Workers of the world, unite!

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THE ARTIST AND THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

That striking Soviet film, *Deputy of the Baltic*, treats brilliantly of a very significant, complex problem of the day: the relationship of the Socialist revolution and the intelligentsia to one another.

The hero of this picture has become a favorite character of millions of cinema goers in the Old World and the New—this Professor Polezhayev, an advanced thinker and scientist who welcomes the Revolution as the bringer of the freedom and human rights he craves, and decides immediately and irrevocably to serve the cause of the people. He typifies the deep-rooted friendship of the people and the best of the intellectuals.

Who does not remember the scene where the professor speaks over the phone to Lenin? Polezhayev, as he answers questions about his work and material needs, is filled with emotion at the solicitude he senses in Lenin's tone. The head of the Soviet state, himself a great thinker, does everything to give the scientist security and opportunity to carry on his work.

And that was in the difficult days when the young Soviet Republic, ringed about by the blockade, was heroically repulsing the intervention of foreign powers.

This little episode well illustrates the care which the Socialist order has always exhibited for the welfare of its great and talented men.

The bourgeoisie very well understand the role and significance of the intelligentsia and try to make them into servants of the capitalist system. When scientific Socialism was yet at its dawn, the bourgeoisie tried to frighten intellectuals with every sort of slanderous fabrication about Socialism.

Under Socialism—so the bourgeoisie argued—the thoughts, ambitions and desires of all would be standardized, brought to a common level, suppressed. Personality and liberty would be destroyed, talent would be straitjacketed, said the pseudo-scientific spokesmen of bourgeois ideas. There would be no place for a genius, a Raphael.

This nonsense was exposed and condemned by Marx and Engels, brilliant founders of a new world outlook for mankind, in their earliest works, such as *German Ideology* and *The Communist Manifesto*. But slander is long lived. To this day the same lies, with variations old and new, are repeated by capitalist spokesmen—striking illustration of the poverty of the ideological arsenal used by the bourgeoisie in fighting against Socialism.

Refuting the falsehood that Socialism means reducing all toa a

dead level, Marx and Engels pointed out that, on the contrary, it would be a social system which would assure every budding genius, every potential Raphael, of opportunity for unlimited development of his powers. The Soviet Land in its twenty-one years of existence has afforded brilliant proof of this far-sighted prophecy.

The Land of Socialism is a country where talent comes to flower as never before. It satisfies the material and spiritual needs of its people, and of the brain workers who come from their midst, with a scope that the capitalist world has never known. This is a truth about the Soviet Union which it is becoming ever more difficult to screen from the peoples of the world.

But there are still some intellectuals whose conceptions show the influence of old prejudices, kept alive by ignorance of the Soviet Union, by lack of truthful information about it—which, indeed, is not so easy to find in the bourgeois press. Richard Aldington gives a good picture of these vacillations in his *Very Heaven*.

The hero of the book, Chris, after reading a pamphlet given him by a Communist friend about the latest achievements of the Soviet Union, declares that when the propertyless of the world learn of these things, "revolution will cease to be probable; it becomes a certainty." Yet Chris himself is not fully convinced of the truth of the impressive successes of the Land of Socialism.

The masses of the people and the intellectuals, for whom the menace of fascism is a constantly growing one, must know the truth. Of particular importance in this respect is a knowledge of what the Socialist Revolution has done for artistic talent, a knowledge of the tremendous development of gifted men of arts and letters in the U.S.S.R.

Throughout their long history, the peoples of the Soviet Union—now living in freedom and brotherly accord within the confines of the multi-national Socialist state—have produced many outstanding intellectuals. In spite of tsarism's oppression and slavery, these great men of the past fought their way to the heights of culture and won fame for themselves and their people. They, nevertheless, were solitary exceptions, like Lomonosov, upon whom destiny smiled. And even they often felt how bitter was the fate of an advanced thinker under a barbarous despotism.

And how many were the great men whom the autocracy destroyed? Simply to name the gifted people whom tsarism crushed constitutes the most terrible of indictments against the regime which the people overthrew in 1917. Pushkin, Lermontov, Shevchenko, Chernyshevsky were brought to an early end—and how many more gifted men of the people perished neglected and unknown? Even now one cannot read without deep indignation Hertzen's moving story of the terrible fate of a talented serf actress in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In our own day pages still more terrible have been added to these gloomy annals—the history of fascism's barbarous crimes. The best people of Germany, country of Goethe and Schiller, are in exile, and those who were unable, or like Ossietski did not wish to emigrate, have been tortured in the concentration camps of the twentieth century Inquisition.

In Italy, home of one of the most ancient cultures in the world, progressive intellectuals are murdered or thrown into prison. The penal islands to which the Italian fascists condemn the flower of their country have been described by the French writer, Gabriel Audisio, in his *Les Iles Cellulaires*. In Japan writers

and artists with even the slightest progressive tinge are all regarded as a source of "dangerous thoughts" and are the object of the constant witch-hunt led by the military-fascist clique.

To pass from the countries of fascism to the Land of Socialism is really to leap from the realm of horror to the realm of freedom. There is no field of intellectual endeavor here which cannot boast of many new talented people who have come to the fore in the past twenty-one years. Many of them are famous throughout the civilized world.

This development is characterized not only by the appearance of new gifted people, but also by the "rebirth" and artistic growth of the best men and women of the old culture. The people have a profound respect for intellectuals who honestly devote themselves to the people's service. The Party and the Government pay the greatest attention to the needs of workers in the cultural field; everything is done to give the sons and daughters of the people opportunity to develop their creative powers. Development of the artistic forces of the country was always one of Lenin's chief concerns. It remains to this day one of the chief concerns of Stalin.

The place occupied in our country by that great Russian writer Maxim Gorky is too well known to need mention. His memory is cherished as something sacred by the people, who call down curses on the heads of the fascist monsters of the Trotskyite-Bukharinite gang for murdering one of the greatest humanists of our times.

The works of Vladimir Mayakovsky, best poet of the Soviet epoch, are highly cherished. The people showed their affection and confidence in Alexei Tolstoy when they elected him deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. How the people, the Party and the Government regard the author of that stirring work, *Peter I*, and the novel *Grain*, was well expressed by V. M. Molotov at the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.:

"The speaker before me was the writer A. N. Tolstoy, whom everybody knows. Who does not know that he is the former *Count* Tolstoy? But now? One of the best and one of the most popular writers of the Soviet land—*Comrade* Alexei Nikolayevich Tolstoy. *(Applause.)*

"History is to blame for this. But the change has been for the better: in that we all concur, including A. N. Tolstoy himself."

How different is all this from the misconceptions of the mutual relationship between the Soviet power and the intelligentsia—misconceptions still current in bourgeois countries!

Seated in the Soviet parliament together with Alexei Tolstoy are the Ukrainian writer Alexander Korneichuk, the Georgian writer Shalva Dadiani and many other representatives of the arts, elected as deputies by the Soviet peoples.

Such pivotal cultural institutions as the famous Moscow Art Theater, whose fortieth anniversary was recently celebrated by the whole country, are accorded the greatest of care and attention. Its great regisseurs and masters of the stage, the late Konstantin Stanislavsky and his collaborator Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, were granted the highest decorations the U.S.S.R. has to bestow. What the Land of Socialism has done for the Art Theater was recalled by Nemirovich-Danchenko in a speech:

"Now we enjoy a security which has no equal in the whole world.

"When, on our trips abroad, we describe the tremendous significance which the Government devotes to the theater in our Soviet Land, they

think us regisseurs with Bolshevik leanings, who have come to boast, or else theystare in amazement. The best people of the theater abroad can only dream of such a thing. You are refused nothing; you are told: work, create; if you need more money we will provide it; don't be in a rush to stage your productions. But produce what the cultural life of the country needs. Work on the classics, cultivate your art, educate the youth. Do not consider yourself obliged to carry out a narrowly political line; above all we need your great art and the preservation of the best tendencies of your theater.

"And thus we stand firmly."[1]

This is characteristic of the solicitude shown for theaters in the Soviet Union, which number among them such outstanding ensembles as the Maly and Bolshoi in Moscow, the Academic theaters in Leningrad, the Opera and Dramatic theaters in Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, and Georgia's splendid theater at Tbilisi (Tiflis).

But it is not only the Russians, Georgians and Ukrainians—peoples with many centuries of historical and cultural development behind them—whose theatrical art is flourishing. The Party and the Government take every care for developing the art of *all* the peoples of the U.S.S.R., no matter how oppressed and backward they may have been under tsarism, so that in the shortest possible period their art may reach the level of peoples who did not experience such national oppression.

One manifestation of the friendship of the Soviet peoples is to be seen in the festivals of national art which are held regularly in Moscow; among them have been the Ukrainian, Kazakh, Georgian and Uzbek festivals, at which the capital has learned from the creative achievements of the national theaters, while the latter in turn have carried back valuable impressions. Other instances of cultural interchange are the acceptance of the opera *Kyor-Ogly* by the Azerbaijan composer Uzeir Gajibekov for production at the Bolshoi Theater, Moscow, and of *Abesalom and Eteri*, Georgian opera by Paliashvili, for the same theater.

In order to understand why so many talented young people are coming to the fore, one has but to consider the methods by which they are trained.

"Our young artists know nothing of the difficulties which are such a heavy burden upon the youth in capitalist countries," writes Professor Henry Neuhaus of the Moscow Conservatory. "We are assured that not a single genuine artistic talent will go to waste. The best students are given the best teachers. From the pedagogue's point of view, in the U.S.S.R., as distinguished from capitalist countries, teachers are not forced to devote their energy to education of the mediocre and talentless for the sake of money."

Gifted young people of our country have already won world recognition in a number of fields of art. It is not so many months since Hillels and Fliere created a sensation by their success at the Brussels piano contest, while David Oistrakh and young Busya Goldstein are famous violinists.

Among the young Soviet composers whose renown has spread far and wide are Dzerzhinsky, author of the operas *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Soil Upturned*, based on Sholokhov's novels of the same name; Shostakovich, whose latest work is his splendid Fifth Symphony; Dunayevsky and Pokrass, authors of popular songs sung not only in the U.S.S.R. but far beyond its borders. And this is far from a com-

[1] *On the Production of Gorky's* Yegor Bulychev, 1934.

plete list of the outstanding young musicians of the Soviet Union. The recent contest of orchestra conductors, held in Moscow, was a phenomenon without precedent in the history of music and speaks for the high level of art in the Soviet Union.

A similar picture is to be seen in other fields of artistic endeavor in this country. Millions of visitors to the Paris International Exhibition in 1937 admired the majestic monument which graced the Soviet pavilion. This statue of a young man and woman, holding aloft the crossed hammer and sickle, was the work of Vera Mukhina, Soviet sculptress.

Tremendous success attended the appearance in Paris during the exhibition of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble under Professor Alexandrov. This group, almost all of whose talented members are young, later visited Czechoslovakia and has been invited to New York for the 1939 fair.

That many splendid actors, especially the younger ones, are still little known abroad, can be explained by the obvious difficulties of acquainting the great mass of foreign audiences with the Soviet theater. Its achievements, however, are well known and appreciated by the foreign guests who have been present at a number of theater festivals here.

In these festivals a whole galaxy of younger actors vied for attention with such veteran masters of the stage as Moskvin, Kachalov, the late Blumenthal-Tamarina, Ostuzhev and Pashennaya.

The cinema, with its ability to transcend geographical frontiers and reach the spectator in many countries, has brought fame to not a few young actors. Babochkin, creator of the role of Chapayev; Cherkasov, who played the professor in *Deputy of the Baltic;* and Tarasova, who was Catherine in the film version of *Peter I* are among the considerable number who have gained a high place in the roll of great actors of the world.

The U.S.S.R. has fostered the development of many masterly young regisseurs. It is worth noting, by the way, that the world renown of the Soviet cinema was achieved exclusively by men of the post-revolutionary generation. Eisenstein for his *Armored Cruiser Potemkin*, the Vasilyevs for *Chapayev*, M. Romm for *Lenin in October*, Dzigan with *We of Kronstadt*, Zarkhi and Heifets with *Deputy of the Baltic* and many others are known in every land where Soviet films are shown.

Similarly the cinema has helped popularize the works of a number of young Soviet poets who write song lyrics for screen productions. Lebedev-Kumach, for example, has been translated into many languages. What greater joy could a poet have, indeed, than the knowledge that his works are beloved even in foreign lands, that they inspire people with courage and strength in the struggle for freedom?

Fadeyev, Soviet writer, who visited Czechoslovakia last summer, tells how pleasantly surprised he was to learn that many Soviet songs, especially those of Lebedev-Kumach, had been adopted as popular songs by the Czechoslovak people.

A number of Soviet writers are widely known abroad. Among them are Sholokhov, Fadeyev, Vsevolod Ivanov, Katayev, Vishnevsky, and Pogodin.

Soviet writers' works are issued here in editions of tens of thousands. Paper production would have to be increased many times to satisfy the demand for books. As a rule an edition of 50,000 lasts no more than a few days, and that for Moscow alone. The classics of world literature are sold by the million in the U.S.S.R.

Gifted young writers are given every encouragement to develop. Readers of our magazine will recognize the name of Nikolai Virta, whose *Loneliness* has been published in an English translation, and that of Yuri Krimov, whose *Tanker Derbent* is appearing in our pages.

The Union of Soviet Writers in recent months has accepted a considerable number of talented young colleagues, among them Yelena Blaginina, a woman writer whose works find a worthy place in that literature for children where the names of Chukovsky, Marshak and Barto loom so large.

At the same time the writers' organization has taken into membership, as fully worthy of the name of creators of literature, a number of those traditional tellers of folk tales who have long been popular among the people. In tsarist Russia the creative talent of folk bards received no recognition, but the Soviet Union accords it the highest honor. The Soviet people are convinced, and they are supported in this by the greatest artists of all times, that true art is firmly rooted in the creative powers of the people; and art of the people is true art of a very high order. Gorky called Suleiman Stalsky, popular folk singer of Daghestan, the Homer of the twentieth century; and the venerable Kazakh poet, Jamboul, is perhaps no less gifted.

The growth of amateur art circles in the U.S.S.R., in which literally hundreds of thousands develop their talents for literature, music, dancing, painting and other arts, forcibly recalls the words of Marx and Engels to the effect that "in Communist society there are no painters, there are people who among other things are occupied in painting." They had in mind the all-round development of the individual.

The necessary premises for such development have been achieved in the Soviet Union. The young writer Krymov is not giving up his profession of engineering, but is able to combine it with the creative work of a writer. The talented dancers who enjoyed such success at the London international folk dance festival in 1935 continue to work in their factories and collective farms. The seven-hour working day here, the absence of unemployment and the complete lack of anxiety over the morrow allow people, while continuing to work at their specialties, to devote their leisure time to developing their artistic abilities.

The number of workers in the arts is rapidly growing in the national republics, where before the Revolution the people lived under the double yoke of the native bourgeoisie and tsarism. Film director Chiaureli and the screen actress Nata Vachnadze have won recognition far beyond their native Georgia, just as the fame of the Belorussian poet Yanka Kupala, the Ukrainian playwright Korneichuk, the Ukrainian film director Dovzhenko, and the Armenian film director Bek Nazarov have spread throughout the Soviet Union.

The Soviet intelligentsia has no interests that differ from the interests of the people. Workers in the arts are patriots ardently devoted to their Socialist fatherland. Professor Alexandrov speaks of the happiness it afforded the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble to be doing its part "on the cultural front" in the Far East at the time of the fighting near Lake Hassan. These Soviet musicians were inspired by their meeting with the heroes of the Red Army to create new dance and music compositions.

In his famous conversation with Clara Zetkin, Lenin outlined the development of art in the Soviet Union. He touched on the tasks of Soviet intellectuals:

"... Our workers and peasants are deserving of something more than circuses. They have gained the right to true, great art. For that reason we are first of all introducing the broadest popular education and training. It will lay the basis for culture, of course on condition that the question of bread be solved. On this basis a truly new, great, Communist art should grow up, which will create a form corresponding to its content. By understanding and fulfilling those tasks they would pay their debt to the proletarian revolution for opening wide to them, too, the door that leads to the wide expanses from the mean conditions of life so incomparably characterised in the *Communist Manifesto*." (*Recollections of Lenin* by Clara Zetkin.)

The time which Lenin had in mind has already come. Having solved the question of bread, the Socialist Revolution is now able to solve all other questions and to insure the most favorable conditions for the development of the new, Communist art. Workers in the arts are already beginning to repay their debt to the Proletarian Revolution and their contribution to the culture of the Soviet people will undoubtedly grow year by year. Is it any wonder that the intellectuals are so highly esteemed in this country? Quite naturally, *the people, the Party and the Government consider our Soviet intellectuals the salt of the earth.*

In tsarist Russia, to be one of the advanced intellectuals always meant to be in opposition to the autocratic government. And in the capitalist countries today, too, progressive thinkers and bearers of culture are usually in opposition to the rulers of the land, whose interests are not the interests of the people.

This is again evidenced by recent events. Leading writers and intellectuals were opposed to the policy of encouraging the aggressor which was pursued by the governments of England and France. No honest intellectual could take any other attitude to such a policy.

For in the capitalist world it is not the people who rule, and affairs of state are by no means decided in their interests. This is now admitted quite openly not only by Communists or Socialists, but by every thinking person who has not sold out to fascism and does not wish to capitulate to it.

It is not by chance that Georges Bernanos' *Great Cemeteries in the Moonlight*, that terrific indictment of fascism, has produced such a deep impression. Catholic and royalist, the author was a supporter of the interventionists at the start of the insurrection in Spain; the change in his attitude is an instructive example of the way in which honest people's eyes are being opened by what they live through.

In the land where the Socialist Revolution has swept away the power of gold, the position of the intellectuals inevitably had to change. Here the intellectuals are linked with the people; they come from the heart of the people; just as the country's leaders—the Soviet Government, the Communist Party—are linked with the people, come from the people. This is truly a people's government, which follows a policy in the interests not only of its own country but of all advanced and progressive mankind. In the U.S.S.R. the intellectuals, the Soviet people and the Soviet Government do not, nor can they, have any differences of purpose.

How indicative is the following comparison! Both Soviet and English writers answered the appeal of Czechoslovak writers "To the Conscience of All Mankind."

Both Soviet and English writers expressed their sympathy for the courageous people of Czechoslovakia, betrayed by the Munich accord into the hands of fascism.

The answer of the Soviet writers expressed the feelings of the whole Soviet people and followed logically from the position of the Government of the U.S.S.R., which, as Peoples' Commissar of Foreign Affairs Litvinov pointed out with the utmost clarity in his Geneva speech, was consistent and loyal to the international obligations it had assumed. The manifesto of the leading democratic, anti-fascist writers of England, on the contrary, ran counter to the position of the Tory government.

Gambling on the lack of information and the prejudices of intellectuals in capitalist countries, the enemies of peace, democracy and freedom attempt to make use of demagogy. The fascists and their Trotskyite agents wail in heart-rending tones that in the U.S.S.R. artists have been deprived of the right to create freely.

The realities of Soviet life refute this bare-faced lie. Freedom is the sacred and inalienable right of the Soviet artist engaged in creative work for the people, for Socialism. The Party and the Government in the Soviet Union steadfastly protect the interests of artists.

Dovzhenko speaks eloquently of this in an article, *Teacher and Friend of the Artist*, in which he recounts in detail some conversations with Stalin. It will be recalled that when Dovzhenko was awarded a Government Order, Stalin suggested to him that he make a film which would feature Shchors, hero of Civil War days in the Ukraine. Later Stalin invited Dovzhenko to visit him, and here is what Stalin told the film director:

"When I spoke to you last time about Shchors, it was only a suggestion. I was only thinking of what you might do in the Ukraine. But neither my words nor the newspaper articles place any obligations upon you. You are a free man. If you want to create a film about Shchors, go ahead; if you have other plans, work on them. Don't feel yourself constrained. I sent for you in order to make this plain."[1]

The words of Stalin, leader of the Soviet people, are highly significant in point of principle. They are evidence of the unrestricted freedom of the Soviet artist, creator of Socialist art. The artist in the U.S.S.R. is free from all compulsion. He is secure materially. Everything is done to give him the opportunity to accomplish his difficult work. He is accorded every right save one—the right to produce mediocre works of art.

Our writers, artists, actors, musicians and composers have been working for more than two decades alongside the people in the building of Socialism. Together with the people, they constitute a great, united, invincible force which is leading the U.S.S.R. ever forward to the lofty heights of Communism.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

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[1] A. Dovzhenko. *Teacher and Friend of the Artist*, in the newspaper *Izvestia* November 5, 1937.

Yuri Krymov

TANKER DERBENT

Tanker Derbent *is Yuri Krymov's first novel. It has received a good press in the Soviet Union and high praise from Soviet writers. Krimov acquired his solid knowledge of oil and tankers by years of practical work as an oil engineer in Baku.*

Though the characters are fictitious, they are based on the life, work and experiences of living people. The section from Tanker Derbent *which we give here embraces one of the vivid episodes of the story. See further note on the author on page 149.*

At the end of January the tankers came out of repairs. Neiman addressed a meeting of the repair crews. He spoke of sleepless nights, poor supplies and firm spirits. He spoke with animation, heatedly; his talk was rewarded by prolonged applause. Basov sat alongside Eibat.

"I spoke to Neiman and the shop chief, Gladkov," he said. "They're all opposed to your idea. We'll see what the crews have to say about it."

Eibat shrank despondently.

"Forget it, Sasha. Whatever Neiman says, goes. Who am I? Just a lathe hand."

"Have you become frightened?" remarked Basov drily. "You have a rotten character, Zakiria!"

He looked around the auditorium to figure out who would support him. Brigade leader Voron passed along the rows of seats, limping and breathing heavily. He dragged his crippled figure sedately and proudly like a tattered banner. "He'll be for us," Basov thought.

The director spoke of the experience of the winter repairs, and the significance of the forthcoming navigation season. Basov's turn was next.

Basov tried to speak briefly. The shops could economize much time and means. Everybody knew about the proposal made, but it got stuck in the chief engineer's portfolio and it must be pulled out (he did not intend to sting Neiman, but it sounded malicious and provocative). The shops have good workers and new lathes. If people learn to save seconds, rush jobs would not be necessary.

The foremen listened with frozen smiles. The engineers whispered. Bronnikov sneered, his lips moved, he prepared to speak. Basov took his seat. Suddenly he clearly understood how inept his speech had sounded. Everyone wanted to talk about the difficulties which had been overcome, and of their achievements. And suddenly someone announces that it could have been done quicker and cheaper!

The hall became noisy. Voron rose heavily and cried sonorously:

"He's talking turkey. We ought to look into it and find out why the proposal was shelved. . . ." But Neiman came over to Voron and whispered something into his ear. Bronnikov began to speak and soon a wave of laughter swept the hall.

"Mechanic Basov is proposing

that we economize seconds.... As concerns the proposal, it is hardly applicable and even dangerous. What nonsense it is—'the cogs slow down the piston.' When such proposals reach the shops, the foremen scratch their heads...."

Basov's face flushed crimson. There was no doubt that the meeting was preparing to enjoy itself at his expense. The men's features relaxed and the noise grew. One of the engineers remarked gaily: "He wants to snatch away our bonus! Give it to him, Bronnikov!"

Basov sighed and rose.

"You're defaming a worker! You won't put it over! We'll win yet!"

Among the indifferent, curious faces which turned at his cry he saw several plainly antagonistic, regarding him with unconcealed malice.

"You just don't want to be bothered," he shouted at the top of his voice. "You hide behind printed rubbish. What did we teach people for?"

Then he immediately calmed down and conviction gave way to apathy. He felt ashamed of his action. As he made his way to the door, he heard Neiman saying:

"That borders on hooliganism. Basov must be called to account."

When he came home he sat down at the table and dropped his head on his arms. For the first time he felt alone. All these people—the mechanics and shop foremen, headed by Neiman, undoubtedly worked hard and conscientiously. But for some reason or other they stubbornly held to the old, ugly system in the shops, with rush work, bustle and the senseless repetition of the same mistakes. Basov felt as if he had run far ahead, had looked back and only then had noticed that he was alone out in front.

Musya saw that something was amiss. She sat down at his side and looked into his eyes.

"Has anything happened?" she asked. "Why are you silent?"

He braced up. He told her what had taken place. Musya listened in silence. She did not put any questions, and was not indignant. She watched him with intent eyes, as if she were studying his face for the first time. When he told her how Eibat had tried to persuade him not to speak, Musya could not restrain herself. She threw up her hands in distress and rage.

"He himself tried to persuade you," she repeated. "No, really? Oh, there's no one like you!"

She laughed, but her lips quivered. Then she moved nearer him and seized his hands. Her face became imploring and pitiful, it begged, ingratiated and threatened. Basov had never seen her so.

"Sashinka, drop it all! Can't you work like everybody else, without trying to be original, without raising a fuss? You worked nights long, and they didn't reward you. Didn't others receive bonuses? You don't know how to obtain what is your due, you can't get along with people. Now you've come forward with this proposal. You set against you the men in authority and they'll pay you off, you can rest assured. Why do you do yourself harm, Sasha? You're strange, so strange. You're just a crank!"

He listened to her wearily and indifferently, thinking his own thoughts. In order to convince people that he was right he had to be unyielding, confident, and indifferent to his own fate. Here he was, torturing his own wife.... "I am impatient and quick-tempered," he thought. And had he wanted to strain his relations with his comrades at the repair shops? He did not even know what to call this

truth that had so absorbed him. He had simply studied the labor processes and come to the conclusion that the machinery was poorly utilized and the work could be improved, that was all.

"Is life hard with me?" he said thoughtfully.

"I feel uneasy. You're so strange."

Before the opening of the navigation season new motorships appeared in the docks, a series of identical giant vessels meant for the transport of mazut oil. Screw-propellor Diesels, they were built by the Sormovo Shipyards and were expected to develop 1,400 horsepower. However, when the first of them, the *Derbent*, was regulated, the testing shop could not get more out of it than a thousand horsepower. The matter rested there.

Mechanic Bronnikov reported at the conference in detail on the defects and expressed the opinion that the projected power could not be attained at all. Opening Nemirovsky's textbook, he read:

" 'The limit operating capacity usually runs between 70 and 75 per cent of the projected. . . .' If the noted engineer Nemirovsky thinks so. . . ."

Somehow they agreed with Bronnikov very readily, and when the second tanker developed a thousand horsepower everyone was satisfied; no more could be attained, it was clear.

And suddenly the third tanker, the *Agamali*, unexpectedly achieved 1,380 horsepower, almost the calculated limit. Working on the regulation of this tanker, Basov sent a memorandum to the chief engineer about it. He asked two days to reach the complete calculated power, and suggested that additional work be carried out on the vessels of that series already placed in operation.

Bronnikov was called to the director. He foresaw an unpleasant conversation, and he was worried. The tanker *Agamali* stood in the dock, and from its giant stack white clumps of smoke rose to the mast—Basov had attained the calculated power and by his stubbornness threatened his, Bronnikov's, felicity and peace. Apparently Basov wanted to climb, to get a raise. Whatever it was, Bronnikov felt a hatred for him at this moment.

In the lunch room Beizas, the engineer, stopped Bronnikov.

"Have you heard?" he asked, and in his eyes Bronnikov recognized curiosity and eager expectation of scandal. "The *Agamali*'s engines have reached the calculated power. It works out as if we cheated the Navigation Trust. How embarrassing!"

Bronnikov entered the director's office when the latter was engaged in a dispute with Neiman.

"Don't try to justify yourself," the director was saying vehemently. "Tell me outright: was the Navigation Trust deceived? Are the Sormovo Shipyards at fault, or are we?"

"Ask him," Neiman cut in coldly, pointing to Bronnikov. "I have already expressed my opinion."

On the way Bronnikov had had time to think over the situation and to prepare a defense. He recalled all the defects met in regulating the engines of the *Derbent*. The left screw made 105 revolutions while the right made 103.

"What kind of deceit?" he asked composedly. "The shipyards turned out these vessels in a rush, and you know how the vessels were checked over when they were accepted by the Navigation Trust. It's hardly surprising that the screws have different speeds!"

"Just the same, this Basov says he can bring the power up to nor-

mal," said the director with an unexpected shade of malevolence. "Then it can be done, apparently? It can, I say!" and the director suddenly struck his palm upon the table and turned his formidable round eyes on Bronnikov. "His memorandum mentions incomplete compression in the cylinders. Why is it incomplete, this . . . what do you call it . . . compression?"

Bronnikov hung his head, trying to retain his composure. Neiman droned confidentially: "It isn't that way at all, Ivan Danilovich. There is this ugly affair with Basov, an unpleasant affair, Ivan Danilovich. . . ."

The director's anger died out just as rapidly as it had flared up. He was thoughtful for a bit, staring absent-mindedly at Bronnikov.

"Leave things as they are," the director said at last wearily. "If necessary, regulate the screws on the *Derbent*, using the vessel's own crew to do it. Don't send the tanker back to the dock." He turned over his papers slowly and Bronnikov glanced at the door with relief.

"And here's another matter," the director suddenly remembered. "The Navigation Trust needs an engineer, for this ill-favored *Derbent*. We have been asked to select some one from among our men, they say for one navigation season, but you know what that means. Well, there's nothing to be done about it—the new fleet has to be manned. Whom would you suggest?"

Bronnikov regretted that he had not had time to leave. But, come to think of it, the director hadn't been looking in his direction. He was looking at Neiman. Could it be that Neiman would propose sending him? Yes, it might well be. He had regulated the engines of the *Derbent*, and had regulated them badly. Now it would be awkward to refuse. In his mind he hunted for motives for a refusal: His inexperience? . . . Two years ago he had shown signs of tuberculosis. . . . A sick old mother? Nervous exhaustion? . . .

"We're running repair shops, not a vocational school," Neiman said crossly. "Whom can we send?"

He sighed and glanced at Bronnikov. "We ought to send a Party member. Let's send Basov!" he added.

Bronnikov quietly slipped to the door, and opened it, trying not to make any noise. Behind the door he stood a moment, listening, and smiling weakly. The director apparently had not objected. . . .

He bestirred himself and went off to the shops. In his relief he even excused Basov for the unpleasantness he had caused. If that crank's name hadn't turned up you never can tell how the matter would have ended for himself, Bronnikov.

Basov tried very hard to seem satisfied. He had only to impress upon himself the necessity for the transfer and the usual calm mood he always had at work would return. Somebody had to be sent to the new job, and the choice fell on him. Perhaps if he had not had a conflict with the chief engineer, another man would have been selected—Bronnikov, perhaps; and then Basov would have been indignant and would have felt sorry for Bronnikov.

Musya heard him out without interrupting. She clasped her knees and turned her head to watch him. When he became silent she shook her head as if she were shaking off a weight.

"How unfortunately everything has worked out," Musya said composedly. "You have no luck."

He had expected objections, reproaches, painful explanations.

Nothing of that sort happened. Musya was pulling out the bureau drawers and removing clothes from the hangers of the closet.

"You have to get ready to leave," she said. "Let's figure out what you have to prepare."

She did not seem at all surprised. Silently, paying no attention to him, she heated water in the kitchen and prepared a tub for washing. Basov stood near and watched the pearly suds trickle from her hands. He felt that she was dearer to him now than anyone else. He had entered a strange period in his life, when every achievement presaged a new failure. He had brought the power of the new motorship up to the calculated capacity, and had to leave the repair shops as a result. Neiman, Bronnikov and many others had become alienated from him. Inert, helpless people had invented limits of attainment to hide their helplessness. They used old, obsolete quotas of output and false science for this purpose. They had united, shouting of imaginary dangers, furiously defending their tranquillity.

Musya returned to the room and sat down at the window, without switching on the light. She wrapped herself in a downy shawl and her shoulders quivered as if she were chilly. Basov wanted to comfort and hearten her. As a matter of fact they had no reason to become disheartened. Weren't there many distinguished captains, engineers, and mates in the fleet? Musya wanted him to rise. He had been put in charge of the engine room of the *Derbent*. The chief thing was to bear in mind how necessary it was. Somebody has to sail on the ships; if not he, someone else. What was there to regret?

"The settled life is over," he said cheerfully. "Now I'll have to creep into the entrails of the vessel and frighten goblins there. Word of honor, I'm actually pleased, Musya. Why refuse a hard job just because it's hard? At the radio station where you work you'll be listening in to our call signals. We'll see each other every five days. Yes, every five days. . . ."

Musya nodded silently. In the darkness he could not see her face. He tried to think of what he might do to raise her spirits before they parted. It was warm outside, there was the smell of acacias, the air was blue out on the roadstead. In their club the sailors were dancing the tango to the music of an accordion with girl students of the Industrial Institute. He wanted to take Musya there. The moon came up over the flat roof of the house opposite, and the light shadows of clouds crept along the wall.

"Musya," he said affectionately, "look at the moon. Isn't it nice?"

Musya raised her head slowly. Large, glistening tears ran down her cheeks. They made the corners of her mouth wet and fell on her breast. She bit her lip and wiped her eyes with the edge of her shawl.

"You never loved me," she said with conviction. "And I never meant anything to you."

It was so quiet in the room that he heard her irregular breathing and the rustling of her dress. He touched her shoulder, but she moved away.

"But I'm not crying about that. . . . Never fear! I'm sorry for you, because you're a failure. Whom do you think you're fooling by your cheerfulness? You're trying to deceive yourself, and others. I was always something incidental to you. You made our life just one constant rush, and you lived like a lodger: overtime at the shops . . . preparing for your study cir-

cle . . . meetings . . . catching up on sleep. . . . We never lived like human beings. But all that's unimportant, and I wouldn't have said a word about it. But did you really work? You set the whole staff against yourself, and they tried to get rid of you. They don't act that way with valuable workers. You're a failure, a weak, foolish person. They turned you out of the repair shops. It's an insult! And you're satisfied! I would feel better if you at least got mad or swore at them. Somebody else, some swindler or good-for-nothing, will take your place at the shops and get good pay. . . ."

Her tears dried, but her voice was raw and shaky. She was pouring out all that had accumulated in her heart. It seemed to him that the girl before him in the dark was no longer Musya, but another woman, a stranger, stupid, indifferent, spiteful. He shouted angrily at the top of his voice:

"Shut up!"

She looked at him and raised her hands to her face in fear. Perhaps she thought he would strike her. And at the same time she watched him with a kind of strange hope. He checked himself and brought her a glass of water. She swallowed a drop and then pushed his hand away with vexation.

"What are you saying?" he said sadly. "It's true, they got rid of me. What of it? All because I gave them no peace. They work badly in some of our shops, and I saw a way to improve things, to make things much better. I think it will become clear to every worker soon. Meanwhile they bow before the old norms at the shops. But much has changed since the old norms were set. So I. . . ."

Musya glanced at him attentively and sadly, the way people look upon one of their own who happens to be mentally deranged. He stopped short in the middle of a word as if he had run into a wall. Maybe they had really never been dear to each other?

"Sasha, stop," she said gently. "It's our last evening, darling. . . . And I wanted to tell you. . . . These tankers. . . . Even the sailors run away! They hide their qualifications and steal documents to jump ship. . . . Surely you didn't know about it. . . . And we'll see each other rarely, so rarely. . . ."

She became silent and smiled with guilty fear.

"Do you know?" she went on. "I am drawn to you, darling. But what can I do if you're like this? . . . I want so much to live. . . . Don't be angry!"

He suddenly felt surprisingly indifferent. Musya's fingers stroked his hair and tickled his face. He felt the contact of her moist lips on his cheek, and he rose quickly.

"Well, we're not tied," he said unconcernedly. "Do as you please."

And he left the house and spent his last night ashore wandering about the town.

RAGTAG AND BOBTAIL

The green water rustled along the ship's hull. Snow-white layers of foam fell back from the hull listlessly. Myriads of bubbles scattered on the waves and burst noiselessly.

Mademoiselle Suzanne
Sold orchids on the street. . .

The sunlight warmed the steel deck. It was sprayed across the waves, and it made the burnished copper of the rail glow. The devil knows what the words of the song mean! The wind had brought them, nobody knew whence. They clung to Gusein's lips, like sweet glue. As soon as he forgot himself he would start to hum the words. He squatted near the hatch and look-

ed into the distance. The cigarette he had rolled burned to white ashes. He had to go down to the engines again. There was nobody around. The ventilator tinkled with a stream of air, and the waves rolled on endlessly. It was just like that yesterday. It would be the same tomorrow.

A well-bred English lad
Thought her eyes surprising sweet....

Gusein was not thinking of the words of the song. He was thinking of the chances of leaving the tanker before the end of the navigation season. To feign illness? To start a fight during a stop-over in port? No, it wouldn't do. And there wasn't a friendly soul aboard ship. During the first voyage he had made the acquaintance of the whole crew. He treated them to cigarettes and proposed playing dominoes. Dejection drove him from one end of the vessel to the other, to wherever he heard human voices and people moving about. The first few trips were over, the crew had lost its novelty, for him, and this feeling of dejection had become habitual. Boatswain Dogailo was constantly poking about decks, his eyes filled with stupid, senile preoccupation, always seeking something to put in order. He was forever in a hurry and would never answer questions.

Gusein tried to make friends with the second mate, Alyavdin. He began to tell him how he had been expelled from the Young Communist League for drinking. Just then the stewardess, Vera, ran past, and Alyavdin whispered: "Mark her down on the credit side of the ledger..." He winked, and chuckled, rubbing his hands. Gusein did not finish his story.

He tried to mix with the Young Communist League members, but they formed a closed circle of friends. There were five of them—three electricians, one motorist and one assistant engineer. They were demobilized sailors from the Red Fleet. From their military service they preserved a love of discipline, neatness in dress, and the hurried businesslike earnestness characteristic of men accustomed to responsibility. Gusein liked them, he even played up to them a bit. One of them, the electrician Kotelnikov, questioned him in detail about the unfortunate spree, but when he heard the story his expression remained coldly aloof as if he were soiling himself by listening. His curiosity melted rapidly.

"Set an example in your work," he exhorted Gusein. "Though I doubt if anything will come of it. After all, the Y. C. L. is no revolving door."

And he glanced about, seeking a pretext under which to cut short the conversation. Gusein was ready to sink through the floor. Now Gusein avoided the Y.C.L.-ers. No one was interested in him. Very well. Then he would be interested in no one. Thirty-eight hours to the Astrakhan roadstead, thirty hours for the return journey free of cargo. The endless open sea, the blue sky overhead, and the fresh wind. Captain Kurasov reading thick volumes in his cabin, sighing sadly and wiping his crimson neck with a handkerchief. Kasatsky lowering the wooden blinds and latching the door. He always smelt of vodka but he never stumbled and never raised his voice. And he never looked at Gusein.... The second mate winding up the Victrola in the cabin. Saxophones braying, violins singing, cymbals ringing. Alyavdin moving in the narrow passage between his berth and the cupboard, learning modern "Western" dance steps.

Gusein did not read books, he didn't buy new records or

flashy ties. Gusein didn't take a chance on drinking. After duty he would deliberately linger under the shower to kill time. Soapsuds bubbling, sharp streams of bitter sea water pricking his shoulders. The top lights flashing like stars on the masts, the cool damp darkness swimming in from the sea. He would sit on the hatch cover, humming the languid words of a silly song, and dream:

"All this ragtag and bobtail is thinking only of jumping ship. Many of them will probably do it before the end of the navigation season. Then we'll get new men on the tanker. It will be possible to make friends with them. They would share everything and stand the night dog's watch together, inseparable in adversity and in work. How pleasant it would be to walk down the boulevard with a friend, to play the 'Yablochko' on the guitar, to dance in the moonlight, to stand watch for a friend in bad weather, in the cold, in a high sea. To converse with him to one's heart's content, to walk arm in arm, to shake his hand in parting: 'friends to the last.' But for the present—that is only a dream. Forty-five men aboard the *Derbent*—sailors, engineers, mates—and not one real friendship among them!"

Kasatsky, the chief mate, came along, leading the captain on the spardeck and holding his elbow, a dazzling, naive smile on his face. Only Kasatsky could smile like that.

"Never mind, Evgueni Stepanovich, just disregard it," he was telling the old man. "They kick up a row at the navigation office because the tanker is just the least bit late. Time they got used to it! Besides, you have a good reputation, old pal."

Look how friendly they are, the captain and the chief mate!

But an hour later Kasatsky appeared on the spardeck again. This time he was with Second Mate Alyavdin.

"The old man got a reprimand by radio," said Kasatsky with his usual smile. "He's a nice old chap, but he's lazy, he has no will of his own, and he's a coward besides. If the *Derbent* were wrecked, he would try to shift the blame on us. Wait and see."

They almost brushed against Gusein as they passed him. No friendships aboard the *Derbent*. Only a subtle illusion of friendship—a stroll arm-in-arm, cautious pinpricks with poisoned words cloaked in a dazzling smile. Better no friendship at all.

The worst of Gusein's luck was his impossible chief. If he could have chosen his chief, he would have picked Kasatsky or Alyavdin. Chief Engineer Basov was the worst of the lot, he was worse than any of them, worse than any of the other forty-four men of the *Derbent* crew.

Basov went down to the engine room on every watch. He looked like a man who suffered from a constant toothache. His eyes were bloodshot. He stood there with a slight stoop, arms akimbo, as if he were rooted to the spot. From this motionless figure fitters, motorists and mechanics dispersed in all directions. He stood there, illuminated from above by a dim electric light, and the whole furious throbbing of the *Derbent*'s six-cylindered Diesel seemed to weigh on his shoulders.

A belated motorist appeared on the upper staircase. His hands were slipping along the greasy railing, his legs, weak with sleep, unsteady. The moment he reached the bottom the chief engineer unglued his tight lips.

"Slept your full? If not, you can return; we can do without you."

The throbbing of the engines fairly drowned his voice, but the words could be guessed from the movement of his lips. The chief engineer had once been a simple motorist. At least, so they said. He might be more congenial with the boys. Probably the sleepless nights that made his eyes bloodshot had dried his heart, too.

"Son of a gun," muttered Gusein, glancing with hatred at his chief's broad back. "And he's a Party member! The slave driver!"

Gusein himself was never late. The chief engineer never spoke to him sharply. But they avoided meeting and watched each other like enemies. They were bound to clash some day.

Before the end of the watch Basov climbed to the electric motors on the upper level. Here it was comparatively quiet, and the air was moist and warm. Behind the instrument panel the dynamoes hummed softly. And, strangely, from all corners of the engine room engineers, motorists and electricians came without being called. They climbed up the stairs, half naked, in shorts and oil-stained shirtless sleeves. Along their burning faces ran streams of dirty sweat. Those who got there first ranged themselves alongside Basov, at the rail. The others came up behind.

"The left screw turns at a speed of 103 revolutions while the right makes 105," Basov said. "I'm convinced we can get all 110."

The fellows nudged each other and smiled ironically. The vessel had just come out of the dock! Basov's confident tone irritated Gusein.

"Why don't you do it, Basov?" he asked challengingly. "It's easy. Just start, then finish!"

He looked around, expecting approval. Basov continued calmly:

"I can't do anything alone. And it isn't so simple. But together we can handle the job easily."

He grew more animated and raised his head:

"The motorists know what's wrong as well as I do. The sprayers get clogged, first. That means the fuel doesn't feed into the cylinders smoothly. The piston rings are no good—two. That's why we get insufficient compression. The registratry engineers accepted the vessel but the registratry engineers live on shore, and we sailors live aboard ship...."

Gusein made his way forward and, forgetting himself, placed his hand on his neighbor's shoulder.

Ash-grey shadows flickered across the chief mechanic's face. He slowly bent his head, as if preparing to meet unseen obstacles.

"Some motorists are afraid to breathe on the engines because they were regulated on shore. We don't need that kind here. Let them ship on barges. They're not sailors! Regulate the engines several times and then they'll show what they're made of. Right?"

He cast a glance over the men, who had grown still, and the light in his eyes died. He wiped his forehead and crushed the butt of a cigarette with his foot. The motorists, electricians and fitters crowded to the exit. Gusein went unwillingly. In front of him was Basov's back, with shoulders moist from perspiration. If Basov would turn around, Gusein would talk to him, he thought. But Basov was hurrying back to the engine room. The last thing Gusein saw was the back of his head. And, freezing to the spot, he resumed his habitually defensive position against the indifference of the world: "Building up his authority that way.... The bastard!"

Gusein had no one with whom to exchange a word. Therefore he eagerly eavesdropped on others. He knew the chief engineer was not loved aboard ship.

"They've stuck a commissar on my neck," Captain Kutasov sighed. "Today he told the political instructor that the loading could be carried out more quickly. Perhaps tomorrow he'll start keeping a watch over me, how do I know?"

In the captain's eyes was a sick old man's fright, and to his aid rushed Kasatsky's blinding smile.

"Evgueni Stepanovich, my dear fellow, our esteemed engineer has suffered a stroke." He tapped his forehead significantly. "Why worry about him?"

Gusein was glad he was not the only one in misfortune. Right alongside him just such a blind wall surrounded another man. But Basov somehow seemed to notice nothing. During the loading he kept his eye glued to his watch. He tried to interfere, a funny, absurd man with inflamed red eyes. What could he accomplish, with such ragtag and bobtail? The better men went on the dry-cargo vessels, where the work was easier, the stops longer and the bonuses more frequent. The tankers got the men who happened to be available on shore when the tanker was leaving. Many of them were drunkards, sick men, good for nothing. They smoked on deck, despite orders to the contrary, and moved as lazily as sleepy flies. Today motorist Kozov had looked over the grease pump. He just opened the cover, rubbed his finger along the inside, and winked to Gusein, grimacing. Gusein turned his back. What did he care? Let the chief engineer struggle, let the motorists soldier on the job, let the sailors smoke on deck. Let the five Young Communists meet and vote alone. The tanker did not fulfill its plan, it was at the tail end in this season's navigation. Serves them right!

They arrived at the roadstead late again. The icy spring north wind whistled in the tackle, tore clots from the crest of the waves and flung them onto the deck. The wind pulled a curtain of clouds from behind the horizon, and it screened half the sky, whirling and dropping gusts of rain. In the radio shack Volodya Makarov fought hard against sleep, rubbing his eyes with his fists. He splashed his face with sea water, sat down at his apparatus and sighed into the microphone.

"Astrakhan!" he cried impatiently. "Astrakhan—roadstead! Why haven't the barges come up yet?"

The sun was visible in the east, through the clouds. It resembled a tin plate. A crown of ash-colored clouds encircled it. On the spar-deck the tarpaulin over the lifeboat flapped noisily in the wind.

"Astrakhan! We wired in good time that we were coming. Where are the barges?"

He turned back from the microphone and swore softly and dispiritedly. Chief Electrician Kotelnikov glanced in at the porthole.

"Did you get them, Volodya?"

The radio operator silently nodded and reached for his earphones. He switched to reception and prepared to receive the answer.

"I'd fire the lot of them if I had my way," said Kotelnikov sullenly. "The captain, and the mates, and those bastards on shore. Fire the lot of them and get a new bunch!"

The radio operator was writing, bent over the paper, the tip of his tongue sticking out.

"They reply that a mistake occurred," he explained. "The tanker *Agamali* took our barges. Well, whom would you fire, buddy?"

"Every one of them. Are they commanders? Invalids with atrophied brains! We're becoming a laughing stock. The *Agamali* gained four hours by its trick with the barges. It overtook us at sea. Now

it will be six hours ahead of us. And it doesn't bother a single one of them. They laugh at us at the dispatchers' and on the ships and in the dock stores. We haven't received a kopek in bonuses, it's a fact!"

Volodya drew a crooked sail on the margin of his log book and a hook-nosed face in clouds of smoke. Then he sucked his pencil and held his head on one side, admiring his drawing.

"I yelled into the microphone for half an hour," he said, laughing bitterly, "and I might just as well have yelled down a ventilation tube. The devil with them! Who gives a damn for my work here? This month we failed to fulfill our plan by half a million ton miles, no less. And what can I do?"

"True."

"Yesterday, when they were taking on the cargo, they began to pump in the oil without getting the water ballast out of the tanks. The captain shook like an old woman when they told him. And afterward I heard Kasatsky explaining to an agent of the transport section of the O.G.P.U. It seems the pumps are responsible for everything!"

"A thin explanation, Volodya."

"Couldn't have been weaker!"

"The political instructor, Bredis, is a good fellow," said Kotelnikov. "He's ready to haul the cargo on his own back if necessary. But he doesn't know anything about navigation, so he's afraid to interfere with the captain's orders. Besides, he's consumptive. I think he won't last long."

Meanwhile Volodya was drawing a deep sea diver in his diving helmet. He even smiled with satisfaction, it was such a nice drawing.

"You know what, Stepa?"

"Well?"

"Let's get away from this ship altogether."

The radio operator's voice dropped and he licked his cherry-colored lips. "I know where I could go. To the ship salvaging trust. They're raising the vessels that sank near Bear's Point. Boy, that would be a job!"

"They wouldn't let us go," muttered Kotelnikov, glancing around apprehensively. "How could we leave the tanker? It would look as if we were deserting before the non-Party people. No, forget it...."

"There'd be work for you there, too," continued Volodya imperturbably. "I found out. Maybe we ought to just disregard documents, and go without permission. No, they'd take away our Y.C.L. membership cards for a thing like that."

"Don't talk nonsense." Kotelnikov turned as if he wanted to leave the porthole, but he didn't go. He was embarrassed and interested. Volodya's proposal drew him like a magnet.

"If we only tried to get action from the district committee...." he said uncertainly. "No, they'd never let us go...."

"Nonsense! 'You can lead a horse to the trough but you can't make him drink,' as the saying goes, I'd like to know how they can keep me here against my will!"

"No, it won't do to jump ship," said Kotelnikov firmly, but without conviction. "Maybe we can still improve matters aboard ship. And besides, as chairman of the ship committee.... Just the same, you find out about the ship salvaging trust," he added, with a forced smile.

Uneven, loud steps sounded on the spardeck. Then the wind smothered the sound. A man passed the cabin, walking with big steps and bending forward as if he were

falling against the onrush of the wind.

"Basov," whispered Volodya. "Did he hear us?"

"I don't know," Kotelńikov moved back from the window. "Well, enough of panic. It's unbefitting Komsomols. Here come the barges."

Waves rolled along the roadstead like agile, frightened beasts, light green waves covered with brown oil stains. The barges come to meet the tanker bobbed up and down; they squeaked, and plunged their steep rusty hips carefully in the water. A tiny black tug threw the wet end of a rope into the sea, whooped deafeningly and steamed off, ruffling the waves and dragging a sinuous tail of foamy water.

In the pump room of the *Derbent* the force pumps were in action. The deck made a slight ringing sound, rising a little. Basov stood near the railing of the bridge, pressing his elbows to his hips in order to keep warm.

"The Caspian is badly made," said boatswain Dogailo, who stood next to him. "Awkwardly situated, the Caspian."

He exhibited the toe of his huge boot, which looked as if it had been molded, together with his foot, of cast iron.

"It's drying up, our sea, it's feeding the earth. Do you know the ancient Maiden's Tower in Baku? It takes two minutes to reach the sea from that tower. People say that poor girl was imprisoned in the tower by the wicked khans and she faded away from despondency. The tower stood in the sea at that time. The sea receded and left the stones bare. Now with a water line of twenty feet it's risky to go further than Seal's Bank. Nothing but water around, yet it's too shallow to pass. . . ."

The boatswain had a high, singsong, expressive voice. In surprise Basov cast a sidelong glance at the boatswain's huge brown Adam's apple bulging out of the collar of his coat, and said with assurance:

"Soon we'll make the bottom deeper—then the tankers will go right to Astrakhan, they won't have to reship their cargo on barges."

Dogailo smiled into his mustache, looked at his interlocutor with mild pity, and slowly pulled off his cap. The wind ruffled the thin, rumpled down on his egg-shaped skull.

"Everything seems so easy to you, you think you can achieve anything. But I suppose learned people thought of it before you and had to give up the idea. The reason is that there are alluvial deposits and currents which will cover with sand all you do, and destroy it. No, it won't be as you say," he ended triumphantly, and once more gave Basov a look of calm disapproval. The latter had no desire to argue. Silently he walked along the bridge.

At the repair shops Basov had been among his own people, after all. There were the fitters and brigade leader Voron and the little lathe operator, Eibat. Many people of varied specialties were on the vessel. But Basov had no friends among them. He observed them, but under his glance people felt uneasy, their pupils contracted and disappeared between their eyelashes. In his eyes the men seemed dull and had an incomprehensible sameness. Their efficiency seemed faked, their earnestness seemed to mock. Silently, as if they were asleep on their feet, they moved in the narrow passages of the engine room, swallowed the hot air, sat down wherever they could. Si-

lently they swung the wheel and their knotted muscles swelled on their perspiring backs. After their watch was over they assembled on the upper deck, listened to Basov's explanations, and stared at him as if he were some outlandish prodigy. Sometimes he appeared among them, unnoticed, and saw the motorist Gusein swaying on his haunches, humming a silly tune, or the motorists Kozov and Gazaryan speaking to each other, wearily glancing up at the sun, their eyes in a frame of soot. "Call this a crew? They ought to be sent to the devil and a new crew hired," they would say. "Call them men?" They gave sugary agreement to each other in everything, held themselves as if they two were the only real sailors on the *Derbent*. They lied to each other, they lied to themselves. As a matter of fact they had long ago abandoned all thought of ton-miles and revolutions of the screw.

Torrents of water flowed onto the deck from the open taps. The streams of water spread and were covered with shaggy dust. The sailors slipped on the wet metal deck, pushing swabs swollen with water. Dogailo wove back and forth among them like a shuttle threading through the warp of a piece of cloth in the making. The sailor Khrulyev, freshly shaven, with a guitar under his arm and a cigarette behind his ear, climbed to the stern. He threw back a lock of fair hair and twanged the strings of the guitar.

The doctor asked what I complain of:
I told him, "Seven men I love."...

Basov walked to the quarterdeck. Mechanically he stared at a seagull swirling over the waves. The bird swooped down like a snowy pink clot and her wing touched the water. The sailor Khrulyev twanged the guitar for the last time, yawned and looked indifferently at Basov.

Here in the monotonous hum of the motors, at the entrance to the engine room, Basov pictured this small world, limited by the blue line of the horizon, a tiny colorless world like eyes in a fat face, a world in which everybody had reconciled himself to his own nullity, but despised others for theirs: "Call them men?"

At the repair shops Basov had been considered a good organizer, but the shops had existed before him and would go on without him: here everything had to be started from the very bottom. How? His inability, the ineffectual attempts to get things under way, made him weary. But he couldn't be indifferent, look on calmly, lock himself in his cabin. Some obstinate little spot in his brain, strained and deafened with weariness, ached unceasingly like a bruise: to act, to change everything, to get the men to work during the stop-overs, to overhaul the engines, to increase the number of revolutions of the screw.

Standing near the porthole of his cabin, Evgueni Stepanovich Kutasov watched his wife unpack her purchases on the table: a bundle of magazines, a bottle of wine, coffee.

Through the porthole gleamed the lights of the city. At times dense puffs of smoke screened the lights as if the smoke were falling on the earth and crawling along the streets.

"The Solntsevs send you their regards," said Natalya Nikolayevna, "and Dinnik and Simochka and her husband, too. Are you listening, Evgueni?"

The rattling and scrunch of the crane chains were heard from the pier. Long, disheveled shadows traveled along the wall like spider's legs. The people whom Evgueni

Stepanovich's wife mentioned were former colleagues from the bookkeeping department.

"How nice of them," said Evgueni Stepanovich, deeply moved. "Tell them, Natasha, tell them . . . ."

Somebody outside ran hastily through the corridor and knocked at the door.

"Who's there?" cried Evgueni Stepanovich. "What do you want?"

"Everything is ready for loading, Evgueni Stepanovich. The hoses are attached. Can we begin?"

"Yes, go ahead." Evgueni Stepanovich stood a moment before the door, undecidedly fingering the knob. The footsteps disappeared down the corridor. Suddenly Evgueni Stepanovich flung the door wide open and shouted after him:

"Wait a minute. Ask Kasatsky. It's his watch, ask him."

"Ask Kasatsky, it is," came the reply.

Natalya Nikolayevna watched her husband attentively. After a moment's silence she asked:

"Who is Kasatsky, Evgueni?"

"Well..." Evgueni Stepanovich was thoughtful for a minute. "Kasatsky is the first mate. He respects me and we understand each other. What I like in him is his innate tact and his broad culture. I believe he is reliable, and we squirm about together in this bedlam."

"I asked you," said Natalya Nikolayevna, "because it looks like something is wrong. There are rumors in the navigation office about the *Derbent*. Don't you put too much trust in people, Evgueni?"

Kutasov looked at the door and then at the porthole. His face changed, at once losing the handsomeness of an elderly man which was his. A fleeting smile of suffering appeared on his lips. The wrinkles of his mouth expressed resentment and weariness.

"I am a little worried myself, my dear," he said, lowering his voice and with a tone of mystery. "Sometimes I really think something is wrong. All these people. . . . When I see them and talk to them I can't believe they can be deceiving me. But when I remain alone...."

"Don't get excited. When you are alone—?"

"Everything is different then. I am not so trustful as I seem to be. Yesterday we sent a radiogram about bad weather because we were horribly late. The weather was not particularly bad, just a light wind. Kasatsky is a master in the art of coaxing, and he always writes such telegrams. But this time it was awkward."

Natalya Nikolayevna boiled with indignation.

"Why did you consent? How odd you are! Didn't you see it was bad, it was wicked? Why did you yield?"

"Shh. . . . Don't shout, please. Well, I consented because I was really in rather an awkward spot. The devil alone knows why we were late. For some reason we had to wait a long time for barges at the roadstead. The pumps were out of order. It's not in my line. And in general everything goes slowly and we're experiencing a general decay. The personnel department was too hasty in the selection of the crew. They picked the men very unsuccessfully."

He paused and cheerlessly rubbed a stain on his sleeve.

"I'm tired of it, Natasha, and the worst of it all is this constant worry. They assembled a crew of ragamuffins—tramps and saloon hounds. The ship is new, lots of machinery, inflammable cargo in the holds. I think that if somebody shouted 'fire' my heart would burst. The political instructor is a sick man. Kasatsky squirms about and the senior mechanic, Basov, tries to spur the motorists

to do better work. By the way, that man doesn't like me. I don't understand why. I think I'm friendly with all of them. I have a kind word for every one. But he looks at me grimly and hardly answers my questions. Kasatsky says he is insane, but it isn't true. Maybe he is watching me. . . . So you said there were rumors about us?"

In the mirror opposite him Evgueni Stepanovich saw his sad face, growing old. He was sorry for himself to the point of tears. They committed mischief, they deceived, they spread rumors, and he wanted nothing, he wished well to all of them. Was he guilty because he knew nothing about modern Diesels and pumps, because he was considerate and couldn't bring himself to be sharp with people?

Evgueni Stepanovich felt the approach of the sentimental mood into which he sometimes fell. It occurred only in the presence of his wife and always ended in weak self-accusation from his side, and a protest from hers.

"I am incapable of coercing others," he said plaintively. "Conflicts make me suffer, and I feel pleasure if I can yield to somebody. Unfortunately that is not what life demands. . . ."

He expected her to object, which would confirm him in his feelings and liberate him from dissatisfaction with himself. Afterward he would feel better, like a child who has cried his heart out on his mother's bosom. But Natalya Nikolayevna suddenly seemed in a hurry.

"I almost forgot," she said, rising. "I'm holding and holding it in my hands. A clean handkerchief. Take it, Evgueni."

She smoothed his hair and kissed him. She was in a hurry, as if she feared he would start speaking again.

"Everything will come all right, somehow," she said mildly. "Please don't forget to put on your warm coat when you are on night watch. Well, I must be going. And do you know, Evgueni, I think you ought to go to the bridge right away."

Before sundown political instructor Bredis went out on deck. His lips were parched from the heat and illness until they looked like a dark, drying wound. Round spots of crimson burned on the cheeks of his thin face, creating a false impression of animation. He breathed cautiously on his cold palms and glanced about.

The yellow strip of the shore swam on the edge of the sea in the rays of the setting sun. The sea shone with an unbearable brilliance, the sky was a transparent blue. Martins flew in black streaks around the masts. Dogailo was working over the donkey engine motor on deck.

The political instructor could hardly maintain his balance. How blinding was the brilliance of the sea, how tiresome the smell of mazut oil, how irritating the resonant blows of Dogailo's hammer on the metal! The political instructor tried to recall what the boatswain was called, but the odd name escaped him. Damn it, how annoying! He could not recall names, he didn't know what was going on aboard ship! He was close to desperation. His illness was no justification. He, the political instructor of the ship, had to fight for fulfillment of the plan, a plan well within the bounds of possible realization. This task was so simple and tangible, yet so unattainable! . . . Long experience as a leader, knowledge of men and the ability to convince them helped little in this new situation. Poorly qualified, fortuitous people, new machinery, which had not yet been mastered, poor service by the shore . . . final-

ly—his illness, which hardly permitted him to work at this decisive period of his life—all this had combined against him. He felt his strength failing him and he did not know what to do.

The chief engineer came from the engine room doors. He looked to the west and up into the cloudless sky. He looked about slowly, as if he were in no hurry to enjoy the expanse of sky before him. The political instructor called to him, afraid that he would turn back.

"You here?" Basov asked in surprise. "Why are you running about? You have a fever, Bredis."

He approached the political instructor and proffered his dirty hand.

"I was looking for you," said Bredis animatedly. The thought had come to him that it would be best to discuss the situation with the chief engineer. "If you knew how tired I am of staying in the cabin!"

Like a man tortured by one importunate thought, he immediately began talking about the fact that they were behind plan. According to his calculations, the *Derbent* had fallen behind to the tune of more than twenty thousand tons of cargo. Minor delays in loading and unloading added up into big ones, and their low speed added to that. During the loading at pier No. 80 the tanker had run aground because it had not cast off from shore in time. More than an hour had been wasted in calling up for tugs and another hour in getting clear.

The diversity of causes perplexed Bredis. No one was guilty, no one was to blame, they all sweated conscientiously. The captain was a sorry figure, so upset did he become. But the multitude of minor reasons added up to create serious underfulfillment of the plan.

"Who's guilty?" said Bredis, overcoming a cough. "We Party members are guilty. I'm guilty—I shouldn't be loafing in bed at such a moment, I should be on the lookout.... Of course I'm guilty! And you, and the other Communists.... We should be fighting!"

"We don't have so many Communists," laughed Basov. "You and I, and the five Young Communists. So you and I are chiefly to blame, eh?"

He smiled gloomily and angrily, the corners of his mouth quivering. It seemed that at any moment he would bare his teeth and start cursing venomously or spit furiously. Bredis felt embarrassed.

"You're worked to the bone yourself, I see," he said softly. "As a matter of fact, I didn't have you in mind."

"Don't be in a hurry to point an accusing finger at yourself, Bredis," said Basov. "Leave it to others to decide whether we're guilty. If we are they'll expel us from the Party and that will be that." He laughed mercilessly, gazing at Bredis' eyes. "And they'll send stronger men in our place. Only I'm not thinking about that now. Our engines are new. So the problem is one of people. We can still straighten things out before the end of the navigation season, we can still overfulfill the plan."

"You speak boldly," said Bredis impatiently, "but I don't understand on what you base your hopes. On blind luck?"

"We have one fine group of men here!" continued Basov ironically, but calmly. "They have no organic connection with their work. They're as unimpassioned as saints; so far as they're concerned everything might be on fire and they wouldn't give a damn. Perhaps Kotelnikov is right and they're just ragtag and blobtail. But other vessels day in and day out fulfill their tasks. The *Agamali*, for

instance. They have many demobilized men from the Red Fleet—swell chaps. Not long ago they made fun of our motorists when the latter were making purchases at the dock store. 'You're slowpokes,' they said, 'like a coffin afloat'. The radio operator said things nearly reached the fighting point. That's fine. And the *Agamali* crew got a bonus, and we won't. That's good, too. In a word, we have to let our men feel in every possible way that they're the worst of the worst."

Bredis smiled and shook his head like a musician who has caught a false note.

"Wait, comrade, you aren't putting it quite right. According to what you say, everything depends on pride and pay. But that's not so! At the front we fought to the death, and we didn't get any bonuses for it. We laid down our lives for freedom, for Soviet power. And this is the same front, the same war, if you please. If we don't carry the oil there won't be any. There will be nothing for the tractors and planes. Clear? You must drive that into them, that we must work without sparing ourselves. Who have you got down there in the engine room? Your own brother, a worker, a proletarian, and not ragtag and bobtail! What if he is semi-literate? He will understand. You have to develop their political consciousness, not their conceit...."

The fever shook him, and he shifted from foot to foot to render the pain bearable. Basov listened to him indifferently.

"All you say is obvious to me, and to them, too, for that matter. I sometimes think it's harder to transport oil than to fight at the front.... They know the country needs fuel, but they do not feel themselves responsible. They sleep on duty and disgrace themselves in port. On the last voyage some bastard left a rag in the grease pump and, in general, I can't talk to them about the significance of transport until they begin to feel ashamed."

"You don't despise them?"

"No, I don't despise them. Of course, they're our own men. It's a different thing with Second Mate Alyavdin. But all the same they're different, it's hard to accomplish anything with them and it's hard with our chiefs, too."

"It's hard everywhere," confirmed Bredis, thoughtfully. He took out a cigarette case and searched his pockets for matches. "You know, Basov, I guess you're right. If we could organize a competition..."

"We'll organize it!" responded Basov in an unexpectedly gay tone. Smiling, he took the political instructor by the arm and took away his matches. "Incidentally, you can't smoke on deck. You might be blown up."

"Oh, damn!" swore the political instructor, crumpling the cigarette. He crimsoned to the roots of his hair. "How could I have forgotten?"

"Worse than the front?" smiled Basov.

"Yes.... Guess it is."

During the stop-over Gusein succeeded in spending some time in town. He met Zhenya at the appointed spot. He proposed going to a cinema, and afterward for a swim. He had only three hours, but he thought they would have time besides to go to a cafe and to the athletic field, where races were to be held. Zhenya preferred visiting the industrial exhibition. In the end they remained on the boulevard.

The boulevard was deserted so early in the morning. Birds chirped in the bushes; white acacia petals were falling. Zhenya was very

pretty in her yellow blouse, shining in the sun like fire. She teased him and made him tell her about life aboard the tanker. He looked at her bright lips and he was tormented by the desire to kiss her.

They chatted with animation, gaily, and did not notice the passing of time.

"I have often thought of you since we parted," she confessed without embarrassment. "You seem to lead a very interesting life. I read in the *Caspian Bolshevik* about how the country's supply of oil fuel depends on the work of the tankers. In general things aren't going too well, though, in oil transport. But some ships overfulfill the plan. How do you work, Mustafa? I wish I were in your place. Up to now I've only been a student, preparing for life. Around me people are living and struggling and I want a real job, I want to meet people, I want responsibility. I often think of you. I think you're impetuous, insistent and daring. Maybe you're destined to become a famous sailor. There are a good many of them already on the Caspian. I'm a romantic, Mustafa," she added confidingly, with a serious air. "Don't laugh."

Gusein was surprised at the turn the conversation had taken. The girl was interested in oil transport and in his work. And she wanted to be in his place. Was it romantic stuff? Romanticism about his tanker? Laughter shook him.

"This is a dull conversation, Zhenya," he said in the tone of a grown-up explaining to a little boy the absurdity of his question.

"The work is hard and dirty and everything is going to rack and ruin. The tanker doesn't fulfill its plan. The men are not familiar with the engines. There are constant squabbles aboard ship. Our chiefs are a bad lot, and the crew is still worse. Beachcombers, rabble."

"Beachcombers?"

"Yes. It's an English word. It means an unemployed sailor, a *lumpen*. We have no unemployment, so the word has another meaning. A beachcomber is an idler, ragtag and bobtail. Do you understand now? Between you and me, I have something of the beachcomber in me...." he said unexpectedly, with sincere indifference. "My fame—don't make me laugh. I am pretty well known at the militia precinct."

"Oh! Why do you say things like that? Aren't you ashamed?" The words slipped from her mouth in her annoyance.

She blushed and seemed offended. Gusein bit his tongue.

"But I speak to you as to a friend," he said, embarrassed. "I exaggerated a bit. Everything will be all right. We've fallen far behind the plan, but if we pull ourselves together and repair the engines.... The left Diesel makes only 103 revolutions and the right one makes 105. I'm convinced we can get all 110...."

He recalled that the chief engineer had spoken like that and he felt annoyed. "Just boasting," he thought resentfully, as he always did. But Zhenya threw back her head and smiled.

"Well, you see," she said in a conciliating tone. "You were talking nonsense about yourself. When you squeezed a coin in your fist when that man insulted me, I felt creepy all over. It was tremendous—and funny. You were so calm! And now you've spoiled everything. A beachcomber!"

"Can't you take a joke?" smiled Gusein complacently. "Listen. About the Diesels. If we succeed in raising the speed to thirteen miles, we can fulfill the plan. Our mechanic is efficient even if he is a dog. But he can do nothing single-handed. It's different with us

motorists. In order to repair the Diesels we would have to work during stop-overs, which means we wouldn't be able to go ashore."

"Terrible misfortune, isn't it?" broke in Zhenya spiritedly. "Well, what's to be done if the work has to be carried out?"

"That's what I say: we'll certainly do it. But there's something wrong with the motorists. Some of them are afraid to touch the engines because they were regulated ashore. That kind of a fellow is no sailor! He doesn't belong on a tanker." ("Basov again," was his fleeting thought, but there was no longer any anger in it.) "Regulate the engines, not just once or twice, and then they'll show what they've got in them. That's the way it is, Zhenya. And forget that about being a beachcomber. It was only a joke."

The girl by his side was attractive, cleanhearted, the kind he had not known before. Her eyes, only a minute ago expressive of sullen disdain for him, were now scrutinizing him as if they were trying to determine whether or not he was speaking seriously. Suddenly he became terribly sorry that the imaginary achievement of which he was speaking with such bland assurance would probably never be attained....

CHALLENGE

When the electricians returned from town they told of an encounter with the sailors of the tanker *Agamali*.

The electricians seemed embarrassed, their cheeks burned.

"They leave port two hours after we," cried Kotelnikov, "and they said they would give us two hours headstart and leave us behind by evening. They said they'd take us in tow."

"It's a lie."

"'You won't lose anything and we'll have the pleasure of beating you,' they said."

"'Internal combustion tortoise, they called us," put in Volodya Makarov.

"Who's a tortoise?"

"They meant us, the bastards. They were laughing at us."

"The boatswain said..."

"I don't care who said what," roared Gusein irritably. "But it can't be that they'll leave us behind."

"It mustn't happen."

"We must be prepared," sneered Khrulyev, throwing back his curly locks. "Hey, chairman of the ship committee! Show your stuff!"

That day everything went as usual. Watch followed watch. The weather reports came in by radio. Political classes were held. But the sailors aimlessly crowded the spardeck, looking to the south, where the shore seemed to drown beyond the blue line of the horizon. In the afternoon a faint spot appeared on the horizon. It grew slowly, stuck at the point where the sea melted into the sky, and it seemed an ugly notch on the irreproachable line of the horizon. Dogailo, who was wandering about on the spardeck looking for something wrong, was first to notice it. With a low, drawn-out whistle, he went down to report his discovery.

"It's coming!" exclaimed Dogailo in a triumphant falsetto. "The *Agamali* is coming. They'll leave us behind toward evening without even trying."

The electricians ran out on the spardeck. Dogailo jogged after them, smiling into his moustache.

"Maybe it's a gunboat," suggested electrician Protsenko.

"You hit the mark all right! And where's the smoke? No smoke to be seen. No, old pal, it isn't a gunboat, it's an oil burner."

One by one the motorists and

sailors off duty appeared on the spardeck. They stared from under their palms, to protect their eyes from the sun, and then disappeared. Dogailo walked to and fro, with his eyes on the ground. Out of habit he poked in all the corners as if he were looking for something. But every once in a while he stared into the distance himself. On the pilot's bridge Kasatsky put the binoculars to his eyes, watching the approaching vessel. It increased in size, as if urged on by the moist wind from the south. Kasatsky lowered the binoculars and his mouth formed into a set smile.

The men kept coming out on the spardeck, hastily searching for the silhouette of the vessel on the horizon, measuring the distance with their eyes. They did it silently, without looking at each other, trying to seem casual, and seeking to conceal their anxiety.

Before sundown the *Agamali*, energetically veering to the right, revealed to the *Derbent* its white superstructures and the short stack emitting thin curls of smoke. The *Derbent*'s sailors ran out on deck and stopped at the rail. A group of motorists assembled around Gusein. He stood with his heavy hands on the rail and on his dark, inscrutable face a vein beat noticeably over the left brow.

Basov appeared on deck at the moment when the two ships came alongside. His eyes traveled from the motionless Gusein to Alyavdin, who stamped on one spot in nervous excitement; then to the faces of the sailors, the motorists, the electricians assembled on deck. Dogailo walked past, his boots clattering, and made his way toward the stern.

"We ought to salute the leader!" he sang out slyly. "As a sign that we respect them and give way before them. *Bon voyage!*"

He climbed down to the stern and some curious men followed him.

"Leave it alone, Dogailo, don't," protested Alyavdin weakly but the boatswain didn't hear. He went to the stern and undid the knot of the flag. He pulled the rope and the broad red strip of bunting, twisted by the wind, slipped obediently down the long flagpole and dropped to his feet.

Everything on the deck of the *Agamali* was clearly visible from the *Derbent*. Men stood motionless near the *Agamali*'s rail. Others were dragging the end of a rope. Its hard coils straightened out elastically. The *Agamali*'s flag still flew at its stern. Nobody was in a hurry to lower it in answer to the *Derbent*'s salute.

"The insolent pups," remarked Dogailo in a low voice. "See, they brought a tow-rope. They'll hang it out as a sign that they're ready to take us in tow."

The men on the deck of the *Agamali* seemed to be carrying out a serious job planned beforehand. They threw the end of the tow rope overboard and it hung, swinging, making zigzags on the water. The vessel plowed ahead. It was already showing its stern to the *Derbent*. Silence on the *Derbent*'s deck.

"What brass!" exclaimed Dogailo, shaking his head. "Did we contract to race them? Our engines are different. The chief engineer can confirm that."

The men turned to him. Some of them smiled. The singsong voice of the boatswain had a calming effect. The sailor Khrulyev, who had been standing aside, came up to Gusein and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Take the tow-rope, Mustafa," he said, looking around as if he were inviting the others to laugh. "All the same your engine doesn't

move us forward a bit. Ah, Mustafa, don't let the opportunity slip by."

Gusein swung about as if he had been stung. He raised his fist. His face was distorted with pain.

"Go away, you parasite," he screamed in a frenzy, his fist clenching. "I'll wring your neck."

Khrulyev moved back, putting up his fists.

"Steady with your hands, you," he said rapidly in a low voice. "Ever see such a nut, fellows?"

A circle of curious men promptly closed around them. Volodya Makarov's round, freckled face thrust itself over Gusein's shoulder.

"No fighting, Mustafa," he shouted wrathfully. "He isn't worth it. Spit in his eye and he'll only wipe it!"

"What's this?" shouted Alyavdin authoritatively. "No fighting, fellows!"

Basov came up to the noisy group. Volodya's loud boyish voice reached him.

"Why do we always run aground? Why do we make only eight miles without cargo? Can any of you explain?"

"We can wipe their nose on the next trip," said Basov, elbowing his way to the radio operator. "Just take it easy, Volodya, I'll explain."

Now every eye was on him, and for a second his voice broke with the strain. "If only I don't spoil things now," flashed through his mind. He looked around for the political instructor, but Bredis was nowhere in sight. He was running a high temperature and was lying in bed in his cabin.

"Why are you yelling?" asked Basov sharply, meeting Gusein's roving glance and addressing himself to him. "It's quite clear. Those *Agamali* sailors don't consider us human beings. And you laugh at it?" he quickly turned on Khrulyev. "Then you agree that you're muck?"

"We have many like that," shouted Volodya. "They don't give a damn about anything. They cause us trouble."

Somebody moved behind Basov's shoulder and breathed hotly on his neck. Basov raised his voice confidently.

"We can wipe their nose! Let them win first place now. Every dog in the harbor curses us. But we can still beat them. The first thing we have to do is to overhaul the engines. And then we must economize time on the stop-overs."

"And when will we have time to enjoy ourselves?" someone put in with a sneer. Every one hushed him immediately. Basov did not turn round.

"We must economize every minute. The pilots must see to it that the ship casts off from shore in time when we're taking on cargo, so we don't go aground. We must repair the auxiliary Diesels during the trip. We can make the water boil under our ship if we want to!"

"We'll never run aground when I'm on duty," declared Alyavdin unexpectedly and hotly.

"Why chew the rag? Let's begin," somebody said in a low voice.

"Shall we start?" asked Gusein, looking incredulously at the faces of his neighbors, as if he still didn't believe the job could be begun so suddenly.

"Come on, fellows! What a job we'll do!" Volodya tore off his cap and squeezed it in his fist as if he intended to dash it to the deck.

"We must challenge them to a competition, that's what we ought to do!" Kotelnikov declared, intently biting his nails.

"That would be too nervy! And if we make a flop of it?"

"We certainly ought to challenge them," said Basov. "We'll do it by radio. But it doesn't matter now. Since we're decided on it, the en-

gine crew will have to work during the stop-over."

There was a brief silence. Kozov stuck his hands in his pockets and scrutinized the smooth surface of the sea. The motorist Gazaryan, looking at his feet, said: "How can I miss shore leave, if my mother is ill? She's an old woman. How can I..."

"Oh, what a misfortune!" Kotelnikov exclaimed, blinking nervously. "She was quite well when we cast off. Did you get the news of her illness by radio?"

"Get out! Go to a saloon, we can do without you," shouted Gusein, menacingly scrutinizing the motorist. His face changed every minute from excitement; sometimes it cleared and sometimes a menacing expression passed over it. "Anyone who goes ashore during the stop-over is a rat."

"Everyone will remain, don't worry," declared Basov. "Nobody likes to be considered a slacker. And if anybody does go ashore, he will be that much less hindrance." He nodded to Gusein and strode off to the engine room, but Volodya Makarov overtook him.

"Basov! The fellows will work in the engine room. And how about me? There's no overhauling to be done in the radio shack."

"You have nothing to do with the engine room. You're not a mechanic," replied Basov undecidedly. "But the devil take it. It isn't a matter of mechanics now.... Come, by all means."

It was still dark when Gusein awoke. The cabin partitions vibrated with the clatter of the engines, even and monotonous like the throb of blood in one's temples. He rose and jumped down from his berth. He thought he was late; the vessel must have anchored already. The porthole was dark. The splashing of the waves and the soft whistling of the wind reached his ears through the porthole. Gusein ran out into the corridor and almost knocked down a man who was passing by.

"Come on," said Basov, preoccupied. "I was looking for you. We just passed Zhiloi Island. It's time to begin."

They walked past the hot kitchen wall, past a row of cabins, and reached the engine room. Here Basov stopped.

"Almost the whole crew has assembled down there," he said, smiling. "It's a good beginning, but it isn't necessary at all for the regulation of the Diesel screws!"

"What do you mean, isn't necessary?" asked Gusein in surprise. "But you said yourself...."

"I insisted myself on all of us putting in extra time on shock repairs, it's true. Better if the first successful results are obtained by joint efforts. Everybody will be proud, then."

"Right," agreed Gusein. He was pleased that the chief engineer was confiding in him, thus singling him out from the rest of the crew. "It's a good idea. Only will there be work enough for all? Shouldn't we keep out those who are superfluous?"

"It won't take long to get rid of them if need be, but I think we mustn't have any bystanders among our crew."

The men filled the engine room, talking to each other, striving to make themselves heard above the throb of the engines. Gusein was perplexed when he saw this extraordinary meeting. He knew all these people, and considered half of them good for nothing. They were only able to fulfill orders and always tried to get off duty as soon as possible. They had to be constantly watched. And these were the men whom Basov wanted to overhaul the engines!

As he followed the mechanic down the ladder, Gusein felt the glances directed at them, and he felt awkward, as if he were pretending to be some other person.

"When you change the piston rings," Basov told him, "take five fitters and motorists. Keep your wits about you when you lift the pistons."

Gusein's embarrassment increased. The chief engineer had two assistants, but for some reason he preferred to trust him. And how would Gusein "keep his wits about him" when he was just a motorist and had never before had people under his direction?

Basov spread out the diagrams. The crew crowded around him and for some time Gusein stood there without knowing what to do. The chief engineer's voice could hardly be heard above the throbbing of the engines. Little by little the usual distressing thoughts which he always had when he was inactive took possession of him. The chief engineer will increase the number of revolutions of the screw, he will report it to the proper authorities and receive a bonus for good work. What had he, Gusein, to do with all this? He had made a fool of himself yesterday on the deck!

Suddenly he saw Basov wave to him, and he felt all eyes on himself. His face flushed as he knit his brows fiercely. Blindly he looked at the diagrams Basov handed him.

"Look," shouted Basov, pointing at the sheet. "This is the first piston. Incomplete compression. And here is the way it ought to be. Here is the correct diagram of cylinder № 5. See the difference? So where must we change the piston rings?" He thrust the diagram at Gusein and put his hand on the latter's shoulder.

Engineer Zadorov, Basov's assistant, cast a sidelong glance at the diagram and prompted impatiently. "In the third and fourth, of course. . . ."

"I know it myself," snapped Gusein jealously. "They must be changed in the third and fourth. . . ."

The cylindrical body of the piston, one and a half meters long, lay on the grating, blocking the passage. Kozov, Gazaryan and two fitters were trying to lift it in order to put the rings on. They were crimson from the strain and shouted at each other.

"The fellows are practising gymnastics, and the crane is taking a rest, I guess," joked Basov. "Go help them, Mustafa."

Gusein ran up the ladder. As soon as he approached, the men dropped the piston and straightened their backs.

"The crane doesn't work," the fitter Yakubov explained coolly. "Probably the couplings are off. What are you looking at? We're told to finish the job before the stop-over is ended, and we're trying to do it as best we can. . . ."

He smiled good-naturedly, wiping his broad kind face with a handkerchief. Gusein liked this simple-hearted fellow, but now for some reason or other he got angry.

"You went about it in a slipshod manner," he shouted wrathfully, and in his rage he seized the iron tackle. It resisted.

"We ought to climb to the upper girders to repair them," remarked Yakubov, not in the least offended by Gusein's tone. "But I'm afraid to fall down."

The others didn't move, looking expectantly at Gusein. He too had no great wish to climb up and repair the crane. It seemed easier to lift the piston with their hands. But he noticed Basov watching him from below.

To reach the girders under the ceiling of the engine room he had to clamber through the skylight. Gusein left the engine room and

ran to the stern. A cold offshore wind was blowing. It was dark. The lights of the port surrounded the vessel and were reflected in the water like golden garlands. Gusein slipped through the skylight, hanging on with his hands and feeling for the girder with his feet. He felt a blast of heat laden with the smell of the engine room. People were standing below and watching him, staring upward. Gusein climbed along the girder on all fours, whistling and grasping the iron girder tightly. As he reached the carriage of the crane he put the chain on the pinion and said in a hollow voice, as in a barrel:

"Pull up a little. Are you frozen stiff there? Step lively!"

Basov was standing below, examining the diagrams, and Gusein was glad Basov was not watching him, as if he had fully entrusted him with the whole piston job. He descended by the chain and began to help the fitters as soon as he reached the grating.

From behind the switchboard came the electricians, the Komsomols. They kept the electric plant of the *Derbent* in perfect order. They had already finished the ordinary, usual repairs. But they did not leave.

"What shall we do?" asked Kotelnikov, biting his nails. "Here is the decisive sector. I confess I can't make head or tail of a Diesel."

"We should be heading the job," worried Volodya, "We must set an example."

Kotelnikov frowned.

"You always like to head everything," he said angrily. "Simply help people, just hand them their tools, for instance. That's one way to set an example for those who only chatter."

"Does he know what to do?" Protsenko measured Volodya with a glance. Volodya was quite perplexed.

Kotelnikov went down to Basov.

"We have finished our job," he said. "We came to help you. Give us any task, even if it's just carrying something."

Fitters tinkered about the raised piston, adjusting the rings. It seemed to Gusein that the work was moving languidly, as in slow motion shots on the film screen. The piston rings did not fit into the grooves, and they had to clean out the grooves with chisels. He heard the mighty champing of the engines slow down and the siren's call above decks. They had to prepare three pistons, and he did not have the first finished. He took a tool from Yakubov and set to work. Shining shavings flew from under the chisel.

"Take it easy, Mustafa," advised Yakubov mildly. "If you clean it out too much the piston rings will be loose."

They rolled the second piston in from the repair room, and raised it. Pausing in his work, Gusein observed what was going on at the engines. Men armed with wrenches climbed on the cylinders. Carefully grasping the hot pipes, they unscrewed the cylinder covers. Among the men Gusein saw Kotelnikov, but he had no time to be surprised. Volodya approached.

"Haven't you finished yet?" Volodya asked in a tearful voice, "We have only two hours left. *Ekh!* and you call yourselves men!"

"Do it faster, if you can," snapped Gusein irritably. "Go ahead, I'll watch."

The groove in the iron became deeper under his chisel and his perspiring shoulders were covered with a silvery powder, from the shavings. The fitter Yakubov, feeling in his pocket for his cigarettes, gave a gesture of resignation and began on the last piston ring.

"We'll smoke when we get out

to sea," he said gaily, winking at Volodya. "Hand me the hammer, bud."

When they finished the pistons, Gusein dropped the chisel and went up to the ventilator tube. A cold stream of air tickled his perspiring back. His arms ached sweetly. Now, when he had finished the work, they seemed to have forgotten him. The motorists were removing the cylinder covers and examining the sprayers. Everybody was in just as much of a hurry as Gusein, even those whom he had considered idlers and superfluous on the vessel.

"Here I strained myself, worked, and did anybody notice it?" he started to think, but the thought no longer stung him as it formerly did, but seemed tiresome and repulsive, like a healed sore whose scab one wants to scratch off with one's nail. He roused himself and ran to the engines.

The carriage of the crane slowly swung under the roof. A finished piston swam through the air, the taut chain tinkled. Below, like cattle drivers behind a herd, the men moved at the capstan bars.

The piston stopped over the opening, was lowered and soon its end slipped into the throat of the cylinder. Gusein compressed the rings with his hands as they entered the opening. When the last piston ring had been lowered, he straightened up and wiped his hands.

"The cover," he commanded the motorists. "We're finishing the third cylinder, Alexander Ivanovich," he said to Basov.

Basov glanced at his animated face and smiled. With deep emotion he noted what was happening around him and especially the new expression on the men's faces. The lazy torpor seemed to have left them and to have been replaced by an expression of impatience and ardent curiosity, such as people have when they first take to a serious thing heart and soul. But he had certain misgivings. This might be only the animation caused by novelty—a bright but unsteady flame ready to die out with the first failure.

Basov did not want to think of this possible failure, he did not want to believe that this splendid animation might disappear from Gusein's face. When the siren whistled, announcing that the loading was over, Basov calmly went to the controls.

The crew gathered before the instrument panel. Gusein stood near the pressure gauge, his hand on the controls. Suddenly his confidence disappeared. Maybe the gauge would make only a hundred revolutions as before? The crew hadn't gone ashore and many had worked straight through two watches. Gusein had been the first to raise a fuss about competition, he had stirred up the men. Now he would be laughed at, he thought.

The boatswain's signal rang out. Basov touched the flywheel and looked at the gauge. Gusein sighed and shut his eyes.

"Start the engines, Mustafa," came Basov's voice.

Hearing the heavy champing of the first piston blows, Gusein took courage and approached the instrument panel. The index showed "reverse slow," then "ahead slow." The vessel headed about and left the pier.

Gusein couldn't stand it and turned away from the instrument panel. What if nothing came of it, what then? "I'll laugh with the others," was the cowardly thought that flashed through his mind. But the next moment he forgot everything except the rising roar of the engines.

The needle of the gauge quickly moved along. Without stopping it moved past 100.

105 . . . 107 . . . 110. . . .

The crew buzzed in excitement, the men behind rose on tiptoe to see better. The propellors churned at full speed.

"A hundred and twelve!" shouted Volodya triumphantly in Gusein's ear. "Just look, Mustafa!"

"Hmm. . . . Yes. . . ." Kozov drew out the words significantly, wrinkling his nose with a cunning smile. "Well, now we can compete with the *Agamali*, Basov."

Gusein went out on deck and sat down to have a rest. The lights of the port were falling back into the dark. The wind drove clumps of smoke down on the deck and pulled them about; they clung to the hatches like pieces of gray fluff.

Gusein saw the chief engineer come out of the engine room and halt in the strip of light from the door.

"Will he come up to me or not?" thought Gusein, turning around. It seemed to him that if Basov came up to him and spoke to him now, something very important would happen which would change the whole life on the tanker.

He heard the sound of steps behind him and shuddered in nervous anticipation, as he felt Basov's hand on his shoulder.

"We made a hundred and twelve revolutions," Basov said in a preoccupied, matter-of-fact voice. "The lads in the engine room are all excited. They never expected it. But this is only the beginning. We must keep the engines in this condition. That's more difficult, and we may fail. Constant attention is necessary, and we shall have to spend more than one stop-over in the engine room."

"The sprayers get soiled frequently," said Gusein in the same dry, unemotional manner. "It's dark now and we don't see what the smoke is like. It was black before, lots of soot, and now it seems to be pure exhaust smoke."

"The smoke is a trifle," said Basov thoughtfully. "Smoke is only smoke!" He laughed. "Is it time for your watch, Mustafa?" he asked.

"I'm going," Gusein said as he rose. "I've had a little rest."

Nothing unusual had occurred. They had exchanged remarks about the work, they were ready to part. Probably absent-mindedly Basov addressed him with the intimate "thou." He might have used it mechanically. But Basov addressed only the Komsomols as "thou."

"I wanted to thank you," Basov said suddenly. "If it weren't for your help. . . .I could have achieved nothing single-handed," he added simply.

"Not at all," muttered Gusein, surprised. "I wasn't the only one." He scanned the chief engineer's face. The latter stretched out his hand.

And unexpectedly the important event occurred which Gusein had vaguely expected. He seized the mechanic's hand and squeezed it with such strength that the fingers stuck together.

"Ah, Basov," he whispered cordially. "Friend!"

The radiogram sent to the *Agamali* read:

"Challenge you to Socialist competition on fulfillment of transport plan. Communicate acceptance of challenge.

"*Kotelnikov*, Chairman Ship Committee."

The chairman himself stood behind the radio operator while the latter worked away at the key.

"Maybe they won't even reply. It's really pretty nervy of us. We still have to catch up with the plan—that's a handicap."

Volodya switched the transmit-

ter off, and swung about on his chair.

"Then we can beat them unofficially, and they will have to acknowledge it. What's the difference? We're challenging them, we forty-five men of the *Derbent*! Splendid, isn't it? What an amazing thing competition is! I can hardly rest in peace now until they send us the barges. I think I must have jolly well spoiled the nerves of those cold-blooded fellows at the roadstead. But they gave us the barges in time."

"Will we beat them?"

"Certainly. Do you know, Stepa, I think we were mistaken when we discussed the crew. Do you remember how you called them ragtag and bobtail?"

"I don't recall it."

"Eh! Don't be sly! I tried to tempt you with a job with the ship salvaging trust. You have a poor memory, Stepa."

"It was long ago."

"Did you notice how the motorists worked during the stop-over? That was something new. The most interesting part of all this is that it was done without the chiefs. Do you remember how it began?"

"It was Mustafa Gusein who started everything...."

"He's a former Komsomol. Why was he expelled, do you know?"

"Kicked out for drinking, I think. I'm not sure...."

"It's wrong, Stepa. We lock ourselves up in the Red Corner and don't know the people around us. The competition began spontaneously, without us. All we did was to join it."

"You wanted to head it yesterday," said Kotelnikov sarcastically.

"Oh, cut it out.... We must break this closed circle. We must work with people. Then maybe we can lead things."

"More open meetings," said Kotelnikov, "and fewer secrets. And the main thing is to work hard. We kept the electric plant in order and thought we were setting an example. 'Look at us, we're models.' That sort of example isn't worth much, Volodya! We should be everywhere where things are going badly. If you can't overhaul the engine, make yourself useful, hold the tools for the other fellow, organize people, show them what we're all fighting for. It's a hard job, Volodya, to organize people, a hard job...."

The *Agamali* was in no hurry to answer. In the evening, during supper, Volodya came dashing into the mess room.

"Ship committee chairman wanted at the radio," he called triumphantly. "Get a move on, Stepa."

The radio shack was full of people. Here were sailors, electricians, the donkeyman, the motorists. Even Second Mate Alyavdin had come. They spoke in subdued tones, almost in whispers, as if the person who had radioed from the *Agamali* for the chairman of the ship committee were here, behind the dial board. Gusein, his mouth half open, was listening to the clatter of the key and the whistling of the loudspeaker.

"What did you just transmit?" he asked quietly. "And what do they say? What did they reply?"

"Go to the devil," said Volodya. "I'll get mixed up."

From the sea the tapping of the radio brought the casual reply:

"Accept if you are not joking. Our conditions: to transport 25,000 tons above plan, to reduce idle time and carry out repairs during voyages. Signing off."

A clamor arose in the radio shack as the radiogram traveled from

hand to hand. Alyavdin shook his head.

"We'll be pretty good if we catch up with the plan . . . but 25,000 tons above plan! It's insane!"

"Nevertheless, they propose it, and apparently they don't think it's insane."

"Our engines are different."

"The engines are of the same series. Our brains are different, that's what!"

"So far as heads go, let me tell you something," Donkeyman Pronin broke in. "Do you know who regulated the *Agamali* engines?"

"How do I know?"

"Well, I do. Our chief engineer, Basov, regulated them. He used to work at the docks."

"Impossible! You must have got it balled up."

"No, I'm quite sure. He's the one who did it."

Gusein smiled triumphantly.

"Yesterday we increased the number of revolutions of the left screw to 112," he said, turning around. "Did you know that? Basov says we can get all of 115 out of them."

He seized the radiogram from the table and quickly left. Khrulyev's glance followed him, and he grinned maliciously.

"Jumping all over himself!" he said, winking at Alyavdin. "I suppose he's gone to the chief engineer to play toady. Ingratiating himself, the beachcomber! You know he was tried on a charge of rowdyism?"

"For drinking," sullenly corrected Kotelnikov. "Why do you gab so much? You have a filthy tongue, Khrulyev, it's like a deck swab."

Gusein opened Basov's door. The chief engineer was seated at his desk, his head in his hands.

"Do you have a toothache?" asked Gusein, cautiously closing the door behind him.

"No, my teeth are all right," said Basov, pulling himself together. "What makes you think so? I just couldn't sleep. Didn't sleep all night, and can't get to sleep now."

Gusein sat down on the edge of the chair and opened the telegram, but for some reason or other he folded it again.

"So you're feeling melancholy," he asked, in a tone of sympathy. "I noticed it long ago. What's the reason?"

"All sorts of thoughts," replied the engineer in a dull voice. He raised his head and suddenly laughed, perhaps at himself, perhaps over Gusein's question. "I left my wife on shore," he added unexpectedly.

"Young, I suppose?" Gusein grinned.

"Young. . . . I'm not a greybeard myself. Know what? Use 'thou' with me, don't be embarrassed. We're not at work now."

Gusein made himself more comfortable in the chair with an air of satisfaction and crossed his legs.

"Too bad," he said lightly. "But the navigation season will come to an end, and you'll go home. Don't you have any children? You'll have them."

"It's all not as simple as that, Mustafa."

"You don't get along?"

"We don't get along. They sent me here. She didn't like that, Mustafa."

Gusein stopped smiling.

"Ah, life! I'll tell you about myself," he broke in uncontrollably. "I got acquainted with a girl. She's a grand girl, the real thing. She graduates soon from the institute. But how can I keep up the acquaintance, when we can see each other only twice a month? We reach port either at night or

early in the morning, when she's not free. I don't ask her to come to the dock—we might be late or I might not to able to leave the tanker, and the boys at the docks are roughnecks, they start wisecracking: 'You look lonely, maybe I ought to keep you company?' You know. They might offend her. We meet on the boulevard and we have exciting talks. She's interested in how the sailors live, and why we don't fulfill the plan. I feel that she wants me to do something about it, and expects great things of me. 'You're ardent and you stick to it when you start something,' she says, 'you have a lot of spunk in you.''

"She's pretty intelligent," said Basov. "What did you answer?"

"I chattered, of course: 'We'll become famous in a week.' And nothing will come of our acquaintance. There are lots of people on shore. Ardent and persevering—just take your pick of them. Maybe she already met someone while I was at sea. And she's capable of big things herself. She was chief over ten men when her institute sent her out for construction practice. 'The workers respect me very much, honest to god,' she said. I listened and felt sad. Our paths lie in different directions."

"According to you all sailors ought to be bachelors," smiled Basov. "Nonsense. Kotelnikov has a wife and a child, the boatswain has children in school... and what nice kids. You ought to see them!"

"You've forgotten about yourself, eh? And you agitate!"

Basov rose and paced the room "I was joking, Mustafa," he said guiltily. "I have no wife, I'm single. You asked me if my teeth ached, and I felt in a mood for joking. It was silly of me. Excuse me for it...."

"So you were stringing me along," he drawled, rolling a cigarette and moistening the paper with his tongue. "Well, joke to your heart's content.

"Look what the *Agamali* radioed," he went on, displaying the slip of paper.

He waited patiently while Basov glanced over it.

"Twenty-five thousand tons above plan," said Basov. "It's a steep figure. But I think we can do it—if we utilize all our reserves."

"What reserves?"

"Speed and quicker loading. And maybe we can find other reserves, too."

Gusein became thoughtful.

"Can't we increase the carrying power of the *Derbent?*" he asked.

"We can't, Mustafa. The *Derbent* isn't made of rubber."

"Joking aside.... How much fuel do we carry? Isn't it a supply for four voyages?"

"Well, let's say four. What has that got to do with it?"

"If we only took a fuel supply for one trip each time, we could carry three hundred more tons of cargo."

"Damn!" exclaimed Basov in surprise. "Sure! I never thought of it. Why do we carry a four-trip fuel supply?"

"I don't know. It's a rule. Just in case there's a world flood, I suppose."

"Well, it's absurd. Here we should be carrying cargo, not ballast, and—! How is it nobody ever thought of it before?" Basov stopped. "Wait! Can't we relieve ourselves of some more dead weight?"

"We have lots of chains and spare anchors and all kinds of junk on board," said Gusein thoughtfully. "Then there's the engine room storehouse. If we collect all the scrap iron and all the rubbish on the vessel it will add up to about fifty tons."

"A total of three hundred and fifty tons each trip?"

"There you are!" Gusein beamed. "And you said we couldn't increase our carrying power!"

After the second screw was regulated the *Derbent* covered the distance to the Astrakhan roadstead in thirty hours. But an unexpected delay occurred at the roadstead. The tugboat brought only two barges when the tanker arrived: the third was out of commission.

Volodya Makarov strained his vocal cords before the microphone, all in vain, calling the dispatcher. "We sent to Astrakhan for spare barges," came the monotonous answer every minute, provoking fits of helpless rage.

The loaded barges departed for the north. The cargo hose of the *Derbent* stretched out over the deck like a giant rusty trunk. Screeching seagulls flew around the tanker, snatching small silvery fish from each other. The sea, pale blue near the ship, grew darker toward the horizon and merged with the enameled sky. The sailors on watch walked dejectedly along the deck, looking toward the north, whence the new barges were to come.

Chief Mate Kasatsky, annoyed by the idle waiting, went in search of the captain.

"Just think," he said, appearing in the doorway of the mess room, "we saved five hours on this trip.... We ought to crow about it, by god."

Evgueni Stepanovich was sitting at the table, stirring his tea. He saw his face reflected in the shiny curved surface of the tea kettle. It was ugly, swollen and flattened, with monstrous crimson swellings instead of cheeks. As he conversed with the chief mate he was unable to keep his gaze from this fantastic mask.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea to send a radiogram to the steamship office," Kasatsky went on. "Something like this: 'On the basis of Socialist competition and shock work...'"

"It won't do at all," interrupted Evgueni Stepanovich with aversion. "Faking... putting up a false front.... You ought to be ashamed, Oleg Sergeyevich."

"But it's the pure truth, my dear fellow," smiled Kasatsky. "Why not take advantage of it? Is it so long since we were nervous about being in bad with the trust? And now: 'It won't do at all!' Well, have it your way."

"I don't want to fool anybody, and I'm fed up with these radiograms of ours." The captain grew more and more heated as he spoke, like a man who suddenly ventures to voice his thoughts. "It's time to realize that these inflated reports are nothing but just lies, disgusting, indecent falsehood! The competition has just begun, and you and I have nothing to do with it, understand!"

As always with him in moments of wrath, Evgueni Stepanovich impatiently awaited objections which would add fuel to his indignation. But Kasatsky was silent, an expression of shock and mild perplexity on his face.

"I never imagined you would place such an interpretation on these trifles," he said with a sad air. "Perhaps I overdid matters a bit in trying to put affairs in the best light. The shipping trust is very worried by the unsuccessful opening of the navigation season. One of the captains has already been removed from his post, I heard. And, frankly, I wouldn't like to have another captain."

"What's that? You say... removed?" asked Evgueni Stepanovich.

"It hurts me to think that you might... an honest old-timer, an honorable respectable fellow! Frankly, I have a special feeling of solicitude toward you."

"My dear fellow, don't I know

it?" muttered Evgueni Stepanovich. "Believe me, I appreciate your attitude, but I am worried about these reports. It seems to me that we have been abusing them a bit recently. Honestly speaking, we are guilty of many things ourselves. We ran aground near the piers.... What was at fault? And the incident with the water ballast? Do you remember? What is there to be said?"

Kasatsky became calm immediately and sat down at the table.

"Yes, yes, I agree," he said patiently. "Everybody makes blunders once in a while. But there is a prospect of a sudden change. The chief engineer didn't let the men off duty go ashore, and overhauled the engines. He had no right to deprive the men of their rest, but we must shut our eyes to it."

"He reported to me."

"And he certainly looked grimly at you. As if he were thinking: 'I despise you, but I am forced to talk to you!' Don't mind, he's rather queer. I, for instance, make it clear to him in every possible way that I am by no means a fragment of the past, as he considers me, but that I'm with them a hundred per cent. It's true, of course. For me, dear Evgueni Stepanovich, the competition is a revelation in a way. How universal are the methods of adapting human material! All the long-range guns of human conduct are employed. Even the eternal verities like 'glory' and 'heroism.' There's something old-fashioned yet beautiful and strong in the word 'challenge.' Really, it seems to me that our men bear a new, intelligent expression. In a word, I'm for it."

Evgueni Stepanovich listened in silence. The vague passive mood, which always governed him in conversations with the first mate, took possession of him. He could only follow Kasatsky's unexpected turns of thought, and at such times his own feelings were lost as in an endless maze.

"So you think a change has set in?" he asked thoughtfully.

"Undoubtedly. And everything must be done to ensure success. It depends in great part on the shore servicing. The dispatchers have their favorites, like the *Agamali*. A model ship gets everything ahead of the others. That means we must create for the *Derbent* the reputation of a model ship. If, as I proposed, we send the shipping office a radiogram...."

"Well, I have no objection to it. Let's draw it up," agreed Evgueni Stepanovich. He felt repentant for his hasty temper, and he wanted to yield as soon as he could in order to smooth matters with the chief mate.

"Let's make it brief and dignified,' said Kasatsky, taking out a notebook. "'On the basis of Socialist competition and shock work we have succeeded in increasing the commercial speed....' That sounds sincere and modest. Right?"

He wrote out the radiogram and handed it to Kutasov. Then he paced the room and halted before the porthole, rocking on his heels. The captain knitted his brow as he read the telegram.

"Good," he said at last. "Quite dignified."

"One thing more," said Kasatsky, yawning. "There's a proposal to stop carrying a four-trip fuel supply. Basov thinks that if the superfluous fuel, plus odd bits of junk, are removed from the tanker the vessel's carrying power can be increased by three hundred and fifty tons. It's a clever idea. I wanted to suggest beforehand not to object."

Evgueni Stepanovich was surprised. "But can we agree to cut the fuel supply?"

"Yes, to leave only enough for each trip."

"But is it done?"

"I knew you would say that," laughed Kasatsky. "Tell me: why do we carry fuel for four trips?"

"In case anything happens. You never can tell. Everybody does it."

Kasatsky yawned.

"The supply for one trip is more than enough even in stormy weather," he said softly. "And three hundred and fifty tons a trip makes three thousand tons a month, twenty-five thousand above the plan. Clear, isn't it?"

"But isn't there any danger?"

"There certainly is. We run the risk of receiving a bonus and praise from Godoyan. Well, agreed?"

"I guess so...."

"Basov says we can considerably overfulfill the plan if we utilize all our latent reserves," said the chief mate thoughtfully. "He seems to be right. Anyway, he's found one of the reserves. He'll probably make a grand career for himself,—that insignificant fellow. Just wait and see."

The last barge came two hours behind schedule. The tugboat dragged it up to the *Derbent*, its screws churned the water, it whistled shrilly and then grew still. On the barge sullen, sleepy men in sheepskin coats moved unhurriedly, drawing out a hose. The sailors observed them from the *Derbent*'s decks.

"Those bureaucrats at the roadstead!" cried Volodya Makarov. "Ink-rats! They don't care a damn whether we lose two hours or not. We can't get anywhere this way. We have to make them feel it hard."

"Let's write a complaint to Director Kaspara," said Kotelnikov sagaciously. "He'll take them in hand."

Gusein looked at the two of them and his brow twitched convulsively. The slowness and the indifferent faces of the men on the barge irritated him unbearably.

"Are you always asleep on your feet like that?" he shouted at them. "Hey, you down there on the battleship!"

"Don't get them sore," advised Kotelnikov. "They'll dawdle all the more just for spite."

But Gusein would not remain quiet.

"Tell your blockhead chiefs that we'll put in a complaint. We'll get justice yet!"

"You're yelling to no purpose," came the answer from the barge. "We're not the big shots who run things."

Gusein left the rail. What use was it to save time at the stopovers and to economize every minute if the result of all these efforts was wiped out because of the simple inattention of the dispatcher on shore? The sailors of the *Derbent* were interested in seeing the competition succeed, but its success depended also on the dispatcher and the hairy men from the barge and the dock workers in the port, and Gusein tried not to look at what was taking place on the barge, tried to restrain the muffled irritation that boiled within him. It all seemed to him all the harder to bear because, as a matter of fact, there was no one to be angry with.

He calmed down a bit when they left the roadstead. The *Derbent* was making twelve knots. Then his watch came, and it passed without incident; the engines did not slow down, they worked faultlessly. Nevertheless an importunate thought kept bothering him: perhaps it was all useless?

After his watch he ate supper and went to sleep. When he woke up he saw a dense milkywhite murk through the porthole.

Fog always filled Gusein with

bitter dejection, and brought to the surface all the sorrows buried in his soul. He went on deck. The lights which had flared on the masts now burned turbidly, as if they were wrapped in white tissue paper. Voices and footsteps sounded muffled. Volodya, who came up to him, had a hoarse voice and his face seemed greenish.

"Listen to what our chiefs did," said Volodya. "How stupid of them! What a fog, what a fog. Now we shall certainly be late."

Gusein was not surprised by Volodya's downcast appearance and what he was saying. With a fog like this nothing good could happen. He breathed the thick, suffocating air and spat out sweet saliva.

"They sent a radiogram," said Volodya. "Listen: 'On the basis of competition and shock work....' They're seizing the opportunity to boast, the scoundrels!"

"To hell with them," declared Gusein indifferently. "The fog is flowing in like lava. Now they're slowing down. You can tell by listening to the engines."

"Disgusting," Volodya remarked. "What won't they take advantage of in order to boast! Well, I'm going...."

Gusein remained alone. Everything around him moved slowly and noiselessly. Grey clumps of fog crept along the deck, stopping at the hatches, rolling up the ladders, with a damp, musty smell reminiscent of the suffocating smell of exhaust gas.

The siren of the *Derbent* hooted with a short hoarse whistle and an approaching vessel replied with a thin wail, and winked its green eyes. Gusein squatted and grasped his knees.

"Bad," he said softly, and his voice sounded weak and muffled. "They befouled the competition with their radiograms! The scoundrels, the scoundrels! And on shore we have the same kind of men...." He ran over in his mind all that had happened in the last few days, hoping to find something else bad which would fill his cup to overflowing and give him reason to abandon himself to despondency.

"The fog will retard us, it will hold us back very much... and Zhenya won't come to the boulevard. Fog, and it's late. No, she won't, not a chance. How long is it since we saw each other? What does she need me for, anyway?... Basov keeps on agitating. How can he expect results if there's a clique on shore which screens each other, so you can't pin the blame on anybody? Reports, false reports.... Maybe Basov doesn't really expect results himself, and he's just like the Astrakhan dispatcher and Kasatsky and Alyavdin... only more cunning.... The port isn't far off. There's the island, now there'll be lights... lights.... How nice it would be to have a drink of beer! Just the time for it...."

He approached the rail, placed his hand on it and turned his face toward the glowing port lights, swimming out of the fog. Thus he stood, spitting every minute, until he heard the rattle of the gangplank being laid down. Then he ran to the pier, walked without looking back, swinging his arms with relief, as if he were deserting the tanker forever.

The lookout men poked about on deck, shouting to each other in the dark, paying no attention to Gusein. He was seen an hour later by some sailors of the *Derbent* who had dropped in at a saloon to warm up. Among them was the fitter Yakubov, the one whom Gusein had taught to handle the crane during the overhauling of the engines—a quiet, inconspicuous chap who had given up smoking only because when he bought cigarettes he invariably handed them out to others. He gap-

ed in surprise when he saw Gusein at a neighboring table, and rose to go to him in order to lead him back to the pier. Khrulyev held tight to the fitter's sleeve.

"Don't interfere. Now we'll see this shock worker show what he is worth!" he whispered maliciously. "Sit quiet, I tell you!"

Gusein was glaring about him, trying to catch the eyes of his neighbors, who sought to avoid his glance. He leaned back in his chair. Before him stood a battery of empty bottles. There was a fleck of beer foam on his lower lip, which hung down. A cigarette butt clung to the lip.

Around his table the waiters had long been hovering anxiously, and opposite him a chance fellow-drinker, a little, frayed fellow, frightened and weak, humbly shut his drunken eyes as he prepared to slip out.

Suddenly Gusein rose and swept the bottles off the table. Stepping unsteadily over the pieces of glass, he moved towards the door. An army of waiters in white met him, waving their napkins menacingly. But near the exit he shoved one of them with his palm, and the waiter, hitting his head against the door, gasped. Gusein dashed out into the street and ran off. Behind him he heard whistles. In the saloon Khrulyev split his sides laughing, and slapped his knee. Yakubov held out money to the waiters, begging them not to raise a row over the incident.

Gusein was no longer humming softly as he did at sea at sunset. He was gasping for breath in his drunkenness, waving his fist over his head and roaring like a siren. Passersby near the entrance to a cinema stepped out into the roadway to avoid him. Youngsters on the street shrieked deafeningly: "Beachcomber! Drunk! Beachcomber!"

At a crossing Gusein threw out his arms wide, blocking a woman's way. Terrified, she tried to flee.

"Caught you, Marusya!" And, looking at her pale, youthful face, he suddenly smiled sadly and perplexedly. "What are you afraid of? I won't touch you! Oh, my darling!"

His frenzy suddenly disappeared. Weakness and a slight dejection came in its place. On the boulevard he tumbled down on a bench and tore open his collar. The trees swam from left to right. Their trunks were bathed in fog.

"This is the end, it's too late to correct things . . ." he said, moving his tongue thickly. "Now I'll be put on trial again . . . in the Red Corner . . . like that other time . . . just like that time. . . . Basov will be the judge, of course. . . . Of . . . course! . . . Well, go ahead, put me on trial . . . . What do I care?" He raised his head and listened to the scream of the siren. "The *Derbent's* siren. . . . What a roar it makes. . . . They'll pull anchor and sail off. . . . without me. . . . That's all. . . ."

His left fist hurt, and he felt it moist, as if he had crushed something living and sticky. He held up the palm of his hand. It was black with blood.

"Where did I get that? . . . The bottles. . . ."

His head ached and he felt the nausea rise in his throat.

The distant siren screamed again and Gusein's feet felt cold.

"Why am I sitting here? Sitting and sitting. . . ." He counted the seconds, painfully stretching his feet. "If I get up right away I might be in time yet. . . . Oh, I'm sunk!"

At last he crawled off the bench. His long legs shook when he rose, and he strove to keep down the nausea.

"I must get back to them," he said loudly. "And I must find Basov. I have to get aboard without being noticed. Basov knows it's my illness."

Near the grocery store, under the shed, two men were standing. The

waves lapped the rocks near the pier.

"You say he ran to the boulevard?" Basov asked, worried and angry. "And you couldn't stop him, you tin soldiers!"

"We didn't have time. He was in a frenzy," Yakubov justified himself. "Even the waiters couldn't hold him."

"Mind, not a word about this," warned Basov. "Isn't that him coming?"

A man was moving along the side of the pumping station, which threw a black square on the asphalt. He walked furtively, stumbling constantly and raising his foot high with each step. His hoarse, heavy breathing could be heard from afar. He saw the men under the shed and halted.

"Basov," he whispered. "Can I go to the tanker? . . . I understand!"

"You must go down to my cabin," Basov said sharply. "Try to stand steady. Go ahead."

They went up the gangplank in single file. Yakubov hung behind a bit, out of a feeling of delicacy, feigning to tie his shoe laces. He was sorry for Gusein.

On the deck, near the gangway, the figures of the lookouts seemed black. Cigarette ends glowed through the fog.

Gusein straightened up and walked up the gangway. In the middle he lost his balance, groaned and grasped for the railing with his slashed hand. The men on deck laughed.

"Dead drunk," someone said. "Did you see that, fellows?"

Basov came on deck and stopped.

"Khrulyev!" he called. "Come over here."

The sailor came forward, hiding his hand behind his back.

"What's the matter?"

"You know the orders. Smoking on deck during loading is punishable by dismissal and trial. This isn't your first time."

"I put out the cigarette," Khrulyev hastily spat on the butt, averting his face. "You persecute some people while you screen other men's drunken sprees," he said in a trembling voice. "It isn't fair!"

"Why should I shield anyone?" Basov remarked lazily. "To-morrow I'll turn in a report and everyone will get his due. Clear?"

"But I put it out already. . . ."

"And he's sober already. . . ."

"Honest, this will be the last time, Basov, I promise. . . ."

The corridor was empty; only voices came from the mess room below. Basov entered the cabin. Gusein sat down at the table, his head in his hands. He swayed slightly as if he were suffering unbearable pain. His shirt, covered with sticky dirt, stuck to his body; wet fringes of hair stuck out on the back of his neck.

"Did anybody see you?" asked Basov. "You have blood on your face. Where did it come from?"

Gusein raised his head and sobbed.

"I'm a scoundrel, Sasha," he said in a quiet, sober voice. "I ruined my life and besmiched the ship's reputation. Why did you bring me in here?"

Twitching, he bit his lips and rubbed the tears over his face. Basov sighed and sat down on the berth.

"Listen, stop moping," he said impatiently. "You have blood all over you, and. . . . Did you vomit? Go wash up at the washstand."

He rose, opened the cupboard and drew out a clean shirt. Gusein soaked his head under the tap, rubbed his face with his palms, wheezed loudly and shuddered. Streams of water ran from his bare elbows and drummed on the floor. In confusion he raised his elbows and opened one eye.

"Take off your shirt," commanded Basov. "Put on mine for the time being. Ugh, what a scoundrel you are; it's simply amazing! Got into a drunken hysteria! What for, anyway? At a time like this, when discipline is so important! Here's a towel.... Do you expect to be called a real comrade? You sap!"

"Go ahead, bawl me out." Gusein wiped his face and changed his shirt. He sat down on the chair and folded his hands in his lap. The clean shirt on his back felt strange, holiday-like, and his face slowly and diffidently began to glow.

"It all seemed to mount up, you understand," he said huskily. "Bureaucrats at the roadstead, and our own men are fine ones, too... they sent a radiogram. 'Competition, rush the praise.' And then the fog...."

"In a word, your grandmother told your fortune! You're just a depraved type, a *lumpen*! A bit more and you would have completely disgraced the ship. It's pure luck you didn't."

"Never again, Sasha. It won't happen again! You won't tell anybody, will you?"

"I don't know," Basov reflected. "I'll tell the political instructor, Bredis. But he's a good fellow. We can smooth it over, I think."

Gusein sighed and looked out of the porthole.

"We've left shore," he said in relief. "Left shore...."

STAKHANOVITE VOYAGE

The political class was being held in the Red Corner of the *Derbent*. Here were the men of the engine room crew, the electricians and the sailors off duty. The men were seated around a long table, at the head of which sat Bredis. Kasatsky had come, too. He sat apart, motionless, with a concentrated, stern look.

Basov had been delayed in the engine room. When he entered it was quiet in the cabin, and a wrinkled newspaper was being passed from hand to hand. Basov noticed a large photograph on the front page—a broad-brimmed miner's hat, the lengthened oval of a face....

"We're discussing an old newspaper today." The political instructor turned to Basov. "We fell behind because of my illness," he added guiltily.

"A thousand two hundred per cent of his quota of output," said Volodya Makarov. "Wow!"

"How the devil did he do it? I can't figure it out," boomed Gusein in an offended tone. "What is he, a giant or something?"

"Doesn't look like it, from the photograph. You're probably stronger."

"Read it aloud, Volodya."

Basov stood along the wall, watching the faces of the men, out of habit. This did not prevent him from concentrating on what was being read; it even helped.

"... On August 30 Alexei Stakhanov's brigade, after reorganizing its work, turned out 152 tons per pneumatic drill in one shift...."

An old newspaper, Basov had already read it.... Motorist Gazaryan listened with open mouth. His face expressed amazement with that touch of mystery which children's faces bear when they are listening to a fairy tale. For him it was a miracle which had happened somewhere beyond the hills, beyond the valleys. Kotelnikov, glancing around at his comrades, bit his nails in concentration. He had already read about Stakhanov and now he was enjoying the effect it created on others. Gusein, by his side, was frowning. Over his brow a vein throbbed elastically, and the brown skin of his forehead was wrinkled. Of course he was think-

ing about whether it wasn't possible to "reorganize the work" on the *Derbent*, too.

...The sailor Khrulyev was staring at the ceiling with sleepy eyes. Near the ceiling rolled grey curls of tobacco smoke, the paint was peeling; the light hung in a dusty wire net. Probably Khrulyev had his own thoughts—that the trip had just begun, the stopover was far off, and he would soon have to go on duty, a dog's watch, the night watch.

...Apart from all the others, sat Chief Mate Kasatsky. He listened attentively, but, although he did not look around, he watched everybody. Could anyone understand Kasatsky?... Basov knew by heart the brief story of the coal miner, Stakhanov. Technical study at the Irmino Mine, intermitted with shock work in overhauling, attempts to organize and rearrange the brigade in his own way. Intent attention to labor processes, with every move, every second calculated.

It probably hadn't been easy to achieve what Stakhanov did, Basov thought. He recalled engineer Neiman and lathe operator Eibat, Nemirovsky's textbook and the regulating of the Diesel motors. And barring Alexei Stakhanov's way stood backward engineers and bureaucratic directors. Maybe he had been disconcerted by citations from books too.

...Alexei Stakhanov had to conduct an arduous struggle with some administration officials who stubbornly stuck to out-dated technical quotas of output.

So it had been. The frightened administrators snapped back, the foremen laughed: "Young and inexperienced." They dragged out old books and... quotas of output. Seven tons of coal a shift—that was the limit. "What is he after, this restless man and his brigade? It would be a good thing to get rid of him under a plausible pretext."

"It didn't work out," thought Basov, excited, and it seemed to him that when he had been forced to leave the repair shops a vague presentiment of victory had prevented him from giving way to despondency.

Bredis folded the newspaper neatly.

"The Stakhanovite movement," he enunciated slowly, "is above all a movement for utilizing technique to the full. This movement began from below—the directors and administrative staffs had nothing to do with it. The Stakhanovites are workers who have mastered technique and gathered enough knowledge to increase production. Such things as the Stakhanov movement can never occur under capitalism."

Stepan Kotelnikov, bending to one side his intelligent, slightly ape-like face, spoke up:

"There aren't many Stakhanovites, but there are already people who have mastered technique in their work. If they could organize work in Stakhanov fashion, there would be plenty of everything in the country. Every Stakhanovite produces much more than he can use himself. That means that others who have not yet reorganized their work will be living partly on the Stakhanovites' account. And what honest worker would allow himself to live on the account of another? Everyone ought to work like a Stakhanovite, as far as his abilities permit, of course."

"R-r-r-r-ight," said Volodya. "That's how it works out."

Kasatsky rose and advanced to the table, smiling, his handsome eyes shining.

"Comrade Kotelnikov stated a remarkable truth," he addressed the political instructor. "The Stakhanovite movement is only start-

ing, but it already carries within itself a mass beginning and undoubtedly will embrace the whole country. Kotelnikov is a bright lad."

"The boys are learning, they're thinking for themselves," remarked Bredis good-naturedly. "They didn't study political economy for nothing...."

The class ended. In the Red Corner several men had grouped around the radio operator, who was drawing something with rapid sweeping strokes. On the paper there appeared a long chain of mine cars and a small figure in a broad-brimmed hat. As always, the drawing appeared with remarkable rapidity, like an animated cartoon on the screen. And under Volodya's hand jumped out tiny barges and over them the figure 25,000. The hull of a ship, sketched in a few lines, stuck out from the edge of the paper, and under its nose curled the waves.

During dinner lookout Karpushin, who was on duty, appeared in the doors of the messroom.

"The *Agamali* is coming," he announced in excitement. "Boy, she rides beautifully, comrades!"

Several men laid down their spoons and forks. Others hurried, burning their tongues with the hot soup.

All of the crew off duty had assembled on the spardeck. Because of the fact that the ships were approaching each other and the distance between them therefore melted quickly, it seemed as if the *Agamali* were moving with the speed of a gunboat.

Second Mate Alyavdin joined the sailors watching the oncoming vessel. He strove to assume a careless, bored look, but his eyes sparkled restlessly.

"You ought to get in touch with them, Volodya," he told the radio operator. "Interesting to know what speed they're making."

"Do you think it's convenient?" hesitated Volodya.

"Why not? We're competing with them."

The ships came alongside and the men on the *Derbent* clearly saw the decks of the *Agamali*; along its rail men stood motionless. Unexpectedly the flag on the *Agamali's* stern quivered and slipped down the flagstaff. The crowd on the *Derbent* hooted approvingly.

"Aha! They've begun to consider us human beings," triumphantly cried Karpushin. "We ought to reply."

He glanced at Alyavdin, and the latter nodded. Karpushin ran to the stern. The men on the *Agamali* waved their caps as the vessel moved off in a cloud of grey smoke. Volodya came out of the radio cabin and went up to Alyavdin.

"They're making twelve knots, they radioed," he said in a disappointed tone. "That's their old speed with a full cargo. I thought they had improved—looks like they're resting satisfied with what they attained."

"Yesterday we made twelve and a half," remarked Alyavdin preoccupied. "And now, without a cargo, we've made thirteen. I bet we'll be at the top of the list for this season!"

"Can't tell yet. We have to make the most of our hidden reserves."

"What reserves?"

Volodya condescendingly toyed with his belt.

"Weren't you at political class? Too bad! We discussed the Stakhanovites. Hidden reserves are what an engine can do if it falls into able hands. Take, for instance, the *Derbent's* engines. When they left the shipyards the screws made a hundred revolutions and the cylinder load was unequal. After they were regulated by the crew they made a

hundred and twelve, and now only the fifth cylinder on the left lacks a full load. Basov says the screw can do still more and we can raise the speed. That's a hidden reserve. Basov says. . . ."

"Don't chatter so fast! Listen, Volodya. . . ."

"Well?"

"I read about Stakhanov myself, and I wanted to talk to Basov about an idea I had."

"So what? Go ahead and talk to him."

"He won't get sore at me because I made objections to the twenty-five thousand above plan, will he? What do you think?"

"Nonsense. He isn't the high-and-mighty kind."

"Listen, Volodya." Alyavdin was noticeably excited, but he made a desperate effort to seem unconcerned. "You're doing something there and you're trying to improve matters and you've already accomplished a good deal. But you don't understand a thing about navigation, and there are hidden reserves in piloting itself. I have an idea that isn't so bad. . . . The point is," continued Alyavdin, "that we round Zhiloi Island on the way to Astrakhan roadstead, leaving it on our left. We have to make a big swing roundabout, because the direct route would lie on the other side of the island, where it's shallow, and with a cargo we can't make it. But on our return trip, when we carry no cargo, there's no reason why we shouldn't go the direct route if the weather is good and we aren't carrying ballast in the hold. Yet we continue to go the roundabout way, making the detour and losing at least forty minutes each trip."

"How deep is the Sound?"

"Seven feet minimum. There's no question that we can make it *via* the Sound if we don't carry cargo or ballast. Forty minutes saved. There's hidden reserves for you," he finished triumphantly.

"Why doesn't anybody else go through the Sound?" Volodya wondered. "It's so simple."

"I don't know. . . . They're afraid to take a chance, I guess. I want to talk it over with Basov, and if he agrees we can persuade the captain."

Alyavdin offered Volodya a cigarette and ran off to study the map. The proposal pleased Volodya, though he strove to appear indifferent. He was embarrassed and even a bit regretful. It would be understandable if the proposal came from Basov, from the political instructor or from one of the motorists. Volodya didn't care for Alyavdin and everything he knew about him seemed hostile to the collective which had been forged by the competition. Alyavdin held himself apart, with vulgar jauntiness. But to save almost an hour by a simple shift in the course! Volodya was impatient to tell it to the Komsomols.

In the evening the crew was listening to the radio in the Red Corner. Kotelnikov was there, and Protsenko and Gusein. They listened to Volodya without animation —apparently they shared his instinctive dislike for the second mate.

"When we started, he sat back with his hands in his pockets," said Gusein irritably, "and now, when things are going ahead without him, he's rolling up his sleeves and jumping into the battle. For us it's a matter of honor, but he just wants to be in the swim. The devil with him!"

"Just the same, the suggestion is a good one," remarked Kotelnikov idly.

"What if it is? We would have thought of it without him."

"He kept playing the Victrola, that's all he could do," sneered

Protsenko in Ukrainian. "The devil with him!"

Basov entered and sat down. He had overcome his sleeplessness and had slept several hours. He was not what you would call lively, but he felt rested and calm, listening to the distant music from the radio loudspeaker, and, trying to catch the tune, he whistled it.

"Well, Volodya, my fine radio operator! Too bad we haven't an accordion."

Volodya smiled in reply, but instantly began to relate Alyavdin's proposal in a tone of mystery, his voice held down to almost a whisper. The Young Communists watched the chief engineer, who drew on his cigarette with pleasure and listened calmly.

"So Alyavdin proposes that we go through the Sound?" he said at last. "Sounds suspicious. I think it's shallower than eight feet there."

"I told you it was absurd." Volodya seized on his words with relief. He was pleased that now everything had become clear and the proposal of Alyavdin, whom he considered hostile to the ship's collective, had turned out to be inapplicable. "He's just a lot of hot air!"

"He wanted to show off, but it didn't work," remarked Gusein. "We ought to get rid of him...."

"Of whom?" asked Basov.

"The second mate. It's none of his business!"

"You've gone crazy!" Basov was amazed. "Here's a fellow proposing an improvement, and you grumble! We have to discuss it."

The Young Communists fell silent. Volodya began squirming in his chair, glancing about in confusion.

"But you said yourself—! I simply don't know enough about navigation to judge. Alyavdin is second mate, he knows better. Let's talk it over with the captain, look over the maps, and think it over. I can't see what there is in the proposal that makes you dislike it so much." Basov looked about with his former good nature, but he noticed dissatisfied faces and he stopped short, ceased smiling, and his eyes became hard.

"You don't have any gift for judging people," grumbled Gusein at Volodya. "Can't you see what kind of a bird this is? He looked down on us when we began to tackle things, said that twenty-five thousand above plan was a crazy dream. And now he wants to make a stir and advance himself."

"This is all low talk about personalities," said Basov, frowning. "There are no strangers here, and I know Alyavdin as well as you do. But he's second mate, and as long as he is on the ship no one has the right to interfere with his participation in the work of the collective. If he does us dirt, we'll fix him, or we'll kick him out! He wants to help us now, and to repulse him is to cut off your nose to spite your face."

"No good, fellows," remarked Kotelnikov sullenly. "Again we're beginning to create a closed circle, a group of the virtuous. We spoke about that, didn't we? Volodya, you yourself said we work little with people. Why repeat mistakes?"

"I don't like him. He's alien, somehow...."

"I think we ought either to kick him off the tanker or draw him in and use him. There ought to be no alien people."

"It's always like that," resumed Basov more softly. "At first you work alone, you're hindered, laughed at and they try to show you that you've started a crazy thing. If you're on the right path and fight hard to reach your goal, little by little they begin to

agree with you and soon they want to help. Half the job is to get people on our side. The bigger half, if you please.... You talk to the poitical instructor. He'll tell you. I speak poorly, I'm no propagandist!" He stopped short with a smile.

"All right, what are we arguing about?" grumbled Gusein, reluctantly. "If he helps, we'll say thanks. That's right, isn't it, Volodya?"

"Right...."

Before the last watch Basov went up on the pilot's bridge to take a look at the maps.

The sea was calm. The crests of the broad, smooth waves bore an indistinct reflection of the stars. The railing on the bridge was warm, and damp from spray, and it quivered slightly.

If it were not for this weak internal quivering of the vessel, it would have seemed to be standing still and the sea to be flowing like a river, in the opposite direction, the direction in which the wind was blowing and the waves rolling.

Basov hummed a tune and looked down. On the spardeck, near the lifeboats, he saw the white of a woman's dress. The sound of laughter and a voice simulating anger was wafted up to him.

"Don't be naughty...."

"Who can be with her?" Basov thought, recalling Vera's smiling, rosy face, her small nose and the light eyebrows on her childlike porcelain forehead. That spring the sailors had quarreled over her and gossip about her had spread among the crew until Bredis shamed the fellows at a meeting. She was equally affable with everybody, but had never hung about deck with any one member of the crew.

"And now Vera has found someone," thought Basov with sudden pain. "She's probably head over heels in love, too. Well, it's understandable. Even the deformed... and only I...." He cut short his thoughts. "Well, I'm glad. A beautiful night, and they're probably standing there, alone, embracing. And I had love, too, but apparently it wasn't the real thing, because it all ended so simply, as if it had been cut off. What is there to regret?"

He went forward to the cabin and tried to occupy his thoughts with the subject of the new route proposed by Alyavdin, but with the clarity of delirium he saw Musya's bare arms, he even felt her weight on his shoulders and her face appeared from the dark like a flash of light. "I think I always loved you, Commander...."

He looked up at the black sky, dotted with sparkling stars, and gritted his teeth. He felt the need of occupying his mind at once. He went forward along the bridge and reached the pilot's cabin. Near the reserve compass, bent over the dial, stood Karpushin. He was making a note of something and was so absorbed that he did not hear Basov's footsteps.

"Studying the compass?" asked Basov, trying to give his voice that sociable tone which, he felt, people adopt in a serious conversation. "I myself want to study navigation, but I can never find the time....A serious business...."

Karpushin started, and moved aside, smiling in confusion, but as soon as he recognized Basov he felt at ease again.

"No, I'm not studying. I'm following the course," he muttered mysteriously. "Only please be more quiet. I don't want him to hear."

"Who?"

"The sailor at the wheel."

"You're following the course?"

"I'll explain right away," the sailor said hurriedly. "Just let me write this down.... O.K.

"See how the ship just went off

course by three points? That was when he lit a cigarette. I've written down four pages of such little shifts in the course. Some of them are pretty big ones—five degrees and even more. If you drew our course on the map you'd get a wavy line. I'm checking the course this way for the second day. . . ."

"These shifts slow us down plenty, I suppose?" asked Basov, becoming interested.

"Shhh, he'll hear us. . . . Of course they slow us down! You increased the speed, but it all goes for nothing as long as the work at the wheel is sloppy. I noticed it on my own watch when I stood at the wheel. And then at the political class we started discussing Stakhanov and hidden reserves. I think a direct course, without any deflections, is a hidden reserve. Today when I was on duty at the wheel I achieved a minimum of deflections. No more than half a degree. Now I'm recording the work of the other sailors at the wheel and tomorrow I'll show them how they work. It's a damned shame!"

"Are your notes in order?" asked Basov rapidly.

"In perfect order. I even write down the time of each deflection."

"Then let's chart the deflections and call a meeting of the crew to discuss it. That is really a great hidden reserve."

"Isn't it, though?" interrupted the sailor. "We'll make them look sharp, Basov." He glanced at the compass and opened his notebook. "Deflected from the course again, just now. Two and a half degrees. . . . Look!"

"I see," smiled Basov. "I'm only in your way with my questions. I'll leave."

This brief conversation somehow cleared his mind and brought back that firm balance which had been shaken by the sight of another's happiness.

"One more discovery," he thought with joyous surprise of his conversation with the sailor. "And so simple, clear to everybody who knows that a straight line is shorter than a curve. The mates and the captain and the motorists knew about the deflections from the course. But it took a sailor at the wheel to make the discovery."

The plan for the first Stakhanovite voyage was approved at the general meeting of the *Derbent*'s crew. You could hardly call it a meeting. There was no presidium and no one made the main report. Men came from their watch, left. The Red Corner became foggy with tobacco smoke, and Bredis did not even try to restore order when the men grew noisy.

He frowned slightly when the noise grew and the voices melted into a disorderly excited roar. He sat without looking around and without changing his posture, and he seemed to be deep in thought. Only the brief remarks which he dropped at rare intervals showed that he was listening attentively and easily appraised all this noise.

The meeting did not go off without friction. Karpushin placed on the table a sheet of paper on which a wavy line had been drawn in pencil. Red-faced and clumsy with embarrassment he described his observations at the reserve compass. The men laughed and all began talking at once. Kotelnikov squinted, looking about for the men who served at the wheel.

"You know what this looks like?" he began seriously. "Like the story of Peter and Ivan, who went to drag in a log. Peter strains himself, breaking his back, and Ivan pants and puffs out his cheeks. It isn't very honest, comrade sailors, it's even an ugly business."

"It's a pack of lies, comrades!" a sullen voice cried. "He himself

sleeps at the wheel! . . . The ship doesn't follow an even course when he's on duty, either! . . ."

"You're lying!"

"He ought to get his teeth knocked out for this," a cautious voice muttered.

Gusein's cheek quivered and he suddenly lunged out of his seat.

"Who said that?" he roared, his face turning purple. "Come on, step out!"

"Take it easy, fellows," said Bredis, without moving. "Where do you think you are?. . . Karpushin is talking turkey. The men at the wheel have to take themselves in hand and stop spoiling the achievements of the rest of the crew. For the beginning we'll check their work."

"Right! Check their work!"

"Next point. . . ."

Second Mate Alyavdin sprawled on his seat with his usual negligent, bored look, flinging back his hair and squinting from the smoke. Nevertheless, he kept his eye on the door. The captain kept coming in and going back to the bridge. Basov was late, detained in the engine room. Alyavdin began to feel uneasy. Could it be that they had forgotten about his proposal? But the captain returned, sat down with a groan alongside Bredis and covered his eyes wearily. Kasatsky came to the door, sized up the meeting with a curious sharp glance and smiled, apparently at his own thoughts. Basov was the last to enter. He was very dirty and looked tired. From the layer of soot on his eyelids his eyes looked as if they had sunk into their sockets, and this gave him a gloomy, menacing appearance. But he smiled and went straight to Alyavdin.

"Have a seat, Basov. Plenty of room," Alyavdin said, moving over. "I was afraid you wouldn't come. . . ."

He had dropped his usual cocksure tone, and he immediately became angry with himself. "They'll think I'm trying to ingratiate myself. I ought to be more perfunctory and rude with him, like he is himself. That's how he gets his authority. . . ."

Basov sat down on the edge of the chair and flung his hand carelessly over the back.

"They've prepared everything for overhauling the fuel pump," Basov said, looking aside. "That's the last thing that remains to be done."

Alyavdin assumed an attentive look, regretting that he could not find something to say in reply, but at the same time glad to be sitting with the chief engineer and chatting with him in front of them all.

"How about the new route?" cried Basov, addressing Bredis. "You discussed it at the triangle,[1] why do you keep silent about it?"

Captain Kutasov fussed nervously.

"Well, as a matter of fact, we didn't come to a conclusion. It looks as if the Sound is deep enough to pass without cargo, but, on the other hand, the route is so little studied. . . . What do you think, Kasatsky?"

"I wasn't present when the triangle discussed the matter," commented Kasatsky, smiling, "but I have already stated my opinion. The new route is quite navigable."

"I know it's navigable. . . . But it's a big responsibility," Evgueni Stepanovich said slowly. "Other vessels don't take the chance, and we'll run in where angels fear to tread. If other vessels are afraid, that means it's probably dangerous. It is dangerous, isn't it?"

[1] Party organizer, director and trade union organizer in a factory. Aboard ship, the Party organizer, captain and chairman of the ship committee.

"Well, dangerous is too strong a word. There's a small risk, true."

"See? There is a risk. How can we— ?"

"But only fish swim without taking risks, Evgueni Stepanovich," smiled Kasatsky with hypocritical affection. "We're not asking the captain of the *Agamali* to chart the new course for us."

An awkward silence set in. Many dropped their heads to hide a smile, or bit their lips. Basov groaned and frowned, watching the mate. Kasatsky himself seemed surprised at his own words. He looked about in innocent and gay amazement.

"I meant that it is worth taking the risk if it is sensible and seems expedient," he continued, unembarrassed. "We can gain an hour in the Sound, which means about a hundred thousand ton-miles a trip. If we take into account the fact that we are opening up a new route for others . . . in a word, I'm for the proposal!"

"When you looked at the map, Evgueni Stepanovich, you didn't object, I think," said the political instructor.

The captain grew distressed. He supported his cheek on a fat palm. As usual, he felt uncomfortable because he had been persuaded, and he wanted very much to agree and have done with the matter. But at the same time the responsibility, which he might yet avoid, frightened him.

"All right, let's do it," he said finally in a firm, determined voice such as soft, yielding people employ when they are conscious of their softness and seek to hide it from others. "I'll lead the ship through the Sound myself. After all, the risk is not very great, is it?" he finished, as if he awaited confirmation which would completely allay his fears.

Alyavdin beamed. In the last minute his countenance had changed several times, now falling into gloomy vexation, now becoming animated. He whispered to Basov, unable to hide his joy and forgetting his intention to appear rude and perfunctory:

"That's a real rationalization proposal, isn't it, Basov?"

During the stop-over about a hundred tons of superfluous burden was removed from aboard the tanker: anchor chains and anchors, heavy parts prepared for winter repairs. Only enough fuel was taken for one trip. All this made it possible to take on three hundred tons of extra cargo.

In the engine room they overhauled the fuel pump and cleaned the sprayers. Mustafa Gusein, filthy and tousled, came running out on deck and called the radio operator.

"Can you do me a favor?" he asked, embarrassed. "I won't have time to go ashore today, you see. . . . I want you to telephone . . . to some one."

"I get you.No date for you today," laughed Volodya. "You look like a cannibal in a children's drawing. And what's her name, this 'somebody' of yours?"

He took the slip of paper from Gusein and shoved his cap back on his head.

"I'll tell her you're not in the right mood today. Maybe she'll go out with me. Who knows?"

"Now don't you get brassy with her, Volodya, hear me? Remember, no wisecracking! She's a nice girl," Gusein said, scanning his envoy doubtfully. "I'll give you hell if you're rude to her."

Before they had come to port they had radioed ahead that they would be preparing for a Stakhanovite trip. The workers of the docks and the personnel of the pumping station were notified, and the sta-

tion worked in good order, the cargo was loaded at top speed, the hose throbbed, and the high hull of the *Derbent* slowly sank lower and lower.

From the bridge the captain and the mate watched the loading. The excited, somewhat solemn fuss of loading absorbed the captain. At sea he had read through the latest newspapers, and before him was the figure of Stakhanov in an aureole of lightning-like glory. But Evgueni Stepanovich was afraid of something. Fear seized him suddenly, it seemed to catch him unawares, caught at his heart. Too much that was new was being instituted on the vessel, and these new things contradicted his love of the accustomed, the habitual order of things.

At the meeting he had been persuaded to go through the Sound, and he had agreed, because the risk seemed a small one, and around him they were discussing Stakhanov's daring rationalization. But when he climbed up to the bridge he recalled the accident to the *Kavkaz*, which had run aground at Bear's Point, and his assurance disappeared. They were dragging rusty chains and coils of rope along the deck; heavy cylindrical objects whose use was known only to the mechanic were being dragged out of the engine room storehouse.

While Basov stood on deck and directed the workers, Evgueni Stepanovich calmly figured up in his mind how many tons lighter they were for freeing themselves of unnecessary dead weight. But when the chief engineer descended into the engine room, Evgueni Stepanovich suddenly felt nervous. All the same, no one had done it this way before! And what if the spare parts were needed at sea or they ran short of fuel in a storm?

Evgueni Stepanovich would have willingly talked it over with the chief mate; he even began a conversation several times, but Kasatsky answered in monosyllables and was apparently preoccupied. His face was pale, and the puffiness of his cheeks, evidence of age, a sign Evgueni Stepanovich had not noticed before, became more evident. In addition Kasatsky smelled of vodka and his eyes shone gloomily, unhealthily.

"What's the matter?" Evgueni Stepanovich whispered when they remained alone for a moment. "You look ill. Has anything happened?"

"I have a headache."

"Too much drinking. You ought to stop."

"Leave me alone.... What do you want me to do, go to a cinema for recreation? Listen.... They're all so young. Or does it simply seem so to me? I mean the men on deck."

"Not so young. Basov is around thirty. There he is."

"He's just a lad.... A talented lad, that's all."

"I don't understand."

"You don't have to understand. You're an old man."

"You ought to lie down. What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing. Look at Alyavdin."

The second mate ran up to the bridge and paused to catch his breath. He looked at the clock and smiled.

"Seven thousand tons loaded in three hours," he reported, beaming. "Isn't it great, Evgueni Stepanovich? The docks never worked so well. I went to the pumping station, wanted to thank them, and they laughed. 'We're working for Stakhanovites today,' they said. 'Show us what you can do at sea, that'll be thanks.' But we have to cast off into deeper water, it's too shallow near the dock, Evgueni Stepanovich."

"Well, let's cast off," agreed the captain. "What do you think, Kasatsky?"

"I don't know.... You can judge best."

"Cast off," decided the captain, growing suddenly gayer. "Go ahead, friend, cast off. So you say everything is going well?"

"Splendidly, Evgueni Stepanovich."

On deck workers were raising the hose. Pulled aside, it hung over the pier, dripping black streams of mazut. The electric winches of the *Derbent* rattled. The vessel slowly slipped along the pier into the deep water, and stopped. Now only one hose was attached, pumping in the last thousand tons. It grew dark.

Gusein came out on deck and sat down on a step of the gangway. He hummed quietly, wiping his face and his bare chest with a rag, and sniffing the fresh sea wind. The sailors returning from the city passed him on the gangway. Among them was Volodya Makarov. He went up to Gusein, saluted and clicked his heels.

"Orders carried out," he said merrily. "I was told to convey her regards. She was gracious enough to speak of you in terms of high esteem. I even shed a tear."

"Cut it out. Stop horsing around and tell me what she said," frowned Gusein.

"No, it's a fact. Looks like she was waiting for you impatiently, because when I said you were busy her voice broke. It would be interesting to know what she's like."

"None of your business.... Oh, damn it all.... That's my luck, Volodya!"

"What do you mean, your luck? I told her we're going on a Stakhanovite trip and she began to question me and seemed to feel better about it. I think she likes my voice, by the way. Finally the other people waiting to make calls kicked me out of the phone booth. She's a swell gal!"

"A hell of a lot you know...."

The workers on the docks began pulling up the hose. The loading was over. The metallic voice of the *Derbent* screamed deafeningly and drowned other sounds momentarily. Then the roar was cut short and from far off the echo came in a short bass bark.

"We finished loading in three hours and seventeen minutes," said Volodya, glancing at his wrist watch. "Good lads, the dock workers! We never filled up the holds so fast. Now put on the speed, comrade motorists!"

Gusein stretched, smiling gaily.

"We just repaired the fuel pump. We'll make thirteen knots, not less. Enough for you? Boy! We'll make speed today, Volodya!"

Along about midnight Kasatsky emerged from his cabin. Stepping heavily on the damp deck planking, he walked along the spardeck and leaned against the davits, raising his sharp chin.

At the edge of the sky the tongue of the young moon shone out from blue-grey clouds. The quivering glow of the port lights was drowned in the sea.

Kasatsky sighed, yawned, shrugged his shoulders and walked on, stamping heavily with his heels, past the lookout, who stood aside as he approached; up the ladder to the bridge, past the pilot's cabin, down and again there were the same davits, bent in the shape of a question mark, with the block at the end, the wet tarpaulin, sprinkled with the sparkle of the moon; the lights on the masts, the lights on the edge of the sea.

"Prison!" he said loudly, starting at the sound of his own voice. "Well, you've taken your walk. Don't you want to return to your

cabin, Oleg Kasatsky?" he addressed himself.

In the corridor a dusty frosted bulb burned near the ceiling and the door knobs gleamed. Something tinkled below. From Alyavdin's cabin the phonograph sounded sweet in the silence. The first mate rocked back and forth on his heels and jingled his key ring.

"Are you dancing? Dance, cretins! Just the same you're in a prison. . . ."

He walked back, as far as the man on duty at the wheel.

"Khrulyev?"

The sailor straightened up, and his figure loomed indistinctly in the dark.

"Come nearer. Well, how are things?" asked Kasatsky, yawning. "It's dull, old man."

"Yes, dull enough. The night watch is hell."

Khrulyev shifted from foot to foot, trying to scan the mate's face.

"Satisfied with the job?" asked Kasatsky carelessly. "Big changes these days. We'll get bonuses. Glad of it?"

"Of course I'm glad, how. . . ."

"Then you're satisfied?"

"Well, how should I put it. . . ?"

In the darkness their faces were indistinct and their voices felt each other out cautiously.

"Some of our men are getting famous. How do you like that? When you read the paper you'd imagine Tatar Gusein was fulfilling the plan single-handed and the rest don't count, they're just trash."

"Sure. It's a damned shame. . . ."

"As for you, pal, you'll never be famous. You don't have the figure. That kid radio operator—that's another story."

"We'll see about that! Yesterday that propellor of theirs acted up, and the lights went out. . . . I notice it all, don't worry!"

"Bright lad, you've got a head on your shoulders. You ought to make it your business to know everything that goes on aboard the tanker. Today it's the screw, tomorrow something else. . . . Then we'll put things in their proper place!"

"If there were to be an accident in the open sea. . . ."

"Shh! What are you saying? Who's that standing down there below?"

"The boatswain. He's hard of hearing."

"Good. That proverb about not having to teach the learned goes for you, I see. You realize that everything depends on me? The captain is just a minus."

"The old guy," snickered Khrulyev, moving nearer. "I've noticed everything. Don't worry, Oleg Sergeyevich."

"Bright lad. I'll speak to you when the time comes," said Kasatsky, glancing at the distant lights in the sea. He turned and again walked around the deck.

One of the doors was pulled ajar and a round head stuck out, covered by thin silver bristles. The head stood motionless, the eyeglasses shining.

"Evgueni Stepanovich!" joyously cried Kasatsky. "Aren't you asleep yet? I'm going through hell, my friend. It hurts here." He placed his hand on his chest. "A terrible evil worm, a huge worm. . . . He will eat me one of these days! But why aren't you asleep?"

The captain squeezed through the chink of the doorway and stroked his shaved head.

"I was rereading Gorky's *Song of the Falcon*," he said, smiling tenderly. "Remember it? 'Born to crawl, he cannot fly. . . ' How much pride in that for the winged and how much bitter gall for those who cannot fly!"

Kasatsky broke into a laugh.

"Oh, my friend, what nonsense.... But I'm glad you're not asleep." He rocked on his heels and thrust forth his lips with drunken tenderness. The captain moved back and sniffed.

"You're drunk, Oleg Sergeyevich," he said sadly. "When will you put a stop to it? Put your cap on straight."

"Drunk, of course drunk! What else do you expect me to do in a prison? There remain drinking vodka and studying the classics. Come into my cabin, Evgueni Stepanovich, come on, just for a minute! Such horrible dreams.... You wouldn't refuse me this favor, this little, tiny favor? Desolate, desolate.... Now I'll unlock my cell.... Cell, that's just the word. We're in a prison. Don't look around! We're alone, there's no one else here! One can see by your very face that we're in a prison. You have a conscience; you're unhappy, yet you can't leave. Where would you go? Into the water?"

Evgueni Stepanovich followed the first mate into his cabin. On the table were an inkstand and a complicated old chinaware clock. Green light fell from under the lampshade. Underfoot was a soft rug.

The room smelled of alcohol, perfume and honey-like tobacco. Cozy, warm, attractive. But Kasatsky bared his teeth convulsively and spoke of boredom, sleepless nights and brief, terrible dreams.

"I have no friend here except you," continued Kasatsky. "I want you, and you alone, to understand me. What difference would it make to me if Bredis, for example, sympathized with me? He would lecture me and tell me I am a remnant of a dying class. It's a terrible thought to be considered a useless thing. Ha, ha.... Throw away the fragments, throw them right out so they won't get in your way!"

Kasatsky's eyes grew round and large, and he stamped his feet with a frenzy half in jest, half in earnest. Every muscle twitched in his distorted face. Then he wiped his brow and smiled, a weak, weary smile, like an actor playing a difficult role.

"But I don't want to be thrown out, that's the point!" he went on, lowering his voice—mysterious. "*Mein Kaffe schmeckt mir noch sehr gut*, as old German women say. What would you suggest doing?"

Evgueni Stepanovich fell heavily into the armchair, folded his hands over his stomach, and sighed.

"What nonsense you talk," he said irresolutely. "Who's going to throw you out? And in general... why do you drink so much, if it upsets you so? You look a mess."

Kasatsky began pacing up and down the length of his cabin.

"Tell me, don't you sometimes feel old, very old? Not senile, no. Old is just the word I want, old like one of the moss-grown stones in the Persian Wall in our town? Before your eyes scores of generations have lived and died, and you shared their every mistake, their every stupidity. You discovered continents, built the pyramids, issued laws. And now the continents are settled and tilled, and jaded tourists eye the remains of monuments. Packing-houses and public lavatories have been erected on the sites of ancient cemeteries and battles. People are in a hurry to live, as if they were going to do something amazing. Just try to dissuade them! They'd push you out of their path and go forward without glancing back. But they don't concern us. You, you—what about you? You're old and you tired of everything long ago. What to do? To flee into the taiga, where the wolves will

surely devour you? Or to pretend that you believe in today's sun, and to go along with those who are remaking life? You'll be granted a place in society, general respect and your bread and butter. But it's very hard, very exhausting and the worst of it is that the people about you don't do their fighting with toy swords. They're fighting to the death, and honor the fallen like heroes. In order not to betray yourself you must go under fire. But you're pretending only in order to save your own life, which, the devil knows why, is still dearer to you than anything else. So you go through the comedy, you turn crimson from the strain and groan, like a clown lifting cardboard dumbbells. Sooner or later they'll find out your dumbbells are cardboard and you'll be chucked off the stage in disgrace, and at the same time they'll deprive you of the bread and butter for which you did it all. The game isn't worth the candle, as they say. Besides, you know beforehand that sooner or later this will happen. . . ."

Evgueni Stepanovich glanced at the clock, bored. He no longer wanted to sleep but he felt a torpor, a heavy apathy which pressed him to the armchair.

"I don't understand what you're driving at," he mumbled, looking into Kasatsky's face irritably. "This is some kind of an allegory. Are you speaking of yourself?"

"Allegory! That's just it, an allegory!" Kasatsky seized on the word in admiration. "Our whole situation is in that word. We are so cautious even with one another that we have recourse to allegories. Brainy rascals, these 'former people'! But what do you think about it all?"

"I think you're simply drunk. . . . A healthy-minded person shudders at such thoughts. They're foul."

"Really?"

"Yes. We don't dare to talk so about the past. All these sculptors and commanders and even alchemists were in their way correct, and they were immeasurably above you, because they believed and sought. Without them we would not have learned what we know now."

"But they rotted!" shouted Kasatsky. "Well, why did they torment themselves? Did they make anyone happy, did they reconcile anyone, were they themselves happy? Nonsense!"

"You don't understand a thing. Not a thing!"

"Think it over, Evgueni Stepanovich. In a hundred years not a trace of you will be left on the face of the earth. . . . But the devil with the past! Was I really speaking of it just now?—You understand me, I hope?"

"Yes and no. I gathered only that you hate those, down below. You hate them because they're young and ready to sacrifice themselves, because they're happy and listen to music. Their happiness and their faith in the future is unattainable for you. There's no place for you in that future. You're too . . . alien. But your hypocrisy is terrifying, Kasatsky. How you carried yourself at the meeting! You even offended me somewhat, though I don't hold it against you. Sometimes I become repulsive to myself. . . . But how can you live, with your thoughts? Some day someone will point a finger at you and cry: 'He's a sham!'"

The last word Evgueni Stepanovich uttered in a whisper. He paled, and perspiration broke out on his forehead. Kasatsky rocked on his heels and bared his teeth. It seemed as if he were shuddering at each word, as if from unseen pinpricks.

"I'm not afraid one bit," he said sharply. "They don't have the brains to see through me. And you,

my dear fellow, will not betray me: I am nearer to you than Chief Engineer Basov, and you understand me better than you understand him. Don't try to deny it!"

Kasatsky paced back and forth diagonally across the cabin, turning agilely at the corners. His shadow now contracted into a clot under his feet, now straightened out and was flung across the wall.

"I have nothing but contempt for what they will think," he muttered indistinctly. "They can't understand the operations of my brain. But if they only knew...."

He approached the table and slowly unscrewed the stopper of his black thermos bottle. He shuddered as he poured the transparent liquid into a glass, gulped it down and covered his lips with his palm. He broke off a piece of bread and slipped it into his mouth.

"Listen, enough of that," protested Evgueni Stepanovich weakly. "Really, I'll leave right now! Stop!"

The odor of alcohol in the cabin grew stronger. Somewhere below them a phonograph gave one last sigh, the sound scattered into bits, and stopped. Kasatsky halted at the table, his long fingers buried in his hair.

"Well.... I want to tell you something. Don't think that repentance is gnawing at my vitals or that I fear my own thoughts. No, no. I want you to know about it. Only you. I am convinced that fundamentally we think along the same lines, although you quote the classics. Well.... Fancy, I once nearly sacrificed myself. You don't believe me? ... I'm speaking quite seriously. But then, it was long ago, in 1906. See, I even give the date—candidly, no allegories.... Those were ugly days. Sober shopkeepers, procurers, and the Black Hundreds beat up workers and students on the streets. Men whose morale had broken down, who no longer believed in anything, committed suicide. And liberal lawyers and doctors, who had previously taken moderate part in politics, hid behind the curtains and even went to the lavatory with a peculiarly mournful expression. A foul, horrible period!

"Remember? Probably you sat at home yourself. Well, well, I'm jesting, of course. But this storm involved me seriously. It cast me up and whirled me about so, that I held myself back on the very edge of the abyss. I don't know what impelled me then to involve myself in the struggle. A thirst for adventure, the romantic trappings of paroles, attending conspirative gatherings, weapons in one's pocket, weapons in the attic and so on? Or simply the spirit of the times? For impressionable people, a mighty factor. I think all these things played a part.

"... At that time I had graduated from the naval academy and was serving at Kronstadt. That summer a state of alarm reigned in the fortresses. The cruiser *Gromoboi* had returned from the Far East. After the Tsushima defeat the sailors were sore as devils—they ganged up and even threatened their officers with their fists. I knew a few men from an underground organization. Most of them were simple folk: sailors, sappers, mechanics of the repair shops. I think they didn't trust me very far. And it seemed to me that these men, gay and fearless, gathered only for the sake of the excitement, to escape boredom. They would talk, threaten, and when everybody would agree, it would be found that the times were not ripe for action. That pleased me. Although I imagined myself a conspirator and although I concealed weapons, deep down in my heart I felt sure

nothing would happen, and felt it would be better that way. Though it would not have been a bad thing to kick out the admirals, seize the ships, hoist the red flag and steam off to Petersburg—let 'er ride! . . .

"One man alarmed me a bit, a sapper whom we knew by the nickname Turk. He was really the soul of the organization—a huge, pockmarked fellow with tiny hawk-like eyes. Once the orderly Senya came to a meeting with his head bandaged. An officer had flung hot tea in his face. Turk heard what had happened, turned pale as a corpse. 'I'm a scoundrel if they live through the summer!' he cried. 'We'll tear up their cursed tribe root and branch! Senya let's have a look at you!' The orderly unwrapped the bandage. His face was a mess of red patches and blisters. What a roar of fury arose! My heart jumped. This no longer had anything in common with that exciting game which had attracted me. The worst of it was that this man felt a strong fondness for me. He would smile affectionately, and tell me: 'They say you're from their camp, but now you belong to us, you've come over to our side. That's why I love you like a son.' It went against the grain, this affection, but what was there to be done? Perhaps I might have broken with the organization then, but pride gripped me, petty pride, boyish pride. How could I let them think I had taken fright? And so the summer passed. As a matter of fact, I was happy. Fresh surroundings, a uniform with shoulder stripes, a sword, I had not grown tired of it all yet. A café on the boulevard, with an orchestra, the height of chic, smart, elegant women, gypsies from the Strelna restaurant. Perfect! Night trips down the bay on cutters, white nights over Marquis Pond, pearly dawns.... Careless lightheartedness, my head awhirl with wine, the spectre of desperate deeds ahead. What place in all this could reflection or self analysis have had? Once, when I rushed home late in the afternoon, I found a note on the table. 'The devils have driven out the monks. Come to the gambling house!' I realized something important had happened, but somehow I did not believe danger was at hand. I recall that before I went out I shaved and sprayed eau de cologne on my officer's cap. I wanted to stroll down the boulevard or go to a café after the meeting. Somehow it even seemed piquant—to go from a meeting right to a pub: I covered a tremendous distance in ten minutes. Of course, I concealed this, and even to myself this unnatural mixture seemed terrible . . . but I liked it.

"I came. Turk met me in the anteroom embraced me and kissed me thrice. 'Comrade,' he whispered, 'the crews revolted on the warships in Sveaborg. They threw the officers overboard, tore up the flag of St. Andrew for dish rags, and they're heading for Kronstadt. We have a telegram!' The apartment was full—the whole organization had assembled. It was hot as a steam bath. Jackets flung open, faces crimson, voices hoarse from strain and a kind of desperate, absurd exaltation. I heard the orderly Senya, who was always so subdued, shouting, 'Brothers, our torments are over! Drown the dragons!' And Turk said to him affectionately, 'Rest assured, Senya, we won't even leave seed of them for a new crop,' and to me, with a triumphant smile: 'At last!'

"I sat down in a corner, waiting for some cautious person to bring them to their senses: 'The time hasn't come for action.' And then everything would go on as before—happily and engagingly, and not terrible. . . But it didn't turn out that way. Turk said: 'Tomorrow we act,

we shall support our comrades. Anyone who is afraid of his skin had better leave. This is a serious business, brothers....Well, I'm calling a vote, who is for joining the uprising? . . .

"No one left, no one stopped Turk. Silently everyone raised his hand. I, too, raised my hand, scanning the others. At that moment I lost my ability to act independently. Then the plan of the uprising was discussed. I think I took part, gave advice. Turk told me: 'At four bells tomorrow we must get the gun crews out of the forts. Try to put the guns out of commission.' I agreed.

"What happened to me was like what happens to a man who slips a noose over his neck for a second to experience the sensation of a hanging. You know it's just a joke, you have only to rise on your toes to breathe freely. And suddenly your foot slips, the noose tightens.... It's the real thing!

"I tried to recall what my assignment had been for the following day. Target practice....Horseback riding with the Chinese girl, Mako. . . . A party at the Yenisei Regiment. But something had happened. I could not recall the faces of the officers of the Yenisei Regiment, or their names. Just pale ghosts. . . . As if my soul were paralyzed and half of it had stiffened monstrously fast. On the other hand, I clearly realized what would happen to me at the forts. Probably the commander would shoot me before I would have a chance to open my mouth. Turk seemed to guess my thoughts. He came up to me, sat down alongside, embraced me. 'Oh, my dear friend, many of us will be missing tomorrow! Don't think about it....' Oh, yeah? I went out on the street. What the hell! Music on the boulevard, 'Toreador'.... You understand?"

Kasatsky laughed, a peal of nervous laughter, and patted the captain's knee. Evgueni Stepanovich shuddered.

"Make it snappy," he muttered angrily. "How did you survive? Did you flee after the rebellion?"

"Mmm.... Not exactly....I am describing my emotions, not facts, Evgueni Stepanovich.... Do you think I turned coward? Do you think I soiled my pants, prayed to god? No, no, no! Really, I was almost calm at that moment. I stood there, listened; what did I need that damned music for? I stood and saw in my mind's eye, the people dancing. A clear sky, pale green; the next day would be clear, windy. What has all this got to do with me? I thought, when tomorrow I would almost certainly be killed. At the meeting they had kissed each other, they had rejoiced over something, they were expecting something. Not death? No, of course not. Or were they convinced they would remain among the living? Again, no. Then they rejoiced over what would be after their death.... 'Let us suppose,' I said to myself, 'let us suppose that they succeed in seizing the forts, the warships and the arsenals. Arrest the officers, make their way to Petersburg, arm the people.' Beyond that my imagination did not go. I would not be among the living! How could I rejoice over what lay in wait if I would never see it myself, I, a living being, yesterday still with a future which seemed to be boundless. My dead ghost would take my place at the future rejoicing...."

Kasatsky caught the fixed glance of the captain and looked aside.

"I've lived a long time, Evgueni Stepanovich, I have grey hair. But I would not say I am tired of living. I would have been a fine one in a tarpaulin sack on the bottom of Marquis Pond. They would have forgotten me the next day, probably. Unless some kind soul would have squeezed an article on

the dead hero into an underground newspaper. B-rrr. 'Dead hero' sounds as absurd as, let us say ... 'nice corpse.' Would you like to be a nice corpse, my dear friend? No, thanks. I prefer prison! ... Why do you stare at me? Don't you agree with me?"

"You haven't finished your story," mumbled Evgueni Stepanovich in a shaky voice. "Please proceed."

Kasatsky cracked his finger joints and turned around.

"I don't know what you want of me! ... But the devil with it! ... Do you want the facts? Well, the uprising started at the appointed time. They stabbed the guards. They gathered a pyramid of rifles and tried to make their way to the forts. They were met by machine guns.... They attacked the arsenal. Then they were surrounded by soldiers of the Yenisei Regiment.... They didn't have ammunition. Shooting began. There weren't so very many of them... Everything was over by nightfall. What more do you want to know? I don't remember the details.... The warships from Sveaborg never came. Whether it was a mistake or a provocation I never learned.... It blew over surprisingly quickly. They took the bodies out on cutters and scrubbed the pavement...."

"And this Turk, Oleg Sergeyevich?" said the captain so low he could hardly be heard. "What happened to him?"

Kasatsky rose and paced back and forth, shrinking in drunken chill.

"What makes you think of him all of a sudden? You're inquisitive, you know.... Well," and he halted, glancing sidewise, with not quite a smile and not quite a grimace. "Hung! Do you need details? I regret I do not recall the details."

Evgueni Stepanovich sat motionless, breathing heavily; he flushed deeply.

"You haven't told me everything, Kasatsky," he began with the impetuousness of a hesitant person who steels himself to tell the truth. "You're silent. No more is necessary. I heard about this terrible incident.... There was treachery there, and you know it quite well.... You...."

"*Yurodivi!*"[1] the first mate cried, crunching his teeth, his whole body trembling. "Ugh, what a thing to imagine.... No, you surely have gone crazy! ... Listen...."

"Why, why have you told me all this?" cried Evgueni Stepanovich, grasping the arms of the chair and making an effort to rise. "What devil bound me to you? I do not sympathize with you. Your thoughts and your presence nauseate me.... Oh, why cannot I expose you—and myself!"

"My dear friend, is it worth while tormenting yourself?" said Kasatsky, holding forth his hand and smiling a joyous, unctuous smile. "So you have something to conceal, too? I knew it, I knew it! We are tied firmly, with ties of blood.... Only, for god's sake, not a word! We shall live long. And even here there are pleasant moments.... Even quite pleasant moments.... Now we'll take advantage of this competition, I'll arrange that.... I'll arrange everything, Evgueni Stepanovich. Only, remember—not a word! And if you try...."

He did not complete the sentence. On his face alternated suppliantly affectionate and threatening grimaces. But the captain suddenly softened and seemed to be embarrassed by something. No trace re-

[1] A half-mad devotee, in the Russian Orthodox church regarded as both saint and seer.

mained of his recent flare-up of rage.

"I have similar memories ... or worse," he muttered sadly. "And I, too, can't forget, and try to justify myself, just like you. But there is no need to talk of this. Do you hear? Never again ... and to talk—no, I will tell no one. No one...."

The news of the Stakhanovite voyage spread to every corner of the port. The tanker *Derbent* steamed out to sea, and there was no word from it until morning. At six o'clock it reported by radio, when the chief of the navigation department queried them for their speed. Radio operator Tarumov recorded in his log book an unheard-of figure: fourteen knots. This seemed too high and looked like an error. The navigation department telephoned to ask whether the radio operator hadn't got it wrong in his haste. Tarumov decided to check the figure, and he called the *Derbent* again. He let the time allowance for broadcasting the meteorological forecast go by, and a heap of undelivered radiograms gathered on his desk. He worked away at the key until the radio brought the reply: "Quite correct. Speed fourteen and a half." And after a pause came, abruptly as a curse, the ringing clatter of dots and dashes: "99." The radio operator chuckled and dropped the earphones. In the international language of radio amateurs this figure means "go to the devil." Volodya Makarov was becoming rowdy from joy or had really become annoyed by the repeated calls.

"Do you realize, Musya?" said her fellow-worker, Tarumov, to Basov's wife at the radio station. "They beat all the old speed records! The *Agamali* makes twelve knots with cargo, and that's considered good speed. What are they, magicians or something?"

Musya Beletskaya replied reservedly:

"Don't be in a hurry to rejoice. They haven't arrived in port yet. Of course it's a high speed, but ... they have to keep it up. Up to now they were always behind," she added.

But soon they phoned from the office of the newspaper *Caspian Bolshevik* to inquire about the speed of the *Derbent*. Musya spoke into the phone carelessly:

"The latest report is fourteen and a half knots. You don't believe it? Then you'll have to come to the radio office to convince yourself.... Yes, yes, we're congratulating them.... If only they're not delayed at the roadstead. We'll let you know when there's something new...."

At eight o'clock Tarumov and Musya were relieved. They walked together to the crossing. As usual, he held her arm and they were both silent, unembarrassed by this silence, like people who have known each other a long time. Suddenly Musya broke the silence with a question.

"They'll probably write about the *Derbent* in the newspapers, I suppose. Do you think so?"

"Certainly."

"Will they print their portraits?"

"Whose portraits?"

"Well, theirs ... the Stakhanovites'."

"But there are forty-five of them.... They'll probably carry the pictures of the best ones, not all."

"To look at them.... Listen, Arsen."

"Yes?"

"I read that some officials slandered Alexei Stakhanov last year. Can it be true?"

"Of course it's true. But why do you ask?"

"It just seems odd. Well, goodbye, Arsen."

"Goodbye. Why are you so strange? Your eyes are big.... Watch out, don't get run over...."

In the morning Tarumov once more got in touch with the *Derbent*. During the night the tanker had not dropped in speed. It had covered the distance to the Astrakhan roadstead in thirty-one hours. A caravan of barges was in wait for it at Seal Banks. The wind grew stronger toward morning, and a swell set in. They brought up the last barge with difficulty. Despite this, the unloading was completed in three hours. The tanker was already on its way back, running before a heavy swell from the north which threatened to slow down their speed.

A different shift was on duty at the radio station during the day and Tarumov, coming on duty that evening, glanced at the log-book. There was no record of the Stakhanovite voyage. The *Derbent*'s arrival in port was expected after twelve noon, but at eight o'clock in the morning the radio operator heard its call signal.

"Nearing Zhiloi Island. Will arrive in two hours. Inform pier for loading."

"How can that be?" thought the man on duty in surprise. "If they're nearing Zhiloi Island they have three hours to go, no less. Maybe the radio operator balled it up!"

"Phone the dispatchers' office," laughed Tarumov. "No one balled it up, it's quite correct."

"But it can't be! I worked on a ship, I know."

'You don't know the new route. They're going around the other side of the island, through the Sound. It's much shorter."

"But it's shallow there."

"Eight feet deep. They're traveling empty, without ballast. Besides, they got rid of useless weight, so their waterline is lower. They figured it all out, don't worry."

"Clever lads! It's not for nothing they're the talk of the port. Now they'll hear about them in Makhach-Kala and Astrakhan and Krasnovodsk...."

"I know one of them, the radio operator Makarov. An ordinary fellow, just a lad.... Very lively...."

"I know their captain. Nothing special. An old fellow. 'Please, my dear fellow,' 'Thanks, my dear fellow....' A quiet one."

Musya, biting her lip, listened in silence. She had become quiet since the morning, and no one paid any attention to her. Suddenly she addressed Tarumov with an assumed air of carelessness:

"There will probably be lots of outsiders at the pier. What if we went to look on?"

"All right," agreed Tarumov. "I'll take you."

"I want to take a walk," she added hastily. "There's such a nice cool wind."

They walked along the boulevard to the harbor. Musya mechanically toyed with his fingers, pressed her shoulder to him and was silent. Tarumov reflected aloud.

"What is the Stakhanov method? Rationalization, sensible organization of labor, complete utilization of the technical means of production. I think this method can be applied wherever labor is equipped with technique. Why not employ it in radio communication? I tap out over a hundred letters a minute, and locate my correspondent rapidly. But that's not all. If we were to overhaul the transmitter and eliminate the static.... What do you think, Musya?"

They passed the repair shops and the unbearable glare of the sea struck their eyes. A metal giant slowly turned about in the middle

of the bay, raising above the water its yellowish rusty hull. Clumps of foam flooted astern.

"Is that... it?" asked Musya, halting.

"That's it, the Stakhanovite! Come on, quick!"

"No, wait...."

People passed them on their way to the pier, conversing animatedly and waving their portfolios. Tarumov heard a fragment of a sentence: "...a hundred and twenty per cent of their task for the voyage...."

Musya freed her hand and looked at the pier with staring eyes.

"We can see well from here," she said in a low voice. "I won't go any nearer." He looked at her in surprise and a certain hope, for he recalled that her husband Basov was on the *Derbent*.... So Musya did not want to see him?

Tarumov pulled out his watch.

"Just ten o'clock. They made this trip in sixty-three hours. Just the same I'll run over and watch them pull in. Wait here, Musya."

He waved his hand and ran down the hill to the pier. Musya remained alone.

During October the tanker *Derbent* carried a hundred thousand tons of mazut oil to the Astrakhan roadstead. In the second fortnight it overtook the *Agamali* and took first place among the tankers of the Astrakhan line. But around the twentieth of the month the *Agamali* successfully carried out its first Stakhanovite trip and came right up to the *Derbent's* record, challenging the new champion.

Competition became part of the normal course of events on the vessel. Large bonuses, articles in the press, roll-calls of the ships, with their standings, became common. The extra time put in on overhauling engines to increase speed ceased; repairs and overhaulings were made without strain. And even the crews' conferences went by without incident—new proposals were discussed calmly, without arousing distrust.

But once, at the end of October, again during a political class in the morning, Bredis paled and buried his face in his hands. The sailors jumped up and crowded around helplessly. Bredis raised his head and looked in surprise at his hands, covered with blood.

"The class is over," morosely declared Kotelnikov. "You can all leave."

But no one left, they all crowded around the sick man and stared at him. Gusein proffered him a handkerchief and, glancing about desperately, ran his hand through his hair.

"A silly incident," the political instructor muttered. "Why are you staring at me, Mustafa? We won't give up the fight yet, bud. Call Basov...."

They led him to his cabin and put him in bed. He stretched his bony body out on the berth, stared up at the ceiling and was silent.

Basov came. He ordered water brought and sat down by Bredis' bedside.

"We'll be in port in two hours," he said. "I'll call an ambulance."

"It isn't necessary...."

"As you please. Then I'll take you home by tram.... Why did you let it come to this, Herman?"

"Oh, forget it!" the political instructor turned over with an effort and took a deep breath. "I knew it would happen, Sasha, but I didn't expect it so soon. There are only two months left until the end of the navigation season. That's not so long. And in the spring the political administration will find someone to take my place. But these two months.... I would like

to work until the end of the season."

"Don't be silly. Do you want to die at sea? We aren't doctors, Herman. We'll wear you out in no time, if we haven't done it already. Tomorrow everybody will forget again that you're sick, that we have to spare you. This is no sanatorium."

Basov warmed the sick man's hands in his, stroked and pressed them, as if to soften the involuntary rudeness of his conclusions. The political instructor said:

"Not so simple, to leave the tanker. The province committee of the Party may not find a man to take my place right away."

Basov was silent.

"What's the matter? Why are you silent?" smiled Bredis. "You' ll have to take over the political work at first. That's plain as day. Of course, no one can force it on you," he added hastily, "you have the right to refuse. Then . . . everything will have to remain as it was."

"What kind of a political worker would I make? Are you jesting?"

"Then there's nothing to talk about. I'll stick it out, in bed. As a matter of fact, there really isn't anything that requires me to go ashore. The most important thing for men with lung trouble is pure air. And at sea there's plenty of that. . . . Brew some tea, Sasha, will you?"

Basov fussed about with the tea kettle a long time, and made a noise with the cover. His face turned red, even his ears crimsoned.

"We'll have time to go to the district committee during our stop-over," he muttered at last, as if he were discussing a settled matter. "If they have no objections to putting me in charge of political work temporarily, you can and should stay in town."

Neither spoke. Bredis took a sip of tea, wrinkled his nose and smiled guiltily.

"You're probably cursing me now, confess? But you're a splendid comrade. I still want to live, Sasha."

"I should think so!"

"If only everything goes well here. I sometimes think things aren't in such good shape as we think. The chiefs. . . . A few days ago I glanced over the log-book. All those radiograms of the captain. . . . They were all written under dictation. You know whose dictation?"

"I know."

"Aha! I've been watching for a long time, but I can't put my fingers on anything concrete. There isn't anything, is there?"

"Nothing."

"Keep your eyes peeled, Sasha. . . . Come to think of it, when will you have time to look into such things? You have your own worries—the engines. You know, I think I'll stay for one more trip. Shall I? Maybe I'll get a little better."

"None of that! Do you think that we're indispensable? What good would it be if you died here, aboard ship?"

"All right. I'm relying on the crew. Did you notice how the last few classes went off? There are hardly any who don't participate actively now. If only I weren't sick. . . . Who's that behind the door, Sasha?"

"The men. They're worried about you. You ought to go to sleep, Herman."

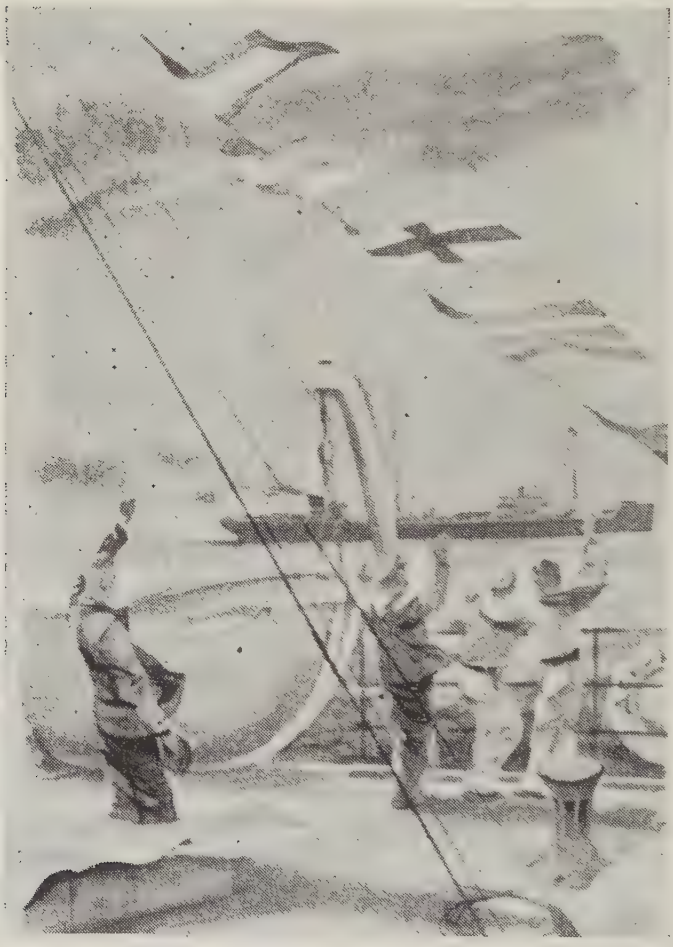
"Swell fellows. Pure gold. . . . All right. I'll sleep and then when we get to port I'll go ashore today. I want so much to get better . . . and return!"

At the stop-over Bredis left the vessel. He walked along the pier, tall and ungainly, his skinny, round shoulders bent. The wind ruffled his light hair and swept the end of

his long coat about his legs, as if it were mocking his weakness. A crowd of sailors followed him, nudging one another to help him, and from the tanker's decks the lookouts waved their caps, following him with their eyes.

They did not forget him, on the tanker. They remembered him in idle moments in the mess room, in the Red Corner, they were sorry for him, they asked after him in port. But the serious events which were soon to occur on the *Derbent* deflected attention from him. Afterward, remembering that season and trying to establish a consecutive account of events, the sailors would say: "That was in the days when Bredis was political instructor—that's when it was!"

Another excerpt from *Tanker Derbent* will appear in a forthcoming issue.



Frontispiece to a Russian edition of "Tanker Derbent"

Adam Scharrer

HANS ZAUNER BECOMES A SOLDIER

Of the seventy peasant families in Oberstiebingen, only half harvested enough grain to keep from starvation. In previous years they had found sources of additional earnings, but now even the Public Works Committee had ceased functioning for lack of funds. Jobs building the road through the forest to the summit of the Herre gave out when the road was hardly half completed, and the work was continued free by "voluntary" labor. The sawmills stood idle; the abandoned quarries began to fill up with water.

Zauner had always eked out his slim income by raising calves and training them to pull loads. He would wait until the calf grew up and was broken in to the work, then sell one of his cows. When luck was with him he obtained considerable additional earnings in this way, and at the same time he always had a team.

But after Hitler came to power Zauner lost even this means of adding to his income, for manufactured goods grew more and more expensive, and the prices which the *Reichsnährstand*[1] gave for farm products had dropped. Zauner could no longer pay for the strip of meadow land he used to rent, and his own fields did not yield enough fodder for two cows.

Zauner had read in the newspaper of a campaign against unemployment in the district of Neunkirchen, and of the plans connected with it. In an Unterstiebingen saloon he made the acquaintance of a certain Wasserschuh, a storm trooper and bricklayer, who was looking forward to the expected construction boom to get a job. But it was only February 1, and he had to wait a couple of months for the building season to get under way.

Once, when Wasserschuh visited Zauner, they agreed that Wasserschuh would repair Zauner's roof, and, as the roads were covered with a thick layer of snow, and Wasserschuh might obtain work from other people in the village, Zauner urged his widowed daughter, Emma, to let Wasserschuh stay in her room.

Emma objected because of the gossip that might arise. Her husband had died only a year before.

Zauner was sure that Wasserschuh would help him obtain work in the spring and so he argued with his daughter. "Why must a diligent man, able to pay his rent, travel to Unterstiebingen and back every day, even in the fiercest snowstorm, just because people might gossip?" grumbled Zauner. In order to avoid further argument, Emma yielded. Wasserschuh was to work it out for her parents, and, in addition, he proposed completing the building of Emma's own little cottage, which lacked one wall; her husband had died before he finished it.

Meanwhile Wasserschuh made friends with Emma's daughter.

[1] A state price-fixing organization which purchases farm products.

Little Anna was three years old, and she was very fond of candy.

Emma earned her living by sewing for people in the village, but there were weeks when she obtained hardly enough for bread. When the wall of the cottage was complete, Wasserschuh stayed on, and people looked askance at Emma because he remained. The villagers thought they would marry. Zauner thought so too.

Emma was quiet and subdued. Soon she bore a child that came into the world with a bad rash and died some months later. Then Emma began to go twice a week to Unterstiebingen to see the doctor. Zauner knew nothing of her illness except that it was a woman's ailment.

His own worries drove it from his thoughts. The marketing rules were being strictly enforced. Not a liter of milk, not a pound of butter, not a kilogram of meat, not a chicken, not a rabbit could be sold on the market. The whole village was indignant.

Wasserschuh was appointed clerk and cashier of the *Reichsnährstand* of the Oberstiebingen group, and he stood over every sack of grain or potatoes, over every liter of milk, like the devil after a poor soul. He also sought out young people for "volunteer work"; among these young people was Zauner's eldest son, Hans.

Wasserschuh received seventy marks a month for his work and soon he became the most redoubtable man in the village....

The forester Eric Falk and the son of old Axelbreit were arrested and sent to a concentration camp.... One day Emma turned up at Zauner's with a bruise over her eye.

"What's happened?" asked Zauner.

"I slipped in the yard and fell against the wall," Emma replied. But when Zauner questioned his wife about the matter, he was answered: "Just ask the *Lumpen*. Isn't he your bosom friend?"

Zauner sold his two best fields and bought a horse. He received five hundred marks for both fields. A cart cost a hundred and fifty and harness fifty. Perhaps the old mare, with her sharp, prominent ribs and sunken back, might still have worked a couple of years, at her snail's pace, if only she had been fed a couple of kilograms of a oats a day in addition to her bad hay. But she had to earn the oats first. In order to obtain jobs Zauner underbid other carters. He coupled the mare so that she would not be a useless burden during the coming winter. The foal would have to be sold for enough to keep the mare in feed through the winter, and, thought Zauner, perhaps there would be more work next spring.

It was a bad idea again. The mare miscarried, and two weeks later she died. There had been a mortgage on the house for more than two years. The interest on the mortgage had been three hundred marks a year; now it rose to three hundred and fifty. The uncertain hope that enough land would be added to each household in Oberstiebingen to assure a living to every family had faded. The entrances to the estate of Baron von Boldt, the district peasants' "*Führer*," bore a legible inscription: "No trespassing."

The management announced that a permit was required to fell trees. Such a permit cost five marks, and it was valid for one month only, though for long weeks it was impossible to reach the forest because of the heavy snow and rain.

Permits were also required to gather acorns, at six marks a permit, valid only for the autumn season. The estate management received more than six hundred marks for these permits. Aside from the acorns the peasants had nothing

to feed the hogs. "Social requirements come before personal needs, but this is taking the shirt off our back," Zauner said bitterly to the forester.

"The few marks you pay for the permits for wood and acorns hardly cover the cost of the damage you will commit poaching. But if you think it is taking the shirt off your back, stop at home and don't let yourself be seen here again," he was told.

Frau Zauner had to ask the neighbors to buy a permit for acorns for her, and from sunrise to sunset she gathered acorns with her children. They had to survive the winter somehow, for the useless sale of the fields threatened them with near starvation. Frau Zauner was of the same age as her husband, not much over fifty, but she was already bent with age and her dumb, stubborn diligence was a constant gnawing reproach to her husband for his frequent drinking sprees. She worked, sometimes on bread and water, for as long as she could stand on her feet, and she could stand on her feet for a surprisingly long time. In summer she would find time, besides her work in the fields, to help her children gather berries and mushrooms. In the autumn, when the people brought in wood and acorns, and wanted help, they could always count on Frau Zauner. There were four in the Zauners' family: Gerda was twelve, Paul, the youngest son, ten. They had to have bread every day; three hundred and sixty-five days a year and if one day they didn't have any it would be the end of the world for Frau Zauner.

But now the remaining four hectares of land were so heavily mortgaged that Zauner doubted if even his wife's diligence would have any results. He felt as if he were a stranger in the village who had suffered a terrible stroke of ill luck. When Zauner came home one evening he found his wife in the room shelling acorns.

"Why do you shell them?" asked Zauner.

"For sale."

"But you can sell them as they are."

"We will receive a higher price if they are shelled."

"You will exhaust yourself with so much work."

"Up to now I haven't. And it won't kill me. Winter is long."

After a while Frau Zauner went on: "Hans wrote that he might come home in a couple of weeks, before he is called up for military service."

"A letter from Hans?" asked Zauner in surprise. "Where is the letter?"

Frau Zauner rose. She shook the shells out of her apron and answered: "He wrote to Emma. But he asked her to enquire about us. I don't like this roundabout way of asking after us."

"I have nothing against his coming," Zauner said. "Now go, get some sleep."

A cold wind was already blowing from the summit of the Herre when Hans arrived. He seemed changed.

He was as tall as his father and his gawkiness had disappeared. In appearance he was quite an imposing storm trooper. Of the life in the labor camp Hans related what everyone knew, that military order reigned there, that the day was strictly organized from sun-up to bed time: reveille, labor duty, dinner, labor duty again, lessons, athletics, marching with knapsacks between these occupations, night camp outdoors, field exercises, holy offices.

Hans was very attentive to his mother, and did all the heavy work for her. He repaired the old sled and went sleighing with his

sister. He was on excellent terms with Emma. When they walked together near the house, absorbed in conversation, they seemed like lovers. And on the evenings when the storm troop detachment was free from duty and Hans wasn't at home, Zauner assumed that Hans was at Emma's and Wasserschuh's in Unterstiebingen.

In these weeks Zauner felt the pinch still harder. The young cow still gave six liters of milk a day at the end of the autumn, but when there was no more green fodder and the cows had to feed on chaff, rough straw and thin turnip mash, the young cow began to give only two liters a day. The old cow was soon to have her twelfth calf. She became so thin that Zauner lived in constant fear that she would play him the same trick as the mare. He would have to economize on necessities and save money for a sack of bran, he decided.

Zauner determined to speak to the leading people in the village in order to find a job for Hans for the rest of his leave. First he went to Hummler, the innkeeper. Hummler had inherited a farm and he was chairman of the *Reichsnährstand* for Oberstiebingen. His horses and farm hands were kept busy carting wood for the store. Hans could certainly work a week or two for the *Reichsnährstand*: he might even work for Hummler himself and be paid out of the community funds. It was only two marks a day, but for ten days it would be twenty marks.

But Hummler, a heavy, clumsy fellow, did not seem to understand Zauner. He kept drinking and cursing his luck because his eldest son was to be called up for military service though he was his heir. "Four of my children have nothing, one will inherit the household, and he will also have nothing, because he won't be able to dispose of the household.[1] The devil alone can understand it," Hummler cursed. "In my time a young man was either a recruit or a peasant, and he became a recruit only when he was a settled man, already grown up. But nowadays...."

When Zauner asked Hummler to help Hans find work, Hummler replied:

"I can do nothing, Zauner. You have a bad reputation at the baron's. They grow furious at the mention of your name."

Zauner next went to the district peasants' "*Führer*," Erk. Erk was a keen hunter, a hunter by occupation, and some years ago in his zeal he had shot and wounded his only son. The law would give the household to the half-paralytic boy, now ten years old, and Erk took it as a stroke of fate, as god's will. His two daughters were married and lived in town. They had already received their dowry. Erk hunted now in leased hunting districts, mostly the reserves kept for storm troop detachments, S.S. men and Reichswehr officers.

When Zauner met him in the street late in the evening and spoke to him, Erk answered: "The best thing for you to do would be to speak to the baron yourself. Or write an application to him. If I wanted to do something for you or for Hans I would have to enquire beforehand, anyway, so why do it in this roundabout manner? Hans is a storm trooper. He will be given a job."

"I'll think it over," Zauner said, and walked on, bitter and humiliated. Zauner had abandoned the idea of asking Wasserschuh, but now he passed the latter's home and heard Wasserschuh's threatening, domin-

[1] The Nazi law makes the first-born heir to the household, and forbids its sale.

eering voice. Zauner entered the yard and heard clearly: "You hang about there the whole day and he hangs about here. And you always find something for him to glut. Do you suppose I can pay for it?" When Emma began to speak, Wasserschuh shouted: "Shut up, shut up, I tell you. And mind! If you go once more to Axelbreit or to this fornicator, Falk, or if they come here, I'll make you regret it."

When Zauner opened the door Wasserschuh turned round in fright at Zauner's unexpected appearance.

"What's the matter with you?" asked Zauner, feigning surprise.

Emma stood behind the table, deathly pale.

"What kind of tricks are these, old man? What do you mean wandering around my house like a ghost, in the middle of the night, and spying?" shouted Wasserschuh. "I tell you straight, I don't like uninvited guests, especially at such ungodly hours."

Zauner shut the door behind him and making a strong effort to regain his composure, he said: "There's no spying needed to find out what kind of a fellow you are," and as Wasserschuh still smiled defiantly, Zauner went on harshly, raising his voice: "It's my fault, *Lump*, that you're here, but rest assured the debt will be repaid—and if it comes to swift justice I'll be sure to take part in it."

Wasserschuh sat down. In Zauner's presence he looked even smaller than he was. Coldly he glanced at Zauner and said, shrugging his shoulders: "I have nothing to do with you, Zauner, absolutely nothing, but what I'm arguing about with my wife should make you thoughtful, too. The path from you to certain people always leads to Axelbreit, from Axelbreit to Falk, from Falk to our home, then back to your house, to Axelbreit ... and Hans, a storm trooper, among you! Who knows where this path winds up? Maybe you know, Zauner?"

Wasserschuh pushed his chair back with a strong movement and went to the bedroom. He undressed noisily and went to bed.

Emma picked up her coat, which was on the oilcloth sofa. As she lifted it Zauner noticed that a rolling pin had been lying underneath. Emma walked out into the yard and Zauner followed her.

"Is there any truth in what he said?" asked Zauner.

"I remade a coat for Frau Axelbreit," Emma answered. "Frau Falk also gave me some work. Clothes for her children. How can I get work if people can't come to me and I can't go to them?... But that isn't the point. The quarrel occurred because I don't want to transfer my property to his name."

"The hound!" Zauner exclaimed wrathfully, and he looked helplessly at the grey sky. Then he asked: "Where is Anna?"

"She's at mother's."

"Come with me, too. You'll sleep with us. In the morning I'll speak to him and make him realize how badly he's acting."

"No," said Emma. "It's not my first sleepless night. When he's drunk he falls asleep soon, and since he knows I won't take a beating from him without giving tit for tat, he'll think it over first. Go, and don't utter a word about it to mother."

When Zauner came home his wife was in the barn. "I think the calf will come tonight," she said. She had already prepared a rope, hay and warm water.

"Go to sleep," Zauner told his wife. He examined the cow, which was quietly chewing. "I'll wake you up in time."

He sat down on a bench. "He won't leave Emma in peace until

she agrees to transfer her property to him," was the thought that flashed through his mind. "And then he'll stay there forever, and if Emma objects he'll make such a hell of her life that she'll either leave the house or perish."

Hours slowly glided after hours in the night. The cow lay down, rose again and groaned from the birth pains. When she became quiet, Zauner's mind was again filled with concern for Emma. "Wasserschuh will insist on the fact that he completed the construction of a half-built house, that now his wife wants to turn him out like a beggar because he wants her to keep his home politically 'clean.' It will be easy for him to prove that Zauner, too, is not 'clean.'" It seemed to Zauner that he was an unarmed man in a narrow passage, with an abyss in front of him and an armed brigand behind.

The cow stood with her feet spread wide and gasped for breath. Zauner bent down to see if the calf lay in the right position.

It did. But the confinement did not advance. Pains came and passed, the cow grew weaker and weaker, she tried to lie down, but fell heavily and lowed wearily. Zauner tried to help her to rise, but she stretched her legs convulsively and there was a rattle in her throat as if she were choking.

Zauner woke his wife and Hans. They raised the cow with a rope and belts, while Zauner examined her once more. The head and forefeet of the calf could hardly be reached and the cow stood, her head hanging, convulsive rattles in her throat.

"Go to the shepherd, Hans," ordered Zauner. "Tell him to come at once, or both cow and calf will be lost."

The pains came again, and fresh hope with them. But the cow's knees shook, she shivered as if in a chill. Hans came back.

"The shepherd is in Unterstiebingen. I woke up old Axelbreit. He will come at once."

Axelbreit had the reputation of being a handy man with cattle. But Zauner feared that just now Axelbreit's interferance would be even more dangerous than the death of both cow and calf. Yet this apprehension made him wrathful. As Axelbreit entered the barn, Zauner said in helpless despair, and as if he were apologizing: "You are our last hope, neighbor."

Axelbreit quickly grasped the situation. Pregnancy had exhausted the cow, and she did not have enough strength to give birth. "In a case like this assistance is necessary as soon as the pains come," Axelbreit said. He rolled up his sleeves and felt for the calf's head and forefeet. Hans and the mother had to hold the cow's head. Zauner held a pail of water high enough so the cow's nostrils would nearly be in the water; to keep her head free the cow had to raise it. "Hold her, it's coming," cried Axelbreit. Then: "Let her head go, put the belt around her body, help her to rise." The pains again. The cow made a strong effort. "It's coming," shouted Axelbreit triumphantly. "Give me the rope," he cried.

It lasted a long time, but finally the calf was born. The cow lay exhausted. "She will recover," said Axelbreit comfortingly. "But when she recovers she must have something nourishing to fill out."

"What do I owe you?" asked Zauner, when Axelbreit was ready to leave. Axelbreit clearly felt Zauner's embarrassment. "You owe me nothing," he said. "You owe me just what I owe you, what people owe each other: to help each other. You owe me nothing but what each human being owes to himself."

Axelbreit tapped his breast. "You owe nothing but respect for what is inside here."

Frau Zauner came back from the kitchen, threw a blanket over the cow and turned to Axelbreit: "Stay a while, neighbor. It's warm in the kitchen." She brought a bottle of prune *schnapps* and poured a glass for him, as well as for Zauner and Hans.

"I haven't tried this myself yet. You must have found a good hiding place for it," Zauner said in joyful surprise.

Axelbreit clinked glasses with Hans and Zauner, and made Frau Zauner take a sip, too. He drank with pleasure and sat smiling through his ragged mustache. "For this price you may wake me more often, Frau Zauner," he said.

He drank another glass, and said, in order to efface his unceremoniousness: "If you had waited any longer with the cow, Zauner, you would have lost both it and the calf. Yet you are old enough to understand what was going wrong."

Zauner emptied his glass "If your mind were always free," he said earnestly, "and you were able to think of simple matters, things would be easier and you would be able to understand them better, but everything is in a muddle here"—Zauner pointed to his forehead with his thumb "—and if you want to have something out of here and you can't have it because you don't know what it may come to, then you feel you are finished, just like an old cow. And you recover your senses only when you receive a blow strong enough to knock the stuffing out of you."

"Don't be so foggy," Axelbreit answered. "I know what's wrong with you. I know it quite well, Zauner. Be cautious. It is not only fog that you have around. You can see cattle drivers already through this fog. I tell you frankly, you will be the first ram to fall when shots ring out. I'm speaking frankly to you, Zauner. Shots may be fired sooner than you expect."

And, looking at Zauner's frightened face, Axelbreit added: "I know you regretted a hundred times that you brought the *Lumpen* to the village, but regrets won't help you. If you don't resist him, if you keep on yielding, you and your family will be lost, and Emma, too."

Axelbreit's frankness made Zauner uneasy, and he was undecided whether he ought to speak in Hans' presence or not. Axelbreit spoke heatedly. "Now that we have come to it, Zauner, let's strike while the iron is hot. You must not play hide and seek with Hans. He is more cunning than you. And in the past, in cases where you made lots of fuss, behaving like a fool, your wife took care that you recovered your senses in time, so that you would be forgiven many things, but now we can demand of you that you openly take another line. You should stick to decent people in the village even if it means a sacrifice, Zauner." Axelbreit tapped his breast again. "You will be clean then, here inside, and you won't be abandoning and betraying your own wife and children. And that's worth something, isn't it? It isn't the same thing as dooming your own flesh and blood, even if it has been against your will, and so you must finish with the *Lumpen*. You must do it openly and not wait until you swing in a noose. Because the wolf who is within range receives the first bullet."

"Quite right," intervened Hans, and this "quite right," sounded in a tone unfamiliar to Zauner. It was affirmative and encouraging, not reproachful. Frau Zauner sat with motionless features, as if everything Axelbreit was saying stood to reason. Zauner grew more and more

pale and uneasy, but Axelbreit went on firmly.

"You still think, Zauner, that there is more justice above than below, but this is entirely untrue. Just think what the von Boldts have grasped. They separated two inherited households of their estate, and the von Boldt sons live a soft life and receive their officers' wages to boot. What they are doing now in Spain on a big scale is to a certain extent what they are doing in our village on a small scale. They keep the poor under heel, and they squeeze the last penny out of them; that's why they need such *Lumpen* as Wasserschuh. They can't exist without such people, and so long as such a *Lumpen* does not feel that behind each of us stands another man, so long as he does not see behind the second man a third, a fourth and a fifth, so long is each of us a lone wolf worth only the pelt that can be ripped off him."

Axelbreit spoke heatedly. He asked Zauner for a glass of water and shook hands with everybody.

"Good night."

"Good night."

Zauner decided to write a complaint about Wasserschuh to the Baron von Boldt. It had to be composed as if it came from Emma, but in the labor camp Hans had acquired some experience of complaints and how to go about them.

"In the beginning father must keep in the background," he said. "I will hand in the complaint as a storm trooper. If they imprison me I won't lose so much as you. It's not a very brilliant prospect to be called for military service, anyway. Emma must apply for divorce and we must make the greatest efforts to get as many witnesses as we can. Many people of the village can help us as witnesses, and I'm sure they will. Things will not turn out so bad if we go about it the right way."

"We should think it over carefully," Zauner said but there was more respect and acquiescence than dissent in his objection.

Later in the day Wasserschuh came from the village. He knocked, entered and greeted the Zauners with a "*Heil Hitler*"; took a seat without being invited, took a list of names from his portfolio, and said: "I want to collect some money. Five marks seventy-five pfennigs. Tax for road building."

"What do you want to collect?" asked Zauner. He swallowed as if he felt nauseous.

"Five marks seventy-five pfennigs. The money ought to have been paid long ago."

"But the work was done by 'voluntary' labor service. There was no talk of tax."

Wasserschuh looked at Zauner as if he understood the latter's wrath. "You are mistaken. At the meeting when it was announced that the road to the Herre had to be built, it was also announced that individuals would be notified later. We have made an estimate now and have calculated the tax for each household exactly. This is the first tax bill. You will have to pay more. You have four hectares of land, and two cows, to say nothing of the calf.... The only friendly advice I can give you is to pay."

And before Zauner could utter a word, Wasserschuh turned to Hans:

"I see you still owe forty marks for your uniform. It must be paid before you are called up for military service."

"When I joined the Labor Service I was clearly told the uniform debt would be canceled by the storm troop detachment. You said so yourself," Hans replied.

"I followed the regulations. I told you that it would depend on

each individual to behave properly if he wanted the debt to be taken up, and now I'm telling you frankly that I'm not surprised your debt is not being paid by the detachment. Either you pay, or else admit that you want to cheat the storm troop detachment out of it."

Zauner stubbornly looked out the window. He hated to look at these small, malicious eyes, at this yellow, bloated face, he hated to hear this voice. Every word Wasserschuh pronounced sounded full of the joy of revenge. Frau Zauner came out of the kitchen. Wasserschuh puffed at his cigar.

"You came here—don't deny it! —to show us what you can do," Hans broke the silence. Wasserschuh wagged his head like a weasel. Hans made a step toward Wasserschuh, stared at him calmly and disdainfully. "We know who you are. The whole village knows. You're a scabby dog. We know what you're up to. You want to deprive Emma of her house, and because her parents and I know about it you want to ruin all of us. I advise you to keep your hands off."

Wasserschuh jumped up. "You do me an injustice, Hans," he protested. "You have everything wrong, and you insult me without reason." He added with assurance: "The problem is what the reaction of the district administration will be if you don't pay, and it's quite simple. If you lose a horse or a cow or a pig overnight you can stand it, and you do, but you pretend not to be able to pay a debt for something that concerns the whole people. That's how matters stand. If you want to pay, bring the money to my home. You have until tomorrow."

Wasserschuh put the paper in his portfolio and stalked out hastily.

Emma went to the doctor and asked him to give her a certificate that she had been treated by him for a venereal disease.

"What is your name?"

"Emma Wasserschuh."

"What do you want the certificate for?" asked the doctor.

"I want to divorce my husband."

"I can only state that you had a venereal disease, but I must put it on record that it was not dangerous at first, it grew worse because you did not resort to medical treatment in time. I can't state that your husband suffered from a venereal disease, too; I have not treated him."

"I don't demand that," said Emma. "I only want a certificate of my own illness."

"You can demand nothing," the doctor said uncivilly. "Besides, I am surprised that you want a certificate of your illness after several years, when you have entirely recovered, in order to publicly discredit your husband. I wouldn't be surprised, now, if it were not your husband who gave you this illness but that, on the contrary, you gave it to him."

Emma was speechless with shame and wrath.

"How can you say such a thing, Herr Doctor?" she asked after a painful pause.

The doctor smiled spitefully and raised his head.

"Experience, *gnädige Frau!*"

"So you won't give me a certificate?"

"No."

After this interview, Emma spoke to Erk. He answered her in a fatherly manner.

"It is quite possible that you are incompatible, Emma. But certainly nothing will come of what you accuse him of. He poured his heart out to me, too. He told me you are cold to him, that he tried to do all he could to improve relations, but you avoid his efforts, you maintain friendships with peo-

ple who bear him malice; that he spent the best period of his life with you and your child, and suffered terribly when his child died. That he wished with all his heart to have another child by you, but you were against it. And if the court must decide which one is guilty, surely, Emma, when you come out with your accusations and he with his, you will be at a disadvantage. It will depend on the reputation of the witnesses you can bring—and relatives don't count."

"In his way Erk is right," Emma said to Hans. "The court will consider him right, and if it comes to that, Hans, it will be our own turn next—mine and yours and father's and who knows whose else? Wasserschuh knows it, and he will try to secure damages and he will demand the price of his work on the house. Everyone can figure what we will have left over, after all that."

"Try to keep him from taking action," Hans exclaimed. "Make him hope. I will talk to Axelbreit and tomorrow I'll see a comrade in Neunkirchen whom I knew in the labor camp. Don't say a word to anybody about it. We must charge him in court, but we must try to accuse him in the village first."

When Hans noticed that Emma did not quite understand him, he added: "You must be careful. There was a time when I, too, had only one desire: to give the hound a blow that would send him straight to heaven, and that would be the end, but I overcame it and I'm glad now. Glad because it permits me to help you now: and Falk and Eric Axelbreit and all the decent people in the village take our side. Everyone has his own troubles, but it is easier to bear it if you know that we all have the same burden and will all throw it off together. To shrug your shoulders or to commit suicide doesn't make things easier for anybody. In any case it would do no good to me or to the old people. If you realize all this and think not only of yourself, it won't seem so hard to you. You will stand firmly on your feet, then, and can play cat and mouse with this buffoon of yours. Then you can select the right moment to catch him. You think maybe these are only empty words, but they aren't, Emma. Try to prevent him from beating us to it with his claim of divorce. Tell him he must give you some time; you have all kinds of illnesses and you must recover first. Aren't you a woman?"

He smiled so meaningly that Emma thought herself a baby compared to him. But she felt the tension melt within her. She felt how thirsty she was for an encouraging word, and looked thankfully at Hans. "How you talk!" she said in surprise. "Where did you learn it?"

Hans shrugged his shoulders. "You learn lots of things in the labor camp."

In the evening, as Hans was writing the complaint, little Anna came in.

"Have Poppa and Momma quarreled again?" asked Hans.

"Poppa was drunk, and Momma said that when he falls asleep she will come and fetch me."

But Emma made her wait a long while. The children went to bed. Zauner went to the barn to adjust the blanket on the cow. Hans tried to go on writing, but he was anxious. Usually when Wasserschuh was drunk he fell asleep at once. Why did Emma not come?

Suddenly he saw a face peering through the chinks of the blinds. Emma. When she saw Hans she jumped back and ran off. Hans

dashed out, called to her, and found her behind the house.

"What's wrong?"

"Are the children sleeping?" asked Emma, looking past him. Then she slowly turned her head. Hans almost jumped at the sight of those frightful eyes in the chalk-white face.

"What's wrong? Tell me, Emma. For god's sake, speak!"

A ghostly smile appeared on her face. Emma said in a broken voice:

"It's happened, Hans. He's dead. I. . . ."

The wind whipped the confession from her trembling lips. She stretched out her hand to Hans.

"Goodbye, Hans. I won't come in the house. You must know nothing. Kiss the old folk and Anna for me. But tell them nothing. I'm going to give myself up to the police at Neunkirchen. . . ."

Emma wanted to pull herself away, but Hans held her strongly. As they struggled Zauner appeared at the door. "Come inside," urged Hans. "Otherwise you will involve all of us in this misfortune. Take her inside, father." Then to Emma: "If you don't obey me now I will never forgive you."

Emma walked into the house, shaking like a leaf. Hans looked about once more. There was nobody around. Then he stepped in and locked the door. "Let's go in the kitchen," he advised.

"Wasserschuh is dead," he notified the frightened parents. In despair, Frau Zauner threw up her arms. Zauner stood with his arms hanging, his face grey and limp.

"Don't cry," warned Hans. "You will only help the dead dog with your weeping. We must take care to keep out of trouble ourselves now. Nobody to help us, and no time to waste. The night is short." But neither the parents nor Emma could understand what he wanted.

"Now no mistake," said Hans. "It was I killed him, I and nobody else, and you must accuse me, only I must be gone before you do it.

"Father," he went on, "you have made a good many mistakes in your life, but now you can correct things and do some good if you guide Emma and mother properly."

An enigma still lay in Zauner's grey eyes, but he felt his giddiness pass. The greenish fog swimming before him melted. His wife's alabaster-colored face, her crooked, knotty fingers, intertwined as if in prayer, her cramped body, became as clear to him as the pottery on the plank. Everything suddenly became startlingly clear: Hans, the children, the village, life up to this minute.

"Tell us how it happened," Hans said quietly to Emma. Emma looked over the table at the wall as if she were seeking a place on which to rest her eyes. Then she began to speak as if she were waking from a dream.

"He came home drunk. I had kept his food warm for him. Cabbage, flour dumplings and sausage I had brought from Hummler's. He ate, and laughed at me. 'Aha, the *gnädige Frau* improves. She will improve still more.' Then he wanted some beer. In order to avoid a quarrel I brought some in. I thought he would lie down and I would have some peace. Then he wanted me to bring him cigars. I told him he shouldn't smoke so much. He started to yell again and to laugh at me. 'You will jump before me like a hare yet.' Then he demanded warm coffee. I gave him some. Then he said: 'Now undress. Show what you've got and what you can still do—but mind, show me everything.' I did not answer and sat still on the sofa. He sat down next to me, pawed me and tried to tear my garments from my body. I wouldn't let him, so he

slapped me. I hit him back, pulled myself free and ran to the door, but he had locked it after I had brought him the coffee. He seized me again from behind, but I tore away again. He threw the beer jug at me. I took the rifle from the wall and hit him. His eyes rolled up. He reeled and grabbed the table, and I thought he had had enough, but he was only feigning, and I saw him take his revolver from his belt, that was hanging over the chair. I hit him once more and then. . . ."

Emma's voice broke She laid her head on her arm and wept.

The clock struck ten. Hans told his mother: "Give me a pair of stockings." Frau Zauner obeyed mechanically. Hans put on his stockings, his boots, a woolen sweater, a jacket, a coat; tied a woolen scarf around his neck, looked in his pockets for his gloves, penknife and money, and said: "Now I must see what happened there. I must know in case I'm caught.

"At 12:30 I will take the train from Unterstiebingen to Neunkirchen, and then another train. You stay here, and no matter what happens, say he was drunk and hit Emma. Emma came to us. I went to him without your knowing of it. In the morning you noticed—*you* noticed it, father—that I didn't come back. You went then with Emma to see what was wrong, and at once you went over to Erk's to tell them. The rest will depend on your firmness."

His mother stared at Hans terror-stricken. Her lips quivered as if she wanted to scream, but it was only a muffled broken whimper. "And you," she muttered, "where will you go?... I can't stand it."

Zauner coughed and swallowed, then rose wearily and asked with difficulty, as if he were speaking a strange language:

"I don't know, Hans, the thing you want to take on yourself... isn't it more than you . . . more than we can stand? Wouldn't it be better to let justice take its course?"

Hans looked sternly into his father's eyes. After a moment he asked him: "Will you take this responsibility on your conscience? Do you want to abandon yourself and six other persons to this justice? Do you still believe in justice?"

Frau Zauner wrung her hands. "But you, Hans, where are you going? You will be caught like a wolf, and then nothing can save you from the hangman's hands."

Hans smiled painfully and looked at Emma, who rose as if after a faint.

"Don't go, Hans," she begged him. "Stay here. I'm the guilty one, and I can face the consequences. Stay, and let me go."

She rose. Hans held her back, and appealed to his parents. "Will you let her go?"

"No," said Zauner, and barred her way.

"Do you know a way through the border?" he asked Hans later.

"I don't know yet, but I hope I'll find out."

"Give him money, mother, give him all you have."

Frau Zauner ran into the bedroom in her stockinged feet and brought back fifteen marks. Emma had four marks more. Hans put the money in his pocket, patted his mother's hands and face, kissed Emma, shook his father's hand, and told him: "Take care of them, father." In the kitchen doorway he looked back once more. Then he left the house.

Exactly at four in the morning Zauner said: "Now we must go." He and Emma went to Emma's house. Emma gave the key to her

father. "Unlock the door, father. I can't. I feel faint."

Zauner unlocked the door, lit a match and stood petrified. Wasserschuh was lying on his back, his face yellow and bloated, one of his temples blue and bloody, his nose smashed. Chairs were overturned around him. The revolver, pieces of the broken beer jug, the rifle, a picture of Hitler smashed to pieces, a crushed cigar butt.

"Come," said Zauner hoarsely. "There is nothing more for us to see here."

He locked the door again, listened to the silence of the night, sighed, and whispered to Emma: "Now everything depends on each word we utter if we don't want Hans' sacrifice to be in vain."

"I'm firm," said Emma. "I'll be firm, even if they torture me."

When they reached Erk's home they had to call out in the yard for a long time.

"Can't a man have some peace in the middle of the night once in a while?" cursed Erk.

"Not in this case," said Zauner. "Open the door."

Erk listened to Emma's statement: "Hans killed my husband in the night." Erk stared at Zauner and Emma as if he had been doomed to the same fate. "For god's sake," he shouted. "Are you crazy?"

Zauner shook his head and answered: "Unfortunately, we're quite sane."

"And . . . where is Hans?" Erk asked, still stunned.

Zauner told his story, weighing each word carefully.

Erk dressed hastily, and cast a glance around the room. He locked the door, and said to both of them: "I must place you under arrest until the police arrive." He brought them to Hummler and locked them in the sitting room.

Then he tried to telephone, but the line was cut. He had to harness the carriage and drive to Unterstiebingen. They sent a police dog, who ran from Emma's house to Zauner, then to Hummler, barked in the sitting room, ran to Erk. Finally he followed the scent to Unterstiebingen, where the police discovered that the telephone wire had been cut, obviously with the shears found on the spot. It was discovered that Hans had taken the train from Unterstiebingen to Neunkirchen, but the discovery came too late; seven hours had elapsed. The first interrogation of Emma and Zauner lasted until three in the afternoon. Afterward Zauner was set free and Emma was kept under arrest until the inquest.

She was set free three months later. People in the village shook hands silently with her. Anna hugged her mother and laughed and wept with joy. The house was clean. Nothing remained of Wasserschuh. But the wound ached.... Where was Hans?

One evening when the children were already asleep Zauner said: "I want to take another look at the cow in the barn. Come with me, Emma. Let's take a look at the cow." Frau Zauner's eyes suddenly shone warmly.

In the barn, Zauner crawled under the manger, removed a stone from the wall, and took out of the recess a small tin box. He opened it and removed the picture of a soldier. A young smiling face. Hans!

Emma wanted to ask questions, but she saw tears in her father's grey eyes. With joy she looked at the picture again. The picture showed Hans raising his fist in salute.

It bore the inscription:

"*Salud!*"

CHAPAYEV

And indeed Chapayev did not drown in the foamy grey Ural.

He swam across the river—not in vain was he thought a great swimmer—and the Cossacks went in pursuit of him.

Plucky was this man Chapayev!

The mounted White Cossacks kept pressing on after him, and he fled from them into the woods. Bullets whizzed above his head, but he dodged them, crouched low and pressed on again.

The Cossacks were almost upon him, but he tricked them. He jumped into a bear's cave and hid there while the Whites rushed past, thinking he was still ahead of them. Chapayev crawled out of the cave and ran along a side-path hidden in the bushes.

The forest was dense and dark, and it is hard to say how long Chapayev ran. Many long hours must have passed, and he still kept running. Evening was setting in when he at last reached the edge of the woods. The sun was already rolling beyond the steppe horizon.

Chapayev looked about him and saw a tent to his right, and horses grazing in the steppe. He walked toward the tent.

"Who lives here?" called out Chapayev.

Complete silence answered him. One could only hear the grass sing, and the call of the larks in the sky.

"Who lives here?" called Chapayev again. "Come forth."

A rustling sound was heard in the tent, and an ancient Kirghiz crawled out.

"What is your wish, friend of the steppe?" he said.

Chapayev told him who he was.

"I am Chapayev," said he. "Vassily Ivanovich Chapayev, the commander of the Chapayev Division. I am fighting against the Whites, for a free and happy life for the poor."

"I've heard about you," said the old man. "You are a great hero, and all the world knows of you. All the poor love you—the Russians and the Kirghiz, the Tatars and the Chuvash."

Suddenly he bent low, and held his ear close to the ground, and

listened. His face darkened and grew grave.

"There," he said. "Your enemies are on your trail and drawing close."

The old Kirghiz ran into his tent and fetched a piece of cheese and a pot of *kumiss*[1].

"Eat and drink," he said, "but do so quickly. Then we shall see."

Chapayev ate, wiped his mouth with his shirt sleeve and waited to hear what the old man had to say.

The Kirghiz again held his ear to the ground and listened.

"The White Cossacks are closing in," he said. "They might come galloping out of the woods at any moment now. Their horses are fast as deer, but ours are still faster—they are like mountain falcons."

The old Kirghiz rose to his weak, trembling knees, and whistled so loudly that the entire steppe heard him. And Chapayev saw a stallion leave the drove and race toward them. What a stallion! Rarely has a king had such a horse as this. He was like a flame. A white star shone in the center of his chest, and his eyes were as bright as the eyes of a human.

"Here is a horse for you," said the ancient. "He will speed you away from any disaster. And here is a silver saber and a gilded gun. They will prove your most faithfull friends."

And he handed Chapayev a silver saber and a gilded gun.

"Mount the horse and fly past the woods to the right, then to the left. Speed on thus for five days and five nights until the stallion brings you to the Black Eagle Mountain of which no mortal knows. You will camp there and no one will ever reach you. But when the need arises, and the rich wrong the poor, you will come to their aid and save them."

Chapayev embraced the old man and kissed him thrice.

"Fly fast, bright falcon, the Cossacks are close at hand!"

Chapayev jumped into the saddle, caught the halter, and, swift as lightning, the stallion shot through the woods in a cloud of dust.

The sun in the meantime dropped beyond the horizon, and night fell on the steppes, dark as pitch. The Cossacks came galloping out of the woods, and approached the old Kirghiz.

"Where is Chapayev hiding?"

"I know not," he said, "I have not seen him."

"How can that be? You must have seen him!" cried the Cossacks. "He could have gone to no other place!"

They searched everywhere—the tent and the nearby woods, but they found no trace of Chapayev. The officer then ordered his men:

"Hang this old Kirghiz monkey on an aspen tree!"

And they hung him on an aspen tree, and burned down his tent. Then they returned to their general and reported that Chapayev had been drowned in the Ural river.

Only the Ural steppes know of Chapayev's heroic deeds! Many a time did he save the Red Army troops from disaster.

At times it would seem a detachment was perishing, so few men remained, and all ammunition gone. It would seem as though any moment the Whites would hack these noble fighters to pieces—when suddenly, as if from the very sky, Chapayev would appear. Flying on his flaming stallion as though it were a bird, he would swing his silver saber, the folds of his wide felt cloak outspread in the wind.

"Follow me, comrades," he would cry, dashing at the enemy.

[1] *Kumiss*—fermented mare's milk.

The Red Army men would then lose all fear. Their hearts aflame, they would follow Chapayev into the fiercest attack. Swinging their swords they would press on, until not a single enemy remained alive.

Later, when all was quiet again, they would find that Chapayev was gone. Then they would wonder whether he had actually been with them. But many swear that they had seen Chapayev with their own eyes, and he was wearing three Orders of Valor on his chest.

From a Collection of Red Army Folklore

Bronze plaque struck to commemorate the anniversary of Chapayev's death

V. I. LENIN

THE TASKS OF THE YOUTH LEAGUES

Speech Delivered at the Third All-Russian Congress of the Russian Young Communist League, October 2, 1920.

Comrades, I should like today to discuss the fundamental tasks of the Young Communist League, and in connection with this subject I should like to discuss what, in general, the youth organizations should be like in a Socialist republic.

It is all the more necessary to deal with this question for the reason that, in a certain sense, we may say that it is precisely the youth who are confronted with the real task of creating Communist society. Clearly, the generation of workers that was brought up in capitalist society can at best fulfill the task of abolishing the foundations of the old, capitalist, social life based on exploitation. At best it can fulfill the task of creating a social system that will help the proletariat and the toiling classes to retain power and to lay a firm foundation on which only the generation that is starting to work under the new conditions, under conditions in which exploiting relations between men no longer exist, can build.

And so, in approaching the tasks of the youth from this point of view, I must say that the tasks of the youth in general, and of the Young Communist League and all other organizations in particular, may be summed up in one word: learn.

Of course, this is only "one word." It does not answer the most important and material questions: to learn what; and how to learn? The whole point here is that, simultaneously with the transformation of the old capitalist society, tuition, the training and education of the new generation that will create Communist society, cannot be conducted on the old lines. The tuition, training and education of the youth must be based on the material that was bequeathed to us by the old society. We can build Communism only on the sum of knowledge, organizations and institutions, only on the stock of human forces and means left to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the work of instructing, organizing and training the youth shall we be able to ensure that the result of the efforts of the young generation will be the creation of a society unlike the old, *i.e.*, of Communist society. That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth, and of how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify its title of Communist youth; of how it should be trained in order to be able to complete the building of what we have started.

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Young Communist League, and the youth as a whole, which wants to pass to Communism, should learn Communism.

But this reply—"learn Communism"—is too general. What do we need in order to learn Communism? What must be singled out from the whole sum of general knowledge in order to acquire a knowledge of Communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which often confront us when the task of learning Communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted too one-sidedly.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning Communism means imbibing the sum of knowledge that is contained in Communist textbooks, pamphlets and books. But such a definition of the study of Communism would be crude and inadequate. If the study of Communism consisted entirely in imbibing what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets, we would too easily obtain Communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often cause us harm and loss, because those who had learnt by rote what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets would prove incapable of combining all this knowledge, and would prove incapable of acting in the way Communism really demands.

One of the greatest evils and misfortunes bequeathed to us by the old capitalist society is the complete separation of books from practical life; for we had books in which everything was described in the most attractive manner, and in the majority of cases these books contained the most disgusting, hypocritical lies, and described Communist society falsely. That is why the mere routine absorption of what is written in books about Communism would be extremely wrong. In our speeches and articles we do not now merely repeat what was previously said about Communism because our speeches and articles are connected with daily and all-sided work. Without work, without struggle, a book knowledge of Communism obtained from Communist books and works would be worthless, for it would continue the old separation of theory from practice, the old separation that was the most disgusting feature of the old bourgeois society.

It would be still more dangerous if we began to learn only Communist slogans. If we did not realize this danger in time and if we did not direct all our efforts to avert this danger, the half a million or million boys and girls who call themselves Communists after learning Communism in this way would only damage the cause of Communism very considerably.

Here the question arises: how should we combine all this in order to learn Communism? What must we take from the old school, from the old science? The old school declared that its aim was to give a versatile education, to teach science in general. We know that this was utterly false, for the whole of society was based and maintained on the division of men into classes, into exploiters and oppressed. Naturally, the old school, being thoroughly imbued with the class spirit, imparted knowledge only to the children of the bourgeoisie. Every word was adapted to the interests of the bourgeoisie. In these schools the young generation of workers and peasants were not educated; their minds were stuffed with things that were to the interest of that bourgeoisie. They were trained to become their obedient servants who could create profits for them and not disturb their peace and idleness. That is why, rejecting the old school, we have

set ourselves the aim of taking from it only what we require in order to secure a real Communist education.

This brings me to the reproaches and accusations which we constantly hear about the old school, and which very often lead to totally wrong conclusions. It is said that the old school was a school for learning by rote, in which knowledge was drilled into the pupils. That is true: nevertheless, we must distinguish between what was bad in the old school and what was useful for us, and we must be able to choose from it what is necessary for Communism.

The old school was a school for learning by rote; it compelled pupils to imbibe a mass of useless, superfluous, barren knowledge which clogged the brain, and which transformed the young generation into officials all of one pattern, as it were. But you would be committing a great mistake if you attempted to draw the conclusion that one can become a Communist without acquiring what human knowledge has accumulated. It would be a mistake to believe that it is sufficient to learn Communist slogans, the conclusions of Communist science, and that it is not necessary to acquire the sum of knowledge of which Communism itself is a consequence. Marxism is an example of how Communism arose out of the sum total of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that Communist theory, the science of Communism, mainly created by Marx, the doctrines of Marxism, have ceased to be the product of a single Socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that they have become the doctrines of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world who are applying them in their struggle against capitalism. And if you asked, "Why were the doctrines of Marx able to capture the hearts of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class?" the only answer you would receive would be: It was because Marx took his stand on the firm foundation of human knowledge, which had been gained under capitalism. After studying the laws of development of human society Marx realized that the development of capitalism was inevitably leading to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed, most profound study of this capitalist society, with the aid of preceding knowledge, which he had thoroughly assimilated. He critically studied all that had been created by human society, and did not ignore a single point of it. He studied all that had been created by the human mind, subjected it to criticism, tested it on the working class movement, and arrived at conclusions which those who were restricted within bourgeois limits, or bound by bourgeois prejudices, could not arrive at.

This is what we must bear in mind when we talk about proletarian culture, for example. Unless we clearly understand that only by an exact knowledge of the culture created by the whole development of mankind, that only by re-working this culture, is it possible to build proletarian culture, unless this is understood, we shall not be able to solve our problem. Proletarian culture is not something that has sprung from nowhere, it is not an invention of those who call themselves experts in proletarian culture. That is all nonsense. Proletarian culture must be the result of the natural development of the stores of knowledge which mankind has accumulated under the yoke of capitalist society, landlord society and bureaucratic society.

All these roads and paths have led, are leading and continue to lead, to proletarian culture in the same way as the political economy reworked by Marx showed us what human society must arrive at, showed us the transition to the class struggle, to the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

When we sometimes hear representatives of the youth and certain advocates of a new system of education attacking the old school and saying that it taught by rote, we say to them that we must take what was good in the old school. We must not take from the old school the system whereby the young man's mind was crammed with knowledge nine-tenths of which was useless and one-tenth of which was distorted. But this does not mean that we must confine ourselves to Communist conclusions and learn only Communist slogans. We shall not create Communism by this means. One can become a Communist only when one enriches one's mind with the knowledge of all the wealth created by mankind.

Learning by rote is of no use to us, but we must develop and perfect the mind of every student with a knowledge of the main facts. Communism would become a void, would become a mere signboard, the Communist would be a mere braggart if all the knowledge he has obtained were not mentally digested. You must not only assimilate this knowledge but assimilate it critically, so that your mind is not crammed with useless lumber but enriched with all the facts that are indispensable for the modern man of education. If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism on the basis of the ready-made conclusions he has obtained without having put in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little I will strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants which the capitalists needed; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. That means that we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of men? Does that mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

For the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority, we shall substitute the class conscious discipline of the workers and peasants who combine their hatred for the old society with the determination, the ability and the readiness to unite and organize their forces for this fight, to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions who are disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without that single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this class conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause would be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to conquer the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even be able to consolidate the foundation, let alone build the new Communist society on this foundation. Similarly, in rejecting the old school, bearing a legitimate and necessary hatred for the old school,

prizing the readiness to destroy the old school, we must understand that in place of the old system of tuition, in place of the old system of memorizing, the old drilling methods, we must put the ability to take for ourselves the sum total of human knowledge and to take it in such a way that Communism shall not be something learnt by rote, but something that you yourselves have thought over, that it shall be an inevitable conclusion from the point of view of modern education.

That is how we must present the main tasks when we speak of the task of learning Communism.

In order to explain this to you and at the same time to take up the question of how to learn, I will give you a practical example. You all know that following the military tasks, the tasks of protecting the republic, we are now confronted with economic tasks. We know that Communist society cannot be built up unless we rebuild industry and agriculture, and these cannot be rebuilt in the old way. They must be rebuilt on a modern basis, according to the last word of science. You know that this basis is electricity, that only when the whole country, all branches of industry and agriculture have been electrified, only when you have mastered this task, will you be able to build up for yourselves the Communist society which the old generation cannot build. We are confronted with the task of economically regenerating the whole country, of recrganizing, restoring both agriculture and industry on a modern technical basis, which rests on modern science, on technique, on electricity. You understand perfectly well that illiterate people are unsuitable for electrification, and even the mere ability to read and write is inadequate. It is not enough to understand what electricity is; it is necessary to know how to apply it to industry and to agriculture, and to the various branches of industry and agriculture. We must learn this ourselves, and teach it to the whole of the younger generation of toilers. This is the task that confronts every class conscious Communist, every young man who regards himself as a Communist and who clearly understands that, having joined the Young Communist League, he has pledged himself to help the Party to build Communism and to help the whole of the young generation to build Communist society. He must understand that he can build this only on the basis of modern education; and if he does not acquire this education Communism will remain a pious wish.

The task that confronted the old generation was that of overthrowing the bourgeoisie. The main task in their day was to criticize the bourgeoisie, to rouse the hatred of the masses towards them, to develop the class consciousness of the masses and their ability to combine their forces. The new generation is confronted with a much more complicated task. Not only have you to combine all your forces to protect the rule of the workers and peasants against the attacks of the capitalists: that you must do; that you understand perfectly; the Communist sees this distinctly before him. But this is not enough. You must build up Communist society. In many respects the first half of the work is done. The old is destroyed, as it deserved to be destroyed; it has been transformed into a heap of ruins, as it deserved to be. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the young Communist generation must build Communist society. You are confronted with the task of construction, and you will be able to cope with it only if you master all modern knowledge, and if you are able to transform Communism from ready-made, memorized for-

mulae, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programs into that living thing which unites your immediate work; if you are able to transform Communism into a guide for your practical work.

This is the task by which you should be guided in the work of educating, training and rousing the whole of the young generation. You must be in the front ranks of the millions of builders of Communist society, and every young man and young woman should be such a builder. Unless you enlist the whole mass of young workers and peasants in the work of building Communist society you will not succeed in building it.

Naturally, this brings me to the question of how we should teach Communism and what are the specific features of our methods.

Here, first of all, I will deal with the question of Communist ethics.

You must train yourselves to become Communists. The task of the Young Communist League is to organize its practical activities in such a way that, in learning, organizing, uniting and fighting, it shall train its members and all those who look upon it as their leader, train them to become Communists. The whole object of the training, education and tuition of the youth of today should be to imbue them with Communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as Communist ethics? Is there such a thing as Communist morality? Of course there is. Often it is made to appear that we have no ethics of our own and very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of repudiating all ethics. This is a method of shuffling concepts, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we repudiate ethics and morality?

In the sense that they were preached by the bourgeoisie, who declared that ethics were god's commandments. We, of course, say that we do not believe in god, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landlords and the bourgeoisie spoke in the name of god in order to pursue their own exploiters' interests. Or, instead of deducing these ethics from the commandments of morality, from the commandments of god, they deduced them from idealistic or semi-idealistic phrases, which were always very similar to god's commandments.

We repudiate all morality that is taken outside of human, class concepts. We say that this is deception, a fraud, which clogs the brains of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landlords and capitalists.

We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality is deduced from the class struggle of the proletariat.

The old society was based on the oppression of all the workers and peasants by the landlords and capitalists. We had to destroy this, we had to overthrow this; but for this we had to create unity. God will not create such unity.

This unity could be created only by the factories and works, only by the proletariat, trained, and roused from its age-long slumber; only when that class was formed did the mass movement begin which led to what we see now—the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest countries in the world, a country which for three years has repelled the attacks of the bourgeoisie of the whole world. And we see that the proletarian revolution is growing all over the world. We now say, on the basis of experience, that the proletariat alone could create the compact force that could take the

lead of the disunited and scattered peasantry, that could withstand all the attacks of the exploiters. This class alone can help the toiling masses to unite, to rally and completely withstand all attacks upon, completely consolidate and completely build up, Communist society.

That is why we say that for us there is no such thing as morality taken outside of human society; such a morality is a fraud. For us, morality is subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What is this class struggle? It is—overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, abolishing the capitalist class.

And what are classes in general? Classes are that which permits one section of society to appropriate the labor of another section. If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landlord class and a peasant class. If one section of society possesses the factories and works, has shares and capital, and the other section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was easy to kick out the tsar—only a few days were required for that. It was not very difficult to kick out the landlords—we succeeded in doing that in a few months. Nor was it difficult to kick out the capitalists. But it is much more difficult to abolish classes; we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is settled on a plot of land and appropriates to himself superfluous grain, that is, grain that he does not need for himself or for his cattle, while all the rest of the people have to go without grain, then the peasant becomes an exploiter. The more grain he clings to, the more profit he can make; as for the rest, let them starve. He says to himself: "The more they starve, the higher the price at which I can sell my grain." Everybody should work according to a common plan, on common land, in common factories and works, under common management. Is it easy to bring this about? You see that it is not as easy as kicking out the tsar, the landlords and the capitalists. In order to achieve this the proletariat must re-educate, retrain a section of the peasantry; it must win over to its side those of them who are toiling peasants, in order to crush the resistance of those peasants who are rich and make profit out of the poverty and want of the rest. Hence, the object of the proletarian struggle has not yet been achieved by the fact that we have overthrown the tsar and have kicked out the landlords and capitalists; and this is precisely the object of the system which we call the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The class struggle is still proceeding; it has merely changed its forms. It is the class struggle of the proletariat to prevent the return of the old exploiters, to unite the scattered masses of ignorant peasants into one union. The class struggle is still proceeding, and our task is to subordinate everything to the interests of this struggle. And we subordinate our Communist morality to this task. We say: Morality is that which serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat, which is creating a new Communist society.

Communist morality is the morality which serves this struggle, which unites the toilers against all exploitation, against all small property, for small property puts into the hands of one person what has been created by the labor of the whole of society. The land in our country is common property.

But suppose I take a piece of this common land and grow twice

as much grain as I need and speculate with the surplus? Suppose I argue that the more starving people there are, the more I will get for my grain? Would I then behave like a Communist? No. I would behave like an exploiter, like a property-owner. This must be combatted. If this is allowed to go on, everything will slip back to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has happened more than once in previous revolutions. And in order to prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie we must put a stop to this huckstering, we must prevent individuals from enriching themselves at the expense of the rest: the toilers must unite with the proletariat and form a Communist society. This is the principal specific feature of the fundamental task of the Young Communist League and of its local organizations.

The old society was based on the principle: "Rob or be robbed, work for others or make others work for you, be a slave-owner or a slave." Naturally, people brought up in such a society imbibe with their mothers' milk, so to speak, the psychology, the habit, the concept: "Either a slave-owner or a slave, or a small owner, a small employee, a small official, an intellectual—in short, a man who only looks after himself, and does not care a scrap about anyone else."

I own this plot of land and I do not care a scrap about anyone else; if the others starve, all the better, the more will I be able to get for my grain. I have a job as a doctor, or an engineer, or a teacher, or a clerk, and I do not care about anyone else. Perhaps, if I toady to and please the powers that be I shall keep my job and even climb up into the ranks of the bourgeoisie. A Communist cannot have such a psychology and such sentiments. When the workers and peasants proved that they were able by their own efforts to defend themselves and create a new society, a new Communist upbringing began, an upbringing in the midst of the struggle against the exploiters, an upbringing in alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and small owners, against the psychology and habits which say, "I seek my own profit and I do not care about anyone else."

This is the reply to the question of how the young, rising generation should learn Communism.

It can learn Communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle the proletarians and the toilers are waging against the old exploiting society. When people talk to us about morality we say: For the Communist, morality consists entirely of compact united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters. We do not believe in eternal morality, and we expose all the fables about morality. Morality serves the purpose of helping human society to rise to a higher level and to abolish the exploitation of labor.

In order to achieve this we must have the young generation which began to awaken to conscious life in the midst of the disciplined, desperate struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this struggle it will train genuine Communists, to this struggle it must subordinate, and with it must link up, every step in its studies, education and training. The upbringing of the Communist youth must not consist of all sorts of sentimental speeches and moral precepts. This is not upbringing. When people see how their fathers and mothers lived under the yoke of the landlords and capitalists, when they themselves experience the sufferings of those who started the struggle against

the exploiters, when they see the sacrifice entailed by the continuation of this struggle in order to hold what has been won, and when they see what frenzied foes the landlords and capitalists are—they, in this environment, receive a Communist upbringing. At the basis of Communist morality lies the struggle for the consolidation and consummation of Communism. That also is the basis of Communist training, education and tuition. That is the reply to the question of how to learn Communism.

We would not believe in learning, training and education if they were confined to the school and isolated from seething life. As long as the workers and peasants are oppressed by the landlords and capitalists, and as long as the schools remain in the hands of the landlords and capitalists, the young generation remains blind and ignorant. But our schools must impart to the youth the fundamentals of knowledge, must train them to be able to work out Communist views independently; they must make educated people of them. At the same time, as long as they attend school, the school must make them participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters. The Young Communist League will justify its name as the league of the young Communist generation when it links up every step in its tuition, training and education with participation in the general struggle of all the toilers against the exploiters; for you know perfectly well that as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic and the old bourgeois system continues in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they, we shall be under the constant menace of attack. Only if we learn to be compact and united shall we win in future struggles, and, having become stronger, become really invincible. Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organize and unite the whole of the rising generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. Then you will be able to start building the edifice of Communist society and bring it to completion.

In order to make this clearer to you I will quote an example. We call ourselves Communists. What is a Communist? The word Communist is derived from the Latin word for "common." Communist society is a society in which all things—the land, the factories—are owned in common. Communism means working in common.

Is it possible to work in common if each works on a separate plot of land? Common labor cannot be created all at once. It does not drop from the skies. It comes as a result of toil and suffering. It is created in the course of the struggle. Old books are of no use for this; no one will believe them. One's own living experience is required. When Kolchak and Denikin were marching from Siberia and the South the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin in Siberia and the Ukraine, they realized that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalist, and he would at once hand them over into slavery to the landlords; or to follow the workers, who, it is true, do not promise a land flowing with milk and honey, who demand iron discipline and staunchness in the arduous struggle, but who will lead them out of slavery to the capitalists and landlords. When even the ignorant peasants realized and saw this as a result of their own experience, after having passed through a stern school, they became conscious adherents of Com-

munism. It is such experience that the Young Communist League must lay at the basis of all its activities.

I have replied to the question of what we must learn, what we must take from the old school and from the old science. I will now try to answer the question of how we must learn this. The answer is: only by inseparably linking up every step in the activities of the school, every step in training, education and tuition, with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters.

I will quote a few examples from the experience of the work of one or another of the youth organizations to illustrate how the learning of Communism should proceed. Everybody is talking about abolishing illiteracy. You know that it is impossible to build Communist society in a country in which the people are illiterate. It is not enough for the Soviet government to issue an order, or for the Party to issue a definite slogan, or even to assign a certain number of the best workers for this work. The young generation itself must take up this work. Communism means that the youth, the young men and women who belong to the Young Communist League, shall say: This is our job. We shall unite and go into the country to abolish illiteracy, so that there shall be no illiterates among our rising generation. We should like to see the rising youth devote their activities to this work. You know that it will not be possible to transform ignorant, illiterate Russia into a literate country quickly. But if the Young Communist League sets to work on it, if all the young men and women work for the benefit of all, the League, which has a membership of 400,000 young men and women, will have a right to call itself the Young Communist League. One of the tasks of the League, is, after having acquired certain knowledge, to help those young people who cannot by their own efforts liberate themselves from the gloom of illiteracy. Being a member of the Young Communist League means giving one's labor, giving one's efforts to the common cause. That is what Communist education means. Only by performing such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist. Only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists.

Take, for example, work on the suburban vegetable farms. It is one of the tasks of the Young Communist League. The people are starving; there is starvation in the factories and works. In order to put a stop to starvation, vegetable gardens ought to be developed; but agriculture is being carried on in the old way. The more class conscious elements should take this up; if they did, you would find that the number of vegetable gardens would increase, their area would grow, and we would get better results. The Young Communist League should take an active part in this. Every local League organization should regard this as its job.

The Young Communist League should be the shock group which, in every job that has to be done, gives a hand, displays initiative, makes the start. The League should be such that any worker may see that it consists of people whose doctrines he may not understand, whose doctrines he may not immediately adopt, but whose practical work, whose activities, prove to him that they are the people who are showing him the right road.

If the Young Communist League fails to organize its work in this way in all spheres, it will show that it is slipping into the old bour-

geois road. We must combine our training with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters in order to help the former to fulfil the tasks that logically follow from the doctrines of Communism.

The members of the League should spend every spare hour on the vegetable gardens in order to improve them; or on organizing the education of young people in some factory, works, etc. We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into a wealthy country. And so the Young Communist League must combine its education, its tuition, its training with the labor of the workers and peasants, and not shut itself up in its schools and confine itself to reading Communist books and pamphlets. Only by working side by side with the workers and peasants is it possible to become a genuine Communist. Everyone must be able to see that all those who belong to the Young Communist League are literate and at the same time are able to work. When everyone sees that we have driven the old drill methods from the school and substituted class conscious discipline for them, that every young man and woman takes part in subbotniks, that they utilize every vegetable garden to help the people—the people will cease to look upon labor as they looked upon it before.

One of the tasks of the Young Communist League is to render assistance in the village or block in which the members live in the matter of—I will take a small example—cleanliness and distribution of food. How was this done in the old capitalist society? Everybody worked for himself, and no one cared whether there were any sick or aged, or whether all the housework fell on the shoulders of the women, who, as a result, were in a state of oppression and slavery. Whose business is it to fight against this? It is the business of the Young Communist League, which must say: We shall change all this, we shall organize detachments of young people who will help to maintain cleanliness, or help to distribute food, make systematic house-to-house inspections; who will work in an organized manner for the benefit of the whole of society, properly distribute its forces and prove that labor must be organized.

The generation which is now about fifty years old cannot count on seeing Communist society. This generation will die out before Communist society is established. But the generation which is now fifteen years old will see Communist society, and will itself build it. And it must realize that the whole purpose of its life is to build this society. In the old society, work was carried on by separate families, and nobody united them except the landlords and the capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organize all labor, no matter how dirty and arduous it may be, so that every worker and peasant may regard himself as part of the great army of free labor and feel convinced that he will be able to build up his life without the landlords and capitalists, will be able to establish the Communist system. The Young Communist League must train the masses for conscious and disciplined labor when they are still young, from the age of twelve. That is what will enable us to count on being able to solve the problems that now confront us. We must reckon that not less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may be served with the latest achievements of technique. And so, the generation which is now fifteen years old, and which in ten or twen-

ty years' time will be living in Communist society, must arrange all their tasks of tuition in such a way that every day, in every village, and in every city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of the problems of common labor, even of the smallest, even of the most simple kind. To the extent that this is done in every village, to the extent that Communist competition is developed, to the extent that the youth prove that they are able to unite their labor, to that extent will the success of Communist construction be ensured. Only by regarding every step one takes from the point of view of the success of this construction, only if we ask ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united, conscious toilers, only by passing through this prolonged process, will the Young Communist League unite its half a million members into a single army of labor and win universal respect.

J. V. STALIN

THE TASKS OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

(An Answer to the Questions Propounded by the Editorial Board of "Komsomolskaya Pravda," 1925)

I

What, in the main, are the duties which the present international and internal position of the Soviet Union imposes upon the Young Communist League?

The question is put in too general a form, and therefore the answer can only be given in general terms. The present international and internal position of the Soviet Union in the main imposes upon the Young Communist League the duty of supporting both by word and deed the revolutionary movement of the oppressed classes of all countries and the struggle of the proletariat of the Soviet Union to build Socialism and to ensure the freedom and independence of the proletarian State. But it follows from this that the Young Communist League will be able to fulfill this general task only if it is guided in all its work by the guiding instructions given by the Communist International and by the Communist Party of Russia.

II

What tasks confront the Young Communist League in connection with the danger of liquidationism *(the loss of the perspective of Socialist construction),* nationalism *(the loss of international revolutionary perspectives) and the* belittling *of the Party leadership—that is to say in connection with those dangers to which attention was drawn in the pamphlet "Questions and Answers"?*

Briefly speaking, the task of the Young Communist League in this sphere is to educate our young workers and young peasants in the spirit of Leninism. And what does educating the youth in the spirit of Leninism mean? It means, first of all, imbuing them with the consciousness that the victory of Socialist construction in our country is possible and necessary. It means, in the second place, strengthening their conviction that our workers' state is the offspring of the international proletariat; that it is the base for the development of the revolution in all countries; that the final victory of our revolution is the cause of the international proletariat. It means, in the third place, imbuing the youth with the spirit of confidence in the leadership of the Communist Party of Russia. It is necessary to create in the Young Communist League such cadres and such an *active* as would be able to educate the youth exactly along these lines.

Young Communists are active in all fields of construction: in industry, in agriculture, in the co-operatives, in the Soviets, in the cultural-educational organizations, etc.

Every active Young Communist should connect his daily work in every field of construction with the perspective of building Socialist society. He should be able to carry on his daily work in the spirit and in the direction of realizing this perspective.

Young Communists carry on work among the workers and peasants of the most varied nationalities. The Young Communist League itself represents a peculiar sort of International. An important factor in this is not only the national composition of the League, but also the fact that the Young Communist League is directly associated with the Communist Party of Russia, which is one of the most important sections of the world proletarian International. Internationalism is the fundamental idea that permeates the activity of the Young Communist League. Therein lies its strength. Therein lies its might. The spirit of internationalism must always hover over the Young Communist League. The successes and failures in the struggle of the proletariat of our country must be associated in the minds of the Young Communists with the successes and the failures of the international revolutionary movement. The Young Communists should learn to regard our revolution not as an end in itself, but as a means and an aid towards the victory of the proletarian revolution in all countries.

The Young Communist League is, in the formal sense, a non-Party organization. But it is at the same time a Communist organization. This means that the Young Communist League, while formally being a non-Party organization of workers and peasants, must, at the same time, carry on its activities under the leadership of the Party. The task is to secure the confidence of the youth towards our Party, to secure the Party's leadership of the Young Communist League. The Young Communist must remember that the principal and most important thing in all the work of the Young Communist League is to secure the leadership of the Party. The Young Communist must remember that without such leadership the Young Communist League will be unable to fulfill its fundamental task, that of educating the worker and peasant youth in the spirit of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of Communism.

III

How should the question of the growth of the Young Communist League be put at the present time? Is it necessary for it, in the main, to continue the policy of enlisting in its ranks all the young workers, young agricultural laborers and young poor peasants, together with the best of the young middle peasants; or should it turn its main attention towards the consolidation and education of the masses of the youth already enrolled in the League?

We must not say: either—or. It is necessary to do both the one and the other. It is necessary to enlist, as far as possible, all the young workers and also the best elements among the poor peasants and the middle peasants in the Young Communist League. But it is necessary at the same time to concentrate attention on the education and assimilation of the new members of the Young Communist League by the *active* of the League. The strengthening of the proletarian core is a most important immediate task of the Young Communist League. The fulfillment of this task is the guarantee that the Young Communist League will proceed along the correct path. But the Young Communist League is

not solely an organization of the working class youth. The Y.C.L. is an organization of the young workers and peasants. Hence, simultaneously with the strengthening of the proletarian core, work must be carried on to enlist the best elements of the peasant youth to ensure a firm alliance between the proletarian core and the peasant section of the Young Communist League. In default of this, the leadership of the young peasants by the proletarian core in the League will be impossible.

IV

Some of the gubernia committees of the Young Communist League, referring to the fact that women s delegate meetings are organized, have begun to organize delegate meetings of the non-Party peasant youth with permanent delegates. The function of these meetings is to unite the active elements among the young peasants and primarily among the young middle peasants, under the leadership of the League. Is such a position correct? Does it not involve the danger that these delegate meetings may degenerate into something in the nature of non-Party leagues of young peasants, which might set themselves up in opposition to our Young Communist League?

In my opinion such a position is incorrect. Why? For these reasons:

Firstly, because it harbors a sort of dread of the middle peasants, striving to keep the young middle peasants at a distance, an attempt to wash one's hands of them. Is such a striving correct? Of course not. We must not repel the young middle peasants, but bring them closer to us, bring them closer to the Young Communist League. Only in this way will it be possible to inspire the young middle peasants with confidence in the workers, confidence in the proletarian core of the Young Communist League, confidence in our Party.

In the second place, there can be no doubt that in the present conditions of the revival of all groups of the peasantry, separate delegate meetings of the young middle peasants attached to the Young Communist League would inevitably become transformed into a separate league of young middle peasants. Moreover, such a separate league would necessarily be led to set itself in opposition to the existing Young Communist League and to its leader—the Russian Communist Party; it would attract to itself the peasant section of the Young Communist League and thus create the danger of the Young Communist League splitting into two leagues—into a league of young workers and a league of young peasants. Can we afford to ignore such a danger? Of course, we cannot. Is there any need for such a split, especially at the present juncture, especially under the existing conditions of our development? Of course not. On the contrary, what we need today, is not that the young peasants be estranged from the proletarian core of the Young Communist League, but that they be brought closer to it; not discord but a firm alliance between them.

In the third place, the organization of delegate meetings of the young middle peasants cannot be justified on the grounds that delegate meetings of working women and peasant women are organized. We must not put under one head the worker and peasant youth who have their special organization in the form of the Young Communist League, and the working women and peasant women, who have no special organization of their own; just as we must not confuse the youth

of the middle *peasants* with the working women who form a part of the *working class*. The organization of delegate meetings of young middle peasants creates a danger to the Young Communist League, whereas the organization of delegate meetings of working women and peasant women does not involve any danger to anybody because no special permanent organization of working women and peasant women similar to the Young Communist League exists at present.

That is why I think that the organization of special delegate meetings of young middle peasants attached to the Young Communist League is superfluous.

I think that the Sixth Congress of the Young Communist League was right when it confined itself to the proposal to create auxiliary organizations in the rural districts in the form of educational circles, agricultural study groups and the like, around the Young Communist League.

V

Is it possible in our conditions for the active workers of the Young Communist League to combine their practical activities with a thorough study of Marxism and Leninism, and what should the Young Communist organizations and the individual Young Communists do in this direction?

First of all, a few remarks concerning Marxism and Leninism. As the question is formulated one might think that Marxism is one thing and Leninism is another, that one can be a Leninist without being a Marxist. But such an idea cannot be regarded as correct. Leninism is not Leninist doctrine *minus* Marxism. Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions. In other words, Leninism includes all that Marx taught, plus Lenin's new contribution to the treasury of Marxism, which necessarily follows from all that Marx taught (the doctrine of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasant question, the national question, the Party, the question of the social roots of reformism, the question of the most important deviations from Communism, etc.). It would be better, therefore, to formulate the question in such a way as to speak of Marxism or of Leninism (the two being fundamentally one and the same), and not to speak of Marxism *and* Leninism.

In the second place, there can be no doubt that *unless* the active workers of the Young Communist League *combine* practical work with theoretical training ("study of Leninism"), there can be no intelligent Communist activity within the Young Communist League. Leninism is the generalization of the experience of the revolutionary movement of the workers of all countries. This experience is the guiding star which lights up the path of all practical workers in their daily activities and gives them their direction. Practical workers can neither be sure of their work nor can they be certain that they are doing their work properly if they have not mastered this experience, if only to a small degree. Groping blindly in the dark—such is the lot of the practical workers if they do not study Leninism, if they do not strive to master Leninism, if they have no desire to combine their practical work with the necessary theoretical training. That is why the study of Leninism, Leninist training, is a most necessary condition for the transformation of the present *active* of the Young Communist League into a genuine Leninist *active*, competent to train the millions of Young Communists in

the spirit of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of Communism.

But is such a combination of theory and practice possible in existing circumstances, when the *active* of the Young Communist League is so overworked? Yes, it is possible. True, it is difficult. But it can be done, since it is so necessary, since without this condition it is impossible to create a genuine Leninist *active* within the Young Communist League. We must not be like weaklings who run away from difficulties and look for something easy to do. Difficulties exist so that we may fight against them and overcome them. The Bolsheviks would certainly have perished in their fight against capitalism if they had not learned to overcome difficulties. The Young Communist League would not be the Young Communist League if it feared difficulties. The *active* of the Young Communist League has undertaken a great task, therefore it must find within itself the strength to overcome each and every difficulty that stands in its path to the goal.

Patient and persistent Leninist training—that is the path the *active* of the Young Communist League must pursue if it really wants to train millions of young people in the spirit of the proletarian revolution.

Komsomolskaya Pravda, No. 133, October 29, 1925. Republished in *Leninism*, by Joseph Stalin, (pp. 251-57).

TO THE CONSCIENCE OF ALL MANKIND

In this terrible hour, when the fate of peace is being decided, we, the undersigned members of the Union of Czechoslovakian Writers, appeal to you, the bearers of the conscience of mankind, with these words to which we have given profound thought:

We have lived for centuries side by side with our German speaking countrymen. This was a period of fruitful co-existence and cultural reciprocity. Having gained once more our national independence in battles on the Russian, French, Serbian and Italian fronts, we hoped that our land, our common native soil would become one of the hearths of a new Europe, a better and happier Europe, and we worked in that direction. Fully realizing our responsibility before history, we address the present appeal from the last islet of democracy left in Central Europe, and we state that our people is not to blame and will not be to blame for the disaster that is threatening the world.

We are striving with all our might to defend peace, our common peace. But we will also fight with all our might for the freedom of our country.

And we turn to you because it is for you, more than anyone, to defend that which until now has always been the honor of Europe and of the entire civilized world: respect for truth, for freedom of spirit and for a pure conscience. We ask you—judge for yourselves, on which side is an honest desire for peace and justice and on which side is a desire for plunder that utilizes every means of violence and falsity. We ask you to explain to the public of your countries that if we, a small people, deeply permeated with the desire for peace, are compelled to enter into a fierce battle, then we will be waging our grave struggle not only for ourselves but also for you, for moral and intellectual values common to all free and peaceable peoples throughout the world. Let no one harbor any illusions: after us will come the turn of other nations, other countries.

We ask all writers, all who engage in mental labor, all those who believe in reason, to use all the means at their disposal to bring this appeal to the consciousness of all the peoples of the world.

October, 1938

Joseph Capek, Karel Capek, Jan Capek, Jan Cep, Vaclav Cerny, Jaroslav Durych, Hana Gregorova, Frantisek Halas, Adolf Hoffmeister, Joseph Hora, Hanus Jelinek, Peter Jilemnicky, Josef Kopta, Josef Knap, Jaroslav Kvapil, Frantisek Langer, Emil B. Lukac, Marie Majerova, Bohumil Mathesius, Rudolf Medek, Vitezslav Nezval, Laco Novomesky, Ivan Olbracht, Ferdinand Peroutka, Marie Pujmanova, Miroslav Rutte, Jaroslav Seiffert, Anna Marie Titschova, Vladislav Vancura.

SOVIET WRITERS' REPLY

Our dear friends and fellow workers:

We have received your stirring appeal, "To the Conscience of All Mankind."

During the days when the monstrous betrayal was consummated and the troops of the fascist barbarians, through the complicity of the governments of Britain and France, are lacerating the living body of your peaceful democratic country, we, Soviet writers, express to you from the bottom of our heart our fraternal solidarity and love.

In this, your terrible hour of trial, we want you to know that we are with you, with your courageous country, which is making heavy sacrifices.

The conscience of mankind to which you appeal cannot but shudder at the monstrous, outrageous injustice that has been perpetrated against your country.

We have the greatest admiration for the endurance and courage of your people... for your loyalty to them.

Let the fascist barbarians know that there are no hardships or sacrifices that are capable of breaking the free spirit of the Czechoslovakian people. You will not be alone: we will not abandon you; we will help you.

October, 1938

A. Tolstoy, A. Fadeyev, V. Gerasimova, S. Kirsanov, V. Lidin, A. Novikov-Priboy, V. Fink, I. Lezhnev, N. Zaryan, O. Voitinskaya, V. Stavsky, I. Selvinsky, N. Pogodin, L. Slavin, V. Katayev, A. Korneichuk, F. Gladkov, I. Novikov, V. Ivanov, M. Jaliev, G. Lakhuti, V. Veresayev, A. Serafimovich, N. Aseyev, K. Trenev, V. Vishnevsky, G. Grigoryan, Y. Libedinsky, A. Bezymensky, M. Golodny, N. Lyashko, A. Zharov, H. Usiyevich, V. Ermilov, A. Karavayeva, M. Sholokhov, L. Leonov, M. Shaginyan, K. Paustovsky, V. Ilyenkov, G. Shtorm, Y. Yanovsky, A. Kopylenko, M. Bazhan, A. Barto, V. Bill-Belotserkovsky, P. Antokolsky, A. Faiko, I. Mosashvili, A. Makarenko, V. Lugovskoy, T. Akhumyan, A. Platonov, I. Babel, P. Pavlenko, S. Marshak, V. Bakhmetyev, F. Yuldashev, B. Lavrenev, O. Forsh, M. Slonimsky, Y. Tynyanov, Satty Husainov, N. Virta, A. Usenbayev, B. Pasternak, K. Fedin, I. Frenkel, V. Pertsov, L. Sobolev, Yanka Kupala, Yakub Kolas, Perets Markish, E. Petrov.

Intellectuals Protest the Bombing of Defenseless Cities

The bombing of defenseless cities is the subject of wide discussion. It has been placed before the League of Nations. It was the subject of investigation by English delegations to Spain. It was dealt with at a conference called in Paris last July by the World Peace League.

This vast organization, which in England is under the chairmanship of Lord Robert Cecil, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and in France of M. Pierre Cot, the former Minister of Aviation, has more than one million members throughout the world. The League commissioned the writer Paul Gzell to solicit the opinion of a number of prominent intellectuals, scientists and writers regarding the massacre of the civilian population, of women, children and old people, by Japanese airmen in China and the German and Italian aviators in the service of Franco in Spain.

The answers to these inquiries will be published in a compilation by the World Peace League. They constitute a terrible indictment of the barbarism of the fascist governments which resort to such methods. We publish below some of the most typical comments. They bear the signatures of the most prominent figures of today, of Nobel Prize winners, of members of the French Academy and the Institute of France, of philosophers, scientists, playwrights and novelists of world renown.

The great writer Romain Rolland declares:

"I am horrified by the bombing of unprotected cities and the shameless massacre of the population. I join in the protest launched by the World Peace League.

"But allow me to say that you will not succeed in making war humane. It will never be humane.

"War must be made impossible. If the only means of so doing is the general acceptance of *collective security*, work for its organization. The civilized world must either accept it or perish.

"ROMAIN ROLLAND"

Roger Martin du Gard, the most recent Nobel Peace Prize winner, is likewise amazed that civilization has not yet found a remedy against war. According to him, war only exists with man's consent:

"I am not one of those who like to deliver 'messages.'... If I have consented this time, it is because of the seriousness of the occasion and the importance which I attach to the World Peace League.

"We shall not evade the issue. What is monstrous is not the fact that bombings slaughter 'innocent' members of the population. (The distinction between combatants and non-combatants is no longer valid at a time when the whole of a nation is involved in war. Are the old folks, the women and children, more 'innocent' victims than the sons, husbands and fathers who were placed in the front line? Is the slaughter of the people in the rear more 'inhuman' than that of the young men who are massacred at the front?)

"It is war that is monstrous....

"The horrible part of it is that populations which in their vast majority consist of peaceful men have allowed themselves to be led after twenty years to the verge of the precipice, that they have tolerated the frustration of all efforts made by the people to lay the foundation for a European federation, to establish international law, organize a genuine tribunal of arbitration, to revise treaties by peaceable means, to limit armaments and reduce the functions of armies to those of national police forces.

"What is far more outrageous than the bombing of defenseless cities is the passivity of the world in the face of war, the way public opinion coldly discusses 'totalitarian' war, submarine, aerial and chemical warfare, the way it regards a possible conflict as a cosmic disaster independent of human wills, and persists in its aberration to the point where it forgets that war is a social event, *whose occurrence is contingent, in the last resort, upon the consent or refusal of the masses who are to be mobilized* Even more terrible is the fact that in a Europe which is unanimously appalled by the approaching catastrophe, the instinct of self-pres-

ervation is not strong enough to evoke a supreme emancipating effort, that the various peoples do not succeed in reaching an accord and in uniting, in spite of those who govern them, for the creation of a vast movement of defense and fraternal cooperation against all war, regardless of where it comes from and what its pretexts are; this is the only means of securing the common welfare.

"ROGER MARTIN DU GARD"

Dr. I. Bordet, the Belgian scientist, winner of the Nobel prize for medicine, and director of the Pasteur Institute in Brussels, lifts his voice against war.

"Humanity is materially and morally in danger. Peoples tear each other to pieces. War organizes the pitiless slaughter of women, children and old folk. In the face of this homicidal fury, the scientists who seek to make men happier, to improe their physical and moral health, bitterly realize the futility of their efforts. Every day we view the demoralizing spectacle of injustice and cruelty, often we view it without protest, sometimes even with indifference, because we have become so accustomed to it. It is time for humanity to come to its senses, to affirm the sacred principle of solidarity, of respect for life, to proclaim its ardent desire for peace and liberty in the face of tyranny.

"Dr. I. BORDET"

Frederick Soddy of Oxford University, winner of a Nobel scientific prize, writes:

"While agreeing heartily enough that modern war and the bombing of defenseless towns is mass murder, naked and unashamed, for which the sane can feel nothing but horror and loathing, I would suggest that the world's intellectuals stop these verbal attitudes towards morals, conscience and the like, and examine with more open minds the crude realities that have attended the rise of scientific civilization, and particularly the upstart monetary system invented to thwart material progress.

"FREDERICK SODDY"

Dr. Christian L. Lange of the University of Oslo, a Nobel Prize recipient, demands the complete outlawing of aerial warfare:

"All war is organized barbarism. Modern technology enables the sadistic fools of our time to excel the barbarism of the past.

"The Italians in Ethiopia, the Japanese in China and the Spanish rebels, aided by the dictators of Italy and Germany, commit acts that cause all thinking and feeling beings to shudder with horror.

"It is a good and just thing to voice indignant protests against these atrocious methods.

"But it is even better to vow solemnly to oneself and to humanity to neglect no effort directed toward making nations forswear such methods. Indeed we should attain the absolute outlawing of aerial warfare, that is to say the controlled discontinuance of the manufacture of arms for this purpose.

"C. L. LANGE"

Jules Romain, President of the Pen Clubs, writes that he shudders at the savagery of the fascist murderers:

"Frequently, in the accounts of the 'savage times,' one reads how the unconquerable warriors *put to the sword* all the inhabitants of a city.

"When I was a child that phrase made me shudder with horror.

"Our 'apex of civilization' has greatly improved upon these atrocities, and today, when newspaper photographs show the massacres caused by airplanes in defenseless cities, I am again seized with the icy shudder I felt as a child.

"JULES ROMAIN"

Maurice Donnay, member of the French Academy and one of the masters of the theater in France, author of *Lovers* and of an adaptation of Aristophan s' *Lysstrata,* in writing against war, appeals to the collective conscience of the civilized world:

"In the early days of aviation, men shouted exultantly: 'Wings, wings, wings at last!' Today, when an airplane is seen crossing the sky, everyone thinks: 'There go bombs,' and recalls the horrible deaths of infants, women and old folk.

"The World Peace League asks us to join in a protest which seems limited to a protest against the bombing of defenseless cites, but we should protest against all warfare, against all its horrors. The coming war will rock civilization, it will be an orgy of barbarism which will engulf both victors and vanquished, unless consciences are mobilized immediately throughout the world.

"MAURICE DONNAY"

Valeri Kirpotin

RUSSIAN CULTURE

The contribution made by the Russian people to the progress of mankind, toward the triumph of democracy and Socialism, has been inestimable. The Russian people have helped to weld the nations of the Soviet Union into a fraternal commonwealth and together with them have built up a Socialist society. The success of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin in the Soviet Union is the embodiment of the dreams of the best minds of earlier generations.

From the very outset of their historical existence the Russian people displayed great civic valor and creative energy. Even in the days of feudal principalities the sense of national solidarity was deeply embedded in the consciousness of the Russian people. The early chronicles speak of the "Russian Land," and in them we find the concept of national unity and national patriotism holding greater sway then the antagonisms of the various principalities. The Russians inhabited a territory which for centuries had been swept by the invasions of warlike nomad tribes. It was the struggle for the union of the Russian people against the alien enemies that inspired *The Tale of Igor's Regiment*, an epic poem which ranks as a literary masterpiece. *The Tale of Igor's Regiment* was known to Marx and Engels, who valued it highly. "The significance of the poem," Marx wrote to Engels on March 5, 1856, "lies in its appeal to the princes to unite in the face of the Mongol invasion."[1]

The cultural development of the Russian people in the past was not of a homogeneous character.

"*Every* national culture," wrote Lenin in 1913, "bears some *elements*, however undeveloped, of a democratic and Socialist culture; for *every* nation has a toiling and exploited mass whose conditions of life inevitably give rise to a democratic and Socialist ideology. But *every* nation also has a bourgeois culture (and the majority an arch-reactionary and clerical culture as well), and not in the form of 'elements' but as the dominant culture. Hence 'national culture' in general is the culture of the landed aristocracy, the priests and the bourgeoisie." [2]

In old Russia the "culture of the landed aristocracy, the priests and the bourgeoisie" was fostered by the government. All manifestations of democratic, of Socialist culture were brutally suppressed by the ruling classes. Yet in spite of all persecution, suppression and terrorism, we find throughout the history of the Russian people that the culture which in one form or another responded to the needs, interests and ideals of the masses was

[1] Marx, Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXII, p. 122, Russ. ed.

[2] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, p. 137, Russ. ed.

incomparably richer and more vivid then the culture of the ruling and exploiting classes.

This fact must be noted in any discussion of Russian culture. It was true not only of the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries but in every era of Russian history. Radishchev [1] was savagely persecuted and in the end was driven to suicide. Novikov [2] was incarcerated for fifteen years in the Schlusselburg Fortress for his many-sided contributions to the development of Russian culture. The revolutionary democrat Chernyshevsky was condemned to exile and penal servitude and Pisarev [3] was cast into the Peter and Paul Fortress. And thus without end. The ruling cliques of Russian society ostracized Pushkin and gave preference to Faddei Bulgarin, a mediocre hack and secret police agent. Katkov, intellectual spokesman of the autocratic regime, demanded the most repressive measures against such representatives of the people as Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov; and he declared in the press that Nekrasov, one of Russia's greatest poets, was a man without talent. The ideologists of the ruling classes tried to conceal their antipathy for the people, but at times their hostility to the masses found open expression. For example, the following utterance is to be found in *Vekhi (Landmarks)* [4]: "Being what we are, far from ever dreaming of fusion with the people, we must fear them more than any machinations of the government; rather, we should be thankful to the government, for it alone, with its bayonets and jails, protects us from the fury of the people. . . ."

Peter I realized that if Russia was to be transformed into a powerful state, with whom strong neighbors would be obliged to reckon, she would have to borrow the cultural achievements of the then more advanced West. The reforms he introduced and enforced with the strong hand of an all-powerful despot helped to bring the cultural life of Russia closer to that of the European nations. But so long as the new enlightenment, with its science, art, crafts and technical perfections, was not absorbed by the people as something that was their own, as something national and essential to their lives, as long as its spread bore the character of an artificial transplanting, it could not take firm and durable root. Suffice it to mention that at first scientific works could not be written in Russian owing to the absence of specific scientific and technical terminology. Knowledge, culture and literature had to become an organic part of Russian life, something developed by the Russian people themselves. It had to be shown that the Russian soil was capable of producing its own thinkers, scientists and poets. It had to be shown that Russian was one of the most flexible languages in the world, a medium capable of serving progress in any sphere of science and art.

What even the colossal energy and unrestricted power of Peter I could not accomplish was performed by the brilliant Russian scientist, Mikhailo Lomonosov, the son of a peasant. It is a curious and significant fact that in this vast aristocratic monarchy, where the gov-

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[1] Writer. Fully accepted the ideas of the Great French Revolution. Openly opposed serfdom and autocracy. Was banished to Siberia.

[2] Writer, educationalist. Editor of satirical journals in which he held up to scorn and ridicule the morals of the court nobility. Advocated the abolition of serfdom.

[3] Eminent critic and publicist. Was incarcerated in the Peter and Paul Fortress for an article favoring the overthrow of the Romanovs.

[4] A collection of articles by writers who shared the views of the Constitutional Democrats (Cadets).

ernment did its utmost to make education a prerogative of the nobility, it was the son of a peasant who set the cultural initiative of the nation a-working. Lomonosov was the first to make Russian a language of science and literature. In this respect he was the brilliant forerunner of Pushkin. In a circle that regarded the native tongue as a language of barbarians, Lomonosov displayed a true patriotic pride in demonstrating, both theoretically and practically, the fact that this tongue was fully as rich as any other. In the Russian language, he said, we find "the grandeur of the Spanish, the vivacity of the French, the strength of the German, the tenderness of the Italian and the richness and forceful brevity of Latin and Greek. The subtleties of philosophical reflection and reasoning and the manifold variety of the natural properties and changes of this visible structure of the world and human affairs can find in our language seemly and adequate expression. And if there is anything we cannot describe with exactitude it is not the language which is at fault but our own lack of skill in using it. He who continuously delves deeper into it and takes as his guide the general philosophical concept of human language will perceive before him an immense field or rather an almost boundless sea." In an age when the narrow circle of educated notables imitated the foreigner in everything including language, when in Russia as in Europe generally, men of learning wrote in Latin, only a true Russian patriot could display so exalted a love for his native language. Lomonosov had to break many a lance against foreign men of learning in defense of his dignity as a Russian, and against the all-powerful aristocracy, who regarded the peasants, the people, as little more than cattle ted with speech, in defense of his honor as a son of the people. It was this that inspired Lomonosov to say in his letter to Shuvalov, words which were later repeated by Pushkin under almost identical circumstances: "Not only at the table of notable lords or of the masters of this earth will I not play the fool, but even before the lord god himself. . . ."

Lomonosov was part of the flesh and blood of the Russian people, and his thoughts were not of his own self-interest but of the weal of his people and the grandeur of his country, as he conceived them. It was to this peasant's son that Russia owed her first university. Lomonosov's work marked a profoundly important step in the development of Russian culture.

The democratic and popular trends of Russian culture were bound to come into conflict with the surrounding reality. Lomonosov dreamed of the glory and felicity of the Russian people. It was not so very long after Lomonosov's time that Radishchev was forced to realize that there could be no happiness for the people so long as the vast majority of them led the lives of slaves. He courageously raised his voice in defense of the peasant; he demanded the abolition of serfdom; he exalted freedom. "I looked about me," he said, explaining the motives that led him to write the famous *Journey From St. Petersburg to Moscow*, "and my soul was pierced by the sufferings of man. I turned my gaze within myself, and I perceived that man's tribulations come from man. . . . I felt that it is given to every man to share in the welfare of his fellows. It was this thought that moved me to record what you shall herein read."

Radishchev started a movement that later justly came to be recognized as a heroic beginning in Russian literature and culture. The motive which moved Radishchev was

a sense of social justice and a longing to end the sufferings of the people. He did not blame "god" or "nature" for their woes and hardships; he believed that the defects of society depended on men alone and could be removed by men. This was a materialist concept later developed by the great European and Russian utopians.

Every big achievement and every step forward in the progress of Russian culture after Radischev's time was closely bound up with the development of the Russian revolutionary movement. Whenever the revolutionary movement attained a higher level, so did the cultural development of Russia.

In his article, *In Memory of Herzen*, written in 1912, Lenin described the succession of generations and classes in the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia in the nineteenth century as follows:

"In honoring the memory of Herzen, we clearly perceive three generations, three classes, operating in the Russian revolution. First there were the nobles and landlords, the Decembrists and Herzen. These revolutionaries formed a narrow circle. They were frightfully remote from the people. But their work was not in vain. The Decembrists awakened Herzen. Herzen developed revolutionary agitation.

"It was taken up, extended, intensified and tempered by the revolutionary commoners, beginning with Chernyshevsky and ending with the heroes of the *Narodnaya Volya* (the People's Freedom Society). The circle of champions grew wider, and their contact with the people closer. 'The young helmsmen of the coming storm,' Herzen called them. But this was not yet the real storm.

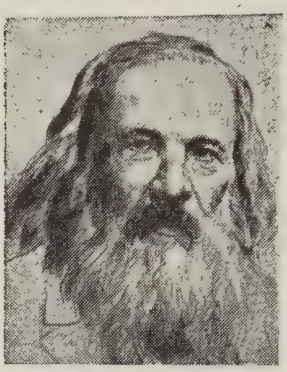
"The real storm was the movement of the masses themselves. The proletariat, the only thoroughly revolutionary class, rose at the head of them and was the first to rouse millions of peasants to an open revolutionary struggle. The first outbreak of the storm came in 1905." [1]

The Decembrists were powerfully influenced by the teachings, the most advanced in those times, of the bourgeois enlighteners of France and other European countries—the ideologists of the revolutionary struggle against absolutism, feudalism and religion. The Decembrists consciously recognized the necessity for equality and the injustice of despotism and slavery. The rising revolutionary movement of the first quarter of the nineteenth century exercised a tremendous influence on the development of Russian culture. Publicists arose. Pestel [2] composed his remarkable political tractate, *Russian Truth*. The Decembrists made a diligent study of republican and democratic tendencies in the past history of the Russian people. The revolutionary atmosphere of the first quarter of the nineteenth century had a very stimulating effect on the development of Russian literature. One of the organizers and prime movers of the revolt of the Decembrists (December 14, 1825) was the poet Rileyev, who was executed by the tsarist government for his share in the uprising. Kuchelbecker, Marlinsky and Odoyevsky were all writers who took part in the Decembrist movement. Griboyedov's brilliant comedy, *Woe to Wit*, would never have been written had it not been for the influence of the Decembrists. It was the Decembrist movement that helped to form the genius of Pushkin, who brought Russian literature into the ranks of the most advanced and highly perfected literatures of the world. Although Pushkin did not formally belong to the Decembrists' secret

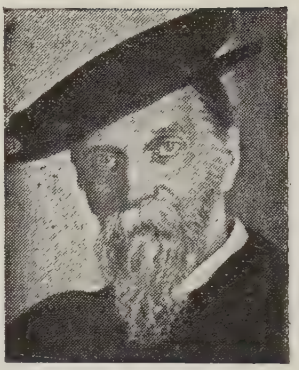
[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, p. 468, Russ. ed.

[2] One of the leaders of the Decembrist uprising.

M. V. LOMONOSOV



I. D. MENDELEYEV



K. A. TIMIRYAZEV

society, he was their poet-spokesman. Even after the movement was crushed Pushkin never surrendered to reaction. His ties with the country and the people never weakened; on the contrary, they grew firmer and closer. His interest turned more and more to the peasantry languishing under the yoke of serfdom.

Pushkin laid the foundations of Russian national literature. The simplicity and clarity of his poetry and prose arose from a combination of Russian popular elements with the achievements of world culture. Pushkin gave definite form to Russian literary language. His works mark a complete epoch in the history of Russian culture.

Maxim Gorky, the great writer of the proletariat, wrote of the part played by Pushkin in the development of Russian culture:

"As though by a miracle, immediately following Napoleon's invasion, and after Russians clad in officers' and soldiers' uniform had been in Paris, this man of genius appeared, and in the course of his brief life laid the firm foundation of everything that forms our subsequent heritage in the field of Russian art. Had it not been for Pushkin, Gogol (to whom he supplied the theme for the play *Inspector-General*), Leo Tolstoy, Turgenev and Dostoyevsky could not have appeared until much later then they did. All these great Russian men acknowledged Pushkin as their spiritual progenitor."

The Decembrists suffered defeat. But tsardom's victory only helped to accentuate the political and social discontent of the finest of Russia's people. The best creations of Russian culture were born of the struggle against the oppression and terrorism of the autocracy and of the struggle against capitalism.

The great poet Lermontov, a contemporary of Pushkin, who developed under the dual influences of the Decembrist tradition and the rising democratic current represented by Herzen, found no recognition in the reactionary court circles. In *Death of a Poet* (on Pushkin's death) Lermontov called down upon the heads of the autocracy the thunder of revolution. [1]

[1] History has preserved the words with which Nikolai I greeted the news of the death of Lermontov, who, like Pushkin, perished in a duel: "A dog deserves a dog's death." The royal hangman held a different feeling for the murderers, as is now definitely established by the reports in the case file of the duel, which was recently found. Notwithstanding the law qualifying death by duel as first degree murder, the tsar ordered the immediate release of two of the accessories to the arime while the murderer was sentenced to only three months arrest.

Gogol created a whole gallery of types of Russian feudal landlords and officials and subjected them to mordant and relentless criticism. Men of feeling were first provoked to laughter by Gogol's characters and stories, but laughter soon gave way to indignation against the things Gogol held up to ridicule. Gogol's literary skill awakened dormant political forces. The Gogol trend in literature stimulated the movement to cleanse Russia of the accumulated ordure of absolutism, the orthodox church and serfdom. The new-born Russian democracy made full use of the blasting power of Gogol's creations.

The first to appreciate the genius of Gogol and the significance of his art to the culture and future of Russia was the critic and democrat Belinsky. Yet those in whose hands lay the power—the official spokesmen of the Russian "people" and of Russian "culture"—regarded Gogol as an indecorous writer! This was one of those vivid instances that showed that the true champions of Russian honor and Russian culture were to be found in the democratic camp. Belinsky was able to appreciate the profound artistic and national significance of Gogol's work just because he hated the official, autocratic, serf-owning Russia. He wrote to V. P. Botkin [1] on July 28, 1841: "There has arisen in me a wild, frantic and fanatic love for the freedom and independence of the human personality, which are possible only in a society founded on truth and courage. . . . I came to understand the French Revolution. . . . And I came to understand, too, Marat's fierce love of liberty and his fierce hatred of all who wanted to barricade themselves off from the brotherhood of man, if only by a crest on their carriages."

[1] Collaborator to *Otechestvenny Zapiski* and *Sovremennik*. In the 'sixties went over to the reactionary camp.

Belinsky's work strongly influenced Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, who became the ideologists of a new era in the revolutionary and cultural development of Russia. They were consistent democrats and great utopian Socialists. Cherishing a boundless devotion to the people, they were the heralds of the ripening peasant revolution. They demanded the relentless extirpation of the autocracy and the serf system. And in all their activities they pinned their faith on the masses.

Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov were commoners, peasant democrats. Their more consistent democratic position enabled them to radically reform nearly every branch of Russian culture on more profound and more progressive lines.

Under the tsars philosophical thought was hounded and suppressed. The tsarist government, not without justification, regarded philosophy as a weapon of revolutionary criticism. At one time the teaching of philosophy in the universities was forbidden, for as Shirinsky-Shikhmatov, the reactionary Minister of Education, declared, "nobody has yet demonstrated the value of philosophy, whereas we know it can be harmful." Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov were ardent and persistent propagandists of materialism and atheism. They were both followers of Feuerbach, and not mere disciples of the great German thinker; they did outstanding work in carrying his ideas further.

"Chernyshevsky," wrote Lenin in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, "is the only really great Russian writer from the 'fifties until 1888 who was able to keep on the level of an integral philosophical materialism and who spurned the wretched nonsense of the neo-Kantians, the positivists, Machians and other muddleheads." [1]

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIII, p. 295, Russ. ed.

Chernyshevsky was a profound and at the same time an encyclopedic writer. He wrote on literature, art, philosophy, political economy, Socialism, history and the agrarian and peasant question; he was a student of home and foreign politics, wrote on military affairs, the status of women, and many other subjects. Chernyshevsky has left profound traces in all the fields about which he wrote; everywhere he ruthlessly criticized the prevailing reactionary or pusillanimous liberal views, and helped to clear the minds of advanced people of the old ideological rubbish and to train fighters for the cause of democracy and Socialism.

Particular mention should be made of the progress of Russian economic science and esthetics resulting from the transfer of the leadership of the revolutionary movement to the democratic commoners. Chernyshevsky's commentary on John Stuart Mill has unfortunately not yet received the appreciation it deserves.

Chernyshevsky's popularist democratic conceptions of political economy, although they did not attain the level of Marxism, were nevertheless a big step forward in the history of Russian science.

Chernyshevsky created a materialist esthetics. His essay *On the Esthetic Relation of Art to Reality* had an important influence on the development of Russian criticism, literature and art.

Marx and Engels valued Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov highly. In the preface to the second edition of *Capital* Marx refers to Chernyshevsky as a great Russian scientist and critic, and in a letter to Danielsohn dated November 9, 1871, he says of Dobrolyubov: "With Ehrlieb's (*i. e.*, Dobrolyubov's—V. K.) writings I am already in part familiar. As a writer, I rank him with Lessing and Diderot." [1]

[1] Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, p. 164, Russ. ed.

The intellectual movement of the 'sixties was not only able to proclaim its esthetic standards in the realm of literature and art but also to give them practical embodiment. What Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov proclaimed in theory and criticism the great writers Nekrasov and Shchedrin wove into the imaginative tissue of their writings.

Nekrasov opened a new chapter in the history of Russian poetry. He called for the sacrifice of everything, even of life itself, in the service of the people; he called for vengeance on the oppressors of the Russian people. Nekrasov's revolutionary poetry was inspired by the interests of the peasants, by their revolutionary protest. He combined a realistic and faithful depiction of the sufferings of the people with a revolutionary appeal. Nekrasov's realism was the realism of a revolutionary peasant democrat. That is why his poems, grim as they are, never sink to hopeless despair, to dejection and pessimism. He believed in the talents of the Russian people, their strength and their future; and he believed that in the end they would emerge triumphant from their sufferings and trials.

Nekrasov's vigor and optimism were an echo of the vigor and optimism that always distinguished the revolutionary teachings of Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov.

In Shchedrin Russian culture produced a great satirist, no less a master in this genre than Rabelais and Swift. Like Nekrasov, Shchedrin expressed the interests of the peasant democracy. He ruthlessly castigated the autocracy and the bureaucracy, serfdom, capitalist morality, the kulaks, and the liberals who concealed their servility to the autocracy under a false and florid phrasemongering. His Yudushka (Judas) Golovlyov personified the pious, canting, perfidious hypocrite. Yu-

dushka was the epithet Lenin borrowed from Shchedrin to brand the traitor, assassin and spy, Trotsky.

All the biting power of this great satirist was directed against the autocratic, serf-holding and capitalist features of old Russia. Shchedrin personally took no direct part in the political revolutionary struggle, but the general character of his criticism could have been borrowed only from revolutionaries like Petrashevsky,[1] Belinsky and, above all, from Chernyshevsky and his followers. Only the rising flames of revolutionary hatred could have lent such devastating power to his satire.

The writings of Nekrasov and Shchedrin marked a further important stage in the development of Russian literature. They were products of the spread of revolutionary and Socialist ideas in Russia, of a transition to a new and higher level of the revolutionary struggle.

The revolutionary democratic movement that began in the 'sixties gave a powerful stimulus to Russian national painting. "At the beginning of the 'sixties," the great painter Repin relates, "Russian life awakened from its long moral and intellectual slumber. It looked about it, and the first thing it wanted to do was to cleanse itself and brush off the useless sweepings and offal, the elements of obsolete routine. New and healthy paths were being sought in every sphere of activity. The youth and strength of fresh Russian thought pressed cheerfully and boldly forward and without regret broke down everything it found to be out of date and useless. This mighty wave of the intelligentsia was bound to sweep into the arts as well, and the Academy felt the force of its onslaught. . . ."

The galaxy of talented artists who flourished in the period of the revolutionary democratic movement in Russia was strongly influenced by the materialist and democratic esthetics propounded by Chernyshevsky. They were convinced champions of realism; they strove to create paintings that would be understandable to the people, and were anxious to place their art at the service of the people. A group of artists headed by Kramskoy, Myasoyedov and Perov resigned from the Academy and formed the Society of Itinerant Art Exhibitions. "This protest of the young people," Repin wrote, "had deep and national roots. . . . The painters instinctively felt that they were the representatives of the Russian land in art. The Russian people had advanced them from its ranks and expected of them an art understandable and native to the people."

This initiated a period in Russian painting which produced such famous artists as Repin, Surikov and Serov. Repin's first great work, one that earned him world fame, was the *Burlaki (Volga Boatmen)*, which in theme and idea had much in common with the Volga poems of Nekrasov and with the depiction of the revolutionary Rakhmetov, in Chernyshevsky's novel, *What Is to Be Done?*

The general progress and democratization of Russian culture in the second half of the nineteenth century gave rise to a rapid development in Russian music, marked by the names of Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Chaikovsky.

Similarly, the democratic trends in public life, which the reactionary government was unable to counteract, and the increasing sway of materialism over idealism in the

[1] An official of the Foreign Ministry. Organized a secret circle for the study of socio-economic and political problems in Russia. Opposed serfdom. Banished for life to Siberia.

public mind created conditions that favored the rise and spread of Russian science. Herzen, in his *Letters on the Study of Nature*, had insisted on the vital importance of natural science. As in every other country, the reactionaries in Russia endeavored to make philosophy the handmaiden of religion, but Herzen tried to pave the way for a union of philosophy and science. Making allowances for the condition of the time, Chernyshevsky's *Anthropological Principle in Philosophy* was a brilliant attempt at a scientific proof of materialism. He did yeoman service to subsequent scientific development by demonstrating the profound practical value of natural science to the national life.

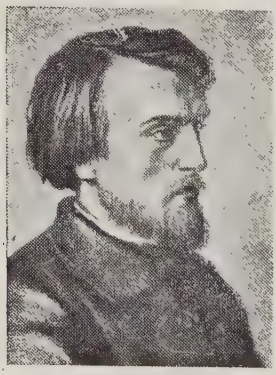
A man who did much to spread scientific and materialist views in Russia and to demonstrate the importance of the natural sciences was Pisarev. Pisarev's articles are known to have given the original stimulus to many prominent Russian scientists, among them Academician Bach, who acknowledges the debt in his autobiography.

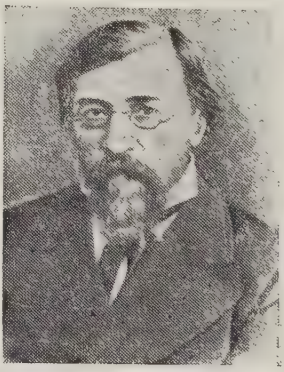
The efforts of these advanced thinkers were not in vain. The flourishing period of Russian scientific progress began in the early 'sixties. At the opening of the nineteenth century there were only a few scientists in Russia, and most of them, moreover—by origin and education and the lauguage in which they wrote—were foreigners (the German biologist Behr, for example); but from the middle of the century a number of outstanding chemists, biologists and physiologists began to come to the fore. The generation of the 'sixties could boast such names as Mendeleyev, Metchnikov and Sechenov.

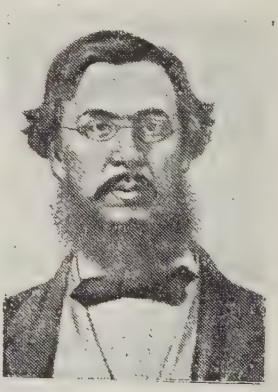
Sechenov was a materialist who openly proclaimed his convictions. His work on the central nervous system and the physiology of breathing contributed greatly to the development of the science of human physiology. "The man who should be regarded as the father of physiology in our country," said Pavlov at the Fifteenth World Congress of Physiologists, "is Sechenov, who was the first to lecture not on the basis of what others had written, but as a specialist in the field, illustrating his lectures with experiments, and founding our first school of physiology."

The development of scientific thought in the 'sixties was accompanied by a rapid growth of public interest in the sciences and a growing realization of their public importance.

Thus we find Russian culture







V. G. BELINSKY N. G. CHERNYSHEVSKY N. A. DOBROLYUBOV

growing and spreading. At a time when the tsar, the government and the ruling classes—the official representatives of the country—were acting as the gendarmes of Europe, the Russian people were struggling for freedom and happiness, for justice and enlightenment. The forms and programs of the struggle changed with each generation. The hour of the people's victory had not yet struck; but every achievement in politics, philosophy and science, in the arts and in literature, was a result of the independent activity of the people, of popular discontent and of the ceaseless revolutionary class struggle. Official autocratic and feudal Russia might inspire fear, but the love and respect enjoyed by the Russian people among the family of nations were won by the culture they themselves had created, the motivating force of which was the revolutionary struggle for democracy and Socialism.

Leo Tolstoy, whose influence on world literature has been enormous, was not a revolutionary. He was, as we know, opposed to all forms of violence, including revolutionary violence. But "his world significance as an artist," wrote Lenin, "his world fame as a thinker and preacher both, in a way, reflect the world significance of the Russian revolution.

"Leo Tolstoy came to the fore as a great writer at a time when serfdom still prevailed. In a number of the great works he produced during his more than half a century of literary activity he depicted principally the old, pre-revolutionary Russia—which even after 1861 had remained a semi-serf country—rural Russia, the Russia of the landlord and peasant. In describing this phase of the historical life of Russia, Leo Tolstoy managed to raise so many profound questions and to attain so high a level of artistic mastery that his works occupy one of the foremost places among the literary masterpieces of the world."[1]

Lenin stresses the great role of Tolstoy's works in world literature. His books have penetrated all lands and have exercised a progressive influence on many writers of world fame, among them Romain Rolland, who has written a study of Tolstoy.

But it was when the working class took the lead of the revolutionary struggle of the Russian people that the world influence of Russian culture assumed particular strength and scope.

With the development of capitalism in the 'eighties a working class took definite shape in Russia. It grew in size and strength in the midst of an incessant and stubborn struggle. From 1870 to 1880 more than one hundred and twenty thousand workers went on strike. The strike of the Morosov Textile Mills in Orekhovo-Zuyevo in 1885 aroused countrywide attention. The revolutionary movement of the working class had a healthy effect upon public life, which had been repressed by reaction and corrupted by the liberal Populism. The revolutionary struggle became a powerful, vigorous and growing movement with quite tangible prospects of ultimate and complete success. The revolutionary and progressive sections of society abandoned despondency for optimism, "petty affairs" gave way to great revolutionary exploits.

Influenced by the developing strike movement of the Russian working class, Plekhanov swung from the Populist movement to the Marxist. He rightly attributed greater historic significance to the workers' strikes during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 than to the war in the Balkans. The changed social conditions enabled Plekhanov not

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XIV, p. 400, Russ. ed.

only to read Marx—that many a Narodnik had done before him—but to understand the principles of scientific Socialism.

Plekhanov was the first of the Russian Marxists to take up the cudgels against Populism and to deal it many a shrewd and telling blow. And although he was unable to give that movement the *coup de grâce*—that was left for Lenin—he did much to elevate Russian theoretical thought and to stimulate its development. He raised Russian philosophical thought above the level at which Chernyshevsky had left it.

"In parenthesis, I think it would be appropriate to observe for the benefit of the young members of the Party," Lenin wrote in 1921 in his article *Once More on the Trade Unions*, "that it is impossible to become an intelligent, real Communist without studying—precisely, studying—all that Plekhanov wrote on philosophy, because that is the best there is in the whole international literature on Marxism." [1]

It should be stated that Plekhanov subsequently became a Menshevik and a betrayer of the cause of the working class. "No Russian Social-Democrat," Lenin wrote, "should confuse the present Plekhanov with the old Plekhanov."[2]

The Emancipation of Labor group which Plekhanov founded in 1883 did much to spread Marxism in Russia, but it had no contacts with the workers' movement. It required the genius of Lenin to link revolutionary Marxism with the mass working class movement in Russia. In the conditions of the new epoch—the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution—Lenin elevated Marxism to a new and still higher level.

As Stalin said in the *Foundations of Leninism;* ". . . Russia became the home of Leninism . . . and Lenin, the leader of the Russian Communists, became its creator."[1]

At the beginning of the twentieth century the center of the world revolutionary movement shifted to Russia.

". . . In Russia," Stalin says," a great, popular revolution was rising, headed by the most revolutionary proletariat in the world, which possessed such an important ally as the revolutionary peasantry of Russia. It is self-evident that such a revolution could not come to a halt midway; that in case of success it was bound to advance further and raise the banner of revolt against imperialism.

"It is for this reason that Russia had to become the junction point of the contradictions of imperialism not only in the sense that these contradictions were exposed more easily in Russia than elsewhere in view of their especially repulsive and intolerable character, and not only because Russia was the most important bulwark of western imperialism, uniting as it did western finance capital with the eastern colonies, but also because only in Russia did the real power exist capable of solving the contradictions of imperialism in a revolutionary way." [2]

This it was that turned Russia into the home of Leninism—of the "highest achievement" (Stalin) of Russian culture.

The activities of these leaders of the working class—Lenin and Stalin—who had been trained in the experience of the world revolutionary movement and in the

[1] *Ibid.*, Vol. IX, p. 66, Eng. ed.
[2] V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. *I*, p. 89, Russ. ed.

[1] J. V. Stalin, *Leninism* Vol. I, p. 19, Eng. ed.
[2] *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 18.

revolutionary traditions of the Russian people, have transformed our country into a center of world cultural life. Profoundly difficult problems that had exercised the minds of humanity have been solved by the nations of the U.S.S.R., headed by the Russian people and under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin. The U.S.S.R. has the Stalin Constitution, the most advanced and democratic in the world.

"The Soviet Revolution," writes Romain Rolland, "was born of the heroic genius of Lenin and of his fearless colleagues; it rests on the great Bolshevik Party, the backbone of the nations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Soviet Revolution was long the ardent dream of all freedom-loving minds which were outraged by social injustice and strove for a more humane social system.

"We cherished this dream in the stifling atmosphere of the pre-war years and in the stormy years of the war. It was only because of this dream that we were able to live at all. Consequently, the October Revolution was also born of our faith. Its victory was our victory. Our fate is bound up with its fate. We belong to it, and it belongs to us."

Henri Barbusse, in his book on Stalin, speaks of the magnetic force of the U.S.S.R. and of Russian Socialist culture as follows: "For the first time in history a considerable section of the human race has thoroughly refashioned itself. The eyes of the world turn towards the Soviet Union. . . . The Russian people, who were the first to begin the salvation of the nations, the U.S.S.R., the only experiment in Socialism, furnish an actual and existing proof that Socialism can be established on earth."

Today, when the fascist barbarians are murdering women and children and destroying seats of culture in Spain and China, when unbridled reaction is raging in Germany, Italy, Poland and other countries, and fascism is being encouraged by bourgeois-democratic governments, the land of Lenin and Stalin is like a beacon illuminating the path to salvation, freedom, happiness and cultural progress for the toiling masses of the world.

In this creation of a new, Socialist society the Russian people are drawing widely on the cultural treasures of their past. The new Socialist world is the product of a long and stubborn struggle in which the working class had its precursors. Lenin says in *What Is to Be Done?* that Herzen, Belinsky and Chernyshevsky were the precursors of Russian Social-Democracy.

Never have the classical productions of Russian literature, art and science received such wide recognition among the masses as they have in Soviet times. The immortal works of Pushkin have been translated into the languages of eighty-five nations of the Soviet Union, the works of Gorky into forty-eight, and *The Tale of Igor's Regiment* into twenty.

Maxim Gorky opened a new chapter in the development of Russian literature. He raised it to a new level, one consonent with the fact that the working class had become the leader of the revolutionary movement. "In his powerful influence on Russian literature," said V. M. Molotov, "Gorky stands with such giants as Pushkin, Gogol, Tolstoy, as the one who best carried on in our times their great traditions. The influence of Gorky's writings on the destinies of our Revolution is more direct and more forceful than the influence of any other of our writers. Therefore it is precisely Gorky who is the genuine begetter of proletarian Socialist literature in our land and in the eyes of the toilers of the whole world."

Gorky was a patriot of his Social-

ist country. He was a disciple, friend and comrade of Lenin and Stalin. He called upon honest workers in the field of culture all over the world to rally to the banner of Lenin and Stalin, and taught that their great ideas should be taken as a guide.

"We are working in a country," Gorky said at the First Soviet Writers' Congress of the U.S.S.R. "which is illuminated by the genius of Lenin, a country where the iron will of Joseph Stalin is ceaselessly performing miracles. That is what we must bear firmly in mind in our work and in all our utterances to the world."

The new art, with its new social and political content, needed a new method. This method was Socialist realism.

Gorky was an innovator in literature; he did not imitate the old realists or the romanticists. The pre-Gorky realism was too objective and contemplative; even its foremost exponents suffered from those defects from which the pre-Marxian materialists suffered in the realm of philosophy. It was a realism that lacked an active principle. It was strong in its criticism of social evil; but in its intellectual message and in the images it created it was unable to show how the evil was to be combated, nor had it anything new and positive to suggest in place of the evil.

Gorky entered literature on the rising tide of the revolutionary movement started by the working class. His criticism of the system of exploitation and despotism was a realistic one. But against the reality he criticized he brought a new vital principle. And his dreams, his romantic discontent with the present and his glimpses into the future likewise bore the impress of realism.

Gorky's ear caught the new note of life—new in Russia in those days—sounded by the proletarian champions of Socialism. It was the proud note we find re-echoed in *The Stormy Petrel* and in the *Song of the Falcon*—it was the call for struggle against poverty and ignorance, the music of the striving for happiness, enlightenment and human dignity. Gorky's condemnation of the existing system was the offspring of his dreams of a better future. These dreams did not isolate him from life; on the contrary, they led him into the very thick of the struggle. His dreams were accompanied by deeds; the realization of these dreams was being fought for by people he knew, by people who worked side by side with him in the illegal underground movement of tsarist Russia, where the future of our country, as outlined by Lenin and Stalin, was being shaped.

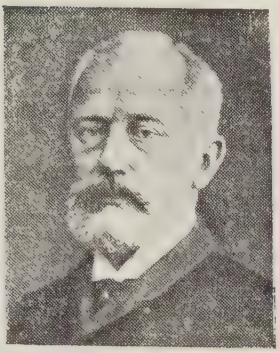
Through Gorky Russian proletarian literature has exercised a profound influence on the literature of the world.

"Maxim Gorky," wrote Barbusse, "is now exercising a tremendous influence in France owing to the profound realism and revolutionary intensity of his depiction of the social struggle and social antagonism."

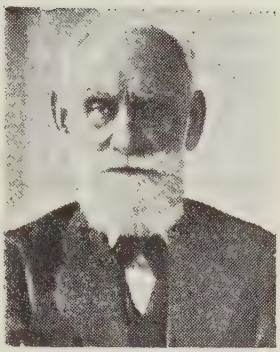
"Gorky is a child of the revolution," wrote Martin Anderson Nexö. "He was suckled on the milk of that revolution and all his literary efforts were devoted to preparing the way for and helping to bring about the great upheaval. From the esthetic standpoint, Maxim Gorky is a great artist, but together with the new Russia, acquiring tremendous proportions, he becomes the living embodiment of the new world."

Gorky was a great humanist. He passionately hated the enemies of the working class, of the people and of culture. "If the enemy does not surrender," he said, "he must be

A. I. HERZEN



P. I. CHAIKOVSKY



I. P. PAVLOV

destroyed." These words were dictated by a profound love of the working people. This great master of Russian and world culture was murdered by the Trotskyite and Bukharinite bandits—those vile traitors, spies and hirelings of fascist intelligence services—because they are the bitter enemies of culture, the bitter enemies of the working people, of the Russian people, and because they had designed to destroy the Soviet Union—the fatherland of all advanced humanity.

Tsarist Russia was a prison of nations, but the peoples that suffered under the yoke of the tsars looked on the Russian people as a friend and ally in their struggle for emancipation.

The nations inhabiting the Russian Empire benefited from Russian democratic and Socialist cultural influences. The great Ukrainian poet and revolutionary, Taras Shevchenko, may be cited as an example. He grew up in the traditions of the Decembrists and of the first utopian Socialists and publicists of the 'sixties. Shevchenko met with complete understanding and sympathy on the part of Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov. In 1856 Shevchenko came across a copy of Herzen's *Polar Star* the cover of which was illustrated by portraits of the executed Decembrists.

"The cover, that is, the portraits of these apostles and martyrs, affected me so deeply," wrote the poet in his diary, "that I am still unable to recover from the depressing impression. What a good idea it would be to cast a medal in commemoration of this heinous event: on one side the portraits of these supreme martyrs with the inscription—'The first Russian heralds of victory'; and on the other the portrait of the unforgettable Retarder (of progress—*i.e.*, Nicholas I—V. K.) with the inscription—'Not the first Russian crowned executioner.' "

The tsarist government persecuted Shevchenko during his lifetime and after his death banned his poems and forbade the commemoration of his memory. But his writing always met a warm response among the people and the Russian working class. The poet knew this. He himself loved the Russian people and a number of his works were written in Russian.

Russian democratic thought had a profound influence on Georgian literature. In the 'sixties Georgians used to go north to study in Russian universities and to acquaint themselves with the ideas of Belinsky, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov at

first hand. These ideas helped to bring about a new growth of literature and social and political thought in the nineteenth century in Georgia. The movement was headed by the famous Georgian writer, Ilya Chavchavadze. Among the prominent figures in Georgia influenced by the progressive currents in Russian culture were, in addition to Chavchavadze, Akakii Tsereteli, Georgi Tsereteli, and Niko Nikoladze, a contributor to Herzen's *Kolokol (The Bell).*

The revival in Armenian literature in the middle of the nineteenth century was also directly stimulated by progressive Russian culture. The most prominent representative of the movement in Armenia in the 'sixties was Mikael Nalbandyan. He was in close contact with Bakunin, Ogaryov and Herzen. Nalbandyan was incarcerated in the Peter and Paul Fortress.

Ovanes Tumanyan, the most important of the Armenian poets of the nineteenth century, wrote: "The Russian poets that influenced me most were Lermontov and Pushkin, and I think that it was under their influence that I wrote the poems in which I sing of the life, customs and manners of our mountain people."

Contrasting the Great-Russian culture symbolized by the names of Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov with the Great-Russian culture represented by Purishkevich, [1] Lenin drew attention to the progressive absorption of Russian democratic and Socialist culture by the other nations inhabiting the Russian Empire.

"While it is true that the majority of the Ukrainian workers," he wrote, "are under the influence of Great-Russian culture, we know for a fact that side by side with the ideas of the Great-Russian culture of the priests and the bourgeoisie the ideas of the Great-Russian democrats and Social-Democrats are also having their effect. While combating the former kind of 'culture,' the Ukrainian *Marxist* will always distinguish it from the latter culture and tell the workers of his nation: 'We must absolutely seize, take advantage of and multiply every opportunity of communion with the Great-Russian class conscious worker, with his literature and with his circle of ideas; this is dictated by the profound interests both of the Ukrainian and the Great-Russian working class movement.

"If a Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be carried away by his *perfectly justified and natural* hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors *to such an extent* as to transfer even a particle of this hatred, even only a sense of alienation, to the proletarian culture and the proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, that Marxist will sink into the bog of bourgeois nationalism. And a Great-Russian Marxist will similarly sink into the bog of nationalism, not only of bourgeois but of Black Hundred nationalism, if he forgets even for a moment the demand for the complete equality of the Ukrainians or their *right* to form an independent state." [1]

The progressive influence of Russian Socialist culture on the culture of the other nations of our country became particularly marked after the victory of the October Revolution. Before that many of the nationalities of tsarist Russia did not even have their own alphabet. The tsarist government did its best to encourage ignorance and stagnation among the peoples under its rule. With the establishment of

[1] Arch-reactionary landlord whose advocacy of pogroms against the national minorities in Russia made his name a symbol of obscurantism and feudal oppression.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, pp. 143-44, Russ. ed.

the Soviet power, the Russian people helped the formerly backward nationalities to create their own alphabet and literature. In accordance with the national policy of Lenin and Stalin, the Russian nation is in every way helping to develop the culture of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., a culture national in form and Socialist in content. Never has cultural communion between nations been so intimate and profound as it is between the nations of the Soviet Union, where it aids the cultural growth of each and at the same time strengthens the ties of friendship between the whole family of Soviet nations.

The part played by Russian culture as a world emancipatory force has also determined the international significance of the Russian language. We have already quoted Lomonosov on the subject. Turgenev wrote in the same connection: "...It is hard to believe that such a language was not given to a great people!" Engels said that the Russian language "is fully worthy of study both for its own sake, for it is one of the strongest and richest of living languages, and for the sake of the literature to which it gives access." [1]

The importance of Russian has been particularly enhanced since Russia became the home of Leninism—the highest achievement of Russian culture.

The powerful democratic current in Russian culture in the past, the victory of the Socialist Revolution and the triumph of Socialist construction were bound to develop remarkable positive qualities in the people of Russia. The enemies of the revolutionary and Socialist movement in Russia calumniated the Russian people. For instance, that fascist hireling and assassin, Bukharin, referred to them disparagingly as "a nation of Oblomovs." [1] It is true that the feudal backwardness of the country did tend to develop Oblomov features among certain Russians, especially the parasite landlord class, but Oblomovism has never been characteristic of the Russian people as a whole. Radishchev, the aristocratic revolutionary Decembrists, Herzen, the commoners, the peasant democrats, and the Russian working class, which produced the Bolshevik Party and was the first to establish a Socialist system—these were not Oblomovs, but people with a spacious outlook and indomitable will who shrank from no difficulties or obstacles. The activities of the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin and Stalin, have moulded a type of Soviet individual who combines the revolutionary sweep of the Russian with the efficiency of the American.

Russian culture awakens a legitimate feeling of national pride.

"Is the feeling of national pride alien to us, the class conscious Great-Russian proletarians?" asked Lenin in 1914. "Of course, not! We love our language and our country: we are striving above all to raise her laboring masses (that is, nine-tenths of her population) to the level of conscious life of the democrats and Socialists. It is most painful to us to witness and to feel the violence, oppression and outrage to which the tsarist butchers, the nobles and the capitalists are subjecting our splendid country. We are proud of the fact that these outrages have met with resistance in our midst, in the midst of the Great-Russians, that from *this* midst rose Radishchev, the Decembrists and the revolutionary commoners of the 'sev-

[1] Marx, Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. XV, p. 239, Russ. ed.

[1] Oblomov, a character in Goncharov's novel of the same name, is synonymous with laziness, ineffectualness and spinelessness.

enties, that in 1905 the Great-Russian working class created a powerful revolutionary party of the masses, and that at the same time the Great-Russian *muzhik* began to become a democrat and to depose the priest and the landlord." [1]

The sense of national pride of the Russian workers and peasants has grown since these magnificent lines were written. The Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, has become the beloved and universally recognized leader in every phase of life of our country. Since the October Revolution Russian culture, fostered by the policy of Lenin and Stalin, has made gigantic strides. "The period of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.," says Joseph Stalin (*Marxism and the National and Colonial Question*), "is a period in which national culture, Socialist in content and national in form, *blossoms*."

Under capitalism, the benefits of culture were enjoyed not by the majority of the population—the workers and peasants—but by the ruling and exploiting classes. Capitalism endeavored to keep the masses of the people in darkness and ignorance. As Lenin wrote:

"Capitalism crushed, stifled and destroyed a host of talents among the workers and toiling peasants. These talents perished under the burden of want, hunger and outrages to the human personality." [2]

As long as capitalism had not passed the zenith of its development, it did to a certain extent create conditions necessary for cultural progress. But now, in the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism, in the epoch of the stagnation of capitalism, the hostility of capitalism to progress and culture stands out in clear relief.

Modern capitalism is inimical to technical progress. The bourgeoisie, which once revolutionized the industry of the world, now fears technical innovations and shrinks from applying new inventions and discoveries.

The fascists extol hand labor and assert that machinery is harmful.

The private ownership of land in capitalist countries prevents the rational application of modern machinery and agronomical knowledge to agriculture.

Many a world-famous scientist is unable to secure the funds required for his researches, and is often condemned to unemployment and poverty. Teachers are brought before bourgeois courts for the crime of expounding Darwinism. The fascists exile men like Einstein, when they do not drive them to "suicide." Ignorant drill-sergeants are appointed to the chairs of once famous universities. A few weeks of fascist rule in Austria were enough to turn her capital, so recently one of the world's cultural centers, into a provincial town groaning beneath the yoke of fascist terrorism.

Art is deteriorating and declining in the modern capitalist world. Poets cannot find publishers, while the huge circulation of books in the Soviet Union seems fabulous to Western writers, something beyond their wildest dreams.

In the countries where fascism prevails, esthetic criteria have lost all validity. Art is only expected to reproduce the hysterical ravings of the Hitlers and their calls for murder and destruction.

Against this background the flourishing state of culture in the Soviet Union stands out in bold contrast.

The whole power of our Socialist State is directed to fostering the

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[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII, p. 81, Russ. ed.

[2] *Ibid.* Vol. XXIV, p. 491, Russ. ed.

progress of culture in all its branches. The heroic exploit of Papanin and his comrades which has upset old established views on the Arctic, and the famous flights of Chkalov and Gromov from the Old World to the New are indicative of the boldness and sweep of cultural progress in the Soviet Union. This progress is evident in all spheres of life and knowledge. In industry and agriculture, Stakhanov and the Stakhanovites have started a revolution in productive methods on a scale unknown and impossible under capitalism.

Culture in the Soviet Union has become the patrimony of the masses, who have acquired a keen thirst for knowledge and love of art. Byron and Goethe, Pushkin and Gorky, Homer and Rustaveli, Belinsky and Dobrolyubov have become widely known to the masses. Nowhere else are scientists and artists surrounded with such care and solicitude by the Government and with such love by the people as in our country. This is because the masses in our country have been schooled in the cultural revolution initiated by Lenin and Stalin.

"The destinies of nations and states," said Joseph Stalin at the First Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers, "are now decided not only by leaders, but primarily and chiefly by the toiling millions. The workers and peasants who without noise and fuss build mills and factories, mines and railways, collective farms and state farms, who create all the benefits of life and feed and clothe the whole world—there you have the real heroes and creators of the new life."

The teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin form the foundation of the world outlook of our people. The highest achievement of human reason—dialectical materialism—is now the only method of thought and Socialist practice in the U.S.S.R. Realism—the method of classical art—in our country has developed into Socialist realism. Science has been completely freed of the fetters of religion and idealism, and never have conditions been so favorable for its advancement and spread among the masses.

A new culture of labor, a new attitude towards labor have developed in our country.

"The most remarkable thing in competition," said Stalin at the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, "is the fact that it is causing a fundamental revolution in people's views on labor, for it is transforming labor from the shameful and weary burden it used to be formerly considered into a matter of *honor*, a matter of *glory*, a matter of *valor* and *heroism*."

Soviet culture is imbued with the consciousness of its indissoluble ties with the democratic and Socialist culture of other nations. The fact that Soviet culture, headed by Russian Socialist culture, is a thing of the masses, that it enjoys the love of the larger and better part of the nations of the world, goes to show that history will not be turned back in its course. The fascists make bonfires of books, close down universities, bombard schools, museums and hospitals, and reduce teaching to a matter of military drill and racial hatred.

The fury of the imperialist bourgeoisie springs from a knowledge of its weakness and inevitable doom. But in the free development of Soviet Socialist culture mankind perceives the pledge of the ultimate triumph of light over darkness, of progress over fascist reaction, of the brotherhood of nations over bestial jingoism, and of democracy and Socialism over fascism.

Vladimir Rubin

THE YOUNG GENERATION OF A GREAT PEOPLE

Shortly before the land of the Soviets celebrates the twenty-first anniversary of its existence, it will mark another important date: October 29, the twentieth anniversary of the Leninist Young Communist League (the Komsomol). The entire country will take part in celebrating this event, for the Young Communist League, under the leadership of the Communist Party, has won the country's love and esteem by its devoted and self-sacrificing work in all spheres of Socialist construction.

The Leninist Young Communist League is a mass, non-Party youth organization close to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. It unites in its ranks the advanced, politically conscious working youth of town and countryside. Its major task is to aid the Communist Party in educating Soviet youth and children.

The Young Communist League has traversed a great historical path in the twenty years of its existence. In the early years of Civil War, when the country was beating back the attack of fourteen powers, when Russian counter-revolution, together with the interventionists, tried to crush the young Soviet Republic, the battle front absorbed the attention of the Young Communist League. Thousands of its members joined the Red Army detachments. Signs hung on the doors of many district committees of the Komsomol: "Closed. All members have gone to the front." Many Young Communists perished as heroes, fighting for the liberty of their country; many of them underwent savage torture at the hands of the whiteguards. For the self-denial, hardihood and courage displayed by the Komsomols on the battle fronts, the Young Communist League was award ed the order of the Military Red Banner.

The Civil War over, the country entered a new phase of struggle—struggle against economic ruin, hunger, poverty and ignorance. A new front had arisen, the front of economic construction.

The Bolshevik Party undertook the gigantic plan for transforming the economic basis of the country. Members of the Young Communist League threw themselves into this new task. Lenin's speech on the tasks of the Komsomol at the Third Congress of the Young Communist League was of great historical importance in the development of the League. (See p. 85.) After Lenin's death in 1924 the Komsomol took the name of the genius of the Proletarian Revolution. Lenin and Stalin stood at the cradle of the Komsomol, they directed it along the path of struggle and victories.

Under Stalin's leadership the Bolshevik Party undertook the Five-

Year Plans which radically changed the Soviet land, transforming it into an advanced industrial country, a land of large-scale collectivized agriculture, first in Europe and second in the world in industrial output.

The Bolshevik Party relied on the aid of the Young Communist League in this tremendous historic undertaking. More than two hundred thousand Komsomols were sent by the Central Committee of the Young Communist League as shock workers on the great construction projects throughout the country. Miracles were wrought by the Komsomols, young men and women workers, in erecting the blast furnaces of Magnitogorsk, in the mines of the Donets and Kuznetsk coal basins, in building the Moscow subway and so on. An entire city—a city of youth, Komsomolsk—was built in the Far East by Young Communists. For outstanding activity in Socialist construction, the Young Communist League was awarded a second Order, that of the Red Banner of Labor.

Almost seven million workers under the age of twenty-four are now engaged in Socialist industry. In such huge industrial plants as the Stalinogorsk Chemical Works, youth comprises sixty per cent of all workers; at the Chelyabinsk Tractor Plant, forty-seven per cent. Young Stakhanovites occupy a place of honor among them.

The Young Communist League holds a place of honor in strengthening the defense of its Socialist fatherland. It accepted a great political responsibility when in 1922 it took patronage over the Red Fleet and in 1931 over the Military Air Fleet.

Splendid heroic traits—self-denial, endurance, persistence, clarity of aim and a love of life, coupled with a readiness to sacrifice themselves in the struggle for the cause of the working people, for their beloved fatherland—mark the Stalinist young generation. It is no matter of chance that Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered* is a favorite book of Soviet youth, while Pavel Korchagin is their beloved hero. The heroic personality of the writer Ostrovsky, himself a Young Communist, embodies the best features of Soviet youth.

The Young Communist League may look back with pride over the path it has traversed in twenty years. Together with the whole great Soviet people the young generation of the U.S.S.R. has attained a joyous and cultured life. "Life has become better, comrades, life has become more joyful!" Soviet youth fully experiences the truth of these words of Stalin. Great vistas are opened before it: the Stalinist Constitution gave Soviet youth the right to work, education and rest. Prior to the Revolution (1914-15) 124,000 students attended the higher schools. These were for the most part children of nobles, merchants and officials. "Cooks' children," as one tsarist minister of education derogatorily referred to children of the workers and peasants, were carefully kept out of the higher schools. Today over 550,000 students, the children of workers, peasants and intellectuals, attend the higher educational institutions of the Soviet Union. Tsarist Russia had ninety-nine higher schools in all. Today their number reaches seven hundred. Over 800 million rubles has been set aside by the Government in 1938 as stipends for students.

Every facility for a cultured and healthy life has been placed at the disposal of Soviet youth. Among these facilities are 650 athletic stadiums, 7,200 sports grounds, 2,600 skiing clubs and numerous boating clubs, sanatoriums and rest

SOVIET YOUTH

Akhmanbek Marvalyev, son of a Tajikistan collective farmer, is a pupil of the Stalinabad Music School. He is playing on the tambur, a native instrument

homes. There are ten million sportsmen in the Soviet Union. Of these a great number have won the Labor and Defense badge and Voroshilov marksmanship badge. Parachute jumping has become a mass sport. In numerous cities excellently equipped physical culture institutes are turning out first class instructors.

All this is perfectly natural in the Soviet Union for, as Stalin pointed out, "the distinctive feature of our Revolution is that it brought the people not only freedom but also material benefits and the possibility of a prosperous and cultured life."

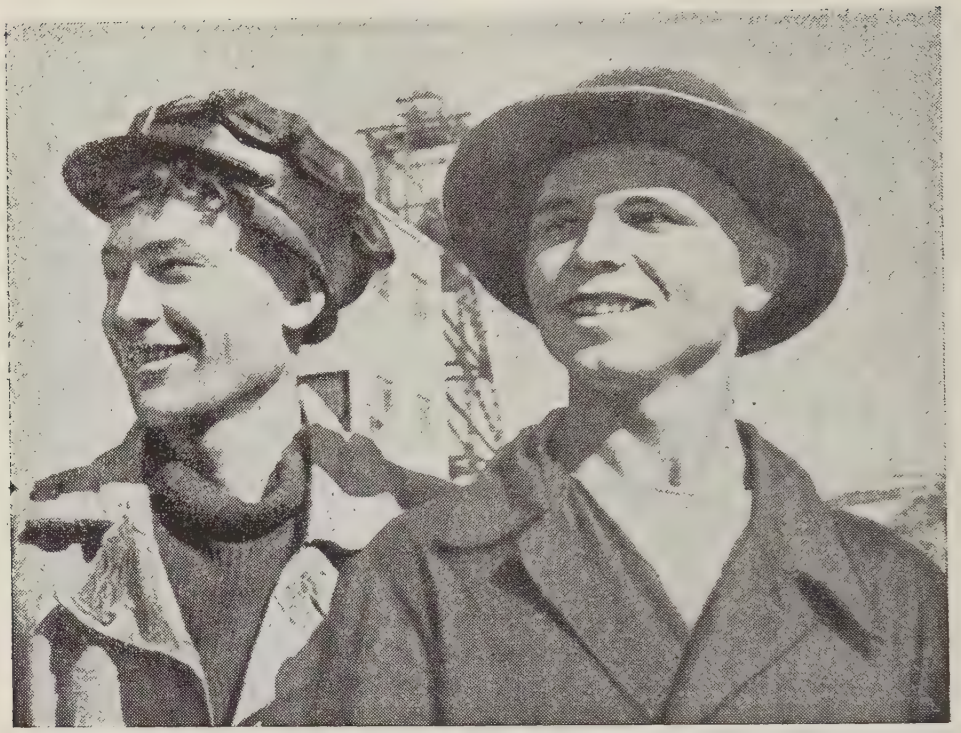
The Young Communist League, which had four million members in 1936 and has since greatly increased — by one and a half million in the past six months alone — represents a vital force. Its central daily newspaper, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, has a circulation of 600,000. Ninety-three other Komsomol newspapers, as well as fifty-five children's newspapers and scores of magazines for juveniles and children, are today published in the U.S.S.R. The Young Communist League has its own publishing houses, the Young Guard Publishers and the Children's Literature Publishers, which issue millions of copies of books for the rising generation.

The Young Communist League took a most active part in the recent elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., and to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous Republics. Komsomols, young workers, collective farmers and intellectuals are playing an important part in administering the country. Suffice it to mention that two hundred and eighty-four young people, including fifty girls, have been elected to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. What parliament in the world contains nineteen-year old deputies, young workers and milkmaids?

The Komsomol elevated many of its members to unprecedented heights. The names of such outstanding young Stakhanovites as the locomotive engineer Krivonos, the girl collective farmers Maria Demchenko and Pasha Angelina, the weaver Dusya Vinogradova and many others are known not only in the U.S.S.R. but among the friends of the country of Socialism in other lands. Ivan Dzerzhinsky, the gifted composer; Emil Hillels and Jacob Fliere, winners of the Ysaye International Pianists' Contest; Botvinnik, the renowned chess master; the writers A. Korneichuk and A. Avdeyenko, the poet Samed Vurgun, and many others, have all been brought up by the Young Communist League. They are striking examples of the unlimited opportunities afforded Soviet youth for creative growth and development.

Soviet youth, raised in the spirit of militant internationalism, knows the conditions under which youth lives in capitalist countries. With deep sympathy it follows the heroic struggle of youth in Spain and China. It knows that in the fascist countries youth is being trained to be obedient cannon fodder, that a real cult of war is being inculcated in the young generation in those countries.

In his reports from Spain Ilya Ehrenburg has given us pen portraits of several young German and Italian fliers taken prisoner who embody these ideals of the Hitlerites and who passed through the school of the Baldur von Schirachs (the "*Führer*" of German fascist youth). Soviet youth is well able to give a worthy reception to these fascist gangsters should they dare attack the U.S.S.R., and the Soviet young generation is confident of the support of anti-fascist youth throughout the world.



SOVIET YOUTH

Two young Stakhanovites, Young Communists of the Kirov mine, at Krivorozhye, in the Donbas—V. Gushin and T. Polishchuk

The technical initiative and resourcefulness of Soviet youth are yielding splendid results. The example of the Young Communist Stakhanovite Abram Blidman is an excellent case in point. Blidman, a former shepherd, went to work as a stevedore, and improved loading methods, increasing labor productivity considerably. Before his method was adopted, young Blidman had to overcome inertia, conservatism and the resistance of saboteurs and wreckers. He surmounted all obstacles. His rationalization methods, increasing loadings from 32 to 630 tons of freight per hour, won universal recognition. Blidman's fame is spreading far and wide. He was appointed by N. I. Yezhov, People's Commissar of Home Affairs and of Water Transport, to head a group in charge of introducing his methods in all harbors of the U.S.S.R.

Young artists feel their indissoluble ties with the Komsomol. On returning to their native land Emil Hillels and Jacob Fliere stated: "In Brussels, when a crowded auditorium applauded us as victors, our first thought was to share our joy with our fatherland, with the Party, with the Leninist Komsomol which nurtured and educated us."

The eighteen-year old actress, Salima Satarova, was also reared by the Young Communist League. At the age of sixteen she gained the title of Honored Actress of the Kazakh Republic. Her father was a petty artisan. Prior to the Revolution such a girl could never

have dreamed of a career on the stage. Today this young Komsomol is an outstanding actress. Recently Salima Satarova was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh Republic.

Georgi Usatenko, Komsomol border guard, was sent to catch a frontier violator. This happened in winter. Thirty-five kilometers from the outpost he noticed suspicious tracks in the snow. He dismounted and, in order not to make any noise, removed his boots and ran barefoot in the snow. It was a long chase, but finally the border violator was caught. It was the thirtieth border violator captured by Usatenko. The young border guard was awarded a Government Order. He has since been elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

There has been a great rise in the cultural level of the Soviet youth. An interesting illustration is offered by the reading matter of the Komsomols in one of the Red Army detachments. Gleb Tregubov, a private, has read in recent months *The Divine Comedy*, the *Odyssey*, *War and Peace*, Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done*, and works by Shakespeare, Byron, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire. Lieutenant Terskoy has read Novikov-Priboy's *Tsushima*, *The Enchanted Soul* by Romain Rolland, and other classics. Rusanov, another private, has on his library card eleven books by Gorky and works by Dreiser, L. Tolstoy, Sholokhov and others.

The playwright Alexander Korneichuk, member of the Komsomol, is not only famous as the author of *Destruction of the Squadron*, *Platon Krechet* and *Bogdan Khmelnitsky*, but is also prominent in public affairs. He is Vice-Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Republic. In a recent article he writes: "At six plants in Kiev, eleven young people have recently been promoted to foremen, and sixty-four were advanced to the post of shop superintendents and chief engineers. In Dniepropetrovsk Province 1,268 young people were promoted to executive positions, in Kharkov Province 625. Peoples · Commissar of Railways L. M. Kaganovich has entrusted the management of a railway line to P. Krivonos, young Stakhanovite locomotive engineer. The Ukrainian people elected to its Supreme Soviet thirty-nine Komsomols and seventy-five other young people, all under thirty."

In the elections to the Supreme Soviets of other republics a similar picture is to be observed. Among the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R. ten are under twenty, fifty-seven range from twenty-one to twenty-five years, and one hundred from twenty-six to thirty—one hundred and sixty-seven young deputies in all.

Who are these young people who have been considered worthy of the honor of being elected to the state's supreme body?

Alexander Stepanenko, a young miner, was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine. He first entered the mine in 1929, and soon became a brigade leader. In 1934 he was called up for service in the navy but, even aboard ship, he followed the life of his mine. Learning of Stakhanov's record, he took special leave and went back to the mine: in six hours he cut five hundred and fifty-two tons of coal (as compared with a scheduled output of seven tons).

The Young Communist Zinaida Fyodorova, a forewoman in the Stalin Auto Plant, was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the

SOVIET YOUTH

These Azerbaijan airplane model enthusiasts took part in the Twelfth All-Union Airplane Model Competition

R.S.F.S.R. Her father was a waiter and her mother a domestic servant. "My life," she relates, "has been entirely different from that of my parents. From the school bench to this very day I have always been in a collective." In 1936 she was promoted to forewoman. In 1938 she was elected to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R. "Loudspeakers carried my name over the entire yard of the plant, where twenty-five thousand workers were gathered. People were applauding on all sides and my girl friends shouted to me: 'Zina! Zina!' Around me I beheld the familiar faces of our workers, yet it all seemed a dream. I realized what great confidence the people in our country repose in their young generation."

Among the deputies from the Red Army there are some splendid young men, all Komsomols. Pavel Dudin, Deputy, bears the Order of Lenin. In January, 1936, two companies of Japanese troops crossed the Soviet border. Dudin was thrice wounded but continued to fight.

Especially striking are the life stories of young women of the various nationalities who were elected to the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Autonomous Republics. To appreciate the full import of their election one must be acquainted with the conditions of slavery and oppression under which women lived in the national regions before the Revolution, conditions of servitude not only in society but also in the family.

When twenty-five years ago little Sara was born into the family of the sailor Agar Husein Sadykhov,

it was considered a misfortune. "Again a girl!"

Today not only her family but the whole Azerbaijan people is proud of the Komsomol Sadykhova. Under the Soviet system she was graduated from the university *cum laude* and came to the oil-fields of Baku as one of the first women engineers in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan people elected her to the Supreme Soviet of the Republic.

Nino Agashenashvili, daughter of a Georgian herdsman, is only eighteen. While working as a weaver in a Tbilisi mill she was promoted to instructor. She quickly won the esteem of all by her organizing ability. Nino was elected to the Supreme Soviet of Georgia.

These young men and women are worthy representatives of the youth of the land of victorious Socialism.

The happy period of youth has always inspired writers and poets. But the conception of youth is devoid of meaning in the capitalist world where the law of the jungle prevails. It is only in the Soviet land, with its Stalinist solicitude for man, that the conception of youth as a happy period takes on real meaning.

Soviet youth is sincerely grateful to the Party and the Government for the opportunities it enjoys. It is imbued with a spirit of infinite love and devotion for its teacher and friend, Stalin. It remembers his warm words: "The youth is our future, our hope."

All attempts of the despised enemies of the people, the Trotsky-ite-Bukharinite bandits, to corrupt some strata of the youth by flattery and bribery and to oppose the League to the Party were crushingly defeated. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Young Communist League, together with the whole Soviet people, actively participated in the struggle against the fascist arch-bandit, the Judas Trotsky, and his hangers-on. The Leninist Young Communist League, all of Soviet youth, is rallied around the Party of Lenin and Stalin, around the great friend of youth, Stalin, more solidly than ever before.

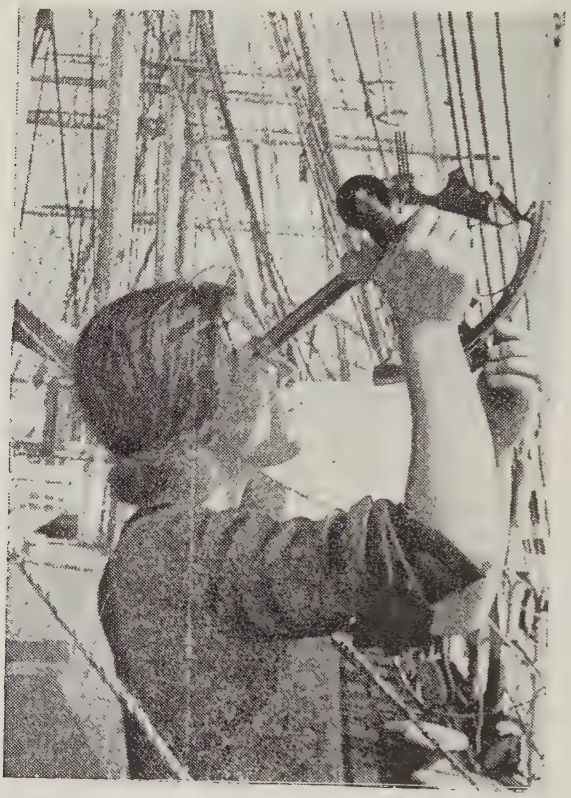
Soviet patriotism is a distinguishing feature of Soviet youth. It is not without reason that young patriots are marking the twentieth anniversary of the Young Communist League by preparing "gifts for the fatherland"—achievements in their particular field. This movement was initiated by the young Stakhanovites and specialists of the Stalin Auto Works in Moscow. They published an open letter addressed to all Soviet youth. "Let every young Soviet citizen," the letter stated, "prepare a gift for our fatherland in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the Young Communist League. Such gifts may be new Stakhanovite production records, improved models of machinery, new creations of Soviet art, excellent ratings in study, bumper harvests, athletic records, mastering of military knowledge and so forth."

This initiative was quickly taken up and became country-wide in character. The young workers of the Moscow Hammer and Sickle Works have undertaken to fulfill their year's production plan before schedule. Dr. Klinichevsky, a Young Communist, is preparing as his gift a scientific dissertation. A young Stakhanovite in the Kramatorsk Iron and Steel Works is fulfilling his quota of output by 1,500 per cent. These are but a few examples out of tens of thousands. It is for this reason that whole families of young patriots (such

as the five Mikheyev brothers) are forming special tank crews. It is for this reason that Ivan Lagoda came to replace his brother, Semyon, killed on the Far Eastern frontier.

The young generation of the great Soviet people is a live spring of talent, a vital force. To it much is given and from it much is demanded. It has accomplished a great deal, and still greater tasks lie ahead.

It is a happy country which possesses youth of this caliber. It is a happy young generation which possesses such a fatherland.



Susanna Tumanishvili, student of the Mercantile Marine School at Batum

TO THE SOVIET FAR EAST

I was born in Leningrad. In 1931 I was graduated from secondary school. Being only seventeen, I could not enter a technical college, as I desired, so I went to work as draughtsman in a research institute of the machine-building industry and at the same time entered the Kalinin School of Machine Designing.

In 1932 I left for the Far East.

It happened this way: I was sitting at work when my friend, Celia Yudina, who was a draughtsman like myself, came over to me and asked: "Valya, how would you like to go to the Far East?"

I was surprised, to say the least.

"The Young Communist League is mobilizing members for the Far East," Celia explained. "We have to strengthen that region, and transform League patronage over the Far East into something real."

I did not take very long thinking over the matter. "I'll go," I replied.

"So will I," said Celia.

That evening at a bureau meeting of our League nucleus the secretary spoke of the League decision to mobilize Young Communists for the Far East, and urged that we too should send some of our members.

I was first to volunteer. The bureau members were astonished. A girl! And still under eighteen!

"I'll go, just the same," I said. Nevertheless, I was a bit shaky about it in my own mind. "What about mother?" I thought. I knew how upset she would be. Then I thought of all that had been written and said about the Far East—that in natural resources it was one of the richest regions in the Soviet Union, that everything should be done to develop them as rapidly as possible and to strengthen our defenses against Japanese encroachment. I remembered all this and made up my mind to go at all costs.

During the next few days, while the necessary documents were being prepared for me, I could not help thinking with pleasurable excitement of the Far East. I lived through those days in a kind of haze, dreaming of the new places to which I was going, and threatening the Japanese in my own mind: "We'll show you! You'll get what you're not looking for, but never the Far East!"

They were a bit skeptical in the Smolny District Committee of the Young Communist League.

"Where do you girls think you're going? Can you shoot?"

"We'll learn," we said, laughing. We were gradually beginning to believe that we were actually going to the front.

When I received my papers, I said to mother:

"Mother, I'm off to the Far East. I've been mobilized by the Central Committee of the Young Communist League."

I invented that bit about the

mobilization so as not to upset mother too much. But she went to see my uncle, who was precinct chief of the Militia, and he said:

"Why, she isn't eighteen yet. . . . How can they mobilize her? She must be going as a volunteer! There's a reckless girl for you!"

I was always called the reckless one at home.

When mother told me what my uncle had said, I admitted its truth. She only sighed.

"Why didn't you tell me the truth? You know, I never interfere or hinder you in any way." And she cried.

My mother is a wonderful person. When we children grew up, she never hindered us from taking any decision we thought best, and never forced her opinion upon us. If she did not agree with something, she would simply say gently: "There's something wrong here, girls," or: "Just think it over, sonny."

Our father had been a worker in the Baltic Plant. In 1918—I wasn't quite five years old then—he died of cholera. Those were the famine years. Mother was left with the four of us, yet she managed to give us a good start in the world; we all got an education. She is a dressmaker. We used to joke about it and say: "Mother brought us up on her needle."

But, of course, if it had not been for the fact that we were living under the Soviet system, we would not have got anywhere. We children had the benefit of a free education, and received stipends as well. My sister Vera was graduated from the Geodetics Institute. Nina went to work at a factory and is now studying to be an engineer. My brother is a mechanic.

In 1930 a terrible calamity occurred. My sister Vera was drowned. She had to measure the thickness of ice on a frozen river. It was in the spring; the ice cracked, she fell through and was drowned. It was a dreadful blow to my mother, who was ill for a long time after.

It will be easily understood, then, why my unexpected departure for the Far East pained her so much. She never showed it, though, for fear of upsetting me. She only said:

"It's so far. . ." and then added: "But don't be afraid."

On May 19, 1932, we set out for Khabarovsk. Farewell, Leningrad! Goodbye!

I have since made the journey from Leningrad to Khabarovsk several times, but the first impression of that long trip will always remain fresh in my memory.

A marvelous sight met our eyes at Lake Baikal. It was an early May morning when we approached it. Day was just breaking, and the rising sun first turned the snow on the low hills to a rosy hue, then glinted across the calm surface of the lake. The waters of Lake Baikal are extraordinarily clear. It is said that the bottom can be seen clearly even a long way from the shore. The train passes close to the water's edge, and it goes slowly. There are many tunnels and we were glad when we left each and could again admire the lovely lake.

I did not care for Khabarovsk, with its heat and dust and dirt. But we soon left for De Kastri Bay.

To reach De Kastri we had to cross a lake thirty-five kilometers in width. Here for the first time we experienced some adventures.

We boarded a *kungass* (a many-oared boat). The voyage promised to be pleasant, but suddenly a storm broke out and caught us in mid-lake. The situation was further complicated by the presence of young children. The *kungass* tossed dangerously from side to side, but the oarsmen succeeded in bringing the

Valentina Khetagurova reading applications of girls who responded to her appeal to come to the Far East

vessel to shore. On this unfamiliar shore we lit a fire and made tea, exactly as it is done in adventure stories!

We arrived finally at De Kastri. I had expected to see, if not a town, at least a big settlement. Imagine my surprise when the woman who drove us there (we had to hire horses and a vehicle) pointed to a few little houses and said:

"There's De Kastri!"

A dense fog hung over the place. Here and there lights gleamed faintly.

Yudina and another friend, Kozlova, had arrived a couple of days earlier. I met them in what was called the "dining room." This was a small log hut, furnished with a few tables. The only light was furnished by cotton wool wicks floating in a saucer of vegetable oil.

The girls grumbled that things were bad in De Kastri.

"Come and see our apartment," they suggested. The "apartment" was not much to look at—a tiny room in a log cabin, so tiny that it seemed overcrowded by the cast iron stove and narrow bed that it contained.

"Never mind," I consoled them. "Let's go to bed; we'll see things differently in the morning."

Celia and I slept on the bed, and Marusya settled down on a heap of coats on the stove. In the night we were roused by a piercing shriek.

"Fire! Fire!" It was Marusya yelling.

It appeared that someone had put wood in the stove to dry. It had kindled and then blazed up. Marusya woke when she felt the coats burning under her.

We put out the fire, but we could not get to sleep again. And somehow it became jollier. We saw only the funny side of the incident, and we laughed over it till morning. We seemed to be in a better mood now.

In the morning we went to the chief of the personnel department. Everywhere building work was going on; here timber was being felled, there a house was being put up, in another spot excavation was going on.

We girls were sent to different parts of the construction work going on in the bay. Young people were to be seen everywhere: the engineers were young, the draughtsmen were young, even the bookkeeping department was directed by a member of the Young Communist League.

Was it dull or lively at De Kastri? Nobody considered the question, because there was no time for it. We were busy all the time.

It is pleasant to walk about in our town now. There are two-storied buildings, a bath-house, a restaurant, a sports field, tennis courts, a park of culture and rest—all this has arisen where not long ago there was nothing but impenetrable taiga.

When we arrived De Kastri was anatural bay, with a few little houses and huts. Around it lay the taiga, the dense, impenetrable taiga. To walk in the woods around Leningrad is a pleasure. But try to go for a walk in the woods at De Kastri Bay! There is nowhere to walk. You can only scramble through the undergrowth and fallen trees that lie piled on each other, overgrown with moss. Fifty paces from the settlement you can easily lose your way. No wonder Siberia was described as the home of songless birds and scentless flowers. . . . But that was said of the wild, dead taiga; the taiga the Bolsheviks had not yet reached.

"We'll have sweet smelling flowers and birds that chirrup here yet," said the director of the building work.

Many of the builders of De Kastri were living in tents at that time. There were no roads; the snow came up to one's waist in winter, the horses could not get through it, and timber had to be hauled by the builders themselves.

Timber there was in abundance, but building a house was not such a simple matter. Before the posts could be driven into the ground, a clearing had to be made, trees felled, stumps rooted out. Work went on every day, regardless of the weather. Sometimes in winter, prior to driving posts into the ground, fires had to be lit for two or three days on end to thaw the frozen earth.

There were no conveniences, certainly. But inconveniences—as many as you please. Yet I do not remember anyone being downhearted. A worker remarked to me: "You know, the way we're living, it's a full-time job."

True enough, the way we lived and are still living in the Far East is a full-time job.

The first winter was a pretty hard one. The blizzards were more than we could manage. When you were going uphill the wind would knock you off your feet. Once there was such a snowstorm we could not leave our house for two days.

On arriving at work in the morning, we had to heat the stove (stoking was nobody's job in particular), and melt the India ink we used for our work; it turned to ice during the night. On one occasion, after a particularly fierce storm, we found the door of the office torn off its hinges and a deep snowdrift inside that had to be cleared out.

That winter Celia and I moved into new quarters. We were given a room on the second floor of a new building. The administration office was on the floor below. One day, I decided to give our room a good spring cleaning. I dusted it thoroughly and scrubbed the floor. Next morning, when I went downstairs, I heard loud exclamations.

"What the devil is all this!" the manager of the administrative department was shouting. "What sort of halfwits live up there, anyway?"

Our floor, it appeared, leaked. When I scrubbed it, the dirty water dripped down onto the manager's desk, and all his papers had frozen to the desk. . . . It caused a great deal of mirth.

At home it was cold and often there was not enough firewood. We were living in the midst of a forest and yet we did not have enough fuel. The horses were needed all the time on the construction jobs. They could not be taken off to drag firewood for us. No one grumbled, everyone realized perfectly that it was a critical moment in our work. When our stock of firewood gave out, we went to bed in our clothes—short thick sheepskin coats, fur caps and big felt boots, made for men. In the spring we changed our felt boots for coarse leather ones called *ichigi*. There was nothing *chic* about our apparel!

The remarkable thing was that in spite of the severe climate I never caught cold. In Leningrad I had often been down with angina, while as for colds in the head—I never seemed to get rid of them. But at De Kastri I never had them once.

For a whole year I was secretary of the Young Communist League nucleus in the office of the chief of construction. All my spare time was devoted to social work in the barracks.

Our dramatics group produced plays. We all took part in them. We used charcoal for our make-up. It was all very jolly. You should have seen with what applause our actors were greeted.

There were not enough workers in the bay, they had to be recruited from the "settled districts," but that was expensive and did not solve the problem. Then the administration decided to form a commission to recruit workers among men demobilized from the Red Army. Former Red Army men willingly agreed to remain in De Kastri.

It was suggested that I go and recruit men demobilized from the unit commanded by Major Khetagurov. This unit was situated about nine kilometers from the bay. For the first time in my life I mounted a horse. "Oho!" I thought to myself. "This town girl is certainly going some. . . ."

George Khetagurov proved to be a charming young man. We met often. Acquaintance deepened into friendship. In the spring we got married. Khetagurov was only thirty when I first met him, but he had served in the Red Army nearly fifteen years. When still a lad he had helped his father—a railway mechanic—to fight the White bandits.

I made my acquaintance with the men of Khetagurov's division when I was recruiting workers for the bay. We became better acquainted during the First of May celebrations, in 1933. I was still living at the bay, but I came to spend the holiday with my husband.

We celebrated the date with a party. We could get together only in the barracks, which in those days did not resemble the clean, well-equipped dormitories of the Red Army men today. They were very large, with several rows of sleeping bunks, one above the other. A space was cleared and here we danced, sang and played. It was all very gay, and we felt like members of one big friendly family.

It was this friendly bond and singleness of purpose among the men, the commanders and the women that was so great a help to us in building a really civilized Soviet town. Yet we were building in what

was almost a desert island, where we had about as few conveniences as Robinson Crusoe.

The first homes of the commanders were tents scattered about in little clearings freshly made in the virgin woods. The place was so wild and remote that grouse showed no fear of people and used to alight on the tents. Woodcocks felt perfectly at their ease among us, and once, when the men were resting, a bear walked calmly and leisurely up to them.

In the summer of 1932 the families of the commanders began to arrive. This coincided with my arrival in De Kastri.

Dwellings were few as yet, and people lived wherever they could—some in mud huts, others in temporary sheds that were run up in a hurry and afforded poor shelter from either rain or snow. They stood in the depths of the woods, among ancient trees. There was no escape from these trees; even when you went indoors the boughs thrust themselves in at the windows.

And now the advance on the taiga began. The taiga would not surrender, but more and more ground was won and it was forced to retreat.

I am often asked how the women ranged themselves alongside the men in the common task of mastering and defending the Soviet Far East. To answer that question is at once easy and difficult.

In the first place, we were all brought up under the Soviet regime; all of us young people had received a Communist education from early childhood. It is natural, then, that wherever his destiny may lead the Soviet citizen, he works and lives as only a Soviet citizen can.

We women of De Kastri did not consider ourselves in a category apart from the men.

Our new activity began with something that seemed unimportant. Autumn was approaching, studies were commencing for the army. In order to avoid taking the men away from their training the women started to fix up the apartments themselves: they caulked the timbers with tow, banked the earth around the houses, filled in the space between the ground and the flooring, etc. One of our women discovered some white clay and was the first to plaster her apartment and the Lenin Corner of the army unit in which her husband was director of political studies. Other women followed her example. Our rooms, once so gloomy and damp, now became not only dry and warm, but bright as well. We mixed tooth powder with the white clay and soon both the dwellings and the army dormitories looked clean and cheerful.

Thus the personal and the social intermingled; there was no sharp dividing line. But is it not so everywhere in our country, where everything social is done in such a way that the personal element in the lives of Soviet citizens may blossom out?

Khetagurov was in command of a newly formed unit, situated, as I have said, not at the bay itself, but some way off. The barracks had few comforts and my husband often asked me at home whether something couldn't be done to improve them.

"What has to be done?" I asked.

"Well, they should be brightened up. They ought to be cozy and well managed. So that the men would find the barracks a place of rest and comfort."

I talked it over with the women's organizer whose task it is to lead the activity of the commanders' wives. We went to the commissar of the unit, discussed the matter with him and then decided to call a meeting of the women.

The meeting was held and we all

agreed that the unit ought to have more comfortable conditions. We would begin with little things, like brightening up the dining room and barracks.

I made a trip to the army cooperative store, and bought a great deal of stuff. In the evenings we hemmed table cloths and made curtains. Tatyana Ivanova, a teacher, boiled a mixture of glue and tooth powder, and painted slogans with it on red calico.

After we had put curtains in the barracks, we thought there ought to be little tables by the men's bedsides. So we ordered them.

When they were ready we decided that they ought to be covered with little cloths.

We made those, and then we thought there ought to be carafes on them; so we ordered the carafes at the cooperative store.

When the carafes were brought, a new idea occurred to us: we wanted mats for the floors. We bought ordinary common baize and made mats and strip carpets that ran the whole length of the barrack rooms.

When all this was ready we felt that there was something else needed to complete the picture—lampshades.

Frames were made for us in the unit workshop, and some of our women turned out to be experts in fitting silk over the frames.

Now the barrack rooms looked splendid!

There were twenty-two women in the families of men in Khetagurov's unit. They could not all come to the barracks for the "big Saturday" of volunteer work, as some had to take care of the children. But all who were free came and threw themselves into the work of dissipating the barrack-like appearance of the barracks. We brought vinegar and rubbed the windows with it till they positively glittered. Every chink and corner was thoroughly cleaned and dusted. Then we set out the bedside tables, covered them with the little cloths, and laid down the strip carpet.

The men, who were away on a march, had heard that the women were preparing some sort of a surprise for them, but they had not, of course, the remotest idea of the transformation going on in the barracks. When they returned, they were dumbfounded. Could this be their old barrack room?

There were two barracks in Khetagurov's unit at the time. The men in each of these made up their minds that the women had transformed only their one barrack and left the other as it was. The men from the first hurried off to look at the second at the very moment when the men from the second were hurrying to the first; they met halfway. The same pleasant surprise had awaited the men in both barracks.

We all knew, and the military authorities often reminded us—the women in particular—of Comrade Voroshilov's instructions regarding the setting up of individual gardens and farms. We began to keep pigs and poultry. I myself raised young pigs.

The pigs yielded thirty tons of pork a year, while the hens gave us forty-two thousand eggs annually.

The cows had to be shipped to us, and a pitiful sight they presented on arrival.

The cows received as much care as human beings. We cleared the snow to find grass for them. Eventually we brought them back to health and strength. Later on, in the winter time, when the calves came, the women took them out of the chilly sheds to their own homes. For both the adult and the juvenile population of our bay, the raising of stock was a matter of primary importance. Think of it—milk for children and sick people!

Now we have running water, excellent spring water. Yet a few years ago in summer we drew our water from the ditches and melted snow for water in winter.

We have a cinema with "talkies," and on the shore of the bay has been laid out a park of culture and rest with flower beds, arbors, fountains and a dance floor.

We have a kindergarten and a children's camp for the Pioneers; sand is brought specially to the park for the children to play in. Yet only a few years ago these children were born in any hut available, and it was regarded as fortunate if the child was born in the day time, for at night, as often as not, there was no kerosene for the lamps and heaters.

I remember when the commanders' wives' social movement was just being started at De Kastri. Khetagurov said to me: "Try and think of some way to combat scurvy."

We decided to gather red whortleberries. These are very effective in keeping off scurvy.

We organized berry-gatherings, that were lots of fun. Fresh whortleberries took the place of fruit, and we collected them in barrels for the winter. They freeze in these barrels. When you want to make jelly, you take the berries indoors, where they thaw in the heat. Thawed, they can be eaten without cooking and they taste and smell almost as good as when fresh.

It was soon found that whortleberries failed to satisfy as a substitute for vegetables and fruit. We decided to grow vegetables.

We began in a small way with potatoes and radishes. The first summer showed that the climate would be no serious obstacle to our gardening experiments. Well-cared for gardens yielded potatoes and radishes.

We started next to sow oats, but they did not fully ripen. Unripened, however, they made an excellent grass lawn plot. Now flowers are getting our attention. When I left for the All-Union Conference of Red Army Commanders' Wives, the women instructed me to consult florists and discuss the problem of growing flowers in our region. The chief engineer of the Moscow Flower and Plant Trust, with whom I talked things over, suggested that we build hothouses. De Kastri was to have its own flowers!

People usually begin to think of flowers and beautiful things when they are on the highroad to prosperity. The more prosperous we grew, the greater became our demands. Now we had classes for draughtsmen, telegraph operators and for dressmakers. The problem of teachers was solved in the same manner as other problems. A sufficient number of teachers were found among army instructors, commanders and the women. A seven-year school for children was opened. Textbooks were a very difficult problem at first. Later the director of the school, supported by the whole of the population, decided to start workers' continuation classes. A story, *The Workers' Continuation School in the Taiga*, was printed in the army newspaper, *The Alarm*.

At first the children's school was situated in one of the rooms of a workers' barrack. Here the first, second and third classes studied. The inconvenience of this arrangement can easily be imagined. Now we have a real school, a big building with bright airy classrooms.

Formerly, one used to hear a lot of talk about it being out of the question to give birth to children in our part of the country. It was solemnly asserted that owing to lack of vitamins the children would grow up deformed. What nonsense was talked! Everything turned out quite differently; we bear our children and they grow up sturdy and

strong. My little Julia is a fine, healthy child—she weighed over four kilograms at birth.

When I addressed the All-Union Conference of Red Army Commanders' Wives, and mentioned that we had almost as many children as there were women, someone good-humoredly called out: "That's not half enough!" True, but after all, we had only just begun to settle down. . . .

I must admit when I first resolved to go to the Far East, I was attracted first of all by the thought of romantic adventures. I never imagined how much life experience I would gain in the distant taiga, or that life itself would prove far richer and happier than I had ever dreamed.

In December 1936, I was delegated by the Special Red Banner Far Eastern Army to the All-Union Conference of Wives of Red Army Commanders. Articles on my modest efforts in De Kastri had already been printed in the Far Eastern and Moscow newspapers.

The conference opened on December 20 in the Great Kremlin Hall. It was all so wonderful. We had come to the Kremlin. The Kremlin! The heart of our country, the heart of the world Proletarian Revolution! We were soon to see our own dear leaders, soon to see Stalin. . . .

Three thousand delegates and guests were present. Flowers were around us in profusion. A holiday spirit was in the air. Excitedly we kept looking at the clock. Would they come soon?

At ten minutes past six Comrade Stalin and other leaders of the Party and the Government appeared.

And what an ovation greeted them! Long, stormy applause. I was beside myself with happiness. . . .

We got down to business. Elections to the presidium began. Suddenly I heard my name.

"Khetagurova. . . ."

Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov spoke to me. He introduced me to Comrade Stalin and to Comrade Sergo Orjonikidze. Comrade Stalin did not forget me. When he was being photographed together with the Far Eastern delegation, someone wanted to introduce me to him again. But Comrade Stalin smiled and said:

"I know, I know—it's Valya Khetagurova from De Kastri."

I addressed the conference, and described the work we had done. I could never imagine that my modest efforts and initiative would be singled out for such praise. On December 26, by decree of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union, decorations were awarded the wives of Red Army commanders. My name headed the list. The Government awarded me the Order of the Red Banner of Labor.

When I returned to De Kastri after the conference I was appointed manager of the army staff dining room. I did not remain long on this job, however, as I was summoned to Khabarovsk to meet the girls who had arrived from the central part of the Soviet Union. In our district these girls are known as "Khetagurovkas."

The story of these girls runs thus: while I was in Moscow, I wrote an open letter to Soviet girls. I told them about my experiences and about our work in the Far East. I appealed to them to come out to this rich and wonderful region of our country.

My letter, written in February 1937, was printed in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, organ of the Y.C.L., under the heading: "Come to the Far East!"

"Girls!" the letter began. "Sister-Komsomols! I am appealing to you on behalf of the young women of the Far East.

"Far away in the East, in the taiga of the Maritime and Amur Provinces, we women are settling, with our husbands and brothers, a marvelous region. At the will of our country and our Party, in the depths of the forest where, until recently, only the roebuck, the bear and the tiger roamed, towns and settlements are being founded, roads laid and impregnable concrete forts—the outposts of Socialism on the Pacific Ocean—erected.

"In this region, which contemptible assassins and spies from the anti-Soviet Trotskyite gang attempted to betray to Japanese militarism, in this region, to seize which our Eastern neighbors are sharpening their weapons, we are building and creating, in the name of Socialism, a new life.

"It is difficult to write of this colossal and thrilling task, to do that well one would need to be a poet and an artist. But it is gratifying to think that by our own efforts what was but recently a wild and unproductive borderland is becoming one of the most wonderful parts of our marvelous country. Millions of brave people are fighting out there against the impenetrable taiga. They are subduing mountains, forests and rivers. But skilled hands are all too few. Many people are needed before nature can be subdued, before all the wealth of the region can be won for Socialism."

Then I described the part women play in that gigantic creative work.

". . . Our women have no time to feel dull. They work shoulder to shoulder with their husbands. . . ."

". . . We are living thousands of miles away from our capital, from Moscow. But even at this distance we feel every day the deep care, the enormous amount of attention that is centered on our work. We are warmed and encouraged by the Stalinist care for people, and we are thankful to our great Stalin for giving us, the young people of the Soviet Union, the chance to live such rich, full-blooded lives.

"Here, in the struggle with nature, the finest human qualities rise to the surface. . . . Difficulties only draw people nearer to each other. That is why we all live like one large closely-knit family.

". . . And now, dear friends, we, the women of the Far East, call upon you to come out to us. You are not being asked to renounce your lives. What awaits you, though difficult, is attractive, is full of interest. You will bring to our hard and often rough life here influences that ennoble people, inspiring them to new deeds of heroism.

"Remember, though, we invite only the bold and determined, only those of you who are not afraid of difficulties. We know that our young men and girls feel an inspired love of all that is heroic, no matter how hard its achievement may prove. They hold a place of honor for all that is difficult of attainment and of benefit to our country.

"We need fitters and turners, teachers and draughtsmen, typists and bookkeepers, clerks and actresses—all to an equal degree. We simply need people—bold, resolute, unselfish. And I hope that thousands of brave girls will follow us. I appeal to you, dear friends, you, our sister-Komsomols, to help us in this great and difficult work. Our slogan is: 'Come East!' Here you will find awaiting you wonderful work, wonderful people, a wonderful future. And will it not be a great honor to be in the front ranks, defending our great mother-

land as she was defended by the Far-Eastern Bolsheviks and Partisans in the memorable nineteen-twenties? We shall give the enemies that covet our Soviet Socialist Far East a lesson they will not forget for many a long day.

"We are waiting for you, girls!

"I am sure there are hundreds and thousands of you who will want to come and work in the Far East."

I wrote of hundreds and thousands, but literally tens of thousands of girls expressed their desire to come to the Ear Fast.

The replies came to Khabarovsk and to De Kastri, they came to the newspaper office, to various institutions, they came to my home. They came from Moscow and Leningrad, from the Ukraine and Central Asia, from all over the country.

There were so many letters that a special commission attached to the Regional Executive Committee was formed to deal with them. This commission summoned me to Khabarovsk.

The girls were greeted with great enthusiasm. Four hundred arrived in the first group. A big meeting was held at the station, where the girls were heartily welcomed by representatives of the regional organizations and the wives of the commanders. Unfortunately the girls arrived in the midst of a downpour, but this did not hinder the meeting or cool the ardor of the new arrivals. The girls were happy. They had reached the Far East at last. They were pelted with flowers. The rain did not cease. Dancing followed the speeches of welcome. A band played, and the girls joined in folk dances and songs. What artist ever dreamed of a subject like this for a painting?

One of the girls told us that just before they left Moscow for Khabarovsk a group of "Khetagurovkas" had called at the editorial offices of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, where they met a French journalist.

"Tell me honestly," he asked in astonishment, "why are you going out there? Have you had some trouble at home? Are your living conditions very bad here? Why are you going so far away?"

The bourgeois journalist could not believe that the young girls were prompted by no other motive than that of patriotism. Such patriotism is indeed unknown to the bourgeoisie!

I was summoned to Khabarovsk on May 15. But it was impossible to leave then, for Lake Kizi, which linked us with the Amur, was still frozen. On the twenty-fourth we were informed that the ice was moving, and on the twenty-fifth my husband and I started out. When we reached the lake, however, the river had started to freeze again. And we still had thirty-five kilometers to go. The cutter could not start because in some places pack ice had formed.

At last we decided to venture out in a two-oared gilyak boat. At times we bumped menacingly against the ice. In some places we had to drag and carry the boat ourselves.

The voyage took nearly two days. We spent the night in a fisherman's hut. Next day we reached the Amur, where we took passage on a steamer.

In Khabarovsk I went to work as a member of the commission for receiving the new arrivals and appointing them to their jobs. The commission received from two hundred to three hundred letters daily.

We had to turn down many. Judge for yourselves: altogether sev-

enty thousand letters were received, but owing to lack of accommodation only twelve thousand could then be accepted.

Almost all the girls who came to Khabarovsk demanded to be sent to the taiga, to some distant spot. They would come to us and say:

"Send us where things are hardest, to the virgin taiga, where people are scarce."

For the most part the authors of these letters are young girls of eighteen and twenty. But we have also had letters from women of thirty and thirty-five, who ask a perfectly reasonable question: why have you invited only young people to the Far East?

I have talked about girls all the time because the letter I published in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* was addressed directly to them. But among the groups of "Khetagurovkas" more and more young men are appearing.

My letter caused a lot of dissatisfaction among the fellows; they wrote to me quite frankly: "Why," they asked, "does Khetagurova appeal only to the girls? Aren't we just as good Soviet patriots as they?"

The first group of girls was followed by a second, then a third, a fourth. . . . They embrace the most varied professions, from charwomen to engineers, including typists, bookkeepers, secretaries, doctors; they are all needed, all are warmly welcomed in Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and in many other places.

We could not turn down the men, especially those demobilized from the Red Army, and a large number have recently arrived. This gave rise to an amusing incident.

A telegram was received at Suchan saying: "'Khetagurovkas' on way meet train," etc. The young men of Suchan put on their holiday best, bought bouquets of flowers and went to meet the girls. The girls turned out to be a group of young machinists—male. The train arrived, the doors opened, and . . . nothing more need be said; the reader can well imagine the discomfiture of those who had come to meet the train. A loud roar of laughter did away with the embarrassment.

The public organizations of Komsomolsk-on-the-Amur advanced me as candidate for deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. Our commission had settled five hundred girls in Komsomolsk alone. The "Khetagurovkas" had evidently made my name known to the voters of the youthful town of Komsomolsk.

I began to receive a great many telegrams and letters; at meetings my name was proposed and supported as candidate.

When my name was registered by the district election commission I traveled about my district; it covers an immense area, stretching from Khabarovsk to Komsomolsk-on-the-Amur. I attended a meeting of workers in a sawmill at Khor Station, not far from Khabarovsk. One of the oldest inhabitants made a moving speech. He described life in the taiga in former days and the magical changes that had taken place under the Soviet Government. Then the old man came up to me and said:

"If you were my daughter I would kiss you."

Now I am in Komsomolsk. Five years ago, when I was traveling to De Kastri, I passed this town in the making. I recall that our steamer stopped here. We called at the post office, a shabby log hut in the village. We were told that the place would soon be changed beyond recognition, the foundations

of a big industrial town were being laid there.

Five years have passed. The remote, neglected village is no more; the impassable taiga and impassable roads have retreated before the Bolsheviks, and the Bolsheviks have built their town.

When you pass through Komsomolsk, the impression of vast construction work going on never leaves you. Many buildings are still hidden by scaffolding, others have just been begun. Much is still in a chaotic state, but the town is there; a big town, of new Soviet people.

VALENTINA KHETAGUROVA

Young founders of the city of Komsomolsk on a ride down the Amur

MIRZA MAMEDOV

When the election campaign was under way the Dawn of Socialism Collective Farm advanced Mirza Mamedov as candidate for deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. It is not hard to understand why, nor is it any less clear why dozens of surrounding villages in the Azerbaijan Republic, the cannery workers in the towns and the fishermen along the Caspian shore unanimously supported his candidacy.

Not long before, this young man had been elected secretary of the district Party committee. Though his headquarters were in the city of Lenkoran, he was more often seen in the nearby Talyshi villages, traveling from one collective farm to another, talking to the members, discussing tea and rice with the agronomists, learning the condition of the herds from the shepherds and veterinarians.

Many of the collective farms were utterly disorganized. Some criminal hand was behind it all, setting one settlement against another, spreading hostility among the people, poisoning the cattle. . . .

A promising, warm southern spring had set in. The damp earth was ready to receive the rice. Spring rains had accumulated in the reservoirs for the rice fields until they were filled to the brim. But agricultural work went slowly. On the mountain slopes where tea might be blossoming, the land lay uncultivated.

A few months later, after he had become acquainted with the district and understood the situation, Mirza Mamedov commenced a fierce fight against the bourgeois nationalists. He exposed the enemies and, with the district cleared of traitors, there began a process of transformation.

Lenkoran, which had been neglected, seemed to grow younger. A green boulevard was laid out along the sea shore; new streets made their appearance; a large tea factory with an annual output of five million kilograms was constructed.

By winter, Mamedov had become one of the most popular men among the Talyshi people. From far and near they came to seek his advice.

It was but natural that he should be elected deputy from that district. . . .

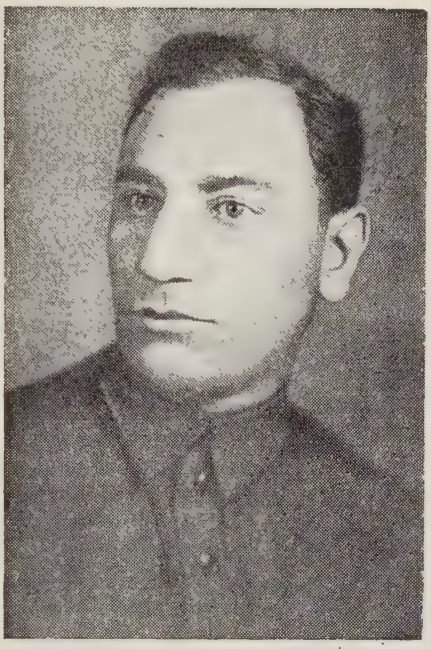
Mirza was born high up in the mountains in a village overlooking the Caspian. His father slaved for a kulak, working in his rice fields in water up to his knees and living in debts up to his neck. When the boy was seven, with his Talyshi father, mother and two brothers, he left the village for the oil fields near Baku.

But life there was not easier. Just as in the village, the father arose before dawn and returned after the sun had set. In the evenings, the mother would light the lamp, which reeked from the burning crude oil. Strange, different people lived around them—Turks and Armenians. Mirza couldn't understand them, nor did he know a word of Russian.

For two years they lived there when, in March 1918, the rumor spread that the Mussavatist and

Dashnak bands were coming to the city to slaughter the Armenians and Turks. The Talyshi family decided to flee to the mountains. Nuri, the oldest son, was left; he hired out to a baker as laborer.

But in the village, to which the family fled things were even worse than before—there was no work at all. The rich peasants were in no hurry to sow rice in those turbulent days and the fields were turning into swamps. One after another Mirza's father, mother and baby brother died . . . of starvation. At nine the boy was left alone. Somehow he managed and two years later, after tramping forty-two kilometers to Lenkoran, he stowed away on a ship and came to Baku. He found his brother Nuri there. Nuri got him a job as a water carrier and errand boy fetching products from the bazaar.



Mirza Mamedov

At fourteen, Mirza was utterly illiterate. His brother sent him to school and life started anew. In the Young Pioneers he became active and at that early age began to display a talent for organizing.

Sixteen. The Young Communist League. And leader of a Pioneer detachment which soon became known as the best in the city. His entire days were spent with the children. His evenings, studying Russian. He had made up his mind to go to Moscow to study in the Krupskaya Academy. . . .

During the examination in Russian he was asked to describe the contents of one of Pushkin's poems. But he didn't know Pushkin! He knew nothing about him at all! He was not accepted into the academy.

But the Talyshi boy didn't give up. He went to the Central Committee of the Young Communist League, to the Peoples Commissariat of Education. He spoke of his life, of his aspirations. He argued that the decision of the entrance commission was incorrect. He was accepted into the academy with the proviso that he later pass his Russian exams.

Three years flew by but he was hardly aware of it; he had to learn so much. And he did learn. Lenin and Stalin he read in Russian. In the original! And Pushkin! He became one of the best students.

The Party. And upon graduating he returned to Baku to work as chairman of the Central Bureau of the Pioneers. He taught methods of teaching. Became director of a scientific research institute. Was elected secretary of the Young Communist League Committee of one of the largest oil districts of Baku. . . .

Mirza Mamedov was making a tour of the villages, settlements and cities, speaking to his constituents of the First Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

In his absence tremendous work had accumulated. Land had to be prepared for the citrus orchards. The Messina lemon and South American

cork trees had to be examined to see how they thrived on the new soil. He was head over heels in work when he was summoned to Baku—he had been appointed Peoples Commissar of Education of Azerbaijan.

All those years—work with the Pioneers, the study of Russian, the Krupskaya Academy, various activities in the Young Communist League and duties in his native Azerbaijan—they were years of preparation for important state activity.

Mirza Mamedov took the commissariat in hand. The apparatus was in a terrible state. Heads of departments did not know their duties. Enemies of the people had neglected the training of teachers, and many had been wrongly dismissed. They abolished the teaching of the Russian language in the schools, they stopped constructing new schools.

His job was a mighty one: 3,333 schools, 16,567 teachers, tens of thousands of school children. It was necessary, without losing a moment, to get things under way. Mirza Mamedov saw to it that thirty-six schools were started under construction. He, himself, investigated the grievances of the discharged teachers. He opened courses in Russian for teachers, for during the summer two thousand had to be trained. Mirza recalled with what difficulty he had learned the Russian language and he did everything possible to make it easier for the children of Azerbaijan.

The young Peoples Commissar daily received a heavy mail bag: letters from village teachers, graduates, parents of school children, scientists, Red Army men, students, specialists. He was advised to look into the work of a local board of education; he received complaints of unjust discharge; he was asked to help in clearing up a problem in connection with a pension.

For Mirza Mamedov these letters were the most important, for they were the letters of electors to their deputy. Though working in Baku he is connected by a multitude of threads with his constituents in Lenkoran and in the Talyshi villages. Frequently he leaves the oil city to visit his district.

Once, after reception hours, Mirza Mamedov went to the hilly section of Baku to visit the school where he studied as a fifteen-year old illiterate boy. The two-story building looked just as it had when he was a pupil.

An embarrassed principal led the Peoples Commissar along the corridors into a classroom where a lesson on the Constitution was in progress. The Peoples Commissar took a seat in the last row. How funny. Fourteen years before Mirza Mamedov, now Peoples Commissar of Education of Azerbaijan and deputy to the Supreme Soviet, had sat in that very room and learned to read and write. How tiny the benches seemed; how cramped he felt. As he observed the progress of the lesson it struck him that his years of study were not yet over. His commissar's desk must become a school bench for him. He has much to learn in order to justify the trust the people have placed in him.

When the lesson was over the teacher approached him to learn his impressions. During the conversation she complained that the school library was very poor in fiction, in literature. They didn't have any classics.

"Do you have Pushkin?" Mirza Mamedov asked. "You don't have Pushkin? How's that?"

And that day he issued an order for a complete set of Pushkin's works to be sent to the library of the school where he had sat at his bench, dreaming of going to Moscow to study. . . .

V. VIKTOROV

YURI KRYMOV — YOUNG SOVIET AUTHOR

Befitting the twentieth anniversary of the young Communist League of the Soviet Union, Soviet youth's holiday, is *Tanker Derbent*, from which we publish an excerpt in this issue. Not only is this the first novel of a young author, but it is also a tale of young Soviet life, a tale of the growth and development of people.

How the men of the tanker *Derbent* are swept into Socialist competition is the major theme of the novel. The moral and psychological development of the crew is treated with the human understanding and the technical knowledge which only one who has lived among such events can possess.

Yuri Krymov, author of *Tanker Derbent*, is such a man. Born in 1908, he was graduated from the school of physics of Moscow University, and became a scientific worker of the Moscow Oil Institute. His practical experience was gained at the Baku oil fields, the largest in the world. The life and work of the tanker fleet, with which he became acquainted there, inspired him to write *Derbent*.

The book aroused great interest, and immediately established its author among the most promising of young Soviet writers.

Comradely encouragement and warning were voiced at the meeting of the Union of Soviet Writers at which Krymov was unanimously accepted as a member.

Anna Karavayeva was one of the many writers to take the floor.

"In reading *Tanker Derbent*," she said, "one recalls the words of Maxim Gorky that the theme of labor in Soviet literature is reflected with insufficient emotion and fullness, without enthusiasm. In Krymov's story, the theme of labor, the theme of competition, is presented profoundly and lyrically."

Valentin Katayev, author of *A Lone Sail Gleams White*, turning to the young author, stated from the platform of the Writers' Union:

"Frankly, I was somewhat envious, so well written were some of the pages. Here you have laconicism, the ability to find the typical, pithiness. The drama of Basov is described with great feeling..."

Katayev warned Krymov against wasting his talent on hack work. He warned him that magazines would flood him with assignments and urged him to select carefully. "If you don't like an assignment, reject it. Write what you want to write, for you have something to say. Preserve your ability and don't squander it on trifles."

A. Makarenko, author of *Pedagogical Poem*, addressed the meeting and Krymov as follows:

"You are living proof of the point of view that many of us hold that a real writer, a real artist, issues from life."

Krymov, himself, addressed the writers, thanked them for the honor they had bestowed upon him by receiving him into the Union, and then spoke of writing as a profession.

"The path of a writer, as I now understand, is a great, difficult but thrilling path," he said. "To be a writer it is insufficient to be an objective, neutral observer of life. The man who passes through our life as a tourist will never paint a picture. In order to execute a canvas it is necessary to learn to love and hate your characters with the same sincerity, the same spirit, as people love their fighters and martyrs, as they hate traitors. . ."

Stating that he would not abandon his work as an oil engineer, he declared: "I don't know what I shall write in the future; I hope it will be something good. If, however, despite all efforts, I am unable to create something worthy, I shall try to create values of a different nature."

ARTS

The fortieth anniversary of the Moscow Art Theater was celebrated triumphantly and joyously by the entire country, by the whole Soviet people. The celebration was a token of the complete fusion of the Art Theater with the people, with the Socialist Revolution.

The theater did not attain that fusion immediately. The material published in these pages portrays both the theater's creative path as a whole and individual stages in it. The speech of Anatoli Lunacharsky, delivered in 1933 on the occasion of K. S. Stanislavsky's seventieth birthday and the fiftieth anniversary of his activity in the theater, characterizes a stage of development of the Art Theater which the theater has left far behind.

THE EDITORS

From the Speech of V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko on the Fortieth Anniversary of the Moscow Art Theater

...We well remember and realize that on the eve of the Great October Socialist Revolution we were in a state of the worst confusion. This confusion was felt in our repertoire...

Our art had begun to shrivel up. It had long not been so fiery and passionate as it been when we started our theater. It was at best warm. We began to lose faith in ourselves and in our art. Our striving to make our theater accessible for all, our striving for a popular audience, was fettered by our economic situation. It was necessary to live, it was necessary to exist. Therefore, we had to turn to so-called bourgeois shareholders, dependence upon whom was painful for us. Our political life was colorless. We lost creative daring, without which art cannot advance.

We all now realize perfectly well that if there had been no Great October Socialist Revolution, our art would have been lost and overgrown with moss. Therefore, in reply to the question to what and to whom we are obliged for our celebration today, I answer decisively and outright: we are obliged for this to the October Socialist Revolution and our genius revolutionary leaders.

The October Socialist Revolution fundamentally changed the conditions of our work. It freed us of economic dependence, of bourgeois shareholders. It opened up to us the road to the true people. At first we ourselves did not foresee how the tremendous proportions of the Revolution would develop. In our conceptions of the Revolution literary images dominated. We knew of the Revolution from books. But after October there developed before us a vivid reality which simple and courageous people were building, themselves not realizing the heroic character of their revolutionary creative activity....

Coming closer to the people, we saw before us in the theater a remarkable audience, exceptionally sensitive to all that was deep and beautiful. We saw that the Revolution not only did not interfere with cultural development, as it seemed to some representatives of the bourgeois intellectuals, but, on the contrary, created a favorable soil for a true flourishing of culture. The Party and the Government attentively and solicitously followed the process of our ideological evolution. This led to the fact that now, at this triumphant celebration, before all of Soviet society I can say that we old men who have gone through three revolutions bringing our love for art through all the stages of the development of the Art Theater now have firmly, emphatically and unequivocally reforged ourselves into true Soviet citizens, for whom there is nothing more valuable than the interests of our great fatherland, than the ideals of Socialism, which we are all wholeheartedly building...

Anatoli Lunacharsky

STANISLAVSKY, THE THEATER AND THE REVOLUTION

Talking to Stanislavsky, I gaze with satisfaction at his calm, assured, kind countenance, which seems aglow with an inner light; from time to time illumined by a strange shy smile. I behold the full figure of this man, a figure that expresses his entire personality with such remarkable vividness. Indeed, wherever Stanislavsky appeared, even in a crowded meeting, in a hall where scarcely anyone knew him, he always attracted general attention and immediately people began asking who the handsome white-haired old man was.

Stanislavsky's entire appearance was patterned after his own maxim: from the inner to the outer. Outwardly Stanislavsky fully corresponded to the lofty aspirations of his mind and spirit.

I watch him as, with his faint, seemingly shy smile, he pronounces the significant words: "Anatoli Vasilyevich, I am by no means against the Revolution. I well realize that it contains much that is sacred and profound. I thoroughly perceive what noble ideas and intense feelings it ushers in. But we are afraid that it will be a long time yet before this music of a new world finds expression in artistic language, in the art of drama.

"At least we have seen no indication yet, and if we of the theater are given half-baked, clumsy, dry and artificial material, regardless of how it accords with the lofty ideas of the Revolution from the standpoint of the publicist, we cannot find proper expression for these ideas in the theater; as men of the theater, as artists we cannot serve the Revolution and demean ourselves and our art. For one cannot compel musicians who have attained a high degree of musical culture to play elementary, immature pieces, devoid of life. Pushkin spoke of how Freischutz is rendered by the fingers of timid pupils. But it is a real tragedy when masters are forced to play not Freischutz, but semi-literate efforts at interpreting phenomena of tremendous vital significance."

I appreciated the great artist's sincerity. I realized his dilemma. If he rejected the revolutionary repertoire, which at that time was, indeed, utterly childish, people would say to him: what is the good of your splendid theater, of your marvelous instrument, which you built with such pains, if, after the upheaval, when a new world has begun to develop, this instrument can no longer serve its purpose and can only grind out the tunes of the past like an old music box, even though a good one. If he made concessions, if he said: give us what you have written and we will

try to produce it—what would result? The tawdry nature of the immature material would be apparent to everyone, and the theater would promptly be blamed for this tawdriness. People would say that these old folk, these last Mohicans of an outworn culture, had failed to express, or perhaps still worse, had not wanted to express, the new ideas. What was most important for Stanislavsky was the fact that even his old friends, people with high esthetic standards, people with an artistic conscience, would say: "What has happened to the Art Theater? Is that art?"

Veresayev read us a play of his. That too was long ago. The play was neither good nor bad, but at least it was written with the degree of skill that comes naturally to a finished writer. After the reading a discussion began in which Stanislavsky participated. Big, almost monumental, with his white-haired head of a sage and his shy smile, which by no means indicated inward timidity or indecision, but was rather the expression of a great man's deference in talking to his friends, he remarked:

"What I like about your play is the fact that it is alive, that the characters are alive, that the dialogue is alive. Sometimes an author starts with excellent premises and wishes to prove something good. All sorts of important ideas are milling in his mind, but in the end, out of all these elements, he produces a sort of laboratory chemical compound, a sort of Apoponax.[1] You know, Vikenti Vikentyevich, there are perfumes that smell like living flowers—like syringia and acacia. And then there are Apoponaxes of this kind. The devil may know why such Apoponaxes exist, but I don't like such smells."

When Stanislavsky said this he probably, almost certainly, did not realize how close he came to Marx's reflections on the theater. For Marx (as well as Engels) in his famous letters to Lassalle regarding the latter's dramas, condemned even Schiller (we shall never forget the great playwright) because he, to use Stanislavsky's expression, "Apoponaxed." They contrasted him with Shakespeare, for in Shakespeare everything is alive. And they regarded Shakespeare's vitality, the profound, dialectical verisimilitude of his plays as an eloquent and faithful expression of class essentials through the medium of individual characters. Shakespeare did not know this terminology. He was not consciously interested in this aspect of the matter. But because he was an artist and a dialectician, because he used life as his source and transformed what he had taken into something more vital than life itself, concentrating its hues, the result was that drama which Marx and Engels called dear to them and a model for the stage of tomorrow.

But Engels, when discussing the theater of tomorrow, had scant hope that a drama fully up to his standards would develop in Germany. Such a drama, he said, would be distinguished by its Shakespearean richness of color, combined with profoundly scientific analysis of the social events portrayed. Engels would have liked the playwright to be a Marxist, to be a revolutionary, but at the same time to be an artist. Not only would these elements not interfere with each other, they would invariably assist each other under truly normal conditions. But these normal conditions would arise only after the political triumph of the pro-

[1] A cheap strong perfume.

letarian revolution, and even then, they would not spring into being all at once, but gradually, as we have witnessed in our own case.

What was Stanislavsky striving for in his theater; what were his views on the theater, its nature and its tasks?

Essentially, Stanislavsky's theater was a theater of transition. It might be imagined that a theater of a transition period must needs be anemic and feeble, and could never rise to the level of the period prior to the transition or the period after it.

However, this does not necessarily hold true. And in this case it did not hold true.

There is no doubt that the period prior to the 'nineties was a glorious one in Russian literature. From the 'forties on, the revolutionary-populist wing, the militant wing of the advocates of Russia's development on the American pattern, as Lenin expressed it, had developed with power, albeit with martyrdom. The existence of this wing proved a powerful influence on the sentiments of the intelligentsia, and through the latter it affected painting, literature, and all of art, including the theater. Indeed, such great men of the theater as Shchepkin, Mochalov, Sadovsky and his group, developed in this atmosphere. To be sure, because of the censorship, the theater reflected the revolutionary ferment less clearly than literature. But for all that art's foremost requirement was to serve the people, to serve their ideas in conformance with the terminology of those times.

The defeat of the populist ideas in the 'eighties, plus the powerful development of Russian capitalism, after the Prussian pattern, placed art in the new conditions which I described above as transition.

Populism broke down into an espousal of minor causes. It drifted into the curious channel of Tolstoyism, sometimes into the morass of complete pessimism. It was impossible to serve ideals; to profess those ideals without serving them was shameful; to renounce them was difficult and also shameful.

Meanwhile a broad market was opening before the intelligentsia. Capitalists of a Europeanized type and the wealthy intelligentsia which they created clamored for refined Westernized art in all its aspects and varieties. Creative talents were in considerable demand. Esthetic requirements grew rapidly, insofar as form was concerned; but what could supply the content of the new art? The reader will perhaps imagine that this content should have been the glorification of capitalism or the proclamation of the need for renegacy and for propitiating the idols of the autocracy, and other equally monstrous ideals.

Not at all, in examining the art of the 'nineties and early nineteen-hundreds we find scarcely any such elements.

Very soon a decisive revolution, no longer populist but proletarian, stirred on the left, while on the right a peculiar formalism was proclaimed. This was not the formalism of empty form. For the best people of that time it was a period of torturesome, sometimes heroic, groping. Life was essentially gloomy. There were no ethical beaconlights. The intelligentsia tried to fill this life with a new content. It created much that was vivid, subtle, resonant and light. At times it learned with the aptitude of genius from the achievements of Western European culture, which was also brilliantly decadent. At the

same time it tried to replace the former ideals which foretold the coming day of reckoning.

The Russian decadents, for example, undoubtedly represented a particular variety of romanticism, and from this standpoint, as Plekhanov correctly defined it, the Russian decadent movement testified to the antagonism between the artist and reality. This antagonism was not revolutionary, but passive; on the one hand it was tinged with martyrdom, but on the other it found consolation, an extremely gilded and honeyed consolation, in the realm of beauty.

The most brilliant phenomenon and most valuable product of those days of questing was the Art Theater. And in the theatrical world the greatest representative of this period was K. S. Stanislavsky, offspring of a capitalist family, who had fled to the camp of the intelligentsia.

All of Stanislavsky's searching, all his foresight and all his mature comprehension of the purpose of the theater are dominated by a single truth: art is sacred, the theater is a lofty institution. Artistic creativeness is in its way heroic.

The gloomier surrounding life became, the firmer the more sensitive people among those for whom the way to the revolution was barred clung to esthetic and ethical protests against reality.

Was Stanislavsky a realist? Did he really want life-like truth in the sense of an extraordinary resemblance to reality?

Yes, this was partially true of Stanislavsky. Seeking a realistic interpretation of life, he demanded the reproduction of various details; he insisted upon an extremely acute and intensive effort to create reality as it is. But he soon realized, and with such companions as Anton Chekhov he could not fail to realize, that you can never present the whole of life in either a story or a play. You reproduce it after the fashion of Treplyev's remark about the writer Trigorin in Chekhov's *The Seagull*: "The bottle-neck shines in the moonlight and you see the whole moonlit night before you." Stanislavsky soon abandoned realism of the Meiningen type for a remarkably subtle impressionism, which conveyed the very essence, the aroma of life in that aspect which the given performance attempted to render.

But Stanislavsky did not stop at this. He not only staged historical plays (here there was as yet no break with realism), but he also produced symbolist plays and Ibsen and Hauptmann in their second period in which life had been subjected to an exceedingly careful doctoring from the standpoint of definite ideas. He went even further. He produced Maeterlinck's fairy tales and Hauptmann's *Sunken Bell*, works of fantasy.

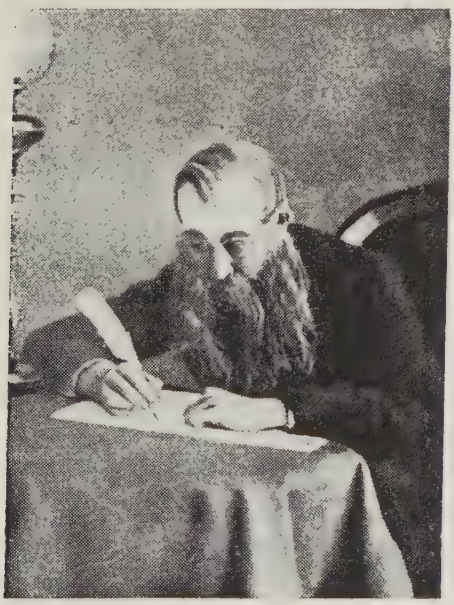
Stanislavsky sought dramatic material which was significant in itself and whose literary expression harmonized with the needs of the stage: whenever he found it his musical instrument gave the score its full due.

Stanislavsky reasoned or felt as follows: the ultimate aim of his art was by using psychic means, over a period of as many evenings as possible, to fire the broad public with lofty emotions which would make their "souls" more requiring, stronger, more perceptive and more genuinely human. This meant Stanislavsky knew, or at any rate perceived, how to raise the public above a miserable existence, an existence which was the target of so much bitter mockery on the part of Chekhov.

K. S. Stanislavsky

as Famusov in Griboyedov's "Wit Works Woe"

as Argon in Molière's "Le Malade Imaginaire"



as Krutitsky in Ostrovsky's "Every Sage is Something of a Fool"

as a cavalier in Goldoni's "Mistress of the Inn"

It required a completely unique theatrical art to achieve this end. The spectator had to be made to feel that the theater itself was deeply fired with emotion, that it was sincere in its creative endeavor. Hence the profound seriousness of the art, hence the careful thought put into each detail, the agreement of these details with the picture as a whole. This was the discovery of those conditions which made the spectator feel that he was not being merely amused, but was being educated in the best sense of the word. Education is often associated with tiresome lesson learning, which is of little use, especially in the theater. But genuine education (which is also self-education), Goethe's *Bildung*, affords the deepest enjoyment. But this enjoyment does not soften our forces; it concentrates and organizes them.

Stanislavsky's great service lies in the fact that in a period of transition he created a theater which became practically the strongest and finest voice to be heard anywhere in those days. It was to his credit that he not only made this voice powerful and fine, but capable of endless modulations, capable of subordinating itself with incredible flexibility to the social ideas which reached this amazing membrane through the playwrights.

Stanislavsky's art and the masters of the stage whom he trained were not old wineskins; they were new ones; but in those days there was no new wine to pour into them. The classics remain the classics. No Shakespeare can talk to a new epoch the way its own son can.

Where were the new?

Of the new playwrights Chekhov and Gorky were most closely associated with the Art Theater. Chekhov himself was a writer of a transition period. He, too, was one of the great children of transition who cursed their own epoch, who revealed its horrid features in the magic mirror of art and thereby tried to overcome it.

But Chekhov did not know how to overcome it, nor where to go.

Therefore the theater could portray only disgusting people, reptiles from the quagmire of the autocracy, on the one hand, and on the other, splendid people whom you pitied, sharing their tears.

The theater, together with Chekhov, sought to defend the noble spirit from banality. And this defense was its only form of attack. We are grateful for even this, of course. But if this is new wine it is very, very weak.

Gorky's wine was stronger. He was a champion of Russia's not far distant future. He was warmed by the rays of the new sun and was destined to develop along with this future.

A keen ear could detect the cry of the stormy petrel not only in Gorky, but in Chekhov as well, in the plays produced by the Art Theater. But it was still an extremely muffled cry. This is why the Art Theater acquired the character of such a lofty institution for the protection of cultural, ethical and artistic treasure. With its velvet voice and great finesse the Art Theater sang to Russia, mainly to the intelligentsia, songs to the effect that life was essentially fine, that things would somehow turn out all right, that there was, at any rate, one solution in the inner knowledge that a splendid humanity existed.

Yet this quality of transition also lent the Art Theater the stamp of a certain hostility, as it were, to the active spirit; of mistrust of noisy martial music, mistrust in slogans, appeals. The Art Theater was not, of course, an Ibsen's "Wild Duck," but to some extent it was a singing swan, and its swan song not only foretold

the end, beautiful though it might be, but presaged the rise of a new and noble life, even on this unclean earth. It was nevertheless a swan which had forgotten how to fly. The wings of the Art Theater were wings of dreams. The Art Theater could not employ, or at any rate never felt the necessity for employing, wings that could cleave the air and fly far through storm and clouds to attain their goal.

The Revolution came and confronted the theater with this very task. The Revolution told the theater: "I need you! But not in order that after my labors and battles, I, the Revolution, may relax in comfortable armchairs in a pleasant hall and enjoy a show. I need you not in order that I may smile restfully and forget my cares. I need you in the capacity of an assistant, a searchlight and a counsellor. I want to see both my friends and foes on your stage. I want to see them in the present, past and future, in their development and evolution. I want to see them face to face. I also want to study them through your medium. And not only study them. Through you I want to love and hate, not more passionately, for I am passionate as it is, but with greater clarity. I want you to glorify my exploits and my fallen heroes. I want you to reveal my mistakes, my shortcomings and my scars, and to do this truthfully, for I do not fear them. I want you to fulfill this task to the fullness of your magic powers, without being bound by any petty schools or narrow rules. Use camera-like reproduction, concentrate, stylize, give free rein to your fantasy, employ all the colors on your palette, all the instruments in your vast orchestra, and help me to know and to feel the world and my own self. For I am eager to know, I am eager for an explanation of my own feelings. I require an intense inner life, that my work in the world, my struggle for happiness, may be more successful and fruitful."

Some theaters took fright, others wagged their tails and said: "Always ready!" New theaters sprang into existence, some on the wrong track; others close to the task of the Revolution, hastily fashioning new instruments for the new music. The Art Theater and its able directors harkened pensively and cautiously to the summons.

They questioned: can this be transposed into theatrical music? Isn't this coarse? Isn't that sensational? Isn't this one-sided? And what is a class? Why do we speak in terms of class instead of humanity, whom we, in our opinion, are pledged to serve?

And the Revolution eyed Stanislavsky and his theater with similar mistrust: Isn't that theater bourgeois, or esthetic or intellectual? Doesn't it have a discoordinating influence? In the tragic years, in the days of transition, it provided consolation. But why should we need consolation? And what kind of consolation does it provide with its soft voice, exquisite manners and perfumed silk handkerchief with which it wiped away the tears of lacerated souls who lived in the twilight before dawn? How can it go with us to dress the wounds of revolutionary fighters? How can that daintily perfumed and exquisite stage handkerchief be transformed into even the smallest banner of our struggle?

Revolutionary drama developed slowly, as was inevitable. With equal slowness the theater advanced to meet it and provide a subtle esthetic instrument attuned to the needs of the times. Without abandoning its main pivot or its basic faith in the mission of the theater, it sought to join in the new con-

structive work and thus include new motifs in its symphony. For a long time it was only partially successful.

Perhaps the drama, *Days of the Turbins*, had a good deal to do with the situation. Many people rebuked the theater for that play. The Party was quick to perceive the favorable aspects of the performance. The play had been accepted by the Stanislavsky Theater without artistic reserves and it was profoundly contemporary, dealing with revolutionary actuality.

Armored Train, by Vsevolod Ivanov, in its culminating moments, was essentially something of an event in the history of culture. The actors of the Art Theater were moved by the play. And the audience was touched.

Everyone felt that the Art Theater as an instrument and orchestra had by no means outlived its time, that the "new wineskins" which Stanislavsky had created by virtue of his sincerity, his lofty faith in art and self-imposed demands, had not become obsolete. And if up to now they had contained insipid potions and weak wines, it was only because it was still too soon for the full-blown ruby wine of renewed life, of militant human action directed toward the accomplishment of the greatest aims.

Has Stanislavsky attained this now? Not entirely. Not fully. We shall not indulge in excessive boasting. We shall not be dazzled by success.

I heard an excellent story and I hope it is true. A gifted Communist playwright, in conversation with a leader of our Party, remarked in reply to criticism that the quality of production was inadequate: "Well, what can we do? We're not Shakespeares." To which the leader presumably answered: "But why aren't you Shakespeares? Isn't the age we're living in far above Shakespeare's time? And why should it not have a dramatic voice even more powerful than Shakespeare's?"

We shall have our Shakespeares. We cannot fail to have them. Perhaps they will come somewhat later. But come they will.

And today on Stanislavsky's seventieth birthday and the fiftieth anniversary of his artistic endeavors, which are known to the whole world, which are so important in our history, my most ardent wish is that he will become fully convinced that the splendid instrument which he has fashioned with such infinite pains and reverence, was really designed (although he did not realize it at the time) to become the instrument of the great Revolution, the beginning of the world Revolution.

This is what our revolutionary playwrights must strive for. This is what the theater itself must work for. The new music requires considerable alterations in the instrument. Organs must be adapted to their functions. The Art Theater can accept the new music, but the latter must transform the Art Theater. The great days of complete harmony of the theatrical legacy of the pre-Revolutionary decade with the artistically mature periods of the Revolution will undoubtedly smile on Konstantin Sergeyevich Stanislavsky. For Kachalov was right when he remarked in his charming article about his old friend that Stanislavsky's beautiful soul is twenty-two years old and has not a single grey hair.

His crowning achievement would indeed be a series of revolutionary productions with a wealth of artistic content. Come what may, this wreath will yet bedeck the brow of Stanislavsky the creator, which will then too be devoid of a single grey hair.

"If there is a theater out of the past which we must save and preserve at any cost, it is, of course, the Moscow Art Theater".[1]

V. I. LENIN

Yuri Sobolev

FORTY YEARS OF THE MOSCOW ART THEATER

Forty years ago, on October 27, 1898, the Art Theater, organized by K. S. Stanislavsky and V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, opened in Moscow.

"The program of our undertaking," wrote Stanislavsky in his remarkable book, *My Life in Art*, "was revolutionary. We protested against the old style of acting, against the theatrical, against false pathos, against declamation and overacting. In our iconoclastic, revolutionary zeal for the rejuvenation of art we declared war on all convention in the theater, wherever manifested."

The Art Theater sprang into existence as a legitimate reaction against the stagnation and decadence which afflicted the Russian stage at that time.

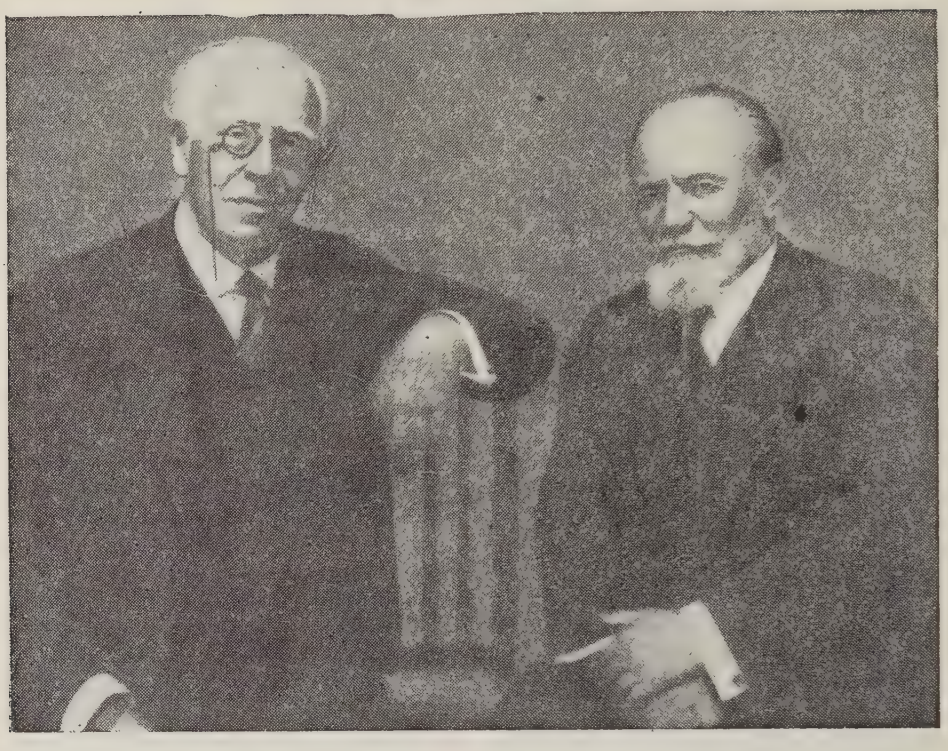
"In those days theatrical affairs were in the hands of bartenders and bureaucrats:" such is Stanislavsky's scathing estimate of the entire theatrical system forty years ago, before the appearance of the Art Theater. Despite the fact that splendid actors played in the imperial theaters, the Maly in Moscow and the Alexandrinsky in St. Petersburg, the Russian stage had nevertheless entered a period of decline, because the stage lacked the guidance of a competent artistic leadership, while the bureaucratic officials who controlled the theaters had little love for art. The dull pettyfogging tsarist censorship did not allow the best contemporary European and Russian plays to be produced.

The more enlightened people in the theatrical world longed for a rejuvenation of the stage. Much was accomplished in this direction by the Society of Lovers of Art and Literature, an organization headed by Stanislavsky. The society staged productions that were truly remarkable. They bore the stamp of great artistic discernment, of genuine love for the stage and tremendous care in their production. At the same time, the noted writer, dramatist and critic, V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, was carrying out daring reforms in the methods of training people for the stage. He conducted classes in drama at the Moscow Philharmonic Institute. These two men conceived the idea of organizing a new theater.

V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, who had heard of the performances of the Society of Lovers of Art and Literature, invited Stanislavsky to discuss the prospects for establishing a new theater. Their meeting on June 22, 1897, eventually led to the establishment of the Art Theater. The company originally consisted of members of the Society of Lovers of Art and Literature and the pupils of Nemirovich-Danchenko.

The organizers of the theater were guided by lofty artistic principles. First of all they raised the question

[1] From the reminiscences of A. V. Lunacharsky.



K. S. Stanislavsky and V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko

of what should be included in the repertoire. The new theater could not subsist on the fare provided by mediocre playwrights, who cluttered the stage with poor productions. Nemirovich-Danchenko and Stanislavsky decided that the repertory of their new theater should include only works "imbued with a healthy sense of living truth." They wanted to produce Ostrovsky, Gogol, Griboyedov, Pushkin, A. K. Tolstoy. From the European classic repertoire they chose Shakespeare's tragedies and Molière's comedies. of their contemporaries they spoke of Hauptmann, Zudermann, Ibsen, Chekhov. For the theater's opening they chose a play which had never been produced and which had been banned by the censor, A. K. Tolstoy's tragedy, *Tsar Fyodor Johannovich*.

The general principles on which the theater was founded might be summarized as follows: "First, there was the desire that a class of people who were not wealthy, particularly the poor intellectuals, might enjoy good theater seats at a cheap price. Second, there was the artistic attempt to infuse the Russian stage with a new current, the desire to free it from the narrow confines of routine and stereotype. Third, there was the desire to give young actors opportunity to develop."

The Art Theater's first production was a vivid and convincing protest against entrenched stereotypes of stage routine and overdramatization. Outwardly the production adhered to the methods of the Meiningen school, which called for the strictest observance of historical

PRODUCTIONS OF THE MOSCOW ART THEATER

"The Cherry Orchard"—Act I

"Marriage of Figaro"—Act II

A scene from "Enemies"

"Armored Train" — Act I

"Lyubov Yarovaya" — Act II

"Land" — Act III

and ethnographical verisimilitude. Everything, including the decorations, dress, makeup and props, had to be exact. One of the great innovations of the Meiningen school was the ability to handle a crowd on the stage. Whereas the stage crowd had previously been wooden and dumb, it now became lively and colorful. Each member of the crowd portrayed a particular character and acquired an independent role.

Stanislavsky went beyond his teachers of the Meiningen school. One of his achievements, for example, was the complete transformation of the theatrical set. The painted canvas drops were replaced by objects which gave the complete illusion of the interior, say, of a real house. Hanging arches, representing "woods" and "gardens," were banished for ever from the stage. At the first performance of *Fyodor*, in the scene of the garden of the Shuiskys, the audience was amazed to see trees and bushes that stood on the stage floor instead of painted backdrops or wing sets, suspended from the ceiling. All the details of the production, the flowing sleeves of the Boyars' coats, the low-ceilinged rooms of Fyodor's apartments and his tsar's raiment, all reproduced sixteenth century Russia and conveyed the atmosphere of the period. The theater maintained the same naturalism in such productions as *The Death of Ivan the Terrible*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Snow-Maiden*, *The Powers of Darkness*, and later, *Julius Caesar*. In many of these the passion for verisimilitude reached the point of needless exaggeration. Shylock spoke with a Jewish accent; the dirt in a village street set for a drama by Tolstoy was an exact copy of a model brought for the purpose from Tula province, etc. The reality of human existence and the beauty of poetic imagery was eclipsed by the excess of naturalistic detail.

All the parts of the theatrical mechanism of the Art Theater were subordinated to a single directive will which assembled the scattered and unconnected details to form a harmonious performance, in which everything, from the actor to the set and costume designer, were involved in a common effort. This created an ensemble such as had never before existed in the history of the Russian theater, amazing in its complete coordination and concert-like harmony.

The "law of inner justification" (Nemirovich-Danchenko's definition) was applied to the training of the actors. This meant that every emotion down to the tiniest nuance expressed on the stage, must be justified psychologically. Nemirovich-Danchenko's formula can be further explained as follows: only complete agreement between the correct external interpretation of the character and its true stage presentation can preserve the full flavor of artistic truth. But just as in the case of naturalism, so with the theory of "inner justification," there was much that merely burdened the performance with unnecessary detail, which needlessly complicated the character interpretation, depriving it of theatrical vividness.

But naturalism proved to be primitivism, when the theater sought to stage Chekhov.

In Chekhov's plays the lyric of feelings had to be conveyed in subtle details. In producing Chekhov the Art Theater learned to reject the chaff and to seek out the grain of great human emotions. Thus it was that the previous museum naturalism gave way to a vigorous realistic trend, a trend which freed the Russian theater from the caked layers of scenic stereotype and literary cliché. It restored to the stage live psychology and plain speech. It taught people to view life not only from its heights and yawn-

Moskvin as Epikhodov in "The Cherry Orchard"

ing precipices, but in ordinary surroundings. Stage realism affirmed the dramatic quality of plays in concealed, inner psychological movement, not in the external theatrics, which had reduced the theater to a narrowly specialized profession and had repelled live literary talent. Thus Chekhov's plays, by cleansing the theater of literary clichés, brought back to the theater real literature, from which it had been cut off for decades. Drama that was not merely *genre*, but broad generalization, drama of profound vitality, demands the same vital qualities from the production. The Art Theater had the correct approach. It realized that the "vitality" of Chekhov's plays can be conveyed even by the bench on which the characters sit with their backs to the audience in the first act of *The Seagull*.[1] This daring innovation was not a director's prank or an attempt to be original at any cost, but was organically linked with Chekhov himself, with the entire undertone of his play. Thus did objects themselves become animate on the stage. It was necessary not simply to provide a set with the ordinary household furnishings. Objects had to be chosen which blended organically with the inner current of the play.

The first seasons of the Art Theater were characterized by the struggle between the naturalist influences and the purely realist trend.

Summarizing the impressions of these first years of the Art Theater, one critic wrote: "You see how people live in Norway, how tired the nurses' faces are, how beautiful the sunrise is in the Yarilina Valley (in *The Snow Maiden)*, how comically Stockman walks, what dark shadows lurk in the corners of the Boyar duma. You hear the tread of the boyars across the bridge and across the entryway, the hysterical sobs of Irina (in *Three Sisters)*, the excited honking of the geese above the lake. You feel how fragmentary, how accidental and yet how significant and splendid life really is."

The Art Theater passed through several stages; sometimes it gravitated from one extreme to the other. Thus, in renouncing naturalism, with its literal presentation, the theater became absorbed in methods of interpretation, when complex emotions were conveyed metaphorically as in Hamsun's *Drama of Life*, which was the most "stylized" of the theater's productions. Absorption in details of the period and minor trivialities (as in the first staging of *Inspector-General)* gave way to extreme economy in the use of means of external expression, as in Turgenev's plays.

A. K. Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky,

[1] *The Seagull* was produced by the Art Theater in 1898. Since then the theater has used the image of a seagull as its emblem.

Dostoyevsky, Gogol, Griboyedov, Leo Tolstoy mark periods in the development in the Art Theater toward the completion of that "circle" which Stanislavsky on the theater's tenth anniversary described as follows: "The Art Theater, having started from the principles of realism, described a complete circle and returned to that same realism."

The Great October Revolution in 1917 found the Art Theater at a decisive turning point. The old stage forms which had found such brilliant and finished expression in the interpretations not only of Chekhov's plays but in all those splendid productions which constituted its repertoire could no longer satisfy the more discerning of the theater's directors and actors and a definite necessity was felt for discarding the "psychological shell" which sometimes weighed down the theater's performances. In the years preceding the Revolution a new current arose, not so noticeably, perhaps, as might have been expected, if only because the conditions in which the theater was placed upon the outbreak of the European War could not, of course, assist the development of new trends. And when the February 1917 Revolution was followed by the October Socialist Revolution, the theater possessed a repertoire which was by no means consonant with the new era. *Tsar Fyodor Johannovich*, revied and with the omissions of the censorship reinserted; Chekhov's plays, Gorky's *Lower Depths*, Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Death of Pazukhin* and a program of Pushkin's short tragedies—such was the theater's bill during the 1917-18 season. As part of its new repertoire the Art Theater produced a stage version of Dostoyevsky's *Stepanchikov Village* which was characterized by the brilliant performance of Moskvin, one of the theater's best actors, in the leading role of Foma Opeskin.

The theater could not carry on with this repertoire; it did not satisfy its leaders, who were aware of the considerable dissonance between most of these plays and the contemporary revolutionary epoch.

The theater sought to present profound, moving productions. However, the staging of Byron's *Cain* (April 4, 1920) did not reach the heights to which the theater aspired. Far more successful was the revival of Gogol's *Inspector-General* (May, 1921).

Subsequently, however, the work of the theater could not develop intensively; a group of actors which went on tour to Kharkov was cut off from Moscow by the Civil War fronts. This group returned to Moscow in May, 1922. The theater had meanwhile received an invitation to tour Europe and America, and in September, 1922, the entire main company of the Art Theater, led by Stanislavsky, left for abroad. In Moscow remained Nemirovich-Danchenko, who at the time was engaged in organizing a musical studio and who also directed those old productions of the Art Theater which could still be staged with the actors that remained. Then it was that Nemirovich-Danchenko voiced the formula, "the garden has been burnt away, the soil remains." The flame of the Revolution had seared the old cherry orchards of estheticism which had loomed so large in the life of the Art Theater. But the soil from which its great mastery had developed remained just as fertile as ever. This assertion was fully borne out in such productions as *Every Sage Is Something of a Fool*, by Ostrovsky; *Death of Pazukhin* by Saltykov-Shchedrin, and *The Cherry Orchard*. These revivals of the theater's early performances testified to its great realistic mastery. Ostrovsky's comedy *Burning Heart*,

which Stanislavsky produced so brilliantly, must likewise be included in this group.

But the theater was looking for material to serve as a contemporary expression of its art. On the tenth anniversary of the Great October Revolution, November 8, 1927, the Art Theater performed Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armored Train 14-69* which told of the Siberian partisans' heroic struggle against the interventionists. The new history of the Art Theater dates from this performance. The process of assimilating the new subject matter proceeded, penetrating deeper and deeper into the organism of the theater.

Maxim Gorky played a great role in the development of this process. Three of Gorky's plays, *Philistines*, *The Lower Depths* and *Children of the Sun*, were produced by the Art Theater in the early days of its existence. Of these performances, *Lower Depths* enjoyed by far the greatest success.

Gorky had played a prominent part in the pre-revolutionary Art Theater, as a founder of that trend in the theater which Stanislavsky called "socio-political." But in the years of political reaction which followed the defeat of the first Russian Revolution, the theater began to go in for Dostoyevsky, and Gorky protested against the inclusion of an adaptation of a Dostoyevsky novel in the repertoire. This caused a rift between him and the theater.

They came together again in the years after the October Revolution. The theater was anxious to work with the great writer's material. It was impelled in this direction by the growing realization of the theater's political role and the desire to create great socio-psychological roles. In 1933 the theater produced Sukhotin's play *In the World*, constructed out of some of Gorky's stories. The purpose of this play was to portray tsarist Russia as seen through Gorky's eyes, lifting separate episodes to the heights of social generalization.

A year later the Art Theater performed the play *Yegor Bulychev and Others*. In their work on *Yegor Bulychev* the directors sought new ways to bring out the socio-political nature of the performance. The actors who took part in the play knew that they were fighting for Gorky's political and philosophical ideas.

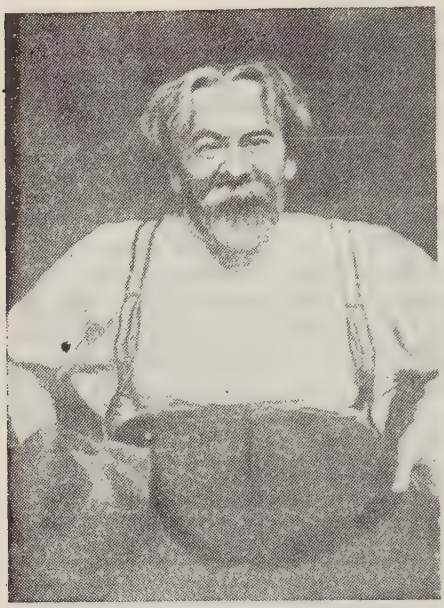
The difficult part of the work on the play consisted in finding the correct correlation of the class forces and at the same time in showing the internal struggle of the play's hero, of Yegor Bulychev himself. And yet this combination of tasks embodies what is fundamental in the concept of Socialist realism.

This was even more strikingly revealed in the Art Theater's third post-revolutionary Gorky production, *Enemies*. *Enemies* is not only a portrayal of the past, of the proletariat's heroic struggle on the eve of the Revolution, but a play which reveals the constructive force of Bolshevik hatred for the enemies of the working class.

The theater had to convey to the spectator the full force of the struggle. At the same time the theater had to make clear its own attitude towards the events and people Gorky delineated.

The theater came up to these tasks. The performance faithfully depicted the historical setting and, employing purely realistic methods, it portrayed the characters in the play as live, passionate, fighting people. Both enemy camps are shown vividly and truthfully.

The strength of this performance, which had its roots in Socialist realism, arises from the fact that the theater, without resorting to the poster but retaining the comprehensiveness of Gorky's social gener-



Leonidov in the title role in "Yegor Bulychev"

alization, did not remain "on the sidelines," but proclaimed its attitude toward events and man, and set it forth in such a manner that the audience could not fail to regard the words addressed to the workers, "these people will win," as a prophecy that was bound to and that had come to pass.

This prophecy resounded in the theater with all the might of Gorky. Herein lies that influence of Gorky of which the leaders of the Art Theater speak. Not only did the acceptance and understanding of Gorky's outlook on the world directly influence the production of Gorky's plays, but the Art Theater's approach to a Soviet repertoire, the discovery of Soviet subject matter (in such performances as *Lyubov Yarovaya* and *Earth*) is an approach and acceptance which developed on the basis of Gorky's outlook.

The great humanist, ardent fighter and mighty bard of the victorious proletariat, the great artist who prophetically foresaw that "these people will win" and with staggering truth revealed the inevitable doom of the Bulychevs, is understood and loved by the theater which bears his name and which reaffirms Socialist realism in its splendid work. By a detailed analysis of the theater's production of *Anna Karenina*, after Leo Tolstoy's novel, one might demonstrate that here, too, the same lines of Socialist realism are observed which are so pronounced in Gorky's plays, in the treatment of *Lyubov Yarovaya* and of *Land*. The Art Theater's production of *Anna Karenina* does not encompass all of Tolstoy's novel, with its tremendous social content. In this production, the subject of Levine, and hence the decisive subject of all Russian life in the 'seventies, is omitted. The play presents only the history of one woman's life, but the significance of the production lies in the way it presents this life, the way in which it expands the personal tragedy of a lady of high society, Anna Arkadyevna Karenrina, into a great social generalization.

The performance brings out its attitude towards that order of things to which Anna, Vronsky and Karenin are fully committed. The play reveals the root of the novel's social significance, hence its importance, its consanguinity with the entire cycle of modern work of the Art Theater which arose on the ground of Socialist realism.

Forty years ago the theater was confronted with purely esthetic problems. In the pre-revolutionary period of its history, the meaning and significance of the Art Theater lay in their profound and faithful solution. In the revolutionary years the work of the Art Theater acquired new aspects. "The Art Theater," says Nemirovich-Danchenko, "remains basically clear, simple and vividly realist, just as it was before. The Revolution has deepened our

understanding of art and made it bolder and stronger."

He goes on to say: "The Moscow Art Theater always recognized only that art which was imbued with great ideas. Now it adds to its repertoire by the inclusion of great socio-political ideas. It wishes to preserve the human quality of its performances while depriving them of all traces of cheap, sweetish sentimentality. It wants genuine socialist humanism filled with love for labor, the fatherland and mankind, and hatred for its enemies."

The Moscow Art Theater has a deep understanding of the social tasks confronting art. Stanislavsky once said:

"The actors should realize what tasks life places before all of us, what obligations to the great masses of the audience lie upon us. These tasks and obligations can only be fulfilled by those who participate along with the masses in the common work of construction, those who develop together with the masses."

As a cultural institution, the Art Theater undoubtedly occupies one of the foremost places in the struggle to build a new life. The significance of the Art Theater as a powerful factor in the development of Socialist culture was splendidly expressed by Stanislavsky. He used to describe how people abroad invariably listened eagerly to his accounts of art in the U.S.S.R. Many abroad would complain to him that the secret of the theater had been lost, that there were no longer any actors or theaters of significance. Some tried to organize studios far from the big cities, monasteries of art as it were, where they hoped to rediscover the secret of the theater. To them Stanislavsky would reply that in his country art requires no secluded sanctuaries and that the theater in the Soviet Union is an integral part of the creation of the new life.

"And this," Stanislavsky would exclaim, "is the source of my happiness, my pride and my youth."

"How wonderful it is to work for one's own people, in close contact with them," the great master of the stage wrote in an article just before his death. "This feeling arises from the deep concern which the Communist Party, led by our Stalin, devotes to our theater."

The Art Theater enjoys the constant attention and solicitude of the Party and the Government. The leaders and actors of the theater have received numerous Government awards. On April 27, 1937, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. conferred the Order of Lenin upon the Art Theater for its outstanding achievements. No theater in the Soviet Union has so many actors who have received decorations. Stanislavsky was twice decorated; he held the Order of the Red Banner of Labor and the Order of Lenin. Nemirovich-Danchenko, Kachalov, Moskvin and Leonidov also hold two Government Orders each.

The Art Theater is the best national theater in Russia. Although its repertoire was never restricted to Russian plays alone but also included world classics, nevertheless, basically it was a national theater even as regarded its choice of plays.

The historical merit of the Art Theater lies in the fact that it revealed to the full the social and artistic significance of the great Russian writers, Gogol, Griboyedov, Ostrovsky, Leo Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky.

The Art Theater was always a theater of principle, and truth. Sincerity and simplicity were its watchwords. It always strove to solve tasks of fundamental importance.

The Art Theater draws up its repertoire plans not for one season ahead, but for several years. On its fortieth anniversary the theater

is working on many new productions. It is staging a new production of Griboyedov's comedy, *Wit Works Woe*, and in the words of Nemirovich-Danchenko, who is directing it, the theater is striving to bring out to the full the realistic tone of this great work. For its jubilee the theater is also staging *Dostigayev and Others*, the sequel to *Yegor Bulychev*. Work is proceeding on *The Orchards of Polovchansk*, by the Soviet playwright Leonid Leonov. Later the theater will complete the production of Molière's *Tartuffe* which was begun by Stanislavsky. A new staging of *Hamlet* is also planned. The theater had produced *Hamlet* in 1911. Gordon Craig collaborated with Stanislavsky on the 1911 production, which was an experiment in interpretative staging. Craig openly avowed his antagonism to the living human actor and dreamed of an ideal marionette actor. The new production is to be realistic in tone.

In its production plans the theater has gone back to the author whom Stanislavsky spoke of as the Art Theater's permanent mainstay, Chekhov. *The Cherry Orchard* has continuously been in the theater's repertoire, and next year *Three Sisters* will be produced.

The Art theater reserves a large place in its repertoire for contemporary plays. Nikolai Virta, author of *Land*, which deals with an episode in the Civil War, is the youngest of the playwrights working with the Art Theater. Virta's play, based on his novel, when he first brought it to the theater, suffered from many of the shortcomings natural to a beginner playwright. The theater, and Nemirovich-Danchenko, who worked with the author personally, helped transform this immature effort into a finished production.

The theater makes it one of its tasks to work with authors, and this fruitful aid to playwrights is, as it were, a creative laboratory.

Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko evolved a doctrine for the stage which serves as a firm foundation for the growth and education of young actors.

From the first day of its existence the Art Theater has concentrated its full attention on the actor. The "system" developed by Stanislavsky increases the opportunities for creative acting. It is the fountain-head which provides the actor's inspiration, which helps and assists him to portray man in the fullness of his contradictory feelings and emotions, with psychological accuracy and social justification.

The Art Theater which forty years ago organized its company from amateurs and young dramatic school graduates, by flexibly applying a carefully elaborated method of education, developed a splendid company of brilliant creative personalities. The names of such of its actors as Knipper-Chekhova, Lilina, Moskvin, Kachalov, Leonidov, Tarkhanov, of the older generation; Tarasova, Khmelyov, Dobronravov and a whole galaxy of their contemporaries of the new, are known to the whole world.

The Art Theater arrives at its fortieth anniversary wearing a badge of mourning for its founder, teacher and inspirer, the great master K. S. Stanislavsky. But the theater, headed by one of the most remarkable figures of Russian and European art, V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, continues on its great path; behind him is a courageous army of people boundlessly devoted to the ideas and ideals of the theater, ideas which received new content, ideals which received new purposefulness and significance, from the Revolution.

GORKY-CHEKHOV CORRESPONDENCE

The names of Gorky and Chekhov are landmarks in world literature of modern times.

They were born about the same time. Their youth coincided with the 'eighties, the years of reaction; both cherished a profound love for their country, for the great Russian people, both rebelled against the poverty of thought of their time.

One of them—Gorky—became the stormy petrel of the Revolution. Reared by the working class, he marched together with the Russian proletariat along the path leading to the Revolution, together with the Bolsheviks, side by side with Lenin and Stalin.

The other—Chekhov—full of implacable hatred for the world of capitalist violence, ruthless oppression, stupidity and hypocrisy, devoted all his activities, all his writings to exposing the life of his time. He dreamed of a future life in which truth and justice would prevail.

In one of his letters on the death of Saltykov-Shchedrin, Chekhov revealed with utter frankness his attitude towards his contemporaries, contaminated by the grim epoch of reaction. "I deeply regret Saltykov's death," wrote Chekhov. "His was a strong, vigorous mind. That swinishness that lives in the petty, soul-warped Russian intellectual of the average stamp lost in him a most stubborn and persistent enemy. Any newspaper hack can make exposures, even Burenin can ridicule, but Saltykov alone was able to despise openly. Two-thirds of his readers disliked him, but everyone believed him. No one doubted the sincerity of his contempt."

This "swinishness" was exposed not only by Saltykov-Shchedrin, but by Chekhov himself and his great contemporary, Gorky. Gorky exposed it throughout his writings, wherever he found it, whether in the consciousness of the "soul-warped Russian intellectual of the average stamp"; in the European businessman—the representative of finance capital who subsidized the tsarist government's suppression of the 1905 revolutionary movement; or in the intellectual of the worst stamp who became the champion of the World War and subsequently inspired the intervention against the young Soviet Republic. He exposed the swinishness of the organizers of a new bloody carnage, the extinguishers of human culture, marching under the swastika banner of fascism.

It is not by chance that Maxim Gorky's posthumous work, *The Life of Klim Samg'n*, was dedicated to the same Shchedrin and Chekhov themes taken in the historical aspect. The Samgins are the sons of those fathers who closed down Saltykov-Shchedrin's magazine *Otechestvenny Zapiski* and vilified the magnificent work of Chekhov.

Perpetuating the cause championed by Chekhov, Gorky raised it a step higher. This was not accidental for, unlike Chekhov, Gorky's life and all of his creative work were bound up with the cause of the working class. Thanks to his direct contact with Lenin and with Stalin, thanks to the long years of connections with the Bolshevik Party, Gorky acquired that power which not only raised him to the foremost ranks of classic revolutionary literature, but made him one of the leading figures of the international Proletarian Revolution.

This power Chekhov did not possess nor could he. It were perhaps another matter had an early death not cut short Chekhov's literary career. But a different fate was in store for him. He died at the very time when Japanese cannon were destroying Port Arthur, when throughout Russia—Rostov, Saratov, Nizhni and Kazan—there swept a mighty wave of workers' demonstrations, when the cumbersome edifice of the Russian Empire was beginning to topple. He died on the very eve of new, epoch-making events, before he had time to link his life with that leading class destined by history to build the new life of which he had dreamed.

The absence of organic ties with the working class, the absence of theoretical background, did not give Chekhov's hatred for the capitalist system a chance to express itself in his writings with as

much ideological forcefulness, depth and consistency as in the case of Gorky. Yet, notwithstanding his early death, Chekhov occupied a leading position in world letters, became a truly classic writer. A keen and thoughtful observer of contemporary life, he was able to perceive in the young Gorky "undoubted talent, and moreover a genuine and great talent." According to his own words, he valued Gorky most highly and had great faith in his ability.

In contradistinction to the Narodnik [1] criticism of his time, which distorted Chekhov's true creative significance, and contrary to the bourgeois liberal interpretation, Gorky correctly judged Chekhov to be a "great and clever man of powerful observation," a man "who condemned the life of his time." Indeed, Gorky said of Chekhov that he painted for men a "merciless and truthful" picture of the "shamefulness and dreariness of their lives in the gloomy chaos of philistine stolidity." Gorky at once sensed a comrade-in-arms in Chekhov, and the contact established between these two writers is replete with political significance. Both of them realized the need for profound and thorough study and work, both were sober materialists and realists in their writings. The personal contact between Chekhov and Gorky did not last long. Their correspondence covers a period of not more than six years and their personal encounters were few. Yet the mutual contact between these two great men of letters is not confined to the period between 1898 and 1904. The relations between Chekhov and Gorky went much deeper and have indeed not been properly fathomed to this day. We do not doubt that not only did Chekhov act as Gorky's teacher at the outset of his literary career but that something of Gorky's creative genius left its mark on Chekhov's work. The purpose of the collection of Gorky-Chekhov correspondence (*M. Gorky and A. Chekhov: Correspondence, Articles and Statements*, Publishing House of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., Moscow and Leningrad, 1937), from which the letters published below are translated, is to shed light on the relations between the two writers.

Gorky's letters have been published by permission of Gorky himself, granted to the Institute of Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., in 1935.

GORKY TO CHEKHOV

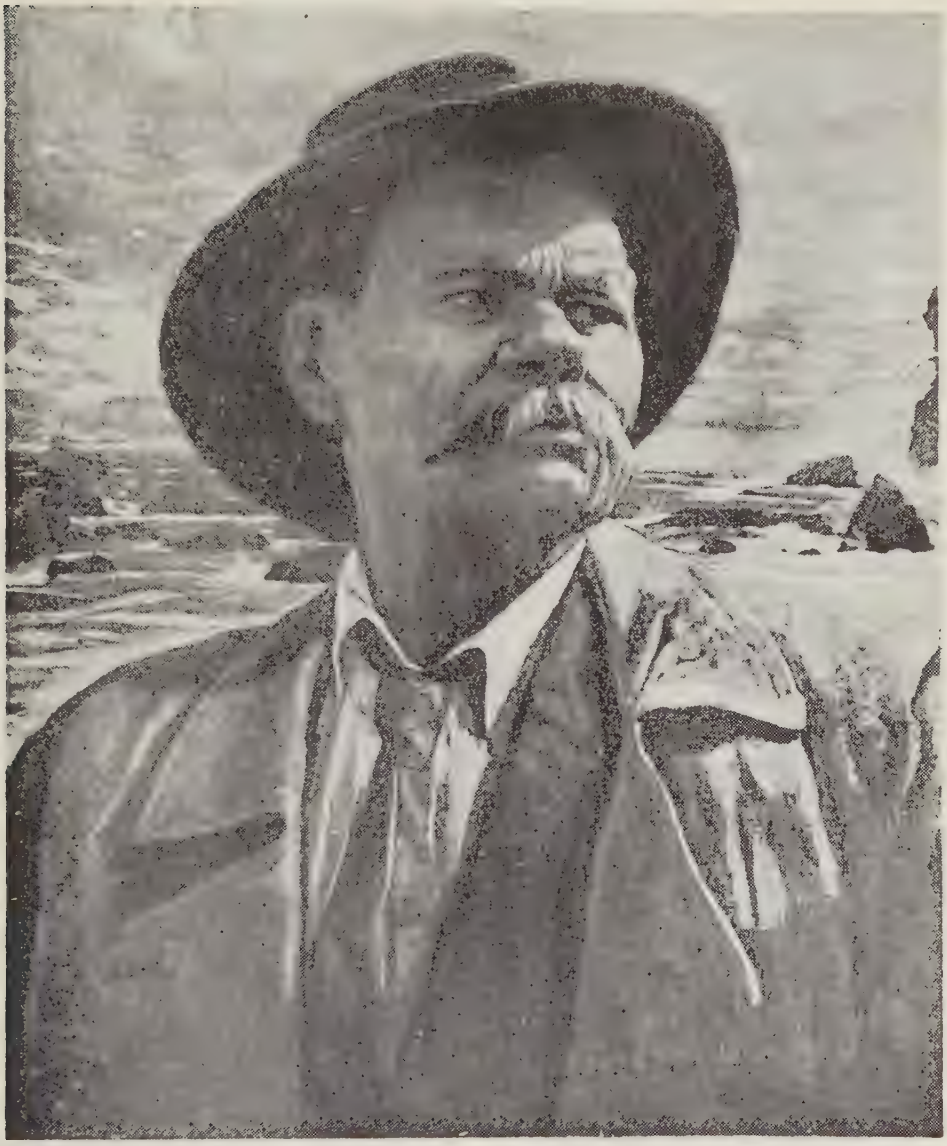
Second half of November, 1898, Nizni-Novgorod

Esteemed Anton Pavlovich,

I thank you most heartily for your response to my letter and for the promise to write to me again. I am eagerly awaiting the letter from you and would very much like to hear your opinion of my stories. Saw *Uncle Vanya* the other day, saw it—and wept like a woman, although I am by no means high-strung. Came home dazed and soul-scarred by your play, wrote you a long letter and tore it up. One cannot express fully and coherently the effect your play has on the soul, although I felt, as I watched its heroes, as though someone were sawing at me with a blunt-edged saw. Its jagged teeth grated right over the heart and the heart shrank under it, groaned and writhed. For me *Uncle Vanya* is a terrible play; it is a completely new form of dramatic art, a hammer with which you strike at the empty skulls of the public. At any rate the stupidity of the latter is impregnable and they do not understand you properly either in *Seagull* or in *Uncle Vanya*. Will you write more dramas? How amazingly you do them!

In the last act of *Vanya*, when, after a long pause, the doctor speaks of the heat in Africa, I quivered with delight at your talent and trembled with fear for people, for our colorless, niggardly life. How splendidly you strike here at the soul, and how well-aimed! Yours is a colossal talent. But tell me, what do you expect to achieve by such blows? Will men awaken under their impact? Pitiful creatures we are, truly, "boresome" people. Sullen despicable creatures, and one must be a fanatic of virtue to love and pity such wretched sacks of bones as we are and help us to live. And yet one cannot but harbor compassion for people just the same. I am far from virtuous and yet I wept aloud at the sight of Vanya and his ilk, although it is very foolish to weep and even more foolish to mention it. You know, it seems to

[1] The Narodnik movement based itself on the peasantry, denying the role of the proletariat.



A portrait by I. I. Brodsky

me that in this play you are colder than the devil in your attitude to people. You are as indifferent to them as the snow or the hurricane. Forgive me, I may be mistaken; at any rate I speak only of my own personal impression. You see, your play made me feel at once terrified and sad. I experienced the same emotions once before in my childhood: there was a corner of our garden where with my own hands I had planted flowers and they grew very nicely there. But one day I came to water them and behold, the bush had been torn up by the roots, the flowers destroyed and on their crushed stalks lay our pig—a sick pig whose hind legs had been crushed in the gate. It was a fine, clear day and the accursed sun shone down with particular zeal and indifference upon the devastation and the ruins of my heart.

So there you are. Do not take offense if I have said anything amiss. I am an

absurd and crude creature and my soul is incurably sick. Incidentally, this is a proper state for the soul of a thinking man.

I press your hand warmly and wish you good health and zest for work. However highly you are praised, you are not valued sufficiently, and, I feel, poorly understood. I personally should not wish to serve as a proof of the latter.

Yours, *A. Peshkov*

Let me know, please, how you feel about *Vanya* yourself. And if I bore you with all this—say so frankly. Otherwise I may perhaps write to you again.

CHEKHOV TO GORKY

Yalta, December 3, 1898

Esteemed Alexei Maximovich,

Your last letter afforded me great pleasure. I thank you with all my heart. *Uncle Vanya* was written a long, long time ago. I have never seen it on the stage. Of recent years it has been produced frequently by the provincial theaters—perhaps because I have published a volume of my plays. On the whole I am cool toward my plays, have long since drifted away from the theater and no longer wish to write for it.

You ask my opinion of your stories. My opinion—there is undoubted talent and moreover a genuine and great talent. In *The Steppes*, for example, it is expressed with unusual force and I even felt a twinge of envy that I had not written it myself. You are an artist, and a clever man. You feel magnificently, you are plastic, *i. e.*, when you describe something you see it and feel it with your hands. This is real art. There you have my opinion and I am very glad to be able to express it to you. I repeat, I am very glad, and were we to make each other's acquaintance and have a talk for an hour or two you would see for yourself how highly I esteem you and what faith I have in your gifts.

Shall we talk about defects now? But this is not so simple. To speak of defects in talent is equivalent to speaking of the defects of a huge tree growing in the garden; here, after all, it is not a simple matter of the tree itself but the taste of the person looking at the tree. Is that not so?

I shall begin by saying that in my opinion you lack restraint. You are like a spectator in a theater who expresses his delight so unrestrainedly that he prevants both himself and others from hearing. This lack of restraint is felt especially in the descriptions of nature which interrupt your dialogues; when one reads these descriptions one wishes they were more compact, briefer, say two or three lines. The frequent repetitions of luxuriousness, rustling, velvety, etc., lend these descriptions a certain rhetorical flavor, a monotony which palls on the reader and wearies him. Lack of restraint is felt also in your descriptions of women *(Malva, On the Rafts)* and in the love scenes. This is not broad sweep of expression, it is merely lack of restraint. Then there is the frequent use of words that are out of place in stories such as yours. Accompaniment, disc, harmony—such words intrude. You speak a great deal about waves. In the descriptions of intellectuals one feels a tension, a certain cautiousness; this is not because you have observed intellectuals insufficiently. You know them, but you do not know exactly from what angle to approach them.

How old are you? I do not know you, do not know who you are and where you come from, but I feel that while you are still young you ought to leave Nizhni and live two or three years, to rub shoulders, so to speak, with literature and literary people; not in order to learn from the strutting roosters and to become more brilliant, but to plunge head first into literature and to love it; in addition to which the provinces make one prematurely old.

I hasten to post this. Be well and successful. I press your hand warmly. Once again thank you for your letter.

Yours,

A. Chekhov

CHEKHOV TO GORKY

Moscow, June 22, 1899

Why are you so downhearted, my precious Alexei Maximovich? Why do you so furiously abuse your *Foma Gordeyev?* Here I think, apart from everything else, if you will permit me to say so, are two reasons. You began successfully, began with aplomb, and now everything seems to you commonplace and humdrum, you are irked and dissatisfied. This is in the first place. Secondly, a man of letters cannot live in the provinces with impunity. Whatever you might say, you have tasted literature and you are now poisoned beyond hope. You are a writer and a writer you will remain. It is natural for a writer to keep close to literary spheres, to live cheek by jowl with those who write, to breathe in the literary atmosphere. Do not fight against what is

natural, submit once and for all—and move to Petersburg or Moscow. Abuse writers, do not acknowledge them, despise half of them, but live among them.

Should you happen to be in Moscow, drop in to see me on the Dmitrovka.

Be well, I press your hand warmly and wish you all the best. Do not be downcast.

Yours,

A. Chekhov

GORKY TO CHEKHOV

Nizhni, middle of January, 1900

Well, I have seen Lev Nikolayevich [Tolstoy]. Eight days have passed since then and I cannot yet marshal my impressions. He startled me at first by his appearance. I had imagined him to be quite different: taller and broader-boned. And he seemed a little old man, reminding me somehow of the stories of that brilliant eccentric, Suvorov. But when he began to speak I listened spellbound. All that he said was so astonishingly simple, profound and although at times perfectly incorrect—in my opinion—nevertheless marvelously good. But the chief thing is his great simplicity. He is really a whole orchestra, but not all the horns are playing in unison. And this is also very good, for it is so human—that is, so peculiar to man. Essentially—it is terribly stupid to call a man a genius. It is quite impossible to understand what genius is. It is far simpler and clearer to say—Lev Tolstoy: that is both brief and quite original, absolutely like nothing else, and, moreover, somehow powerful, that's it, powerful. To see Lev Nikolayevich is very important and valuable, although I by no means consider him a miracle of nature. One looks at him and it is frightfully pleasant to feel that one is also a man, to realize that man can be such as Lev Tolstoy. You understand me? It is pleasant for humanity in general. He was very nice to me but that, of course, is not important. Neither is what he said about my stories important, but everything taken together is important: everything that was said, his manner of speaking, sitting and looking at me. It is very harmonious and powerfully beautiful. I could never believe that he was an atheist, although I felt it, but now when I heard him speak about Christ and saw his eyes—too clever for a believer—I know that he is indeed an atheist and a confirmed one. Am I right?

I sat with him for more than three hours, then I went to the theater, arrived at the third act of *Uncle Vanya*. Again *Uncle Vanya*. Yes, again. And I will deliberately go to see this play again, buying a ticket in advance. I do not consider it a gem, but I see in it more than others do: it has enormous content, it is symbolic and in form it is quite original and incomparable. It is a pity that Vishnevsky does not understand Vanya, but then the others were magnificent! By the way, Stanislavsky's Astrov is not quite as he should be. However, all of them play divinely! The Maly Theater is amazingly crude compared to this cast [the Moscow Art Theater]. What clever, intelligent people they all are, how much artistic feeling they have! Knipper is a superb actress, a charming woman and very clever. How fine are her scenes with Sonya! And Sonya, too, plays splendidly.

Everyone, even the servant Grigory, was magnificent, all of them had an excellent and thorough understanding of what they were about and, by god, even Vishnevsky's erroneous interpretation of Uncle Vanya may be forgiven him for the sake of his acting. On the whole, this theater struck me as a solid, serious and important undertaking. And how fitting the absence of music, and the fact that the curtain moves apart instead of rising. You know, I had never dreamed that such acting and staging could be. Fine! I even regret that I do not live in Moscow—I would be a regular habitue of this marvelous theater. Saw your brother, he was standing and applauding. I never applaud actors—it is offensive for them, *i.e.*, it ought to be.

Well, have you seen *Cyrano de Bergerac*? I saw it recently and was enchanted with the play.

Make way for free Gascons, make way!
'Twas under the southern skies,

With sun in our blood that our eyes
First saw the light of the day.

I love that "sun in our blood." That's how one ought to live—like Cyrano. And not like Uncle Vanya and all the others like him.

However, I tire you. Farewell!

I have pleurisy. I cough with all my might and cannot sleep at night for the pain in my side. I will go to Yalta this spring for the cure, without fail.

I press your hand warmly. My regards to Sredin if you see him and ask him to convey my respects to Yartsev and Alexin.

Yours,
A. Peshkov

CHEKHOV TO GORKY

Yalta, February 3, 1900

Dear Alexei Maximovich,

Thank you for your letter, for the words about Tolstoy and *Uncle Vanya* (which I have not seen on the stage). Thank you in general for not forgetting me. Here, in this blessed Yalta, one can perish without letters. Inactivity and this stupid waiting, with the temperature permanently above zero, the absolute dearth of interesting women, the swinish snouts on the esplanade—all this can befoul and wear out a man in the shortest time. I am so tired, it seems to me that this winter has dragged on for ten years.

You have pleurisy? Then why do you stay in Nizhni? Why? What is keeping you in Nizhni, may I ask? What tar has you plastered down to that town? If, as you write, you like Moscow, then why not live in Moscow? In Moscow there are theaters, etc., etc., and, most important of all, from Moscow, it is a simple matter to go abroad, but living in Nizhni you will get stuck in Nizhni and will never travel further than Vasilsursk. You must see more, know more and broaden your knowledge. You have a strong, tenacious imagination, but it is like a big stove which is not sufficiently fed with fuel. This is felt in general and in your stories in particular: in your stories you give two or three figures, but these figures stand isolated, apart from the mass: it is easy to see that these figures live in your imagination, but they remain figures and the mass is not perceived. I make an exception in the case of your Crimean things (*My Companion*, for example) where besides the figures one does feel the human mass from which they emerged, and the air, and the planes beyond, in a word, everything. You see how much I have written and all to dissuade you from sitting in Nizhni. You are a young man, strong and hardy. If I were you I would set out for India, or any other damn place, I would take two more university degrees. I would, I would—you laugh, but it hurts me to feel that I am already forty, that I am shortwinded and have sundry other minor ailments which prevent one from living as one pleases. However, be a good man and comrade; do not be angry with me for lecturing you like a priest in my letters.

Write to me. I am awaiting *Foma Gordeyev*, which I have not yet read properly.

There is nothing new. Be well. I press your hand warmly.

Yours,

A. Chekhov

GORKY TO CHEKHOV

Manuilovsky, Poltavsky Province,
first half of July, 1900

Things are going slowly with the play, my dear Anton Pavlovich. For the life of me I cannot understand the need for a third act. This is how I see it: Act 1—the plot is raveled; Act 2—the plot thickens; Act 3—the plot is unraveled. However, I am continuing to write, although I am keeping in mind Shcheglov's advice: begin by writing a five-act tragedy, revise it a year later into a three-act drama, take the same the following year and turn it into a one-act sketch and the year after burn the sketch, marry a rich wench and everything will be fine and dandy. Incidentally, this may not have been Shcheglov's advice but someone else's.

I am obsessed by thoughts of China. I should like so much to go to China! It is a long time since I have desired anything so strongly. You also want to travel long distances. Will you go? Really? It would be fine!

It is very nice living here, you know. On holiday mornings I go with a group of *muzhiks* to the woods at Psel and spend the whole day with them there. We sing songs, cook porridge, drink a little and talk of this and that. The *muzhiks* here are fine, literate, and possessed of a peculiar dignity; they have not known serfdom and are quite nice in their attitude to the gentry. Simple. On Friday evening we are going fishing and will spend the night in the woods. We will spend Saturday and Sunday in the woods. We shall drink and we shall stroll and if death should come we shall die. Fine! And yet there is something sad about the *muzhiks*, the village and the Ukrainian folk songs.

I am being very careful to avoid that aching in my heart and yet it continues to ache. God knows why, I don't.

I read *The Ravine* to the *muzhiks*. You should have seen how splendid it was. The *muzhiks* wept and I with them. They liked Kostyl tremendously. So much so, that one *muzhik*, Petro Derid, even expressed regret that so little had been written about this Kostyl. Lipa, the old man who says "great is Mother Russia," was also liked. It was all very nice indeed, I must say. The *muzhiks* forgave everything, the old Tsybukhin and Axinia and everyone. You are a wonderful man, Anton Pavlovich, and yours is a tremendous talent.

I bathe every day, play *gorodkee*[1] and have grown very healthy. I wish you the same with all my heart. I press your hand.

Goodbye. Let me know about China.

Yours,

A. Peshkov

[1] Russian outdoor game resembling skittles or ninepins.

CHEKHOV TO GORKY

Yalta, July 13, 1900

My dear Alexei Maximovich,

Your suggestion about China surprised me. And the play? What about the play? Have you finished it? As a matter of fact it is too late to go to China, for apparently the war is drawing to a close. In any case I could only go as a doctor. A military doctor. If the war continues I will go, but in the meantime I am sitting and writing a little.

There is nothing new here, only the heat and oppressiveness, almost unbearable.

Yours,

A. Chekov

GORKY TO CHEKHOV

Nizhni, end of March, 1901

I had intended to write to you long since, my dear Anton Pavlovich, but, you see, I am in such a mood now that I positively cannot concentrate on anything. Each day passes in tense expectation of something new, every day one hears incredible rumors and reports, one's nerves are strained to the breaking point and every day one sees scores of people just as agitated as oneself.[1] Yesterday our governor brought some more or less accurate news from Petersburg. Vyazemsky[2]

[1] From 1899 to 1901 student disorders, provoked by the students' discontent with the university regime, arose in university cities of Russia. They increased after the government published the "provisional rules," under which students were punished for demonstrating, by expulsion from the university and obligatory military service, no matter what their health, family position, education or age. Particularly sharp students' protests arose after the "provisional rules" were employed in the case of Kiev University students, one hundred and eighty-three of whom were sent into the army for taking part in a meeting. Gorky's letters to writers speak of his absorption in these events. The letter to Chekhov was written by Gorky when he returned from Petersburg at the end of March, 1901, and had witnessed a student demonstration, March 4. The results of the demonstration were mass arrests and exile. Soon after

has been exiled. Legal proceedings against the thirty-three and forty-nine writers who signed the letter condemning the actions of the police on March 4 are about to be instituted on the grounds of incitement to rebellion.[3] There is strong dissatisfaction among the guard troops at the recent orders and particularly the participation of the bodyguard Cossack detachment in the fighting on the fourth..

Legal investigation on the March 4 affair established the exact figures of those beaten up: sixty-two men, thirty-four women; four killed—Stelling, a technologist; Annensky, a doctor; a girl student, and an old woman trampled underfoot by the horses. Fifty-four policemen, gendarmes and Cossacks injured. And all this took place within a space of not more than thirty-forty minutes! You can imagine the violence of the conflict! I shall never forget that battle as long as I live! Both sides fought savagely, ferociously. Women were seized by the hair and be ten up with *nagaikas*, one student girl, an acquaintance of mine, was flogged on the back, as though she were a pillow, until she was black and blue, another girl had her skull fractured, a third lost an eye. But with all the gory mugs no one knows yet which side took the upper hand.

Well, goodbye, goodbye, my dear Anton Pavlovich. God give you health, will to work and happiness, for it is never too late to be happy. I wish you all the best, you are a good man. And *Three Sisters* is progressing magnificently. Better than *Uncle Vanya*. About this I will write later on when I come to myself somewhat.

Yours,

A. Peshkov

(April 17, 1901), Gorky was arrested and kept in prison. He was accused of buying a mimeograph for printing proclamations addressed to the workers, of writing a denial of the official government communique on the March 4 demonstration, and of participation in the student revolutionary movement.

[2] L. D. Vyazemsky, prince, member of the State Council, who received a sharp reprimand from the tsar for interfering with the actions of the police during the March 4 demonstration.

[3] After the March 4 demonstration writers met at the Russian Writers' Mutual Aid Society and addressed a sharp protest to the Home Affairs Ministry against the violence used against the demonstrators. Another protest against the authorities' action was a letter of Russian writers addressed to Russian newspapers and magazines. It was signed by forty-three writers, Gorky among them. This letter was mimeographed and distributed. A mimeographed copy is preserved in the Chekhov archives together with Gorky's letters.

"GORKY'S CHILDHOOD"

Some of the most important events in the history of the Russian people are associated with the Volga. The people cherish a great love for this river and have dedicated many songs to it. They love its spaciousness and majesty. The Volga is indeed a great Russian river.

It was on the banks of the Volga that Alexei Maximovich Gorky, the great Russian writer, spent his childhood. His character was formed against the background of the magnificent Volga landscape. The Volga was to Gorky what the Rhine was to Jean Christophe, Romain Rolland's hero. And hence it is only fitting that Volga scenes introduce the film *Gorky's Childhood*, which is dedicated to the great writer who perished at the hands of the Trotskyite-Bukharinite agents of fascism.

Mark Donskoi is the regisseur of this film. A few years ago he and another young regisseur produced the film *Song of Happiness*. Donskoi's co-author, Legoshin, has since achieved fame by his new work, *A Lone Sail Gleams White*, which was very well received in the U.S.S.R. as well as in Europe and America. Similar success undoubtedly awaits Donskoi's latest film. On the whole the work of these two young regisseurs is a striking demonstration of the rapid growth of talent in the Soviet Union and the wide scope afforded by Socialist society for the development and perfection of artistic skill.

There are some films that can be viewed over and over again, each time evoking the same emotions and giving fresh esthetic pleasure. *Gorky's Childhood* is such a film. It is difficult to say what charms one most in this picture: the scenario, adapted from Gorky's own writings about his childhood, the skill of the regisseur, or the gifted acting of the cast. It would be correct to say that all these elements and many others, above all the brilliant work of the cameraman, have merged into one complete whole. The result is that rare blend which goes to make up a genuine work of art.

One must be an artist of great finesse to be able from the outset to win the sympathy of the audience for one or another character in a film. Donskoi has learned this secret. There is one secondary character in the film, an apprentice working for Gorky's grandfather, who at once endears himself to the spectator. Tsyganok is a merry, good-natured lad, a universal favorite, a jack of all trades, and his senseless, tragic death wrings genuine compassion from the audience.

In order to appreciate the true value of the happy present one must never forget the dark past, the heavy yoke of oppression so recently flung off. *Gorky's Childhood* is a reminder and an excellent portrayal of the bleak and joyless existence, the terrible reality of tsarist Russia wherein talents perished, human lives were maimed and life was a cruel stepmother, stifling any outstanding manifestation of individuality. Donskoi's work is particularly valuable for its truthful, vivid and unforgettable picture of

Massolitinova as the grandmother and Alyosha Larsky, a pupil of a Moscow school, as Alyosha

Alyosha's grandmother (played by Massolitinova) is the center of an eager group when she relates one of her fascinating tales

the ugly face of that Russia that vanished forever twenty years ago. And if many Soviet films about our life today cause the heart to fill with joy and pride, there are many episodes from *Gorky's Childhood* that strike one as fearful and terrible ghosts arising from the remote past. It is difficult to believe that a regime that fostered and nurtured the conditions described in the film was overthrown by the people only two decades ago.

Before our eyes passes a panorama of that incredible philistinism which Maxim Gorky hated and detested so passionately all his life. We see the circle of petty proprietors, heartless egoists and exploiters. And alongside them, in striking contrast, are the splendid natures of the common people. For Gorky's grandfather money-grubbing was the be-all and the end-all of existence. He had a hard life and he prided himself on the property he had accumulated, but he never realized that he had become a slave of his possessions. His sons are wretched creatures. They appear devoid of all human feeling. But the film properly gives the cue to the audience, which is made to feel that it is not they who are to blame, but the system which maimed human souls.

The life and customs of this environment have been recreated by the regisseur with exceptional accuracy. We witness repellant scenes of debauchery, drunken brawls and the inhuman upbringing children received. These scenes are the more impressive that the regisseur never makes the mistake of lapsing into crude naturalism, he never loses his sense of proportion. Donskoi knows how to bring out important ideas by stressing some apparently trivial detail. Take, for example, the scene in which one of Gorky's uncles boxes his son's ears. The child swings round and vents his outraged sense of justice on his little sister. And the audience realizes that this was the unwritten law of capitalist Russia, a society where people snapped and bit at one another like angry curs, a society in which might was always right.

But it was not only churlishness that

characterized the people of those times. The film shows us beautiful friendships and great love for which people gladly suffered pain and hardship.

These contrasts are the keynote on the whole film.

The central figure is that of the young Gorky. His role is played by Alyosha Lyarsky, a pupil of one of Moscow's schools. His acting brings out the main traits in the character of the future writer, whose whole life was devoted to the struggle for Socialism, for a system which might with justice be summed up in Gorky's famous words: "Man—how proudly it rings!" All of Gorky's outstanding characteristics—love of freedom, sympathy for the weak and defenseless, determination and courage—are felt in Alyosha Lyarsky'a acting.

The role of the grandmother, the big-hearted, dignified old woman, made wise by years of experience, is excellently played by Massalitinova. One feels that Pushkin's famous nurse, Arina Rodionova, must have been just like this. And like her, Gorky's grandmother relates to the future writer the splendid old folk tales of the Russian people.

The positive heroes in the film embody the major characteristics of the Russian people: their versatile talents, the generosity of their nature, their determination, love of freedom and readiness to fight for it to the bitter end. At the same time the film shows other sides of the heroes' chaacters—their good nature, a native artfulness and an impetuousness sometimes brimming over into sheer childlike fun. In *Gorky's Childhood* the beauty of the Russian landscape is splendidly conveyed. In some scenes it is as though some can-

M. K. Troyanovsky as the grandfather in "Gorky's Childhood"

vases by Levitan, the great Russian landscape painter, had been transferred to the screen. Russian folk tunes are interwoven in the action of the film.

The regisseur has successfully introduced the humorous element which enlivens the action and modifies the tragedy of some of the scenes which might otherwise have been excessively gloomy.

It would be a mistake to overlook a few minor defects in the film. For one thing it is a shade too long. A number of episodes, such as the scene of the village fire brigade, merely lengthen the film unnecessarily and might have been deleted with advantage. Similarly, one scene of the fair would have been sufficient.

But all these are minor details which do not really detract from the merit of the film as a whole. *Gorky's Childhood* is a major achievement for the Soviet cinema. It is a work worthy of the memory of the great Russian author.

V. TAROV

China's Artists in the Struggle For National Independence

With posters, cartoons in the newspapers and cartoon magazines; with cartoons many feet long on factory walls, or painted on sheets of cloth stretched above the streets; with cartoons on thin slips of bamboo paper pasted to village walls—thus the artists of China are calling the people to the defense of their country.

Political lectures are illustrated by cartoon sequences, and series of drawings strung along the streets depict the reign of terror instituted by the invaders in conquered territory. On the suggestion of General Feng Yu-hsiang, cartoonists have begun to utilize the ancient "shadow theater"—the old Chinese equivalent of the animated cartoon, still highly popular in the villages. Here Japanese militarists strut with Hitler and Mussolini—paper figures whose shadow is thrown on a screen by the light of an oil lamp. Where real cinema equipment is available, part of the program is apt to consist of animated cartoon films with a political content.

It is significant that Chinese graphic artists have long been in the vanguard of the fight for the united front and were already well organized when the war began. The war started in July; by the beginning of August the first Cartoonists' Propaganda Corps was organized. The artists in these corps are under military discipline. They work collectively, and with great enthusiasm.

Despite their press of war work, the cartoonists have not neglected their task of organizing and leading the progressive movement of the Chinese artists. At the outbreak of the war they sent an exhibition of modern Chinese graphic art around the world. This exhibit helped collect many thousands of dollars for medical aid. The exhibition toured England, Scotland and the United States, and was shown in Moscow.

Making a twenty-foot poster

The cover of a recent issue of a Chinese cartoon magazine

The exhibition won the praise of critics, many of whom saw in the work on display evidence that the Chinese artists had succeeded in lending new vitality and purpose to the forms of Western art. The London *New Statesman and Nation* saw in the exhibition the beginnings of a new genre of heroic realism.

Chinese artists sent their delegate to the Second American Artists' Congress in New York in December, 1937, and as a mark of solidarity the English Artists' International Association and the American Artists Congress sent a return exhibition of their graphic art to China. Rockwell Kent, John Nash, Gropper and other well known artists are represented in this exhibition, which was shown in Hong Kong and Canton, despite the bombing of the latter city.

The exhibition has been sent to the newly created Lu Hsun Academy of Fine Arts in Yennan, a unique institution. The academy's pupils alternate three-month periods of study and of practical work in clubs, camps, schools and propaganda corps, in the rear, at the front or behind the Japanese lines.

While the students of the art academies have long been influenced by the progressive ideas of the graphic artists, it is only now that the artists of the classical school have come to the realization that they must direct their energy to the defense of culture and their country.

For many the lesson has been truly bitter. Kao Chien-fu, outstanding classical artist of the South, lost all his work when a bomb wiped out his studio in Nanking. Six out of eight members of his family were injured in Canton when his house suffered a similar fate. Other artists have discovered it impossible to carry on their work under the rule of the Japanese and are fleeing occupied regions, to carry on in the South or the provinces of the interior. The Japanese have made it amply plain that it is not safe even to paint birds and flowers unless they are imbued with "the Japanese spirit."

JACK CHEN

CHRONICLE

This outline of coming events in the arts is by no means complete. However, it will give the reader an idea of the scope and trends of the 1938-39 season in some fields of Soviet art.

Sixty-six new productions, of which thirty-nine are the works of Soviet playwrights, have been added this season to the repertoires of the twenty-one Moscow theaters under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Committee on Arts. This does not include such theaters as the Bolshoi, the Maly, the Art Theater and others.

One of the current season's highlights is the fortieth anniversary of the Moscow Art Theater, which has added a number of new plays to its repertoire. Two of these, Griboyedov's classic *Wit Works Woe* and Gorky's *Dostigayev and Others*, are special anniversary productions. The Moscow Art Theater is also producing *The Orchards of Polovchan'k*, a new play by L. Leonov dealing with contemporary Soviet life. The great Russian satirist of the latter half of the eighteenth century, Saltykov-Shchedrin, will be represented by a staging of his *Death of Pazukhin. Weekdays*, a play by Golikov dealing with Soviet airmen; Chekhov's *Three Sisters*; Molière's *Tartuffe*, *Conspiracy* by the young Soviet playwright N. Virta, and *Hamlet* round out the list of new stagings by this theater.

The Maly Theater, the oldest Russian realistic theater, is hard at work on a revival of Griboyedov's *Wit Works Woe*. *Sandukov's Flight*, by L. Leonov, which is reported to be novel and colorful, is also being rehearsed. Among other scheduled productions are a stage version of Leo Tolstoy's classic *War and Peace*, Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter I*, and A. Korneichuk's new play, *Bogdan Khmel'tskv*. Tracing the heroic struggle of the Ukrainian peasantry against the Polish *pans*, *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* is notable for its fine character delineation.

The Vakhtangov Theater, which was the first among Moscow theaters to portray V. I. Lenin on the stage *(The Man With the Gun)* is preparing to produce Alexei Tolstoy's *The Campaign of Fourteen Powers*. The Vakhtangov troupe opened the season with the premiere of *A Soldier Came From the Front*, based on Valentine Katayev's *I, Son of the Working People*, a tale of the struggle of the Ukrainian people for freedom and independence during the German occupation. The theater's next premiere is Gogol's *Inspector-General* in a new staging. Among the other productions in progress are Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* and a stage version of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

A. Y. Tairov, director of the Kamerny Theater, has declared that his theater is aiming at creating a repertoire of topical Soviet plays. Among productions planned are *General Consul*, by Sheinin and the Tur brothers; a play by P. Zhatkin and G. Vechora on Soviet scientists; a play about the First Cavalry Army by V. Vishnevsky, author of the scenario of the film *We of Kronstadt*, and *Madame Bovary*, a stage version produced by Peoples Artist of the R.S.F.S.R. Alice Koonen. M.Y. Lermontov's play *Spaniards* will be staged in connection with the 125th anniversary of this great poet's birth.

The Moscow Central Theater of Working Youth (TRAM) has been reorganized as the State Theater of the Leninist Komsomol. For the twentieth anniversary of the Young Communist League the theater produced *Destroyer Gnevnoi* by a commander of the second rank, V. A. Knecht, who is also a young playwright. The theater is working on *The Root of Life*, by I. Chekin. The hero of this play is a collective farm woman Stakhanovite. *Comrade Women*, by Lev Nikulin, is to be produced in the second half of the season.

The Theater of Satire is preparing for the premiere of Nikolai Pogodin's *Gioconda*, which has for its setting a rest home for collective farmers. The production of George Bernard Shaw's *Geneva* is planned, as well as a play by J. B. Priestley. For ten days out of every month

the theater will go on tour to Leningrad, where it will perform at two of the city's largest workers' clubs.

The Central Theater of the Red Army, in its tour of the Far East last season, presented the premieres of its staging of *The Taming of the Shrew* and Vsevolod Ivanov's *Doves of Peace*. It will present these plays in Moscow this season. The theater will also produce Nikolai Pogodin's *Silver Cascade*, about Soviet border guards, and Kazakov's *Chekists*, about Felix Dzerzhinsky, as well as one of Gorky's plays.

The State Jewish Theater plans to stage, among new plays, *Restless Old Age* by Rakhmanov and Sholom Aleichem's *Tevye der Milkh'ger*. The Romany Gypsy Theater will stage the premiere of *Bloody Marriage*, by the well known Spanish writer Garcia Lorca.

Moscow has many special theaters for children, outstanding among them the Central Children's Theater, the Central Theater of the Young Spectator, the Third Moscow Theater for Children, the Central Children's Marionette Theater, the Marionette Theater of Children's Books, the Concert Theater for Children, and the Marionette Theater of the Moscow House of Pioneers. All of them are preparing new productions for their young audiences. The Central Theater of the Young Spectator has presented *Tom Kenty*, based on Mark Twain's *Prince and the Pauper*. The stage version was made by Sergei Mikhalkov, whose *Comrade Tower* was published in No. 7 of *International Literature*. The play drew warm praise from *Pioneer Pravda*, the children's own publication.

The Central Children's Theater is presenting a new play by K. Paustovsky, well known writer, about inventors; Mikhalkov's *Skates*, on the life of youngsters; Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire*, a play by Lev Kassil on school life, and other new productions.

This sketchy preview by no means exhausts the list of new stagings. Each theater, of course, has its repertoire carried over from previous seasons in addition to these new productions.

OPERA AND BALLET

A wide range of new productions, Soviet as well as classic, mark the program of the State Academic Bolshoi Theater. Two classics from the opera stages of the fraternal republics of the Soviet Union are to be offered next spring by the Bolshoi: *Abesalom and Eteri*, a Georgian opera, and *Kyor-Ogly*, the Azerbaijan opera which was greeted so warmly by Moscow audiences last spring during the Azerbaijan Opera Theater's visit to the capital.

Many new stagings of old operas are scheduled by the Bolshoi. The most im-

Peoples Artist of the U.S.S.R. Khalima Nasyrova with folk bard Abdullah Shoir Kuralyev, a member of the Commune Collective Farm, at a Tashkent concert

A rehearsal of the newly-formed Ensemble of National Song and Dance, Kabardino-Balkaria

portant of these is *Ivan Susanin*, the famous work by Glinka, which is to be revived in December. The libretto has been considerably revised by Sergei Gorodetsky to make it correspond to its original Glinka spirit, from which the old libretto by Rosen, a German, had far departed. The real historical and artistic content of the opera, whose title had been changed by the tsarist censor to *Life for the Tsar*, is being restored. This work is a hymn to the Russian people and their struggle for the independence of their country against the Polish invasion in the seventeenth century and not, as it was represented, an "ode to tsarist absolutism." The genuine spirit of patriotism and real love for the fatherland expressed in *Ivan Susanin* is a theme near and dear to the Soviet spectator.

The hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great Russian composer Mussorgsky will be marked by revivivals of his *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, while Chaikovsky's one-act opera *Iolanthe* and his ballet *Casse-Noisette*, both of which have not been on the stage for a number of years, will be revived for the forty-fifth anniversary of his death.

Among the other classics to be revived by the Bolshoi this season are Gounod's *Faust* and Verdi's *Falstaff*.

In the sphere of the ballet, the Bolshoi Theater's new staging will be Klebanov's *Svetlana*, on a Soviet Far Eastern theme.

The Affiliated Bolshoi Theater is preparing to stage V. Zhelobinsky's *Mother*, adapted from Gorky's novel of that title. The theater is also working on *Solitude*, an opera by Tikhon Khrennikov depicting the struggle of the toiling peasantry against the kulak counter-revolution in 1921. Another work in progress is V. Yurovsky's opera based on Bagritsky's poem *Tale of Opanas*, an epic of the Civil War in the Ukraine.

The Stanislavsky Opera Theater opened the season with the late K. S. Stanislavsky's production of *Border Guards*, written by L. Stepanov, a Young Communist. The young composer has toured wintering stations in Amderma, Novaya Zemlya, Franz Josef Land and other Arctic points in order to acquaint himself with the life of Soviet workers in the Far North, to which he plans to devote his next opera.

Another opera now in the making is K. Makarov-Rakitin's work based on Valentine Katayev's *I, Son of the Working People*.

The Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater will perform Khrennikov's new opera, *In the Storm*, based on N. Virta's play *Land*, which is running at the Moscow Art Theater.

Another colorful opera is promised this year by Ivan Dzerzhinsky, composer of *Soil Upturned:* he is now completing *Volochayev Days* to Victor Gusev's libretto. *Volochayev Days* takes its scene in the Far East in 1919 and 1920, and depicts the rout of the Japanese interventionists.

O. Chishko, composer of *Armored Cruiser Potemkin*, is busy on *Song of Happiness*, an opera dealing with a girl Stakhanovite of the collective farm fields.

Lev Knipper has written an opera, *Rising Sun*, based on P. Pavlenko's novel, *In the East*. Shishov is writing a historical opera, *Peter I*, while Nechayev has selected for the hero of his new work the figure of Ivan Bolotnikov, leader of the popular uprising in Russia in the eighteenth century. Shibalin is planning an opera about the First Cavalry Army, led by Budyonny.

The Operetta Theater is to produce A. Shenshin's *Twins*, based on Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, as well as Offenbach's *Orpheus in Hades*. V. Tipot is writing a new operetta on a Soviet theme, *On the Banks of the Amur*. Shalva Dadiani, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., has written a musical comedy depicting Georgian village life.

NEW THEATERS

The Peoples Commissariat of Railways of the U.S.S.R. has established a Central Railwaymen's Theater in Moscow. Large premises have been granted to the theater, which will give its initial performance during the celebration of the twenty-first anniversary of the Great Socialist Revolution.

Two other new theaters for Moscow are the Music Hall Theater and the Theater of State Music Collectives of the U.S.S.R. Construction of theaters is going on apace throughout the country. Leningrad will soon have the new Red Theater, with 1,600 seats, Minsk a new opera theater, Ivanov a theater seating 1,800, Smolensk one seating 1,500

PROVINCIAL THEATERS

Following on opening nights in Moscow and Leningrad, provincial theaters have launched their new season. The Volkov Theater in Yaroslavl opened with Gorky's *Enemies*. Nikolai Pogodin's *The Man With the Gun* was shown on the first night in Kursk and at the Sundukyan Theater in Yerevan (Armenia).

Many of the plays popular in the capital are being shown in out-of-town theaters. Such plays as Pogodin's *Silver Cascade*, Kazakov's *Chekists*, Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter I*, Korneichuk's *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* and Katayev's *A Soldier Returns From the Front* are playing all over the country.

Many provincial theaters are also staging plays which have not yet reached Moscow. The Sverdlovsk Theater of Opera and Ballet, for instance, is staging *For Life*, an opera by Trambitsky, a local composer, on the revolutionary past of the Ural workers. The Volkov Theater in Yaroslavl is presenting *A City on the Volga*, by two local playwrights, Khargin and Nazarov, dealing with the suppression of the whiteguard revolt in that city in 1918. The Shevchenko Theater in Kharkov is planning to produce a play on Taras Shevchenko, the famous Ukrainian revolutionary poet, by the Ukrainian writer S. Golovanivsky.

New conditions mark the work of provincial theaters this season: permanent troupes have been formed and the theaters are displaying a more discriminating attitude toward their repertoires.

"When there were new troupes every year, practically all the productions of the provincial theaters were drawn up with the tacit understanding that they would last only one season. Now it is necessary to depart from this system. Each theater can and must take steps to set up a 'golden treasury' repertoire," says *Pravda*.

Classics occupy a prominent place in provincial repertoires. Vladivostok theatergoers are viewing Fonvisin's *The*

Eighteen-year old actress Salima Satarova and actor Yakhya-Yakhyadov Danyar in a Kazakh play. Satarova is a deputy to the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan

Young Hopeful and Schiller's *Love and Intrigue; Othello* and Gogol's *Inspector-General* are playing in Kazan, Lermontov's *Masquerade* in Voronezh, Gogol's *Marriage* in Poltava. Plays by Gorky, Ostrovsky, Griboyedov and Chekhov are included in the repertoires of almost all the provincial theaters.

AMATEUR ART GROUPS

Amateur theatrical, song and dance groups, so widespread in the Soviet Union, often develop into full-fledged professional theaters, as may be seen from the example of the unique Island of Dance Theater which was a feature of the summer season at the Moscow Central Park of Culture and Rest.

Four years ago the park announced the establishment of an amateur dance circle. A flood of applications greeted this proposal, and one hundred and fifty persons were chosen from among the many who wished to join the group. These one hundred and fifty factory workers, office employees, school teachers and housewives came to the park in their free time and studied the fundamentals of dancing, the history of the theater, music and the like.

That they studied well is evident from the enthusiastic appraisal of their accomplishments by Moscow audiences. For the amateur dance group has grown into a regular ballet theater, and the students of four years ago are now graceful and talented dancers.

This theater stages its performances in an original and effective manner—the stage is on a small wooded island in one of the park's lakes and the audience is separated from it by a stretch of water. Fountains serve as curtains.

Another case of an amateur group developing into a regular theater is that of the Ustuzhinsk Collective and State Farm Theater of Vologda Province. In 1930 a group of rural theater lovers—a shepherd, a shoemarker, an accountant, a house painter, a machinist and a typist—formed a dramatic circle. Young and confident, the artists traveled from col-

Participants in the Amateur Art Olympiad of Buryat-Mongolia play on national musical instruments

lective farm to collective farm, putting on their performances. Their work was noticed and encouraged; in 1936 they came to the fore at an amateur talent show and last year the group was made a permanent professional collective and state farm theater. Premises, qualified direction, in short, all that was necessary, was granted the group. The theater's repertoire includes plays by Ostrovsky, Schiller and Gorky.

Hundreds of talented singers, instrumentalists and dancers are brought to the fore annually at reviews of amateur talent groups which are held regularly. A similar role is played by the Moscow Theater of People's Art, whose performers are amateur groups selected from all over the country. This season the theater is departing from its previous custom of presenting productions composed of separate amateur group numbers, and is giving regular plays staged by amateur groups under its guidance.

The first production of the Theater of Peoples Art in the current season is a stage version of Nekrasov's stirring poem, *Who Lives Well in Russia?* The actors for this play have been drawn from the dramatics circles of workers of the aviation industry.

The theater will also produce *The Old Men of Gdov*—a stage portrayal of an old Russian wedding. The songs for this production were written by old men of Gdov District, Leningrad Province, who are producing the novel spectacle.

MUSIC

The forthcoming concert season promises to be replete with interesting programs. An important event in the musical life of the Soviet capital is to be the Festival of Soviet Music, to be held in November, when many new compositions of Soviet composers will be heard for the first time. Among them are Myaskovsky's new violin concerto, a new 'cello concerto by Prokofyev, fragments from *Decembrists*, a new opera by Shaporin, dealing with the 1825 uprising, and symphonies by Veprik, Muradeli and Khrennikov. On the programs are performances of excerpts from new Soviet operas—Kabalevsky's *Master of Clamcy*, based on Romain Rolland's *Colas Breugnon;* Lyatoshinsky's *Shchors* and Yurovsky's *Tale of Opanas.*

A series of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Chaikovsky concert cycles are planned to embrace the best players of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Tbilisi, Minsk and other cities, as well as the country's largest music collectives—the State Symphony Orchestra of the U.S.S.R., the symphony orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic, the State Chorus of the U.S.S.R., the Pyatnitsky Russian Folk Chorus, the Leningrad Capella, the Red Army Ensemble of Song and Dance, and the State Opera Ensemble of the U.S.S.R.

The last-named organization has only recently been set up. Its task is to present concert stagings of operas not in the repertoire of opera theaters. Its first performance is to be Gluck's *Orpheus.*

To bring out new talent, the Committee on Arts is conducting three countrywide contests this season. One of them the concert of orchestra directors, has just come to an end as this goes to press. The other two are for mixed quartets and soloists, respectively. It must be borne in mind that it was such contests which brought to the fore such splendid musicians as David Oistrakh, now a professor of the Moscow Conservatory; Jacob Fliere, a winner of the Isai International Pianists' Contest in Brussels, and many others.

The Leningrad Capella this year marks an interesting jubilee—the 225th anniversary of its official existence. Actually the capella was formed in the fifteenth century, when the "tsar's chorus" of Johann III was created. Peter I laid its official foundation as a permanent professional chorus. The names of M. I. Glinka, Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov were at various times associated with the capella. But under tsarism the character of a court church choir which the capella bore left its mark on the capella's activity. Under the Soviets the capella has developed into an outstanding chorus presenting the best examples of classics and contemporary choral music. Swelled by new members who have sprung from the ranks of amateurs, the capella is now an important force in the musical life of the country.

CINEMA

Leading the plans of Soviet film studios this year are pictures on Soviet life, the heroes of Socialist labor, the Red Army, the Party of Lenin and Stalin and its role in the struggle for the building of Socialism.

Among these films an outstanding place is expected to be occupied by *Lenin*, a sequel to *Lenin in October*, produced by M. Romm.

Of the same type will be *The Man With the Gun*, from the play of that title by Nikolai Pogodin (published in No. 7 of *International Literature* for 1938).

The Leningrad regisseurs G. Kosintsev and L. Trauberg are completing the film

A still from the film "Fair at Sorochintsy"

Vyborg Side, the concluding part of a screen trilogy of which *Youth of Maxim* and *Maxim's Return* have already appeared.

M. Chiaurelli, well-known Georgian regisseur and Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., is also working on a film dealing with the history of the revolutionary movement.

Schchors, the famous Civil War commander in the Ukraine, is the hero of a film being made under the direction of A. Dovzhenko. Another historical film is *Stepan Razin*, from A. Chapygin's novel.

The Vasilyevs, regisseurs of *Chapayev* fame, are producing *Grain* from the book by Alexei Tolstoy. The film is devoted to the heroic defence of Tsaritsyn under the leadership of Stalin.

The writer Vsevolod Ivanov has collaborated on a scenario about Amangeldsy, the Kazakh revolutionary.

Three notable films dealing with the past of Russia are the sequel to *Peter I*, *Minin and Pozharsky*, and *Alexander Nevsky*, which Sergei Eisenstein is directing.

Gorky's *Enemies* has already appeared on the screen; his *In the World* will follow.

A sequel to *Great Citizen*, Friedrich Ermler's triumph of last season, is devoted to Soviet political life.

The Oppenheim Family, based on Lion Feuchtwanger's novel, is being directed by the regisseur G. Roshal. Feuchtwanger is taking part in the work on the scenario.

The Fair at Sorochintsy, a color film from Gogol's classic, is now being screened. Nikolai Ekk, who made *Path to Life*, is directing. A color film is also to be produced by G. Alexandrov, regisseur of *Merry Fellows*, *Circus* and *Volga, Volga*.

Shooting has begun on V. Katayev's *I, Son of the Working People*, based on the novel of the same title. S. Vasilenko has composed the music for the film.

CHILDREN'S FILMS

Children from three to twelve are the actors in *Juvenile Musical Revue*, now being shot by Soyuzdetfilm (All-Union Children's Film Studios). Child talent and the friendship between nationalities is the theme of this color film.

The same studios are filming *A Train to Moscow*, which relates how Young

Pioneers averted a train accident prepared by subversionists.

The Paris Commune of 1871 and the heroism of its young defenders is the theme of *The Drummers' Conspiracy*, which was screened in Yalta, in the Crimea.

Doctor Ai-Bolit, shortly to be released, is a children's comedy portraying the merry adventures of the good doctor. Accompanied by his faithful animal friends, he ventures out on a sea voyage to rescue the father of the boy Penta, who has been kidnapped by pirates. The film is based on the popular children's poem by Corneus Chukovsky.

A new anti-fascist film, *The Struggle Continues*, adapted from Friedrich Wolf's play *The Trojan Horse*, is being screened. It tells of the conditions under which youth lives and works in fascist Germany.

The life of Soviet children at school, at home and at Pioneer camps is the subject of *Seventh-Grade Pupils*, soon to be released by the studios.

A still from the children's film, "The Wolf and the Seven Goats"

SOVIET CHILDREN'S DRAWINGS

From an exhibition organized in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the Young Communist League. The exhibition was held under the auspices of the Central House for Art Education of Postal Workers' Children

PETER I STORMING NARVA, by Kolya Manenko, fourteen years old, of Sovietsk (Kirov Province)

BORDER GUARDS, by Nadya Gubkina, fifteen, of Krasnograd

STEPAN RAZIN'S FLEET ON THE VOLGA, by Kolya Manenko

SPRING, by nine-year old Fatya Kryuchkov, of Orenburg

What Soviet Children Dream About

A series of drawings, *What Soviet Children Dream About*, full of warm humor and heartfelt love of children, has been completed by the talented Soviet cartoonist K. Rotov.

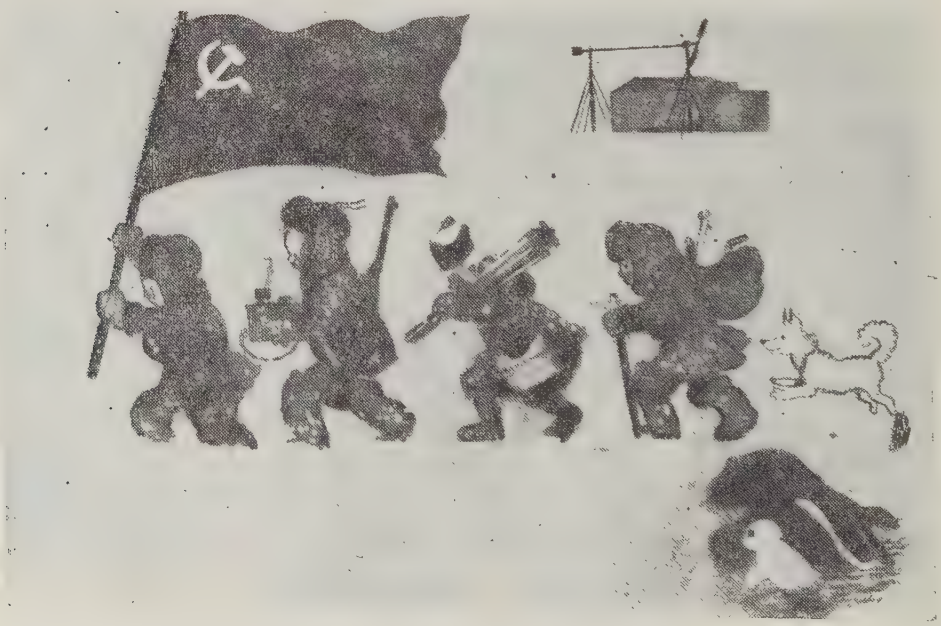
In the Soviet Union children are interested in and take active part in the life of the whole country. They play at being heroic Red Army men, sharp-eyed border guards, airmen and brave polar explorers. Rotov has depicted all these ideals of Soviet youth in his series of drawings.

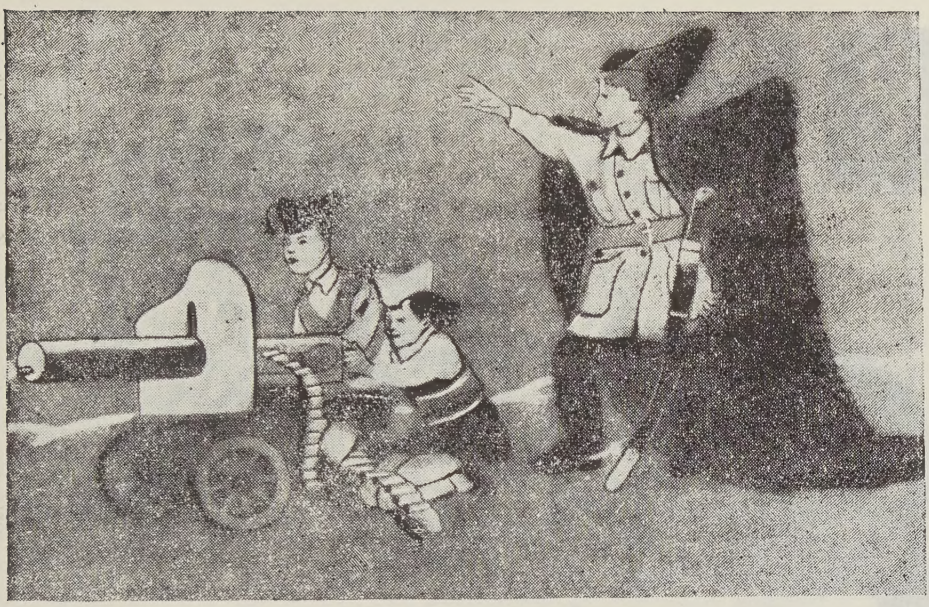
Here we see four children who want to be Papaninites. And behind them, of course, marches the dog Happy, beloved of Soviet children.

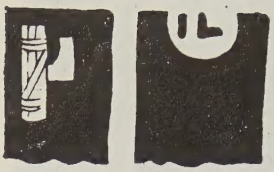
Another drawing: two children crouch behind a machine gun. They are fighters of the people's army, defending the Spanish Republic against the fascists. They are led by an older boy, in Chapayev's Cossack cloak and tall hat, with an enormous saber. The image of Chapayev has sunk deep into the hearts of Soviet youngsters.

Here a tiny border guard with a tremendous rifle, accompanied by an Alsatian watchdog, is flinging himself on three violaters of the border who, in trembling fear, have their hands up.

The simple laconic drawing, the carefully worked out details, the bright, vivid coloring—all this belongs to drawings for children. One feels the mastery of a skilled cartoonist. The drawings are full of the joy of life.







Boris Yefimov's International Zoo

Above:
SALAMANCA HYBRID
Cross-breed of hare and rat

At Right:
JAPANESE BOA CONSTRICTOR
Appetite greatly exceeds digestive capacity

At Left:

BERLIN JACKAL

Feeds on concession. Hangs its tail at the slightest show of resistance

Below;

COMMON, or GARDEN OSTRICH

Habitat: many European capitals

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

ADAM SCHARRER. German anti-fascist emigrant writer, author of several novels.

VALERI KIRPOTIN. Well known critic and literary research worker. Author of *Pushkin and Communism* and other works.

VLADIMIR RUBIN. Young Soviet critic, whose work has appeared in former issues of *International Literature.* Member of the Young Communist League of the U.S.S.R.

VALENTINA KHETAGUROVA. One of the initiators of the youth movement to settle the Soviet Far East. Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the R.S.F.S.R.

V. VIKTOROV. Young Soviet journalist.

YURI SOBOLEV. Dean of the theatrical faculty of the State Institute of Dramatic Arts, Moscow.

KONSTANTIN ROTOV. Well known Soviet cartoonist and illustrator whose work appears frequently in *Krokodil* and other publications.

JACK CHEN. Young Chinese artist.

TO OUR READERS

The editors of *International Literature* would like to know what the readers think of the magazine.

In this period, more than ever before, with menacing attacks upon world culture, *International Literature* feels the gravity and significance of its role as an organ devoted to the cultural interests of the advanced and progressive people throughout the world. It wishes to fill this role as effectively as possible. For that reason it calls upon its readers for this cooperation.

There may be some features you prefer to others. We would like to know what they are. You will help the work of the magazine if you tell us.

If the magazine has disappointed you in any way please let us know.

Please tell us what type of stories you have liked, whether you object to serialization of material, what type of articles you have valued, what aspects of international and Soviet cultural life you would like to have chronicled in the magazine; and how you would like to have the chronicle material presented.

Do you find the present form of the magazine attractive and readable? Recently, at the request of some of our readers we introduced illustrated covers and a two-column page. Are there other changes of format readers would like to see introduced? Are you satisfied with the quality of the translations?

Address letters to editor of *International Literature*, Box 527, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV