, that will cost twelve English pounds; the passage will cost about eighty pounds, tourist ticket there and back. The Australians have telegraphed the money for the journey, only . . ."

"Only . . .?"

"They cabled the money to England as it is cheaper, and London will settle up with us. Meanwhile we are to advance the money."

"Can you advance it?"

"We must, the Australians have sent the money. Tomorrow you will receive the money from us."

"Yes, but . . ."

"But? What do you mean by but? Don't you want to go? We thought you would be delighted."

"I am, but there's a snag: I have been deported from England."

"Is that written in your passport?"

"It was written in my passport, but I have a new one now."

"Splendid, then you can go."

"Hadn't I better ask the British Consul whether there aren't any difficulties? It would be stupid making a journey round the world and then not to be allowed to land."

"You'll land all right."

"Wouldn't it be safer to send someone with a clean sheet?"

"Nonsense! Anyone else would be stopped just the same. Delegates to congresses against war and fascism are always stopped. The Hitler diplomats in the country concerned see to that."

"Then I shall be doubly stopped."

"Perhaps so. But you'll get into the country all right."

"May God fulfill your hopes."

"Good, that's settled. Now you must go immediately to Cook's."

In the travel office they were not sure whether there was a vacant place on the *Strathaird*. "There are centenary celebrations being held in Melbourne, you know that."

Of course he knew it, *selbstverständlich, naturellement,* that was just why he wanted to go to Australia. He wanted to attend the celebrations.

Cook called through to Marseilles. There was a vacant berth in a four berth cabin, return fare 78 pounds, "shall we reserve it?"

"Yes."

"It must be paid cash down."

Our man, purely by chance, had not as much as that on him.

"A deposit will do."

Our man, purely by chance, had no money at all on him. Would it do tomorrow?

"No guarantee."

Our man enquired whether an entry visa was necessary. No, he was told, Czechoslovak citizens with return tickets did not require a visa.

The only thing he wanted then was his fare: 175 francs to Marseilles, 78 pounds to the most westerly point of Australia, 12 pounds from thence on to Melbourne. Then a certain amount for the usual traveling expenses would be required—the journey alone would take five weeks—and if one was not allowed ashore the return journey would take ten weeks instead of five. The boat does not return directly, but continues on past Australia to New Zealand. Our man had hunted carefully through the timetable: the *Strathaird* would not be back in Marseilles until January 4 of the following year.

Our man has exactly 22 French francs 25 centimes in cash. It is quite clear that this is insufficient for a journey to the antipodes. But tomorrow he will be sent money.

Tomorrow is an evil day. Murder, "murder of a king, murder of a minister," shriek the newspaper headlines. "Away with the Metheques, away with foreigners!"

Before he leaves his hotel the next day our man has to receive two inquisitive visitors who want to know why, being a Czechoslovak citizen, he lives in France, and if he knows any Yugoslavs or other suspicious persons. No, he doesn't know any: he may go. In Paris hell has been let loose, houses are searched, political refugees are questioned, there are purposeless arrests.

From the committee he learns that only some of the money for the journey has been received, enough for the Paris-Marseilles stretch and the ship fare, but not enough for the railway journey across the continent of Australia. "But friend Ulrich will meet you at the station with it this evening."

At Cook's our man is told that a visa will be required after all. "I never heard of such a thing before," he shouts. "Didn't you know that yesterday?" He kicks up a din until they ring up the British consulate: "Hello, Cook's speaking, there's a gentleman here who, owing to our error, has not applied

for a visa to Australia. Could you oblige and let him have it straight away, he is sailing this evening for the Centenary."

The Consul has the black list—our man knows it well—lying on his desk to the left. "You are the gentleman Cook's have advised us about, are you," he says and rubber stamps the passport:

British Passport Control
Paris
Date: 11-10/35 No. 51852
Visa for Australia
gez.: C. E. Collinson
Good for any number of journeys within
twelve months from date hereof.
Temporary visitor.

Then to the library of the geographical society and back with a box full of books.

In the evening, Gare de Lyon; friend Ulrich, who is to bring the money, has not yet arrived. Luckily someone is there who can lend 1,000 francs, that will be enough for the Fremantle-Melbourne stretch.

Friend Ulrich is not to be seen, and our man says: "And he is usually so reliable. This is the first time he has left me in the lurch."

Friend Ulrich was there as it happened, but not knowing that two trains leave for Marseilles at about the same time, was waiting on the other platform. The next day he reported to the committee that the delegate had not left. "And he is usually so reliable. This is the first time he has left us in the lurch."

Friend Ulrich soon learns of his mistake. Our man will not hear about it for some time.

As our man was the last to come on board his name is not on the passenger list. All the others who are the life and soul of the social activities on board have their names printed on the list with their place of origin and destination. The said social activities begin each morning with a descent on the shaving mugs in the washroom and on the baths.

The ladies make their way to the washroom with greater or less speed depending upon whether it is more important to them to hide their undone faces or to show off their silk kimonos. At breakfast their dress is governed by other considerations. Those with hairy or thick legs prefer long curved beach trousers to shorts. The ladies who do the high jump do so to make themselves graceful or to "slenderize"; the prudes knit jumpers or embroider silk. There are crossword puzzlers, and if one comes up to our man with a pencil in his hand he answers "Heine" before he has time to ask which German poet has five letters. Worthy men and women are continually studying the passenger list, although there is only one interesting thing about a passenger list and that is: the problem as to what *can* be interesting about it. But it is probably envy if our man thinks this, envy because he, as the last-comer, is the only person whose name is not on.

The toe of the boot of the Apennine peninsula shines as though brightly polished and the football, Sicily, is of plain chrome leather. The ship slips neatly in between ball and foot.

On Sunday hymns are sung in the saloon. "How lovely," cry the ladies in delight when the parson calls out the next hymn. Afterwards they lurch to

the hallelujas of the jazzband. What metamorphoses. At the services all is propriety, in the daytime they go about in gaping dressing gowns, bathing suits or trousers, while at night their long evening dresses chastely cover even the ankles of legs whose every hair is known to everyone.

There are 1,204 passengers on board, among them the Archbishop of Bombay, the Lord Bishop of Madras, a considerable number of nuns on their way to India and assorted majors and colonels. It would show a lack of respect to suppose that they are traveling tourist class (especially the nuns). The ship's crew consists of 400 men. The officers and sailors are English, so are the stewards and so are the pages, good looking boys of from sixteen to eighteen, carefully chosen, their white kid gloves stuck under their shoulder bands looking like epaulettes. Unbelievably emaciated Indians with *pugrees* (turban-like bandboxes wound round with cloth) on their heads and violet sashes about their bodies, wash and scrub the deck, barefooted, without a moment's pause.

The radio announces: Poincaré is dead. The Croatians have liquidated their opposition over the bier of King Alexander. The protestant church resists Reichsbischof Müller.

The *Strathaird* berths in Port Said, changeling of three continents! Beggary, child prostitution, trade in cantharidin and other stimulants prohibited in Europe, money changers, jugglers. The *Strathaird* passes out of Europe through the Suez Canal.

The next stopping place is Port Suda. This is darkest Africa in spite of the modern warehouses and the British soldiers, whose numbers have greatly increased during the last weeks as an attack on Abyssinia by Mussolini is feared. . . .

The Red Sea has a growth of red seaweed. It is from this that it derives its name and not from the blood that has so frequently flowed here.

In the afternoon there is a children's party on board. The small people, dressed up, trip out the polka with shy and anxious looks. The prize for the most original costume is given to a boy in a blue, artistically torn linen smock on which is sewn empty matchboxes, and used matches. Round his neck he carries the inscription: "British Workman, no more strikes." Can anyone deny that this promising motto deserves the first prize?

Aden is without shadows, without water, without plants, without color. The sun-glitter spreads from the back-streets of the town out over the waves of the sea and is stronger than the cool breath of the water.

It is oppressively hot on the promenade deck of the *Strathaird*. Down below, however, four stories lower down, where the passengers of the tourist class are housed, four in a little hole of a cabin, it is unendurable. And so the tourists wander round in the higher regions all night, a pillow under their arm. They try to sleep now in a deck chair on deck, now on the parquet floor of the smoking saloon, but mostly without success. No cover is endurable.

Even the bathing suit one wears all day now feels like a fur coat. One sweats at the thought of what one is to wear at the fancy dress ball for grown ups. An elderly lady appears in Russian national costume; a bride's crown weighs on her plaited hair and her streamlined bosom is studded with pearls. She has a heavy weight to drag but, no pain no gain, and she wins the prize all right while the orchestra wheezes out the *Volga Boatmen*.

Nor is love-making hindered by the heat. "Let's go and have a look at the Southern Cross," runs the formula with which a gentleman invites his partner to seek out suitable corners: he leads her on to the dog deck or into the linen room where it is still darker and from where there is no question of being able

to see the Southern Cross. But why should that worry one? Even Dante never saw that constellation and yet he sings that it lit his way from the Inferno into Purgatory:

To the right hand I turned and fixed my mind
On the other pole attentive, where I saw
Four stars ne'er seen before save by the ken
Of our first parents. Heaven of their rays
Seemed joyous, O thou northern site! bereft
Indeed and widowed, since of these deprived.

Console yourself, reader from the widowed north, the Southern Cross is glorious, but no more glorious than the lights in the dome of heaven above you.

The ship goes straight from Aden to Bombay without a stop. Those who are going to India get ready to land, they pack and squeeze and fill up forms. All this fuss is smiled at by the passengers for Oceania. The latter have long since christened the Indian passengers "week-enders."

More than two thirds of the passengers land at Bombay. The Hindu crew is changed. Those who are traveling further have a day in which to go ashore, no, only half a day, less: nine hours. But the light enables cameras to be clicked till late in the evning and vouchers to be brought home, on the strength of which one can pronounce authoritative opinions on India and its people for the rest of one's life.

After leaving Bombay the ship has quite a different character.

Gone are the dress-changing ladies, gone are the salary lords (explanation for German readers: Gehaltsgrafen), gone are the Smokings (explanation for English readers: dinner jackets).

The new arrivals, mostly Australians, behave unaffectedly and speak still more unaffectedly. They drink tea with every course, even with their soup, and are agreeable and friendly. A group of awe-inspiring giants have brought Australian ponies to the army in India where they will be taught to play polo and draw field guns. These men are returning home ponyless and pennyless and those who have not left all their earnings in the public houses in Calcutta now drink it away in the bar of the smoking saloon.

The passengers feel quite at ease walking about in their shirt-sleeves whether they have braces or belts or neither. When they wear a coat, which is very seldom, it is decorated with the badge of the Anzacs. The word Anzac is easily deciphered as being made up of the initial letters of the "Australian and New Zealand Army Corps"; the Anzacs fought in the World War at Gallipoli and later at Wipers.

"What is Wipers,"—"Wipers is in Belgium; great battles were fought at Wipers," is the answer. Wipers. Our man racks his brains all night as he lies on his berth. Wipers. He cannot get to sleep. It doesn't occur to him that it was Ypres they were talking about.

In addition to the Australians and the four Italians there are about twenty dark-skinned passengers on board, Tamils from Ceylon. They keep shyly to themselves and avoid the others. Till the end of October they worked on tea plantations on the Indian mainland while Indians from the mainland picked tea on the islands of Ceylon. The reason for this is that foreigners are easier to exploit than local people.

Our man sits in the writing room of the ship to prepare his address for the congress, to present the problems of war and fascism in the King's English,

building up sentences from the vocabulary at his command. This dependence and restriction of expression is not at all to his liking. He would very much like to increase his knowledge of English, but he hears nothing but Australian spoken around him. What he learns is:

That before every noun and every verb, as also before every adjective, one must put the word "bloody."

That a chair may be referred to as an adulterous bastard and bad beer as a fair cow.

That a man is a bloke.

That an Englishman is a real Englishman but that a real Australian is a "dinky-die-Aussie."

That sentences must be ended with the word "goodo."

Without any extension of his vocabulary and therefore without any of the joys of authorship he drafts his address. The work is in any case probably all for nothing. The immigration authorities will no doubt confiscate the manuscript and bring an action against him for libeling the head of a state. With this in mind he only indicates the bloody bloke with the first letter of his name, but then crosses out the H and replaces it with an X. But who could be deceived by this? Nobody but H. could be meant by the bloody bloke.

The ship slid down the western side of the Indian triangle. In the evening, at ten o'clock when everything has been served and cleared up, the dining stewards, however tired they may be and however difficult it is to discern the coast in the twilight, stand on the afterdeck and cast their gaze over the sea as though they would make it fast, like a rope, to their dark home.

Our man gets into conversation with one of them, a young lad, with a clear brow, a native of Goa, India, one of the dots of empire, left to Portugal. He looks round nervously. Although his nationality and native language are Portuguese and he is a catholic by religion he does not want to be caught speaking to a European. His voice drops to a whisper: "You haven't by any chance a book in Portuguese, I am very fond of reading." He has been at a missionary school, he says, and would very much like to study, but he hasn't enough money, there is much hunger in Goa. "You wouldn't believe what hunger there is in Goa."

"I quite believe it, dear steward. There is hunger everywhere in the world. What misery didn't we see in the streets of Bombay a week ago." — "I know," said the Goanese, "I know, but we are Christians after all, we shouldn't have to endure hunger like Hindoos." He points proudly at a rectangular mountain: "The holy Francisus Xaverus, my patron saint, is buried over there."

As our man wants to hear more about the tomb, the Indian Christian admits mournfully that there is very little of the saint left. Every vessel in the Christian shipping world has carried off a piece of the relic.

"What must it be like for the living, then, who are not even holy?"

The young Goanese nods and stares over at the visible strip of that homeland of his from which everything has been taken, even its holy corpse.

In the double light of the two morning suns, (one of them sheds its rays from the bottom of the sea) the Malabar coast comes in sight. Two suns must have lit up the land and the water in just the same way in the days when the Hindoos here saw white-skinned men for the first time.

The leader of the white men was Vasco de Gama. In the year designated 1498 by Christendom the wind brought him here from the Cape of Good Hope; he landed in Calicut, was received in a friendly manner and was presented with gifts on his departure, so he came back again later in order to enslave his hosts.

The *Strathaird* still draws its parallel to the side of the triangle. The area of the triangle is itself intersected by frontiers. One state is called Cochin. Here Elephantiasis rages and converts the inhabitants into disfigured monsters. Another state is called Travancore. Its stamps, especially the dark green four chuckram, are known and prized by every European collector, but hardly anyone knows or cares for the four and a half million inhabitants who are divided into four hundred castes not counting the black Jews whose futures are as dark as their features. Between the rocky ridges of Alleppey there are factories for the manufacture of coconut oil and coconut matting. Why are the factory chimneys so high? Is one afraid of contaminating the air between the rocks and the sea? Or do the factory owners of Alleppey want to show the ships that they can raise their smoke as high as any industrialist in Europe?

At Cape Comorin the *Strathaird* passes the peak of the Indian triangle. Then comes Colombo, where one can go ashore. After that one crosses the equator and there is an end to our geography.

The *Strathaird* will not put in again until she reaches Australia. The passengers bound for Australia must fill up the landing form with its cross columns and headings and its captious questions; purpose of journey, has one forty pounds landing money? names of acquaintances and relations in Australia, what political ideas does one favor and so forth.

For our man there can be no question of forty pounds in cash but he hopes that for the passengers with a return ticket that is not required. Nor has he any relations or acquaintances in Australia, but he hopes that this also is not required of a visitor to the centenary celebrations in Melbourne.

In the Australian papers which he bought in Colombo he could find nothing about the Anti-War Congress, he does not even know where the Congress will hold its meetings. What will happen if the friends do not know that a delegate is landing from the *Strathaird* in Fremantle and traveling by train to Melbourne? What will happen if they come to the station and do not recognize him? We, invisible observers, can give him an answer to this: "You will not land in Fremantle, and so will not take the train to Melbourne. Quite a different fate is awaiting you, in the meanwhile enjoy your freedom of movement." But we do not betray our secret.

The passengers crowd on deck armed with cameras in order to take snaps of the *Emden's* corpse. The *Emden* means almost as much to the Australians as Gallipoli and "Wipers," for it was an Australian cruiser, the *Sydney,* that put an end to the German battleship. Here, where the *Emden* came to grief, she still lies 12 degrees South latitude and 97 degrees East longitude. One sees her masts sticking up at the edge of a reef overgrown with coconut trees. We don't want to talk any more geography but we cannot resist mentioning the history of this interesting archipelago.

It was discovered in 1608 by Captain Keeling of the East India Company and was given the name of the Coconut Islands. The name gave rise to misunderstandings however. Too many adventurers came here and approached the islanders with the question: "Will you please tell us where the fabulous treasure of the Morgan pirates lies buried?" When they were told that the Coconut Islands of the Morgan Pirates were in quite a different place, namely in the Caribbean Sea, the visitors became furious, and one can hardly blame them, for who would like to make such a long journey for nothing. That is why the Coconut Islands now bear, as subtitle, the name of their discoverer, Keeling.

After Keeling's visit no white man landed on these islands for two centuries. The next visitor was Clunie Ross, who, cruising here in 1825 and taking a

liking to the spot, returned two years later with wife, child, mother-in-law and eight Scottish sailors to found an empire, small but his very own.

Imagine their astonishment, however, when they found that there was someone there already. His name was Alexander Hare and he was a shipwrecked Englishman who lived a married life of melancholy constancy with forty Malayan wives at his disposal. With the arrival of the new immigrants he was driven out of his paradise. Each of the Scotsmen took five wives from Hare's harem, Captain Ross became hereditary ruler and the archipelago belongs to his descendants to this day, although it is administered as British territory from Singapore. Twenty officials of the Sea Cable Service now live on Keeling Islands, and each has at least one wife, so in the course of a century everything has come out right.

The wreck of the *Emden* is left behind, the day dreams to which the story of the marital idyll of a European with forty Malay women has given rise, fade away and the *Strathaird* approaches the Australian continent and its jubilee celebrations. Australia was colonized by white men almost 150 years ago but the subsidiary settlement at Port Phillip, which developed into the huge town of Melbourne, with its million inhabitants, and into the State of Victoria, is exactly a hundred years old.

The *Strathaird* is not the only ship bringing guests to the centenary celebrations. The Duke of Gloucester, son of King George V of England, is on his way in a battleship: John Masefield, who holds the ancient dignity of Poet Laureate to the English court, is on his way; Sir Maurice Hankey, Chief of the British Defense Committee, is on his way to see about the question of obligatory military service, and Sir Baden-Powell is on his way to point out to his boy scouts the path to an heroic death; Field Marshall Lord Milne, to whom is entrusted the organization of the civilian population in time of war, is on his way; Sir John Cadman, in charge of army oil supplies, is on his way; the British Grenadiers' Band is on its way.

Visitors to the jubilee are also sailing through the air, and these attract by far the greatest attention. Every morning the passengers crowd round to see the radiograms. Today news has arrived about the record flights. Black and Scott have reached Australia from London in two days, thirteen hours and fifty-seven minutes.

Two days, thirteen hours and fifty-seven minutes—our man has just about that time still to go before he arrives in Australia, but it is already four weeks since his start in Europe. His address for the Congress has been committed to writing. A traveling library on Australia has been practically read through and excerpts have been made. In the first official work, *The Commonwealth of Australia* by Bernhardt R. Wise, our man has come across a remarkable law, by which one may exclude an immigrant without refusing him entry, and condemn him although he has done nothing punishable. "You're getting hotter," we feel inclined to call out to him when he reaches this part of Wise's book, "hotter and hotter" as children say when playing "hide the thimble" and the searcher comes close to the hidden object.

According to this law every person on landing must undergo a literary test, in some European language. Our man read that the Socialists and other progressives had opposed the introduction of the law on the grounds that it could be used by the government then in power to prevent political opponents entering the country.

Here our man nodded. It would seem that he shared the fears of the radicals. As he read on however, he learnt that the opposition to the law was illogical and ludicrous.

"Nevertheless, and in spite of an express promise the opponents adhered to their opinion that white immigrants might be kept out with the help of this law, and they succeeded in further propagating this mischievous falsehood. Actually the promise given to parliament by the government has been most faithfully kept, and from the day when the law was passed to the present day (1908) *not a single person of a white race has been subjected to the language test, nor has a white person ever been refused entry into the Commonwealth on account of it.*" (Bernhardt R. Wise's italics)

Our man, who had at first intended to publicize this curious law in Europe, now decided that this would be unfair as he now saw in black and white that advantage was never taken of it. He therefore crossed out the excerpt, but then, in another book, he found that the literacy test had been used against white persons after all, though, it is true, only against paupers, mental deficients, prostitutes and criminals. An adventurer from Greece was given fifty words of dictation in Gaelic. An amusing incident, thought our man and made an entry in his notebook, "Gaelic test." The notes he made on board ship ended with these two words.

The night before arriving in Fremantle, the port of the West Australian capital, Perth, that is to say the night of the fifth to the sixth of November, he did not sleep. In the morning the mail was brought on board and there were a letter and two telegrams from Australia for our man. The letter was more a statement than a communication and showed that the sender, a Melbourne merchant and taxpayer, undertook thereby to guarantee the landing money if such should be required.

One of the telegrams was a greeting from the Pan-Australian Anti-War and Anti-Fascist Committee and the other was from the Melbourne organization of journalists inviting our man to give a lecture on November 12 on the European Press.

The passports of the passengers who are to land are being examined in the first class saloon. Our man goes over and is informed that British citizens will be dealt with first. He thus has an opportunity to have a look around in the first class world from which he has hitherto been excluded. The day before he would undoubtedly have taken the opportunity but today he prefers to keep his eyes steadily fixed on the long awaited shore. He looks out and sees piles of timber, a monument, strange white-trunked trees (perhaps the Australian rubber tree?), warehouses, hotels and. . . .

What do the telegrams mean, he wonders, what does the letter mean? Why are the committee in such a hurry to welcome him, why do they attract attention to the delegate, why do the journalists telegraph invitations, why does the Melbourne merchant offer his guarantee?

Our man looks at the shore in order to make a thorough mental note of it for all eventualities: piles of wood, a monument, the strange white-trunked trees (perhaps the Australian rubber tree), warehouses, hotels, and. . . .

Two well set up, stern featured men stride across the deck and make a bee line for our man: "Are you Mr. Kisch?"

They bring him before the customs official who, in the name of the Commonwealth government, makes the announcement: "Entry prohibited. Any attempt to overstep the prohibition, that is to say to step on Australian soil, will involve very grave consequences." And his passport will remain with the authorities.

The customs official then begins to search our man's luggage in his cabin. The unadmitted arrival protests. Either a prohibition to land or a customs

search—a government has no right to claim both gratifications. Somewhat abashed the customs official stutters that he has his instructions, notes the protest, but carries out his search.

Supported by two Western Australian Sherlock Holmes', prepared for anything, he makes a very thorough search indeed. Every handkerchief is unfolded, every book looked through, the sides of the trunk are tapped in an expert fashion and the tubes of toothpaste felt.

"No bombs there," says our man, but this remark elicits neither a smile nor an answer. The three men continue their work in good earnest. It takes about half an hour, during which time our man wonders what is going to happen to him.

He might be escorted to the next steamer sailing for Europe, that is perhaps the worst that can happen to him. He might be isolated on the *Strathaird,* in which case his Australian friends might never learn whether he has arrived at all, whether he has landed or where he has got to. That is another possibility and just as bad as the first. If, however, the authorities were unable to hush up his arrival and the prohibition to land, if our man should be able to get into contact with his friends, then everything would by no means be lost.

Meanwhile, the customs men continue tapping and slapping his trunk. When eventually they click it to again, their chief repeats, laying great emphasis on his words: "Any attempt to step on Australian soil will have very grave consequences."

Our man accompanies the gentlemen out of his cabin. At the end of the corridor he sees a group of people who have evidently been waiting for the official procedure to come to an end. These are not cops; cops are not as a rule young lads with such a free and easy manner, cops do not have cameras dangling over their stomachs. These are evidently members of a set who can help him out of his fix.

"You are the newspaper blokes I take it. Let us go up to the smoking room and the story mixen." They laugh because he addresses them as blokes, and therefore knows Australian, because he speaks about "story mixen" and therefore knows newspaper slang. By the time they are sitting together up above he is quite one of them. This does not prevent their first question from being a very personal one: "Are you a Communist?"

"Splendid," our man answers. "Splendid that the question of party membership should be the first question to be asked. I can now explain straight away that I shall neither invoke my membership of any particular political party nor, by emphasizing my non-membership, alienate myself from any party. I come as an anti-fascist and a militant opponent of war. There are members of all progressive parties in the movement against war and fascism, millions of Communists, many great scholars and writers like Henri Barbusse, Romain Rolland and others."

"And you want to agitate here against Germany?"

"For Germany, against the Nazis, into whose hands she has fallen, against national-socialism which is a danger to world peace."

"You say that as a matter of policy, don't you? You yourself know quite well that the Hitler regime suits the German character. If you like we will not mention that we asked you this question."

"On the contrary, I am here to refute the view that the German people want war; to tell how all those with whom I was in prison could not be forced to become fascists even by the most horrible tortures; to speak of the resistance and the illegal work in Germany, carried out in the face of indescribable

dangers. There is hardly another people that would oppose bloody tyranny with such self denial as the illegal workers in Germany do."

Pencils race.

"And now we shall share the matter out so as not to compete against one another. I shall tell *you* about the war menace at the other side of the Suez Canal, *you* about the Nazi terror, *you* about the activities of our movement and you fellow journalist from the illustrated news, shall have anecdotes from my life as a reporter. That way each of you will have your scoop, your exclusive news. Is that O.K.?"

"O.K."

After this our man composes a telegram to the government in the capital of the Commonwealth, Canberra, expressing his painful astonishment at being received in such an unfriendly way and asking that what is evidently a misunderstanding be put right. This is taken down by the newspaper blokes.

The passengers from the *Strathaird* have gone ashore to spend the day in Perth. The two detectives have remained on board and keep at a distance of three paces from our man.

Our man looks enviously at the broad road which leads eastwards from Fremantle. At the end of this road, out of sight, lies the city of Perth. Passengers from the *Strathaird* are now probably walking about its streets in the midst of palatial Australian buildings and Australian life, lunching in Australian restaurants, and buying Australian goods, until at about three o'clock the afternoon papers appear and they see on the front page the photograph of a man with whom they have spent the last weeks without having an inkling of his dangerous character.

The Berliners are better off still. They hear about our man's detention with full details, before luncheon. They read about these events at the very moment they are actually happening in Western Australia, for, as we should point out, the very moment comes nine hours earlier at 120° East longitude than it does in Central Europe. In Wedding, in Neukölln, on the Potsdamer Platz and in front of the Gedächtniskirche the newspaper boys shout "... Not allowed into Australia. Rabid reporter indignant. Evening edition."

We, the observers, remove our astral bodies from Australia and buy a newspaper from the Berlin newspaper boy as he shouts the word "indignant" through the streets, and this is what we read:

"London, November 1. According to a Reuter dispatch from Canberra (Australia) the 'emigrant' Egon Erwin Kisch, who was to have spoken against war on the continent of Australia as a delegate of the World Anti-War Committee, has been refused entry by the immigration authorities. The grounds given were that since Kisch left Germany he has engaged in open Communist propaganda. Kisch immediately sent an indignant telegram to the Ministry of Home Affairs in Canberra, in which he referred to a protest against this treatment on the part of an 'author of international repute.' "

The largest letters that the Scherl printing house has at its disposal, the headlines with their expensive underlining in red, the text spaced out in bold type, are not sufficient to fill the first page and so a Herr Editor suspected of formerly having been associated with the hero of the headlines, now so indignant with Australia, is called upon to add a vitriolic commentary.

With the same speed as Reuter's telegraphic agency shot to Europe with the news it now shoots back to tell Australia what Germany says: "... the rebuff that he has now been given in Australia is a welcome proof of the extent to which the world is now beginning to realize the true character of emigrants from Germany...."

This and similar extremely satisfied comments by the minister for propaganda lie in full on editors' desks in Sydney and Melbourne and one cannot put them under any other heading than "General Approval in Berlin." The English papers, Reuter informs the Australian press, confine themselves to a mere statement of the news and only the *Manchester Guardian* considers that the prohibition to land is "petty, and lowers the prestige of the Commonwealth."

Past Cape Leeuwin, the southwest point of the receding continent and along the southwest coast of Australia the *Strathaird* proceeds with our man on board through a stormy bay.

Radiogram from Melbourne: "Is the government's assertion true that you are not allowed into England question mark wireless reply immediately stop committee."

What answer should he give his friends to this question, after the landing business? Our man wirelesses in reply that it is merely ludicrous to suggest that England will not have him. Last year he gave lectures in London, in Essex Hall and Kingsway Hall, presided over by Lord Marley, Sir Bertrand Russell and Lady Despard, Marshall French's sister. It was only when he was on his way to London for the counter-trial of the Leipzig Reichstag fire case that he was stopped at the English coast like so many of the foreign witnesses, through the intervention of the German embassy, but this was clearly only applicable to that particular case.

This radiogram costs eighteen shillings and is paid for out of the money intended for the transcontinental railway journey.

It takes fifteen hours for the telegram to reach the addressee and the ministry has already made its decision before it is delivered. The sender is of course unaware of this, and he is also unaware of the fact that another overseas delegate is on his way to the Anti-War Congress, a delegate from New Zealand. Our man has not yet heard this delegate's name, but they are traveling towards one another, our man eastwards and the New Zealander, Gerald Griffin, westwards.

For the rest our man, as he glides past the coast of the mainland, does not know anything about the dissatisfaction that is beginning to grow there. For the masses the centenary is no jubilee. Banquets and balls are arranged for the guests of honor, there is gossip about the awards of public honors, all kinds of expensive structures are erected. Is it a proper time for such things?

Of all the official events the only one which aroused popular interest (and it aroused the most intense interest everywhere) was the 19,000 kilometer airplane race from London to Melbourne. But the results of the race showed up only too clearly what had previously gone on behind the scenes.

Joyce Manton, a lecturer at Melbourne University in her well documented pamphlet: "The Centenary Celebrations are Preparations for War," shows up in a documentary fashion the imperialist essence of this prologue. An Italian airplane and the American *Bellanca* airplane were nat admitted to the race, the master flyer Kingsford Smith and his American machine were obstructed at the start, although he was being financed by the founder of the flying prize, the Australian chocolate king, Macpherson Robertson, and other airplanes were handicapped or forced to take a roundabout course. Thus it was that Scott and Black, two Britons, won, as the Army authorities had arranged from the beginning.

The Jubilee committee is headed by military men; most of the official guests are military figures. The squadron of seaplanes from Iraq has not come for sport and the choir of the Scottish Grenadiers has not come for music.

All this is too openly a pretext for militarization to suit the taste of the Australian worker.

Few countries lost such a high percentage of their population during the World War as Australia. The debts Australia incurred in order to equip and support the troops sent to Europe remain an acute financial problem. This land, once so rich, is in the throes of economic crisis, and unemployment is relatively greater than in any other country in the world. And yet a war memorial is erected which makes a record in costliness—a million pounds, although it was chiefly dole workers who have toiled at it for a year at twelve shillings a week unemployed benefit. Platforms are being built and festivities organized for visitors who wish to introduce compulsory military service in Australia and to militarize the youth, while an opponent of war is declared an undesired guest and forbidden to land. "We have no use for the message he brings us."

Meetings, protests to the government, questions in parliament, leaflets, demonstrations. The Labor Party, only recently in a position of considerable influence in the Commonwealth and in most of the states, is now in bitter opposition to its successors in office. Acting on decisions by local groups and youth organizations it declares that the prohibition to land is a breach of hospitality, an act of repression against the workers and a preparation for fascism.

A Reception Committee for the International Delegate had been formed in Melbourne and now, after the prohibition to land, it is converted into a Defense Committee, and local groups are started all over the country. The Trade Unions assail the government's action, writers protest against the arbitrary treatment of a European colleague, Catharine Susannah Prichard, Vance Palmer, Jean Devanny, J. M. Harcourt, Tom Fitzgerald, E. J. Brady, Bartlett Adamson, Bernard Cronin, Georgia Rivers and Marx Meldrum, Australia's greatest painter, the university professors Walter Murdoch, Beasley, Greenwood and Macmahon Ball describe the refusal to admit the guest as an insult to the Australian people; F. Alexander, Chairman of the Australian Section of the League of Nations Union, uses still stronger expressions and a bishop, E. H. Bergmann sends a note of sympathy to the Committee.

Mr. Menzies, Public Prosecutor-General and minister, watches this storm raging at his feet coolly and contemptuously. It was not he who issued the prohibition, he answers to the first questions in parliament, it had already been issued by the last government, but he would carry it into effect. "This man has been forbidden to land by the Minister for Home and Territories and there the matter rests," he declares and adds that the delegate "shall not set foot on the soil of the Australian Commonwealth."

The Melbourne Anti-War Committee accuses him of untruthfulness in saying that the ban was issued by the previous ministry. The present government has been in office since August and the question of an Australian Anti-War Committee had not then been raised. It was only on October 12 that the Committee learnt that a delegate was coming from Europe. How can the government have known about it months previously? When asked to explain this Menzies answers that if the ban was issued by the present cabinet it was in his absence, and that the delegate "shall not set foot on the soil of the Australian Commonwealth." And there the matter rests.

A question is also put to the Postmaster-General, MacLachlan. How is it that a radiogram refuting the government's assertion which was handed in at 7.05 p.m. on board the *Strathaird* off Fremantle was discussed by the

cabinet the same evening while it was only delivered to the addressee (the Melbourne Anti-War and Anti-Fascist Committee) the next day at half past eleven? The postmaster answers that the Australian post office transmits 100,000 telegrams a day, and occasional delays cannot be avoided.

Eight days before, the organizers of the Anti-War Congress had prepared notices for the press about the expected arrival of the international delegate, in which they had attempted to show why his choice as delegate to Australia was of such particular significance; (between ourselves this was no easy task, for they knew next to nothing about him, and if they had known all about him, they could not have given him a very promising biography). Either on account of the meagerness of biographical details or because people did not wish to give publicity to a left-radical congress during a period of patriotic festivities, most of the papers refused to print the notice. In particular Mr. B. H. known not only as newspaper magnate of New South Wales, but also as a militant patriot and guardian of public morals and piety, did not allow any mention to be made in his papers of the congress or its delegates.

One evening Mr. B. H. staggers through the Leichhardt district of the city in a hopelessly inebriated condition, accosts the women he passes with "To Hell with the Virgin Mary." He opens the door of a hairdresser's shop and loudly contests the legitimacy of the Pope's birth, demanding, at the same time, still more loudly that he (the Pope) should go to the devil.

The sacrilege arouses the indignation of an aboriginal. His ancestors had been lured out of the woods with Catholicism and had had God in Heaven and his representative on earth dinned into them until they had recognized these supreme beings and had given up their free life in exchange,—and a life of great charm it had been with the wood as their night quarters and the moon as their sun. How could their grandchild therefore allow his so dearly purchased Holy Father to be scorned and condemned to eternal damnation? The black man flew at the blasphemer in a rage *pro ecclesia et pontifice*.

At this moment there happened to pass by an anti-fascist writer who only a few days previously had had a notice about the congress refused by Mr. B. H. He seized the soldier of God by his black arm and stowed away the blasphemer, who had collapsed burbling on the pavement, into a taxi. No hotel would take in the alcoholic carcass and so the young writer brought it to his own lodgings. He took off Mr. B. H.'s shoes, put them away under the bed so that the owner should not trip over them on getting up and himself lay down to sleep in the next room. When the good Samaritan woke up, towards midday, his guest had disappeared and only his shoes remained under the bed. (It leaked out later that B. H. on waking up, had seen a reproduction of the Titian Venus against the wall and concluding from this that he was in a brothel made himself scarce as quickly as he could.)

The writer hastened to the editor's office and offered him a piece of local news: Yesterday evening a well known Sydney figure wanted to put a colored man to the test as to how far his Christianity was only missionary whitewash and was so touched by the pious, and fiery indignation of the black that he gave him his shoes as a present....

The already pale Mr. B. H. became still paler.... He then said solemnly: "Young man, you have saved my life, my honor and my family. In return I will print your confounded notice about your confounded delegate. We shall then be quits."

Quits! A few days later (this was of course after the events in Melbourne about which the reader will hear later) the sacrifice that was made by the newspaper king in printing the notice was no longer a sacrifice. His one time

savior was awakened one night from his sleep by a messenger from Mr. B. H. and asked whether he would be so good as to write down everything he knew about the delegate, the more the better, at a shilling a line.

But the writer knew nothing, no one in Australia knew anything. Only a German farmer in Gipp's Land, who took in *Das Neue Tagebuch,* had seen there a review of a book by our man called *No Admittance;* this struck him as an amusing title in view of the recent events, and so he wrote to a Melbourne newspaper about it. In a jiffy the fastest motor car at the disposal of the editorial staff was rushed to the Gipp's Land bush, so that the document might be facsimiled, translated and published the next day with the headlines " 'No Admittance,' Book with a Prophetic Title." Unfortunately the criticism in the *Tagebuch* was somewhat off the rails (take note Ludwig Marcuse) and contained an allusion to the nickname of the author of the book under review. That this nickname was "rabid reporter" was not stated. Instead the editor wrote that the banned guest was known in Europe as the "Herald of Peace."

Most of the newspapers for lack of any other suitable matter came out with articles on Czechoslovakia, about the Martyr Huss, the composer Smetana and President Masaryk. Somewhat nearer to the theme was the reminiscence of one reader that our man was not the first Czechoslovakian who had been refused entry. Thirty years earlier the Czech singer Emmy Destinn was to have made a concert tour of Australia, but Melba, "the Australian nightingale," prevented it by exercizing pressure on the concert agency and paid 1,500 pounds fine for breach of contract out of her own pocket. Even for a Melba 1,500 pounds is no joke and we ask our reader to note this sum well, as Hegel is reported to have said somewhere that all great facts and persons of significance in world history occur, as it were, twice; and Karl Marx added to this as yet untraced passage of Hegel "the first time as a tragedy and the second time as a farce."

Meanwhile our man is sailing along the coast of the seething continent. His position on board has substantially changed, if not improved. For everyone to whom he had formerly been merely suspect of assassinating King Alexander and Barthou he is now a foreign agent who wishes to stir up disaffection in Australia. Mothers forbid their children to play with him, and his former partners at deck tennis begin the game without him.

Alas, for others he has become alluring. One individual tries to win him over to a synthesis of Trotsky, Mensendieck and Freud on which the salvation of the world depends. A wool trader from Queensland on his way back from England explains to our man how the governments of Australia are taxing their citizens into ruin. An estate agent from Port Darwin has a complicated scheme into which he wishes to initiate him. Australia should take the pearl fisheries on the North coast into her own hands (*i.e.,* into the hands of the author of the scheme) instead of leaving them to Japan. "We are always being warned that Japan wishes to conquer Australia, yet at the same time our industries are being handed over to the Japanese and the Japanese are allowed to exploit our waters. Moreover these pearl fishers are every one of them Japanese spies—I know them personally and can prove it. But the government won't listen to me."

As representative of the Indian boy scouts a fifteen-year-old Parsee is on his way to the World Jamboree in Melbourne. Hearing that our man is a writer he asks him to write a speech for him saying that the youth of India are ever prepared to fight and die for the British Empire.

A promoter is returning to Adelaide from India where he has been trying

to find shareholders for the working of a new gold mine. He carries gold nuggets in his pockets and although he does not offer any of them to our man he does offer him two shares in the future mine. He only asks in return that our man should write a book about the promising enterprise or in some other way enlist the interest of possible investors.

The great Australian Bight encroaches in a gentle curve into the South Coast. This is the roughest part of the voyage. First to starboard and then to port the waves rise up to form menacing barriers alongside the ship. The passenger makes a rush for the gunwale but when he has arrived there and is ready to vomit peacefully, suddenly, is jerked away and flung upon a fellow passenger's ribs. Tables and chairs, portmanteaus, knives and forks and human beings all slide and crash about together. The ocean howls its meaningless babble, louder and louder into the wind; it contorts and flings its limbs in all directions. Nor can passengers avoid these high jinks—in their cabins the berths join in the St. Vitus dance.

In the washroom one of the four Italians comes up to our man. He asks softly: *"Parla l'taliano?"*—"A little"—*"Fa attenzione. Miei amici voglione attaccarvi"*—"Why, when, where do your friends want to attack me?"—*"Non so."* With the feeling that there are unknown friends everywhere and unknown enemies everywhere about him our man gets into a swinging and groaning berth.

No sooner does the *Strathaird* make fast, no sooner has calm been restored than she is again full of commotion, the commotion of the mainland. The landing place is called Adelaide but there is not a smoke streak of the city of Adelaide visible. It is fifteen miles from the outer harbor to the city and the same distance from the city to the outer harbor. This does not prevent all the inhabitants free to do so from making a pilgrimage to the outer harbor to get a sight of the stranger, to shake hands and take snapshots. He must even give an interview or rather hold an interview, for a mass meeting has formed and newspapermen have come from all over Australia, everyone crowds round to hear and then in the middle of it our man is called to the telephone. Trunk call!

Telephone, trunk call, on board ship? He learns that the ocean liners are connected up with the telephone exchange on arriving in port. The Melbourne *Star* rings through to our man on the *Strathaird* so as to have a more original form of interview: "What is your tip for the Saar plebiscite?" "What do you think about the England-Australia flight?" and so forth. Luckily the transmission is very bad.

The reporter who has come on board asks our man whether he knows Vicki Baum personally; no, he doesn't know her personally; they ask whether he knows Remarque personally; no, he doesn't know him personally. The disappointment is manifest. They ask him whether he knows Fewktwenjer personally; thanks be to god, yes he does know Fewktwenjer personally and this provides the headline: Best friend of Lion Feuchtwanger, etc.

But he knows other German writers, our man explains, who are no longer alive today. And he speaks about Erich Mühsam, Theodor Lessing, Erich Baron, Franz Braun, about the dastardly murders in the Nazi barracks, the inquisitorial methods of the Gestapo, people martyred in the concentration camps, he tells the journalists who Ossietzki, Mierendorff, Renn and Neubauer are, brains behind barbed wire entanglements, he speaks about Ernst Thälmann who as candidate for the presidency got six million votes and who has now been almost two years in solitary confinement not allowed to read or write. He tells about ten thousand anti-fascists who are in the same plight

and about the German workers who have been "shot while trying to escape" or executed on the block.

Very little is known about such things in Australia. It is not known that the supreme Nazi leader admits himself in his book that he was sent by the Reichswehr among the National-Socialists as a spy and that was how he started his political career. It is not known that he was never recommended for the Iron Cross, 1st class, and was never awarded that decoration but invariably wears it. It is not known that he begged and antechambered Hindenburg for his appointment for months, and that he was only appointed Chancellor at a moment when his followers had been reduced by a million so that by means of a dictatorship the Osthilfe scandal could be kept from being aired, which appointment now bears the official title of "The German Revolution."

German farmers and vine growers from Hahndorf, Blumberg and other German villages in the neighborhood of Adelaide stand round in a circle. They have come here to welcome their compatriot and ask questions.

There are many questions, many answers before the liner puts off from the quay. Down below on the pier our man sees for the first time the Australian flag starred with the Southern Cross. It is waving over the barrel organ around which a war cripple and his family stand, singing for alms. The *Strathaird* sails past a Japanese vessel and out to sea, bound for Melbourne. She will not arrive in time for the congress.

One morning, our man and the other passengers come across in the ship's news, a name with which we are already familiar: Gerald Griffin. The man who bears this name, the New Zealand delegate to the Anti-War Congress in Melbourne, has been detained on his arrival in Sydney and sent back by the next boat. A fact that the Radio News does not mention is that the British citizen, an Irishman from Cork, has been given a literacy test in Dutch and his failure to pass the test has been the pretext for refusing him entry.

At the moment the congress itself does not yet know anything about Gerald Griffin having been quizzed in Dutch. Griffin has of course sent a telegram about it but the telegram will only be delivered after a delay of two days, and Postmaster MacLachlan will answer, if he is questioned, that the Australian Post Office transmits 100,000 telegrams a day and that in spite of the utmost care, etc. etc.

On the platform in the town hall of Port Melbourne where the Congress opens today there are two empty chairs and above them there is a poster which reads: "Reserved for the two overseas delegates who have been prevented by the government of President Lyons from coming forward against War and Fascism."

Do you know what Poppy Day is? Poppy Day in British countries is November 11, and on this day everyone wears a paper poppy in memory of the victorious Armistice, the men in their buttonholes and the women on the northern slope of their eastern breast. Women passengers with tin coin cans sell the poppies on board and even the colored crew, who on all other occasions are completely ignored as though they were made of air, enjoy the honor of becoming purchasers. The single human being who is without the paper poppy is our man. A week ago he probably would have stuck one in his buttonhole so as not to attract attention, but today, now that he has been exposed as an anti-war worker, he cannot conform.

Flowerless he waits expectantly for the announced attack by Italy. He has the intention of confronting the aggressor with Stanley Quinlan. Stanley

Quinlan is one of the giants who brought the ponies to the Indian Army and is now on his way back to Mallee, the prairies of Victoria. Every Sunday Stanley Quinlan answers the call of Big Ben, whose notes are transmitted from London by wireless and call the tourist class passengers to divine service in the first class saloon (for once a week the class character of society on board the *Strathaird* is obliterated). On weekdays also before rolling out of his most inadequate berth, he prays aloud, though on all other occasions he swears, the way a countryfellow from Mallee knows how to swear, and drinks away the remorse which his ludicrously blasphemous oaths occasion him, in whiskey.

Frequently in the evenings, paper hats are dealt out to the passengers at dinner in order to put them in festive mood. Afterwards Stanley Quinlan picks up the crumpled hats from the deck. "For my small nephews," he confides, when anyone catches him at it, "I wanted to bring them back something else but I've drunk all my money."

Since the Italian attack was threatened, our man clings to Stanley Quinlan as to an elder brother. Our man cannot afford to become involved in any scenes; to brand him as a rowdy is just what his opponents on board and his opponents on land would like.

Unfortunately Stanley Quinlan does not sit at meals at the same table as our man, and it is at our man's table that the incident occurs. Smoking is not allowed in the dining saloon, but when meals are over people ask the ladies at table whether they have any objection—they have no objection and one lights a cigarette.

In the middle of today's cigarette the Italians open fire and shout in English, "No smoking here. Steward, throw the fellow out." Our man answers with raised voice: "I'd have you know, I'm a boxer and I'll crack your jawbone for you." As he says this he looks out of the corner of his eye towards the most distant part of the saloon to see if his answer has been given loud enough for Stanley Quinlan to hear it.

The colored steward stands there irresolutely, he does not venture to interfere, but the Italians urge him on against our man. Other passengers crowd on to the scene, then eventually the great brother strides in and violently divides the closely packed chorus, pushes the knock-kneed steward back and the Italians aside and challenges the ringleader: "Come up on deck will you, I'll damn well have a word with you, you damned coward."

It turns out however—it is observed with astonishment by all the witnesses—that the damned coward is not a coward at all, but most ardently desires to have a round with Stanley Quinlan, the giant. "Very good, come out on deck, I'll soon show you who is the coward," roars the Italian, bends his arms in front of his head and hastens to the door eager for the fight. Stanley can scarcely keep up with him. The Italian turns round and calls contemptuously: "Get a move on, my boy, I'll show you." His friends surround Stanley Quinlan who stands there like a lost child and murmurs: "They've gone, they've gone." And the incident ends in laughter.

Melbourne, the town whose birthday is being celebrated, is being approached. Originally the king was expected here, but a year in advance the news arrived that in his place his eldest son, the Prince of Wales, would come to Australia. A little later it was officially announced that instead of the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Kent would represent the king at the centenary celebrations of the State of Victoria. These changes caused greater delight in the rival state, New South Wales, than in the State of Victoria, in fact they caused malicious delight.

Well, the Duke of Kent, then! Enamel badges with his portrait were manufactured in hundreds of thousands, chocolate wrappers with the Duke of Kent, flags with the Duke of Kent, picture postcards with the Duke of Kent.

And then the Duke of Kent was unexpectedly given another job, marrying Marina of Greece; and Australia got the Duke of Gloucester instead. What was to be done with the badges, the chocolate wrappers, the picture postcards and the other things with the Duke of Kent on them?

"All the same the celebrations will be most imposing, if nothing unforseen happens," say the promoters to themselves. "And what unforseen eventuality could there be?" the organizers continue their soliloquy. "The Anti-War Congress perhaps? Ludicrous. The two overseas delegates will not be there. Gerald Griffin has allowed himself to be sent back to New Zealand and has stayed there like a good boy, the other will travel past the city unnoticed. If it had not been for the attention attracted by the prohibition to land the whole congress might have been hushed up completely."

The Australian Class War Prisoners' Aid Society has brought an action in Melbourne against the captain of the liner for kidnapping: the captain of a vessel has no right to take a man who has been refused permission to land and drag him through the seven seas as a prisoner. Has the captain of the *Strathaird* satisfied himself that the prohibition to land was legal? Australia has laws by which undesired persons may be kept away but every person must be allowed to land unless "an objection has been raised by the government of a friendly power through official channels." Had such an objection been raised, and if so by what friendly power? Was this objection communicated to the captain? If not, he was guilty of kidnapping the international delegate.

According to British law there is only one person who can bring an action for infringement of the British law and that is the King of Great Britain. The latter, however, is hardly thinking of bringing the captain of the *Strathaird* to justice for spiriting away an anti-war worker. In lieu of the king and in his name the injured party must do it himself. However where the plaintiff is situated, namely on the high seas, there is no judge, and where there is a judge, namely on the Australian mainland, there is no plaintiff, neither King George V nor his representative for the prosecution, Kisch, and neither of them have authorized anyone to bring the action on their behalf.

However, the Supreme Court of the State of Victoria cannot know this beforehand. It must assemble immediately when an action is brought for violation of Magna Charta and its command: Thou shalt have thy body and shalt have it at thy disposal as long as it has not been put under arrest by a decision of the court. So it was that legal proceedings were started on the basis of an action for breach of *Habeas Corpus* and only when the case began would the court ascertain whether there were legal grounds for the action or not.

There is no need for the organizers of the centenary to fear that this lawsuit will be in any way prejudicial to the success of the celebrations. The government representative will merely produce the note in which a friendly power, *viz.,* England, has through official channels, forbidden our man to be allowed on shore, and the captain will then be exonerated and the liner will proceed with the plaintiff to Sydney.

The *Strathaird* now puts in to Port Phillip, the port of Melbourne. A lady steps on board from a launch and introduces herself as Mrs. Rosenove, his counsel in the case against Mr. Carter for kidnapping . . . *Habeas Corpus* . . .

"Delighted to hear it, delighted to hear it," murmurs our man and thinks

to himself what case, who is Mr. Carter? Kidnapping is American, *Habeas Corpus* is Latin and the whole affair seems to him to have a South-American flavor.

"A commissioner for oaths will come and establish your identity. Mrs. Arens will declare that she knew you in Berlin, in January 1932, at the home of deputy Münzenberg in the Friedrichstrasse . . ." Ah, here they are already, a commissioner for oaths and a woman, and the commissioner asks our man whether he knows this lady. Yes, certainly, he knows this lady, he answers, it is Mrs. Arens, isn't it? And he had met her at the home of the deputy Münzenberg in the Friedrichstrasse in Berlin. "When was that?" asks the commissioner for oaths, coldly and sternly, and holds an affidavit in both hands like a Herald holding a Papal bull. "It was in January 1932," our man answers without so much as moving an eyelash, and everything is in order; exactly the same statement was made by Mrs. Arens in her affidavit which can now be finally drawn up and sealed. Our man has been officially identified as the person he really is, although in January 1932 he might just as easily have been in Shanghai as in Berlin and Herr Willy Münzenberg might never have lived in the Friedrichstrasse. But it is only thus that the truth can be established to the satisfaction of the court.

The commissioner for oaths, the counsel for the prosecution and the witness depart, they must hasten to the court, but others appear. The police have closed the entries to the pier and no delegations or single visitors are allowed to our man, but they come nevertheless. People have to be allowed to come on board to see other passengers and you have only to mention the name of the person you want to see and the constables look in the ship's list to see if the name is really there. The name is always found, however, for our man's friends have furnished themselves with a ship's list and each of them names a person to whom there can be no possible objection.

Members of parliament are allowed past all cordons. In astonishment our man shakes hands with Senator Arthur Roe and Dr. Maloney, M. P. When he had read these names on the voyage in the book called *Australia's Awakening* (it was with them that the first representatives of the working class came to Australia during the early days of capitalism in Australia) he expected to find them only on statues, but here he is confronted with these legendary figures in the flesh.

"Have you a rough draft of your address or anything?" asks the secretary of the congress. "Yes, I have something of the kind," answers our man, and is delighted that his work has not been in vain. The secretary hurries away with the address to read it from the platform.

There are many bulkheads on the ship and on these bulkheads labels are posted and on these labels the pious wish is printed: "Kisch must land." One of these labels is attached to our man's coat and this induces the photographers to take close up views of his buttonhole. Boats manned by young anti-fascists surround the *Strathaird,* their flags and streamers bear slogans against the barbarism of the Nazis, demanding liberation of political prisoners in the Third Empire. Boys and girls lift up their oars, wave their flags and shout in chorus: "We want Kisch," and our man can only answer: "I want you."

Among the visitors on board there are writers who have protested against the prohibition to land. Professional matters are discussed and a future meeting arranged at which the question of the Writers League functioning as the Australian section of the Writers' International is to be raised.

Meanwhile the lawsuit comes before the Supreme Court of the State of Victoria. Kidnapping or legal removal, that is the question. What is happening

here and elsewhere on the mainland is reported by the evening papers which appear one after the other, news of the congress, the lawsuit, scenes on the quays, arrests for distributing leaflets and for billsticking, failure to observe police regulations, showing disrespect to officials, etc.

The crowds on board have become larger and larger, everyone pushes this way and that. It is impossible to hold individual conversations. Let's organize a meeting! A three story meeting is held. The president of the Railwaymen's Union, T. M. Gleeson, presides on the upper deck and from here the speeches are made. On the lower deck to port and starboard the visitors and the passengers who come out to see what is happening form the audience, but not by any means the whole audience; there is a crowd of listeners, mostly dock workers, on the quay, right up to the water's edge, and there is a crowd of listeners, mostly young people, in the boats flying the red flag in the shadow of the *Strathaird*.

Since ships first began to sail about the world shore-dwellers have probably never before chosen the deck of a liner as a place for a mass political meeting. Film operators reel off the "revolution at sea," a police detachment marches up the gangway but does not interfere, however hotly the meeting speaks against the government.

... Against the government. The government is assembling in Canberra, there Parliament also is assembling. There is great excitement there. A minister is making a statement on the question as to whether our man is an author or not.

The Minister for Customs, Mr. White, is expressing his surprise and disapprobation over the protest drawn up by Mr. Bernard Cronin, the president of the Writers' Union, at Kisch having been refused permission to land without the members being asked. "I myself am a member," says Minister White, "and I was not asked. How anyone can credit Kisch's statement that he is an author is beyond me. The works that he claims to have written appear to be unknown to the world. In any case it is quite certain that none of his books have ever been translated into English."

It may be a very bitter experience for an author to have to endure such mockery, but the person to be offended in this case has no time to be offended (perhaps he will have later).

The Public Prosecutor-General Menzies again observes that all actions on behalf of the unadmitted man are aimless and futile, since just as the New Zealand anti-war delegate Gerald Griffin was sent back to where he came from without more ado, the same thing would also happen to the international delegate. "He shall not, I declare for the third time, set foot on the soil of the Australian Commonwealth."

It may be a very bitter experience for a delegate to be so condemned, but the person to be discouraged in this case has no time to be discouraged (perhaps he will have later).

The decision as to whether our man may set foot on Australian soil rests for the time being with the Supreme Court of Victoria. The case opened early in the morning. Mrs. Arens has stated that the captain of the *Strathaird,* Mr. A. E. Carter, is illegally detaining her Berlin friend on board although he is in possession of an entry visa which is in perfect order, issued by the Consul General in Paris. Mrs. Rosenove, who is acting on behalf of our man, who in his turn is acting on behalf of the King of Great Britain and Ireland, demands an "order nisi," the discontinuance of the illegal arrest on board. Against this the defendant answers that he is responsible for seeing that the orders of the Commonwealth government are carried out on his ship. However he cannot

at the moment produce the Commonwealth government's orders to detain the plaintiff.

The court is adjourned till the next day.

The day also adjourns, twilight falls over Port Phillip and the city of Melbourne, the waves get weary and the portholes darken, but the whirlpool of visitors does not abate. It continues throughout the night and carries on into the next morning without a break.

The *Strathaird* should have sailed yesterday according to schedule but she is held fast and will remain held fast until the court decides whether one of the passengers is legally detained on board or not.

Our man's visitors speak not only with him but also with one another. The snatches of conversation that can be heard are on everyday matters, the everyday life of Melbourne.

"Are you not working in the wheel shop any more . . .?"—"Your little girl goes to school with our Nell, I only just discovered that the other day . . ."—"Let's go and have a cocktail at Menzies afterwards . . ."—"No, I have been working for more than a year now at Ruskin Limousines . . ."—"Is our John Fisher really the son of Prime Minister Andrew Fisher . . .?"—"You had best go from Flinders Street by the Deepdene to Kew . . ."—"We are living now in Heidelberg . . ."—"You must speak at our meeting in Unity Hall on Monday, just a few words."—"Come at six to the fiddlemaker Bill Dolphin and have a glass of beer."—"Bourke Street . . . Collins Street . . ."—"Ring me up beforehand, Ivanhoe 4646, it's quite easy to find . . ."

Yes, yes, says our man to himself, it's quite easy to find but it's difficult to understand. Everything is difficult to understand. How is it that my friends are making an appointment to drink cocktails with my enemy, Menzies, the Public Prosecutor? How is it that Melbourne families live in Heidelberg and yet are here? Why does one go to a fiddle maker when one wants to drink beer? What on earth is Deepdene?

Down below a few steps away a huge city lies. Is this Melbourne just like Berlin and Australia just like Europe? How he would like to see everything and describe everything, to do his job and speak his warning against the barbarism of which he has been a witness. But he cannot leave this filthy cursed ship. "I shall never have a chance to drink beer in Bill Dolphin's violin workshop, never learn what Heidelberg means to an Australian, never walk down Bourke Street or any other street," reflects our man as he meets the current of life from the shore.

The next day a representative of the Federal Government comes before the court and reads out a declaration of the Minister for Home and Territories, Paterson:

"On October 18, 1934 pursuant to section 3 G. H. of the Immigration Law, the competent minister under the said law, on the basis of information received from another part of the British Empire, declares Egon Erwin Kisch to be an undesirable visitor to or resident in the Commonwealth."

Our man's counsel describes the particulars in this document as false. On October 18 it was not known to the minister that the delegate was to arrive. The order to the port authorities was: "Kisch, who according to Melbourne press reports is due to arrive on a lecture tour, is to be prevented from landing." The first press reports about the forthcoming arrival, however, did not appear till a fortnight after October 18. The ban was laid at the request of the German National-Socialists in Australia and the statement made by the minister to the effect that information had been received through official channels from

another part of the Empire bore the stamp of falsehood. Where is this information? What were the actual words?

These questions are not answered. At 1 p.m. the supreme judge rises and announces that, contrary to custom, on this occasion instead of pronouncing judgment after the grounds for the judgment have been given he will give the judgment first so that the *Strathaird* may be detained in port no longer than is necessary. The judgment is: The action is dismissed, the plaintiff is being detained on board legally. Costs shall be borne by the plaintiff.

The news is telephoned to the ship, the siren hoots; all visitors must go ashore. Our man says "good bye" and promises to come out and wave from the deck. He advises a young reporter whose political doubts he has discussed with him to remain on the quay for a few minutes after the ship has put off.

"I cannot, even as it is I shall reach the office late—"

"Risk five minutes."

A few days later our man gets a letter of profuse thanks from the young reporter who had waited after all. "If I had not taken your advice I would have been ignominiously dismissed as I would have missed everything that happened."

What was it that happened? The *Strathaird* had put off and there was already a meter of water between the hull and the shore when the crowd on the pier saw to their horror a man swinging over the railings five and a half meters above their head. Good God. He's not going to jump down is he?

It will be understood that it is not we ourselves who are describing what happened, but are leaving it to be described by a few random commentators. For instance the Berlin *Angriff* published the following: "Jewish Insolence of the Rabid Reporter—Just Punishment Kisch breaks his legs." Undoubtedly this *Angriff* is exaggerated. The Jewish insolence was not so great as all that. It contented itself with breaking one of his legs, although the fracture was a double one.

Those who are nearer to the place of the event also come nearer to the actual circumstances. Here we shall merely paste in the front page of an Australian newspaper:

"On hearing that the court had dismissed the claim for his release, Egon Erwin Kisch, the banned Czechoslovak writer and lecturer, jumped from the 18 foot high afterdeck of the *Strathaird* as she was about to sail for Sydney. Falling on a steel rail of the pier, he injured his leg and, after taking a step forward, collapsed. Friends wanted to help him but constables, hurrying from all directions, seized him and despite his protests carried him, escorted by two detective inspectors, in the direction of the ship.

" 'If you have arrested me on shore,' he shouted at the top of his voice as they went, 'you have no right to bring me on to a ship.' No notice was taken of this protest, however, and Kisch was brought to the ship, which had reversed her engines, returned to the quay and put out a gangway. Those of the public who were standing close to the afterdeck, displayed the greatest excitement which was given vent in a variety of different ways and did not subside even after the *Strathaird* had put off again.

"The police took a whole hour to clear the pier.

"The leap was the response to the news which arrived on board that Chief Justice Irvin had dismissed the action. Kisch, although he had previously told friends and visitors that he did not expect to be freed in Melbourne, was surprised at the decision of the court. His visitors went ashore and waited for a parting word. As he appeared at the railing, someone said: 'Why don't you come ashore?' He pointed to a man who kept more or less close to him and

seemed to have an eye on him. Then Kisch retired and most of his friends left the pier as the ship began to move.

"Scarcely three minutes later he appeared on the afterdeck, swung over the railings and jumped down. He fell on to the pier, lifted himself up, took a step forward and then collapsed, with a look of great pain on his face. At the same moment Constable I. B. Weller reached him and asked in a friendly tone whether he had hurt himself, to which he answered that he had broken his right leg. He was carried off and by the detective's orders, in spite of his loud protests was brought back to the ship which was again heaving to.

"We are informed from police headquarters that Capt. Carter who is in command of the *Strathaird* is responsible for Kisch's safe custody and that when the ship returned he demanded that the fugitive should be brought back.

"Before the *Strathaird* put off for the second time demonstrators had stuck labels onto the bows on which were printed the words: 'Kisch, deported by Hitler, 1933—by Lyons 1934. Kisch must land.' Two women were taken into custody while sticking labels.

"Further news about the scenes at the gangway p. 2 and 4—The Kisch Case before the Court p. 5—The Cases of Kisch and Griffin before the Federal Parliament p. 5—A Czechoslovak Beethoven (Smetana) p. 8."

Contorted with pain, our man has been brought before the ship's doctor. The latter shrugs his shoulders, he can do nothing without X-rays and there are no X-rays on board. In order to give the appearance of doing something he orders the leg to be bandaged. The patient is brought past a line of people looking daggers at him, into his cabin.

Friend O'Hara, the Steward, helps our man to undress. Our man cannot move. O'Hara makes a sling of linen towels which he fastens to the berth above, which has been empty since Melbourne. With its help he can draw himself up a little, but it is terribly painful. He has a high fever.

Our man thinks about the proclamation to the effect that he would never set foot on the soil of the Australian Commonwealth. Well, he has put his foot on Australia and broken it in doing so. Mr. Menzies can laugh. So can the Nazi diplomat through whose intervention the prohibition to land was issued, and the Gestapo in Berlin are laughing their sides out.

No X-rays on board. Without setting his leg or putting it in plaster of Paris they will leave him on the *Strathaird* which has not yet started on her return voyage. Next year, when they land in Europe again, he will undoubtedly be a cripple.

It is best not to think of anything. He is not able to read either; his broken leg pains him too much. On his trunk he catches sight of the name Holderin written be hand in red ink on a parchment binding; the little poetry book is a present from a German girl comrade from Melbourne.

A messenger boy brings telegrams from Sydney and Melbourne: "Why did you jump question mark wire two hundred words stop editor" Away with it! Perhaps it would be as well to telegraph to the Czechoslovak consulate in Sydney that his leg needs X-raying. Telegrams to consular authorities ought not to be stopped.

Again a messenger boy comes. Will you write a telegram for me? Thanks very much. Hand me that little book on the trunk. Thanks very much.

It is not given to us
To rest anywhere.
Suffering men

Faint and fall
From one hour to the next,
Like water thrown
From rock to rock,
For years down
Into the unknown.

No, he cannot read, his lips and the ship together beat out a false rhythm . . . The walls of the ship are thumping typewriters, over and over again they tap out a word with ten letters, then a pause, then again ten letters. Our man tries to think of words with ten letters. He feels his temperature rising. If only he could sleep. The steward comes in and asks whether he should switch off the light. "All right, switch off the light, O'Hara, and ask the doctor for the sleeping draught."

An idiotic rhyme keeps tormenting his brain.

O'Hara returns after a timeless interval, moving quietly so as not to awaken our man in case he sleeps. But sleeping is out of the question. In his leg he has a broken bone and in his head the rhyme about a mouse that was kept from the cheese and therefore leapt to the quays, the idiotic creature.

Two powders for today and two for tomorrow, the doctor said. Our man takes all four but it doesn't help. There is a knock at the door—no, it is merely the ship that has been turned into a typewriter.

Herr Strauss is there, the spy from the French concession in Shanghai, who was also standing by the bed when our man had an attack of malaria. "Herr Ussakowski asks me to say that he invites you to dine with him and Herr Trebitsch-Lincoln, this evening, in the Hotel Cathy. He will send his car for you."

How many times has our man told him that he doesn't want to see his face again. "If other people are here," answers Strauss, "I can also be here, I have never sent anyone to the gallows."

The small fat woman beside him is Madame Denise from the hotel in Versailles where our man lives. She says in a chirpy voice that she wants a room on the third floor for a flyer. There is a knock and Herr Strauss asks what he is to order for Herr Ussakowski and says significantly: "Don't make an enemy of him, he knows quite well what Chinamen you were with yesterday in Chapei."

There is another knock and our man calls "entrez," as Madame Denise has just explained in French that a flyer must have rooms on the third floor on account of the air and the height but the woman's voice that he now hears asks in English whether she may switch on the light. "All right," says our man, "switch on the light," and there in front of him stands a wonderfully pretty girl such as one only sees when one has a high temperature.

"Comrade," she says, "the congress committee have delegated me to come on board the *Strathaird* so as to keep in touch with you."

"Delighted," says our man, "very kind of the congress and of you, madame. The only pity is that ocean liners should only take coastal passengers on board when one is dreaming with a high temperature, otherwise they might be really there. Your name is Diotima of course?"

"My name is Gwendolyn. I had to take a ticket to New Zealand as ocean liners do not take coastal passengers."

"Isn't it lovely being delirious? When logic combats unreal appearances, the dream figures themselves answer with logical arguments. One does not even have to formulate one's doubts, one thinks them only and the apparition starts refuting them."

"Here is my ticket from Melbourne to Wellington so that you may believe me, Comrade. And here is my party identification. I am org. leader of the subdistrict at X. Our friends sent me on board before the lawsuit was over, but I did not speak to you on deck so as not to be seen with you. That is also why I did not come in the day time. I shall remain on board as long as you are here."

"Yes, Comrade Gwendolyn, stay with me for ever on this ship, but you should not have said all that in front of Herr Strauss. You see he is a police spy."

"I have not sent anyone to the gallows," says Strauss.

"Who? I do not know any Herr Strauss," says Gwendolyn.

"Excuse me, the thing is I have a slight temperature," says our man, "I know quite well that there is no one here, not even you, fairest of all wish fulfillment dreams."

"I won't disturb you, Comrade, if you are in too great pain."

"Please, don't go . . ."

"There are three things I have to report to you, Comrade. First of all it was decided yesterday that though the case was lost in Melbourne it will be brought up again in Sydney."

"And then I shall be able to go back to Melbourne and have a glass of beer in Bill Dolphin's fiddle shop. . . . But it is quite impossible. It was the Supreme Court that gave judgment against me and there is no higher court to appeal to."

"It was the Supreme Court of Victoria, but in Sydney it is the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and moreover the Supreme Court for the whole Commonwealth is there."

". . . And it will allow me ashore immediately and make a formal apology, won't it."

"At any rate the chances are much greater in Sydney. There are no centenary celebrations there and no royal visitor for you to molest, and in Sydney as a rule the very opposite is done to what is done in Melbourne, while the Supreme Court is fairly democratic. Perhaps you will really be allowed ashore.

"Now that is the first thing I had to report to you."

"And the second, O Herald of Joy, called Gwendolyn? What happens if the mouse is kept from the cheese?"

"The second thing is that your address is being published in pamphlet form. It is being printed tonight in Melbourne and the other copy of the manuscript is being taken by the Prisoners' Aid Society car to Sydney so that the pamphlet can be published there before the arrival of the *Strathaird*."

"It was only a rough draft. I put the letter X everywhere instead of mentioning names."

"Don't worry. I myself typed it out. We knew all right where X meant Hitler and where it meant Hindenburg."

"You typed it out, did you? Tell me now, were there many words of ten letters in it . . . excuse me . . ."

"It is a very good analysis of Nazi fascism and you give a lot of factual matter that we did not know before."

"And what is the third thing that you had to tell me, Comrade Gwendolyn?"

"The third! The third is so confidential that I was not allowed to tell even you until after eleven o'clock this evening. . . . You know, don't you, who Gerald Griffin is?"

"Of course I do. The congress delegate who was shipped back to New Zealand."

"Yes. He's come back again. Under a pseudonym. He is speaking this evening at the collieries in Newcastle."

"Will he not be arrested?"

"We have taken every precaution. . . . Besides the police would think twice before arresting anyone at a miners' meeting. Griffin's landing is a blow to the reactionaries. There is widespread indignation about the two landing prohibitions; the movement against war and fascism is going forward."

"It is splendid about Griffin. I feel much better now."

"Do you really? I'm so glad, Comrade. I have to keep an eye on you to see that they don't put you on another boat or hide you away anywhere so as to cut you off from the public. If you want to send any telegrams I can, of course, take them for you. I have been given money specially for that kind of thing. Or if you want anything else?"

So the night passed, and, in spite of all sleeping draughts, it was a night without sleep and yet without pain.

The waves rush past the porthole; a grey light, flecked with gold, shows that it is morning. There is no longer a visitor in the cabin. The day announces itself from all quarters, even from Europe: "Wire if badly hurt."

At midday when everyone is in the dining saloon Gwendolyn slips in and brings with her a telegram addressed to her: "Concert went off splendidly, love to the family." The concert means Griffin's speech the day before, and the family is our man. The love does him good.

From his red and swollen leg the pain spreads all through his body, but it goes no further, it does not reach his consciousness. A paradox—pain is present, but it does not come to awareness.

The next morning the head steward comes in and tells him that he has to lock him up.

"What?" exclaims our man. "Are you off your head? I have not been arrested." "Captain's orders."—"Will you please tell the captain, that this will cost him dear, and the company too. The punishment for depriving people of liberty is hard labor. I have paid for my ticket like any other passenger and have the right to the same treatment so long as I don't commit any crime. Will you please tell that to the captain."

Imprisonment on board ship is a frightful kind of imprisonment. Even if one could get up and bang on the door nobody would be able to hear one through the din from the engine-room nearby, and there is hardly ever anyone down there all day. What's the idea anyway? To make escape impossible it would be sufficient to post a sentry outside the cabin. They are probably afraid of the workers removing our man from the ship by force. Probably Gerald Griffin's return has caused such a stir that the government wants to avoid being hoodwinked a second time. It has probably been decided to prevent the invasion of visitors that took place in Melbourne being repeated in Sydney, or to avoid the possibility of another meeting held on board ship.

Suddenly there is a blast from the foghorn. Our man hears the companionways shutting. It is probably only a false alarm; on the voyage from Europe they had had fire drill at least six times, it is a strict rule now, crews and passengers have to be thoroughly prepared for future torpedo attacks. But what if it is a real shipwreck or a real fire? Our man calls to mind Albert Londres on the *Georges Phillippar.*

In the event of an accident there are only two alternatives for a ship's prisoner, namely to burn to death or to sink slowly to the bottom of the sea in his

closed cabin. "Imprisonment on board ship is a frightful kind of imprisonment," says our man to himself—there is no one else to say it to. Gwendolyn won't come any more now because she is not the figment of fevered dreams that he at first thought her to be.

The engines of the *Strathaird* stop. Whether the ship has already been berthed or whether a tender has been sent out to her our man cannot tell, one or the other must be the case. A woman doctor from Sydney sent by the Prisoners' Aid Society is let into the cabin accompanied by the ship's doctor. The consul appears—no, only an official from the consulate, not the consul himself. Our man will not have an opportunity of seeing the latter in the future either, face to face, as the consul is not going to commit himself. He will not even answer the question put to him by the general public as to whether our man is really a writer or not.

The woman doctor puts the fractures of the ankle bone and shin bone in place and says to the ship's doctor with a shake of the head: "How was it you didn't bring the man immediately to hospital in Melbourne?" The ship's doctor stammers indistinctly that he was only able to examine the patient after the ship had sailed. The gentleman from the Czechoslovak consulate asks what he can do for our man and the latter answers: "Thanks very much, there's nothing more to be done."

The head steward and the two understewards wait at the cabin door till the séance is over, ready to convert the cabin into a prison again with a turn of the key. But the medical examination has lasted too long. The *Strathaird* is already in Sydney and is lying at Pyrmont quay.

People have come on board. Before the woman doctor and consulate official have left the sickbed, friends and enquirers crowd in. Wave upon wave of them surge past the three stewards on sentry duty and become stranded in the little cabin. There is only room for about ten or twelve at a time, even though some of them climb on the empty berth and others sit on the luggage and on the washstand. The people outside grumble impatiently, some of those inside must leave to give others room.

Our man learns that Gerald Griffin has already spoken at three mass meetings. After his speech the hall has been plunged in darkness and he has disappeared without leaving a trace, under the protection of his friends. The country laughs, the government rages and the police search. The anti-fascist movement wins more and more supporters from all sections of society. The Reverend Rivett, an eighty-year-old clergyman and humanist, respected throughout the continent, preaches in church and speaks at meetings on the text "Kisch must land," as though it were out of the Bible.

Today our man's new lawsuit opens before the Supreme Court of New South Wales. By agreement with the government the shipping company had intended to transfer our man to the *Narkunda* which is due to sail from Sydney today for Europe. Since, however, the lawsuit has now been started, this cannot be done. Until the litigation is over neither the captain of the *Strathaird,* who is the defendant, nor the *Narkunda* which is eventually to carry off the plaintiff, can leave the jurisdiction of the court.

A woman and a man lawyer come up to the patient. Mrs. Jollie-Smith is the solicitor whose job is to prepare the case. She is on the legal staff of the trades unions, has conducted many cases for Socialists and knows what it's all about. Our man quickly comes to an understanding with her. It is somewhat more difficult with the barrister, who will plead the case in court. Mr. Piddington K. C. (*i.e.,* King's Councillor) might be a character out of Dickens, a grey haired, wizened, spindly little gentleman within whom however a vol-

cano burns which will soon break forth and spit fire for four months on end. He will make the judges sit up although he was one of them himself not so long ago. He gave up his position as Councillor of the Supreme Court with the high salary and prestige attached to it, in protest against an anti-democratic measure by the Governor General; he is respected for his strong convictions; he is noted as sociologist, art historian, Shakespearean scholar, and linguist knowing a great number of languages. In the course of this lawsuit he will learn yet one more new language, or rather a very old language, indeed, in spite of his seventy-three years.

It is true he does not quite grasp our man's case in the way our man would wish it to be grasped. Old Piddington wants to make a sharp distinction between our man and Griffin, as the latter in returning illegally to Australia has not behaved like a gentleman. Old Piddington would like our man to lay stress on the non-political character of his journey. Old Piddington is horrified at the thought of our man's lily-white escutcheon being sullied for ever by the sentence of an Australian court. Old Piddington is ready to fight to the death to save him from this dishonor.

Ouf!

Surely photographs have now been taken in all conceivable poses; they can't possibly want to take him in another position. No sooner has our man come to this conclusion than he learns that he is now to be photographed inside. A whole X-ray laboratory is fixed up on board at a total cost of 100 pounds. In Sydney an X-ray photograph would certainly not have cost more than ten shillings, but the crown lawyers have wisely pointed out that if the patient were allowed on shore to be X-rayed the prohibition to land would be thereby infringed.

The heavy patient is carried into the newly installed laboratory to have his leg X-rayed, *en face* and *en profil*. What is revealed in black and white is a broken leg. The written findings, however, in black and white, read: "supramalleolare oblique fracture of the right tibia 6 inches in length running upwards from the malleolus in the Diaphyse of the tibia. Transverse facture of the malleolus externus, lesion of the processus posterior tali."

The question of whether the law has been broken is not so easy to determine. Over there in the building of the Supreme Court Mr. Piddington is energetically answering this question in the affirmative. There could be no prohibition to land for a man who has already landed. His client was seized in Melbourne, that is to say on Australian soil, and brought against his will on to the *Strathaird* by force. What do they call kidnapping if this was not kidnapping? Can anyone in Australia be overpowered and simply dragged onto a ship? I ask your worship, can this be allowed?

The other party is quite equal to the occasion, and produces (oh! ambiguous word) the information received from England about the seditious activities of our man. During the luncheon interval Old Piddington rushes over to our man on the *Strathaird* with the text of this alleged overseas indictment as produced by the Home Minister. "What have you to say about it?" — "I have to say that this information has been composed not by the Intelligence Service but by an Unintelligence Service." — "Bravo, bravo, the gentlemen shall be told that. What is false in the indictment?" "Everything in it is false. At the Kharkov Congress of Writers not only Communists but writers of many different parties, or affiliated to none, writers from all countries took part. I am not a specialist on East-Asiatic economic questions. The spy who wrote that came to this conclusion because one of my books deals with China. I never

belonged to Max Hoelz's band of robbers, for Max Hoelz was not a robber chief but was the leader of the Middle German workers, and I did not get to know him until after the Middle German uprising, and so forth and so forth. It is not worth my while going into this prattle."

Chorus of doctors. "Have you nearly finished, Mr. Piddington? We want to put his leg into plaster of Paris."—"Yes, I've nearly finished. Au revoir."

Plaster of Paris? That's probably an English plaster in the English style, but our man soon learns by personal experience that it means a gypsum bandage. There is always a danger of misunderstandings arising from an imperfect understanding of English. Thus our man, through repeatedly using the word "cry" in a wrong sense, brought a sentimental note into his report. To cry, it appears, does not mean to raise your voice, although our man was taught that it did at school, but it means to weep. The German word "shreien" should be translated by the word "shout." How many Australian women must have shed tears of sympathy when they read how our man "cried" to the police not to bring him back onto the liner, and how he "cried" to the steward who locked him up in his cabin.

—Please note, there was no weeping, there was merely a mistake made in translation.

The plaster of Paris has been mixed and our man is having the first handfuls of the paste splashed onto his leg when heavy footsteps are heard.

An Indian dock worker is brought in on a stretcher. He is unconscious and blood is dripping from his left temple. "Fell through the hatchway, twenty feet deep," say the men who are carrying him, and they lay him on the other operation table. At the head of the stretcher an old Indian is standing, his eyes fixed on the unconscious figure, his son.

The doctors look at one another questioningly and answer one another with their looks. We'll finish the plastering first. This conclusion of the silent conversation does not seem to our man to be right and he says: "Please see to him first."

"You have no say in the matter," one of the doctors says between his teeth, though his effeminate face did not betoken as much energy. Instead of answering our man sits up, takes his plastered leg off the table and lets it fall down while the plaster of Paris drips on to the linoleum. The doctors turn to the other operation table. They feel the injured man's head. The latter groans a frightful groan from the depths of his unconsciousness. His father takes a step towards him.

Our man lies there with a feeling of deep shame. He wants to jump from the operation table. What am I here for? What's all the fuss about? To enable me to get ashore and make a few speeches? A man is dying beside me, a father sees his son dying before his eyes. The old man will be given the remainder of his wages and no one will bother his head any more about the dead man.

"When did I last have that feeling?" thinks our man. "That feeling of hopeless impotence?" He remembers. It was in 1933 in the mass cell on the Alexanderplatz among forty beaten and maimed workers. Broken jawbones, broken fingers, broken noses, crushed kidneys, ribs, testicles, swollen and bloody buttocks. That was the shameful way men were beaten up in the Nazi barracks because they acknowledged their allegiance to Socialism.

That is what I shall speak about if I get ashore, that is what I shall warn people about. I shall warn them about the masters for whom it is not sufficient that "underdogs" should fall through hatchways and come to the grave for their profit, but who beat them until they are maimed with riding whips and steel rods if they begin to question their situation.

The only thing they appear to be able to do for the poor Indian is to put a bandage round his head. They then lift him again on to the stretcher and carry him into the neighboring sickroom. The father follows in a trance, his gaze fixed steadily on his son's mutilated head.

The door closes behind the escort. I shall also lie in there in the sickroom, thinks our man, beside a dying man, a man who has been sacrificed against his will, about whom nobody cares a fig, while a lawsuit is in progress on my behalf.

Now it is our man's turn. Never was a leg put in plaster of Paris with more hostility. When he has been brought into the neighboring room it turns out that the Indian is not there. He has been taken to a hospital in Sydney; this room is, so to speak, an anteroom to the hospital.

Translated from German by N. Goold-Verschoyle

At the Top of my Voice

Comrades of the future, our descendants!
Grubbing in the fossilized crap of the past,
probing the twilight of bygone centuries,
you,
it may be,
will ask who I was.
And perhaps your scholar,
whose erudition
the querying devil himself would have foiled,
will tell of a poet
of sanitation
who never let people drink water unboiled.

Professor,
off with your optical bicycles!
I alone will tell
about our times,
about myself.

I'm a scavenger and water-boy.
When Revolution called, I went to war
and left behind the lordly arbored walks
of Poesy;—the slippery whore.

Made herself a little garden—
roses,
posies,
all complete.

She herself has made the garden,
She herself will water it.
Some spout verse from garden hose,
others spurt it from the mouth—

wisely-cracking Comrade Sidetrax,
gumption-lacking Comrade Wisecrax—
who the hell can make them out!
Sprinkle lysol, stop the stinkers—
out they pounce, the banjo gang:
"pinka-ponka, ponka-pinka,
pa-a-ng!"

Small honor to me
That from roses like this
My statues on high should rear
on squares where consumptions hawk and spit
with whores and hooligans
and gonorrhea.

I'm fed
to the teeth
with agitprop stuff
And I'd scribble you
poetry
gladly enough,
It's much more paying and pleasing.
But I've
subdued
myself;
by the scruff
of the neck my own song seizing.

Listen to me,
comrades of posterity—
an agitator,
trumpeter-in-chief!
Having quenched
the rivulets of poetry,
I shall stride
over lyrical embroidery,
like a live man
speaking with the live.

I shall come to you
in the far-off communist to be,
not like the singsong Yesseninist minstrels.
My song shall come
over the ages' peaks
and over the heads
of poets and of princes.
My song shall come,
but not like those of yore,
not like a dart
from Cupid's lyrical quiver,
not as there come
to coin-collectors
kopeks rubbed and worn,
and not like gleam of stars that sink forever.

My verse
with toil
shall crash the ages' bars
and stand before you,
plain
and rough
and bold,
as Roman aqueducts come down the years,
erected by the toiling slaves of old.

In gravemounds of books,
where my verse lies entombed,
the scraps of iron stanzas chancing to light upon,
you,

with awe's reverence,
will finger the exhumed
and feel an old but formidable weapon.

To caress the ear with words is not my wont.
The maiden's tiny ear,
in ringleted curls entwined,
at semi-obscenities
shall not redden in ecstasy.

Arraying in review
my pages' battle-line,
I stride along the ranks of poetry.
In heavy columns looms the metal verse,
ready alike for death
or fame throughout the ages.

Poems freeze stiff,
in close alignment pressed
the yawning muzzles of their title pages.
The favorite arm of all our fighting line,
wit's cavalry
wait tense and low,
raising the sharpened lances of their rhyme,
ready to burst in thunder on the foe.
And all of these battalions,
armed from head to feet,
with twenty years of victories on their banner,
to the last syllable of the final sheet
I dedicate to you,
the workers of our planet.

The titan workingclass's hated foe
he's mine as well,
inveterate and utter.
What made us march beneath the Red flag so?
'Twas years of toil and days of gnawing hunger
We opened Marx's every volume wide,
like men in their own house
who open wide the shutter,
but without reading too
we knew it signified
which side to fight
and which to muster under

Our dialectics
we never learnt in Hegel's class.
In crashing din of war
it burst upon our ken,
at the bullet's hiss
the bourjois ran from us,
as we
at one time
ran away from them.

At death of geniuses
disconsolate and wild,
let widowed glory trail in funeral weeds.
Perish, my verse! Die like the rank-and-file,
as died our nameless heroes
on the barricades.
To hell, I say, with bronze's hulking tonnage,
to hell, I say, with marble's slimy sweat.
Me and my pals will settle up the damage—
the common cenotaph to do us homage,
shall be
the battle-structured
World Soviet.

Posterity,
Scan well your lexicon's floating bobs.
From Lethe's stream there rise
the remnants of such words
as "prostitute,"
"blockade,"
"tuberculosis."

For you,
whose every limb
with health and vigor throbs,
the poet has licked up consumption's spittle gobs
with the abrasive tongue of posters.

The years trail on,
and I shall soon resemble
an excavated monster,
tailed and hoary.
Good comrade life,
let's open up the throttle
in iron Pyatiletkas thunder out the story.

My poems haven't piled me up a penny.
No cabinet-makers came
my rooms with truck to fill.
And I can say with all the truth that's in me
That, barring a clean shirt, my wants are nil.

Standing before
the Party center
of future years,
above a gang of poetry's
money-hogs and crooks,

I'll raise aloft,
as Bolsheviks raise their Party cards,
all hundred volumes of my Bolshevik books.

Translated from the Russian by H. G. Scott

Peter Pavlenko

In the East

In a recent issue we carried excerpts from the first section of the novel. The excerpts in this number are from the recently published concluding section. It is a visualization of the future war upon the Soviets almost openly being prepared for by Japanese imperialism.

Apart from its obvious political interest, the book has this literary significance. It is to some degree a collective novel. Before the author had turned in his final draft, he had submitted the manuscript to readings by Soviet Far East Pioneers, to Red Army men, aviators, men in the submarine service, and so on. He was advised not only on points of factual accuracy, but on type portraiture, psychological motivation, and so on.

Great historical events are always unexpected, like private tragedies, though a presentiment of them may have been felt for some time.

England was writhing in her death-agony while younger states, her former servants—stood watching in open-mouthed delight. With England an epoch in the history of mankind was expiring. If a regime could become human, we would have beheld a decaying old gentleman who pretended to be a diplomat and an educator and proved, after his death, to have been merely an old clothes' merchant and a money-changer. And, as usually happens in these cases, no sooner had this enterprising merchant died than a hungry boot-black appeared on the scene and declared himself to be the deceased's adopted son.

Thus did Imperial Japan make her appearance. World history was not one of the concerns in which she held shares, but she hoped to acquire them now in exchange for the imitations of Pilsener beer and Lancashire cotton goods produced at home.

England desired to weaken France by means of a hostile Germany and the United States by means of her rival, Japan; the latter country she thought of keeping down by inciting against her the United States and the Soviet Union. At the same time England was continuing her alliance with Japan—as an old woman keeps a lover—a young, impudent coachman, who beats her during their love-passages. England supplied Japan with munitions and loans for the exploitation of Northwest Asia. America had similar plans—against England.

They all hoped to contrive that the Soviet Union should pay for their quarrels.

In Europe Germany was rushing into war, and the experienced preservers of peace were directing her (as they were directing Japan in the East) towards the Scythian plains, from whence no invader had ever returned whole.

War was expected everywhere.

Acting in the spirit of Yamato Damasii—"Wild cherry-blossom—fragrant in the morning," Japan had encompassed the ruin of working-class Shanghai, had seized Manchuria, Chahar and Northern China. Beyond these she saw a vision of a submissive Europe.

But alongside the decaying capitalist world, another Europe and another universe was growing—grown from the barricades of Vienna, from the country villages and towns of Spain, from the nameless revolt of Asia.

Japan pushed on her plans of world conquest. She set up air-bases near the Panama Canal; she flooded Mexico with her spies. Against England she built secret air bases threatening Egypt and Arabia; others threatening the Caspian Sea, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan.

Thus, holding the most important junctions of the world's communications

in her power, she bided her time. Her little marshals possessed vivid imaginations. Like the valiant generals of Napoleon III who entered dreams of the conquest of Africa in their service records, the Japanese generals visualized the conquest of Thibet, Siam and India, and the flag of a united Asia waving over the Pamirs.

The great Bolshevik movement towards the Pacific began in 1932. Some day a conscientious historian will dig up a dusty portfolio of confidential dispatches containing names of heroes unknown to their country, the men who came with the first axes and picks to the taiga and the mountains.

At that time the Soviet Far East did not realize what it was embarking upon. The great began with the insignificant and did not therefore make an impression. The epic of pride had not stirred people's minds. Meanwhile the heroes drilled mountains, bored for water and oil, hewed roads in the taiga and built towns. In wooden theaters actors from metropolitan companies performed; in study circles men from the construction gangs argued over the poems of Alexander Blok. But such things were going on in every corner of the Soviet Union and the Far East never dreamed then of overtaking and outstripping the rest of the country, though this was what soon actually took place.

A great deal had changed in those parts since the first six hundred members of the Young Communist League came to the taiga. New people had appeared, new asphalt streets had been laid in new towns; those who could describe how these towns started were regarded as old men by the rest, so long ago did it seem since the initial difficulties had been overcome. But their memory was as rich as youth; they could recall difficulties that had seemed insurmountable, heroic comrades who had worked with them; they could see within this created world the passionate story of its creation.

The soul of the Soviet citizen was nourished on the conquest of difficulties. It acquired wisdom at twenty, and this early wisdom deposited therein for the rest of life the secret of everlasting youth. A Soviet citizen, having aged a little at twenty, remained youthful until fifty and over.

From year to year he grew cleverer; he ripened.

Our whole state was so organized as to breed manly, straightforward, honest people. All that was false came inevitably to ruin; the coward could not survive.

On the fifth of March, 193 . . . the partisan commander Wang Hsiung-ting resting in his native village, learned that Japanese troops were moving in the direction of Lake Hanka. Their pretext was an investigation of the death of Captain Yakuyama which had occurred some time before. On the sixth of March Wang Hsiung-ting received fresh information: the Japanese were moving in two armies; on the morning of the seventh of March he knew for certain that it was war, although the word had not yet been uttered. He was taken unawares. He had imagined that the outbreak of war would be different, a much slower and predictable process.

Far from his men, cut off from partisan headquarters, he felt for a moment the prisoner of circumstances. On the evening of the seventh he got a message from Yu-Shan saying: "Stay wherever the war finds you. Begin wherever you can, and as close as you can to the front."

He had been right—it was war!

Reports had already appeared in the press about the famine in the northern

provinces of Japan, and the fall of the yen. People were starving in Aomoto and Iwata, dying in Akata and Miyagi, abandoning Fukusima. The idea of war as a way out of their misfortunes occurred more and more frequently to the Japanese. In the Far East war had been expected for many years; it had been an everyday burden upon the people.

But the people in the Soviet Far East were also prepared. They had built towns and roads in the taiga, drained swamps, sown the tundra, conquered winter on the shores of the Arctic Ocean. They knew well what labor and suffering and danger were.

Japan's English creditors were disturbed by the situation. Would Japan be able to fight, could her decaying system resist famine that had become endemic and weakened her like an exhausting war.

England was of two minds—whether to support or to ruin her. Newspaper correspondents were sent to find out how things stood.

At the beginning of March Japanese headquarters in Manchuria received the long-deferred decision of the army to advance towards the Soviet frontier. The march could no longer be delayed. Since the day that the new Soviet Constitution had been made public, the preparation period for war had, in Japan, been reduced to a third of the time. The anti-Japanese movement in the south and south-west, having weakened both Canton and Nanking, strengthened the Reds in Szechuan; all these combined to produce energy for the struggle against the Japanese. Town against town, village against village, street against street, family against family—they fought, and this state of ferment, when the unity of the Chinese state was decaying, was the most convenient for operations in the North. China was busy with her own affairs and nothing now could set her forces free for interference in affairs on the northern and north-eastern borders.

The struggle in the interior of China was complicated and entangled. A great many class forces were involved along with the pulls and pressures of foreign imperialism.

Murusima, Doihara's pupil, the representative of "secret militarism," a spy who had overthrown a ministry, a politician operating in the world stock-exchange, one of the few who comprehended the ideas, the clarity of purpose in the chaos that was beginning, had a subtle conception.

China would have to be bound hand and foot. Did she want to expel the Japanese? This feeling must be appealed to. Was she thinking of English aid? She must be promised it. Did she dream of a democracy? It must be proclaimed. Of a dictatorship? The road to it must be opened.

Murusima even had tender feelings for English intelligence officers and American businessmen.

"Act, act by all means," he urged them in inspired tones. "China belongs to everyone."

He dreamed of including in the game Dutch residents, Tibetan nationalists and Kuangsi federalists.

When the boycott of Japanese goods assumed national proportions, he took steps to ensure that everything on which China existed should be suspected to be of Japanese origin. Tea, rice, silk, wool, and beans were now all suspect.

The consequence was that people had either to die of hunger or ignore the boycott. The whole of China appeared to have been made in Japan. Murusima supported the pro-Japanese movement and financed the boycott of Japanese goods. He supported the terrorists and worked with the leaders of the Pan-Asiatic groups, grudging them neither money nor time.

On the night of the seventh and eighth of March General Minamo moved the Japanese-Manchurian forces towards the Soviet frontier.

The main blow was to be directed at Lake Hanka, at Georgievka, by the second army, under General Nakamura. Its task was to break through the belt of Soviet frontier fortifications, reaching the railway and cutting off the coastal region from the rest of the country.

At the same time the first army under Kurosaka, escorted by the navy and naval air force, was to force—from the Korean side—the mouth of the River Tumengan and reach Possiet Bay by the sea-coast. The third army under General Nissio-senior, reinforced by the Sungari River flotilla, was to face Blagoveshchensk and tie up the chief divisions of the Red forces.

The fourth, left-flank army under Yoshida, an army that included the White Mongolian and White Russian cavalry divisions, was ready to strike at the Mongolian People's Republic, pass through it and entrench itself at Lake Baikal.

The Mongolian objective was to form the main thoroughfare of the war, but it could be used with most effect later on and not before Nakamura had penetrated to Hanka, broken down the main railway and by this means handed over Vladivostok and the Maritime Provinces to Kurosaka's army attacking from Korea.

Two squadrons left Maizuru with landing parties for Vladivostok, three others composed a convoy for many hundreds of transports, on board which Japan sent to the Chinese and Korean shores three hundred thousand young, healthy fellows, together with tanks, airplanes, ammunition, petrol, provisions, all the best that had been accumulated at the price of hunger and death of millions of Japanese.

The night of the seventh of March, while the first detachments of Japanese infantry were marching towards the Soviet frontiers and the first transport-ships laden with men and arms were leaving Japanese ports for the north, in every town in Japan and every town in China where the Japanese were in power, arrests were made. Everybody suspected of intractability or too free thinking, suspiciously well-educated men who, owing to the state of their health, were unfit for service, road-builders, Chinese coolies, Formosans and Korean beggars, all this motley crowd who could not understand each other were sent to the rear of the Manchurian front to build roads and carry loads.

Many villages in Manchuria were deprived of their men, youths and their healthiest women. It was as if some fantastically evil epidemic had passed over the country, leaving only age, vice and deformity alive.

A procession of merchants followed the war northwards. Traveling circuses acquired women. Prostitution and trade went to the war—together with tea-houses, circuses, restaurants and stalls of charms and amulets.

Together with the merchants and prostitutes, the bonzes, who were not so enterprising as the others at first, hastened to follow the war with their movable temples, and "sacred" toys, which had been prepared long since for this great bazaar.

The Frontier War in the Air

The air force was led by General Sano. He had chosen, out of the various forms of raid, one which had appealed to Japanese headquarters for a long time. Knowing that their own aviation was weaker than that of the Soviet Union, they dreamed of striking a lightning blow at the Ivanovsk air-base. While that mighty aerodrome existed, no one in Japan could feel secure.

General Sano supposed that he would take the Ivanovsk aerodrome by surprise, ruin the flying-field with bombs, fire the buildings, smash up the Soviet airplanes standing there and return quickly to the frontier, to the assistance of Nakamura's army.

The last war had shown that the best means of intercepting an enemy air-raid was to prevent it starting. Japanese aviation lacked confidence in air battles, feeling safer acting against land-forces.

General Sano, therefore, preferred to attempt the destruction of the Ivanovsk air-bases. As a beginning he thought of sending out several weak detachments as a feint, in order to decoy the Reds into concentrating their planes at the aerodrome. But Sano admitted that the Red planes might climb above his and secure the advantage.

There was another way out: the Japanese could wait for an attack, keep under cover, slip away, and counter-attack at the aerodrome, where the Red planes, having exhausted their petrol, would be defenseless. This third course was risky, however.

General Sano was also tempted by still another plan: to strike at a town in the taiga in the lower reaches of the Amur, for there lay the soul of the Bolsheviks, and their whole future: he decided to send his heavy bombers against the new town, and use his other forces against Ivanovsk.

He sent Air-Marshal Sakurai to the North and took on Ivanovsk himself.

As soon as he called his air-squadrons from the front-line in the east towards the north, in the west a brief signal was sent to Moscow by a Red air pilot on the frontier.

"Advancing against us in the air."

Another signal was sent by Tarassiuk:

"They are flying over us."

The signal from Georgievka ran:

"Advancing northwards."

The whole of the Soviet Far East from the Sea of Japan to the Arctic Ocean awoke with one accord that night. It was a brisk awakening. The towns awoke, and the trading-settlements, the trappers lost in the taiga awoke and the fishing villages on the far northern rivers.

That terrible night Zhorka the wireless-operator was heard everywhere at once. "Get up, the enemy's out against us!" he shouted into telephones and microphones.

In the far north Yankov and Zverichev were already running, slipping on the frozen snow, to the aerodrome. In the south Varvara Ilyinichna, armed with a rifle, went down, stumbling through the black chaos of the damp March night, towards the sea. The fishermen in Kamchatka started for their boats. In the taiga the Nanaitsi harnessed their dogs. The doctor on board the ship that was wintering in the Arctic, spoke over the wireless: "An airplane, a doctor and a nurse are ready to fly in any direction." Pilots altered their courses in the air. Mothers awoke. Towns sent messages to each other.

"On guard, the enemy's coming!"

And they rose—to a man.

General Sano's headquarters were in a twin-engined "Midubisi" T. B. 91., armed with five machine-guns and field-guns. His squadron consisted of bombing planes and a cruiser-convoy.

The wind was not with them; the night seemed particularly dark, as often happens in March, when the weather is uncertain.

At nine o'clock sharp on the evening of March eighth, Sano's air force crossed the invisible boundary of the Soviet Union.

At about two o'clock in the morning Sano's air force reached the Ivanovsk air-brigade station. The scouts circling at a great height descended with engines throttled and flung light-bombs. The air-fleet swept over Ivanovsk. To the left of the line of the formation appeared the tiny patch of aerodrome with low houses dotted around it. The scouts threw their light-bombs, released the engines and, opening machine-gun fire, flew right over the aerodrome buildings. In the broad explosions of the bombs the outlines of airplanes shrouded in tarpaulin, could be glimpsed. General Sano's squadron set about wiping out the Ivanovsk aerodrome.

The wireless station on the air-marshal's plane could not pick up a single sound of the Russian transmitters. The earth was silent. It became clear to General Sano that the earth in Ivanovsk was deserted. The Lenin air force was either hiding in secret aerodromes or had gone up beforehand, and was waiting for Sano in the air.

The aerial path over the taiga had always been a difficult one even for old birds. The air above the taiga was ruled by the land upon which dwelt Michael Simonovich Schlegel, Shershavin and Zverichev. They guarded the air over the country of their birth and closed its paths from the earth. Air-Marshal Sakurai did not believe this at first, until coming upon a Red aerodrome about twenty minutes after ascending, he understood that it was going to be difficult. In order to fly in there unheard, it was necessary to fly from afar, to climb secretly and at a distance from the enemy; in a word, it was necessary to be in a very different position from that of General Sano's air forces.

Thirty minutes after ascending, the Red Scouts discovered Sakurai's group, and the destroyers attacked his flanks. Now began an aerial battle which had not entered into the plan of the raid.

Sano immediately gave orders for Sakurai to join the main forces.

He now intended to attack the town of Georgievka with the entire mass of his squadron. He ordered a detachment of stormers from the Manchurian frontier zone to go into action, and sent orders to Manchuria for a detachment or destroyers to be ready to join him if called upon. Then he headed towards the frontier.

At three-forty there was a loud roar in Georgievka. The crackling and creaking of window-frames and the splintering of glass roused the inhabitants who were dozing in their gas-masks. No one had expected that the enemy would begin with Georgievka; in fact, they had been rather skeptical about the signals from headquarters. There had been plenty of alarms these last few years, and, to tell the truth, people had grown accustomed to them. The noise brought every living creature to its feet. Dogs howled, startled horses neighed in stables. A monstrous weight fell and a crimson cloud leaped upward in the square before the office of the Executive Committee. Alongside it came another. The crash, which cannot even be imagined, shook human consciousness.

In Luza Street yellow tongues of flame flickered. Fragments of brick and wood rained down unceasingly. Human bodies could be seen falling in the swirling dust. People frantically sought shelter from the fiery storm; some sat stunned on their beds, with helpless hands raised above their heads. Ceilings crashed down on them and they bent in silence under the blows, dumb, blind, deprived of will-power. Georgievka, that resembled a mud-built village, was an easy mark for aerial attack.

The Party Committee had not dispersed since the previous evening and as soon as the people at Headquarters had given warning of imminent danger, Vallesch divided Georgievka into districts and assigned superintendents to

them. Luza, who had started out in the evening to see Tarassiuk, sent back a special messenger to say that the frontier guards were hourly expecting an attack. The partisans, the people from the collective farms and the members of the Young Communist League from the factories telephoned to the Party Committee about forming a detachment. Suddenly there was a roar just beside them.

"Every man to his district," said Vallesch. "Women and children to the hills; the men must come and help put out the fire."

Every now and again there would be an explosion in the streets. A Japanese bomber dropped blazing into Comintern Street. Some of the more daring people rushed towards the machine. Suddenly the air was rent with such mortal convulsions that many of the bystanders lost consciousness. Then, with a deafening roar that stopped the blood-vessels working, a section of the street heaved over on one side.

A crowd of wounded and bruised ran and crawled out of the town into the fields. An anti-aircraft battery was working in Lazo Prospect, a second—outside the town on Blue Hill, a third—behind the partisan cemetery.

In front of the underground hospital in Shakhverdinan Street ambulance-men were busy around the stretchers. The heat from the explosions scorched them and knocked them down. A number of people out of the crowd joined the ambulance-men, the rest moved in the direction of Voroshilov Boulevard where it seemed comparatively quiet.

Groans of the wounded were heard on every side. Panicky children, dripping with blood, darted about and were caught and hushed in the arms of passing strangers. Every minute houses went on fire, but there always proved to be someone within call who needed the calm of hard and urgent work. Someone's hands would find an axe and imbed it in the timbers at a blow; someone else would bring up a bucket of water and, although it was not clear that the building was worth saving, since it might be destroyed by a bomb next moment, still the fire was put out.

Out of the dark heaps of rubbish and smoking fences appeared half crazy, flame-scorched mothers, searching for their children.

A Red Army man named Ushakov, Luza's assistant in the "Osoaviakhim"[1] affairs, picked up an old club-banner and ran through the streets with it. Those who had been rushing aimlessly about in mad terror, ran after him, for the banner led them somewhere. The crowd was joined by partisans and hunters with guns, school-children with placards, and a blood-stained Chinese carrying an axe. Ushakov led the crowd out on to Voroshilov Boulevard. Right across it stood a motor-lorry in which the leather-clothed figure of Vallesch stood. A group of Red Army men were quickly and silently clearing away the ruins of a building from beneath which screams issued. The spectacle of these men working silently was quite unexpected. About thirty men detached themselves from the crowd and joined them, but the rest followed the banner.

An elderly Ussuriisk Cossack jumped into Vallesch's lorry, shouting wildly:

"Where are the rifles, God blast ye? Give us some rifles!"

Vallesch made a gesture towards the end of the boulevard. His voice could not be heard. The crowd moved in the direction he indicated.

On a platform, from which amateur entertainers had sung songs to the children, Luza's wife Nadezhda, a Cossack woman born in Georgievka, was standing. She was holding the pole of an old red placard on which was printed:

[1] Society for Defense of the Soviet Union and the Development of its Aviation and Chemical Industries.

"All hands to the beetroot fields." A small member of the "Pioneers" was beating a drum.

"Comrade-Cossacks," shouted Nadezhda. "Brothers! Our collective farms are at the front line. . . ."

"Come on, speak up!"

". . . The 'Stalin's' out already," Nadezrda went on. "The 'Lenin' folks took up their rifles yesterday evening. The 'Twenty-Fifth of October' was up like one man, Luza's to the fore, Chepurniak's to the fore, Goncharenko's with them as well. . . ."

"To the frontier!" someone shouted. The rest took up the shout.

"To the frontier!"

The people formed ranks, called to their relatives. A woman leading a cow on a rope and talking vociferously, fastened the rope to a car. Others were dissuading her. Musicians gathered from everywhere.

Every disturbed and anxious soul demanded work in which personal pain would be submerged, which would be higher, better and dearer than all that this night had destroyed. Fresh crowds, fresh processions of marchers streamed on to the boulevard. Vallesch drove up, standing in the lorry.

"Wounded and women and children, line up to the left. You're to be evacuated."

Staid Cossack women detached themselves from the lines and arranging the shawls on their heads, took up their positions behind Nadezhda.

"Put us down for fighting," they said sternly.

The aerial battle was moving towards the frontier. Sano's bombers, caught unawares by the Red air-cruisers and surrounded by destroyers, could not advance on Georgievka that night in the compact formation necessary to produce a catastrophe. The air-barrage increased the disorganization of the squadron.

The steel ropes of the balloon-barrage at a height of seven and even eight thousands yards above Georgievka, severed in two the planes of the first line that collided with them, while the second line, bewildered by this elusive danger, hanging invisible in the air, fired its volley before the proper time.

The third plane flotilla which suffered the heaviest attack by the Red destroyers, became a disordered flock of isolated machines; they discharged their bombs at random, and prepared to leave the battle which had been lost before it had begun. The fields around Georgievka were all either ablaze or smoking. The stormers summoned by General Sano from the frontier-zone of Manchuria were already on their way and might any minute come down upon the Georgievka anti-aircraft defences and moving targets. It seemed that just here the enemy was seeking the decision.

From the Manchurian frontier-zone came the destroyers summoned by Sano. They prepared to cover the retreating bombers and rescue them from the Reds.

The aerial battle developed—independent of the attack by Nakamura's army. The Reds had tied up the Japanese general and were separating him from the land movements.

At six o'clock in the morning Sano, seeing the senselessness of the war in the air, in view of the failure of his bombers, gave the order for the squadrons to return to their aerodromes.

But Nakamura, the commander of the second army, ordered the aviators to the frontier, near Georgievka.

On the eve of Women's Day Eugenia Tarassenkova was spending the night with her airplane near an old Nanai grazing-camp. Peng Tih-pu, a native who had been to Moscow as a delegate and returned as an air-bomber, was giving a party. Eugenia sat with the committee, between a young "Pioneer" girl who had made two parachute leaps and an ancient crone who had opened a crèche. After Peng Tih-pu's report, the second part of the evening commenced. The audience listened to some gramophone records, looked at views of Moscow and watched Peng Tih-pu executing Western-style dances with Eugenia.

The old folks laughed heartily and thanked the dancers for their efforts. Then they, in their turn, entertained the company with stories. The tales were of the unexpected kind, invented on the spur of the moment; all listened to them cheerfully and made friendly suggestions and additions. At the climax of the composition when only the last words, upon which the whole plot hung, remained to be spoken, Eugenia was called to the wireless-telephone. It was Zhorka speaking.

"Gene, the enemy's after us! You've got to fly to. . . . he named one of the military aerodromes in the third zone.

"Why, what's happened?"

"The Japs are up to something funny."

"What, war?"

"Looks like it.—Oh well!"

"What do you mean by 'Oh well'?"

"I've known you such a long time now, Gene, and yet I've never seen you. I was looking for you when those Frenkels stole you."

"I've no idea what you're like, either."

"Never mind what I'm like, I'm very fond of you. Oh, well, that's my wireless fate—I have to live invisible like the devil. A dismal destiny."

"When I come back, I'll fly over to see you, Zhorka," she said. "Then you'll see what I'm like—and maybe you won't like me."

"If you come back, you're sure to come back a hero, Gene. Pilots die off like birds, without any fuss. But if you do come back, you won't want the likes of me. Well, good luck!"

"Zhorka!"

"Wood-Trust, please," squeaked a strange voice. "Seven-fifteen-eight-four. Wood-Trust? Hello! Is that Wood-Trust?"

"I'm no Wood-Trust," Gene replied. "I'm a pilot."

"Oh, sorry," squealed the voice apologetically. "Sorry, stepped on the wrong wave."

Zhorka had vanished into the trackless air. She hung up the receiver.

"Onward, airplane!

"Young Communist, onwards!"

She sang with a sort of nervous excitement, and, calling Peng Tih-pu to help her, hurried to the aerodrome. Peng decided to accompany her in her flight, although he was on leave.

The 5th bombing squadron, the one in which Sevastianov was serving, joined the 12th cruiser squadron in the taiga on the eve of March 8th. At midday, the damaged machines from Vladivostok began to arrive at the aerodromes of the second zone; auxiliary airplanes went to meet them from the north. The 7th brigade of heavy bombers and a special squadron of torpedo-carriers arrived.

Eugenia Tarassenkova arrived with the last batch of auxiliaries. She had discovered on her way that Sevastianov and Frenkel were both in the 5th.

"It will be funny if I'm assigned to one of them," she thought with some embarrassment, for she was in a serious mood, and wanted to discard everything personal.

But she did not encounter them. She was assigned at once as second pilot to Shchupak, a former frontiersman, now an aviator in the 7th squadron. He was a stout, heavily-moustached, melancholy man.

"Have you had anything to eat? Have you had any sleep?" he asked. "Well, then, eat and sleep. Aviation's the quickest mode of travel, there's time for everything."

Eugenia remembered Frenkel's favorite saying: "Don't hurry. Aviation's the quickest mode of locomotion." She asked where he was now.

"Who knows? There are eight here of that name, which one did you want? Go and look in the Red Corner, they're playing draughts, very likely."

But the prospect of seeing both men at once alarmed her. She lay down on the narrow cot in the hut, humming softly to herself.

"Shall we get our marching orders today, do you think?"

"Who knows, we may," Shchupak replied staidly and quietly, as he sat turning over the leaves of *The Geography of Japan.*

"Over there?" she persisted, with a nod towards his book.

"Maybe over there," the commander agreed. "And maybe to some other spot. Who knows the way things'll turn out?"

"A queer lot, these bombers," thought Eugenia, irritated, as she went out into the open air.

People kept coming in, giving news to each other in lowered tones. An aerial battle was going on over Voroshilov, the frontier was being stormed by tanks, naval bombing-planes were bombing Vladivostok, Georgievka was on fire.

An airman who had taken part in repulsing the landing-party at Olga Gulf was describing, not very distinctly—since he was munching a roll and spurting crumbs—but graphically, the attack made by the amphibian-tanks on the boats in which the Japanese were attempting to land. The amphibians met the landing party advancing in sloops about a kilometer from the shore. It was dark.

"All of a sudden, the tanks gave a wallop. Right at the sloops! Back went the sloops—in a panic. The convoy-launches opened fire on us. The troop-transports started to play their searchlights on the show—well, and then there was hell to pay—it was impossible to do anything. Then our planes came out."

He gnawed viciously at his roll and with his mouth crammed exploded indistinct, distorted words. But his tale was clear to everyone; they saw the nocturnal battle which half-an-hour before would have seemed unreal, a thing that could not have happened.

Encountering the amphibians, at a kilometer from the shore, the boats and sloops containing the landing-detachment retreated in confusion. Men leapt overboard or opened fire on their own side. Disordered firing began, which increased when the transport ships turned the searchlights on the scene of the unexpected battle. Taking advantage of the confusion, the "mosquito" fleet opened an attack on the transports. The ships opened fire on the "mosquitoes." At the same time airplanes appeared on the scene and completed the havoc begun so boldly by the tanks. The enemy, having lost a cruiser and two transports, put out to sea, transferring to the sloops the remainder

of their landing party. About three hundred wounded Japanese were now lying on the deserted shore, awaiting dawn.

The civilian airman, who had been wounded in the head and the arm, said that at Possiet, where the enemy had succeeded in landing, Varvara Khlebnikova, the partisan, had managed to send all the fishing-vessels out to sea with a hundred-and-fifty Korean women and children aboard.

"Did you do anything there?" But the boy who was telling the tale had been wounded during the first few minutes of the raid. He had barely had time to get to his plane and save it, flying away under fire. In spite of his wounds and the fact that circumstances had not permitted him to do anything, he evidently felt ashamed and the livelier the sympathy shown him, the more irritated he became.

Eugenia sighed and closed her eyes. The most responsible moments of her life were coming.

Three years before the pilot Frenkel had landed at her mine. She was sitting in front of the house, singing a song. A man in blue overalls strode up to her. "You've got a good ear," he said. "An ear anyone might envy." "Why?" she asked, laughing. "A musical ear is indispensable if you want to be a tip-top aviator," he explained. Then he sat down and chatted awhile and as he was going away, said: "You've got a regular jewel of a voice and an ear, come along with me to Khabarovsk and I'll make an aviator of you." So he took her away with him. But she did not become his wife, she liked her freedom too well. Then Sevastianov turned up. He was a smart fellow and a wonderful singer. It somehow happened that both men loved her; she was as fond of both as if they were her brothers, but she still followed her destiny, alone.

Now they were together and before the three of them another life was opening—for how long?—a life that rendered that of yesterday valueless. "Shall I hunt them up?" she thought. "No."

She did not want anyone's support, but she felt lonely. The vague feeling that now she must manage without the support of friends, without men, made her long for a heart-to-heart talk with someone, about herself, about the love not yet experienced. But tomorrow was stronger than yesterday. It must absorb her altogether, with all its excitements, pleasures and misfortunes.

Suddenly in the thick darkness of night there was a stir in the aerodrome. The squadron had received its marching orders.

"We'll be having a go at Tokio, very likely," said the mechanic, one of the most fiery politicians in the regiment.

Commissar Ismirov collected the Party group in haste. The mechanics mopped their faces nervously with oily rags. They all smoked. They were all in a hurry. They all set their watches.

The commissar tried to appear as if nothing in particular had happened. The Party was sending its lads to the war and the Party was saying goodbye to them for a long time. It must be all very simple and go straight to the heart.

Unhurriedly he worked out the agenda:—first the political significance of the raid, second, the admission to the Party; third, a summary of the news, fourth, business on hand, unhurriedly announced, in the hoarse voice of an old fisherman (a Turki from Lenkoran). Their hearts contracted suddenly.

The raid was, as many had already guessed, to be made on Tokio.

"Communism will sweep away all frontiers," said Ismirov. "This idea has got to be understood—thoroughly, very thoroughly, very seriously. It'll sweep them away—Ha! People may ask, when will that be? Why, right now.

When it's necessary, then Communism will sweep them away. That's how I understand it."

But all understood that the frontier of the Soviet Union was not that conventional geographic boundary which existed on the map, but another—invisible, and therefore still more real, a boundary which divided palace and hovel all over the world.

The raid on Tokio was intended in order to include the capital in the circle of frontier encounters.

It was not the villages of the Manchurian peasants that would answer for the attack on the Soviet Union, but the palaces and banks of the Tokio merchants.

The Sea of Japan would have to be flown, the island crossed from end to end until on the other side of the Japanese Alps, Tokio, the capital, the chief bank and headquarters of war, was reached.

"Even a bird wouldn't venture to make a flight like that at one go," said the commander of the squadron, looking around at the others.

"A bird hasn't got our reason for going," the commissar retorted, striking the table with his fist. "A bird wouldn't cross that sea, but we shall."

Then the admission into the Party began. The speakers were not good; the thoughts that strove for expression could not be put into words. Yet here, on the eve of the battle, face to face with death, six persons were received into the Party, and among them was Eugenia Tarassenkova.

They sang the "International," then, without anyone suggesting it, they sang it again; and again. They seized Ismirov in their arms and tossed him in the air. The song did not cease.

"I'm grateful to the Party, and to the command for sending me," cried Eugenia. "I'm going in the name of all the girls in the Soviet Union. I'm going to fight like our elders fought in the October Revolution, like the Spanish women fought, like the Chinese women fought in Fushun."

The aviators let go of the commissar and rushed up to Eugenia. Now she was tossed up over their heads.

"Here you are, as a Spanish woman! And there you are as a Chinese woman!"

"Now toss her up as a Russian woman." Gasping and breathless, she flew so high that she was terrified. Supposing they failed to catch her, supposing they missed her in the darkness? But the strong hands caught her gently.

As Eugenia was running to join her detachment, Sevastianov and Frenkel barred the way.

"Wait a minute, little one," Sevastianov called out affectionately. "Let's say goodbye."

Frenkel said nothing.

She groped for Sevastianov's face and after pressing it to her own for an instant, turned to Frenkel.

"We'll see life yet, lads," she said softly.

A minute later she was in the airplane and had forgotten them. A new and important life faced her, a task more important than life.

Shchupak was putting on his helmet, and stowing his full moustache under it in a very determined manner.

"It's all right in warm weather, but in winter it's a nuisance," he joked. "It freezes to my helmet, devil take it, and I have to thaw it off."

"You ought to have it off."

"Oh, no. Can't be done. At my age a fellow has got to have some style."

The 7th squadron took off with the seventh line of bombers.

Ahead and on the flanks glided the air-cruisers, armed with artillery.

The scouts escorted the detachment for a while and then returned, having noticed the sparks and fire of a battle out at sea.

That night Japan transferred three hundred thousand soldiers from the islands to Manchuria and Korea, and the Red Navy met them on the way.

The Red submarines had been patrolling the seas, awaiting the hour when the great armada of troop-transports would leave Japanese shores. Three submarine flotillas kept to the depths. The first line consisted of submarine cruisers.

Signs of a naval battle were visible quite near, somewhere not far below the airplanes. Sometimes one could see an explosion of sparks and flame flickering over the water.

But the commander of the raid continued his course southwards.

When they had gone half-way the airplanes received the following command:

"Go straight for your aim. Good luck and victory!"

The entire squadron of heavy bombers was ordered to climb to a height of seven thousand meters, and the convoy of air-cruisers to seven thousand five hundred. This was the beginning of the manoeuver—to keep higher than the highest of the enemy planes.

The action had started. Its success depended upon whether the men and the engines would be able to stand the height, the distance, all the deadly strain of the coming struggle. But after Chkalov's flight no one doubted that they would be able to do it.

This blind flying in the darkness kept the nerves at high tension. Shchupak more than once gave the controls to Eugenia and closed his eyes for ten seconds. He needed his strength for the morning.

Bombardier Peng Tih-pu, who was also the navigator, had joined Eugenia and Shchupak. He was now noiselessly busy with a map, carefully tracing on it the plane's course. The rest sat motionless, alert, in a sort of half-conscious tension. The airplane was heading for the east; towards it out of the pearl-grey haze, the distant dawn glided, a bluish spot. The airplane was flying towards daybreak, but the limitless sea of air around it was still grey, colorless and the deceptive blue spot ahead looked like land. The dawn resembled land, but it was far-off and hazy.

The lights of ships and light-houses were hidden in the fog that held on the lower level. Neither sea, nor sky, nor earth were visible, only a grey ocean of vacancy, of space, an ocean of distance on the farthest edge of which glimmered blue, for a brief instant, the objective towards which the people in the airplane were flying.

Between the earth they had left not long since and the earth to which they were to return tomorrow lay nothing except that space, nothing but themselves, nothing but their wills.

Shchupak handed the controls to Eugenia, and closed his eyes. He wanted to rest for a few minutes so he took a few strides to and fro in the cabin and then bent over the map.

The plane was going in the direction of Yokohama. Peng Tih-pu wrinkled his brow as he glanced first at his watch, then at the air-speed indicator, then at the anemometer and with extreme caution made a dot on the map.

At a great height the craft went well; and was much easier to fly than on ordinary, everyday heights, but the ease of movement grew wearying and the height and cold added a peculiar nervousness to the weariness. It seemed as

if everything had ceased to exist, even time. It did not move, it ceased to be sensed in action, it turned into something abstract. Meanwhile everything in this operation turned on time. The most subtle calculations determined the general strategy and would determine the battle tactics.

Heroism was, so to speak, kept to a strict time-table, outside of which it turned into recklessness. This was a battle as complicated as a chemical process, in which reaction A calls out reaction B and creates conditions for new phenomena that could not have arisen except through that sequence. In the complex calculation of this operation accidents, the heroism of one and the weakness of others, could not be taken into account, and time, which to an extraordinary degree was not felt, was the prime mover of victory.

Shchupak's heavy, four-engined bomber was in the last line. Before him glimmered the outlines of the other machines, moving along in close formation.

Shchupak was thinking now of only one thing, a thing that swallowed up everything else: he was intent on keeping in formation, that is, on being exact.

The business of the bombers in the battle would occupy no more than an instant. They were to come out at Yokohama and, skirting it, approach—Tokio. Line after line, they would release their bombs, skim over the city and make for home. The cruiser-convoy would then grapple with enemy attack; the bomber would have fought his battle. Shchupak looked around at his crew. They would stick it out! Good lads!

He took over the controls, gesturing to Eugenia not to doze, because the plane was slipping into daybreak, and must now, he thought, be seen from below.

But the earth had not seen it. The earth itself was scarcely to be seen, rather to be guessed at than recognized. Its existence was conjectured.

Now Peng Tih-pu was making a dot on the map. He coughed.

"Japan," he said, leaning towards the commander of the airplane.

"What?"

"We're flying over her," said Peng Tih-pu; worn out with the strain, he closed his eyes and clenched his teeth.

He was tormented by a desire to look down, but for a brief instant he glanced ahead eastwards, at the dawn that lit up the mist like a light-house beacon, and closed his eyes again; morning was near.

The blue spot, that had so indistinctly and reluctantly glimmered through the grey fog an hour before, was now a smudge, that spread and shone. The airplane seemed to be hanging on the very edge of that blue chasm, preparing to plunge into it but still screened by the grey murk of the night air. Thus might an eagle pause, leaning against the warm rock of his nest, gazing down at his prey before taking flight. But the airplane did not pause, it flew onward at a fearful rate, though seeming to linger on the border of grey and blue, as if dragging the night on its wings. Morning was near, but there was still a greater space left until morning. Peng Tih-pu did not want to waste strength on emotions. He wanted to preserve within him the warmth of his native land, the smell of his native woods and the sound of native voices in that leap through air across the sea.

Shchupak's airplane was nearing its aim. Soon the clouds piled on the edge of dawn were swept aside and, like a drawing seen through tracing-cloth, portions of the earth appeared clearly outlined. The sea glittered. On the border of the blue and the greenish-brown the smoke of the town rose dense.

The earth rose to meet them, smoothing out her valleys and rivers, pro-

truding from under the broad pancake of smoke curtain that hung over Yokohama and partly hid the sea. Then appeared the Kanto valley and the dim curve of the River Sumidagawa, at the mouth of which Tokio stood. Shchupak skirted the valley. The dark-grey waters of the harbor, sprinkled with wart-like islands, were left behind. Everything was crowded into a single instant, it swept on, deprived of length, brief as a sigh.

Tokio approached—it was under their wings. Only flight could save the city, but cities must die where they stand.

"We're there," Shchupak said soundlessly, pointing at a section marked with red pencil on the map. He glanced at Peng Tih-pu as he spoke. The other nodded.

The city looked like the scene of a fire or a fragment of night in the midst of broad daylight. Over it lay the tattered smoke curtain, the wind lifted its edge, exposing the ends of the deserted streets on the outskirts of the town.

The bombers climbed to a great height, since accuracy of aim was not important. The ellipse of dispersion of bombs was so great that neither the smoke curtain, nor a fog (if one had been hanging over the town), could hide and save it. It existed, it was, it lay under the sky; it was vulnerable from above under any circumstances.

First line volley!

Eugenia gave a scream.

The smoke curtain stirred, was torn to pieces by wind and explosions. Through the rents could be glimpsed the center of the town, the bridges across the Simida. The Komadata Bridge disappeared, the Azuma heaved over on one side.

Second line volley!

Wreathing and boiling, the curtain soared upwards and was dispersed. A flaming arsenal came into the field of vision. The Akazaka Palace was smoking like a volcano. Grey-crimson dust of destroyed buildings covered the Kiobachi quarter.

Here to the left and lower down a Japanese air-destroyer was climbing steeply. Two thin sulphur-yellow streams of bullets stretched out before his engine. Like black shadows a score of machines appeared and vanished to the right of the attacking column.

Oh, instant of war, stay yet awhile!

Part of the town below was wrapped in flame. Wharves, docks and warehouses were burning. Between the zones of fire something black and compact—possibly a crowd of people—moved. From the height of seven thousand meters the town looked small.

Third line volley! Smoke rolled and coiled below, flame streamed out. Deserts appeared in the center of the town; sometimes it was possible to see how the buildings merged with the earth and disappeared.

Fourth volley!

Fifth!

Oh, instant of war, stay yet awhile!

Let the war start from here, from this distant city that would not permit either the country or the world to live in peace. Receive then, the war you longed for, Tokio! Fight, merchant! Put on your gas-mask and rise to the defense of your shop, cover yourself to the eyes in its smoking ruins, grip the rifle in your slender hands—the battle is upon you, the war has come home to you.

It will rid you of weary tramping over the mountains, of nights spent out under the rain, of misfortunes at sea.

It will treat you humanely. It will smash up the bank, burn down the house, cripple your children, drive you out, mad, into the streets of Tokio and set you face to face with the people to whom you may then speak of patriotism, of glory, and of war.

Thus was Eugenia thinking, or perhaps muttering aloud as she caught the confusion in the town which, although prepared for defense, was taken unawares by the sudden blow struck by the bombers. Nothing could save it now.

Sixth volley!

The last line advanced, Shchupak's airplane kept on its right flank. The cruiser-convoy was carrying on the battle and covering the turning of the planes that had done their bombing.

Below all was smoking and blazing. White and red caps of cannon explosions grew up in the air, right under the airplane.

Away from the town rushed the trains, the stations were ablaze. Through the streets streamed fiery floods. And something exploded of itself behind a huge garden in the center of the town.

Another volley!

"Tis the final conflict. . : ."

sang Peng Tih-pu, wiping his pale, perspiring face with his hand. Eugenia was singing something; so was the wireless operator, so were they all. Ordinary human death which at first they had feared, no longer concerned them.

If they had been fated to crash down to earth now together with their plane, their death-cry would have been a deafening roar, and, instead of splashes of blood, bricks and stones heavier than their bodies would fly about.

Having released his bombs, Shchupak made a survey of the town and since he was the last in the battlefield, decided to take a photograph of the results of the bombing. Three or five minutes spent on photography were sufficient to separate him from the formation. The white and red clouds leapt closer and closer to the airplane, merging more and more solidly into one large cloud.

The plane was fired at. But neither Eugenia nor Peng Tih-pu, who were still singing vociferously, noticed that Shchupak was wounded.

Suddenly the engines screeched. The machine was shaken in the convulsions of an explosion and lurched softly over to the left.

Eugenia righted it at once, but the height was lost.

"Two on the left," Shchupak said languidly into her ear. His head wagged helplessly from side to side, as he tried, with a violent gesture, to push back his helmet from his brow. Small close drops of perspiration covered his face like pock-marks. The two left engines were smashed.

Now the field of battle became clearer every moment. The earth smoked and burned, the aerial field was filled with the movement of hundreds of machines, darting in all directions; at a rough guess, there were five hundred Japanese aircraft—and these, of course, were not all. A way of retreat should have been planned, but Eugenia felt that in her position retreat was out of the question. It was obvious that they were faced with the second and last decisive battle above the plain of Kanto.

"We'll never get home again," she said, managing the machine automatically.

She swooped down and lost the view of the sky. Then, among the roofs and over the streets, she made her way out of the town.

To her right flew a battered bomber from her squadron. It had dropped out of the formation, too. Eugenia felt somehow that the pilot knew her and was keeping alongside on purpose. She swung her wings, the other replied, but next moment she lost sight of him against the dark background of smoke and dust. The feeling that she was not alone supported and calmed her. "We'll break clear, we'll break clear, yes, and we'll get home yet, we will, we will!" she sang, in breathless exaltation, keeping the plane close to the hills and the shadows of the hills. Her neighbor on the right overtook her crossing the fields. The other bombers had climbed to a good height, and were far ahead of the damaged machines flown by Eugenia and four others. Occasionally a burning airplane or a parachute dropped from high, evidence of the mysterious battle in the upper levels.

Ahead of her loomed a bridge crowded with cars. "Ready?" she asked by a movement of the head. "Ready!" replied Peng Tih-pu, opening machine-gun fire.

She caught sight of her neighbor on the right and decided that it would be wise to follow him. She saw how cleverly he contrived to sink against the color of the earth and become unnoticeable. She ought to do the same. But how difficult it was not to strike a blow when one had the strength to do it.

"All right," she thought. "No good going too far." She followed in the wake of her neighbor, absorbed in the madness of low-flying over the earth. From shadow to shadow, from mountain to mountain, from field to field. And now the whole world with its excitements and cares was set aside, it had ebbed back and dispersed. Now she thought only of speed and time.

To get clear away severally and separately was, in her situation, the only solution. But to make the whole flight from the east to the west of the island, hugging the earth all the time, was almost impossibly difficult. Neither Eugenia nor her neighbor were being pursued, fortunately. The enemy's attention was absorbed by the battle in the upper air. A damaged machine that had been put out of fighting order interested no one at present. Its fate was obvious.

Two hours later, having made hundreds of zigzags and loops in search of a background that would hide her, Eugenia felt that she was nearing a large town.

"How are you getting on?" she asked Peng Tih-pu through the tube.

"All clear astern," he replied cheerfully. "We'll get away yet!"

Her neighbor on the right was trying to skirt the town but Eugenia resolved to keep on her course.

"To hell with life!" she thought calmly. "I'll shake their livers up for them, anyway."

At that moment she felt she was being fired at from below. The smoke spurted higher; the splinters, flying quite close, bruised her face with sharp air-burns.

Japanese destroyers were coming to meet her. Here was a battle such as had never been known for cruelty, swiftness and tenseness of forces. There could be no wounded in a battle like this. The machine had time neither to plane nor to clear out. It is difficult to realize how limited visibility is in the air. An airplane looms into the field of vision unexpectedly and disappears still more strangely. In order to prevent any mistakes, the Japanese decided to ram it.

Now three of them went for her neighbor on the right. He had no chance. He plunged earthwards and, like a shell, shot straight down into a huge

benzine-tank opposite the station. Eugenia saw the machine fly to bits and a thick white fountain of smoke the height of a three-storied house spout from the pierced oil reservoir. Then all at once everything went dark. The airplane swayed and lurched over on its left wing, the straps snapped. Eugenia felt herself slipping out of the cockpit.

"Bravo, that was a splendid fellow," she was thinking swiftly; she realized that she had been tossed up in an explosion and that this was her death.

She did not hear the crackle of the parachute opening above her, nor feel herself falling. Her eyes were wide open, staring into the darkness of the night that swept down over consciousness. She saw the sky, a few stars, heard the noise of distant life and felt herself a part of the air, reflecting the shining of the stars and the gleam of the city lights. She hung between stars and earth and filled with her imponderable existence all with which she came in contact.

She swayed slightly with the air. So it seemed to her. But she had long since fallen to earth.

The Frontier War on the Earth

The shock-troops of the second army passed through the little town of Sanchakou to the south-east of Pogranichnaya

General Odzu, who was in command of the group, was a man of fifty-seven, a bold and energetic soldier. From a hill outside the town he directed the attack in person.

A hero of the Russo-Japanese war, where he had received wounds in the head and shoulders, he desired to meet his death before the steel and concrete Russian defense-line. This was that same General Odzu who not long before had asked as a favor to be allowed to shoot his own rebel son, a lieutenant who had been taken prisoner by the Chinese, had transferred his sympathies to them, and having been captured by the Japanese at Fushun, had been shot for treason.

"We, men of the most fertile nation in the world, will rend their zone of virginity," wrote the general in an order which was transmitted along the march through special loud-speakers carried by motor-cyclists at the head of each company.

His army moved like a flood of small factories and workshops, on caterpillar treads and wheels. Behind the lines of motor-lorries carrying infantry, cannon and chemical plant, came the storage-cars, the water-tank cars, the petrol tank cars, oven cars to burn things infected by gas, smithies, hospital cars and wireless-stations. After these came commissariat-cars, laundries in which uniforms stripped from the slain were washed and disinfected before being returned to the base to be repaired, rifle-repair cars, electrical-fitting cars and again innumerable cisterns and cartridge stores.

With the army of cars went an army of porters. They were to carry supplies of cartridges and water to the infantry regiments and drag away the wreckage from the battlefield.

Into the frontier villages came the Japanese recruiting-sergeants, who gathered all the men into the porter-detachments. Wang Hsiung-ting was bewildered, he did not know what to do next. Delay was out of the question, however, and on the seventh he issued two orders: the men were to join the detachments of porters and group themselves around their leaders, while the women and children were to be told that fires were desirable in all cases. Let everything that could burn, burn merrily.

The second army divisions were deploying their ranks in battle, keeping the artillery and tanks in the vanguard.

The "observer corps," trained by Captain Yakuyama, dispersed among the battalions and batteries a day before the storm. The old frontier spies knew Russian fairly well. They said that on the Red front-line things were as quiet as usual except for the movement of an inconsiderable number of mechanized units on the roads where Vinokurov's division was situated.

The night of the storming approached. The units of the shock-troops put on identification marks for night operations: the soldiers—a white band on the left arm, the non-commissioned officers—white bands on both arms, the platoon-officers—a white ribbon across the chest and a white band on the right arm, the company-commanders—two white ribbons crossed over the chest, the regimental commanders—white ribbons in their helmets.

The frontier was three kilometers away. The barking of watchdogs sounded from time to time out of the pitch-darkness.

Wang Hsiung-ting dressed himself as a Japanese soldier and crossed the Soviet frontier at the tail of the first stormers. He was almost choking in the unaccustomed gas-mask.

Several times he attracted attention, so he decided to change the soldier's white band on the left arm for a white ribbon across his chest like a platoon-commander. The confusion everywhere was incredible. In anticipation of an attack the last orders were being given in the companies and platoons. Every now and again the commanders of phalanxes would send an order down the line: *"Ki votsuke!* Attention! Silence there!"

The higher officers, glancing about in the darkness, growled out curses.

An officer seized Wang Hsiung-ting by the snout of his gas-mask and kicked him in the stomach.

"Sikkei simbai! . . this is no time for strolling about! Who are you? *Oi, zetto koi!"* he called out several times, holding on to the gas-mask. "Hey, come here, someone! *Oi, zetto, koi!"* But, since no one came at his call, the officer struck Wang Hsiung-ting across the neck and ordered him to return to his unit.

Fortunately, it was dark and no one noticed that Wang Hsiung-ting had only one arm. He managed to get clear of the infantry columns, passed the tanks and approached the left flank of the cavalry group.

Across the river rose the black silhouettes of the collective farm buildings, the watch-tower and the obelisk over the grave of four partisans. The howling of neglected dogs filled the air with alarm. Just now it would be easy enough to wade across the river up to the knees and knock at Luza's familiar window. But the house was deserted.

Wang Hsiung-ting dived into a dark, narrow ravine and lay down close to the earth.

Aye, well, he thought, the earth will not be quiet for many a long day now! He lay down and went over the recollections and enigmas of his life, which was beginning all over again—how many times it had begun anew—no one could tell how it would end. He had been a gardener. But had it been he? Was it not his father who had sown turnips and sold them to the Russian priest? And who was it went with the Russians to fight against the officers? It was he himself again. Who was it went back to sowing turnips? And then joined the partisans, from whence no road led back to the garden? Now there was a war on and he was a commander. He thought of himself as a gardener, the father of a partisan, of himself as a partisan—the father of a commander, and smiled, proud that he had begotten two new persons and

would beget many more still. He thought of the gardener Wang Hsiung-ting and praised him for being a good farmer and an honest laborer, but he knew perfectly well that the gardener was a cruel, stingy fellow who liked to cheat his neighbors occasionally.

The partisan Wang Hsiung-ting was quite different, a bold, fierce fellow, not in the least like the gardener. A daring man, and fierce, straightforward in speech and not at all sly. He had no pity for anyone. He knew only the words "to kill."

Wang Hsiung-ting the commander was a little bit like the gardener, who thus became a grandfather. The commander was fond of thinking and singing songs; he could look people in the eyes and understand whether they were speaking the truth or lying. But he was not cunning, nor quiet, nor spiteful. He wanted nothing for himself and grudged nothing to others. He was cleverer than either the gardener or the partisan. Thus, out of one man, three had been born.

At that moment the storming of the Soviet frontier had begun.

Wang Hsiung-ting heard the distant thunder of guns, but it did not disturb his thoughts. Japanese squadrons rushed across the river. A swift whistle of air came from the Russian side. Wang Hsiung-ting ran down to the river. Before him crept the telephone-men; sappers were hastily buliding a bridge; by the bridge chauffeurs were squatting and the cooks were saying that there would be no dinner today.

Wang Hsiung-ting forded the river. Wounded horses were struggling in the shallow water. In Luza's yard his dog Banzai, chained to a post, was rolling about on the ground. He recognized Wang Hsiung-ting from afar, and crouched quite still on the ground. When Wang released him from his chain, the dog flung himself on the telephone man's chest, knocked him down, seized him by the throat and held him down. He stood like that for a long time, gazing into the darkness, listening to the whizzing of the bullets and sniffing rapidly at the air. Luza's dark house appeared to have gone crazy. The windows cracked noisily, the glass was shivered into tiny splinters, the frames split, slabs of iron flew from the roof, bullets bit into the plaster of the walls. The house cracked, and smoked, doors burst open suddenly as if uninvited guests were being driven out, shutters banged. The loud-speaker gasped and growled hoarsely: "Bravo, bravo! Encore!" and a manly voice sang loudly.

On reaching his own quarters again, Wang roused the orderly-on-duty, who was sleeping peacefully in the cellar, and sent word to the leaders that the same plan held good—to hinder and do damage wherever and however the opportunity occurred, burn machines, spoil the roads, and keep everything a dead secret.

Day had broken before the conflagration had spread to the horizon.

The commander of the shock-troops had everything ready for battle. General staff officers were either lying on the grass or perched in trees, with telephones, sound-locators and note-books, adjutants looking through their binoculars, every one in his own direction.

At 3:15 the roar of big guns was heard. In the short pauses between the roars came the rattle of machine-guns.

The guards' division was advancing towards the Soviet frontier.

To the left of General Orisaka's guards rolled the tank-division under Nissio-Junior, the brother of the commander of the third army. Nissio-Junior had been nicknamed the "French Sparrow." During the Great War he

had served on the Western front and even fought on the Somme, for which services he had received, to everyone's surprise, a Rumanian decoration.

To the right moved the cavalry divisions of General Kada. It was very dark. From his hilltop observation post the commander of the group could see the dim mass of the hills and the valleys across the border. There was no wind.

Odzu ordered them to fire at the front line of Reds with shells filled with quick-acting volatile chemicals and send a tank regiment and light bombers to the attack.

"We mustn't waste time, we'll greet the sun on Russian ground."

The Russian ground was growing lighter. The signal-bombs and the flame of explosions fled along it like low flashes of lightning.

Through the little town of Sanchagou ran detachments with mines, hand-grenades and chemicals. After them came a second wave of infantry.

The first belt of fortified points proved to be almost on the geographical border-line. Odzu's scouts could hear the growling of the frontier watch-dogs and the low voices of the patrols.

The frontiersmen bore the first blow.

Always prepared for war, they hugged the boundary of their country with a baffling stubbornness. Men leading dogs on leashes appeared at the crossings of the paths and in the hollows, electricians at the barbed wire, snipers at the fords. Tarassiuk left his post in the beginning of the night. Luza, who had come to see his home, was with him. They went along a narrow track among thick bushes.

"Halt! Lie down!" whispered the night in front of them. They lay down. A tall ash-tree whispered to Tarassiuk, and moved aside, waving its branches, then melted into the dark green that bordered the track. The night was quiet as usual. The ash-tree that had just spoken to them uncovered its youthful countenance and flung a bunch of scarcely opened wild flowers after Vassili Luza. Vassili bowed low to the night, to the bushes and the trees.

"Thank you for the kind thought!" His lips formed the words. He touched the foliage that bordered the path but could not tell whether it covered people or trees.

They came out in the fields of the "Twenty-Fifth of October" collective farm, already deserted, and lay down on the spot where once Luza's field-hut had stood.

At two o'clock in the morning the wood, stooping and stumbling, moved soundlessly down to the river. After it boulders, hay-cocks, tree-stumps and ant-hills lumbered cautiously.

Tarassiuk lay still with his ear-phones on.

"They're crossing the river," he whispered a few minutes after two, when the echo of the first shot rang out cheerfully. Pheasants rose, rustling sleepy wings over last year's dry grass, and flew away scared.

"Looks as though they're in your village," said Tarassiuk aloud and with a sort of relief. He took off the ear-phones and rubbed his numb ears.

The rifle-fire leapt from place to place and then grew into a wall of fire. The frontier snipers were shooting into the first groups fording the river; the land behind them was still silent.

From Tiger Hill behind Luza's hut came the loudest peal of firing. It died down as it reached the village shop and began again at the old Korean farm-steads.

"How do you intend to act?" Luza asked.

"I think I'll just shake hands and then I'll withdraw behind those points,"

said Tarassiuk, tightening his belt and putting away his binoculars in the case. "I'll leave them the stones."

"Which, those?" Luza asked, alluding to the objects that had lumbered past them to the river.

"M-mph."

A bayonet-fight had started down the river. Reports came in one after the other—the enemy had collected before the sector occupied by Bogdanov's mechanical unit and the territorial division.

"Since things are like this, you'd better go to your own lot," Tarassiuk decided.

"I've not much interest in that. I'll just give them one or two jabs with a bayonet and leave them before the fortified points. That's all I'll have to do."

Tarassiuk summoned a telephone man, and in a quick, dry manner dispatched Luza with him, telling him to conduct the old man to Colonel Bogdanov's headquarters. Meanwhile Tarassiuk crawled away hurriedly to the edge of the dark bank, where through the shots could be distinguished the disconnected, grating sounds of human voices.

The first groups of guards in Orisaka's division, wet to the skin, were scrambling up the steep bank on the Soviet side. Some dug themselves in or laid telephone wires, others were trying to moor the rocking pontoon to which a great number of wounded soldiers were clinging, groaning softly as they crossed the river.

The Red frontiersmen crept closer, rolling machine-guns before them. Tarassiuk let off a signal-rocket, and every living creature on the Soviet bank dashed down to the water in a silent bayonet-charge. The antagonists closed in the middle of the river. Then the first Japanese shell exploded and shook Soviet ground—which had lain silent until then—and with this first blow the air was convulsed as if in a storm.

Everything was shaken, and burst into smoke. Then came a dry, heavy torrent of stones, of hot burnt boughs and shattered trees.

The Soviet side kept silence. On the Manchurian side amphibian-tanks appeared and moved cautiously down to the river, as if waiting for the end of artillery preparations.

Tarassiuk threw over a pontoon, led his frontiersmen away and arranged them in underground burrows in the path of the tanks.

Japanese bombers growled in the air. Something blazed up in Georgievka. The furious screaming of the shells, merging with the wild bedlam of sounds, shook the silent earth. It became almost light, but the light was horrible, blinding. It was as if scores of lightning-flashes were dancing over the quiet, slumbering hills, slashing into them and recoiling, breaking up into burning points and then turning into bright dust.

Through the glow of this monstrous pandemonium glided the shadow of the airplanes.

There was a sudden silence, a silence perceived by the eye but not by the ear. Night returned. But hearing was dead. Then the tanks rolled out. Left of the "Twenty-Fifth of October" clattered the horses of the Japanese cavalry, preceded by little tanquettes; after the tanks and the armored cars came the infantry.

Tarassiuk's snipers lay down in their burrows; the keepers let go of the dogs that were now almost crazy with suspense.

The units were still settling in to the gas-refuges, beyond the high-road,

and Colonel Bogdanov, kneeling by the wireless-receiver in the narrow command-booth, yawned and gave a twitch of his shoulders when Luza and his companion ran in from the front line.

The preliminary bombardment was developing. "Well, now, everything comes to him who waits, doesn't it?" cried Bogdanov, shaking hands with Luza. "Have you seen Tarassiuk?"

"I've only just left him. They're crossing the river."

"That's a meeting for you!" Bogdanov exclaimed. "Seems to be your fate to bury your comrades." Then, seeing that Luza did not understand him, he turned on the radio. The air in the booth was filled with shrieking and grating.

"Pretty hot," said Bogdanov with a wink. "It isn't only folks like us can't stand it, a microbe couldn't. Can you hear what's going on? Oh, well—if you're afraid of bad luck you never know what good luck is, they say."

Through the frightful music of screaming metal came occasional shouts of—"Come on! Come on!" Someone in the front line was shouting. A distant "Hurrah" rang out. Someone was striking the earth with a heavy hammer. The earth gave out a deep, hollow gasp.

"So it's goodbye. Andrey Tarassiuk!" said Luza softly. His jaw twitched convulsively as he thought tenderly of his friend.

"Everything's been wiped out there by now, my lad," said Bogdanov, "and there's not a stick or a stone left of your house."

He switched off the front line. At that moment a red lamp flashed on the signal-board.

"Point Stalin starting."

Another lamp flashed, then a row of them.

"The whole of the first line's starting," said Bogdanov, solemnly, getting up off his knees.

The surrounding hills groaned, and so did the hollows between the hills, and the pits, the stacks of last year's hay, the stones, the furrows of the field and the wild animals' burrows.

At that moment an adjutant brought Bogdanov a deciphered telegram.

"Vassili Pimenovich," Bogdanov said to Luza, after scanning the telegram, "people are asking for you. The partisans and hunters have chosen you as commander. They remember," he added enviously. "Well, give them a chance to enjoy themselves, don't be shy."

Under fire from the Red batteries the first Japanese battalions were dismembered into small sections and their commanders sought for ways of coming into contact with the enemy, who was everywhere, and yet nowhere.

The dry grass smoked under the low firing from the points, the air screamed. Staggering in the explosions of the shells, the line of Japanese miners and snipers crept on. Behind them, dragging the machine-guns, crept the infantry. Pressing on them and hurrying them, rolled the tank detachments.

Before them, belted by a low curtain of machine gun fire, lay an unpeopled earth.

Companies crawled to the fortified points, outflanking them and striving to throw their hand-grenades and block up the embrasures with bodies.

"This is Chapei all over again!" said Odzu when the situation was reported to him.

"Yes, but a Chapei where everyone is armed with a machine-gun."

He ordered the regimental artillery to be sent to join the infantry lines, and the regiments not to waste time on attacking separate points.

"If they want to keep in the ground, there's no need to touch them. The main thing is to push on ahead."

At that moment General Kada, at the head of a cavalry division with armored cars on the flanks and artillery in the center, entered the meadow of the "Twenty-Fifth of October" collective farm. Ahead lay the black hills, the silhouettes of houses, stacks of last year's hay.

"How far is it to the railway?" he asked the adjutant.

"By the direct air-route—forty," the adjutant replied.

"And to the nearest village?"

"Twelve."

"One division is enough for twelve kilometers," said Kada, giving the signal for attack.

He rushed to the hills, as he had rushed to the river, hoping to burst through, and to gallop, or crawl the twelve kilometers that should take half-an-hour, without a single backward glance, or a single delay. The batteries were left behind as soon as the cavalry broke into a trot. The machine-gun platoons huddled in the ravine between the collective farm and the frontier barrier, where the frontiersmen were lying, still whole and sound. Aviation flames were illuminating the way for the attack, combing the valleys.

Scattering widely, the squadrons—platoon after platoon—galloped between the hills, without returning the fire of the Red snipers. They dashed into ravines that turned out to be blind alleys, climbed the steep slopes or dismounted to fire at the silent stones of the broken ground.

A non-commissioned officer, wounded in the head, clawed the earth, sprinkling it on himself, as if seeking protection from the shots. Riderless horses in gas-masks writhed on the ground. All this was left behind. Then came the barbed-wire entanglements stretched across the road, barbed wire in the oak-wood, barbed wire on the edges of the gullies.

"It'll be over soon," said Kada. "There can't be more than two or say, three more rows."

They slashed the wire with their sabers, flung the wounded horses and corpses of slain soldiers against it.

"How long is it since we started this attack?"

"An hour and twenty-eight minutes," replied the adjutant.

The general looked at him without understanding. He thought that no more than ten minutes had passed.

"It'll be over soon," he said, dismounting from his horse, so as to let the squadrons pass that were crowding the narrow pathway.

At that moment Bogdanov received orders to take on Kada's division.

After fording the river in the wake of the first column, General Odzu, who was in command of the shock-troops, rode to a point that had just been occupied by units from Orisaka's division, and glancing within, they saw a heap of steel scrap and crumbled concrete.

"Do they dissolve into air when they die or what?" he said, shrugging his shoulders. The Russian shells often fell on the pass. The woods were thinner. On the horizon gleamed the zinc roofs of Georgievka. The broad fields before and behind the village were deserted.

"The Russians were always clever at defense measures," said Odzu to the wounded commander of the fourteenth regiment. "But I cannot yet understand wherein lies the secret of it."

"They crouch underground," said the regimental commander. "That's all. We pass a fixed defense, they fire at the next column coming, while we are being shot at by their neighbor. The whole question is that we don't know

whether they're dead or not, not one of us has seen them come out; it looks as though they're not there. We have not seen a single Russian. We're attacking the ground all the time and the ground is silent and doesn't beg for mercy. We don't know whether the ground is dead or alive."

"This is much too vague a report for the commander of a regiment," Odzu remarked, getting into a car and ordering the chauffeur to drive him down to the river.

The commander of the regiment who had been wounded six times in the right arm, staggered back to the ranks.

"The resistance of modern field units is incalculable. In Shanghai we had a hundred thousand people and the support of the navy, and even then, you know . . ." said Odzu to Count Scheringer, the German attache. The latter made no reply, but merely bowed.

Having received orders to attack General Kada's division, Bogdanov and his units occupied the left-flank sector, touching on one side the electric batteries in front of Georgievka and on the other—which was almost the center of the Japanese attack—Vinokurov's shock-troops. The pass before Georgievka he handed over to the partisans under Luza's command, while together with the mechanized units, he himself withdrew in order to create conditions for manoeuvering.

The artillery and aerial preparations for attack were completed, the Japanese led out their tanks, after them came the infantry guards. The fixed defenses opened fire on the attackers. The guards lay down and dug themselves in, but the tanks, in places, had already passed the first line of defense; the cavalry, making an unusually bold charge, flung themselves on the frontiersmen, galloped through their barrier and under fire from the defense-points of the left sector, strove to get out of the wood lying before Georgievka, the flames of which rose halfway to the sky, filling the attackers with hope.

Luza dug himself in together with five hundred partisans. Divisional commander Guber, the chief of the fortified district, drove up, dirty and covered with splashes of paint, in an armored car.

"You'll spoil the whole of the ground here—it'll have to be fought over," he said threateningly, beckoning Luza to him. They descended a cold, narrow well. A steel door opened. They went in.

"Sit down." Guber began to telephone to the defense points, inserting with some difficulty, his huge finger into the small holes in the disc of the automatic telephone.

"Well, Chayenko?" he asked. "You're carrying on? Is the well in order? And the pulleys? I told you. Don't you worry about the concrete. I supervised it myself. Now look here,—when the Japanese cavalry arrive—let them pass."

He rang up a few more times, repeating the order to let the cavalry through to the pass and not hold them back. Then he began to explain his task to Luza. General Kada was to be allowed to reach the pass, to be kept there till daylight; then the Reds were to retire with a sudden dash, leaving the division in front of Georgievka on the forest side.

"Place them at the electric batteries, lad, at these points and those."

"But why are we going to retreat, Yegor Yegorich?" Luza objected gloomily.

"Don't you start showing me how brave you are, do as you're told," said Guber, wiping his moustache. "You can't do everything yourself, you know. Leave something for other people. In this case physics will act for you," he added briefly.

Someone rang up from a point in front of the pass. The cavalry were coming at the gallop.

"Now you've got to act, Vassili Pimenovich."

He went out, got into the armored car and drove from the pass into Georgievka, looking round and waving to the partisans.

The sky was filled with the thunder of engines, the din of battle could be heard down by the river, at Georgievka, on the pass, and beyond Olginskoye where Golikov's division stood.

"Have they broken through somewhere? Devil knows!" thought Guber as he drove to headquarters. The car drove without lights; the chauffeur had been trained to drive in the dark. In the hollow beyond the pass, Guber came upon the "Thaelmann" collective farm, where men were diligently grooming their horses, preparatory to making a flank attack.

The chairman of the collective farm was seated on the ground, leaning against a tree and smoking. Just under his head the wireless was rattling out "Hurrah, hurrah. Long live Stalin! Hurrah!"

A crowd of Red Army men were lying around a loud-speaker outside the barracks of the building battalion in front of Georgievka. They looked round and made gestures of exasperation as Guber's car was passing. It must have been Stalin speaking, but Guber had no time to stop and listen.

A battle in the air began. It had, as a matter of fact, been going on from the very beginning of the battle on earth, but was just now developing into a wide and independent operation.

That night the Red destroyers and stormers labored indefatigably. The artillery bombardment preliminary to the attack made by General Nakamura brought on the first encounter in the air. The Japanese destroyers came out first, covering their artillery airplanes and aerostats. Against them issued the Red destroyers and scouts. When Nissio's tanks, Kada's cavalry and Odzu's infantry, supported by Orisaka's guards, entered the attack, the air was filled with the new forces. They were joined by the airplanes of the tank echelons. Making a wide detour around the field of battle, the detachments of Red stormers and light bombers attacked the advancing units.

The struggle in the air flared up with new strength. The Red destroyers continued to arrive and the battle of aircraft lost contact with the earth. Hour by hour the Reds advanced further from the zone of attack into Manchuria. Over the battle appeared storm squadrons; the dawn showed them the unhappy earth with scores of thousands of people fighting upon it.

The Red stormers did not delay in the mouth of the gap, but went beyond the range of fire of the Red batteries, directing their blows on the Japanese reserves and communications, detaining transportation and destroying contacts.

The stormers passed by, wave after wave, and the sky above the fields of attack grew ever quieter, more soundless and inert. Then suddenly, from beyond the horizon, a new column of machines appeared. Difficult to detect against the background of hills and earth, it flew almost over the heads of the fighters. From somewhere high above came the drone of invisible bombers.

The traces of the night's battle in the air could be seen all around. Broken, blown-up and burnt machines were smoking like lonely bonfires. The fresh dawn-wind blew rags of parachutes along the roads. The dead bodies of Japanese and Red aviators hung from the trees into which they had fallen.

Occasionally a burning airplane would swoop down like a huge falling star, and a moment later would be heard crashing and exploding.

When Guber drove up to headquarters, it was quite light. Headquarters

consisted of six machines lying west of Georgievka, on the steep slope of a wooded hill. From here the village, the valley lying before it and the belt of frontier hills were clearly visible. Vinokurov, clothed only in his shirt and breeches, was calmly finishing his morning gymnastics. Some way off the chief of the staff, together with the chief of the intelligence service, was busy with a little wireless apparatus on a lorry. About ten telephone men were lying in a semi-circle around a telephone station, talking in muffled tones into the mouth-pieces. The assistant chief of staff was pacing outside the group. Without either rising or turning, they told him something; he listened and then, going up to the map hanging on the car, moved the arrows and symbols on it denoting the position of the units on the ground and in the air. Not a single symbol was quiet. Everything was in constant movement save the red lozenges signifying fixed defense points; these maintained a serene calm, although the blue ovals of the Japanese units moved far ahead of them. Alongside hung a map of the enemy's rear. A young commander with telephones on his ears, was thoughtfully marking in colors on this map lines of commissariat-cars, points where echelons and refuges crowded on each other, and provision bases. He seemed to be searching for future battlefields, carefully laying on brush-stroke after brush-stroke, altering the colors or wiping them out. The wireless information kept him in a state of creative tenseness.

"How are you getting on?" Vinokurov asked Guber.

"Holding out."

"Holding out, are you? You shouldn't have let Luza and his partisans ahead," Vinokurov said in a displeased tone. "I need the field for manoeuvering, and he's gone and dug himself in there and there's getting him out. How many times I've told you, how many times I impressed it upon you that there mustn't be even a single sparrow on the ground. Didn't I?"

"This is the third time he's knocked the Japs off the pass . . ." the chief of the staff began, but Vinokurov interrupted him:

"The pass, the pass indeed. . . . What does he want with that pass, when the Japanese have to get into Georgievka and the sooner the better. It's all his old partisan tricks. Wants his own way in everything."

"Tut, tut, devil take him, I warned him," said Guber, turning to the chief of the staff. "Still, he struck fear into them three times."

The other smiled and nodded.

Vinokurov passed up and down before the map upon which the staff officers were constantly shifting the flags and drawing arrows.

"So," he observed, drawing in his lips. "All very fine. Has the whole of their army been drawn into the business?"

"Yes, that's right," replied the chief of the staff. "The tank units of General Nissio during the second attack reached the Korean farmsteads. The whole of the corps-artillery entered too. The cavalry is at Georgievka. The second echelon will probably be thrown in now, too."

"Oh, that Luza!" Vinokurov sighed. "I'm thinking of him just now—oh, how well I remember him."

He paced up and down again, gazing on the ground.

"They've supplies of petrol in every tank, let them finish it. There's no hurry," said the chief of the staff, grasping at once what Vinokurov was thinking about.

At this moment a deciphered radiogram was received. Vinokurov gave a little gasp.

"The 'Pacific' plan has been carried out. The squadrons have returned from the islands. Tokio has been blown up." With one rapid sweep, the

young commander at the map drew a fat red arrow from the coast of the Maritime Provinces to Japan.

"And you were telling me," exclaimed Vinokurov, going over to the map with the measured strides of a hunter, "you were telling me that we were in a hurry," he repeated; then, turning to the chief of the intelligence, he asked in an irritated tone: "But is Nakamura's whole army in it? Are you certain?"

"The whole lot, comrade. Odzu's group is at the head, the guards' division a little to the right, the cavalry at Georgievka and the engine-mechanized division is approaching Lake Hanka. The 2nd, 17th and 42nd divisions are in Possiet. It's getting hot."

"You bet it is," said Vinokurov, approvingly. "It's bound to be hot in a job like ours, can't get on without it. So the maritime aircraft are free? M-mph. Well, then, give him (he meant Nakamura), give him Neumann's cavalry on the right side, the 9th regiment of stormers and a squadron of bombers," he concluded recklessly and turned to Guber.

"Keep the front line till midday. At midday I'll release the tanks. Let the tanks through and lead out the people from the defense points, see? From twelve noon you're in command of the first air-landing party, and commissar Shershavin—of the second. You go up into the air and occupy this and this point" (he flicked the map) "with your landing party. In case you find those partisans, you take charge of them. But best of all advise them to wait. When I finish, they'll be up to their necks in work."

"Very well, comrade commander. Starting right away."

Explosions everywhere. The earth was dashed upwards like the sea against a rocky shore. Torrents of earth streamed down unintermittently, together with broken stones; deep pits yawned, soft and hot at the bottom; the dry grass rotted. Sometimes—out of a pit sunk by an explosive shell, or out of the depths of underground burrows the corpse of a Red sniper or the head of a Red frontiersman, killed long since, was flung up. Out of the burning grass came a subterranean shriek, a bloody hand was thrust out. Then the flying earth covered all before it with its stony rain. The Japanese infantry were working with spades and bayonets, like diligent gardeners—unearthing every sniper out of his concrete burrow. It was an endless job. Whenever they managed to clear one of these burrows, they found the sniper in his gasmask, surrounded by a heap of empty cartridges. It was obviously impossible to dig them all out. The earth was living and struggling, seized with insatiable fury. (At that moment Eugenia Tarassenkova's airplane fell, far away in the east, on Japanese soil.)

Towards midday Nakamura in command of the second army reached the frontier. Odzu reported that the tank regiment had passed four lines and that ahead of it lay the same sort of fixed defenses, nests of snipers, high-explosive bombs and not a single visible human figure. Orisaka's guards and Kada's cavalry had surrounded Georgievka, but the line of underground defense still held.

With tireless fire it chopped up the commissariat cars, the division reserves and the staff moving at the tail of the shock-column.

After having passed the fortified belt, the 11th Osaka division crawled to Olginskoye. The 9th infantry, following the cavalry, surrounded Georgievka, in slow-moving, thin lines. The 7th reserves were hastily unleashed at Sanchagon under fire from the defense points.

It was a quarter to twelve on the eighth of March. Suddenly there was quiet on the front line. The defense points fell silent. The machine-guns in the hollows ceased firing. The shots of the snipers whined away.

Nakamura gave a deep sigh and, getting into a closed armored Rolls Royce, ordered the driver to make for Georgievka. "At last!" he said. "It was senseless obstinacy on their side."

The division crawling among the hills, got to its feet.

"Banzai, banzai!" came from tens of thousands of throats. The two high-roads leading to Georgievka were crowded with advancing men.

On the knolls west of Georgievka, on the bank of the Sui-feng curled reddish clouds of dust. Rising unevenly as if a light mat had been spread over their lairs, the tanks of the Reds climbed out of masked pits. With a steep bend of their flat bodies, they rushed down to face Nakamura's troops. Here and there a thorn-bush bobbed up or a tree turned over on its side, and from under it crept a smoking machine and lumbered downwards with guns barking.

The tanks—there were about two hundred of them now—thundered down into the valley, crushing the Japanese lines and combing the whole place as far as the river with their field and machine-gun fire.

Here and there the dry grass caught fire. A soundless wind swept away the smoke. The whole tangled mass rushed down to the river.

Bogdanov's units were standing in a wood east of these positions: From a distance the detachment resembled young groves scattered about the valleys. Precisely at noon Guber, the commandant of the fortified district, summoned Colonel Bogdanov to the telephone.

"Forward, Bogdanov!" he called out in a tired voice.

"Right you are!" replied Bogdanov, and, still holding the receiver to his ear, he gave the signal.

The slim trees on the backs of the tanks trembled and stirred as if in a light breeze. Flinging off his overcoat, Bogdanov jumped into the tank on the outside of the left flank. It tore ahead.

"Time for you to be going, too, Vassili Pimenovich," he called out to Luza, who was lying in front with his hunters. They had retired from the pass at daybreak. "We're behind time as it is, Vassili Pimenovich."

Before the infantry was ready to come out, there was a great commotion among the machine-gunners, the dogs and the ambulance men in canvas overalls out of the pockets of which stuck wrenches and some large and complicated instruments.

The doctor went up to Luza and said:

"The wounded will have to be picked out of the tanks like the kernels out of nuts. Devilish fiddling work."

Here on the spot, balloons with preserved blood for transfusions were being prepared.

Luza got up from the ground, brushed down his jacket and raised his binoculars.

A flood of tanks rushed in a broad, steep bow from the knoll to the dale.

The regiments hurried after the tanks. To the right of Olginskoye marched the 57th regiment, the glory of Golikov's division; from the banks of Sui-feng came the mixed detachments of the collective farms in the frontier-line, partisans and volunteers, while closer to the high-road marched the 3rd and 4th infantry divisions.

Luza gave a tug to the leg of his boot and said nothing. Then with the light stride of a hunter, he ran out of the wood.

The hunters followed him, scattering as they ran.

"Good luck and victory!" the doctor shouted after them. He dived into a shallow pit in the ground which contained a telephone.

The fourteenth Japanese division, battered in the nocturnal battle, mustered its failing strength and climbed up the Sui-feng knolls. Bogdanov's seventy tanks, rolling headlong from the crest, crashed into the lines in a quarter of an hour's time. He burst their triple line, scattered the nests of field-artillery and, without stopping for a moment, rushed on to meet the seventh reserve just then fording the river.

Bogdanov's machine was filled with a hot, stifling roar. The stinking vapor from the engine, mingling with the smoke from the guns, made the heart contract. The clatter of the armor-plating and the frightful rolling produced a singing in the ears. No power on earth could now hold back the machine in its headlong course. It seemed as if it were about to be smashed to pieces and go flying down in formless broken metal.

Suddenly the noise in the ears lessened, and a swift breath of fresh air blew into the tank. It came through a hole made by a shell. The gunner dropped down at Bogdanov's feet; they caught a glimpse of a ragged crack in the cupola of the turret, the tank boomed and grated and then, with frightful jolts, gained speed and rushed downhill. Inside it was growing lighter and cooler. The sun played on the metal. Outside the tank-walls, it seemed to be growing light.

Bogdanov opened the shield in front. It was almost cold now. The driver of the machine laughed as he clung to the wheel with bleeding hands. Bogdanov pushed him aside. The tank's only weapon now was speed, and he wanted to manage it himself. The tank lumbered along over corpses and wounded. The place did not look familiar to him.

"On, on," Bogdanov repeated, stepping on the gas. Unexpectedly as in a dream, he saw the river and the town of Sanchagon.

Then he saw a light pontoon bridge, crammed with wounded, and a trench-mortar battery on the left, by the ruins of a hut surrounded by a pile of dead bodies. "Tarassiuk's work," thought Bogdanov.

Where should he make for? The battery or the bridge?

His eyes told him—the bridge. Nearer to the bridge.

He took the three meter bank at a run and the machine crashed down with all its weight, Groaning, it reared and, breaking down the flooring and planks of the bridge, slid into the water. Bits of broken pontoons floated downstream.

The red-hot metal hissed. "We won't sink, it's shallow here," said Bogdanov. The driver who was covered with blood, turned round, nodded and pointed behind them.

A bit of the valley they had just rushed down could be glimpsed through the shell-hole. The tanks were sweeping down like a land-slide, a powerful torrent of thunderous fire.

The Japanese were retreating in disorder.

"What are we fooling about for?" said Bogdanov suddenly. Dragging the machine-gun towards him, he thrust it into the rent made by the shell and fired at the commissariat cars.

"At 'em, colonel, at 'em!" the gunner squeaked, in a feeble voice, coming to himself and moving his wounded hands. He turned to the driver.

"Still alive? So'm I." His sick eyes looked around the mutilated, blood-splashed interior of the tank.

"We'll be ploughing with this tank yet," he said, cheering himself by the thought that he would live and work yet.

Bogdanov moved away from the gap.

"That's enough," he said, rubbing his eyes. "The infantry's out. Look!"

On the knolls in front of the woods, Luza's hunters appeared, in separate groups, followed by Vinokurov's regiments.

They were running, taking cover behind piles of corpses, behind abandoned machines. They crawled out from everywhere, from camouflaged hatches, from defense points, from pits; they got to their feet, then crouched down and crept again without uttering a sound. Now, covering them, from above, the Red airplanes advanced.

Bogdanov propped the wounded gunner against the shell-gap, telling him: "You watch what's going on, lad." Then he climbed out into the cold water.

Vinokurov's regiments got within measurable distance of the Japanese guards for a last attack.

The supporting artillery was reaching deeper into the enemy's ranks.

The clash came. Here—a Japanese platoon, aided by a tank, was attacking a Red fixed defense point, defended by some infantry-men, assisted by an anti-tank gun. There—a bayonet tussle was going on. A little further—partisans were storming a Japanese tank. Hand machine-guns were rattling, there was a volley of hand-grenades, bayonets flashed.

Still further on there were men digging themselves in, crawling out, retiring and flinging themselves anew into battle. Minor battles started and spread throughout the valley, transformed by the airplane bombers and artillery into a field plowed with gigantic furrows and shellholes. The rain of dust and earth never ceased.

New forces kept pouring in from behind the hills.

Old Vassili Luza ran down to the river, overtaking Ushakov and calling to him over his shoulder. Out of a sniper's burrow the bleeding head of junior commander Isoi appeared. Chayenko crawled out, shooting as he went. Wounded Tarassiuk raised his head and waved his hand feebly: "Onward, onward!" The secretary of the Party Committee, Vallesch, in a jacket with a cartridge belt, was charging with the first men of the 57th regiment. Further on, no faces could be distinguished but people could be sensed everywhere. They crept over the corpses of frontiersmen and Japanese, leapt into shell-holes, or, tearing open the hatches of underground sniping-holes, slipped into the fire of the rapidly developing battle with shrieks that drowned the clang of metal. Old Luza crept down to the water's edge. He looked serene. He fired in a leisurely fashion, choosing his aim.

"That's it, old boy! There's a grand fellow for you!"

Behind the old man crept Ushakov, just as calm. He was a first-class sniper, and chose his aim just as deliberately. Death raged around them with demoniacal fury, but they did not notice it. Their eyes perceived only the figures of the Japanese, and the narrow slits in the tanks. They saw only their target. All the rest passed unnoticed somewhere above them.

"Ushakov will beat Luza at it, so he will," said Bogdanov. "He's a young man, he'll beat him for certain." He climbed out through the gap in the tank and crept away to do some shooting beside Luza.

The great Bolshevik infantry was on the march; it was terrifying to watch that silent force.

"The frontier battle's over," declared Bogdanov. "Now the war will begin."

Kada's cavalry still held Georgievka. Kada stood there unsteadily on a high haystack. Sometimes he caught sight of Odzu's infantry flank creeping on the left. To the right of him stretched the silent fields. Things were moving. The units that had lagged behind were just coming up.

"The village is ours," the commander of the hussars said softly to him.

The hussars had just passed through the valley between the hills. "Look, the fire is dying down in the village." (At that time Luza was retiring from the pass, leaving Kada's division before the field of electric batteries.)

"Lend a hand in this last attack," said Kada. "It's evidently your regiment that will decide the issue."

He stood, shifting from one foot to the other, on the shaking hay. The cavalry dismounted and surrounded the village; the silence of a battle ended rose with the sun.

The hussars went by at a trot. Kada saluted them silently. He watched the column descend the gully, cross the broad plowed field, dismount and creep on, then lie still. Kada shook his head. He knew how worn-out his men were, how exhausted their commanders.

"They've chosen a nice time for a nap," he said to the adjutant. "Tell the commander of the hussars to rouse the men at once. They've got one last effort to make."

The adjutant went to the telephone. There was no reply.

"A horse!" cried Kada losing patience. Half-a-dozen adjutants rushed to the horses. It was, of course, stupid to personally conduct an exhausted regiment to the attack, but the general had no choice. If the regiment went to pieces, the success of the whole battle would come to nothing.

He tore at the horse's mouth and put it at a gallop, raging inwardly and exciting himself in the face of death.

Nakamura, the general in command of the second army, drove slowly in his car to the oak-wood, from where a good view of the sector of the attack could be obtained.

The German attache, General Scheringer, asked several times for the car to be stopped so that he could look at the smoking ruins of the snipers' lairs and take photographs.

"Nothing original here," he said each time, putting his head on one side. "The apotheosis of trench-tactics, glorified into a system."

"Yes, the Russians know how to defend themselves," said Nakamura, nodding to the German general.

"Russians know how to defend themselves," the chief of staff agreed, nodding to Nakamura.

Suddenly sounds of a feeble battle were heard from the left, the sector of the guards' division.

"Can that be Orisaka?" Nakamura said, listening and wondering.

But the metallic clatter, merging into peals of thunder, came from the right; it approached rapidly from behind the fringe of oak wood, and spread along the whole horizon. It was like the sound of an earthquake—dreadful and distant, in spite of its proximity.

Nakamura ordered the driver to halt by a tree that had contrived to remain unhurt and asked the adjutant to climb the lower boughs and tell them what he could see.

"It must be Nissio's mechanized unit," Nakamura said, to quiet himself.

The adjutant, who had climbed out on a bough, jumped down and called out to them.

"A crowd moving in our direction."

And now the tumult was near enough for the separate sounds to be distinguished—the creaking of wheels, the booming of tank-engines, the cranking of caterpillars and an uninterrupted human shout.

"What can it be?" asked Nakamura. The adjutant got into the side car of a convoy motor-cycle and rushed away to the left and down to the road

upon which the van of the advancing masses could be seen. But in a moment a motor-lorry with a half-burnt body rushed up out of a gully to meet the adjutant. He turned towards it raising a hand to stop the driver.

A young officer sprang out of the driver's seat and flung back the canvas window-flaps.

"What's that?" asked the adjutant.

"It's General Kada," replied the officer. The adjutant glanced into the car and saw the huge roasted figure of the cavalry general gleaming with grease and fat. Through the burnt leg of his boot, blackened flesh could be seen. His face was unnaturally large and puffy, without eyes or nose, only some holes and swellings in place of features.

"Cause of death unknown. We came into contact with an unknown form of death," said the officer. "It was some kind of electrical gun, the engineers explained to me. It came from underground constructions that we took for hospitals."

At that moment General Odzu's car appeared, crossing the battlefield. To its tires clung blood and human hair. The commander of the group sprang out of the machine and ran in the fussy way of old people, stumbling and holding his hand to his heart, towards Nakamura.

"General, my group is returning," he called out. "I must ask you to cover me with your Manchurian special brigade."

"They're coming nearer," the German general remarked to the commander of the army, who delayed to tell the chauffeur to go back to headquarters. Nakamura nodded. The car started with a jolt.

The German attache, rising in his seat, turned round. The car kept easily ahead of the crowd though the latter moved with the speed of rickshaws.

"Mein Gott! Chinese coolies!"

"Where do you see Chinese?" Nakamura asked him in German.

"Mein Gott! There's your unknown death for you. They're Chinese."

Along the road from Georgievka to the front came the Chinese coolies. Some were on horse-back and the officers in the car could see their faces.

The car turned sharply riverwards along a dirt road. At the same moment the crowd of Chinese crossed the high road, struck on the flank of Odzu's units, which were retiring along the field, crushed them, knocked down their horses, turned the cars upside down, and shot the drivers. Some of the coolies exhibited a courage akin to effrontery. They lay down behind the machine-guns they had just captured and, at a distance of twenty paces, fired at the host of soldiers, leaped over corpses, fell, yet moved inexorably onward like a horde of locusts.

Other Chinese, dressed in Japanese overcoats flying open, rode their horses into the crowds of men in flight. Elbowing the Japanese soldiers aside fearlessly, they shot deliberately at the officers. A third lot walked about the battlefield, carefully examining, in the eyes of everyone, the guns left behind or, shading their eyes with their hands, quietly watched the conflict on the high road. The little officer driving away with Kada's body was surrounded by Chinese.

On all sides the shouts of the flying Japanese could be heard.

"Tasuke! Tasuke! Tasykete kudai!"

Dumbfounded by what was happening, Nakamura bared his teeth and kept silence.

Never yet had a field of battle presented such a terrible spectacle. The earth was mutilated, it was excavated as if in preparation for some great build-

ing project. Craters, slagbanks, trenches, shell-holes, more craters, with the traces of roads on their steep sides, ruins of defense points, roads that could only be traced by the strings of corpses crushed by the tanks.

Nakamura drove rapidly through Sanchagon to the hill used as a commanding point. Here he was awaited by General Orisaka, who had been twice wounded in the arm, Nissio-Junior in a dirty, oil-stained leather coat and the adjutant of the commander-in-chief. The commander of the army sat down at a rough little table and leaned his head on his hands. No one ventured to break the silence. Soon Odzu, the commander of the shock-troops, drove up.

"It's impossible to stop here. Which road should we retreat by?" he asked.

"My men don't seem to have enough courage to retreat," Nissio-Junior said, looking around with despair on his face.

"Retreat.... You moved slower than pack-horses," said Nakamura.

"General, I was confronted with the task of breaking through in three or four hours at the outside.... As for fuelling the cars during the battle none of us ever imagined what it would be like and what it would cost us."

"Fuelling cars.... We're not in a garage, we're on a battlefield," the commander of the army said softly.

"And last of all, we struck on that unknown form of death."

"The engines stopped?"

"Yes, General. This terrible misfortune deprived us...."

"You can tell that story of the engines to the military court... Why did some of the engines stop and not the others?"

"General, it was not I who was directing the fire, I was under it. When every wound is a mortal one, as it was in that horrible business with the electricity, no one cares about being the victor. A wounded conqueror will die in the hands of the conquered."

Nakamura raised his head and said to the adjutant of the commander-in-chief:

"Inform headquarters of the failure of the attack."

The Japanese airmen were frantic, striving to cover the retreat of the units to Sanchagon, where without waiting for orders, two or three regiments were digging themselves in.

General Odzu's shock-troops were still moving. Routed by the attack of the Red tanks, alarmed by the mutiny of the Chinese coolies and cut off from their transport bases, they retreated without any plan, or dug themselves into the ground in the positions they had occupied in the early morning.

Red airplanes bombed them unceasingly. Orisaka's guards retired in great disorder; Nissio-Junior's tank units having used up their petrol dug themselves in, turning their sector into a line of armored nests. Over the bodies of Kada's cavalry-division that carpeted the earth from the frontier to the outskirts of Georgievka, the Red tanks rolled in an uninterrupted torrent. They were supported by the airplanes.

At five o'clock in the afternoon of the eighth of March news was received that Red airplanes were destroying the Japanese rear and communications.

The Manchurian Special Brigade retreated of their own accord, taking the ambulance trains with them, to Harbin.

The front line of Nakamura's army was transferred to the rear. His army had now to turn in all directions. The front surrounded it. Nakamura's army dug itself into the earth.

Moscow Enters the War

Olga was living in Moscow, intending every day to start for home, but postponing her departure.

When, after Vladivostok, she had taken Shershavin, her husband, with her to visit her mother, the latter had received them very calmly.

"Don't be angry that I didn't tell you anything about it, it all happened so quickly. . . ."

"You did right. Talking won't help in cases like these," her mother replied.

But, when she was seeing her daughter off to the frontier zone, she said:

"Thank you, my girl, for having married a military man. Ours is a fighting family, and you and I have got to keep that up in the future, too."

From Possiet Olga went to Shershavin on the frontier and after spending two or three days with him, departed for Moscow.

On the frontier, as in Possiet, they lived in a somewhat diffident manner with each other, although they shared the same room. They kept their things in separate suit-cases, gave out their washing separately. Of their sudden marriage they hardly ever spoke, or if they did, they treated it as a joke.

Commissar Shershavin gave Olga a great many things to do for him in Moscow. She was to go to the Timiryasev Institute, to the Artists' Cooperative Store, the Central Book Store, the Writers' Union, and the Conservatory, make thousands of suggestions and begin negotiations about sending groups of actors and singers out to the Far East.

Between her husband's and Michael Simonovich's business Olga had enough to keep her busy for about four months. When she arrived in Moscow, a friend of Shershavin's gave her a little room to live in. She ran about to all the places she had been asked to visit and in the beginning replied promptly and in detail to Shershavin's questioning and her mother's anxious letters. In the midst of this rush, she discovered that she was pregnant. Quite unexpectedly, she softened and even felt rather lost. She had not intended to have a baby so soon, fearing that the child would tie her down to the home and oblige her to give up science. And so it turned out at first. Anxiety about the unborn child absorbed her. When her son was born, she willingly sacrificed the whole world to him. But to forget the Far East and all its pressing affairs was more difficult than she had expected. The things she had set going suddenly began to develop. The Artists' Cooperative Store sent out a brigade, the Academy—special seeds, the Writers' Union—some books. People arrived on leave from the frontier, bringing, together with greetings, a bulky letter from the Commissar; again the round of visits to offices and institutes began.

The letters that Shershavin sent once or twice every ten days contained a great deal that deeply concerned Olga: they spoke of landscapes, the winds, the trails in the depths of the taiga; but Shershawin wrote best and in most detail about people. "I'm sorry you don't know Ushakov," he wrote. "Every day I think less of myself and feel more stupid in comparison with this young fellow who, three years ago, had not yet seen a book. Books, books, books. Send us books. It is essential for Ushakov to study more, to work like an ox at improving himself."

He wrote of books also, criticizing those he had read, and discussing questions of art. Olga seldom answered him. She went twice from Moscow to the frontier but felt each time that she must not stay very long with her husband.

Shershavin understood her state of mind. He gave her three or four days rest, and then persuaded her to go and see her mother in Possiet or Luza.

After that he easily found a reason for another visit to Moscow and packed her off, agitated and nearly crying.

Olga was almost glad that her visits to her husband wound up like that, though she did not understand his intentions. It offended her that he sent her away so soon, although she would have found it dull and difficult with him. It wounded her to think that he could live very well without her and never complained of lonelines. His persistence in finding things for her to do in the capital irritated her. She felt as if he were turning her into an ordinary secretary. But his manner to her was simple, sincere and frank. He was very fond of his son and took a really touching amount of trouble in arranging things so that she would be comfortable in Moscow. Still, the long and short of it was that his exacting ways annoyed her. He would ask her about books she had read, the plays she had seen and it would turn out that he knew them much better than she did. "You haven't seen much," he would say curtly, changing the subject. Soon afterward, he would bring up the question of a return to Moscow. After she had left him for the third time, Olga resolved not to return. But when she attempted to clear up, once and for all, her relationship to the man who had so suddenly and unexpectedly become her husband, she realized how deeply-rooted in his life hers had become. If they ever had to part for good, it would entail splitting up everything—Ushakov, and the Possiet Works and the seeds from the Timiryasev Institute—all the rich and complex possessions, accumulated day by day, and month by month, and year by year.

Several times in the course of the last winter she had written to Shershavin to tell him that she was getting ready to leave Moscow, but he had immediately sent her a long list of urgent requests, followed by wires, containing still more requests. These delayed her departure each time. At last she grew angry and sent him a telegram:

"Shall I come back or not? Do you love me or not?"

To which he replied, "Come back."

The tone of the telegram was insulting. What did he mean? Was he patronizing her or summoning her? Oh, how she would like to throw it all up and clear out to Central Asia.

But he held her to the frontier with thousands of affairs, which it would now be dishonorable to give up, thousands of beginnings, and projects; impossible that she should not watch their progress, that she should leave them.

"I'd better go."

She got ready to go to the Far East in early spring.

February in Moscow was wintry and windy. March came in with blizzards.

On Women's Day the thermometer showed twenty degrees of frost, but in spite of this Olga decided to go out. There was to be a meeting of all the women in Moscow who had distinguished themselves in various fields of work, and members of the Polit-Buro were to be present.

At about eleven o'clock the concert was in full swing. People kept glancing up at the government box, in which they expected Stalin to appear. Olga was obliged to go, for she was dead tired after her busy day and all the running about she had had to do. Besides, she had left the child at home by himself.

As she was coming out under the pillared porch, she collided with Branitsky who was running in bareheaded from the other side of the square. He was a friend of her father's, they had been to school together.

"What's happened? Where are you coming from?" she cried, blocking the way.

"A Government dispatch has just been received, saying that the Japanese have attacked our frontier."

"Are you mad?" she exclaimed. They ran back together to the theater, climbed the stairs to the upper foyer and halted by a window looking over the square.

"It's morning there just now," said Branitsky. "They've been fighting for six hours. Do you know those parts?"

"What parts, where is it going on? I know nothing about it!"

"Ah, you're young, that's your youth again, of course, you didn't live through the Civil War. That was happiness, Olga Ovanessovna. All one's feelings, all one's actions were checked by the echo of what was going on at the front. At every step a man took he thought of what was going on there, out at the front."

"Do explain properly what's happened?" and Olga shook Branitsky by the arm.

But he did not hear her.

"Only in moments of the greatest danger does one begin to understand properly what the Soviet system really is. We were born and reared in wartime. Our life has been one unintermittent cruel war. We could get into a train and go a thousand miles away without even dropping in at home to say goodbye. We were capable of fighting for twenty years, we were warriors by historic destiny and experience of life."

"Do explain, please, I'm asking you, begging you to . . . "

But its seemed to Branitsky that he was explaining everything.

"Yes, but to us victory means," he went on, as if striving to convince Olga of something that was perfectly clear to him, "it means that we've got to wipe off the face of the earth any regime that rises against us."

"Are you going to tell me what's happened or not?"

"What's happened? Why, the Japanese are breaking through our frontier at Lake Hanka, and bombarding Vladivostok."

Everything went dark before Olga's eyes. "It's my birthplace, almost."

"It's nonsense, of course, nonsense," Branitsky muttered. "China is growing into a powerful Soviet country. Japan will be a happy country. India will get her freedom. Come!" he cried. "We've not heard anything about further developments for the last hour or two. Today we've got to keep amongst people," he said. "You're not long from the Far East, are you? Is your husband there? I suppose you'll be going back as a nurse?"

"Oh, Branitsky, it was foolish of me to come away from it," she said, blushing. "There are so few people, you know."

"Never mind, before we're conquered, all humanity will have to be cut to pieces," he declared solemnly. She said nothing.

Petrovka Street was crowded, as always on the eve of big revolutionary holidays. The news was already known. Theater Square looked like a fair. Government dispatches were announced overhead by loud-speakers.

They went up Dmitrovka, towards the Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater. The audience was just leaving, but they rushed back again because three Chinese had been found who could make speeches. The Chinese were lifted and passed over the heads of the crowd, like banners. It was impossible to talk, everyone was singing.

By side streets Olga and Branitsky made their way to Gorky Street and called in at the editorial office. Bulgarian emigrants, Polish refugees and Indian students were looking at a map and arguing about something.

The secretary, half-crazy, was screaming into the telephone.

"At ten o'clock? I can't hear. At the Ball-Bearing Works? Nine o'clock at the Ball-Bearing Works! In the Hall of Columns at one o'clock? I can't hear a thing. Talk Russian. Noch einmal! A-ah, but je ne parle pas Français, malheureusement, je suis secrétaire de rédaction, yes. Je ne pas Foreign Office, des étrangers, no no, autre telephone, yes, yes, Ringez-vous le Foreign Office, beg your pardon," she screamed manfully, getting the words mixed up.

The editorial office had received nothing from the TASS News Agency, except the Government dispatches, so Branitsky dragged Olga away to Okhotny Ryad. Here and there, in the thickest of the crowd, the banners of factory groups could be seen. An old man in a hoary leather jacket was describing the strategy of a war in the East, sketching his way with his thumb-nail on the wall of a house. Military men were greeted with ovations. "Hurrahs" pealed and thundered; music.

Then the powerful voice of the loud speaker commanded "Silence!" and all was still for a mile around. Slowly the wireless transmitted over and over again to the country the words of the Party and the Government, words that everyone knew by heart.

Some Viennese workers passed with banners. They were singing *"Der Rote Wedding."* Twenty or thirty thousand people joined in. *"Links; links; links! Der rote Wedding marschiert."* Four Frenchmen came out arm-in-arm, from the "Moscow" Hotel and in high voices sang to the words of Eugene Pottier:

C'est elle! C'est elle! C'est elle!
La Belle! La Rebelle! La vie a plein
mamelle! Elle appele!

In the "Metropole" cafe Germans and Englishmen were talking. The performance at the Mally Theater was just over and the people had come out and were standing about on the pavement, waiting.

Days like these only come once in a lifetime. Days like these are worth a whole life. In an hour or two a man can live through more than he has lived through in years.

Between the columns of the Bolshoi Theater a soprano was singing. She could not be heard, but everyone applauded and shouted "Encore." Again and again she sang her soundless song that nevertheless touched her unhearing audience to tears.

Suddenly it appeared that an accident had happened on the other side of the Central Children's Theater, and the human wall swept to the left.

"An interpreter! A German interpreter's wanted here!" came a shout from the theater. An elderly, modestly dressed woman turned pale and clapped her hands.

"Here I am! Let me pass, quick!" and, pushing her way through the crowd, she responded to the summons with the persistence of a doctor called to render first aid.

"This way! This way!" they urged her, pushing her to the theater entrance, towards a sandy-haired Bavarian who was making a speech.

"I can't bear it any longer," said Olga. "Say something, Branitsky. Speak for all of us."

But the most powerful human voice could not have been heard now by the crowd that was talking, singing and arguing in scores of thousands of voices.

A stout bearded man was recounting how he had collected books for the Red Army in 1920; a woman factory worker in blue overalls clapped him enthusiastically on the shoulder, crying "That's right, that's the honest truth!"

and interrupted him to tell of how the bourgeoisie were deprived of their surplus property, when she was a young girl.

"Have you noticed, no one mentions Japan," Branitsky remarked. "What's Japan? Everyone knows that isn't the question. It isn't merely that we're facing the first day of a war that's forced on us, but that we're proclaiming something to the whole universe. It's a question of fighting everywhere. I remember how we waited for news from Berlin in 1923. How we longed to die for those Germans, how constantly we thought of them. When their struggle came to nothing—ah—it was like a personal misfortune for each of us."

"And Vienna?"

"And Spain?" said a young sailor who had been listening to their conversation. "Our vessel was at sea, between France and Spain. The Party organizer gave us orders in the name of the Party to sleep in turns, but no one wanted to go to sleep. When we came off duty we went straight to the Red Corner to wait for news from the wireless operator. The engine room watch sent messengers up every half-hour. The captain was bawling: 'You'll be sent to court for this!' The Party organizer did the same! And we just tossed them. Tossed them up and sang at the top of our voices. For three days no one either slept or ate. Then, all of a sudden, we found out there was a hitch. If we'd been ashore, we'd have got drunk. It's beyond bearing when people lose an opportunity."

"They've been fighting for eight hours now," said Branitsky. Then with an unexpected movement, as if he had stumbled, he pushed aside the man in front of him and rushed through the crowd to the fence beyond the Central Children's Theater.

"Before we can be conquered, all humanity will have to be destroyed," he shouted. The crowd looked round.

"We've always known and never forgotten for a moment that the war would come and that it could not be put off forever. We've tried to hold back the irresistible weight until the fighters among the oppressed nations were grown up, until we could train the classes, and create the Party. How often have our hearts throbbed with happiness, when the flames of revolution swept over the world!

"We knew this hour would come! Arise earth! Your time has come! Arise, oh people! Hands off the Red Army!"

Olga wept aloud. Branitsky's incoherent speech worked on her feelings. It contained a thought shared by all, that the war the Soviet Union was forced to fight would be a struggle for a universal revolution. Branitsky was still shouting something about morale, but his voice sounded husky and nothing could be understood. But though they could not hear him, they trusted to what that lean man with the stern, angry eyes, might say further, and the five or six thousand persons expressed their entire approval of what he seemed to be saying.

"We've had a rest and that's enough," an old worker was saying. "After all, we've got to clear up this muddle sometime."

"Yes, there'll be things done now that I never even dreamed of," an elderly professor replied in the same tone.

Olga had been gradually pushed away from Branitsky, so she decided not to wait for him but to return home. It must have been about two o'clock at night. A worker's family, father, mother and three children who looked like Young Communist Leaguers, were carrying a placard bearing the words: "Let's give 200% of courage, 300% of endurance and 500% of calmness!" The orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater played the "International" unintermit-

tently. The conductor was bareheaded, and in evening dress. Raising his chilled, blue hands high above his head, he conducted with passion.

When Olga entered her room and opened the window facing the street, she heard shouts of "Stalin!"

The crowd was shouting and calling out "Stalin! Stalin! Stalin!" It was a shout of strength and honor, it sounded like "Onward!" In a moment of national exaltation the people called for their leader, and at two o'clock at night he came from the Kremlin to the Bolshoi Theater.

Olga picked up her son and ran with him in her arms to the theater. People made way for her as they always did in the tram.

"Where is he? Where is he?" she asked.

"He'll be here in a minute," she was told from every side. "There he is, there! there!"

She saw him when he was quite near. His calm figure, dressed in a plain military overcoat, and a cap with an unstiffened peak, was touchingly simple. His face was very stern. He hurried along, turning frequently to speak to the members of the Polit Buro and the Government and pointing in the direction of the crowd.

Olga could not push her way into the theater, though she wanted to badly, so she went home. There she turned on the wireless and lay down on her bed. It tormented her to think that she was here in Moscow, and not in Possiet. The days she had spent with Shershavin appeared to her now as the most vivid and entirely happy of her life.

"I've acted foolishly, in a very petty way. I shouldn't have gone away."

If he had come into the room now, how warmly she would have embraced him, how she would have pressed him to her!

Just then Stalin spoke. His words entered the frontier war, mingling with the firing and the roar of shells, waking the still slumbering collective farms in the north and making the peasant in the oases of the Amu-Daria weep for the joy of manliness.

Stalin's voice penetrated to the thick of the battle. The loud-speaker in Vassili Luza's shell-ruined house, though pierced with bullets, issued his voice. Stalin spoke to the soldiers in the underground pits, to the airmen in the sky. The wounded in the ambulance-stations were brought back to consciousness by that hearty but not loud voice. It was the voice of our country, clear and simple, and infinitely honest, the illimitably kind, fatherly, unhurried voice of Stalin.

The War at Sea

Three English correspondents, accompanied by Murusima, a Japanese professor acting as a contact man on their way to Yokohama, boarded a ship. Seishin was full of troops; the Korean port was in confusion. When they had put out to sea, a wireless message arrived from Yukhi to say that Red airplanes were bombing the port, torpedo-boats were blowing up the vessels in the roadstead, and a Red submarine had been sighted on the horizon.

The captain took a more southerly course and increased speed. At midnight they were hailed by a destroyer on guard and ordered to change their course and put into Gensan.

"Is there a naval battle on?" asked Lockes, one of the correspondents. Murusima gave a shrug of astonishment.

"Transportation of war supplies, sir, nothing more," and he added enigmatically: "Defeat is a chain of exposed secrets, just as victory is a chain of preserved secrets."

The port of Gensan was on the alert. Warships patrolled the harbor without anchoring, the sky and sea were swept by searchlights. The streets were dark but busy. The hum of voices carried from the shore to the ship.

The correspondent Nelson paced the deck for some time, watching the signals and listening to the sounds from the sea.

"This is war!" he said when he returned to the saloon.

At that moment Murusima ran in, radiant, from the captain's cabin.

"The Reds have bombed Yukki," he said, vainly trying to disguise his excitement and delight. "They've crossed the Korean frontier and bombed the port."

"You're glad?" Charles asked.

"Very. Public opinion will be for us all over the world." Murusima pressed his hand to his heart. "Gentlemen, military orders—we are to go to Shanghai."

"That's a funny sort of geography!" The correspondent Nelson shrugged his shoulders. "We are going to Japan, Mr. Murusima."

"Gentlemen, it's war-time . . . "

"If we cannot go to Japan, we'll return to Changchun."

"No, no, that is impossible at present."

It was an alarming voyage. The ship followed a zig-zag course. The second mate was on duty on the mast. At seven o'clock in the evening a destroyer hailed the steamer and held a short conversation with her by wireless, after which Murusima collected the Englishmen in the saloon.

"They've attacked us!" he cried, clenching his fist. "They've made a dastardly attack on us. They lied impudently to our faces, they said their armaments were for self-defense. Ah, if you only knew what they've been doing. Defense measures!"

"This is the situation," the captain said, interrupting him. "We're obliged to transfer you to a neutral vessel. It'll be done at once."

The Englishmen were promptly transferred to the *Tromso,* sailing under the Norwegian flag from Kamchatka to the south. Murusima did not even trouble to say goodbye to them. Out at sea, on the easterly horizon a mighty disturbance was felt. The ship's wireless intercepted every now and again conversations from a number of ships and the signals of the "flying boats."

The Japanese army was being transported across the sea at that time. An hour later the first explosion was heard far away on the horizon. Five or six others followed it. After this, the rays of the search-light swung across the sky but were immediately withdrawn, evidently by order of the commander of the Japanese army.

Half-an-hour later there were three more explosions about five miles from the *Tromso,* and the glow of the ensuing fire lit up the forms of two huge steamers lying on their sides.

The *Tromso* sailed full steam ahead for the south, and towards morning the captain decided that he was clear of the sea battlefield. Suddenly a ball of smoke rose over the horizon and distant explosions were heard. On the horizon to the left of the *Tromso's* bows, four steamers passed quickly. Above them soared airplanes. The smoke-ball proved to be a heavy vessel of old-fashioned construction; she was on fire. There was something sinister in her slow burning. Loaded life-boats streamed away from her.

The Norwegian steamed onwards without zigzagging. She had four Japanese vessels on her port at a distance of two sea miles. The sea was perfectly calm, the morning sunny; the Japanese airplanes quietly surveyed the scene, the submarine-chasers flew reassuring signals. Suddenly, there was an explosion under the last of the four ships, then under the third, a moment later—

under the second and lastly—under the stern of the leading transport. Destroyers opened fire and let down boats to rescue the drowning. Some fifteen hundred people were struggling in the sea; it was practically impossible to save them all. The Norwegian increased speed "not to get mixed up in any dirty business," particularly as the steamer carried a very limited supply of fresh water, and had no room to spare for wounded men.

The tactics of the Russians remained quite incomprehensible to the Norwegian captain. He was too glad, however, to have managed to keep clear of trouble, to spend time pondering over Bolshevist technique in sinking ships.

In the Gulf of Korea the Japanese destroyers offered to allow the steamer to enter the harbor, after having loaded the wounded on her. The Norwegian hoisted the Red Cross flag and made for Fusan. Here something quite inexplicable occurred. Fires blazed over the sea as they do over the steppe when the dry grass takes fire. The spilt oil flamed, steamers burned, hundreds of small boats filled with the wounded were wet with blood and brine.

Some foreign ships flying Red Cross flags rescued the drowning.

The *Tromso* was within sight of Fusan when for the first time she got a momentary glimpse of the terrible naval battle.

The periscopes of the Reds were seen on the horizon; Japanese airplanes and mine-layers sped swiftly to meet them. The periscopes remained stationary in the water, not one of them descended in the face of the hydro-bombers. Bombardment from above began. The explosions of depth-charges mingled with the splash of shells; it was impossible to determine the progress of the battle until the Japanese mine-layers, having decided to ram, came up against the periscopes. Immediately, the signal was given to give up the attack, in view of the fact that the periscopes were false. The enemy had set out fifty depth-charges under false periscopes and, while the Japanese were engaged with these, the Red naval airplanes attacked the transports.

While the attack on the false periscopes was going on, ten Red submarines, taking advantage of the fact that the Japanese airplanes were engaged, rose to the surface for a moment and unloaded a "mosquito" from each. The "mosquitoes" chose the convoy-ships as their targets. Then the submarines dived, and torpedoed the transports.

From Fusan and the island of Tsushima came the Japanese forces. Taking advantage of the fresh confusion, the Norwegian crossed the convoy-formation and decided to head southwards. He swore he had seen with his own eyes a Red submarine, apparently taking no part in the battle, disgorge from its interior a single-engined aerial-destroyer.

After passing the island of Tsushima, the *Tromso* quietly entered the Gulf of Korea, intending to stop at Dairen. Panic reigned in the Gulf; it infected the captain and he resolved to go to Chemulpo in the company of two British vessels.

The Japanese placed sentries on the ships and forbade their captains to put out to sea. The port was as crowded as a tramshelter during a heavy shower. Only the Chinese sailing-boats stayed fearlessly out at sea, certain that nothing could happen to them there. The men rescued by the *Tromso* explained by signs that they had witnessed the sinking of twenty-seven transports. A Japanese who spoke English said that those who had gone through this experience were no longer soldiers but invalids for life.

The Japanese had evidently embarked the troops at many ports and put out to sea in six phalanges. Twenty-four transports with convoys from Amori and Ominato steamed into one of the bays on the Soviet coast. Sixty transports with ten cruisers and seventy destroyers headed for the Korean port

of Yukki. Sixty more transports with men headed for Gensan. For the same port were headed twenty or thirty tankers and six aircraft-carriers. The Red submarine fleet, supported by the air force, blocked the Japanese squadrons in all directions.

The British sailors who had witnessed the battle near Maizuru confirmed the Norwegian captain's story of the incomprehensible Red tactics. At the close of the conversation the Norwegian himself admitted that the previous night, he had encountered one of the Red submarines in the Gulf of Chemulpo, but had not mentioned the fact to anyone for fear of the fate of his *Tromso*. He had, he alleged, hailed the Soviet officer standing on the bridge of the vessel. "Where are you intending to fight next?" To which the latter had replied, shrugging his shoulders. "This is a frontier war, sir. I don't know how things will turn out."

"I'm glad we got out of that accursed hole," said Nelson to his fellow-travelers when the *Tromso* left Chemulpo. "I'm afraid that the Russians, who are very fond of history, will want to repay Japan here and now for the loss of their ship *Variag,* in the Russo-Japanese War. I've been told that the Russians still sing a song about the sinking of this ship."

When they should have been in Dairen, it turned out that the *Tromso* was approaching Taku. The latter port received the vessel with astonishment. The local papers had not published a single word about the naval encounter with the enemy; the Englishmen were the first to bring the news.

The sea battle was now raging like a typhoon along the entire coast of Korea and Northern China, moving towards the south. Dairen and An-tung promptly refused to admit merchant vessels. Shares in the Japanese steamship lines and the South-Manchurian Railway fell, insurance companies discontinued the insuring of cargoes in the seas of China and Japan, and the price of imported goods was doubled.

"If you take the late battle as a frontier one, as it was called by that Russian submarine whom the captain of the *Tromso* spoke to"—an Englishman was saying, when he was interrupted by one of his countrymen: "A beautiful phrase—no more."

"People who have bombed the enemy's capital and created a panic in two seas have the right to make aphorisms, or appropriate other people's if it comes to that," the first replied.

The submarine which the Norwegian captain had sighted actually existed, and the remark about the frontier battle had been uttered by her mate, Vallesch. The L 91 was lying in one of the small bays of the Possiet Gulf when the vanguard of General Kurosaki's army crossed the river Tumen-Ula, and attacked the Russian fishermen round about Possiet.

The submarine prepared for further raids on the south . . . To this end she borrowed from the tanker *Pravda* (plying between Leningrad and Vladivostok under Captain Zuyev), the mate, Vallesch, and reached Shimonoseki an hour before the conclusion of the battle in the Gulf of Korea. Caravans of trawlers and mine-layers hovered at the entrance to the Interior Sea. Hospital ships and rescue vessels returned in a bevy from the straits towing smashed-up ships or trains of boats laden with wounded.

Gervasy Goziridze, the commander of the L 91, resolved to enter the Interior Sea of Japan and apply a manœuvre as yet unknown to anyone except the Soviet submarine officers. He dived under the keel of a Japanese vessel he had chosen as his guide and shelter. This was the manoeuvre that had decided, on the previous day, the fate of three encounters at sea and permitted him to sink enemy-ships within the convoy-chain.

Vallesch was on a submarine for the first time and was as fidgety as a small boy. When the port-holes turned blue and everything took on a smoky-green hue, he bit his lip. Silvery bubbles of air like mercury detached themselves from the body of the boat and rose upwards.

"Is everything shut tight?" he wondered involuntarily. Then he stopped worrying because there was no time for it. There was nothing more intense than work on a submarine during even the quietest sailing hours. Watching the horizon was a wearing business. Through the eye of the periscope the world is illimitable, the sea as hilly as extremely broken-up country, waves of moderate size look like mountain ridges, danger is visible only when straight in front.

The electro-photo appliance attached to the top of the mast signaled, it is true, the approach of ships and made it easier to decide on the course.

But at present there were too many of these signals, they kept the commander fidgety and drove Vallesch almost crazy. He had no time to mark on the map the direction of the danger, danger was all round them; he made a rapid series of dots around the pencil drawing of his L 91 on a scrap of paper.

Goziridze switched in the system of "feel." In the glazed cells that ran around the edge of the upper decks and the hull another system of photo-relays was situated. When the quantity of light falling on the submarine under water decreased to a definite minimum, the photo-relays released the signal. Thus, the vessel could determine if there was a ship above it and even determine her measurements.

Then there was the system of sound. The "ears" reported the work of the engines under water, and when transferred to buoys above transmitted fairly exactly the breathing of the steam-engines, the work of the screws and propellers, sounds of firing, music and voices.

Commander Goziridze, an enthusiast, loved to speak in toasts.

"Here's to Soviet steersmen!" he exclaimed in a low voice as the submarine was entering the Interior Sea and dived near the coast of Kure.

They lay there till dark. The submarine's "eyes" and "ears" signaled a certain liveliness among the vessels and the port tow-boats. Towards midnight it died down, or rather, receded. With great caution they decided then to send out a scout in a special hermetically sealed cylinder attached to a steel hawser.

"Now, then, here's to merchant-marine mates!" said the commander to Vallesch. "Go astern, get into the cylinder and close the lid from the inside. We'll throw you into the water on a hawser. As soon as you bob up on the surface of the water, have a look through the port-hole to see if there's anyone about, then open the lid and—here's to your gipsy eye. Understand? If you see danger—press the button three times, shut the lid and wait till we haul you in. If everything's quiet, press the button once and wait for one minute before you press again. I give you half-an-hour for everything—and here's to speed!"

The Interior Sea of Japan is the biggest harbor in the world. Day and night do not exist for this sea; only the fog brings it rest, and even in the fog it clangs and howls and glimmers with lights, because even the fog cannot deaden the life of three big islands studded with workshops, factories, docks and warehouses.

Vallesch got into the cylinder, doubled up and quickly screwed down the lid. "Hold on to the hand-rails," he heard Goziridze advising him. He groped about for them, but discovered that his hands were engaged. He was standing on them, with his legs waving above him; evidently the cylinder had

turned upside down as it was released into the water. Then, rocking violently, he was drawn slowly upwards. Before his eyes he saw the light circle of the port-hole, but he could not understand whether he was on the surface or still down below. Five minutes passed like this. Fumbling for the signal-bell, Vallesch pressed it once and risked opening the top of the cylinder. His hands got wet immediately. He felt chilly and hastily screwed down the lid. After waiting two or three minutes, he gave the signal "all serene" again and decided that now he might open the top without any fear. The water soaked into the cylinder as before, but Vallesch opened the lid and rose to his full height. The cylinder had already been on the surface for some time. A fresh wave tossed it from side to side and washed over it. Pressing his knees against the side, Vallesch raised his binoculars and examined the night on the shores of Kure. The eye of an experienced mate can not only see but also imagine. It discerns silhouettes, and vast shadows, and grasps the meaning of points of light on the masts and bridges of ships.

Tonight the sea was unusually lively after the battle at Tsushima the previous day; it boomed, shrieked, glittered. The clang of hammers against ships' sides, the creak of cranes and the chanting of the coal-carriers came from everywhere. Suddenly an alarm-signal rang out, the feeble screech of sirens carried like lightning, darkness descended over the port and the sea. A derrick still creaked, a coolie still chanted his sad song, but the silence soon crushed these last sounds of activity. Everything died down. Only high up under the stars, a patrol-plane droned.

A minute passed, then another and the jackal-howl of the sirens raised the night to its feet again. And again the coolies took up their songs and again the hammers rang against the steel of the ships.

When he had grown accustomed to the darkness, Vallesch could make out the coastline. He remembered two huge silhouettes on the right of the submarine's bows and the whitish metal squares of oil reservoirs beyond the stern. Then he screwed down the lid and slowly, emphasizing the absence of danger, gave three signals. The cylinder gave a convulsive jump, ceased to roll, and sank down.

"Here's to the mate!" he heard the cheerful voice of the commander through the lid. He started to climb out.

Without a moment's delay, the L 91 rose to the surface.

"This is a grand opportunity," said Goziridze thoughtfully after studying the field. "I'd like to sink them all but what can I do it with? You'd want ten submarines in a sea like this, and even then it wouldn't be enough. Here you want to be an expert!" he repeated, shaking his head.

But delay was out of the question.

"Guns!"

Goziridze decided on drastic measures. While bombarding the oil-tanks with artillery-fire, the submarine—keeping on the surface—would torpedo the steamer at the wharf, turn its fire on the second steamer by the wall and torpedo a massive, low shadow to the left of the bows. Then the submarine would sink, and select a guide under which to make for the Gulf of Korea.

The second shot set an oil-tank on fire. It flared up and betrayed the operation. The shores were immediately plunged in darkness. The blue-gold, sword rapiers of the searchlights crossed soundlessly on the edge of the sky. Bells chimed out on a steamer.

"Bows, fire!"

A torpedo exploded under a steamer and sent the light ship wharf lurching sideways. An alarm-buzzer boomed. Without further delay, the L 91 darted

towards a big low shadow; it was a caravan of seabarges, laden with two-wheeled carts. The L 91 went round it and rushed out into the illuminated circle of sea, a sea disturbed but not alarmed, only cheerfully active.

"Machine-guns! Here's to panic!" cried Goziridze.

The machine-guns extinguished light after light, sound after sound, movement after movement. The L 91 entered the darkness and dissolved into the shadows of the schooners, sampans and small craft, slumbering in a bevy in the middle of the gulf.

"Slow fire!"

A light trench-motor, croaking hollowly, released its treacherous bombs at the deserted decks of the barges, oil-carriers and coal-boats.

Meantime the dark shore livened up. The searchlights laid ray against ray, and the whole gulf shone with a solemn purple light. Motor-boats darted about, sail-boats raised their slumberous canvas, people shouted, torpedo-boats, flinging up torrents of water, flew like the wind, with their sharp bows quivering above the waves.

Then the L 91 dived and with her electric engines working only slightly, made for Shmonoseki Gulf. There she waited until a Japanese warship entered the gulf. Then the submarine moved cautiously under her keel till Tsushima was reached, and there rose to the height of her periscope in order to determine the situation.

The ship, under which the submarine had passed through the mine field in the gulf, was an old cruiser used for coast defense. The commander of the L 91 decided to sink her. There was a perfect calm at sea, the film-like moon was melting into the sky, the approach of sunrise could be sensed, the water gleamed like a mirror, the horizon was clear.

"Well, let's risk it," said Goziridze, lowering the periscope. He gave the command to fire torpedoes from the two tubes in the bows.

About forty seconds later there was a dull explosion.

"Let's see what's happened," said Goziridze moving the periscope and signing to Vallesch to have a look.

"What do you see?"

The Japanese cruiser's stern had dipped a little but she was still bearing herself proudly. Her turrets were preparing for a fight.

Vallesch opened his mouth to speak, but Goziridze pushed him aside. After a glance through the periscope eye he shouted.

"Down! Down! Full steam! Are you deaf or what?" he shouted at Vallesch. "Don't you value your skin? Do you shut your ears when you open your eyes?"

Vallesch stood there completely bewildered. The depth indicator, with fiendish leisureliness, showed that they were sinking.

"Couldn't you hear the submarine-chaser coming?"

"Twenty!" rang out in the bo'sun's calm tones. "We've won."

Suddenly something resembling a blunt knife passed over the plating of the hull, the metal rang, the submarine went down with a sharp jolt and Goziridze cried out, as he fell against Vallesch: "Here's to silence!" although there was not a sound in the vessel.

"Down! With all your might!" A second explosion was heard; it was feebler than the first. Then came a third, some way off. Overhead they heard the noise of the screw. It deafened them all. Vallesch thought the cruiser had flung down her anchor in their upper deck and the noise was the rattle of the anchor ropes.

But the sound had been produced by depth-charges.

In an hour's time Goziridze gave the sign to rise under the periscope. A group of steamers was heading with all speed for the Gulf of Korea, evidently hurrying to Port Arthur or Dairen.

The L 91 sank the last one, crept under the next, sank it, and, disappearing from sight, floated up near Chemulpo, where she encountered the *Tromso*.

The captain of the steamer, a tall, thin Norwegian in short, narrow trousers, shouted to them that it was out of the question to fight in that way, they must choose some definite spot and not spread themselves everywhere; otherwise it was impossible to sail the seas.

"Say something to frighten the wits out of him," Goziridze commanded. It was then that Vallesch casually informed the Norwegian that no one knew how long the frontier battles would last and where the war would begin.

"You're quite right," was Goziridze's approving comment.

After a pause, he added:

"It's going to be a hell of a war. It would be a good thing if the Japanese army could be left alone in China. Let them have it out between themselves. No?"

From here Goziridze started homewards, keeping close to the western shores of Japan.

Not far from Maizuru the wireless operator heard a lively conversation between Japanese ships but could not understand a word of it. They went more cautiously and soon observed on the horizon two transports with five mine-layers. The column was moving slowly without zig-zagging, and carrying on a lively conversation by wireless and signals. The leading mine-layer of the convoy soon turned back on her course and, increasing speed, headed for Maizuru. Another turned back behind her. The rest opened fire on the two retreating ships. The first of them did not reply, the second rapidly drew in close to the transports and for some time sailed alongside them, firing back energetically. Then quickly and silently she began to sink; evidently she was being sunk by her crew. Goziridze went to Maizuru after the first mine-layer, which was now a long way ahead. The mine-layer raced along, sending unintermittent wireless messages. She altered her course several times, and when she and the L 91 drew near at the crossing of their courses, the Japanese ship hoisted the red flag. The submarine came up to the surface and accompanied the mine-layer for a while, and when the latter flung out a smoke-curtain, the submarine, plunging below again, still continued to follow her.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

A. Lavretsky

Gorky on Socialist Realism

Gorky, the first practicing Socialist realist, was also one of its first theoreticians. His literary comments constituted a well-rounded conception of Socialist realism, a conception which repays careful study.

I

In one of Gorky's early critical articles we find a surprisingly apt remark, helpful in defining the distinction between the objective premises of the old and new forms of realism: "More and more frequently two mutually contradictory aspirations come into conflict within man—the aspiration to *be* better and the aspiration to *live* better (the author's emphasis—A. L.). It is impossible to harmonize these two inclinations under the existing muddle of life."[1] The foundation of realism in the literature of the past was precisely this "muddle," where these two aspirations conflicted with rather than complemented each other. Socialist realism develops in a social milieu where to be better is to live better, and *vice versa*. And if Gorky, over thirty-six years ago, could write such lines about the divorce of human qualities and human life under the then "existing muddle," in one of his last articles he could testify to their reconciliation in a Socialist society.

Socialist realism has its basis in man's regeneration and develops for that purpose.

Socialist realism, according to Gorky, is the confirmation of proletarian humanism. The Socialist-humanist Gorky advances far from the idyllic concept of the regeneration of man by preachments of universal love and forgiveness, a doctrine he was hostile to because it denies the necessity of the revolutionary solution and would avert the destruction of the world of violence and exploitation. He was against all attempts to "reconcile the tormentor and tormented"; he tested the genuineness of love of humanity by the presence of hatred in that love—hatred of oppression, of the social order on which the relationship of executioner and victim is founded. He did not see this love in Tolstoy, nor in any doctrine of non-resistance. For Gorky the only road to the realization of the ideal of Socialist humanism was the road of proletarian revolution, for Gorky the only foundation for the regeneration of man was the dictatorship of the proletariat. A social system which "deprived labor of joy, sealed up its creative potentialities . . . leaving neither room nor opportunity for talent to develop and flourish," is anti-human. The rule of capitalists who rob the worker spiritually as well as materially, depriving him of the knowledge of his own worth, is a denial of humanism. The humanists who seek not the destruction but the reform of capitalism confirm and strengthen the rule of the bourgeoisie which by no means "exhibits a weakening of its will to power."

Gorky never gave up his attempts to convince those who did not understand—especially the intelligentsia of the West—that only the dictatorship of the proletariat can achieve humanism.

---

[1]Maxim Gorky, *Materials and Investigations*, Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Vol. II.

All earlier forms of humanism, though they laid claims to a super-class content and origin, were subject to class limitations. Gorky's Socialist humanism, based on the class consciousness of the proletariat and on the knowledge of the truth and creative strength of that consciousness, achieves truly universal human content. Here the universal human element is specific and concrete, and is the product of the struggle for the abolition of classes, the creation of a classless society. The foundation of this humanism is an utterly different concept of man and the conditions of his life from that to be found in literature influenced by the old humanism. Socialist humanism regards man "with all possible optimism" and never foregoes the severest criticism of the conditions surrounding him.

"This view does not permit one to regard a man as a nonentity, serving someone else's pleasure; at the same time it spurs man to dissatisfaction with his work. Life will always be sufficiently bad to keep the desire in man for something better, from being extinguished." (Gorky, *Collected Works,* Vol. XXII.)

Literature with such an attitude towards man draws from and contributes to the proletarian revolution. Everything that Gorky has written on Socialist realism has this quality.

"Young people will think it funny," Gorky wrote in one of his last articles, "if an old man like me admits that he is writing now in the same mood which, at the dawn of culture, enabled people to create unfading poems and legends. Yes, I am writing in just this mood and it is very hard for me to admit that I have no words to reflect the strength of the realities that arouse happiness and pride in one's soul over the successes of the proletarian dictatorship."

A literature that is not alive with the stirring sense of the great things being accomplished cannot now be a realistic literature or fulfill its role in Socialist construction. Gorky said: "Dear Comrades: You live in an atmosphere of collective mass labor which alters the physical geography of the earth. You live in the atmosphere of an unprecedented, amazingly bold and successfully initiated struggle with nature, an atmosphere which re-educates even wreckers, enemies of the proletariat, dyed-in-the-wool property owners, socially dangerous elements; they become useful, active citizens. Perhaps the time has come for you, comrades, also to transform yourselves through mastery of your work into active collaborators with the proletariat, working with them for the emancipation and happiness of the proletariat in every country."[1]

Socialist realism, according to Gorky, is the literary instrument that serves the cause of the world proletariat, being "one of the expressions of its life work, of its striving towards self-education on the basis of that political-revolutionary ideology created by the scientific Socialism of Marx and Lenin." Socialist literature must perform the role of "midwife and gravedigger": it must help the birth of the new man and at the same time "wage pitiless and merciless war against everything that is hostile to the fundamental aim of the proletariat and capable of retarding its cultural, revolutionary, Socialist growth." It should be part of the general system of "the political education of the masses . . . the education of truth."

Gorky rejects the thesis of literature as an end in itself. In this, Gorky carries on the work of Russia's revolutionary democrats of the 1860's, who di-

[1] Unless otherwise specified quotations given here are from the Russian edition of Gorky's *On Literature.*

rected writers to the social scene as the freshest and most abundant source of literature.

"... Art never was and never could have been 'an end in itself' for itself.—In our times this is all too obvious. We have only to see its tragic loss of strength when it served the decrepit bourgeoisie; and its access of strength when it was caught up in the cultural revolutionary growth of the proletariat."

As it serves the cause of the proletarian revolution, the cause of Socialist humanism, art simultaneously learns and teaches. "The scientist studying disease-causing micro-organisms does the same sort of work as the writer who, by observing and studying reality, exposes wreckers—people who in one way or another obstruct the normal development of the social 'organism.'"

To help to create a new mankind, overcoming what is hampering to its growth, arms the artist, it sharpens his eye and broadens his range. In its social relations, art is now one of the new social organs of consciousness. According to Gorky, to educate means to revolutionize man's consciousness.

II

These ideas determine the content of Gorky's conception of Socialist realism.

Here the question of popularism[1] in art acquires special importance.

Gorky always pointed to the popular sources of art. Back in 1908 in an article entitled "The Destruction of Personality," he wrote:

"... Othello ... Hamlet ... Don Juan, all these types were created by the people prior to Shakespeare and Byron. Spanish peasants sang 'life is a dream' before Calderon wrote it; and the Moors before the Spaniards. Knighthood was ridiculed in folk tales before Cervantes, and just as bitterly and as sadly; Milton and Dante, Mickiewicz, Goethe and Schiller, soared highest when they had the wings of collective creation, when they derived inspiration from the sources of folk poetry, sources immeasurably deep, infinitely varied, strong and wise."

In the same article, Gorky observed that the great works of the past, the literature of the bourgeoisie and the nobility, reflected the "moods, feelings and thoughts of the entire Russian democracy," regardless of the writers' own political convictions.

Basing itself on these elements of popularism in the art of the past and developing on the basis of the fullest and most consistent democracy, socialist realism is a confirmation of the popularism of art—art that returns to its source. Natural relations are restored between the artist and man. Healthy popular elements in art are no longer distorted by the influence of anti-popular trends and tastes.

The idea of Socialist humanism, the only consistent humanism, precludes any national limitation of popularist art. Socialist realism assumes internationalism. Its ideas are universal; its subjects relate to all humanity. And just as proletarian internationalism finds its expression in the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R., so the literature of the Soviet Union is the first international literature in the world, expressing the ideas of proletarian internationalism

[1] The term *popularism* ('chuvstvo narodnosti', literally, 'folk spirit,') has become current in Soviet writing to indicate the tendencies or qualities or effects of a work of literature which derive from an intimate sense of the life and culture of the people.

in each of its component national literatures. Gorky emphasized this strong side of young Soviet literature. He noted with satisfaction that "even with the comparative weakness of its descriptive means," it possessed a feature "lacking in old literature; only seldom did the latter 'in passing' and episodically mention 'aliens' and 'heathen'; it regarded them condescendingly. The Tatars, the Finnish peoples of the Volga, the Turko-Finnish peoples of the Caspian steppes and other peoples with whom we lived for centuries remained completely outside the field of vision of the old literature. But even peoples with an ancient literature—the Jews, the Georgians, the Armenians —were treated, in literature, with the same stupidity and ignorance as the writers of Europe have treated and still treat us Russians. This vulgar attitude towards peoples of 'alien blood,' of other races, is almost completely lacking in our young literature and if you occasionally do encounter it you regard it as a 'slip of the pen' . . .

"This is a fact whose cultural significance cannot be exaggerated: the gist of it is that literature unites all peoples of the Soviet Union not only in its ideology, but by its active, comradely endeavor to understand man 'from within,' study and throw light upon the whole of his life, his century-old habits. In other words the young Soviet literature vigorously serves the cause of uniting all the toiling people into a single, cultural revolutionary force. This task is entirely new; its importance requires no proof and it goes without saying that the old literature did not and could not set itself such a task."

III

The difference between Socialist realism and the older realism is deepened by the fact that some of the problems that occupied the old writers vanish, and others are presented in new terms.

Soviet literature has at its disposal "completely new material . . . This is the material of a victory unprecedented in human history, the victory of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The historical import of that victory precludes the use in Soviet literature, as subjects, of the hopelessness and meaninglessness of individual life, of suffering consecrated by the harmful lie of christianity."

Literature ceases to be pessimistic, to be capable only of negation. The criticism to which the old literature subjected bourgeois-landlord society could have an objectively revolutionary meaning because of what it rejected. The revolutionary meaning of Socialist realism is affirmation of Socialist society. The optimism of Socialist realism has its logic in the fact that it "confirms existence as activity, as creation, as the fulfillment of man's potentialities, the consummation of his victory over the forces of nature."

In the light of this optimism, the so-called "eternal" subjects of literature have changed aspects for the Soviet writer—for example, nature:

"The poets of other times apostrophized the beauties and gifts of nature like land workers and land owners, like 'children of nature,' like nature's slaves, in fact. The humility and adulation were and are the notes that sounded most frequently and distinctly. Praise of nature is praise of a tyrant and its tone recalls prayers . . . the poets had never summoned man to struggle for power over nature . . ."

The changes wrought in the face of nature by man for his higher purposes and the triumph of human intellect over the elements—this is one of the subjects of Socialist realism. "Wonder over man," enthusiasm over his powers

and capacities, replace the former pious and passive contemplation of nature which, to a large extent, expresses lack of faith in man and a pessimistic attitude to social organization.

"Concurrently with this new attitude to nature another 'eternal' subject also changes—labor. In fact, its genuine self is only now disclosed, because what is now being accomplished in the Soviet Union by human labor is utterly fabulous.' "

And this is not simply because in the land of the proletarian revolution, nothing obscures the true role of labor; here for the first time the opposition of labor to creation disappears. Labor has become voluntary and this important fact alters the very nature of the treatment of labor in literature. If, formerly, labor was looked down on, was regarded as a mechanical process, something pitiable, a curse upon mankind, as *suffering,* or as subordination to another's will, now labor has re-acquired the character that naturally belongs to it. It becomes a directing and not a subordinate force, the highest interest in the life of the new man. And Socialist realism cannot fail to choose as its hero "labor, that is to say, man, who is formed by the processes of labor, and in turn organizes labor, develops it to the point where it becomes an art. We must learn to understand labor as creation."

Such a phenomenon as the Stakhanov movement is a confirmation of this demand which Gorky makes of literature.

Insufficient comprehension of the creative character of labor is one of the main reasons why Soviet literature lags behind life and has failed to create positive images. The positive hero in the U.S.S.R. is the man for whom labor has become creation, has become an art.

Labor as a theme is linked with heroism as a theme. The two formerly were regarded as incompatible. Heroism is unthinkable outside of labor and consequently outside the collective. The Soviet hero is a vivid personality but not an individualist. His heroism is social.

Such, in Gorky's conception, are the subjects and tasks of Socialist realism. They are new tasks, never previously confronting literature. They require new solutions and Gorky pointedly raises the question of method. Soviet literature still employs old methods suited to revealing the "old Adam." but not the new "Prometheus": "In all books we see . . . the man of yesterday, soiled and stained by petty sins."

IV

The old Russian literature did not conceive a genuine hero—did not know the man of action, not because he did not exist in life but because its realism was limited.

"In literature," Gorky writes, "I, first of all, naturally, looked for 'a hero,' a 'strong,' 'critically minded' individual; I found Oblomov, Rudin and others, more or less like them . . . It was hard to understand why writers pictured the intellectuals as being characterless and will-less at the very time when hundreds of intellectuals 'went to the people' and many of them landed in prison. It seemed as though literature were insulting life and impugning its value . . . Spoiling my delight in beautiful imagery and phrasing was the impression of lack of confidence in literature . . .

"This impression grew as my own experience in the world increased. I saw dozens of highly gifted, talented people around me while in literature —the 'mirror of life'—they were not reflected at all, or so dimly that I did not notice them."

Gorky's activity as a writer began in fact with a protest against uninspired realism, against its characteristic concept of the typical as the ordinary. Gorky demanded that realism be made more profound, he demanded that the typical, in keeping with the given society, also be shown in a heroic form. From his standpoint the old concept of realism was already exhausted. He wrote to Chekhov in 1900: "Do you know what you are doing? You are killing realism . . . This form has outlived its time, it's a fact! No one can go further than you have gone along these same lines, no one can write so plainly as you can of plain things. After the most insignificant of your stories everything else seems coarse, as though it had been written not with a pen but with a pole . . . Yes, you're killing realism. I'm very glad. So let it be! To hell with it! The fact is the time has come when we require the *heroic.* It is absolutely necessary for present-day literature to begin to brighten life and as soon as it begins to do so life itself will brighten, that is to say, people will live faster, more vividly." (Maxim Gorky, *Materials and Investigations,* Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Vol. II.)

These remarkable lines repudiate not realism in general but the degenerate bourgeois-landlord realism. Here the task of the new realism—the most immediate task of Russian literature—is already formulated: to write realistically about the heroic, plainly of the unusual, to write about it so seriously, so earnestly and so convincingly that people will no longer regard it as a dream incapable of fulfillment, but as a definite necessity. This is Gorky's romanticism—romanticism as a phase of realism in the higher stage of its development. Lack of "romanticism," in Gorky's sense, is the limitation of realism. The democratic literature of the *raznochintsi*[1] suffers from this limitation. For Gorky the most vivid of the images in this literature was the "nihilist" Cherevanin, created by Pomyalovsky.

"Active social and revolutionary romanticism was also foreign to the literature of the 'Commoner' intellectuals. The 'Commoner' was too absorbed in his personal fate. He lived 'between the hammer and the anvil': the hammer was the autocracy, the anvil was the 'people.' "

It is interesting to note that Gorky speaks of the literature of the "Commoner" intellectuals, but not of revolutionary democratic literature. When listing the writers and works of the 1860's, Gorky, for instance, does not mention Chernyshevsky, the author of *What is to be Done?,* strong expression of socially active romanticism.

Revolutionary democratic realism is inseparable from the revolutionary enlightenment of the 1860's. But at the time when Gorky's views were being moulded, the revolutionary enlightenment had been eclipsed by the agitation of the Narodniks[2] with which it was often identified. Gorky had a negative attitude towards the Narodniks. Perhaps this explains why he did not regard Chernyshevsky, Shchedrin, Nekrassov as realists of a new order. If the "Commoner" intellectuals could not aspire to socially active romanticism it was otherwise with the writers of the peasant revolution—those genuine forerunners of Socialist realism. The significant distinction between the synthetic realism of Shchedrin, Nekrassov, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov and the "active romanticism" of Gorky lies in the fact that the latter is free of

[1] Raznochintsi—the petty bourgeois intellectuals of the 1860's, called "Commoners" to distinguish them from the preceding intelligentsia of the nobility.

[2] Narodniks, a petty-bourgeois revolutionary group who conceived of Russia as an unalterably peasant land and therefore tried to bring about the revolution by educating the peasantry.

utopianism. "Active romanticism," based on the proletarian revolution, leaves utopian romanticism behind. This has an important significance for art. Those contradictions have been outlived which, in the past, were insurmountable even for the highest type of realism.

Thus even those writers whose ideology was not narrowed by the limitations of the old bourgeois-landlord society were unable to create the complete image of a positive hero. They could not give their ideal a realistic expression because their attitude towards the new social order remained utopian and in this sense their "romanticism," while it added sharpness and depth to their realism, nevertheless, to a large extent, contradicted it. It was Gorky's lot to see the ideal become reality, to behold the new man who created this reality, and who was self-created in the process. Thus he could not fail to place before literature this task:

"Should we not look for a way of uniting realism and romanticism with a third something, capable of presenting the heroic present in brighter colors, speaking in loftier and worthier tones?"

As we saw above, Gorky undertook this task at the very outset of his creative work; but only in Soviet conditions did the new type of realism take on clear outlines. "The third something" eliminates the contradiction which we spoke of above. When "active romanticism" ceases to be the attribute of individuals or of comparatively small groups of advanced people, when it becomes a social fact, then the gulf between romanticism and realism closes up; their synthesis, a higher stage of development, is accomplished.

The lines of Gorky which we have quoted contain another idea realizable only in the literature of the victorious proletariat. His "third something" dissolves another contradiction that baffled revolutionary democratic realism—the contradiction between the "partisan" tendency in art and its objectivity. For Socialist realism this contradiction does not exist, since in life there is no contradiction between theory and practice. The active art of Socialist realism, which serves the transformation of the world, is alien to a self-sufficient, objectivist precision. For its artistic cognition is not the collection of details that have been more or less successfully observed, independent of their relation to the tasks confronting the Socialist writer. Artistic cognition is a form of the practical activity of the class that is changing the world.

"We are interested in the accurate representation of what is," Gorky writes, "only because we require this for a more profound and clear understanding of everything that we are pledged to eradicate, and of everything which we must create."

Socialist realism, like the class that creates it, lives in the present and the future; it faces the future and reflects the present in the light of the future. This is why its first classical writer could not fail to regard the "fundamental significance of art" as "rising above reality, viewing the affairs of the present day from the heights of those splendid aims which the working class, the founder of a new mankind, has set itself."

Even before the Great Proletarian Revolution had created the objective material prerequisites for Socialist art, Gorky opposed to niggardly naturalism and the epigone realism which was little better than the former, his revolutionary concept of realism. Even then he was able to show how the perspective of the future enlarges and deepens the reach of artistic creation.

For example, in 1907 one of the realist epigones, Eisman, wrote a story about a pogrom entitled *The Bloody Flood*. The pogrom horrors were pictured with minute precision, but the story lost itself in this detail and

sounded like the product of hysteria. In Gorky's view such a work, whose subject was connected with the Revolution of 1905, could not be genuinely artistic if the author did not understand that we "are on the threshold of a *new* (Gorky's emphasis—A. L.) historic process, that we are living in the days of the creation of a new psychological type." (Maxim Gorky, *Materials and Investigations,* Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Vol. II.)

Gorky urges Eisman not to measure with the measure of the present—"the measure of blood and victims." For the artist this is a false measure. He requires another measure—the measure of the future, which is "the growth of the freedom of the spirit. It has only just begun, it is roughly expressed but it is developing and it *must* develop with increasing swiftness. And I see terror in the face of this growth in the fruitless efforts to drown it in blood, in the impotent desire to hide from life in the dark recesses of religion, and to hide one's despair before the coming justice of life in calm but beautifully awful thoughts on the inevitability of the death of every living thing."

And Gorky, measuring with the measure of the future, had a right to his opinion, had a right to utter the following words that were based on his whole life of struggle: "This gladdens me!"

Eisman's pessimism derives from the narrowness of his observation, his inability to see the future in the present.

"... There is something external in your story to which I must object... I feel that over and beyond the fact of the killing of man by man you must not only see the hand that directs the murderer but also the mortal terror of the one who, facing his own imminent doom, directs this hand."

These lines retain their full strength in our day. For contemporary revolutionary writers in the West, struggling against fascism, Socialist realism is possible only along the road indicated by Gorky.

V

Special significance for Socialist realism is acquired by the orientation towards the future in a new classless society, in the process of constant growth. Here the artist can further the process, foreseeing its subsequent course, giving people a heightened consciousness of the path they are following. New realism is the "third something" and a higher something, as compared with the old romanticism and the old realism, because it includes the future as well in its image of reality. For to it this future is not an abstract dream, but a reality created before one's eyes.

"Realism" could cope with its difficult task, said Gorky, if, when dealing with personality, the writer was conscious of the development from philistine and animal individualism to Socialism, if he portrayed man not only as he is today, but as he must be and shall be tomorrow. "This does not mean that I recommend 'inventing' man; it merely means that I recognize the writer's capacity, and I even regard it as his obligation, to 'think man through.'" And for this end, exaggeration, magnification is justifiable; it has the function of a scientific hypothesis. Art has constantly had recourse to it. "Hercules, Prometheus, Don Quixote, Faust are not the 'fruits of fantasy,' but fully legitimate and necessary poetical exaggerations of real facts." But with Gorky exaggeration is connected with the foresight of this or that phase of progressive development, which speeds this development. This foresight is characteristic of the literature of growing Socialist society which is the master of its own future.

Orientating himself on the reality of the future, Gorky never yielded to the temptations of naturalism, being aware that "the great truth of the centuries" cannot fail to appear like an exaggeration in relation to the "truth of the day." Here Gorky could refer to the great realist tradition. One of Gorky's great predecessors—Saltykov-Shchedrin—in reply to reproofs for exaggeration, pointed out that "I sought to expose that other reality which loves to hide behind commonplace facts, and is only accessible to very persistent observation." Carefully distinguishing between realism and "coarse mechanical descriptions of nature," he wrote that "in seeking to reproduce any given fact realism has no right . . . to refuse to investigate . . . its future fate"; for both the past and the future, "although concealed to the naked eye are nevertheless fully as real as the present." But under the conditions of tsarist Russia, without seeing the force that would realize the social ideal, without seeing the way to this ideal, Saltykov-Shchedrin, like other writers of the revolutionary democracy, could give only partial effect to this principle. His predictions could only apply to the decay of bourgeois-landlord society; he had no access to the "image of the future man"—"the restored human image enlightened and cleansed of the shame with which centuries of barbarous servitude had clothed him." As we have already pointed out, the conception of this image among the greatest talents of revolutionary democracy was also incomplete. A contemporary of the Great Proletarian Revolution and the Five-Year Plans, Maxim Gorky had a full right to demand that literature create this form—the creative preview of future man. Appealing to the Soviet writers, he wrote: "We must not only know two realities—the past and the present . . . we must also know a third reality—the reality of the future. I do not pronounce these words about the third reality for the sake of sounding clever—not at all. I regard them as an imperative command, like the revolutionary order of the age. We must manage to include this third reality in our activity, we must present it. Without it we will not understand what the method of Socialist realism is."

Gorky's remarks on Socialist realism belong to that small body of writings that sheds real light on the vast content of Stalin's formula. The creative experience of a proletarian writer and a trained sensibility to the requirements of his age helped Gorky to evolve a complete conception of Socialist realism. Its fundamental phases indicated by its first classic writer will always retain their significance for they faithfully reflect the features of that new reality which gave rise to Socialist realism. Gorky pointed out new qualitative features that distinguish Socialist realism from all other forms of realism. These features are: Internationalism and the broad and specific grasp of reality that this involves; the new qualitative attitude towards the so-called "eternal subjects," *i.e.,* an active creative attitude towards nature instead of the passive contemplative attitude, an attitude towards labor which views the latter not as a curse but as a force transforming the world. In the sphere of creative method it is the removal of the contradiction between realism and socially active romanticism, between tendency and objective truth; the concept of the Communist future as a reality which the writer foresees and thereby brings closer to the present.

In our brief essay we have attempted to show how Gorky organically connects all these features to form one integral conception. Undoubtedly this conception will be the point of departure for further investigation of the idea of Socialist realism.

Sergei Dinamov

Sinclair Lewis' Communists

Sinclair Lewis' novel, *It Can't Happen Here,* is representative of the failure to understand the ideology of Communists in general and their attitude towards their own country in particular.

The literary merit of Sinclair Lewis' novel is beyond question in those sections where the writer describes things that he knows and understands.

Sinclair Lewis has absorbed the best elements of Mark Twain's writings. He has acquired the sharpness which Mark Twain possessed but concealed. As distinguished from Mark Twain, he is a satirist by preference and inclination.

The coloring of Sinclair Lewis' images is not shaded, hues merging imperceptibly into each other. Each is marked off by sharp contours.

Sinclair Lewis is a realist. Does this tally with the fact that in the present novel he deals with imaginary events in American life? It does tally. Sinclair Lewis takes tendencies and transforms them into full blooded images and descriptions. These tendencies are fascist. Fascism does not exist in America as a form of government. But there do exist in America fascist organizations, groups, trends, newspapers, magazines.

The preachings of the fascist priest Coughlin call to mind the demagogy of the fascist protagonist in the book, Windrip. The activity of the Ku Klux Klan, the Black Legion and of other fascist and reactionary organizations are a counterpart of the brown terror. American political life provides hundreds of examples of forgery, blackmail, provocation, graft and corruption

Sinclair Lewis is quite right when he shows that in present day America the same lawless acts are committed as in fascist countries, although on a smaller scale and in a manner less flagrant.

He wields the weapon of his satire against good-natured folk who do not recognize fascism in the actions of reactionaries of all shades and distinctions, frequently calling themselves not fascists but democrats or republicans.

Sinclair Lewis takes these separate manifestations of fascism, describes their development and their victory, the establishment of a fascist order in America. Thus, while he remains a realist, Sinclair Lewis combines realism with fantasy, heightening the effect of the novel.

The subject of fascism is of timely importance for American literature as well. Fascism found agents among the "neo-humanists," who have been attacked by Theodore Dreiser, the *New Masses* critics, and the best representatives of the American intelligentsia. "Neo-humanism" has not developed into a broad movement; it has remained the ideology of a clique, but survives, being fostered by the social order of capitalist America.

Fascist "humanism," as a movement, is not yet a thing of the past; the advocates of this "humanism" are alive and are trying in various ways to influence literature. For example, Allen Tate's significantly titled book, *Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideals,* published last year.

With precious demagogy, Tate declares that "reaction is the most radical of programs," because reaction does not seek to go forward, but backwards, to the very roots. The entire book sighs its yearning for the old, pre-capitalist world, when people allegedly simply believed in god and knew no contradictions.

Tate touchingly describes life in the Southern states in the old days, al-

though, of course, to achieve his effect he has to paint the old South in such glowing colors that it becomes utterly fantastic (the essay "How Can an American or a Southerner, Uphold Traditions?").

This openly reactionary avowal of Tate's shows that the "humanists" are still attempting to retain their positions although the literary situation has changed sharply and not in their favor.

Sinclair Lewis strongly implies that the conviction that fascism is impossible in America (and the attendant reluctance to fight against it) is not an accidental or merely individual phenomenon. He gives scenes that prove that this is the typical conviction of the majority of Americans and that this is the very thing that furthers fascism.

In his article in the Literary Supplement to the London *Times* of Jan. 4, 1936, on book-collecting, Sinclair Lewis expresses the thought that the values of spiritual culture are incomparably higher than material values. "My father left me Milton in a leather binding," Lewis writes, "and I too prefer to leave my two boys a hundred or so books each of which is a source of delight for a hundred years; and not the wreck of a ten-year old Rolls-Royce, an out-of-date radio set or an accumulation of income receipts."

Once more attacking the apologists for private property, in the present novel, Sinclair Lewis writes with special hatred of how Windrip's men set out to destroy all cultural values, to destroy the achievements of the human mind.

But this, too, is an inheritance from bourgeois democracy. The noted American poet, Isidor Schneider, in his book, *From the Kingdom of Necessity,* (New York, 1935) observes that the ruling classes of America regard the writer as belonging to a lower class and describes how the philistine women of the rich, as the only class with the leisure and means to read new books, determine the requirements made upon the writer by the ruling class.

The Basis of the Struggle Against Fascism

The fascists carry this situation to its logical conclusion.

Who opposes Windrip?

The scene of most of the chapters is the small town of Fort Beulah, little more than a big village, with a population of scarcely more than 10,000.

Sinclair Lewis knows small town life and more than once smug small towns have been the target of his attacks (*Main Streeet, Elmer Gantry, Arrowsmith*). In such a town lives Doremus Jessup—a quiet liberal, the publisher and editor of the local paper, *Daily Informer,* the civilizing agent in this town far removed from all culture and cultural requirements. He is like a gardener trying to grow roses on bare rock. He cannot conceive that fascism is possible in democratic America.

Sinclair Lewis can be as piercing as a bullet in his use of detail. When Jessup abandons himself to day-dreams, he is interrupted by his wife's remark:

"Dormouse, would you mind driving on the right-hand side of the road—on curves anyway?"

Jessup is embodied by this remark. Life, although in the given case it was only represented by the traffic rules, is one thing, and he, with his dreams, is a thing apart.

Even in his conversations with others, when he argues that fascists may come to America, Doremus Jessup is luke-warm in his conviction and even imagines that under fascism things will be much as they were before. Here is a sample of his beguiling fantasy:

" 'Perhaps, even under fascism, the church clock will stand at ten to three,

and there will be honey still for tea,' Doremus hoped as he put on his rather dandified country tweeds."

Inertia, dislike of action, faith in the automatic strength of democracy, these are the things that restrain Jessup and his likes.

Sinclair Lewis realizes the danger of this attitude, which plays into the hands of fascism. Here Sinclair Lewis describes living phenomena, showing to the average American, who does not realize it, the full international danger of fascism.

Sinclair Lewis faithfully presents another trait of Jessup's. He is an ardent advocate of democracy. Strange as it seems to us, for this very reason he considers it his duty to attack the Communists. But Windrip, the Hearst press, all the stiflers of democracy, are also against them. This means, Jessup reasons, he is in one camp with these enemies of democracy when he attacks Communists; he sees the contradiction but cannot resolve it. Jessup does not see that the Communists, by pursuing the policy of the united People's Front, have become the bulwark of democracy; that Communism is the essential democratic doctrine. The people and democracy are inseparable entities; the Communists are the party of the people.

Jessup stands revealed as a typical middle class intellectual. He regards the Communists as a sect and not as the expressers of the genuine popular demands. Jessup is only vaguely aware of the class difference existing between bourgeois democracy and proletarian, popular democracy; he sees only the gulf in which all democracy is destroyed. He concludes that the crisis of democracy is incurable and that fascism is in fact inevitable.

Jessup belongs to those intellectuals who though they feel their bond with the people, are nevertheless suspicious of all determined and widespread popular action. But these intellectuals are nevertheless drawn into the popular front movement. What impels them to such action? Sinclair Lewis in speaking of Jessup accurately records their psychology.

"But for all cruelty and intolerance, and for the contempt of the fortunate for the unfortunate, he had not mere dislike but testy hatred."

Yet Jessup, a journalist who works like a dray-horse, and who fears "public opinion," is afraid that in the U.S.S.R. he would lose his personality and his privacy. He pictures Socialism to himself as an impersonal existence, one pair of trousers every three years, beans for dinner, the same books for all regardless of tastes, etc. This philistine bourgeois misunderstanding of Socialism is still typical of many people in the west; Sinclair Lewis gives here an accurate study of their psychology. The slaves of capitalist society, who are in no position to display their personality while their courage is confined to trifles and to their family circle (Jessup usually flaunted his "revolutionism" before breakfast), are afraid of losing an illusion: they misconceive the organic freedom that fully exists in the Soviet Union and is lacking under capitalism.

When Windrip becomes president, Jessup fights him in a very "original" fashion. He sits at home reading the classics in order to forget everything including the advent of the fascist Windrip to power.

Jessup tries the last refuge of the weak, religion. But what could religion give him when the huge shadow of Windrip, the conqueror, loomed over everything?

Iron or Lace?

As his daughter, Sissy, aptly remarks, Jessup wants to fight his enemies not with iron but with lace gloves.

With equal realism, Sinclair Lewis shows that in contemporary society it is impossible for a thinking man to stand on the sidelines. Fascism overwhelms those who imagine they can shield themselves in cozy cabins of "pure thought," "independent culture," etc. Fascism overtakes Jessup; Windrip's storm troopers, the so-called "Minute Men," lay their paws on Jessup.

Jessup's patience lasted a long time. Helplessly he watched the bloody terror of Windrip and his "Minute Men." But when the drunken secretary of education shot two harmless old scholars, and was, of course, acquitted, because presumably one of the two, a Jew, had been planning a "ritual murder," Jessup could not stand it any longer and wrote an editorial against Windrip and his regime. He was prompty put in prison.

Sinclair Lewis' merit lies in the fact that his main interest is not in those intellectuals who submissively bear the yoke of fascism, but in those who fight fascism. Relating how Jessup submitted after his prison term and the death of his son-in-law, he writes:

"Why not let the wife and family die of starvation or get out and hustle for themselves, if by no other means the world could have the chance of being freed from the most boresome, most dull, and foulest disease of having always to be a little dishonest?"

These last ironic words do Sinclair Lewis credit as a writer. There are far too many writers in America and in Europe who are ready to extol capitalism and their own disguised slavery. Furthermore, as Sinclair Lewis emphasizes in the case given, he is not interested in important writers who could survive anywhere outside of Germany or Greenland, but in the run of rank and file journalists for whom the struggle against fascism is invariably accompanied by material privations even when they manage to stay alive and keep out of jail. .

Jessup goes through all the ordeals without quailing. He becomes tempered and acquires a new spiritual endurance. Jessup has endured tortures, suffering, moral and physical privation, yet, after a brief rest again he resumes the struggle with fascism.

In the end, Jessup is transformed from a living image into a symbolic one. In Jessup, Sinclair Lewis embodies the unquenchable spirit of struggle against fascist violence. The novel ends as follows:

"His host was slapping Doremus's shoulder, muttering, 'Just had a phone call. Corpo posse out after you.'

"So Doremus rode out, saluted by the meadow larks, and onward all day, to a hidden cabin in the Northern Woods where quiet men awaited news of freedom.

"And still Doremus goes on in the red sunrise, for a Doremus Jessup can never die."

On the People of Sinclair Lewis

According to Sinclair Lewis, Jessup is the central figure of the struggle with fascism. Is this correct? Of course not. It is good that people like Jessup finally realize the necessity of fighting reaction. It is remarkable that they not only want to fight but actually do fight. The People's Front movement, that "school of banishment." as Heinrich Mann expresses it, which the best German writers are going through, the tremendous experience of the international struggle with fascism—all this shows that the intellectuals of the West are coming closer and closer to the people, that they are restoring their

lost proximity to the masses, following the example of the greatest masters of culture of the past and present. All this is true. But it is precisely the people, it is precisely the working people who are the foundation of the People's Front; without contact with the working class, without organizational ties with the working people, the intellectuals would be powerless. Sinclair Lewis does not understand this.

In writing his book he did not understand the basic factor of the anti-fascist movement. He looks down upon the people. The people must submit to the chosen intellectuals. This is the role Sinclair Lewis gives to the people in the struggle with fascism. This fatal mistake leads Sinclair Lewis to a distortion of reality, to a regression from realism.

I recall my conversation with Sinclair Lewis in 1927, when he declared with great conviction that there are no revolutionaries in America, that the American working class was thoroughly contaminated with bourgeois prejudices. Sinclair Lewis was wrong then and he is wrong now.

Sinclair Lewis and Communism

The most unpleasant thing in the book is Sinclair Lewis' complete failure to understand Communism and the Communists: he regards all Communists as dry and narrow dogmatists, weak ineffectual people with meager understanding of political realities—it is enough to point out that Pascal, who according to Sinclair Lewis is a good Communist, hails the victory of Windrip, because " . . . if the Communists had paid for it they couldn't have had anything more elegant for our purposes than the election of a pro-plutocrat, itching militarist dictator like Buzz Windrip! Look! He'll get everybody plenty dissatisfied. But they can't do anything, barehanded against the armed troops. Then he'll whoop it up for a war, and so millions of people will have arms and food rations in their hands—all ready for the revolution! Hurray for Buzz and John Prang the Baptist!' "

Jessup cannot understand that the Communists serve not Moscow but their own country, and that Moscow is not only the capital of the Soviet Union, but the symbol of mankind's emancipation from exploitation and from the violence of the old world. The nonsensical and slanderous "ideas" of the Hearst press have a firm hold on Jessup's mind and at times they induce him to deliver such tirades as the one in his conversation with the Communist Pascal: " ' . . . you Communists serve Russia. It's your Holy Land. Well—Russia has all my prayers, right after the prayers for my family and for the Chief, but what I'm interested in civilizing and protecting against its enemies isn't Russia but America. Is that so banal to say? Well, it wouldn't be banal for a Russian comrade to observe that he was for Russia! And America needs our propaganda more every day.' "

For some reason Sinclair Lewis considers that the American Communists do not love their country, that they are people without a country, that the internationalism of the American Communists brings them in conflict with their love for their country. One sound talk on "Americanism," with a real Communist, who could show Sinclair Lewis what significance the country and its history have to Communists, would enlighten him, would show that his patriotism impels the Communist to seek to free his country from the yoke of capitalism. Vulgar "cosmopolitanism" is deeply inimical to the spirit of Marxism. The "communist" who in the name of internationalism considered himself released from the duty to fight for a better life for his people

is unworthy of being called a Communist. The internationalism of Communism is a negation of cosmopolitanism and a confirmation of ardent love for one's country and one's people. This does not and cannot mean love for "one's own" capitalism, because capitalism is the enemy, capitalism keeps his people in chains.

Lenin on Love of Country

Lenin formulates the attitude of Communists toward their country in his article "On the National Pride of the Great-Russians":

"Are we enlightened Great-Russian proletarians impervious to the feeling of national pride? Certainly not. We love our language and our motherland; we, more than any other group, are working to raise *its* laboring masses (*i.e.*, nine-tenths of *its* population) to the level of intelligent democrats and Socialists. We, more than anybody, are grieved to see and feel to what violence, oppression and mockery our beautiful motherland is being subjected by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that those acts of violence met with resistance in our midst, in the midst of the Great-Russians; that *we* have given the world Radishchev, the Decembrist, the declasse revolutionaries of the 'seventies; that in 1905 the Great-Russian working class created a powerful revolutionary party of the masses . . . We are filled with national pride because of the knowledge that the Great-Russian nation, *too,* has created a revolutionary class; that it, *too,* has proven capable of giving humanity great examples of struggle for freedom and for Socialism; that its contribution is not confined solely to great pogroms, numerous scaffolds, torture chambers, great famines, and great servility before the priests, the tsars, the landowners and the capitalists.

"We are filled with national pride, and therefore we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past . . . and our slavish present, in which the same landowners, aided by the capitalists, lead us into war to stifle Poland and the Ukraine, to throttle the democratic movement in Persia and in China, to strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys, Purishkeviches that cover with shame our Great-Russian national dignity."

(*Social Democrat* No. 35, Dec. 12, 1914)

So you see, Mr. Lewis, Lenin taught us Communists to be ardent lovers of our own country. The Communists are internationalists precisely because one can really love one's country and raise it with one's love provided one loves one's country for its great ideas and people and not for its Babbits, and Elmer Gantrys. Love of one's country is love of humanity.

Sinclair Lewis likewise fails to understand that proletarian democracy is the freest and truest democracy. Let him read his compatriot, Theodore Dreiser's book, *Dreiser Looks at Russia,* written in 1928. Let him examine the wealth of material on the Stalin Constitution which has appeared in America.

Although Jessup pokes fun at the dogmatic Communists, at their dryness and so forth, when he makes up his mind to start fighting fascism, he goes to the Communists, because they "have more courage and devotion and smart strategy than anybody since the Early Christian Martyrs . . ."

Yet here too Sinclair Lewis betrays the truth. The Communists turn out to be nothing but idiots who antagonize Jessup with their first words. Sinclair Lewis passes off his ignorance of Communism and Communists as realism.

Sinclair Lewis' Letter

In his letter to me, Sinclair Lewis writes the following:

Dear Mr. Dinamov,

What I mean to say about Communism may, I think, be judged from the gallantry and integrity—and good hard sense—which I attribute to the Communist agitators in *It Can't Happen Here.*

My best greetings and believe me.

Cordially yours,

Sinclair Lewis.

We should welcome the sentiments towards Communists which the writer expresses in his letter, and voice our regret that Sinclair Lewis did not sufficiently display them in his novel. It was precisely on this account that I was compelled to write Sinclair Lewis the following letter and I hope he will not object to its publication.

Mr. SINCLAIR LEWIS
Care Doubleday Doran Company
Garden City
New York

Dear Sinclair Lewis,

I have twice read your book *It Can't Happen Here* (for the second time when I received your answer to my letter in which I asked your attitude to Communists).

I hope that you will not feel offended if I tell you my sincere opinion on that question.

I am a Communist, a member of the Party since 1919. Somehow I never noticed that Communists, as a rule, are foolish, ridiculous, cannot converse with cultured people, do not understand elementary political questions, etc.

You probably know Granville Hicks and Joseph Freeman, too. Why did you not think of such Communists when you described the activities of American Communists? I shall not speak of those whom I do not know, but I could say something of Robert Minor or Earl Browder—they in no way resemble those foolish leaders of the American Communist Party, whom you described in your book.

You have the faculty of discerning the typical in people, but in your last book the Communists are not typical at all—they are caricatures. Just realize what happened—all the Communists described in your book do not resemble Communists. Were such Communists to worm their way into the party, it would not be long before they would be expelled. Loud mouths all over the world have named themselves Communists—but they are such only in their claims—and they always keep at a safe distance from the Party.

You are a writer, whom the whole world listens to, and of course you may become angry with me for such criticism. But I beg you not to do so. I am your reader and why be angry with your readers? Permit me in that case to continue our conversation:

There are plenty of bad individuals. Some you will also find in the Communist Party. But why see only those who are accidental to Communism?

Do you remember our conversation in Moscow in 1927, you said that there are no revolutionists in America. But you have found them, have you not?

Who are they? Jessups, Trowbridges. Yes, they are heroes in the struggle against fascism. But do you really think that the whole revolutionary movement in America is limited to anti-fascist democrats? That is not true. It can't happen there.

Your book, leaving the above aside, is remarkably written. I intend to publish your book in the Russian edition of *International Literature*. But since it is being published in a country where the true Communist types are generally known, I took the liberty to shorten the book accordingly.

My best wishes to Miss Dorothy Thompson,

Yours very sincerely,

Sergei Dinamov.

In connection with this new novel of Sinclair Lewis', we must mention a letter which appeared in the magazine, *American Spectator* (April 1936) which acknowledges the novel's importance and at the same time emphasizes that "all of Babbit's cheap notions are dear to Lewis himself."

Yes, certain "notions" are still dear to Sinclair Lewis and the sooner he gets rid of them the better. In any case, his novel fully describes the barbarism and cruelty of fascism, and the writer's hatred of fascism is one thing which we fully and wholly subscribe to. As for Sinclair Lewis's mistakes, let's argue about them.

Sergei Tretyakov

The Brush is a Weapon[1]

I want the quill
to be equal
to the bayonet.
(V. Mayakovsky)

In the fighting in Spain, the propaganda poster ranks among the most effective weapons on the side of the anti-fascist forces.

We, in the Soviet Union, who remember the days of the Civil War, can remember how the poster appeared on the firing line. It made vivid to us what we were fighting for, whom we were fighting against. It summoned, ridiculed, agitated, inspired.

The poster must direct its ideas tactically, must be responsive to instant developments. Its idea must strike the center of the mass imagination, giving in a few brief words and splashes of paint, a message that can be read instantly and understood by all.

When the poster makes the beholder clench his fist, then it has found the mark; when the poster compels a distraught man to smile, then also it has been aimed true.

[1] A review of an exhibition of Spanish posters in Moscow.

Join aviation to crush fascism! *Tona*

It is impossible to make such posters sitting at an office desk.

Such a poster can never be a scrupulous copy from nature. There is no time for that.

That is why the work of the poster-maker in wartime is so different from the work of the artist in peacetime.

When we read descriptions of the poster studio directed by Marti Basso in Barcelona, we recall our Civil War days and the similar headquarters of pen and brush at the ROST[1], where Mayakovsky, the great master of poster paints and words worked, shouting out his inspirations, encouraging his comrades, filling huge sheets, and in moments of respite allowing himself only to doze off, laying his head on a log on the floor, "so as not to oversleep."

In such postermaking, it is foolish to argue: does the drawing illustrate the text or does the text explain the drawing. Drawing and text are one. Speed is an essential part of the postermaker's art. Posters received in time not only serve their purpose, but in serving their purpose, become history, live on in the future. How many images of our revolution are etched in our memories by our remembered posters!

Needless to say, without the experience of the Soviet artists, and the work of the revolutionary masters of photo-montage and the poster in other countries, the Spanish artists would not have so soon achieved the striking expressiveness characteristic of their work.

The poster of the artist Gonoi with the inscription, "Against Espionage" is very effective.

"Guardsman! Give no information, not even to your friends, your brothers, or your sweethearts."

This inscription separates the face of a pretty girl with hand cupped to her ear from a stern soldier's face with the lips pursed.

Another effective poster, unsigned, issued by the Communist Party, urges, "Guard the Rear. Strike Down the Hidden Enemies." A reaper's silhouette can be seen through a wall of grain spikes. In the foreground a coiled snake rears its flat head, signeted with a swastika. A hand aims the muzzle of a revolver against it.

Here the coloring plays a strong part, especially the green. The green hue of many

[1] Russian Telegraph Agency—(In Russian initials R.O.S.T.) Functioned during the Civil War as a news and propaganda agency.

Poverty, hunger, destruction, death. . . . that's what the fascist beast brings. *Monteon*

of the posters is unforgettable. In general the coloring is the strong point of the exhibited posters, which, whether they are the products of paint or photo-montage, are almost uniformly impressive.

The failures are few. The poster "Assassins," by Leo, is oversimplified. An airplane bomb pierces a red cross. The red cross is there by itself. There is no suggested outline of a hospital tent. It is an abstraction. It calls for undue concentration on the part of the beholder. A shred of realistic detail would have provided him with the essential associative clue. Further, the dot on the "i" in the word "Assassins" is done in the same shade of black as the bomb. The beholder is distracted by trying to read a meaning into it.

Then there are naturalist posters, pictures done with care and in detail; but the attention is dissipated by the detail; these posters are quickly forgotten.

There are also formalist posters, heavy with the traditions of cubism. Geometric structure is emphasized at the expense of meaning. This applies to a poster showing a tank bearing down on a gigantic swastika which seems made of cement.

But such posters are a minority—most are strong, terse, realistic, well proportioned work.

Leaving aside immediate pictorial effectiveness, this exhibition is interesting as political history. One even wishes that the posters were hung not by artist, but according to the stages of the struggle which brought them into existence. They not only appeal for unity, they not only condense hatred for the fascists, they give orders, they teach.

"PEASANTS! THE HARVEST IS THE REAR OF THOSE WHO FIGHT." "PEOPLE OF THE EAST (this refers to the Eastern provinces of Spain), THE SONS, MOTHERS AND WIVES OF THE HEROES OF MADRID MUST NOT PERISH FROM THE MACHINE GUNS AND BOMBS OF FASCIST AIRPLANES."

"HELP THE EVACUATION, PROVIDE COMFORTABLE SHELTERS."

"TO SUPPLY THE FRONT, RAISE THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LABOR, ORGANIZE SHOCK-BRIGADES!"

"FOR REPUBLICAN ORDER!"

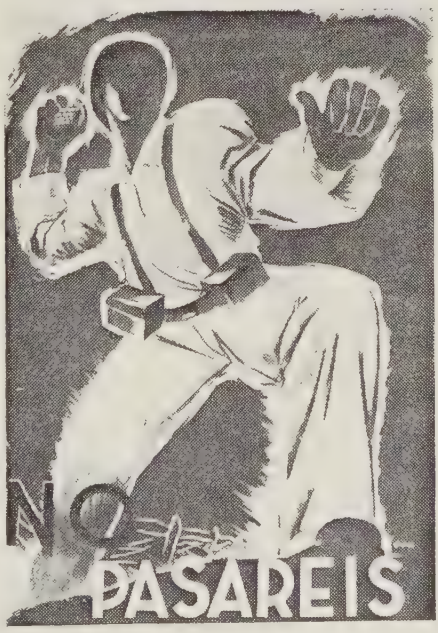
"SAFEGUARD THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROPERTY OF THE SMALL MERCHANTS AND INDUSTRIALISTS!"

"YOU KILL A COW OR A CHICKEN IN ORDER TO BE WELL FED TODAY BUT DON'T FORGET THAT THIS WILL MEAN HUNGER TOMORROW."

"ORGANIZE SPORT OUTINGS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MILITIA."

"ALL RIFLES TO THE FRONT!"

"IN THE REAR VIGILANCE; HAND



"They shall not pass!" *Jimenez*

AND BRAIN WORKING TO THEIR FULLEST CAPACITY."

From these inscriptions we see what a broad range the Spanish posters cover. Lev Kassil, the writer, has mentioned how poster work gains in political maturity, in Spain. If earlier the poster showed the Moor with a knife between his teeth attacking defenseless women, later posters show him being prodded in the back by a fascist bayonet. Nor is the subject matter limited to the immediate internal situation. The theme of the international brotherhood of anti-fascists is frequent; the tie with the Soviet Union is stressed. In Malaga, the artist Herrero made a poster with the inscription:

"NOVEMBER SEVENTH IN THE U.S.S.R.

"TODAY WE HONOR THE MEMORY OF THE HEROES WHO FELL IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION.

"IN SPITE OF INTERNATIONAL REACTION THE U.S.S.R., THE FATHERLAND OF WORKERS THE WORLD OVER, IS FULL OF MIGHT AND IS PREPARED TO RENDER THE MOST ACTIVE AID TO THE TOILERS OF THE WHOLE WORLD AND TO THE SPANISH PEOPLE.

"LONG LIVE NOVEMBER SEVENTH!

"LONG LIVE THE SOVIET UNION!"

Looking at these posters, one sees that the long, careful training of the artists has well prepared them for their revolutionary tasks. They are as rapid and accurate with paint and pen as the best marksmen on the battle line with rifle and cannon.

Two women's faces are indelible among the images of the heroic Spanish people left by the posters in this exhibition; the photograph of Dolores Ibarruri; and the inspired face of a girl raised above the slogan: "The People's Militia Needs You."

The choice of this face is in itself an inspiration of the artist, Arteche. The girl is frail arousing the men's protective instincts; she is lovely, a beautiful personification of the cause for which the men are fighting; she is energetic and commanding, and the leaderly look gives the slogans overtones of authority.

Another impression that the memory retains are the raised fists against a background of red banners. When you see them on Marti Basso's poster, you see the influence of the German revolutionary master, Johnn Hartfield, originator of the art of political photo-montage. A hand clenched in a raised fist—the Red Front salute created by John Hartfield and now the world wide gesture of salutation of the United Front—is to be seen in two-thirds of the exhibited posters. Great flexibility and resourcefulness is shown in its use, especially in combination with other symbols.

When we here look at the outstretched fist beneath the airplane squadron on the Catalonian poster we recall our famous poster, "Our Answer," which subsequently figures on the covers of match boxes. Others remind us of the raised fist combined with a design of battleship guns on the artist Renan's poster for "We From Kronstadt."

The themes of the revolution are universal.

Andor Gabor

Egon Erwin Kisch: Landing in Australia

In his new book, Kisch transcends even his own high standard. It is reportage of the highest order; and in the course of what is on the surface, an extended personal news story, there is a merciless unmasking of capitalist Australia and a clear presentation of the contending social forces.

To do full justice to Kisch's work, it is necessary to try to get clear what reportage, as a literary form, really is.

Reportage is, first of all, reporting, a representation of immediate contemporary events. It does not derive its evidence internally, produce its own premises, as is the case with fictional narrative forms; it must take them from empirical reality, from verifiable facts.

What does this mean?

When Balzac, in *Father Goriot,* describes the Vauquer *pension,* it is not necessary that in Paris, in the street named, and at the time mentioned, there should be a single *pension* exactly answering to Balzac's description. Balzac's *pension* is "true to life"; more significantly true than any *pensions* in Paris at that time, for it has all the typical features that any one *pension* actually existing might lack, but which are essential to the atmosphere of such a *pension* if the latter is to be reproduced with the highest degree of realism. A reporter in the year 1830 doing a piece about a Paris *pension* would have had to keep to the actual *pension,* saying: see for yourselves, verify if you will whether in such and such a place, at such and such a time, the things which I describe did not actually take place; and even the most improbable things would have to be accepted as accredited truth.

Further, Vautrin in the novel does not have to live out the biography of some actual criminal. The "Vautrin case" (if ever there had been such a case) would have had to keep to the terms of the documents. But Balzac's composition gives us the universal features of the criminal within the conditioning social background. For reportage to have attempted that would have called for writing outside the character, explanatory material not organically bound up with the figure of the documentary Vautrin.

It follows from this that fiction writers cannot and should not use the methods of reportage, since they would thus be depriving themselves of their greatest advantage, free composition, liberty to depart from the empirical, time-bounded, accidental instance.

Must we therefore conclude that reportage cannot rise to the level of free composition, to the sphere of art? By no means. A closer investigation shows that in great reportage, of which Egon Kisch's work is worthy to be taken as an example, the aim is not merely to reproduce a momentary reality, but rather to give an image of the world in that flash, above all, in revolutionary reportage which strives, from *per*ception, to reach through to a philosophical *con*ception of the world. This kind of reportage does not come to a stop until it has crossed the threshold of art.

Egon Erwin Kisch

Georg Lukacs in his theoretical article *Reportage or Composition* (*Linkskurve,* Berlin, July 1932) confines the sphere of reportage to political journalism. He says: "Reportage is an absolutely legitimate and indispensible form of political journalism. At its best it establishes a connection, appropriate to its special aim, between the universal and the particular, the necessary and the accidental. True reportage does not content itself with merely presenting facts. Its descriptions always show an interconnection, they disclose causes and call forth consequences (that is why dialectical materialism as its philoso-

phical base also gives reportage opportunities that it cannot have on bourgeois soil). However, the linking up of facts and their interconnections, and therefore of the particular and the universal, the individual and the typical, the accidental and the necessary, is here carried out according to a principle different from that followed in compositional writing. The fact, the individual instance in good reportage, will be presented concretely and individually, in such a way that it can be sensually experienced, *it will even sometimes be composed* (our italics). This isolated instance which is depicted, and in the last resort composed, is here, however, only an example, an illustration of the universal, more or less scientifically but at all events conceptually presented general interconnection, documented (provided with statistical foundations) and intellectually motivated..."

This is all very true, but owing to the polemical character of the investigation which had then quite rightly the aim of discouraging the use of journalist techniques in the novel—a trend of that period—the boundaries of reportage were, it seems to me, too narrowly drawn. In that formulation the bridges which lead from reportage as a form of political journalism to reportage as a form of literature had, so to speak, their sites marked out on one bank, but obliterated on the other bank. Lukacs allows for the possibility of composition, but at the same time is too inclined to throw reportage back on conceptual presentation, a tendency very little in evidence in just those great writers of reportage who have developed this form of writing into an art.

In the nature of things there is much more that is conceptually effective in reportage than in fiction. If, however, I examine John Reed or Albert Londres, or Egon Erwin Kisch closely, I find that what is conceptually presented might often quite easily be omitted, as the compositional part incorporates it; and the work affects me not as a piece of scientific or journalistic writing, but as a work of art; its effects are not in the details, but in the structural whole, though the author takes the series of individual instances as his starting point.

Even for the reporter, the principle holds that phenomenon and essence, appearance and reality do not coincide. Even for the reporter, the essence of an individual occurrence is to be sought beyond its fortuity though it can often be detected only through a complex and subtly discerned series of connections. But is the writer of fiction the only person capable of penetrating to this essence? No, it is the privilege and the responsibility also of the reporter, and especially of the revolutionary reporter. If he fails to do so, he runs the risk of setting down facts and conditions aimlessly without locating causes and tracing effects; he would be producing a lifeless image; the dynamics of the event would be disrupted; their character as elements in a process would be lost (for in every situation, taken apparently at rest, there is motion, a process at work); the past would be covered up, the future shut out; we would get a firmly frozen, unthawable present such as everyone knows is a denial of reality.

Let us take a well-known piece by Kisch from his book, *Asia Fundamentally Changed*, the piece called "Two Color Print of Tashkent." Here the new social conditions brought into being by the Lenin-Stalin national policy in the Soviet Union are drawn not from a description of the Tashkent that lies before him, as it were, as raw material, but through the tsarist past (grey tint) confronted with the Soviet present (red tint) from which, the direction of development being given, there are threads leading on into the future. From these two colors, all the colors of life are born; as they merge and refract, the whole of the reality of Tashkent, dynamic, developing, is reproduced.

To achieve this picture, which is neither scientific nor journalistic, Kisch consciously uses every literary device with the exception of "pure invention." With all these devices, it is true, he nevertheless keeps to the material before him, to the specific empirical reality. But the material is "composed"; that is to say, the author selects and sifts; he omits what is not essential to his purpose, he synthesizes, he reinforces what is thin, joins loose ends, develops; he works the action up to a climax.

Can all this be subsumed under the conception merely of "the working method" of a journalistic science? Hardly. It would be stretching that concept like a tight glove. In the first place, this procedure includes much that is outside the working methods of science; in the second place those methods which do belong to science are present here, transformed, from the quantitative into the qualitative. The method becomes a creative one. Certainly it is not a creation out of nothing; but neither is the product of any writer's imagination a creation out of nothing. If reportage has its base in the factual, in the accidental and time-bounded reality, in the final result it reaches far beyond it to the typical, the necessary, the universal.

It is important to keep out of the lyric, the short story, the novel and the drama deforming reportorial tricks, to keep out of literature misshapen and sterile hybrids (there are already poems with newspaper cuttings and statistical tables "mounted" into them); but if reportage, this comparatively new form of literature which has been fledged in the nest of journalism, is to soar to its greatest heights, we must not clip its

wings. Incidentally great reportage has long ago outgrown this nest. For example, the reportage cycles of Egon Erwin Kisch, as contained in his books on Asia and America, transcend the newspaper. They are self-contained entities and require to be presented separately in a book. Reportage cannot "replace" any form of literature any more than lyric can "replace" epic or epic replace drama, but it can be lyrical, epical and dramatic without breaking through the boundaries of its genre and can be allowed to enrich itself—and all literature—thereby.

It is no wonder that great reportage, the artistically composed account of reality is, in spite of its youth, at its last gasp under capitalism, whereas under Socialism it is flourishing. The Soviet Union has today more reporters with a great style, authors who write reportage of a high literary standard, than all the capitalist countries put together. And it is by no means an accident that the great reporters of the last decade in Europe and America have almost without exception been led by the practice of their art into the revolutionary camp. If it had not been so, it would have been practically impossible for them to come to grips as artists with the raw material of reality, for the reality with which they were faced was the hopeless decadence and putrescence of capitalism. The reporter who abandons the groundwork of capitalism, rises to artistic heights in his reportage.

The capitalist world, especially in those corners of it where it deems itself unchecked and unmolested by the forces of the opposing class, has a mad-house look. It is not the reporter, but what he reports that is "rabid." It is not his mirror that distorts; the distorted reality casts a distorted image, distorted out of all recognition by the forces raging within it. The better the writer delineates this reality, the more incredible are the convulsions and contortions of the picture that is produced.

Kisch's most difficult task, in his new book, was so to present all that happened to him in Australia, everything the actuality and factuality of which was "nailed down" in newspaper reports, photographs, pamphlets and books, in new films, in law court and parliamentary records, that it should be not only credible but also artistically effective, from the moment when the highly improbable but actual event occurred.

In the history of lotteries, it has certainly never occurred that the big money prize has been won by the person who most deserves it, by a person, let us say, who has earned it by thirty years' plodding labor. It may be justly objected: but is it possible at all to deserve and earn a lottery prize? And it is perfect correct to answer: certainly, it is possible; it may once occur, as is proved by Kisch's adventure. Objection: can one theorize about lotteries? Answer: reportage is the type of literature whose raw material is the accidental, the once-occurring; and the first prize in a lottery is the supreme instance of the accidental and once-occurring. There are extremely few such cases in literature as Kisch's voyage to Australia.

A writer who has a passion for the adventurous, whose constant subject it has been, sits by an open window, and suddenly a perfect theme flies in, although he is occupied with another theme (Kisch was working in the autumn of 1934 on another book); and the *new* is just the subject which he would never have dared dream about. If he *had* dreamt it, he could, by no artistic means whatever, have made it credible. Only in real life can a government be so stupid as to forbid just that person to land who is in a position to make the very best use of the prohibition, in his political and literary struggle. Only in real life can a two-story leap turn out so luckily as not to put an end to the adventure, and the adventurer. Only in real life can, and may, a speaker who greets one as the continuer and completer of his work, die as soon as his speech comes to an end.

Outside real life, outside the realm of crude facts, verifiable by documents, a thing of that kind could never be either "led up to" or "explained." All this is a subject only for reportage. And it comes labeled "for Egon Erwin Kisch": The subject does not *"seize"* the writer merely in the figurative, abstract sense, but in the concrete sense. The subject takes the writer by the hand, forces its way into his life, into his mental and even into his physical being; it becomes an episode in his biography; it leads him to the heights of experience.

Then Kisch, who has been seized by his subject, turns and seizes it for his own purposes. In the second half of the book, Kisch works out his subject, enabling us to see what we could not in following the story of his fight to achieve his landing in Australia. We see an episode in a bitter class war.

Australia is the youngest continent on the earth. It has a historical past of altogether 150 years. Kisch shows how this boasted workers' paradise, from the beginning, has been a paradise instead for capitalism and the bourgeoisie; how English capital, in colonizing this part of the world, has recapitulated in modern barbarity the horrors of Cortes and Pizzaro in Mexico and Peru. Each year Australian capitalism celebrates the arrival of the colonists with a national holiday, but is silent about the fact that these colonists were convicts deported from England. In 150 years, English colonial capitalism has exterminated the black Australian aboriginals, converting the stolen continent into sheep pasturage; it prevented the

immigration of new labor so that in Australia, a fertile land larger than the whole of Western Europe, the population is no greater than in Bavaria. Kisch calls Australia the "territory without people" in refutation of Hitler's demagogic tale about the "people without territory." He refutes also the fascist fraud about race. The inhabitants of Australia today, a race of men with high physical and mental endowments, are descended from people who were regarded as "subhuman." Even the great Charles Darwin wrote in his journal on Australia: "But here, at this retired farmhouse, the brightest tints on the surrounding woods could not make me forget that forty *hardened, profligate* men were ceasing from their daily labors, like the slaves from Africa, *yet without their holy claim for compassion.*" Kisch shows how the reformists of the working class movement harnessed themselves to the capitalist coach; how the highly organized trade unions barred the immigration of workers on the pretext that they were thus saving Australia from war and economic crisis.

Wages did increase for some years it is true: but tens of thousands of the best sons of the Australian working class bled during the World War in England's interests; and afterwards, during the periods of crisis, from which Australia was a worse sufferer than the other continents, owing to its isolation, hundreds of thousands were reduced to starvation and beggary. The bourgeoisie succeeded in laying the responsibility for the hard times on the shoulders of the "working class" governments. Kisch shows, however, how the activities of the young Communist Party are beginning to correct the errors of the past and to lead the workers into the path of unfalsified class war.

It would be unjust if, in our appreciation of the dramatic matter of the book, we were to forget the author's merits as a master of form. He is a master of the distribution of color and mood, of emphasis and understatement, of ironical comment, of the unexpected. It is often astonishing the way he lifts a theme from the debris of contradictory appearances and cleans, kneads and moulds it, into firm clear contours.

The way he avoids writing in the first person, in the first half of his book, is a happy contrivance, enabling him, in the most agreeable manner, to avoid any suggestion of egocentricism which would otherwise have been inevitable with such a theme. Egon Erwin Kisch is one of our best stylists. He has sentences which are heavy and knotty like clubs, and which come down with the force of clubs, and he has sentences which are slender and pointed like florets carrying out the most elegant fencing manœuvers.

Kisch, the fighter, has a carefully kept armoury and everywhere and always appears with the "shining weapons" appropriate to the occasion.

But the book suffers from a lack of balance. It is the only one of his works which has this fault. However, the fact that the first part, the story of his landing, throws the second section, the reportage on Australia into the shade, is not the fault of the author. He had no alternative in this respect as this was the order in which the events occurred. The only way he could have saved one piece of reportage from competing with the other would have been to publish them separately. Publishing conditions as they are at present, for emigrant writers, do not make this possible. On five-sixths of the globe the publisher continues to be the tenth muse, whose harsh voice is too often of more account than the sacred whispering of the other nine.

Translated by N. Goold-Verschoyle

Lev Rovinsky

Peter Pavlenko: In the East

In the concluding section of Pavlenko's *In The East,* there reappear the people of the Soviet Far East, drawn with such a loving hand by Pavlenko in the first part of the novel, a section of which was printed in our December 1936 issue; the territorial leader Michail Semenovich, the partisans Vassili Luza and Varvara Khlebnikova, Schlegel and Zverichev, Yankov and Shottman, old fighting commanders; and the creative youth who are transforming their marvelous country. Deep in the taiga under difficult conditions they build new cities and settlements, new factories, a new life. The majority of these people also figure in the second book of the novel. They are, as formerly, full of enthusiasm for their work—Yankov hears music on the construction site.

"I wake up in the morning and lie in bed and then nature awakes and enters your heart. I hear how the saws begin. How I wish I were a musician to record it. The steam saws start up. The rapidly revolving steel is excited and sings in a quavering voice. From the sound you can guess what wood it is cutting. Cedar does not give the same sound as oak; birch, if you have a good log, warbles like a nightingale ... and after the steam saws the electrical saws begin—with chords and scales, and after them the hand saws—a coarse scraping like an accompaniment; and so everything merges together and gives such a combined sound that you try to harmonize with it..."

Events in the first part of *In The East* were carried up to approximately 1936. The second part is a sight into the future. How does this future look to the author of the book? As formerly, people are engrossed in creative labor; but the storm is about to burst; and early in the spring of 193... by the will of the Japanese militarists, war suddenly becomes an actuality. It does not catch the people of the Soviet Far East napping. Engineers and workers, division commanders and lieutenants, business managers and collective farmers have not only built new cities and factories in the Far East but also what the engineer Zverichev in the first book of the novel mysteriously called "Etwas"—"Something." This "Something" is a heavy padlock on the Far Eastern border. Even the skeptically inclined partisan Luza cannot conceal his delight over the strength and power of those constructions—armor against the enemy. Armor that not only covers the ground but the very air over the Soviet territory.

Peter Pavlenko

On the night when, according to the novel, the war begins, when the air fleet of the Japanese general Sano flies forth to destroy the main Soviet air bases while land forces move on Blagoveshchensk, on the maritime district, on Lake Hanka, on Vladivostok and on the Mongolian People's Republic, the Far East woke up immediately from the Sea of Japan to the Arctic Ocean. It was rudely wakened and cities rose, settlements rose, hunters deep in the taiga awoke, fishing settlements on the remote Northern rivers rose.

And all got up—not only in the Far East but throughout the Soviet land.

A cruel and bloody war followed in the East, a war which can only end with the victory of the U.S.S.R., the victory of Socialism. Pavlenko does not embellish the war, he does not portray it as a simple military joyride for the Red Army. No. We know that war means exerting the forces of the whole country, it means blood and victims. But the strength of the Soviet state is invincible, for the people realize that they are fighting with an attacking enemy for their own happiness and that of their children, a happiness which has been attained and which no one can take away.

Pavlenko does not present the enemy as weak and faint-hearted. The war continues in the enemy's own country, in his cities and

villages and in the cities and villages of the regions he has invaded.

It goes without saying that the details of the Civil War in the enemy's camp, like all other details of the future war presented in the novel, are the author's own fancy. Pavlenko naturally knows Japan, China, and Korea less than he does his native Soviet country and the figures of the men of the People's Front are at times schematic. But the main theme of development in the novel is entirely lifelike and logical, for many thousands of Japanese workers and especially of the Chinese people, plundered by the imperialists, have stored up hatred of the imperialists. And because of this the many scenes of struggle of detachments of Japanese workers and Chinese and Manchurian partisans against the army of the Samurai have the stamp of reality.

The novel *In the East* ends with the defeat of Japanese imperialism and the victory of the People's Front in Japan. The novel ends with the chapter "The City of Sen Katayama" (the Japanese Communist leader), with the creation in the Soviet Far East of a splendid international city. In this city captured soldiers, Japanese, Manchurian and Chinese workers and peasants are born anew. Here they learn the full measure, or rather the measurelessness, of the baseness of the leaders, henchmen and spies of imperialism, spies, whose "activity" is vividly portrayed in the novel. Here, in the city of Sen Katayama people learn to love their class and their people and to hate their exploiters. Here they become the builders of a new life and the propagandists of the new, Socialist era of humanity.

In the East is one of the most significant works of fiction to appear during 1936. Among the builders, Party functionaries, frontier guards, airmen, men and women who figure in the novel, Soviet writers will easily recognize the features of their kin, their close friends, acquaintances and neighbors—builders and defenders of Socialism. Among the participants in the air raid and in the battles on land and sea, it is easy to recognize heroes of the Soviet Union, decorated submarine men, tankmen, fliers, frontiersmen, parachute jumpers, whose names thunder throughout our mighty land and whose ranks will grow fivefold, tenfold and a hundredfold when the country summons its sons and daughters to defend it.

The novel *In the East* is perhaps the first Soviet novel on the future war, while Japan, for instance, is flooded with novels (to be sure extremely trashy, and poorly patched together), where the future war is not only described but which openly sound the summons for an attack on the U.S.S.R.

There are *The Japanese-Soviet War* by Nakayama Siro, *Soviet Russia* by Sasaki Kadjuo, *How We Will Fight* by Sinsaku Hirata and dozens of others. Kadjuo's book ends with the author's plain spoken appeal:

"And so now we must destroy Soviet Russia. Only then will the broad road to the brilliant fulfillment of the historic mission placed upon us from above open before us."

And Sinsaku Hirata consoles himself with the following picture:

"And so over the dense forests, in the air above Lake Hanka an aerial battles rages such as has never been seen in Far East. It takes your breath away when you picture to yourself how the Red airplanes of the Kalinin type will fall into the lake, wrapped in flames, how our destroyers '91' will swoop down and destroy the enemy troops seeking shelter in the woods."

In the novel *In the East,* Pavlenko punctures this vainglorious dream of Japanese imperialists; it presents the power of Soviet patriotism; it is an apostrophe to the heroic people of the Soviet Far East; it displays the beauty and happiness of Soviet life.

Editor-in chief SERGEI DINAMOV