Workers of the world, unite!

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CONTENTS

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BELLES-LETTRES

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LENIN in 1918

A FILM SCENARIO

The year 1918. July.

Times were hard for the young Soviet Republic. The British interventionists had descended upon the North. The Japanese interventionists were drenching the Far East in blood. The Turks were taking our southern cities.

The uprising of Czechoslovakian prisoners of war had flared up with evil fire in the center of the Soviet Republic. The Cossack generals were advancing on Tsaritsyn, trying to unite with the Czechoslovakians.

In the country's heart, in Moscow, the "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries had started an uprising.

Having shed its blood, tortured by war, the Republic was being choked by hunger's callous hand.

A corridor in the building of the Council of People's Commissars.

Beside the windows stand tables, telegraphic apparatus on them. The keys are clicking.

"Lenin, Council of Peoples' Commissars, Kremlin, Moscow . . ." In a monotone the telegraph operator reads out the crawling tape to the secretary. "Can't send even a pood of grain. Commissar Smirnov referring to your order demands impossible . . ."

At the next apparatus:

". . . firmly suppress uprising . . ."

The telegraph key is clicking.

". . . shoot on spot instigators agents of counter-revolution notwithstanding rank or position stop Chairman of Council of Peoples' Commissars Lenin."

The tape is moving on the third apparatus. Sleepy, worn out, a telegraph operator, chewing a crust of black bread, is reading:

". . . despite numerous appeals to Peoples Commissar for War haven't received any help. . . . Situation at front serious . . . no shells . . ."

The telegraph operator stops chewing for a second, his eyes close. The tape crawls on, the apparatus goes on clicking.

Lenin's office. The clicking of the telegraph apparatus is heard faintly from the corridor.

In a chair in the corner sits Maxim Gorky.

Lenin's voice is heard from behind the door. Then Lenin, in-

All illustrations in the scenario have been taken from the film.

furiated, appears on the threshold.

". . . and I tell you again, that is foolish leniency!" shouts Lenin to someone evidently following him. Then: "Please—won't you go first? Come in, come in!"

Polyakov, red with confusion, passes Lenin at the door and enters the office.

"We are serving the state, my man, and it's time you got used to the idea," angrily continues Ilyich, closing the door behind Polyakov and not noticing Gorky in the corner.

"Vladimir Ilyich," Polyakov interrupts Lenin, "there's someone waiting for you here."

Lenin abruptly turns, sees Gorky and quickly comes up to him.

"Alexei Maximovich! How do you do! Pardon me, we will be through talking soon."

"I was asked to sit here and wait. Am I in the way?"

"No, no! Not a bit! . . . And you're hoping in vain, Comrade Polyakov, that Gorky's presence will stop me from having it out with you to the end. . . . Have you met? Comrade Maxim Gorky—Comrade Polyakov. . . . Now, get this: no kind of past revolutionary service, no amount of past work for the Party, no grey beard will we take into consideration. Categorically not—when it means discrediting the Soviet power! And we will not allow those gentlemen warming themselves under the wing of kind Comrade Polyakov to sabotage our work . . ."

"Vladimir Ilyich, I understand . . ."

"It's not true, you don't understand this . . ." Ilyich interrupts him, "and if in the future you don't understand, then we will have to punish you, and severely, although you are a wonderful person and an old Bolshevik."

"I agree with you," says Polyakov, crimsoning with embarrassment.

"Well and good!" Lenin suddenly smiles with an open, childlike smile. "Here are your orders—remember they are to be strictly obeyed. And please stop being lenient with those gentlemen."

"Goodbye, Vladimir Ilyich," says Polyakov, smiling. .

Ilyich shakes hands with him and then walks over to Gorky.

"Glad to see you, Alexei Maximovich. I've missed you."

"You can so reprimand a person," says Gorky, "that he goes away pleased. An enviable and useful trait."

"H'm, h'm. . . . How are things going?"

"I live in an endless and not very useful bustle."

"So . . . I have heard, and I am sure that it is true, that you are doing great, interesting work, very useful for the Soviet power."

An almost unnoticeable smile appears under Gorky's mustache.

"You greatly exaggerate my services. It's . . . very pleasing."

Lenin laughs gaily.

"Tell me what you need and I'll tell you what work you're doing. I suppose you came to ask for something?"

"It goes without saying. I have even brought this list."

"Let's have it."

Lenin takes the paper, walks over to the table, reads it and quickly underlines certain points.

Gorky sits down alongside him.

"First of all, Vladimir Ilyich, it is necessary to supply the writers and scientists with food, otherwise they will die."

Ilyich makes a note on the margin of Gorky's list.

"By the way," Gorky continues, "yesterday Ivan Petrovich Pavlov again refused to go abroad. It's the sixteenth invitation that he's turned down. A genius and

a pleasantly angry old man. . . . The requirements of his laboratory are on my list here."

Ilyich turns the pages of Gorky's list and listens to Gorky, glancing up at him from time to time.

"Then this is very important," continues Gorky. "Paper, a printshop and, forgive the bother, shoes. Trousers are still whole on the scientists, but shoes are already worn out. Nearly on all of them. They have to walk a lot. Evidently in search of 'our daily bread.' "

Lenin smiles.

Yevdokiya Ivanovna, the charwoman, enters.

She is carrying a plate with a glass of tea and a piece of black bread.

Lenin clears a place on the table for the tea and bread.

"Thank you. Put it here, please. Alexei Maximovich, have you had your dinner?"

"I've dined."

"Fibbing aside?"

"There are witnesses that I've dined."

"Will you have tea?"

"No, thank you."

"Well, we will try to do everything in our power," Lenin says, putting away Gorky's list. "I feel you have something else on your mind."

"Yes."

"Some one has been arrested and you are going to plead for him?"

"Exactly."

"I knew it."

"Vladimir Ilyich, Professor Batashev has been arrested. He's a good person."

Lenin frowns.

"What does a 'good person' mean? Where does he stand politically?"

"Batashev used to hide our people."

"Maybe he is just very charitable in general. Formerly he used

to hide our people, and now he is hiding our enemies, eh?"

"He is only a man of pure science."

"There aren't such people!"

"Vladimir Ilyich, I am an unkind and distrustful person, yet I am ready to vouch for him."

"Well, what can I say?" Lenin frowns. "Your word carries no little weight." He writes a note. "Go to Felix Edmundovich [1] and talk it over with him. He has a remarkable nose for the truth." He gives the note to Gorky. "But it is to no purpose that you busy yourself with this, Alexei Maximovich. You are doing tremendous, useful work and all these have-beens only get in your way."

"Maybe I'm getting old, but it is difficult for me to see people suffer," says Gorky. "Even though these people are useless."

Lenin rises and briskly paces the office from one corner to the other.

"Yes, it's hard for them," he says. "The smart ones understand, of course, that they have been torn out by the roots and that they will never find soil in which to grow."

"Vladimir Ilyich, I have never met another person," Gorky begins after a silence, "who so strongly loved people, who so hated the woe and suffering of humanity and scorned the meannesses of our life, as you. You, I think, must understand me."

Lenin comes over to Gorky and stops right in front of him.

"Alexei Maximovich," says Lenin, looking straight into Gorky's eyes. "My dear Gorky, you are an unusual, a great man, but you are entangled in the chains of pity. Cast it aside! It poisons your heart with bitterness, it screens your eyes with tears and they begin to see the truth without their old clarity. Cast away this pity!" He waves his hand as though he had resolutely lopped off something.

"Do you realize how much grain we need to meet the requirements of Moscow alone? . . . Here, look at this."

Lenin takes a memorandum from the table and shows it to Gorky.

"And here's how much we have. Look," he continues. "Even if we give people a ration of only an eighth of a pound of bread, we shall run out of grain in two days. There won't be a crumb. Moscow will starve. And at the same time these profiteering scoundrels and kulaks trade in bread. They hide grain and speculate with it. Two hundred of the biggest speculators have now been caught by the Cheka. What do you want us to do with them? To pardon them? To be merciful toward them?"

"Mercilessness is necessary," says Gorky, also rising. He stands, his hands clasped behind his back, bent over, looking down at Lenin. "Without it you can't break and remake the old world. I understand it. But maybe we are unnecessarily merciless sometimes. And that's unnecessary . . . and frightening."

"Two men are fighting," Lenin says, thrusting forward the index fingers of both hands. "How can you tell which blow is necessary and which is not? If it's a fight? A fight to the finish?"

The telephone rings.

Lenin takes the receiver.

"Hello. . . . Yes. . . . How do you do? Pardon me, Alexei Maximovich," he says, covering the phone with the palm of his hand. "Yes, go on."

Lenin listens attentively, his head to one side, eyes narrowed.

"No, no! You mustn't send him!" he says suddenly, as though

[1] F. Dzerzhinsky—head of the Cheka.

interrupting someone, and then he turns his head toward the door. "What's the matter?"

Bobylev, of the secretariat of the Council of Peoples' Commissars, stands in the doorway.

"Korobov has come. Have you asked for him?"

"Ask him in, please. . . . Alexei Maximovich, don't leave. He is an old Petersburg worker, a wonderful energetic person." (Into the phone:) "Yes, I was saying he must not be sent. In the first place he cannot listen to anyone, he can only preach. In addition, he is certain that he is smarter than anyone. What kind of a leader is that?" (To Korobov, who is entering:) "Come in, Stepan Ivanovich. How do you do? Get acquainted."

Korobov, a dry old man of average height, with lively, clever eyes, walks briskly over to Gorky.

"Comrade Maxim Gorky! Very pleased to make your acquaintance."

"Haven't we met before?" asks Gorky, shaking Korobov's hand.

"Unfortunately no. I simply recognized you. One can recognize you from afar."

Lenin casts a happy, satisfied glance at Korobov and Gorky, and continues his telephone conversation.

"That's a different matter. Now listen. I want you to look over a project on the establishment of class rations. About the block-the-way detachments? [1] Yes, it must be done at once. Good. Goodbye."

Lenin hangs up the receiver.

"Well, tell us everything," he says, turning toward Korobov. "You always have something very interesting."

"Here's something. I've been to the village," Korobov begins. "The situation, I tell you, is really interesting!" He speaks passionately, energetically. He can hardly sit in one place, keeps starting from his seat. "The kulaks, Vladimir Ilyich, are enraged. They're on the warpath! Axes, rifles! Machine guns even!"

Lenin listens attentively; he cups his ear with the palm of his hand. His smiling eyes sparkle with satisfaction, Korobov is reporting facts important and necessary to Lenin.

"So! And what about grain?" Lenin asks.

"There's grain. Exactly as you said. But who has the grain? The very same parasites. And it's a sure thing they don't give it to us. They haul it to the city and speculate on it at two hundred rubles a pood. For every proletarian word you utter they have a dozen filthy answers. The village poor are swelling with hunger, starvation is reaping its toll. In Petersburg there isn't a kid who has enough to eat. Here in Moscow, too. . . . And there *is* grain, there's plenty of grain in Russia . . . . That's how things stand, Vladimir Ilyich!"

Although Korobov has said nothing pleasant, the expression on Lenin's face is almost one of satisfaction, so much does he like the fact that Korobov is relating the important things Lenin expected to hear from him.

"If we don't help the village—pardon me for saying it—the Soviet power can't last!" Korobov goes on.

"Of course, of course! The kulaks, they'll show us!" Ilyich agrees with him.

"What do you think it is, a joke? You'll get it in the neck, too!" says Korobov.

"Naturally! Well, what do you think we should do?" Korobov leans toward Lenin.

[1] Special detachments formed during the famine period to combat speculation in grain.

"Vladimir Ilyich. . . . I don't know how you look at it. . . . What if we send the workers to the village? Thousands of them, with their families. Eh? Rally the poor peasants and together with them go for the kulaks? The kulaks won't be able to hold out, then! Eh?"

"If you draw in the middle peasants, they won't."

Korobov jumps up.

"They sure won't! Give us guns and your blessings not to be too soft with the kulaks. And there'll be grain and the Soviet power will hold out!"

Korobov drops back into his chair.

"Correct, Stepan Ivanovich," says Lenin, not smiling now. "You have evaluated the political situation correctly, and your conclusions are right. The idea of dispatching masses of workers to the village is a wonderful idea. We will certainly carry it out immediately. When are you going to Petersburg?"

"Today."

"Very timely. Here is an open letter to the workers of Petersburg, take it with you. And let's act at once. All right?"

"Let's, Vladimir Ilyich."

Korobov rises.

"Wait," says Lenin. "I have a question for you." Hardly noticeably, Ilyich casts a side glance at Gorky. "How do you look at it? How should we treat our enemies?"

"How's that? . . . Pardon me, I don't understand," Korobov says perplexedly. It is evident he doesn't understand why Ilyich is asking him. "It's necessary to fight the enemy. That's the way it seems to me."

"But how 'fight'? By word, persuasion or force?"

"Pardon me, but what kind of persuasion can there be?" asks Korobov in confusion, looking at Gorky as though appealing for support. "You try to use words with the enemy, and he grabs you by the throat. That way we'd put the skids under the whole Revolution."

"Yes, yes," says Lenin, turning away to hide the amused sparkle in his eyes. "But the Socialist Revolution must be the most humane. Must this humanism lie in the fact that we should not raise our hand against anyone?"

"Against the Socialist-Revolutionaries? Against the saboteurs? Against the kulaks? We mustn't raise our hand? We've got to raise it and smack it against their heads so hard that their souls jump out of their bodies! That's the way it seems to me."

"You see," insists Lenin, "alongside of necessary mercilessness they say that we are sometimes unnecessarily merciless. That's what they say."

"Vladimir Ilyich!" Korobov, angry in earnest, flares up. "What's gotten into you today? Are you stringing me? Who's unnecessarily merciless? We? Just look what's going on all around! The entire land's ablaze! For hundreds of years the workers' blood has flowed like rivers! And now pity some kind of trash, and have everything turned backwards? . . . And at a time when we're being hard pressed on all sides. You don't have to go far for an answer—here's Comrade Gorky, ask him. He understands it well. He had a sufficient taste of the old bitter life. Go on, ask him."

Gorky coughs, chews his mustache.

Lenin, unable to control himself, bursts into laughter. He laughs his remarkable laughter, throwing himself back in his chair.

Korobov stops astonished.

"What is it, Vladimir Ilyich? Did I say something wrong?"

"No, no, Stepan Ivanovich, you . . . you . . . everything you said is absolutely right. . . . But I had a conversation with a comrade here before . . . and remembered. . . ."

Lenin roars, brushes away a tear and then, stopping suddenly, looks seriously at Korobov.

"Yes, Stepan Ivanovich, yes . . . our mercilessness is mercilessness made necessary by conditions; it will be understood and justified. Everything will be understood, everything."

The telephone rings. Lenin takes the receiver.

"Hello. One moment, please."

"Everything will be understood," Lenin repeats, covering the phone with his hand. "Well, I wish you well. Will you be dropping in before you leave?" Korobov takes leave of him. Gorky rises.

"You aren't offended, Alexei Maximovich?" asks Lenin.

"Not at all."

"You must come to see me again the next time you are in Moscow."

"No need to invite me, I'll come even without an invitation."

"Hello," says Lenin, taking up the receiver again. . . .

Gorky and Korobov come out into the corridor.

In the corridor the telegraph keys are clicking, secretaries are dictating telegrams in monotones and the operators are reading the tapes. And all of it about grain, grain, grain; about kulak uprisings; about the endless requirements of the front. Here, to the Council of Peoples' Commissars, to the heart of revolutionary Russia, to Lenin flow the hopes and thoughts of the struggling people.

Vasily is walking down the corridor.

He enters Lenin's office, closes the door behind him and stops. Lenin doesn't see him, he is talking over the phone.

"And have an order issued in your department for the requisition of all the *yats* and *tverdye znaks* [1] in all the printshops. Then they will no longer write with the old orthography. And in general, talk to them with more weight, don't be timid, get used to the statesman's tone. . . . Now listen: tomorrow it is absolutely necessary to publish the decree on the abolition of private ownership of immovable property. . . . What? . . . Precisely, because the political situation is tense. In these matters we won't waver or play at politics. . . . Well, goodbye."

Ilyich hangs up the receiver and picks up another one.

"I'm waiting for reports from the front. Please bring them in as soon as they come."

He notices Vasily and quickly goes over to him.

"Hello, Comrade Vasily! Hello, my dear friend!"

"How do you do, Vladimir Ilyich!"

"Have a seat—here, closer."

Lenin seats him in an armchair, closely examines his face and then suddenly, quickly walking around the table, takes his glass of tea, his piece of bread and places it before Vasily.

"Eat it. Absolutely, immediately."

"Vladimir Ilyich. . . . I'm not at all hungry."

"Well, then, tell me quickly, what have you brought? Did you bring any grain?"

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[1] Two letters of the old Russian alphabet which were dropped after the October Revolution in order to make reading and writing more accessible to the masses.

"Two trains—ninety carloads," Vasily answers.

"Good! Excellent! Tell me all about it. Tell me everything in detail. . . ."

"I got to Tsaritsyn just at the time that Voroshilov broke through the Cossack ring and reached the Don. We formed a detachment. Stalin gave me eighty thousand poods of grain and sent me off. That's all."

"All?"

"All."

"And what did I hear? Something about you having been wounded, having been surrounded by kulaks on the way and fired upon?"

"Well, that's something you have to expect, Vladimir Ilyich. We're not playing with toys."

The telephone rings. Lenin picks up the receiver.

"Pardon me, Comrade Vasily. . . . Hello. . . . Hello. . . . Hello, Yakov Mikhailovich [1]! . . . Yes, yes, of course, you're right, tell them the Bolsheviks are stubborn people, we're ready to make a thousand attempts, and after the thousandth, to try the thousand and first. . . . Now one more thing—I wanted to ask you to prepare a project for a decree on the centralization of radio-technological matters. . . . What? It's already prepared?" He laughs. "You know Yakov Mikhailovich, your 'already' will soon become a saying. Well, thank you, thank you very much."

Lenin hangs up the receiver and quickly writes something.

"Now, Comrade Vasily, it's necessary that you take some comrades from the Cheka to help you and that you immediately organize the dispatch of workers' detachments to the village. . . . What do you think of it?"

No answer.

"Comrade Vasily!" Lenin calls in alarm.

Vasily doesn't move. His head has fallen on his chest, his arms hang limply.

Lenin jumps up and rushes over to him.

"Comrade Vasily. . . . Comrade Vasily, what's the matter with you?" He takes him by the shoulders. "My god! What's this?" He runs to the door and opens it. "Is anybody here? Comrade Bobylev—a doctor! Run for a doctor, quick, bring him here at once!"

Lenin pours water into a glass, doesn't know what to do with it and puts it on the table. He squats in front of Vasily and takes his hand. He is very worried. Vasily's head droops lifelessly. His thin, stubbled face is very pale.

Bobylev runs down the corridor. Doctor Rabinovich barely manages to keep up with him. They enter Lenin's office.

"Konstantin Nikolayevich, come here, please!" Lenin calls the doctor. "What's the matter with him?"

Doctor Rabinovich raises Vasily's eyelids, feels his pulse.

"Don't worry, Vladimir Ilyich, it's nothing terrible. A typical hunger faint."

"Yes?" Lenin, after pacing the office, stops beside Vasily. "This man, doctor, has just brought us ninety carloads of grain."

Vasily stirs.

Lenin bends over him.

"Tell me, doctor, may we give him something to eat now?"

"You may. Hot tea would be good."

"Comrade Bobylev," says Lenin, "ask for hot tea at once and, by all means with sugar."

Bobylev leaves.

Vasily opens his eyes. Looks around bewildered. Lenin extends his bread to him. Vasily takes it and eats it greedily. Lenin turns away, pulls out his handkerchief.

[1] Sverdlov.

Then, noticing a stenographer standing in the doorway he angrily waves her away. Stenographer disappears.

Vasily eats the bread, holding it with both hands, which tremble.

Bobylev runs into the room with a telegraph tape.

"Vladimir Ilyich," he says, his voice trembling with excitement, "Muravyev has started an uprising, has turned the front against us."

Not a muscle twitches on Lenin's face. He stretches out his hand.

"Give it to me."

He takes the tape.

The telephone rings.

Lenin picks up the receiver.

"Hello." A pause. "When did Tikhoretskaya fall? When?"

Vasily, forgetting about the bread, looks at Ilyich with alarm.

"Tikhoretskaya!"

Music.

The auditorium of the Bolshoi Theater. *Swan Lake* is being performed.

Among the Red Army men and workers are seen elegantly dressed lovers of the ballet.

In the first loge are seen foreign diplomats, among them the British envoy.

Music.

The curtains in the back of the loge part. Konstantinov, who is sitting next to the envoy, looks around, gets up and walks to the back of the loge.

There, leaning against the wall, stands a man. He is pale and out of breath.

"Why are you breathing so heavily?" Konstantinov inquires scornfully.

"I ran. I was being followed."

The man whispers into Konstantinov's ear:

"Simbirsk has fallen!"

"That's nothing new," Konstantinov says irritably and enters the loge.

There he whispers to the envoy:

"Simbirsk has been captured from the Bolsheviks."

The envoy glances quickly at Konstantinov. He leans towards his neighbor.

Whispers.

Music. Ballet.

Next to the diplomatic loge several sailors are quietly eating dried herring over a torn newspaper which is spread out on the red velvet barrier. They have evidently come directly from the train, for they have their rifles and rucksacks.

Ballet. Ballet costumes quiver. The flash of bare white arms.

The envoy and Konstantinov are sitting side by side at the back of the diplomatic loge. Holding their opera glasses they attentively follow the ballet.

Now we hear their conversation.

"What else is needed, Mr. Railton?" the envoy asks.

"I have the pleasure of reminding you for the third time that I am not Railton but Konstantinov."

"Well, what else is needed, Mr. Konstantinov?"

"We must bribe our way into the Kremlin."

"Through whom?"

"Through the commandant of the Kremlin. . . . He'll open the gates."

"Who will enter those gates?"

"Troops of officers. . . . We have three thousand men. There will be a review of them in a few days."

"This commandant of the Kremlin, has he taken the money?"

"He'll take it."

"How much are you giving him?"

"If you don't object, three million paper rubles."

"That's not much."

The act ends. The curtain falls.

The final bars of the music. Applause.

The diplomats rise.

In the next loge the sailors are applauding enthusiastically.

The curtain rises again. Instead of ballerinas there stands a man in a leather jacket loaded down with hand grenades and with a giant Mauser at his side. The applause stops abruptly. The man in the leather jacket raises his hand.

"Comrades and citizens!" he announces in a thundering bass. "There are two questions which are not on the program. First: by decree of the Yekaterinburg Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, the former tsar, Nikolai Romanov, has been shot. Does anybody wish to speak on the subject?"

A hubbub.

"The question is clear," is shouted from the auditorium.

"Are there any motions?" asks the man in the leather jacket.

"Put it on record," suggests one of the sailors from the loge.

"There's a motion to put it on the record. Is anybody opposed? Carried!"

Hubbub. The audience rises.

But the man in the leather jacket again raises his hand.

"The second question: There is a motion not to leave, because no one will be let out anyway. We're going to check documents now."

The hubbub increases. The effect of the second announcement is tremendous.

In the diplomatic loge an alarmed face appears from behind the curtains. Konstantinov angrily turns around. The face disappears.

"Who is that?" asks the envoy.

"My man. He was followed."

"Good. He'll leave with me. When are you going to have the talk with the commandant of the Kremlin?"

"In a few days."

The Kremlin. The commandant's office.

Konstantinov and Matveyev, the Kremlin commandant, enter.

A Red Army man in a faded uniform which retains its color only where the epaulettes used to be is eating soup from his mess tin with a wooden spoon.

Konstantinov stops at the door.

"Leave us, Smirnov," says Matveyev, "eat over there."

The Red Army man gets up.

"Your portion is here also, comrade commandant."

"Leave my portion. I'll have it later. . . . Sit down."

The Red Army man leaves. Konstantinov sits down.

Matveyev brushes the crumbs off the table.

Konstantinov turns toward Matveyev.

"Well, have you decided?"

"I don't know what to say . . ." wavers Matveyev.

"I don't like this sort of a beginning," says Konstantinov.

"Well, maybe the end will be better," Matveyev replies with a naive smile.

"What's making you hesitate?"

"You see . . ." says Matveyev. "Let's be frank. I have a good job. It's true, the food isn't up to much."

"Well?"

"Still, I don't live badly. Honor. Respect. . . . Our—that is, the Bolsheviks—have managed to carry on for a whole year, and maybe they'll continue."

"Go on." Konstantinov is irritated by Matveyev's naivete.

"And your government, what kind will it be?" Matveyev continues. "I mean, how reliable? And what if I'd be backing the wrong horse?"

"Do you know the situation at the front?" sharply asks Konstantinov.

"Sort of."

"If you know, then you must understand that the Bolsheviks won't hold out anyway."

"That's true," sighs Matveyev. "It looks as though they won't."

"The job we will give you won't be worse. The food, at any rate, will be better. Besides, Mr. Commandant, if the worst comes to the worst, we'll manage without you. Look out, or you'll be the loser."

"Why get angry right off?" says Matveyev soothingly. "I'm just interested. For example, it's interesting to know what parties support you, or maybe some states?"

"When you have taken the money, given a receipt for it and begun to work for us—then gradually you will learn things."

"Yes, and how much money will you give me?"

"Name your sum."

"Pardon me. My goods—your money."

"We are not in a bazaar, Mr. Commandant."

"Yes, but I'm not experienced in these matters. You know how much these things are worth. This is evidently not the first time for you. . . . Tell me the truth, with some of our people, have you already—?" He makes an expressive gesture.

"You know, Mr. Commandant, you ask very well, but answer very badly. I'm beginning to dislike it. I asked you to name the sum."

Matveyev suddenly decides, leans over and in a desperate whisper hisses:

"Two!"

"Write out a receipt."

Matveyev tears off a piece of paper and sits down to write.

"You'll get a million rubles now, and the second million after the operation is completed," says Konstantinov.

"Operation. . . ." sighs Matveyev. "You're getting a bargain from me."

"Mr. Commandant! I repeat, we are not at a bazaar!"

"Well, well . . . but not so loud," soothingly says Matveyev. "Cash down."

Konstantinov begins to draw the money from his pocket.

Lenin is walking down the corridor. He sees a light in an empty room, enters, turns it off, and continues down the corridor.

Telegraph operators' tables. The clicking of the keys.

Lenin approaches the chief telegraph operator.

"Any reports from the front?"

Takes the reports.

The cry of a child is heard.

Comrade Rybakova quickly appears from the room adjoining Lenin's office. She leads a little disheveled girl by the hand.

"Comrade, what does this mean?" Rybakova, excited and angry, asks the guard. "Where did she come from? How did she get here? She slipped right into the office! And that's not all! She stole sugar from Vladimir Ilyich's desk! It's an outrage!"

Rybakova yanks the girl's arm until it hurts. A burst of tears.

"Let the girl go," Lenin says abruptly, having approached them unexpectedly. "Whose girl is she?"

Rybakova, embarrassed, is silent.

"A waif, Comrade Lenin," answers the guard.

Lenin takes the girl by the hand.

"Come with me, I'll give you some sugar."

The girl immediately stops crying and obediently follows Lenin.

Lenin leads her into his office, opens the drawer of his desk and gives her some sugar.

"If you like, stay here with me

and we'll work—you'll draw and 'll read."

Ilyich gives her some paper and a pencil and immerses himself in the reports from the front.

On maps lying on the desk and on maps hanging on the wall Lenin, with little flags, marks the changes at the front in accordance with the reports.

"What's your name?" he asks the girl.

"Natasha."

Natasha is busy drawing; she is sitting right on the floor.

"It sounds good."

Lenin rings.

Bobylev enters.

"Comrade Bobylev, please get me a direct wire to Stalin in Tsaritsyn for ten o'clock. To the northern front, at ten-thirty. To the eastern front, at eleven o'clock. It is necessary to get in touch with Frunze today. No matter how late."

"Very well, Vladimir Ilyich."

The girl, sucking the sugar, continues to draw. She is very occupied.

Ilyich again dips into the reports.

"Why doesn't your mama mend your dress?" he asks.

"I don't have a mama. They all died from hunger. I'm an orphan."

Ilyich continues writing for a second, then abruptly pushes aside the papers, gets up, walks over to the girl and picks her up. He looks into her eyes and then puts her back on the floor.

Ilyich briskly paces the room on tiptoe. Once, twice. He stops at the desk and picks up the telephone.

"Two thirty eighty-seven. . . . People's Commissariat of Education? Is Comrade Krupskáya's conference over? Ask her to the phone, please. . . . Nadya, can you tell

me which of our workers can adopt a child? Maybe Gil will take one? Or Anna Ilyinishna? Find out, please, as soon as possible."

Ilyich hangs up the receiver and takes up another one.

"Felix Edmundovich, there have been some grain speculators arrested. It is necessary to shoot them at once and inform the entire population of it. And in the future shoot every speculator as the organizer of famine."

He hangs up the receiver and picks it up again.

"Just another word. What do you think about the Cheka taking upon itself the care of children? We must exert all efforts at once to save the children. . . . What? Splendid! I knew that you have a soft spot in your heart for children. . . . Then from now on the Cheka will look after children."

The Cheka. Dzerzhinsky's office.

Dzerzhinsky (at the telephone): "All right, Vladimir Ilyich." (He listens). "Thank you, I feel quite all right. From the Czechoslovakian front?" (Listens). "Yes . . . bad news."

The secretary opens the door.

"Felix Edmundovich, the commandant of the Kremlin is here."

"Ask him in. . . . Good, Vladimir Ilyich. Good night."

Matveyev enters. He has a large envelope in his hand.

Dzerzhinsky rises to greet him.

"How do you do, Comrade Matveyev? Sit down, please," he says. Then to the secretary: "You may leave." To Matveyev: "Pardon me." He picks up the telephone receiver. "Number four . . . Dzerzhinsky calling. . . . It is imperative to find buildings for at least ten large orphanages. . . . No, it can't wait. . . . What? Where have you learned those bureaucratic habits? One would think that you had been the chief of one of the tsar's ministries and not a blacksmith. . . . What do you mean, it doesn't concern us? Everything that the Soviet government needs concerns the Cheka. I'll give you until tomorrow. We'll get the furniture from the bourgeois mansions. Only it is necessary to disinfect it—the devil knows what sort of bastards have slept on the beds." (He hangs up the receiver.) "I'm listening, Comrade Matveyev."

Matveyev takes off his cap, wipes his forehead and puts the envelope on the desk.

"Here is a million."

"Then he did come?"

"He came."

Dzerzhinsky rings. The secretary enters with a paper in his hand.

Dzerzhinsky: "Don't come in and don't allow anyone to enter until I ring. What have you there?" The secretary puts the paper on the table. "All right, I'll sign it; you'll take it later."

The secretary leaves. Dzerzhinsky starts to put the paper aside but something on it catches his eyes.

Dzerzhinsky reads. Turns pale with anger. Picks up the telephone.

"Thirty-two." To Matveyev: "Pardon me a second." In the telephone: "Dzerzhinsky speaking. What's the matter with you? Are you in your right mind? What have you sent me?" He listens. "What grounds do you have? . . . That's all? And on those grounds you suggest shooting?"

We see another telephone. The Chekist Sintsov is speaking.

"Felix Edmundovich," he says. "What grounds are needed? Shoot him, and be done with it. He's an enemy. I feel it in my bones."

"Your bones!" replies Dzerzhinsky. "Go to Petrov and tell him that I have arrested you for three days." He listens, making a wry face. "The next time think with your head and not your bones.

Goodbye." Dzerzhinsky locks the office door.

He returns to his place and sits down.

"Now tell me."

"An hour ago he came to me in the commandant's office," Matveyev begins.

"What did he call himself?"

"Konstantinov."

For a second Dzerzhinsky thinks concentratedly.

"Go on."

"This time he was more definite. I am to neutralize the guard and, on the night fixed, open the Kremlin gates and let in certain troops."

"No more and no less?"

"No more and no less. For this I get a million in cash—here it is—and another million after the 'operation' is completed."

"Generous! How did you behave?"

"As we had agreed."

"Did you obtain any additional information from him?"

"No matter how I twisted and turned—nothing. He only started to suspect me. He's cunning!"

"I'm afraid the matter concerns more than the Kremlin gates," says Dzerzhinsky. "What arrangements have you made with this Konstantinov?"

"On the thirtieth at five o'clock I must be at Malaya Bronnaya 2, Apartment 13. The entrance is through the yard and it's on the second floor."

Dzerzhinsky writes it down.

"On the thirtieth at five o'clock you be there," he says. "I'll send a detachment. The house will be surrounded. We'll put Vasily in charge of the detachment."

"Has he come?" Matveyev rejoices.

The telephone rings.

"Yes, Dzerzhinsky speaking. . . . Absolutely, arrest him. Get out a warrant for him. What? You don't know his name? Well, simply write: 'Warrant for the arrest of the man who hurt the child.' Send it to me, I'll sign it." He hangs up the receiver. To Matveyev: "Get together with Vasily in advance. But remember, Comrade Matveyev, we don't know everything about the plot yet; it might be much more extensive than we think. Be careful, don't scare them prematurely."

"I understand."

"Be calm . . . and do a good job of acting natural," says Dzerzhinsky.

"I'm playing the simpleton, Felix Edmundovich. And what a greedy one!"

"Not too much, though?"

"Rest assured, Felix Edmundovich!"

"That's good. Well, goodbye."

Dzerzhinsky unlocks the door and shows Matveyev out, returns to his desk, rings, and leafs through his calendar.

The secretary enters.

"Call in the department heads. All of them."

Dzerzhinsky turns the leaf of the calendar: "Friday, August 30."

He makes a notation on it.

Evening, Nikitsky Boulevard.

A constant stream of soldiers flows by.

An accordion. Singing.

Soldiers are coming from Strastnaya Square.

A group of people in civilian dress talking unconcernedly.

In the group is a man dressed as a workman.

Alongside him stands Konstantinov.

"The third battalion is passing," says Konstantinov.

"Who is that in front?" asks the "workman."

A dazzling salesman in a straw hat, wearing a tie that looks like a butterfly, passes by, demonstratively smelling a flower.

"Commander of the battalion, Lieutenant-Colonel Aristov," says Konstantinov.

Soldiers are walking in pairs and in fours as though on leave. They all have their coats open, they all have a little bow adorning the right side of their chests, they are all going in the same direction.

"The best battalion," says Konstantinov. "Composed entirely of officers. Look at them!"

Soldiers walk by.

"The second regiment has passed," remarks Konstantinov. "The commander of the regiment is Colonel Sakharov. The commander of the first battalion is Captain Grabbe."

A railway engineer and a shabby looking business man in a derby walk arm-in-arm past the group. They each have a flower in their hand. Both are smelling their flowers.

In their wake more soldiers pass.

A man in a leather jacket comes up to the group.

"Pardon me, what are you looking at, citizens?"

They are all silent. Konstantinov pretending to light a cigarette, turns away and whispers to the "workman":

"Looks like a Chekist."

"Some kind of an accident?" continues the man in the leather jacket.

"What are you pestering us for?" rudely answers Konstantinov. "Get on your way."

"I didn't mean anything. . . . Only there seems to be a lot of soldiers."

"Haven't you ever seen a soldier before? It's time you got used to them."

"Pardon me."

The man leaves.

"It's nothing," says the "workman," peering after him.

"What time's the meeting scheduled for?" asks the "workman."

"On the thirtieth, at five."

August 30.

A hallway in Lenin's apartment. A row of different kinds of arm chairs. Near them stands the office manager of the Council of Peoples' Commissars.

Lenin enters, stops.

"What's this?"

"This is for your office, Vladimir Ilyich, take your choice, please."

Ilyich inclines his head to one side, his hands in his trouser pockets. Before him is a chair with lions carved on the arms.

"H'm. . . . With such wild animals we'd probably scare away all the workers and peasants who come to the Council of People's Commissars," he says, smiling. "Tell me, is it at all possible to get an ordinary human chair that has four legs and a back? It is? Well, then get it for me."

Lenin enters the kitchen. Yevdokiya Ivanovna is fussing at the stove.

"Yevdokiya Ivanovna," asks Lenin, "has the comrade that I'm expecting from the Urals come here?"

"No, Vladimir Ilyich, he hasn't come."

A man sitting in the corner, upon hearing "Vladimir Ilyich," rises. He is a peasant in straw sandals, a hempen shirt, a soldier's coat minus the belt.

Lenin notices him.

"Have you come to see me, comrade?"

"To you, your grace, Comrade Lenin," the peasant answers servilely.

"A fellow-villager," grumbles Yevdokiya Ivanovna, looking at the peasant suspiciously. "We haven't seen each other for twenty years. He pestered me: show him Lenin, and he wouldn't take no for an answer."

"A fellow-villager? Then he's from Tambov district? Sit down, comrade. How are things where you come from?"

"How can they be, Comrade Lenin? Therefore I came to you. To learn the truth from you. The muzhiks' truth."

"Muzhiks' truth? Is there a separate muzhiks' truth?"

"It seems that there is."

"Muzhiks' separately, and workers' separately? That's very interesting!"

"How else, Comrade Lenin? Did the muzhiks go over to the side of the Soviet power? They did. The Soviet power said: 'End the war,' and the muzhiks stuck their bayonets into the ground. Isn't that so?"

"Well. Go on."

"The Soviet power said: 'Take the land away from the landowners,' and the muzhiks took it away. Right?"

"Well?"

"The muzhiks harvested the grain from the landowners' land . . . and what happened? The workers' detachments came and the grain—pffft! . . . So, it seems there is a workers' truth separately, and a muzhiks' truth separately."

With a quick, attentive glance, Lenin sizes up the "fellow-villager."

"How much grain was taken away from you?"

"Oh, I'm not speaking about myself."

"But you, personally, how much grain did you have?" insists Lenin.

"As much as I had, it all went. But we're not talking about me," the peasant says evasively, looking aside.

"Then you are not here on your own behalf? Somebody sent you?"

"I have no mandate, but there are some people backing me up."

"Uh-huh, it's clear. But still you haven't said all you are thinking. Isn't that right?"

The "fellow-villager" silently looks at Yevdokiya Ivanovna out of the corner of his eye.

"Yevdokiya Ivanovna," Lenin turns to her. "May I ask you to leave us for a minute?"

"I have milk on the stove, Vladimir Ilyich," grumbles Yevdokiya Ivanovna.

"It's all right, I'll watch it."

Lenin accompanies Yevdokiya Ivanovna to the door, closes the door after her, and again turns to the "fellow-villager."

In the corridor Yevdokiya Ivanovna calls Bobylev and excitedly indicates the door to Lenin's office.

The "fellow-villager" looks at Lenin in silence for a few seconds and then, suddenly changing his tone, says:

"Well, all right. . . . " He rises, walks over to the table and takes a piece of bread. "You eat bread . . . and who sowed it? The muzhiks. Who sweated over it, watered it with their blood? The muzhiks. Who reaped it, threshed, carried it on their backs? Again, the muzhiks!"

"There are no muzhiks," Lenin quietly interrupts him. "You know that very well. There are poor peasants, middle peasants and kulaks." At the word "kulak" Lenin points his finger at the "fellow-villager." "Is that right?"

The "fellow-villager" is confused for a second.

"No, that's not right! There is the capable peasant, one who works well . . . and there is the loafer."

"The loafer—he's the poor peasant?"

"According to you, a poor peasant; according to us, a loafer!"

"According to you 'one who can work,' according to us, a kulak, a parasite who exploits the village, tries to undermine the Soviet power, the power of the workers and the poor peasants. But you—the kulaks—won't succeed."

"Well, then what, Citizen Lenin. Russia is a country of muzhiks! We can get along without the city?

If you don't give us cotton, we'll dress in homespun. Don't give us boots, and we'll walk in straw sandals! But if the muzhiks don't sow grain . . ."

"Then you want to take us by starvation?"

"The city will die, by itself!" the "fellow-villager" threatens impudently, not noticing Sverdlov and Bobylev, who have entered during the conversation and are standing at the door.

"You have painted a horrible picture," Lenin says with pretended alarm. "My hair simply stands on end! Then you have come to declare war on us?"

"You're a learned man. You know better."

"Well," says Lenin, "remember this and convey it to those who have sent you: the Soviet power is stable. The workers and peasants have established it not for just one year, and not for just ten years! There is no way back. For no one! As long as you kulaks exist you'll give us grain. If you won't—we'll take it by force. If you make war, we'll destroy you. That's the entire truth. The real workers' and peasants' truth."

"We'll remember . . . your excellency," quietly and threateningly says the kulak. He hoists his birch-bark knapsack onto his shoulder.

Lenin is smiling.

"Well, we've had it out. Comrade Bobylev, show him out."

The kulak, frightened, turns around. Only now does he notice that there are others in the room. He takes his stick and his hat and bows low to Lenin in pretended servility.

"We ask your forgiveness."

"Goodbye."

"Come on!" says Bobylev.

Bobylev follows the kulak.

Lenin quickly walks over to Sverdlov.

"Did you hear?" he asks with lively excitement.

"How did he get here?" Sverdlov asks.

"A kulak. He came here to have a heart-to-heart talk. To feel out the lie of the land, to get the drift of things: would the Soviet power make concessions? That's a very interesting phenomenon."

"He openly threatened," says Sverdlov.

"Well, of course. And just notice, all the slogans are Socialist-Revolutionary: the poor peasants are loafers; Russia is a country of muzhiks. . . ."

"The village can get along without the city," puts in Sverdlov. "A familiar phrase!"

"Yes, yes! And, finally, the peasantry is homogeneous. He's Kamkov[1] dressed up in different clothes. . . . Yakov Mikhailovich, do you understand anything about milk? How do you tell whether it's boiling?"

Sverdlov comes over and glances into the pot.

"Don't worry. I'll be your consultant. A great cook has been lost in me. It's still early."

"We're too soft," says Lenin. "Our power sometimes resembles milk more than iron. Dictatorship—that's a great word. And we have pronounced that word."

"I think we stand on too much ceremony with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Vladimir Ilyich."

"Right! In the final analysis that was their representative, their agent in the village. Yakov Mikhailovich, come here, please."

Sverdlov comes over. They both look at the milk very attentively.

"No," says Sverdlov. "Not for some time."

"It's just an accident that the kulak didn't have a bomb or a revolver. They'll soon begin to

[1] "Left" Socialist-Revolutionary leader.

shoot at us. . . . And those bubbles? Is it all right that there are bubbles?"

"They don't mean anything at all," categorically says Sverdlov. "Have faith in my experience."

They both turn away. At that second there is a sizzling and a cloud of steam rises behind their backs.

The milk flows over the stove, it smokes, burns.

Sverdlov grabs the milk, beats the stove with a cloth, bustles about.

Ilyich bursts out laughing. He laughs impetuously, wiping away the tears which flow from his eyes, and then suddenly stops.

On the threshold of the kitchen stands Dzerzhinsky. He is very pale.

Lenin quickly walks over to him.

"I must go to Petrograd," says Dzerzhinsky.

"What has happened?"

"Uritsky has been killed."

A cottage resort in the country. Rutkovsky enters a gate. He quickly goes up to the porch and enters a room.

There are three in the room: Novikov, Sokolinsky and, bent over in a corner, Petrov, a worker.

"Uritsky has been killed," Rutkovsky tells them.

"We already know," says Novikov.

Rutkovsky goes over to Petrov.

"What's the matter? What stopped you?"

Petrov is silent.

Sokolinsky also goes over to Petrov.

"Petrov, explain."

Petrov is silent. Rutkovsky sits down next to Petrov.

"Were you at the meeting?" Rutkovsky asks. "Why didn't you carry out the terrorist act?"

Petrov is silent. Novikov comes over to him.

"You're being questioned, Petrov!"

"I couldn't. . . . I never saw him before. He's not tall . . . . An old coat. He began to speak. . . . Every word was clear. . . . He spoke about the workers. . . . He se-

lected my life as an example. Every word was true. I couldn't shoot . . ."

Rutkovsky, friendly, placing his hand on Petrov's shoulder: "Go out on the porch, Petrov. . . . Rest."

Petrov rises.

". . . he's for the workers . . ."

"Come on, Petrov, go out."

Petrov leaves.

Rutkovsky quickly turns around.

"He's dangerous. Sokolinsky, you take care of him."

"Now?"

"Yes. But not here. Take him further away."

Sokolinsky leaves.

Rutkovsky paces the room.

"I told you. The assassination of Lenin by a worker is an absurd idea."

"It would have had a world-wide effect."

"World-wide effect! Idiots. You've simply bungled matters. Is there anyone else?"

"Kaplan then?"

"We have only three hours left. And I must still get to headquarters."

"Have you made certain he is speaking today?"

Rutkovsky bends over to Novikov. "I personally spoke with Bukharin. He's terribly nervous and wants us to hurry. Lenin will be at the meeting today. Is Kaplan here?"

"She's here."

A small, stuffy room. Cigarette butts all over. On the bed, her hands behind her head, lies Fanny Kaplan, a cigarette in her mouth.

Rutkovsky and Novikov enter the room. Kaplan pays not the slightest attention to them; she continues smoking.

"Fanny Kaplan!" Rutkovsky calls her.

"Yes . . ." Kaplan answers tonelessly.

"It's decided."

Kaplan is silent.

"You have been selected."

"When?"

"Today."

Kaplan is silent. She goes on smoking.

"Get up!" says Rutkovsky sharply.

Without looking at Rutkovsky, Kaplan sits up on the bed, takes a little bottle from the night table and pours the medicine into a glass.

"Fanny Kaplan, your day has come. You have lived twenty-eight years, but no one knows you. Tomorrow your name will illuminate the skyline of history." Kaplan continues to measure out the medicine. "Your name will ring across the world! Fanny Kaplan! Everyone will know that name. Fanny Kaplan! The woman who raised her hand against the menace to the whole world—against Lenin."

Kaplan drinks the medicine, making a wry face.

"Cut the conversation!" she screams hysterically. "Give me the revolver."

Novikov hands her the revolver, exposes the cylinder and shows it to her.

"The first three bullets are filed. See? They are poisoned with curare poison."

At this moment two far-off, muffled shots are heard. Kaplan shivers. Rutkovsky looks around frightened. Novikov goes to the window.

"That's most likely Sokolinsky."

"I told him, not here! Ass!"

One more far-off shot.

A house on Malaya Bronnaya.

Through an attic window is seen the empty yard of a two-story building.

In the attic, from which we see the yard, are Vasily, Matveyev and Chekists. Machine guns have been set up here.

"Remember, Vasily," says Matveyev. "If I can't get out, the

signal will be a shot. At the shot, begin at once."

"All right, all right. Go ahead. It's time."

Matveyev lowers himself through the trapdoor.

Vasily watches him through the window.

Matveyev crosses the yard, crosses the street and disappears in an entrance.

Knocks at the apartment door. The door is opened.

"Yaroslavl," says Matveyev.

"Rybinsk. Enter."

In the door leading to the dining room Konstantinov meets Matveyev.

"We're waiting for you."

He conducts him into the dining room. There are about twenty people there. Disguised officers. They all turn and look at the man standing in the doorway and wearing the leather jacket which they so hate.

"How do you do, citizens," says Matveyev.

"The commandant of the Kremlin, Matveyev," announces Konstantinov.

Matveyev smartly clicks his heels together.

"Very pleased to meet you."

He begins to make the rounds of the table, shaking each one's hand and scrutinizing each face.

Rutkovsky walks across the yard toward the entrance.

"Close in," orders Vasily when he sees Rutkovsky enter.

A worker runs down from the attic to convey the command.

Climbing over fences, running through back yards, the Chekists surround the plotters' headquarters.

Matveyev in the dining room among the plotters.

Konstantinov is speaking:

". . . We start tonight. There won't be any special signal. The troops must be gathered and absolutely ready at one-thirty. Does every one know the task?"

Silence.

"Do the commanders have any questions? . . . Please check your watches: it is now five-twenty-seven."

Everyone checks his watch.

"Mr. Commandant," Konstantinov turns to Matveyev. "At two a.m. you will open the Kremlin gates."

"Yes, sir!"

Rutkovsky quietly enters the room and stops at the door behind Matveyev.

"I want to warn you, gentlemen," Konstantinov continues, "that at first, together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the 'Left' Communists Bukharin and Pyatakov will be in the government. We have with us in addition, Trotsky, Zinovyev and Kamenev."

Matveyev turns pale.

"Remember, gentlemen, we must act decisively. The time is most convenient. Dzerzhinsky is not here. He is investigating the assassination of Uritsky in Petrograd."

"He hasn't yet reached Petrograd," someone puts in.

"And when he arrives," continues Konstantinov, "he'll have to return immediately, because in the next half hour Lenin will be killed."

Deathly pale, Matveyev rises and goes to the door.

Rutkovsky blocks the way.

"Where to?"

A pause.

"I have forgotten the plan of the Kremlin guard," says Matveyev. "I'll bring it immediately."

Rutkovsky grabs him by the arm. Matveyev pushes him off and whips his revolver out of its holster. But he has no time to shoot: Konstantinov and Rutkovsky disarm him.

The officers jump up; they grab their guns.

"Don't shoot," cries Konstantinov. "Don't shoot! Strangle him!"

Matveyev struggles in the hands of the officers.

"I'll make you shoot!" Matveyev says hoarsely. "Shoot!"

He breaks loose, runs to the window.

Shots.

"Vasily!" Matveyev cries, jumping out of the window.

"Forward!" Vasily orders.

Groups of Chekists rush toward the house.

The machine gun fires into the windows.

Firing.

Matveyev is lying on the street.

Chekists attack the house. Firing. The explosion of hand grenades. Vasily bends over Matveyev.

Matveyev opens his eyes and tries to speak. Vasily supports him and helps him to raise his head.

"Speak, speak. I'll understand."

Matveyev gasps for air.

". . . Save . . . Ilyich . . . run . . . at once . . ."

Vasily understands everything.

"Blinov," he cries. "Take over the command!"

"Very well!" Blinov's answer is heard through the firing.

"Hey, somebody," Vasily cries, still holding Matveyev in his arms. "Sintsov!"

Chekist Sintsov runs up.

"Sintsov, take him to a safe place. Bandage him."

Vasily carefully lays Matveyev in Sintsov's arms and dashes away at full speed. Sintsov lifts Matveyev up by the shoulders and drags him to one side.

Matveyev lies on the stone street, his head in Sintsov's lap. He no longer has the strength to open his eyes, which are covered with blood.

"Trotsky . . . Bukharin . . . traitors . . . inform the Central Committee . . ."

Exerting his last effort to stay his receding life, he whispers into Sintsov's ear: "Tell Felix . . ."

"Shush . . . quiet . . . quiet . . ." says Sintsov. He strokes Matveyev's head and with his other hand takes his revolver. He looks around quickly.

The street is empty. Suddenly Sintsov puts the revolver against the temple of the dying man and pulls the trigger.

Firing. The Chekists are attacking the headquarters.

Konstantinov jumps over the fence.

He runs, turns the corner and encounters Sintsov. He stops short in surprise.

Sintsov silently makes a sign with his hand: run, beat it!

Konstantinov immediately disappears.

Sintsov returns the revolver to its holster. With a sleeve he wipes the blood of the murdered man from his uniform.

Matveyev's body is lying on the stone street.

After looking around, Sintsov runs.

A courtyard in the Kremlin.

Ilyich appears in the entrance and walks toward an automobile. He walks briskly, his head bent. His face is severe.

Bukharin comes up to him.

"Vladimir Ilyich . . . how terrible, the death of Uritsky. . . ."

Ilyich stops abruptly.

"You are to blame for it. You are guilty of his death!"

In Bukharin's eyes there flashes a deathly fear, but he immediately takes hold of himself.

"Pardon me, Vladimir Ilyich, how am I to blame?"

"Isn't it clear that every one of our weaknesses, each corrupt element in our ranks, is at once used by the enemy to strike a blow at us? The only thing you do is to weaken us by corrupting the Party, by splitting the Party. . . ."

"Vladimir Ilyich," Bukharin tries to interrupt.

"Your struggle against the Brest Peace has already cost us numerous victims."

"Vladimir Ilyich. . . ."

"Isn't it time for us to stop believing in your 'Lefts' and to give a political evaluation of your behavior?"

Lenin stops directly in front of him, looking straight into his eyes.

"Isn't it time for me, personally, to stop believing you, Bukharin, personally?"

Bukharin makes a gesture as though to embrace Ilyich.

"Vladimir Ilyich, stop it, don't get excited, it's not good for you . . . and then you don't know why I have come to you. Listen to me. I have discussed matters with a number of comrades and we have agreed to bury the hatchet, to quit all factional activity, to work in unison, hand-in-hand with the entire Central Committee."

Lenin, narrowing his eyes, peers at him:

"Oh, yes?"

"I swear to you, Vladimir Ilyich! I've thought it over a great deal. I understand everything. This is the end! Here is my hand!"

Lenin doesn't take his hand.

"I'll be glad if it is really so," he says.

"Then it's peace, Vladimir Ilyich, peace!"

Bukharin embraces and kisses Lenin.

Lenin walks over to the automobile.

"Comrade Gil, to the Michelson Plant."

"I thought you wanted to go to the Lefortovo Riding School," smiles Bukharin after the "reconciliation."

"No, I'm going to Michelson's."

Lenin closes the automobile door.

Vasily, breathless, is running down the street. A machine is coming toward him.

Vasily blocks its way. Stops it. A foreigner is in it.

"Get out!" Vasily orders. "Get out!" he repeats furiously.

He throws the foreigner out of the car and takes his place.

"To the Kremlin!"

Bukharin is still standing where Ilyich left him.

Vasily drives up in the car.

"Ilyich!" he cries.

Bukharin shudders, and turns.

"What?"

"Where is Ilyich?"

"He went to the meeting."

"Where?"

"I think . . ." A barely noticeable pause. "Yes, yes, to the Lefortovo Riding School."

The machine flies out of the Kremlin gates.

At the Michelson Plant.

Stormy applause.

One of the shops of the plant is packed with people to overflowing. People are sitting on benches, on long tables, or standing in the aisles.

Ilyich is on the tribune. He attempts, by a gesture, to attain quiet.

The applause finally dies down.

"Soviet Russia is surrounded by enemies," Lenin says. "Like flames, counter-revolutionary uprisings are breaking out from one end of Russia to the other. These uprisings are fed on the money of imperialists of all countries, they are organized by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The imperialist beasts are utilizing the youthfulness and weakness of the Republic in order to tear out its soul. The kulak uprisings, the Czechoslovakian revolt, the British in Murmansk, the uprising of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the offensive of the White Cossacks, all these fronts moving

upon us from the north, east and south are but one war against Soviet Russia. From these severe wounds we are shedding our blood. . . ."

Colorfully, forcefully and clearly flows his speech. He was plain, full of indomitable courage, mighty in inexhaustible strength. Thousands of eyes sought his every expressive gesture, admired his beloved figure, thousands of ears took in his dear voice which rang throughout the world. Truth penetrated the ranks of the people; faces glowed; eyes sparkled. Lenin couldn't speak cold-bloodedly, and he couldn't be heard indifferently.

In the corner of the shop is a round-shouldered man with a nervous twitch. He hastily writes a note and throws it into the crowd. The note passes from one hand to another toward the tribune.

". . . we are living through unheard-of difficulties," Ilyich continues. "We are starving. We are cut off from oil, from coal . . ."

"There is no grain, the block-the-way detachments take it away," says a woman's voice. "One of my relatives . . ."

"Quiet. . . . Shush. . . . Silence, you."

"Comrade, about the grain . . . I'll answer you later. . . . Comrades! It's more difficult to maintain power than to take it! The Revolution is going forward, developing, growing. Our struggle develops and grows together with it. The more complex and deep the tasks confronting us become, the more tense, complex and severe becomes the struggle!"

At this moment the note reaches Ilyich. Continuing to speak, he opens it.

"The transition from capitalism to Socialism is the most complex and most difficult struggle. Our Revolution makes the imperialists shudder. . . ."

Ilyich reads the note.

"Here, comrades, it's very much

to the point. I have received a note." He raises the note high. "Listen to what is written here. . . . 'Anyway, you won't, maintain power. Your skins will be stretched on drums!' "

A hubbub. Roar of indignation.

"Quiet, comrades," says Ilyich. "I see that this wasn't written by a worker's hand. I doubt whether the one who wrote it will dare to come forward."

Hubbub. Shouts. Voices: "Let him try!"

Lenin holds up his hand.

"I don't think he'll try, comrades."

Laughter.

"When a revolution is going on," says Lenin, "when an entire class is dying, it's not like the death of an individual person, when you can carry out the corpse. When the old society dies you can't nail the corpse of that bourgeois society in a coffin and bury it in a grave. It decays in our midst, the corpse rots and infects us, ourselves! It stinks!" angrily exclaims Ilyich, waving the note.

The electrified crowd roars. Stormy applause.

The yard of the plant. The dull sound of the applause is heard.

Lenin's car is in the yard. Gil, the chauffeur, at the wheel.

Kaplan approaches the car.

"Who is speaking?" she asks.

Gil looks at her suspiciously.

"I don't know."

"And whom have you brought?"

"Some speaker. How do I know?"

"You're the chauffeur and you don't know, eh!"

Kaplan walks away.

Novikov is waiting for her at the door leading into the shop.

They enter.

Ilyich on the tribune is concluding his speech.

"Triple vigilance, carefulness and endurance, comrades! Everyone must be at his post. The traitors, who have already been sentenced by the will of the people, must be destroyed mercilessly! The Revolution cannot be successful without the suppression of the resisting exploiters! . . . We are proud that we have done and are doing this!"

Kaplan and Novikov are standing at the rear of the audience.

"As soon as he concludes, go straight into the yard," quietly says Novikov. "I'll try to hold back the crowd."

Kaplan nods her head almost unnoticeably.

Ilyich waves his hand. "Let the worthless souls snivel and the bourgeoisie rage. The maintenance of Soviet power, the maintenance and consolidation of the victory of the toilers over the landlords and capitalists is possible only with the most rigid, iron power of the conscious workers! Remember, comrade workers, we have but one way out—victory or death!"

The burst of an ovation. Thousands of hands are stretched toward Lenin. Thousands of faces are turned to him.

Lenin takes his cap, puts on his coat and leaves the tribune.

The wall of applauding workers parts, letting Lenin through.

He goes down the narrow aisle, a rapturous roar following him, his eyes searching for somebody.

The *Internationale*.

"*Arise ye, prisoners of starvation,*
Arise ye, wretched of the world..."

sang hundreds of voices.

"Comrade!" Ilyich shouts through the thunder of applause and the strains of the *Internationale*, addressing the woman who had questioned him. "I believe you asked about the requisition of grain?"

The embarrassed woman is pushed toward Lenin.

Lenin motions to her.

The strains of the *Internationale*.

Lenin is walking with the woman and explaining something to her

which we cannot hear because of the *Internationale*. He bends his head, listening to the woman's words.

The excited crowd rolls after them.

Ilyich mounts the narrow steps and leaves the shop.

Suddenly—a jam, confusion.

"Don't push, don't push, comrades! Make way for Comrade Lenin!"

Novikov falls, blocking the way.

Ilyich, gay, surrounded by a group of women, is walking through the yard of the plant. He is replying to the women. Jokes, laughs. His friendly smile embraces those around him.

Gil starts the motor and opens the door of the car.

Strains of the *Internationale*.

For justice thunders condemnation.
A better world's in birth.

Ilyich extends his hand. He is taking leave of the women.

The sun is setting. Its last rays are playing on Ilyich's face. He squints; his tremendous forehead is brightly illuminated.

At this moment a hand holding a revolver appears over the shoulder of one of the women, behind Lenin's back.

The earth shall rise on new foundations.
We have been naught, we shall be all.

The report of a shot.

The crowd shook, then — motionless.

A cry is heard.

Another shot. Another.

Gil jumps out of the car.

Kaplan fires for the fourth time, almost without aiming; casts the Browning at Gil's feet and starts to run.

Lenin slowly sinks to the ground.

Novikov runs out of the shop, heads toward the prone Lenin and

whips out a revolver, as he runs. The crowd is pouring out of the shop.

Gil shields Lenin with his own body.

"I'll shoot!" he cries to Novikov.

Novikov turns sharply and runs toward the gate.

A roar of wrath and horror rolls across the factory yard.

A voice cries out:

"They've killed him! They've killed Ilyich!"

Vasily, breathless, collides with Novikov at the gate. Without stopping, he trips Novikov.

Novikov tumbles head over heels.

Vasily snatches Novikov's revolver and throws himself upon him.

Workers run up.

"Hold him!" shouts Vasily.

They grab Novikov.

Vasily dashes to the car.

The machine is surrounded by thousands of people. Vasily makes his way to Lenin.

Ilyich is lying surrounded by a thick ring of workers.

Vasily kneels; he bends over Lenin.

"Vladimir Ilyich . . . Vladimir Ilyich . . . Vladimir Ilyich . . ." Vasily whispers.

A dead silence.

A woman breaks into tears.

Lenin's lips tremble. Vasily puts his ear to Lenin's lips.

"Tell them . . ." says Ilyich, barely audibly, "no panic . . . let . . . comrade workers . . . take to arms. . ."

Holding Ilyich's head in his arms and pressing it to his chest, Vasily raises a grief-distorted face. In the deathly silence his voice is heard:

"Vladimir Ilyich Lenin asks you, comrades—take to arms!"

A murmur passes over the crowd and dies down.

"The victory is ours," whispers Ilyich, his strength ebbing.

"The victory is ours," Vasily repeats loudly.

The sun has set.

The summer twilight settles over the city.

Lenin attempts to rise.

"Comrade Vasily . . . I . . . alone . . . thank you."

He loses consciousness. Vasily and Gil raise him in their arms and carry him to the car.

A murmur hangs over the crowd.

"Long live Lenin!" somebody cries out.

The crowd parts. The machine starts off.

The crowd, immobile, looks after the automobile: it doesn't come together again, it doesn't stir—it is as though a piece of it had been torn away.

And suddenly, from somewhere, a wrathful wail is heard.

The entire crowd, as one, turns.

Kaplan is being brought in.

A growing, threatening rumble in the crowd. Thousands of eyes, smarting from tears and hatred, turn toward Kaplan, who is surrounded by a close ring of worker-Communists defending her from the wrath of the crowd.

"Kill her! Death to the murderess! Death!"

"Comrades! Comrades!" cry the workers who have to use their last ounce of strength to hold back the crowd. "No lynching! She has to be questioned, comrades!"

The furious crowd boils around them.

"Death to the bourgeoisie! . . . Death to the murderers! . . . To arms, comrades! . . . Red terror!"

A worker, his face wet with tears, climbs upon a box and with his clenched fist raised high, shouts above the furious roar of the crowd:

"For every drop of Ilyich's blood! For every drop! They will answer. . . . We will avenge ourselves so, hate so, crush so, that their whole damned world of murderers will

shake from our workers' answer! Red terror! . . . To arms, comrades!"

"Red Terror!" cries the crowd.

The automobile stops at the entrance.

Gil jumps out, opens the door. Lenin alights, Vasily assisting him.

Slowly they walk into the entrance.

Before the stairway Lenin stops.

"Vladimir Ilyich, we will carry you. . . ."

"No, no . . . I, myself. Only remove my coat. . . ."

Slowly, carefully, Gil and Vasily remove the coat from Lenin's wounded shoulder. A sharp twitch of pain passes over his face.

Lenin moves toward the stairway.

He goes, stubbornly, pursing his lips, mounting one step after the other.

A small blood stain spreads on his shirt sleeve.

Vasily and Gil follow in his wake.

"Vladimir Ilyich!"

"No, I'll . . . go up . . . myself."

The news of the wounding of Ilyich instantly spread throughout the entire country. The working people rose as one in defense of the Revolution. With mass punishment of the bourgeoisie and shooting of the whiteguards the country answered the heinous attempt on the life of Lenin.

Evening.

The door to Ilyich's room is closed. From the corridor comes the muffled ring of telephones and the quiet voices of comrades answering them. The clicking of telegraph keys is heard.

Yevdokiya Ivanovna is at the window. Her old face is wet with tears. She is resting the entire weight of her body against the window jamb, as though to keep herself from falling to her knees.

It is dark outside.

There is a huge crowd on Red Square. Thousands of anxious eyes are turned toward the Kremlin. The Kremlin grounds, the stairs to the Council of Peoples' Commissars are packed with silent crowds.

The corridor in the Council of People's Commissars.

The telegraph key is clicking.

Sverdlov dictates in a whisper.

". . . In answer to the attempt on the lives of its leaders, the working class will answer with still greater unity, will answer with merciless mass terror toward all enemies of the Revolution . . . victory over the bourgeoisie is the best guarantee of the safety of the leaders of the working class. Close your ranks! Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Sverdlov. August 30, 1918 10:40 p.m."

The watch is being changed at the door to Ilyich's apartment. The new watch and the escort walk up quietly.

"Nothing new. . . . Expecting a professor," whispers the old watch, giving up his post to the new, but remaining at the door.

Vasily and Professor Minz walk quickly down the corridor. Sverdlov jumps up and meets them.

"Professor?"

"Yes, how do you do?"

Together they walk down the corridor.

A commander runs up to Sverdlov. His lean face is unshaven, eyes inflamed.

"Comrade Sverdlov!" he calls in a whisper, walking alongside Sverdlov, "Chita has fallen. . . . Sarapul is surrounded."

"Likhachev?"

"Killed."

Minz stops.

"I ask you not to inform the patient of any of this," he says severely.

"Yes, yes, of course."

Minz and Vasily enter Lenin's apartment.

Bobylev comes up to Sverdlov.

"The bridge across the Belaya has been blown up. The food transport to Petrograd has been derailed. The Cheka has arrested the guilty."

"Is Petrovsk still holding out?"

"Petrovsk has been taken by the British."

"Shush, quiet. Turn over all reports to me."

Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Mariya Ilyinishna are in the front room. Minz puts on a white robe. Through the slightly open door leading to Ilyich's room doctors are seen bending over his bed.

Minz enters Lenin's room.

Velichkina, Obukh and Rabinovich are at the bedside.

"Morphine?" Minz asks, as soon as he enters the room.

"Injected."

Minz bends over the bed.

Lenin lies there, his head thrown back on the pillows. Large drops of perspiration have formed on his huge forehead.

Minz, with quick, deft movements, feels Lenin's shoulder.

"So. . . . Careful. . . . Turn him a little. . . . Careful! So. . . . You think it's here?"

"One is here," says Obukh, "but the other?"

Minz stops the examination for a second and looks at the wound. Then, seized by terrible fear, he carefully begins to probe the neck. Suddenly his fingers stop.

He casts a quick glance at the physicians.

They instantly understand the mortal danger. They exchange glances.

In the anteroom, Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Vasily are standing before the doorway to Lenin's room.

"Don't worry," Vasily whispers, "everything will be all right."

"You don't have to comfort me," Nadezhda Konstantinovna answers quietly.

Minz straightens up. Obukh bends toward him and whispers something in his ear.

"Yes, have it ready in case it is needed," Minz answers and leaves.

Obukh motions to a nurse.

"Prepare the oxygen."

Lenin moans and opens his eyelids.

a little way. His gay eyes are clouded with pain. Suffering has extinguished his smile.

"Doctor. . . ." he whispers.

Obukh bends over him.

"Is it the end?"

"Why, Vladimir Ilyich! What makes you think so?"

Ilyich, with a glance, stops him.

"You are a Communist, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"You must understand . . . if it is the end . . . I must know . . . the truth . . . to have time . . . a number of things . . . to have time . . . to call Stalin here . . ."

"Vladimir Ilyich. You will live!"

"You better be frank with me . . ."

"If need arises . . . I'll tell you."

"Promise. . . ."

"I give you my word. Try to sleep. Please . . ."

Obukh leaves the room.

In the front room, in the corner, Sverdlov and Minz are quietly conversing. Obukh walks over to them.

"Your opinion, professor?" asks Obukh.

"Bad. Weak cardiac activity, cold sweat. Strange, so soon after the wound."

"Can't it be that there are some signs of poisoning?"

"I'm not excluding that."

Bobylev opens the door slightly:

"Comrade Sverdlov, Tsaritsyn is on the wire."

Sverdlov enters the telegraph room.

The telegraph operator gives him a decoded telegram.

"Stalin."

Sverdlov reads. Then quietly dictates a reply:

"A bullet has injured a lung. Lodged in the right side of the neck. Haemorrhage of the pleura. Not yet known whether gastric tract is injured. The second bullet has broken the collar bone. Pulse bad. Condition serious."

The telegraph key clicks. The tape crawls. The telegraph operator is decoding.

Sverdlov reads the reply. Then dictates.

"Good. It will be done."

The tape crawlson. Sverdlov replies:

"Will be done at once."

Waits. Reads the reply. Dictates:

"Situation at front serious. His life may depend on outcome of your advance. Wish you luck."

Bobylev appears.

"Comrade Sverdlov, you are wanted on the phone. From the Cheka."

"I'm coming."

Lenin's office. Sverdlov goes to the telephone and talks quietly:

"Hello. . . . Yes, Sverdlov on the phone. . . . Who's speaking? Blinov? . . . Speak quietly and distinctly!"

We see Blinov, bandaged, blood-spattered, at the telephone in some room:

". . . We missed up on two men," says Blinov. "Yes, yes, on Bronnaya. They hid in the embassy. . . . They are shooting at us from there. . . from machine guns . . . so we don't know what to do. After all, it's a foreign embassy . . . diplomatic immunity. . . . What? Very well, Comrade Sverdlov."

Blinov hangs up the receiver.

He runs into the street and gives the signal.

Chekists go into attack.

"Let's go!" Blinov shouts, tearing off the ring from a hand grenade and throwing it through the window of the embassy.

With the butts of their guns Chekists are breaking down the gates and the door.

They break into the building.

Konstantinov is firing from a window. Behind him appears the envoy.

"Mr. Railton, we must run . . ."

"How many times must I tell you, I'm not Railton, but Konstantinov."

He fires. "Konstantinov. . . ." He fires. "Konstantinov. . . ." He fires.

A grenade explodes. Konstantinov jumps away from the window and runs.

On the stairways, in the halls and corridors of the embassy, fighting is going on.

Konstantinov rushes through rooms, runs into the kitchen. From there a spiral stairway leads upstairs.

He makes for the stairs but at that moment two Chekists break into the kitchen. Konstantinov fires. One of the Chekists falls. The other rushes to the stairs. Konstantinov pulls the trigger—the revolver is empty. Konstantinov dashes toward the approaching Chekist. They grapple. Fight. Freeing his hand, Konstantinov grabs a kitchen knife from the table and stabs the Chekist in the back. He then runs up the stairs and disappears.

Blinov, with several people, runs into the kitchen. Two corpses are lying on the floor.

Blinov rushes up the stairs.

Konstantinov, slamming the trap door, gets out on the roof and falls right into the arms of the Chekist who is lying at the attic window.

"He's here," the Chekist cries. "Comrades, come here!"

People are running over the roof.

Learning the horrible news, Dzerzhinsky hastens back to Moscow.

The locomotive whistle. Night. The dim lights of a station flicker past. Then, again woods and darkness.

Dzerzhinsky is standing on the platform of the car; he is wrapped in his military coat.

The monotonous clicking of the wheels.

Impatient, terribly anxious, Dzerzhinsky looks out of the window, opens the door, again paces the small, crowded platform, unable to conquer his terrible anxiety.

Lenin must live.

A room in Ilyich's apartment. Vasily is sitting at the table, his head resting on his arms. Sverdlov is pacing from corner to corner.

Dawn.

A nurse, carrying the oxygen apparatus, walks quickly across the room towards Lenin's room. Bobylev enters. He looks at the faces full of alarm and distress and takes a seat near the door.

The professor and two doctors come out of Lenin's room. All rush to them.

"There is nothing to be done but to wait. . . . All measures have been taken. . . . Let us hope. But . . ."

Vasily looks at the professor imploringly.

"Professor. . . comrade doctors. . . . What else can be done? Maybe there remains something else that can be done?"

The professor shrugs his shoulders.

"Let us have faith in the strength of his organism."

"Good news?" Doctor Obukh says quietly, as if to himself.

"Yes, maybe," says the professor, guessing the unspoken thought. "Let someone tell him something which you consider good news."

Vasily and Obukh exchange glances.

"Maybe, simply . . . how shall I put it? . . ." Obukh leaves his sentence incomplete.

"No, no, we can't lie," Sverdlov replies. "And anyway, he won't believe it." A pause. "Come with me." He leaves with Bobylev.

The nurse opens the door from Lenin's room.

"He's spitting blood," she says quietly.

The physicians quickly go to Ilyich.

Vasily goes to the door which they have shut behind them and, listening tensely, waits.

In the deathly silence a muffled moan is clearly heard.

No longer able to control himself, Vasily drops into a chair and buries his face in his hands. He is crying.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna is sitting in the corner. She sits erect, silent, pale, severe.

Vasily, embarrassed, wipes his tears.

"Pardon me . . . Nadezhda Konstantinovna. . . ."

Sverdlov and Bobylev are at the telegraph apparatus. The tape is crawling, the key clicking. Bobylev reads slowly:

"Stalin requests a bulletin on Lenin's health."

Sverdlov is silent for a few seconds.

"Inform Comrade Stalin . . . . Condition very serious, pulse bad. . . ."

Tsaritsyn. Stalin's railway car. Outside there is an incessant downpour. There is the muffled sound of a cannonade.

Stalin stands at the telegraph apparatus.

The telegraph operator is reading the tape.

". . . condition very serious . . . pulse bad . . . he has begun to spit blood. . . ."

The apparatus is silent.

Leaning on the table, his head bent, Stalin stands over the silent apparatus.

The nearby explosion of shells breaks through the noise of the downpour.

Taking hold of himself Stalin straightens up, and, with a heavy tread, walks through the car. With a brisk motion he throws open the door.

He enters the second compartment of the car.

Here military specialists are sitting over a map.

"Continue," Stalin says quietly and calmly.

"How is Vladimir Ilyich?" a gray-haired commander inquires anxiously.

"He's spitting blood," Stalin replies quietly. "Continue," he repeats.

The military specialist, whose report had evidently been interrupted when Stalin left, resumes his account of the situation at the front.

The situation is serious, and while the military specialist, in a dull, monotonous voice, is enumerating one defeat after another, indicating on the map the route of the retreat of our troops, defining where the Whites have broken through the line, Stalin, listening to him, phones.

"Voroshilov," he says quietly, without interrupting the report. "He's left? Good."

At this moment the military specialist names a village taken by the Whites that day.

"When?" Stalin asks him.

"Today, during the first half of the day."

"More exactly."

"Approximately at twelve-thirty."

"Where was your detachment?"

"Unfortunately, I didn't manage to come up. . . ."

Stalin rings. An orderly enters.

"Ask Comrade Terekhov to come in." (To the military specialist:) "Continue."

"Thus, in the situation obtaining in our sector, we can state today that all signs point to further retreat."

"So?" says Stalin. "Is that all?"

"That's all."

Terekhov enters.

"Comrade Terekhov," Stalin turns to him. "Take over command of the detachment. And you turn it over."

The military specialist suddenly straightens up.

"But, Comrade Stalin . . ."

Stalin's eyes take in all those present:

"We are fighting badly. We are occupying ourselves with maps, drafting plans—and retreating. Maps are good when with their aid you can advance. Tomorrow at dawn we advance along the entire front. And without 'signs pointing to retreat' . . ." (He casts a quick glance at the military specialist.) "You will receive your concrete duties from Comrade Voroshilov, the commander of the front. Goodbye."

The military specialists fold up the maps.

Voroshilov walks briskly into the adjoining compartment. Streams of water are running down his leather coat. Wet strands of hair are plastered against his forehead.

Voroshilov walks directly over to the telegraph apparatus. He picks up the tape and reads it eagerly. Stalin enters and stands by his side.

Voroshilov finishes reading the tape and carefully lays it on the table.

Silence.

"So. . . ." finally says Voroshilov. "So. . . ."

Again a pause.

Stalin unfolds a map on the table. Voroshilov walks over to him.

"Tomorrow Krasnov will be beyond the Don," Voroshilov says, gritting his teeth.

An orderly enters and gives Stalin a telegram.

"From the Revolutionary Military Council, from Trotsky."

Stalin reads, and hands it over to Voroshilov.

"Read it."

Voroshilov reads.

"If we translate this order into plain Russian—what does it mean?"

"To disband the front and turn over Tsaritsyn to the Whites," Voroshilov answers. "Nothing else."

Stalin, bending over the table, writes on the telegram:

"Not to be heeded. People's Commissar Stalin."

Voroshilov takes the pen from Stalin and under his signature

writes: "Commander of the front, Voroshilov."

Stalin hands the telegram back to the orderly and, together with Voroshilov, bends over the map.

Voroshilov draws the first line on the map, with a pencil, then lays the pencil down and looks at Stalin with eyes full of anxiety and alarm:

"Spitting blood. . . . Is that very dangerous?"

Stalin silently lays his hand on his friend's shoulder.

Lenin battles with death.

Night. In the half-darkened room. A dim lamp illumines a table covered with a white cloth. Surgical instruments gleam.

In the room are Nadezhda Konstantinovna, Doctor Rabinovich, Vasily. Vasily is standing at the foot of the bed, his eyes fixed on Lenin. Lenin's face is deathly pale, the features drawn. He breathes heavily.

A thunder storm begins. The distant rumble of thunder is heard.

For a second Ilyich opens eyes dulled by pain.

"Why don't they bring me reports from the fronts?" he says, breathing with difficulty, but the terrible fatigue again lowers his lids.

A pause.

" . . . don't tell Nadya anything. . . . I'll get up now . . . move aside, Felix . . . Edmundovich . . . they want to fire at you. . . . You see . . . you must be more careful. . . . Move aside. . . . Won't you please take care of yourself? . . . They are avenging themselves. . . ."

Doctor Rabinovich comes up to the nurse.

"Camphor."

Thunder crashes nearby. Lightning illuminates the room.

"We must take Simbirsk as soon as possible . . . grain . . . they can burn it . . . we were . . . too soft . . . it's time to get up. . . ."

Lenin quiets down. Only the quick heavy breathing of the sick man is heard.

The rain falls more and more heavily.

The crashes of thunder grow more distant. The wind rattles the window.

The door opens slightly.

Lenin listens to the voices behind the door. "Who is that? Who has come?"

"Lie quiet. . . . There's no one there," answers Krupskaya.

Lenin listens: "Gorky has come. That's Gorky. Let him in. Alexei Maximovich . . . Nadya, call Gorky, it's his voice."

"You're only imagining it, Volodya. There's no one there. It's the rain."

Lenin attempts to get up. "No. Gorky. Let him in."

Nadezhda Konstantinovna and Vasily look at one another. Vasily walks out.

The door opens quietly. Gorky. He approaches Lenin's bed. He sits at the bedside.

"Where is Alexei Maximovich?" Lenin murmurs, semi-conscious. "Why doesn't he come? . . . He must . . ."

"I'm here," Gorky says softly.

But Lenin does not hear him.

"Why doesn't he come to me? Alexei Maximovich. . . ."

"Vladimir Ilyich," Gorky furtively wipes away his tears.

Lenin opens his eyes. He has regained consciousness. He sees Gorky.

"Alexei Maximovich. . . . Dear Gorky . . ." A shadow of a smile appears in Ilyich's weary eyes.

"They permitted me to come on condition that both of us keep quiet," Gorky says softly. "Let's be quiet."

"All right," Lenin whispers. "Let's be quiet."

He raises his weakened hand and puts it in Gorky's huge hands.

Lenin is lying and Gorky sitting

beside him. The two great men hold each other's hands in silence.

Noise of the rain.

Bobylev enters the anteroom.

"Comrade Vasily," he whispers. "Comrade Dzerzhinsky wants you on the phone."

"I thought Dzerzhinsky was here."

"No, he went to the Cheka."

Vasily at the telephone.

"Yes, Comrade Dzerzhinsky . . . Matveyev? I put him in Sintsov's care . . . Sintsov! . . . There was no one else around. Matveyev was wounded. No, he didn't say anything else. . . . Vladimir Ilyich is bad. . . . Was delirious. . . . Gorky visited him. . . . He has now lost consciousness again."

Dzerzhinsky hangs up the receiver.

"Lenin's unconscious. . . ."

He covers his face with both hands and sits motionless.

Under the fierce blows of the Red Army the Cossack regiments retreated headlong . . .

The rumble of cannon. The shriek of shells. Explosions.

Columns of fire leap skyward.

The White army is on the run. They run without looking back, leaving their wounded, their arms and ammunition.

With gleaming sword raised high above his head, Klim Voroshilov is spurring on his foam-flecked horse. A lava flood of cavalrymen rolls after him.

The Red Army sweeps after the enemy like a hurricane.

Shouts of "Hurrah!" The swish of swords.

Without looking back the White army runs toward the Don.

Like angry lava flow the Red Army troops, driving the White Cossacks into the Don.

The shells crash into the water, which is full of people.

Shouts of "Hurrah!"

Stalin's car sweeps around the front. Alongside it a shell explodes,

a column of flying earth covers the automobile, but it continues on its way. Stalin is unharmed.

The automobile stops. Covered with dust, his eyebrows knitted on his dark sunburnt face, Stalin enters a mud hut.

"Connect me with the railway car," he says to the telephone operator.

The telephone operator turns the knob of the field apparatus.

"Stalin's car? . . . Stalin's car? Here, you can talk."

The telephone operator hands the receiver to Stalin.

"Commander on duty? Stalin speaking. Inform Comrade Lenin by direct wire . . ."

A corridor in the Council of People's Commissars.

"Comrade Vasily," whispers an excited telegraph operator. "Look . . . look . . ."

Vasily quickly takes the telegraph tape.

"Inform Vladimir Ilyich at once!"

Together with Vasily, Doctor Obukh bends over the telegraph tape.

They read.

With trembling hand Vasily tears off the tape. Together with Doctor Obukh he runs into Lenin's room.

"Vladimir Ilyich!" Vasily whispers loudly. "Vladimir Ilyich!"

Nadezhda Konstantinovna, sitting at Ilyich's bedside, puts her finger to her lips, but Obukh nods his head assuringly.

Ilyich's lids quiver. Without opening his eyes he says quietly:

"I'm listening, Comrade Vasily."

"Listen to the telegram," Vasily whispers loudly. " 'Advance of Soviet troops in Tsaritsyn region crowned with success . . .' "

He reads excitedly, swallowing the words.

" '. . . The enemy has been routed and thrust beyond the Don. The situation in Tsaritsyn is firm. Warmest greetings to Comrade Lenin. Advance continues. People's Commissar Stalin."

Lenin's eyes are open. He looks at Vasily, then turns his eyes to Nadezhda Konstantinovna, to the doctor.

"Read it . . . once more. . . ." he says.

Vasily reads the telegram again.

A smile appears in Lenin's tired eyes.

"Tell him . . ."

He speaks quietly, with difficulty. It is evident that he has much to say but he can pronounce only one word:

". . . Thanks."

The country was informed of Ilyich's health three times a day.

A crowd of workers in the shop of a factory.

"Quiet!" cries someone in the crowd. "Quiet!"

"Read!"

The chairman of the factory committee is standing on a platform. He holds a bulletin in his hands.

Quiet reigns.

" Official bulletin, " he reads loudly, " on the state of health of the Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars, Comrade Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. "

"Quiet!" someone cries, although the crowd is already quiet.

" Temperature 38.2 . . . "

A gasp of grief sweeps the shop.

"The fever continues, " someone says.

" Pulse 120 . . . "

" Respiration 24 . . . "

Silence. Nobody knows whether this is a good sign or not.

" Slept comparatively peacefully . . . "

A murmur of approval; in the back scattered applause.

"He slept!" the crowd repeats.

"Sleep will give him strength."

"Read on! Keep quiet!"

"No coughing . . ."

Applause.

"Feels stronger . . ."

Stormy applause.

"Lenin is on the way to recovery!"

"Quiet! Don't interrupt! Go on!"

"Swallows freely and without pain."

Loud applause. Cries of "Hurrah!" sweep the shop.

"Toss Mikheyev!"

"Toss him!"

Dozens of hands grasp the chairman of the factory committee. They toss him. A young worker climbs onto a box.

"Comrades!" he cries. "Comrades! Let's write a letter to Lenin!"

"Right!"

"Let's write!"

"Quiet!"

"Write: 'Dear Vladimir Ilyich . . .'"

"No, not like that!" an old worker says angrily.

"That's right, not like that, no!"

"Let Mikheyev say how."

Mikheyev climbs atop the box.

"Our dear, beloved Ilyich . . ."

"Now, that's it!"

". . . The entire proletariat stands at your bedside," Mikheyev continues.

"Correct!" says someone, breaking the silence.

And Ilyich began to recover.

Doctor Obukh is walking down the corridor. Yevdokiya Ivanovna runs toward him.

"He's left! Just think of it! He got up and left the room!"

The doctor, together with Yevdokiya Ivanovna, rushes into Lenin's room.

The bed is empty. In the center of the room stands the nurse, embarrassed.

"Why did you allow him to get up?" the doctor cries.

"I told him he wasn't permitted. But he said 'Never mind, never mind.' I couldn't hold the leader of the world proletariat by force."

"For you he is a sick man, and not a leader, and he must obey you. Where is he?"

"I don't know. He went out through this door."

Lenin in his office. Eagerly he is bending over a pile of papers. His arm is in a sling.

The telephone rings.

"Hello. Not bad. He's getting better, feels all right. . . . Yes, yes, temperature normal. . . . What? Yes, of course, he's lying in bed. Who is speaking? Aha, very timely, you're the very person I need, my man. . . . Yes, yes, this is Vladimir Ilyich speaking, just imagine! . . . And there's no sense in your rejoicing about it, Polyakov, for I'm going to give you another bawling-out. . . . What? You agree to any kind? Well, here it is: I'm giving you a severe reprimand, with a warning! You think I don't know that you . . ."

The doctor enters. He clasps his hands.

Lenin sees him. He says quietly into the phone:

"I'll phone you a little later."

He hangs up the receiver and looks at the doctor with a guilty, mischievous look.

"This is an outrage!" says the doctor. "To your bed immediately! I shall complain about you!"

Lenin leaves the office with him, taking him by the arm.

"All right, all right, doctor. Don't tattle, it's a bad trait. The air of the office is good for me."

A room in a commissariat.

A door is flung open. Polyakov, the same one that was given a calling down by Lenin in Gorky's

presence, flies into the room in a state of ecstasy.

"Hurrah!" Polyakov cries, brushing aside everything in his way.

One of the people sitting at a desk raises his head.

"What are you so gay about?"

"I received a reprimand!"

"A strange reason for rejoicing!"

"From whom? From whom, ask me! From Lenin, you blockhead!"

Everyone jumps up.

"From Lenin!" cries Polyakov, starting to dance. "Lenin is well, comrades! He gave me a reprimand personally. A severe one! With a warning!"

Lenin and the doctor enter the front room.

An opened package is lying on the table: rolls, sausage, sugar, tea, a bar of chocolate.

Bobylev takes another loop of sausage from the box.

"This package is for you, Vladimir Ilyich."

"Why did you open it then? Send it to the children's home."

"Vladimir Ilyich, you are sick, and I'm not taking any orders from you," Bobylev replies.

"From whom is the package?"

"I can't understand, there are no indications. I don't know."

Lenin points to the newspaper in which the bread is wrapped.

"Oh-ho! Look at that newspaper. A Tsaritsyn one?"

"A Tsaritsyn one."

"Well, then it's clear. From Stalin!"

They all laugh.

"Tch, tch, tch!" says Lenin. "Such an old conspirator, and how he's slipped up!"

The doctor accompanies Lenin into the next room and leads him to the bed.

"Well, lie down!"

"Allow me to sit in an armchair," Lenin asks.

"All right. But not long, and don't read under any circumstances."

Lenin sits in an armchair by the window. The doctor leaves. Lenin quietly takes a newspaper from under the pillow and begins to read it, now and then looking cautiously at the door.

"Vladimir Ilyich! A telegram!" Bobylev cries, running in. "'At dawn we took your native town, Simbirsk—an answer to your first wound. Samara will be for your second!' "

The Cheka. Dawn. Vasily is sitting at the desk. Konstantinov is opposite him.

Konstantinov, sulky, is signing the protocol of the examination.

"You should have done it long ago." Vasily wipes the perspiration from his brow. He rings. A guard enters. "Bring in the arrested."

The English envoy is brought in.

"Please be seated," says Vasily.

The envoy sits down.

"I protest. You have no right to arrest an envoy of His Royal Majesty . . ." He rises and speaks in a theatrical manner.

"Sit down, there's no king to see you here."

"I am also making a complaint against rough treatment."

"Namely?"

"Your Red Army man said to me: 'How I'd like to punch your mug.' "

"Tch, tch, tch! It's a pity he said it! All right, let's cut the comedy! You, an English envoy, are accused of using your diplomatic privileges in order to organize, together with the French envoy, the Russian bourgeoisie, the whiteguards, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks, a plot for the overthrow of the Soviet Government, the assassination of

Uritsky and the attempt on the life of Lenin. Do you plead guilty?"

"I am indignant at the accusations."

Vasily lays a paper on the desk. "What's this?"

"I don't know!"

"This 'I don't know' was in your pocket. Do you plead guilty?'

"No. I have nothing to say."

Vasily turns around to face Konstantinov.

"Citizen Sidney Reginald Railton . . ."

The envoy shudders on hearing the name. He jumps up. He looks at Konstantinov with horror. He turns his confused eyes on Vasily and, helpless, sinks into the chair.

Vasily casts a rapid glance at him and again turns to Konstantinov.

"Do you confirm the fact that this envoy was the chief organizer of the plot?"

"I do."

The envoy stares at Konstantinov in horror.

"Mr. Konstantinov! What are you saying? How can you say that? Mr. Konstantinov!"

"You can freely call me by my real name now!" Konstantinov says gloomily.

Vasily takes paper and pen. "Well, that's enough. Tell us the whole story."

The telephone rings.

Vasily: "Hello, Comrade Dzerzhinsky. I'll report to you in an hour." Impatiently, to Konstantinov: "Well, come on, speak up. Don't hold me up!"

He gets ready to take notes.

Another room in the Cheka. Sintsov's office.

Sintsov is at the desk; the arrested is opposite him.

"Do you confess that you were forming detachments to be sent to Krasnov?"

The arrested speaks in an insolent tone. "I confess."

"Why did you leave the Whites and come back to Moscow?"

"To make contacts."

"Do you know Kharitonov?"

"Yes."

"Is he with the Whites? And Shevyrev?"

"Shevyrev was arrested in Tsaritsyn."

Sintsov jumps up in horror and, deathly pale, looks at the arrested.

"You don't say! Shevyrev arrested! How awful!"

"Sit down, you woman! Take a drink." He offers Sintsov a glass.

Sintsov sits down and clasps his head in his hands.

"Listen to me," the arrested says. "Where is Konstantinov?"

"Here. Arrested," Sintsov replies quietly.

The arrested jumps in mortal fear.

"Konstantinov arrested!" For a few seconds he looks at Sintsov, then slowly sits down and greedily drinks the water. "Well, all right, listen. . . . In what cell is Konstantinov?"

"In number sixteen," answers Sintsov.

"You'll put me there, too, understand?"

"All right."

"Who of our people still remain in the Cheka?"

"Pavlov."

"What's his work?"

"Chauffeur."

"That's good. It will come in handy. Well, put me with Konstantinov . . . at once."

Sintsov rings. The door opens. Instead of the guard, Dzerzhinsky enters, followed by a guard.

Dzerzhinsky approaches the table.

"Remove the arrested," he says.

The arrested and the guard leave.

"Sit down. . . . Tell me, did Matveyev die in your arms?" Dzerzhinsky asks Sintsov.

Sintsov turns pale. He replies dully, in soldier fashion.

"Yes, sir, in my arms, Comrade

Dzerzhinsky. . . . It's a great loss."

"Yes, it's a great loss," Dzerzhinsky answers calmly. "Did he have time to tell you anything before he died?"

A pause.

"Yes, he did."

"Exactly what?"

Sintsov replies without looking into Dzerzhinsky's eyes:

"'Long live the world revolution.'"

"Look into my eyes!" says Dzerzhinsky. Suddenly he smashes his fist on the desk. "Provocateur!"

Sintsov jumps away as though stung and grasps his revolver holster.

"Revolver on the desk!" Dzerzhinsky says quietly.

He looks straight into Sintsov's eyes and Sintsov cannot stand it. Slowly, as though hypnotized, he unfastens his holster and, with trembling fingers, lays the revolver on the desk.

Dzerzhinsky stands in front of him unarmed, his hands clasped behind his back.

"Why didn't I notice it before!" says Dzerzhinsky, as though thinking aloud. "The eyes of a traitor.... Of course, the eyes of a traitor."

And suddenly, in a fit of raging anger, he cries out: "Curs! Crawled into the very heart of the revolution!"

Suddenly he begins to cough. A hacking cough is torn from his chest. A grimace of pain distorts his face. He turns away toward the window and coughs, holding his chest.

Sintsov's eyes turn from Dzerzhinsky to the desk, to the revolver lying on it. He makes an attempt to move, to stretch his hand toward the revolver.

Dzerzhinsky turns around.

Sintsov withdraws his hand as though burnt, and suddenly drops on his knees.

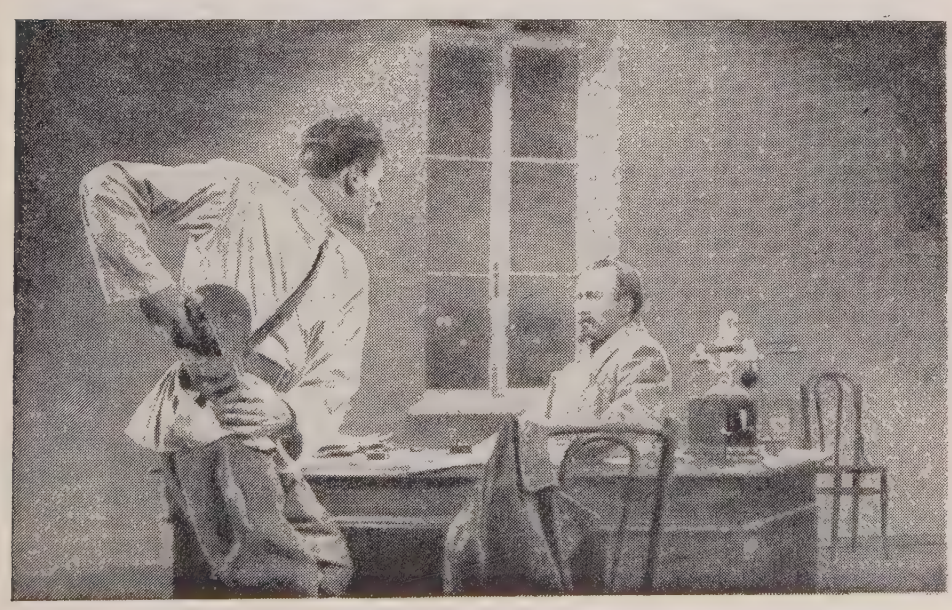
"I'm not guilty. . . . Felix Edmundovich, I'm not guilty."

"You're not only a traitor, but also a coward."

"I swear to you. . . . Upon my word as a Chekist—I'm not guilty!"

"Don't dare to call yourself a Chekist! What did Matveyev say before he died?"

A pause.



Sintsov, still on his knees, looks up at Dzerzhinsky.

"'Long live the world revolution.'"

Dzerzhinsky rings.

A guard enters.

Dzerzhinsky: "Remove the arrested."

To the hideous shot of the mad counter-revolutionaries, to the wounding of the leader of the world proletariat, the genius of the Revolution, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the Soviet people answered with mass Red terror and with victorious advances on all the military fronts.

The Soviet people, tortured by four years of war, by famine, by intervention, rose with great, burning wrath, and the wrath of the people was frightening.

In hurricane attacks Soviet troops took Kazan, Grozny, Uralsk. The White troops fled from Volsk, Simbirsk, Khvalynsk, Chistopol, Buinsk, and were followed and destroyed by the fire of the great Red Army.

Ilyich, fully dressed, is reclining in bed. His legs are covered by a lap robe. His arm is in a sling. On his wan face there is the slight sad smile usual to those who have gone through a serious illness and are recovering. He is sleeping. It is early morning.

The door opens and Stalin enters quietly. In a faded trench coat, soaked by heavy rains and dried by lashing winds, in a military cap burnt by the sun, in high boots covered with the dust of battles and victories, he stands at the threshold and looks at Ilyich. He tiptoes over to the bed. For a long time, with great anxiety, he studies the pale face, changed by sickness, and looks at the wounded arm.

Suddenly Lenin opens his eyes.

"Stalin!"

Stalin rushes to Lenin and carefully, carefully embraces him, afraid of causing him pain.

Lenin speaks very quietly, as always when he is excited:

"I was afraid that you would come too late! But it seems we've sent the angel of death to the devil!" He begins to laugh, but the pain makes him stop, and he only smiles youthfully and happily, holding Stalin's hand. "And you sent Krasnov to the devil, too! Tell me everything. Immediately. At once."

Stalin draws up a chair.

He sits beside Lenin.

The Cheka. Dzerzhinsky's office.

Dzerzhinsky and Vasily at the desk. Wan, unshaven, eyes inflamed from sleepless nights.

Dzerzhinsky is studying papers, smoking incessantly.

"And what's this? The examination of the envoy? Well, well, let's see . . ."

Dzerzhinsky reads. From time to time short exclamations drop from his lips:

"Hmm."

"So!"

"What a scoundrel!"

He underlines some testimony.

"Sintsov will be brought in now," says Dzerzhinsky. "He knows something. He must know! Coward, low trash. He'll talk. Well, what else have you?"

The door opens and a pale, confused secretary enters.

"Felix Edmundovich!"

"Well, what?" says Dzerzhinsky, without turning from the protocols. "I told you long ago to bring in Sintsov. Where is he?"

"An unfortunate occurrence, Felix Edmundovich . . ."

Dzerzhinsky quickly raises his head.

"What is it?"

"Sintsov is killed."

"What!"

"They were driving him to Lyu-

byanka. The chauffeur drove the machine full speed into the wall of a building, killed himself, Sintsov and the guards."

"Was there any other arrested with him?"

"There was."

"Who?"

The secretary is silent.

Vasily, suddenly understanding, leaps toward him and grasps his shoulder.

"Konstantinov?"

"Yes."

"Escaped?"

The secretary is silent.

Dzerzhinsky quickly puts on his coat.

"Let's go to the scene of the accident," he says to Vasily. "It will cost us dear, this accident. The struggle isn't over, Comrade Vasily! No, the struggle isn't over!"

Lenin's room.

Lenin and Stalin are finishing their conversation.

"Yes, yes," says Lenin. "Of course, it's clear, the clearest, most obvious truth—we must immediately radically change our methods of struggle. Without the merciless suppression of the resisting classes, without iron . . . no, steel dictatorship, our Revolution, and any revolution, is inevitably lost."

The door creaks.

Little Natasha walks into the room.

"Come in, come in, Natasha, don't be afraid," says Ilyich. "It's our Stalin. You don't have to be afraid of him. General Mamontov and Krasnov, they have to fear him. Get acquainted."

Stalin tenderly lays his hand on the little blond head.

"This is for whose sake," he says, "we must be merciless to the enemies." After a pause: "She will

live not as we . . . better than we. . . ."

A pause.

Lenin speaks quietly, pressing his wounded, aching arm. Thoughtfully, his clear eyes glisten.

"Yes . . . they will live better than we. . . . And still, I don't envy them. . . . Our generation has fulfilled a task amazing in its historical significance."

Natasha pulls Lenin's sleeve, "Lenin, give me a candy."

"A candy?" Lenin is very upset. "But where can I get it for you?"

Natasha turns to Stalin.

"Do you have one?"

Stalin is very embarrassed.

"No . . . to my great sorrow, no. . . . It turns out, Vladimir Ilyich, that both of us together can't get one candy."

Bobylev enters.

"Comrade Stalin, Tsaritsyn on the wire."

Lenin rises.

"Come on. We'll send a telegram on behalf of both of us."

Lenin and Stalin go out into the corridor.

An employee of the Council of People's Commissars is coming toward them. Seeing Ilyich, he stops and suddenly runs back.

And, as Lenin and Stalin walk along the corridor to the telegraph tables, doors open, one after another, and the employees of the Council of People's Commissars rush out.

When Lenin stops at the apparatus and looks back, the whole corridor is crowded with merry, smiling people.

Their eyes are fixed on Ilyich.

He is standing alongside Stalin at the telegraph apparatus.

"Tsaritsyn, Military Council, Commander of the Front, Comrade Voroshilov," Stalin begins to dictate. "Convey our brotherly greetings to the heroic revolutionary troops of the Tsaritsyn front, dauntlessly fighting for the establishment of the workers' and peasants' power. Convey to them that Soviet Russia with admiration takes cognizance of their heroic deeds. Hold high the red banner, carry it forward fearlessly, mercilessly uproot the landowners' and kulaks' counter-revolution. . . ."

Lenin bends over to the telegraph operator.

". . . And show the whole world," he adds, "that Socialist Russia is unconquerable!"

As if in answer to his words, triumphant music is heard. The armed people has risen in defense of its young Republic. The entire Soviet land has risen in answer to Ilyich's call.

Smashed, the White regiments flee, dropping their arms, in terror and dismay.

The great Red Army marches forward, irresistible, to wipe from the Soviet land forever all who stand in the way of the people, who dare to raise their hands against the people's dearest object—its leader!

The Red Army advances irresistibly.

On February 27 Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya died. She was the wife, closest friend and aide of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. The peoples of the U.S.S.R. and its friends everywhere are mourning the death of this outstanding worker in the field of culture, an old Bolshevik and staunch fighter for the cause of Lenin-Stalin.

TARAS SHEVCHENKO

Commemorating the 125th Anniversary of his Birth

Great Poet of the People

Twenty-five years ago the Ukrainian people prepared to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of their great poet Taras Shevchenko. But in tsarist Russia, the "prison of the peoples," this was impossible. The tsar's ministry of the interior strictly forbade any public commemoration of the anniversary. The name of Shevchenko was taboo anywhere. Nevertheless, in defiance of these orders, numerous meetings and demonstrations were held in Kiev and other Ukrainian cities. The Ukrainian people expressed their deep love and gratitude to the poet who, in the years of their greatest trial, had inspired them with courage, faith and hope for a brighter future, had urged them to struggle against their oppressors to the end.

In his article *On the Question of National Policy*, Lenin, recalling the interdiction against honoring Shevchenko's memory, wrote: "the ban on honoring Shevchenko was such a splendid, superb and uniquely happy and fortunate measure from the viewpoint of agitation against the government that one could not imagine a better means of agitation. . . . After this measure, millions and millions of 'philistines' began to be transformed into conscious citizens and to become convinced of the dictum that Russia is a 'prison of the peoples.' " [1]

Twenty-five years have passed and only in the memories of the older generation does there remain, like a dim nightmare, the recollection of imperial Russia, the autocracy, the system that stifled all free thought and persecuted any expression of liberty on the part of writers or poets. In the free Socialist state, the Ukrainian people, together with all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., are now preparing to give expression to their profound respect, gratitude and love for the great people's poet, Taras Shevchenko, on the 125th anniversary of his birth.

The Shevchenko jubilee is a major event in the cultural life of the Soviet Union. Soviet literary circles have been preparing for it for many months. A jubilee committee has been formed, headed by Alexei Tolstoy, the well-known novelist. Publishing houses are putting out new editions of Shevchenko's works in the Ukrainian language, as well as translations into Russian and other languages of the U.S.S.R. Leading Russian poets, including Aseyev, Antokolsky, Pasternak, Vera Inber, Bezymensky, Lugovskoy, Selvinsky and Tikhonov, have been working for some time past

[1] Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XVII, pp. 324-25, Russ. ed.

T. Shevchenko. Self-portrait, 1860

on new Russian translations of Shevchenko. Biographical and critical essays on Shevchenko by prominent critics are scheduled for publication. Lectures on the life and work of the great Ukrainian poet will be delivered at a special plenary session of the Board of the Union of Soviet Writers, to be held in Kiev this March.

Shevchenko indeed occupies a place of honor in Russian letters. The most progressive minds of his time perceived the exceptional significance of his work. Herzen, the famous Russian publicist and writer, said that Shevchenko is great because he is truly a poet of the people, but his particular significance lies in the fact that he was a political figure, a champion of freedom, as well. Dobrolyubov, another eminent contemporary of Shevchenko, observed that Shevchenko was a people's poet in the true sense of the term. All his thoughts and emotions were in complete accord with the ideas and sentiments of the people. He rose from the common people, lived among them, and was bound firmly to them not only by ideas but by the circumstances of his life.

In our last issue we published a brief biography of Shevchenko. The story of the poet's life is quite unlike that of any other Russian poet or writer. Shevchenko was born a serf, and it was only by a lucky chance that he succeeded in obtaining his freedom. In 1860 he wrote with great bitterness that his brothers and sisters still remained serfs. All his life Shevchenko aspired to knowledge, to poetry and art. He was passionately fond of painting. Two muses lived side by side in his soul: his talent for painting almost equalled his poetic gifts. From the few reproductions of his works in this issue the reader will be able to judge of his singular talent and realize what great things this man might have accomplished had he lived under different conditions. This son of the Ukrainian people yearned to master the treasures of world art; he avidly studied the world classics of poetry, being drawn particularly to the works of Goethe. Shevchenko began to study French in order to be able to read French poets in the original.

But the dark forces of the autocracy barred Shevchenko's progress to knowledge, hampered his development as a poet and writer. Tsar Nicholas I, or "the hindrance," as the poet bitterly named him, did everything in his power to crush Shevchenko's talents. A proscript, forbidding Shevchenko to write or paint, was affixed in the tsar's own handwriting to the sentence exiling him to the remote steppes in the capacity of a common soldier. Yet the tsar did not succeed in breaking Shevchenko's spirit. After ten years of dreary exile, Shevchenko wrote the follow-

The young Shevchenko. A self-portrait, 1845

ing words in his diary: "It seems to me that I am just the same as I was ten years ago, not a particle of my inner self has been changed." (1857.)

The national instrument of the Ukraine is the *kobza*, a stringed instrument. The folk bards, who used to sing to the accompaniment of this instrument, were called "*kobzars.*" By giving the title of *Kobzar (The Minstrel)* to his first volume of poems, Shevchenko sought to stress the folk character of his work, to emphasize the fact that his verse

endeavored to convey the sentiments, the wishes and hopes of his people. Below the reader will find a number of Shevchenko's poems, translated into English by Jack Lindsay.

Maxim Gorky, the great Russian writer, was exceedingly exacting toward any translation of Shevchenko. Gorky held in high admiration the Ukrainian poet's works, which he read for the first time at the end of the eighties of the last century, in illegal hand-copied volumes. In 1903-05 Gorky arranged for the translation of Shevchenko's best verses into the Russian language and demanded a high standard of work from the translators. Rejecting one unsuccessful translation, Gorky wrote to its author: 'Were we to publish Shevchenko in such a form we would be castigated for distorting the poet, we would be censured. Here is a piece of good advice: work hard over this book, and perhaps you will be able to do better. But we have no right to publish the verses in this form."

"Kobzar" (The Minstrel)
Painting by T. G. Shevchenko

In a letter to the editorial board of *International Literature*, Jack Lindsay wrote:

"I enjoyed doing the translation very much. I think I made out what are the essential qualities of Shevchenko in the original—simplicity, pictorial clarity and emotional fervor. And I tried to convey these qualities. I felt them particularly in the longest poem *(If You Knew)* where he works up to an absolute tornado of passionate indignation. . . ."

It must be borne in mind that Lindsay's task was extremely difficult, since he had to work from the English interlinear translation from the Ukrainian. Shevchenko has been translated into Russian by scores of poets over a period of many years. Nevertheless it must be admitted that there is still no adequate translation that would convey the spirit of the original Ukrainian text. Yet the giant figure of the Ukrainian minstrel, the gentle lyric thinker, the stern and implacable fighter against the people's oppressors rises before us even in the translations.

When Shevchenko was arrested, through the denunciation of an informer, one of the witnesses called to give evidence against him declared that "Shevchenko's guiding rule is that he who is loyal to the state is a scoundrel, and he who fights for freedom is a noble man." This striving for freedom is masterfully conveyed in Shevchenko's poetry. His verses are permeated with the dream of a society in which there would be no masters and no slaves. It is remarkable that although his poetry is so profoundly national and bound by firm ties to the folklore of the Ukrainian people, Shevchenko as a

Exterior of the Shevchenko Museum in Kanev

poet advocated the liberation of *all* oppressed peoples. Shevchenko fought against all tyrants, he stood for freedom for the Ukrainians, for the Russians, for the people of the Caucasus, to whom he dedicated his poem *Caucasus*. The poet revered the memory of the Decembrists, executed by Nicholas I. He associated with the most progressive social groups of his time, including the Polish revolutionaries. Shevchenko was perfectly aware, however, that there are two Polish nations: the Polish champions of freedom and the Polish *pans* (gentry). The latter Shevchenko hated bitterly as the most inveterate enemies of his people. This sacred hatred of the Ukrainian people for the Polish *pans* Shevchenko depicted in his *Haidamaks* and other poems. The poet took his themes from the past, from those pages of history when the Ukrainian peasants rose against their exploiters. To give a brief characterization of the content of Shevchenko's poems it would be correct to say that his was the poetry of the peasant revolts. He was one of the most ardent champions of human freedom in world poetry.

Despite tsarism's life-long persecution of the poet, its suppression of his poetry, its merciless distortion of the volumes of his works that appeared during his lifetime, nevertheless the words of truth uttered by the poet found their way to the people. The people loved Shevchenko and claimed him for their own. And when Shevchenko's body was committed to the earth, on a hill overlooking the Dnieper near Kanev, according to the poet's wish, his grave soon became the object of pilgrimages. One secret document addressed to the governor-general of Kiev contains the following eloquent admission: "A host of visitors are flocking to the grave of Shevchenko, whom the poet's friends have taught the common people to regard as a prophet, whose every word is a call to the people; and the word has gone around that the peasants

hope in future to take possession of the landowners' estates; that holy daggers have been interred in the grave above Shevchenko's ashes; that the hour is nigh when once again the *pans* and officials who suppress the people's rights will be massacred."

Shevchenko was well aware of his role as the people's tribune. In his autobiography he wrote that "the story of my life constitutes a part of the story of my country." And these words have come true. For the beloved poet's name is inscribed alongside the most courageous fighters for its national and social emancipation.

Shevchenko pointed out in his autobiography that the publication of the life stories of people who rose by their abilities and persistence from the dark and voiceless mass of the common people, are exceptionally important; for, he says, they help many to an awareness of their human dignity without which no social development is possible. By publishing detailed material on the life and work of the great Ukrainian poet we are merely acting in accordance with his humanitarian behest, a behest permeated with ardent love for the common people.

The tsarist censorship long prevented the Ukrainian people from gaining a thorough knowledge of the work of their national poet. Today this obstacle has been eliminated and the inhabitants of towns and villages in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic are freely commemorating the memory of their great poet with due ceremony.

In his article on the work of Shevchenko, Alexander Korneichuk, well known Ukrainian playwright and vice-chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, writes:

"The Ukrainian people won back Shevchenko with the help of their brothers, the Russian people, in the great days of the October Revolution. Wiping the interventionists off the face of the earth during the Civil War, the workers and peasants of the Ukraine, aided by the Russian workers and peasants, under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, showed the whole world of what the mighty, invincible power of the people is capable. This power of the people, its might, was perceived and felt by Taras Grigoryevich Shevchenko; it was the source of his inspiration and optimism.

"In Shevchenko's verse the Ukrainian language rang out with unusual force for the first time. What Pushkin did for Russian literature, Shevchenko did for the literary language of the Ukrainian people. By his great talent Shevchenko revealed untold wealth of folk dialect, bringing out the charming melodiousness of the Ukrainian tongue.

"Shevchenko's language, his tremendous simplicity, accuracy and the unusual musical quality of his brave words have remained an inexhaustible source of emulation for the Soviet writers and poets of the Ukraine.

"Under the warm sun of the Stalin Constitution the Soviet Ukraine is flourishing with new Socialist life. Over Shevchenko's grave on the Kanev hill play the steppe breezes, wafting the mighty, joyous melodies of the Soviet Ukraine."

TARAS SHEVCHENKO

SIX POEMS

Translated by Jack Lindsay

When I Am Dead

When I am dead, bury me deep
Within the funeral mound.
Bury me out in the wide steppe,
In Ukraine's beloved ground.
Out where the boundless stretching fields
Forever may be seen,
And the steep banks with the Dneiper
Roaring along between.

And when the Roarer from the Ukraine
Bears down to the blue sea
The enemy's blood, those fields and mountains
Will see the last of me,
For then I shall leave them all at last
And soar up into the skies
With a blessing for god—but now, meanwhile,
No god I recognize.

Bury me deep, but yourselves rise up
And break your chains in glee!
And with the oppressors' evil blood
Sprinkle liberty!
And when that great new family's born,
The family of the free,
O have a kindly and peaceful word
With which to remember me.

Pereyaslavl, 1845

If You Knew

If, gentlemen, you knew the ways
Of folk whom endless sufferings craze,
You'd write no elegies ag in
Nor praise your god—qnd praise in vain—
A mockery of our grievous days.

For forest-hut you strangely sigh
As "heaven of peace." Don't ask me why.
In such a hut despair I learned,
There down my cheeks the teardrops burned,
My first wild tears. O, it's no lie—
No evil thing that god has made
But filled that log hut in the glade . . .
For which as "heaven of peace" you cry.

Heaven is not the name I'd give
That log hut where I used to live
By the clear pond, at village-end.
There, swaddling me, my mother would bend
And as she swaddled, sing a song
Pouring her tale of grief and wrong
Into her child, and in that place,
That forest hut, no heaven of grace
I saw but hell. Dark slavery
And ceaseless toil: no one was free
To pause and praise this god you praise.
There my good mother, aged by days
Of toil and misery, while still young,
Into the grave of the poor was flung.
There my father sat with us weeping—
A small bare lot, our store all spent—
Under so cruel a fate he bent
And died, his master's profits heaping,
And we among the folk went creeping
Like little mice.
To school I went—
Yes, water for the pupils I drew.
As laborers my brothers existed
Awhile; then, beaten, they enlisted.

My sisters . . . sisters, woe for you!
My darling young ones—what to say?
For whom are you living on earth? For whom?
In stranger houses you stayed, and stay,
Hirelings, till your hair turns grey,
Hirelings, you'll meet the hireling's doom.
At the mere thought my memory cowers. . . .
That hut at village-end. . . . I shrink.
Such are the deeds to which we sink,
My god, within this "heaven" of ours
Set on an earth you've blessed so well.
In that heaven we created hell
While for the "home aloft" we pray.
So peaceful with our brothers we're found
We use them to plough up the ground
And water it with their tears all day.
Maybe there's more. No, I can't say. . . .
Only it seems to me that rather
(Since by your will, you god, alone,
In this our ragged heaven we groan)
Maybe now you yourself, our father,
Sit in the skies and mock us folk,
Plotting with masters to fit the yoke
And rule the world.
Turn here your gaze.
Here a green forest bends and sways,
And further onward you can see,
Like a strip of linen, a small pond
With pussy-willows draped beyond,
Dipping in the water quietly
Their green branches. A heaven, true.
But look at it, take a closer view.
What stirs in that heaven? Answer me.
Nothing but joy and praise appears.
On you, the only saint, men call,
Praising your wonders down the years.
Don't think it! Praise from none at all!
Only blood, and curses, and tears.
Curses, curses! What do they tell?
Nothing sacred on earth can be.
I think that you yourself as well
Are damned by men eternally.

Orenburg, 1850.

Dream

A serf, she reaped her master's wheat,
Wearily swayed, but not for rest
Sought out the sheaves on dragging feet,
No, to give Ivan babe her breast.
The swaddled child moaned in the heat
Under a sheaf, in shadow-lair,
She unwrapped his clothes, gave him the teat,
And fondled him, and slowly there,
Drowsed over him on her stubble-seat.

And so she dreams. She sees her son,
Comely and prosperous grown is he,
Wed to a woman who is free,
For freedom he himself has won
And no serf-labors must he yield.
O now in their own smiling field
It's their own wheat they're harvesting.
They eat the food the children bring;

And gleaning round the children stray;
Like sacred happiness are they,
Small angels roaming in a ring.
And as she slept, her face was gay.
She woke, and found the old harsh day.
She stared down at the child she bore,
Then gently swaddled him once more
And turned back to her task, before
The overseer came round her way.

Petersburg, 1858.

O Happy Days

O happy days! O youth of gold! . . .
Truly I do not now repine
Thinking what thing I was of old,
But sometimes such a grief is mine
That down my cheeks the tears have rolled;
And if, thus anguished, I behold

A little village-lad alone,
A leaf from the safe branches blown,
Alone beside the fence, forlorn,
Sitting with coat dingy and torn,
Ah, that is I, and I am he,
And it is my own youth I see.
Never, I feel, will that poor lad
Hail freedom living, and be glad,
Sacred Freedom! No, he'll find
His life flow past him, dumb and blind,
Till his best years are left behind;
And though the world's so big and wide,
No refuge he'll meet on any side,
He'll work as farmhand, till, one day,
To end the tears he's vainly shed,
To gain a shelter for his head,
With the soldiers he'll march away.

Kos-Aral, 1849

O Leafy Trees

O leafy trees! O forest-glade!
You are freshly arrayed
Three times a year. . . . Your father's wealth
Is thus displayed!
His bounty drapes you first about
With glittering green,
Till even he in wonder views
The leafy sheen. . . .
And when his girl so young, so dear,
He has long admired,
In robes of sacerdotal gold
She's next attired.
Last, Turkish stuffs provide the vest
And she is dressed
In costly white. . . . Then, wearied, he
Lies down to rest.

Petersburg, 1860

Beside the Hut

Beside the hut the cherries grow,
Cockchafers boom above the boughs.
Ploughmen trudge passing with their ploughs,
The girls sing strolling to and fro,
And supperwards mothers bend their brows.
Beside the hut, beneath the glow,
Of dusk's one star, the family's found,
The girl serves supper gaily round,
Her mother'd like to scold, but, no,
The nightingale drowns every sound.
Beside the hut, to bed now go
The children all . . . the voices fail;
The mother, hushed by her own tale,
Drops off . . . and quiet all things grow,
Except the girls and nightingale.

Petersburg, in the fortress jail, 1847

Village hut *Drawing by T. G. Shevchenko*

TARAS SHEVCHENKO

PRINCESS

In the course of my wanderings beyond the borders of my beloved country I had pictured it to myself grand and beautiful as I had seen it in my childhood; of the life of its taciturn inhabitants I had formed my own ideas, harmonizing them, as was natural, with the landscape. It never entered my head things should not be as I imagined them.

In Kozelets I hired a vehicle with a pair of unimpressive horses and a red-haired Jewish driver, and set out for my destination. It was September. What had been only a grey day in the morning by evening had turned into a wet day. Night was drawing on; it behooved me to think of a lodging, but not an inn did we pass, not even the shabbiest pothouse.

Before we reached the Trubezho River, or, as it is called locally, the Trubailo, we espied on the slope of a hill what seemed to be a village. As we approached we could see that it was a collection of houses which had been burnt down. No sign of life was to be seen in the charred black street, but beyond the dam, on the other side of the Trubezho, we caught a glimpse, between the willows and the faintly yellowing gardens, of white cottages.

We drove across the dam, past two noisy mills, and found ourselves in a big Cossack village. The large, clean cottages bore witness to the well-to-do circumstances of the inhabitants; but it was the homely prettiness of the first of the cottages which attracted me most, and I resolved to seek shelter here for the night.

A fine rain was falling fast now, but the master of the cheery cottage was standing leaning on the fence without the slightest appearance of concern. He wore a new sheepskin coat and smoked a short pipe, and, with a smile on his face, watched his favorite curly-horned oxen enjoying the cabbages growing in the garden. His wife, catching sight of this desecration through the cabin window, ran out in tears, calling:

"What are you standing there for, you old fool, watching the beasts destroying good garden stuff? Why don't you drive them out?"

"I've been driving them out for thirty years, let others do it now," the man returned coolly, and went on smoking his pipe.

"God help us, with the likes

Abridged.

of you!" the woman began again. "You might take off your good coat at least, can't you see it's raining?"

"Well, and what of it. Let it rain, god bless it!"

"What of it, indeed? You'll ruin the coat."

"Well, what of it? If I ruin this, I've got another."

"You might hit him over the head with a stick and he'd never budge," declared the woman, as she ran to drive the cattle out of the garden. The man watched her and smiled complacently.

This behavior, typical as it was of the Little Russian, pleased me very much, so I leaned out of the carriage and wished him a good evening, to which he replied:

"Good evening to you, too, good people. How far might you be faring?"

"Not so very far, yet we'll not be able to get there today," I said, climbing out of the *britzka*. Then I added slowly:

"And might one not spend the night, friend, in your cottage?"

"Why not? Of course you may. God bless us, the cottage is large enough, and we're right glad to see good folks."

As he said this, he opened the gate, and the *britzka* drove into the yard.

"Welcome, in the name of the lord," said the master of the house to me when I entered the yard; it was noticeable that he tried to pronounce his words in the Russian fashion.

I went into the house. Though it was nearly dark within, I could see that it was clean and spacious.

"Welcome kindly, sit you down," said the master of the house, pointing to a bench, "while I go and tell the old one to bring us a light."

A minute later an old woman came in, carrying a candle, which she set down on the table. Then she retired to the doorway, folded her arms and stood there, silent. She wore a clean cap and her dress was made in the German style, which surprised me very much. By what strange chance, I wondered, could such a thing have come into a peasant's cabin?

The master soon appeared again, bearing a crying child who, as soon as it saw the old woman, ceased screaming and smiled, stretching out its tiny arms to her.

"Take the child, Mikitovna," said the man, handing it to her. "See, she's frightened of a man; she's a little princess," he went on, stroking the baby's head with his broad, bony hand.

I had some candy in my pocket: I should explain here that I always carried a stock of this commodity in my pocket while traveling about Little Russia, as I had discovered that nothing softens my sullen countryman so quickly as kindness to his children. I had often applied these tactics with great advantage to myself.

I gave the child a candy. At first she only stared at me with her great big eyes, then she silently accepted my offering and, smiling, popped it into her rosy mouth.

Now I got a better look at both the child and the old woman. The latter struck me as a living portrait by Gerard Dawe; the child was a perfect cherub. Its pure, delicate beauty amazed me; I could not take my eyes off the lovely little creature. The old woman moved away a few paces, and I saw her make the sign of the cross over the babe, probably to protect it against the evil eye. The master of the house came over to me and said:

"A real gentleman's child, isn't it?"

"It's a lovely child," I replied, and offered it another sweetmeat.

The man was evidently pleased

with my gift, and, going up to the old woman, he said:

"Tell my wife to see if she can find something for our supper, and it wouldn't be a bad thing to bring us each a glass of . . . you can guess what, Mikitovna?"

"We're plain folks, sir," he went on, to me. "We have nothing sweet in the house, neither tea nor sugar, only plain things, done in a plain way."

The old woman left the room, while he, carrying the child in his arms, came over to where I was sitting.

"Now you can admire her, sir. Pretty, isn't she? She's a real little princess," he said.

"How did a nobleman's child happen to come here? Tell me the story, for goodness' sake," I said, astonished.

"Let Mikitovna tell you, sir, and see if you don't find it as good as a play. Likely enough, you noticed the burnt-down village over on the other side of the Trubailo?"

"Yes, I saw it," I replied.

"Very good. Well, it was from that very village that was burned down that the child's mother came; and that was her nurse you saw just now. . . . But I can't tell you about how the village was burned down, I was away from home at the time, so I never saw it. Let Mikitovna tell you all about it; she saw it, and she knows how it happened."

Meanwhile the old woman had returned. She laid a clean white cloth over the colored homespun one with which the table was covered, and took down an octagonal bottle of vodka and glasses from a corner shelf. She set them on the table, then brought slices of fish and white bread on a decorated wooden plate. All this was done so quietly and decorously that, watching her, one realized immediately that this woman had never been brought up in a peasant's hut. When she had done, she took the child in her arms and was about to retire when the master of the house said to her:

"Mikitovna, when you've put the child to bed, come back and join us. There's something we want to ask you about. And tell my wife there to get some supper for us, dumplings or a dish of porridge. You see we've strangers in the house."

As the old woman was going out, he repeated, calling after her:

"Come back afterwards, Mikitovna, when you have finished your work."

"Very well, I'll come," she called back from the passage.

After he had drunk a glass, and then another, my host grew more talkative. Once he was started, he talked on until, without noticing it, he had told me the story of his life.

Among other things, he told me how, when he was still a young lad, he had been among those who pursued the retreating French army, and had returned from foreign parts practically naked, with nothing but a cudgel in his hand; how he had hired himself out to the gentry, and how, by toil and good sense, he had grown rich and, from being a homeless orphan and a hireling, had become the foremost in the village. In short, in an hour's time I had learned his intimate history without asking a question. What I particularly liked about him was the way he told his simple story, touching very lightly, in passing, as it were, on his own valiant exploits, never suspecting that there was anything unusual about them.

In the meantime the old woman had brought in our supper and sat down to eat it with us.

When supper was over, the host turned to her and said:

"Now, Mikitovna, tell us the history of your princess, and all that happened that time. But, first of all," he added, "bring us a pitcher of plum cordial; it'll make it more cheery, you know, while we're listening to you."

In five minutes the old woman returned with a good-sized glass flagon. This she set on the table and then sat down on the bench. There was silence for a few moments; then she sighed, and began to speak.

"I'm ready to talk, Stepanovich, about these terrible misfortunes, about this hard and bitter lot—I'm ready to tell the story every day and every year to the whole world, so that the whole world may know of the bitter tears that were shed." And the old woman began to cry softly.

We drank a glass of plum cordial; the old woman wiped her eyes, and began her tale as follows:

"I cannot say now how many years ago it was, only it was a long, long time ago, before the French came. I was still a little thing with short hair when Demian Fyodorovich, who is dead now (god rest his soul!) came home from fighting the French. He had been serving in some Cossack regiment, but which, I couldn't for the life of me tell you. I only know that he was with the Cossacks and that's all.

"After he had looked over the house and the property and seen what was to be done, he straightened up what needed to be straightened up, and he built the two windmills that stand on the hill. Those are all that's left of the property.

"When he'd built the two windmills he bethought himself he'd get married, and he arranged a match with a certain Solonino for Solonino's daughter, Katerina Lukyanovna. In the spring they plighted their troth and after the Feast of the Blessed Virgin they were married.

"He wasn't six months a bridegroom, my dear master wasn't, when after the wedding they took me to work in the house. I missed my own folks and cried for a long time; then I got used to things as I grew older.

"The next year, or perhaps it was the year after that, god blessed them with a child. They called her Yekaterina and made me her nurse. And from then on, right up to the terrible times I'm going to tell you about, I was never parted from my poor unfortunate for an hour, she grew up under my care and got married and . . ."

"You've done enough crying, Mikitovna," my host said kindly. "It's all the will of god, you'll only bring down his wrath upon you with your tears."

After a while, the old woman went on:

"What a manager he was! What a kind master! A just man, if ever there was one! And everything has gone to the dogs. Why, Katerinich, the governor who is dead now, used to come from Kiev to visit us, and he could do nothing but admire and wonder at it all. And, mind you, Katerinich wasn't the kind to praise anyone without reason.

"To tell the truth, there was something to admire. Only forty houses altogether, yet what was there that we lacked in that village! We had ponds, water-mills, bee hives, a distillery, a brewery, and cattle of all kinds, and as for the rooms in the house, good lord, everything on earth you could think of in them. It was a treat to walk down that village street, the cottages were so white and clean. You'd think it was always a holiday—a Sunday; with folks just taking their ease walking about, or sitting outside their doors, well-shod

and well-dressed; and the children playing about the street, in white shirts, like little angels out of heaven. Ay, deary me! And where is it all now?

"Katerina Lukyanovna was a good manager too, that's true, but not like he was. Every Sunday or holiday they would invite Father Kuprian, who is dead now, to the Lord's Prayer [1] with them, and there would be a dozen decanters set out, every one with a different kind of vodka. Father Kuprian, god rest his soul, would take a glass of each with the Lord's Prayer and when he came to the last decanter, he'd say: 'Now, that's a good vodka, we'll drink that one.' Though to tell the truth, all the vodkas were equally good, but he was that sort, was Father Kuprian (he's dead now), and he was fond of his joke sometimes—god rest his soul.

"Now, their child Yekaterina Demyanovna—my Katrusya—was going on for two years old; and when she first started to walk, I led her by the hand to the parlor where they used to drink tea of a morning. Lord! They were so delighted, I couldn't tell you! Katerina Lukyanovna took the baby in her arms and kissed her and said there and then that she wouldn't let her marry anyone in the world but a prince or a general! . . . Ah, me! and what came in the end of all our foolishness. The people that came to ask for her hand! But nothing would please her mother but a prince or a general . . . and what a prince he was, finally, her bridegroom!"

"Aye, a fine one he was," my host observed. "He ruined her, poor thing."

"As the child grew older, they had her taught, first how to read and write, and afterwards, lord save us, what didn't they have her taught, I wonder! To sew, and embroider, and spin, and twist yarn; and once the master himself actually sent her to milk the cows, the poor child.

"Sometimes the mistress would be angry with him: 'What are you making of the poor child?' she'd say. 'Are we bringing her up to be a peasant's wife?'

"Who knows? She may have to live with a peasant yet; who knows what the future holds?' he would say, and then sit silent.

" 'You'd do better,' the mistress said once, 'to buy her a pianoforte in Kiev.' So they bought her a pianoforte by contract in Kiev and brought home a teacher for her along with it. I couldn't say whether he was a Pole or a German, I don't know; only he couldn't talk in our tongue, at every word he said you'd have to laugh. In a year or two he had taught her to play the piano, and when my little swan played you could only sit and listen, and listen and weep. Then she'd take and change to another song, and she'd strike up a tune, a dance so merry that I, though it was a sin and a shame for me, indeed, couldn't help it—I'd put my hands on my hips and go dancing round the room. Oh, how I'd dance! As light as a feather! And she would sit playing and laughing.

"Once the mistress caught us, and how she chided us! 'What are you doing?' she screamed. 'Was it for this you were taught the piano, so that you could ruin the instrument with common peasant songs?' I was scared out of my life, naturally, and I hid in the corner and

[1] A snack consisting of fish, vodka and other appetisers—over which the priest said, in lieu of grace, the Lord's Prayer: a custom which gave rise to an expression: to drop in, or invite someone, for the Lord's Prayer.

stood there so quiet, you'd never know I was in the room at all."

"You don't mean to say you were once a flighty thing, Mikitovna? Were you, now?" said my host, pouring himself another glass of plum cordial.

"God forgive me! I was young then, and youth will be youth. When my little nestling, Katrusya, grew up, we used to steal out as soon as the gentry were fast asleep in their beds, and roam about the garden till daybreak. The moon would be shining as bright as day; and she would sing: 'Don't venture out in the evening, Gritsya!' She'd sing it softly, softly, and so sweetly you could listen to her till daylight, it seemed.

"In the morning, whether she had slept or not, she'd be up and on the wing again like a little bird, as lively as ever and no one but myself ever knew what went on of nights. Oh, and I nearly forgot to tell you this: not far from our village, on the Trubailo, lived Major Yachny. You know the major himself, Stepanovich, don't you? He's still flourishing, thank god, and such a manager, not a whit worse than my dead master, Demian Fyodorovich. True, he had no more than ten cottages on his estate, but what cottages and what folk! About ten souls to a family in every cottage. Naturally they were prosperous and lived in luxury. And the major himself had ponds, and watermills, a house as pretty as that Easter egg of yours, so clean, so white, you could just stand and look at it. What would it have been if his wife had been alive? As it was he looked after everything himself. True, he had a son, but what good was he? He was but a child, he didn't even grow up under his father's eye, but was always away at school somewhere in Kiev or Nezhin, I'm not sure which.

"The major and my departed master were the greatest friends. There was a time when they never took a mouthful apart from each other, either our master went to him or he came to us.

"When the holidays came round, his son came home from school to spend them with his father, but he was at our place day and night. He and my Katrusya were always together; in the fields, in the garden, or in the house—they wouldn't go a step without each other. I used to look at them and think to myself: there's a pair growing up as well-matched as you'd see. They were just born into god's world for each other.

"And so the major thought, and so our Demian Fyodorovich thought and as for the children—there was not a doubt but they thought so, too. Everyone thought the same, save Katerina Lukyanovna; as for her, even when she was asleep, she saw herself with a prince or a general for a son-in-law, and she wouldn't hear of anything else. When the time came for the poor young lad to go back to school, my Katrusya would begin to cry a week beforehand, and after he'd gone, she'd take to her bed and for many a day she'd neither eat nor drink. God only knows what kept her alive.

"So my two little doves grew up; they grew up together and the two loved one another, the foolish young things. Lord! I'm looking towards the grave now, yet when I remember them, my two nestlings, I seem to grow young again. And each time, before they were about to part, they would go out into the garden together, and stand under a lime-tree or an elm with their arms about each other and kiss and look into each other's eyes for a long, long time. And the tears would roll down like pearls from their eyes; it was as

if they felt, even then, that they would never be let live, one for the other.

"Well, he finished school and Katerinich, the governor that's dead and gone now, took him up to Kiev, and put him into some government department but I couldn't tell you for what purpose he put the boy there. Anyway, he'd been a year in the department when he came to us on a visit, wanting to make match of it with my Katrusya.

"Demian Fyodorovich, god rest his soul, was for agreeing to it without any more ado, and said you wouldn't find a better husband for our Katrusya if you were to seek across the seas even, and that was the truth for him. But she herself—not Katrusya, god forbid! but her mother, Katerina Lukyanovna—put her foot down.

" 'What?' she shouted, 'am I to give my only daughter to a farmer, to this country hind? Never! I'd rather lay her in her coffin than see her, my lovely Katenka, living at Yachny's farm. What would she do there? Feed the turkeys and keep the geese? Oh, no, it wasn't for that I brought her into the world, it wasn't for Yachny's farm that I brought her up and educated her!' she would scream, and then shut herself up in her room for the rest of the day. The master himself tried to get round her this way and that way, but no, do what he would, she would have her way and no other; a prince, a general, or nothing!

"Demian Fyodorovich was for having them married without the mistress' consent, but as it so happened it wasn't god's will that he should do this good deed. At Christmas time, after he came back from Kozelets, he fell sick, and in the middle of Lent he died.

"Lord! It's terrible to remember it even now! On his deathbed he begged the mistress not to marry Katrusya to either a prince or a general, but to young Yachny, or even to some other man, as long as he was on the same level as herself. But no, the mistress would have her own way.

"And as ill luck would have it, the dragoons came to Kozelets—it was on Holy Thursday, I mind, and they were billeted on the farms and in the villages all that summer.

"Ah, those dragoons! May they never come back any more! Aye, they let you know they were here, those cursed dragoons did! More than one blackbrowed beauty bathed in her own tears when she saw the last of the villains! In our village alone there were four girls disgraced, and as for the villages of Oglavo and Gogolevo—they were beyond counting!

"Aye, they were a sore trouble to us, a sore trouble, those dragoons," observed the host, pouring out another glass of plum cordial.

"Even now it's fearful to call to mind," the old woman went on. "Once, as the evening was drawing in, we were sitting all three of us in the parlor: I was sitting knitting, I believe, Katerina Lukyanovna was just sitting, and Katrusya was reading a book, such a pitiful one, too, that I was ready to cry; it was all about some Cossack from beyond the Rapids—I think Kirsh or Yuri was his name, but I can't rightly remember which, only it was awful sad and pitiful. And just as my darling reached the part where they were putting fetters on this Yuri and throwing him into a dungeon, we looked up and there was a dragoon coming straight into the room. He was a tall man with a mustache and his visage was smooth and ruddy and the

gold braid glittered on the collar of his uniform.

"I'm so-and-so and so-and-so,' says he, 'Prince Mordaty.' 'We can see for ourselves that you are *mordaty*,'[1] I thought to myself.

" 'I am buying oats and hay,' says he. 'Do you happen to have any for sale?'

" 'Yes,' says Katerina Lukyanovna. 'Pray be seated.'

"So he sat down and Katrusya and I went into another room to finish our book, and no sooner had we begun, than in comes Katerina Lukyanovna and says: 'Now, Katenka, he is your fate.'

"We sat as if we were turned to stone. What passed between them that unhappy evening and how he came to make the match, we never knew. But from that evening on the prince rode over to see us every single day, early and late. And when young Yachny came home from Kiev to see us, he wasn't allowed inside the yard. He walked up and down outside the garden, weeping, and seeing him, we wept too. But of what avail were all our tears? Katerina Lukyanovna would have her own way: a year after Demian Fyodorovich's death my poor unfortunate Katrusya was betrothed to the prince."

"Aye, you may well call her unfortunate; of the property, and the luxury, all that's left is the two windmills, and as for her herself—god knows if she's still in the land of the living," my host muttered, as if to himself, and filled up his glass with plum cordial.

"And this was the way it was, Stepanovich. They were married the first week after Easter. She cried and cried, my poor unhappy girl, but what good was it all? God willed it so, that's clear; hadn't she prayed for mercy? Whom the lord loveth, he chasteneth.

"The day after the wedding the prince left Kozelets and came to live with us, and brought his orderly, Yashka—the nastiest ragamuffin! And all the property they had with them was a great white curly-haired dog, a green leather tobacco pouch and a long-stemmed pipe. And from that day we had a new master in the house."

At this point the old woman paused and then, after a few moments' silence, she crossed herself and went on:

"God forgive me unpardoned sinner that I am! Why do I judge a man who never actually did me any harm? . . . But when I come to think of it, he did me no little harm. He—may the almighty god have mercy on his soul!"—here she crossed herself again—"he was the death of her, the murderer of my only treasure, my one and only love! I never loved anyone in the world as I loved her, my poor unfortunate Katrusya. She was my only joy; the sweetest happiness I hoped for was to see her happily married. And what came of it? Only tears, tears, tears and disgrace.

"It was all her mother's doing. Her own mother was to blame for everything. She had wanted to see her only daughter a princess, well, and there she was—a princess! Now look at your princess, and be satisfied. Look at your lovely village now, your once green garden, the ruins of your fine tall house! Look at it all, Katerina Lukyanovna, and admire your handiwork! For it was you, you alone, and no one else who did all this.

"Now, tell me, good people, what did that sinful woman lack? Quality they were, real gentry, and she lived in the lap of luxury. But no, that wasn't enough; 'Let

[1] *Mordaty* — in this case an adjective meaning someone with a large, broad face.

me have a prince for a son-in-law, or I'll die if I don't get him,' that's the sort she was! So she got him, she got what she bargained for, she bought herself a prince by selling her only daughter. Oh, mothers, mothers! Surely you forget your own sufferings when you bore your children, since you sell so cheap a child that cost you so dear!"

She paused again, and my host said: "That's true enough, Mikitovna, but still we haven't heard yet how the new master of the household behaved."

So she went on quietly:

"It began, Stepanovich, with the prince turning the rooms into dog-kennels; that was how the new rule in the house began! Every day of the week there was feasting and banqueting, you couldn't see the daylight for tobacco smoke, and as for the rest—the least said about it the better. Sometimes the new master would invite all his dragoons from Kozelets for hunting, and then god help us! They'd come home drunk, dirty; an evil lot they were, such as god forbid you should ever see even in your dreams. And everyone of them would have an orderly with him that was as bad as himself and not for one, nor two, nor three days would they stay, but the whole week. And what they did that week in the house I'd be ashamed to tell you. It was like a pig-stye, a regular pig-stye. We were scouring, and scrubbing, and burning stuff in the house to get the smell of them out, for a whole month afterwards. That was when I learnt for the first time what dragoons really were. But all Katerina Lukyanovna did was to sit and look at them and smile.

"Before the month was out, he had everything in his own hands. His dirty Yashka had the keys of the chest of drawers and the cellar, so that whenever Katerina Lukyanovna wanted anything, she had to ask Yashka. Oh, then, for the first time she shed tears; then she saw her prince as a mother should have seen him before the wedding. But she was proud, and would not let anyone see that she noticed anything. And sometimes, when it was too much even for her to bear, still she would do her level best and smile and turn everything into a laughing matter.

"Katrusya, my poor Katrusya, sat in her room day and night, and her tears flowed like a river. He often came back drunk from Kozelets, at midnight, bringing a Jew with cymbals with him, and he'd rouse everyone in the house.

"'Dance!' he'd bawl. 'Dance, you tufted louts, dance or I'll strangle every one of you!' Katrusya and I used to run out and hide in the garden in the summer, and in winter time we often spent the night in some peasant's hut."

"What I wonder at," the host remarked, "is that none of you ever thought of smothering him sometime while he was drunk; people would only have said he drank himself to death."

"Ah, it's easy enough to talk like that, but what about the sin of it, and the judgment day, Stepanovich! No, let everyone die their own death, the judgment and the punishment are in god's hands, and not in ours, sinners that we are."

"And what else happened, Mikitovna?" the man reminded her, as he drew the bottle of cordial towards him again.

"Oh, Stepanovich, there was such drinking and dancing and midnight banqueting! The dragoons, you know, used to be so hungry when they arrived that if you only set an empty earthenware jar on the table, they'd gobble it up. Every single thing you put on the table

would be gone in a minute as if it had been swept away with a broom. And if you didn't clear away the dishes in time, the dishes would go flying under the table. You know what drunken men are. And the prince himself sat at the table and clapped his hands and shouted: 'Hurrah!' At first I didn't know the meaning of this word, I thought he was angry and was chiding his guests, but it appeared he was glad to see them ruining all his things.

"This Sodom and Gomorrah went on all winter, and then spring came, and we looked and saw that the fields were not turning green; neither grass nor barley nor wheat were sprouting. And the week after Whitsuntide went by, and still the fields were as black as if nothing had been sown.

"Prayers were offered up and pitchers of water were blessed, but nothing availed, nothing came up. They sowed spring wheat, but the seed rotted in the ground. The folks wept, the cattle bellowed with hunger, and at last even the dogs scattered howling. Then, lord only knows from where, wolves came and hunted the village night and day. Oh, there was dire trouble then, trouble for everyone.

"But ours was a two-fold trouble! On the one hand, the folks in the village were swollen with hunger, and dying like dogs without the last comforts of the church, without confession or holy communion (Father Kuprian himself was ailing). And the other trouble was that our prince, who saw nothing of all this, went on inviting his guests, his dragoons from Kozelets, with their people and horses and dogs, and giving them food and drink for a month at a time. It was nothing to him that every bit of thatch on the peasants' cottages had been eaten up by the cattle; that there wasn't a tree left alive in the wood. Every tree—the oak, and the ash, and the maple and the aspen, and even the willow, bitter as it is—had all been stripped and scraped by the starving folks. Oh god! the things god does to his people! You would see a man who didn't look like a human being any more, but some dreadful creature, some wild hungry beast; you couldn't look at him without a feeling of horror. And the children, the poor little children! They were swollen with hunger; they crawled about the streets like puppies and all they knew was one word: 'Bread, bread!'

"You think, maybe, we had no grain? The mice were eating it in the granary: we had enough to feed not only our village but the town of Kozelets as well, for five years. But what could we do? He wouldn't give it to the people. 'I'll do better to sell it when it rises in price. Let the people die, there's not much profit to be got out of them.'

"My poor Katrusya tried sometimes to put in a good word for the people. 'Hold your tongue!' he would shout at her, as if she were his white dog. 'I know what I'm doing, don't I?'

"The poor thing would say nothing in reply; she would go into another room in tears, and I had to shed tears looking at her. How could she contend with him—a wild beast, not a man? God alone knows how she bore her unfortunate infant!

"She was big with child then, that same child you saw today," the old woman went on, addressing me. "And sometimes when the master fell into a drunken sleep, she would steal past him on her tiptoes, trembling, and go to her own room and fall on her knees before the ikon of the sorrowing mother of god, and weep so bitterly, oh, so bitterly, so sorrowfully.

I've never seen anyone weep like she did. It used to frighten me.

"But when he had gone hunting with his dragoons, then we would each take a sackful of bread and . . . I used to caution her—'don't try a load that's beyond your strength, you can see the way you are. I'll carry both sacks.' But she would say: 'Never mind that, Mikitovna' (she called me Mikitovna, too)—'only show me the houses where there are little children and feeble old people.' So we'd go from cottage to cottage. God! The sights I saw. . . . A starving mother snatched the bread from the hand of her own dying child! A she-wolf, I believe, wouldn't do such a thing, but that's what starvation does to people.

"There was one cabin we went into. Ah! I'll never forget that cabin as long as I live! When we opened the door, the breath of hunger struck us full in the face. We went in and saw, lying in the middle of the floor, two miserable, thin little children. Only their knees were big. One was quite dead, but the lips of the other were still moving; beside them sat their mother, bareheaded; thin and pale she was; all she had on was a torn shift—without a gown to cover her. And her eyes—oh, lord!—her eyes! They were frightful to see. She was not looking at the children nor at anyone; god only knows what she was looking at. When we stopped on the threshold she seemed to cast a look at us, and then she screamed. . . . 'No bread, I don't want any bread!' I took a piece out of the sack and handed it to her. She clutched at it with both hands, gave a sort of shiver, and put it to the lips of the dead child. Then she burst out laughing. We went out.

"The summer passed somehow," she continued. "Autumn we never saw, because winter came on at once, and a cruel, hard winter it was. Both cold and hunger came down on us together. The stripped woods withered, but our prince forbade the people to cut them down for fuel.

" 'If any of you touches a single branch I'll drive him into his coffin,' he said. 'It's nice, dry wood, and in the summer I'll build myself a home out of it,' he said. 'I like plenty of room, a palace is what I need, and none of your Little-Russian huts, like the one I'm crowded into now like a dog in a kennel.'

"The poor people froze and died of cold and what was to be done? A gentleman does just what he likes.

"The first week in Advent Katrusya was delivered. She didn't want to have a wet-nurse, she fed the infant herself.

"Soon after the christening the prince went off to Kozelets with his comrades and stayed a whole week with them. It was a bit of a rest for us without him, and thank god for that.

"But one night, when we were all in our beds, he came home, and thundered at the door as if he would break it down, and shouted. I jumped out of bed and opened the door. When I brought a light I saw he had a woman with him, wearing a man's cap and an officer's overcoat.

" 'What are you staring at?' he shouted at me. 'Clear out, you fool!' I went back to my room.

"Next day when they were drinking tea, he said to Katrusya:

" 'Do you know, darling, what a surprise my sister gave me? Without writing a single word to tell me how much she wanted to make your acquaintance, she just took it into her head that she'd come here, without, as the saying is, thinking twice about it. What a flighty creature she is, to be

sure! And just imagine, she came by the stage-coach, dressed up like a regular woman-Hussar; she simply borrowed the clothes. Imagine my astonishment! Yesterday I was just going into the station, when I saw a sleigh and three horses standing ready at the gate. I halted, thinking, let me see, who can this be? And then I saw a lady come out. I was a trifle tipsy, you know (forgive me, my dear, it's an abominable habit of mine!). Well, I looked at her, and, imagine my joy! It was my own sister. . . . Of course, we flung ourselves into each other's arms!'

" 'I never knew you had a sister," Katrusya said.

" 'Why, of course, I have. And not one sister, but two. One is married to Count Gorbatov, and she lives at the court, in the capital. She would have come to see me, too, but she can't, you know; she's much too prominent at court. I'll introduce my sister to you now, darling.'

"My poor Katrusya turned as white as a sheet; she guessed only too rightly what sort of a sister it was. . . . In a minute he came in with a woman on his arm. I couldn't tell whether she was young or old, for the red and white paint on her face. 'Allow me, darling, to present Princess Julie Mordaty.'

"The woman curtseyed in a spry sort of way, and mumbled something, but whether it was Russian or Polish she spoke I could not tell, nor Katrusya either, I think, for she did not even nod to the woman; she only turned whiter than before.

" 'You must excuse my sister, my love, she's still at a boarding-school and she can hardly speak a word of Russian; in the highest circles no one needs to know Russian. Why, as regards myself, I must admit I couldn't say two words in Russian till I was twenty. At home in Georgia it's just the same as in the capital; no one speaks Russian, only French. That's the fashion, my love. We'll send our little one to a boarding-school in the capital, too, won't we?'

"Katrusya could listen no longer. She got up from the table without speaking and went to the nursery: I followed her.

"Katerina Lukyanovna was left with her princes and princesses. I would be happy, Stepanovich, if I could only forget what went on in our house. But god gave me a good memory in punishment for something—I don't know what.

"After that abominable sister, I never left my Katrusya for a minute, and she, my poor unhappy one, never stirred out of her room. Oh! St. Katherina, holy martyr that you were, did you suffer such torments as your poor namesake suffered? She would weep all day, and weep all night. I was at my wits' end, wondering what to do with her. She went on weeping and weeping until at last she began to be a little queer in her head. When I wanted to take the child from her breast she would not let me.

" 'We'll die together," she said, 'lay us in the same grave, and then let them do what they will; but I'll not give my child up to anyone.'

"What was I to do? It made me cry to look at her. Sometimes Katerina Lukyanovna would come into the room, and look at her princess and, proud woman though she was, she could not help but weep and go out of the room.

"We could hear songs and music from the other rooms; it was like a tavern at the cross-roads; and the Jewess Haika—the prince called her his sister, too—was always in the company of the dragoons and singing and dancing and cutting all sorts of capers. It was abominable. She even smoked a pipe.

"In the beginning my poor Katrusya pretended she saw and heard nothing of it. But as time went on it became more than the unfortunate woman could stand; what could we do with that villain? Women like us can but shed tears, only tears, nothing else is left to us. And what are tears? Water. Ah, me! Those bitter tears she shed.

"He would come in to see her from time to time, as if nothing had happened, and ask: 'How are you feeling now?' He seemed as if he were blind, and couldn't see that the poor thing was hardly able to drag a leg after her. 'Perhaps, my love, we ought to send to Kozelets for the regimental doctor?'

" 'No, it's not necessary,' she said, that was all.

" 'Oh, well, you know best. It's your affair, not mine; I never interfere in your affairs, my dear,' he would say, and go out, banging the door behind him.

"We only ventured out when he went away for two or three weeks to visit his dragoon comrades. Then we would scour and scrape the floors and give the rooms an airing, for he had turned them into regular stables.

"Once he came home at night, bringing another 'sister' with him, not a Jewess this time, but a Polish woman, or maybe a Gipsy, for all I know; I only remember that she was very dark and that he wanted to introduce her to Katrusya, but Katrusya would not let him into the room."

"The winter was drawing to an end. About the middle of Lent our peasants came in a crowd to ask for grain for seed for sowing, and promised if god sent them a good harvest that they would repay him sevenfold.

"But no, he would not hear of it, nor let them have their say. He drove the poor fellows away and set the dogs on them.

"Katerina Lukyanovna wanted to put in a word for them, but he barked at her: 'Hold your tongue! It's not your business, I know myself what I'm doing. I don't advise you about your caps and blouses, do I? I beg you not to interfere with my arrangements.'

"Then he called to his man, Yashka, and ordered him to get a sleigh and three horses ready, as he was going off to his dragoons.

"When he had gone, Katerina Lukyanovna went out to the threshing-barn to choose half a stack of rye and wheat and give orders for it to be threshed for seed for the peasants; she thought the master had gone away for a long time as usual.

"When she looked into the granary she saw that half of the stacks were gone.

" 'Why, where has it all gone?' she asked the watchman at the threshing floor.

"He told her that the prince had sold it off by degrees to the Jews, and that half was sold already, straw and chaff as well, all to the Jews: and the Jews sold the straw, of course, to the dragoons, and the chaff to our peasants, who, poor things, were glad to get even that.

"Katerina Lukyanovna chose a stack of barley and another of wheat and told the peasants to thresh it; 'only do it quickly,' she said, 'because if the prince comes back, he won't let you have any of it.'

"And so it turned out. Next day, as soon as they had started threshing, there he was, driving into the yard.

" 'What are you doing, you rogues?' he shouted. 'How dare you! Who gave you leave to do this? I'll show you!'

"And he snatched a whip from the driver's hand, or maybe it was from Yashka's, and started to thrash the threshers till there wasn't one left on the threshing-floor, they all fled. And Katerina Lukyanovna got into so much trouble over that threshing that, poor thing, she didn't rise from her bed for three days afterwards.

"For a while after that, the master stayed at home, feasting, and never went away right until the week after Whitsuntide.

"But in 'green week' he took Yashka with him and went away somewhere. Katerina Lukyanovna sent for the peasants at once and ordered them to thresh as much as they could of wheat for spring sowing, because, thank god, there had been rain and the earth was growing nice and green.

"They had just started to thresh millet and buckwheat, when that very day back he was again, with a host of dragoons like the hordes of Mamai.[1] Some on peasants' carts, some riding bareback; and their poor orderlies tramping along barefoot, after their masters.

"As soon as the master set foot on the threshold, he called Yashka and told him to order dinner for fifty, to be got ready by three o'clock without fail, and supper for a hundred in the evening, and that should be ready without fail, too. Both for dinner and for supper the table was to be laid in the garden: 'Enough of lounging about in that stable of a house, now we can go out on the grass.' And he jingled the gold in his pockets. 'Tell the steward to have all the peasants out on the threshing-floor tomorrow, do you hear? All the grain must be threshed at once, as much as there is of it.' Here we guessed where the gold that jingled in his pockets came from. 'Can he have sold all the grain?' Katerina Lukyanovna said. 'What will the poor people sow, then?'

"So the dragoons went straight into the garden with all their dirty crowd, and never entered the house. They lay on the grass, talking their indecent talk and smoking their pipes, until the master ordered vodka to be brought out to them. All the chairs and tables were carried out into the garden: he ordered the things to be taken out of the bedrooms as well, but we locked ourselves in and would not let him enter. He cursed and swore after his fashion—Moscow fashion—but left us alone while the dinner was being prepared.

"The dragoons amused themselves in the garden, drinking vodka, of which big decanters were set out under nearly every tree. And the rest of the guests drank and played cards. Our prince drank and gambled with them and lost all the gold he had got in advance from the Jew for our grain. Then he flung his cards down on the ground and got up from the table, and the dragoons roared, laughing at him. I saw all this out of the window.

"Dusk was coming on when Yasha and the other orderlies started to lay the table. They first set up the tables and then laid long boards on them, plain oaken boards. They covered these with coarse linen, because, although we had a long tablecloth, Katerina Lukyanovna refused to give it to them. It was a costly one and she did not want these drunken guests to spoil it.

"Candles were set in three places on the table, and, to give still more light, tar-barrels were set at each end of the table and lit.

"The very minute the dragoons took their places at the table, the regimental trumpeters—god knows where they came from!—struck up,

[1] Tatar warrior.

Poor Man's Hut *Drawing by T. G. Shevchenko (1843)*

with a blare that made the very ground shake under them.

"They hadn't played the first march through before I saw our threshing barn was afire. Sparks from the tar-barrels were flying about everywhere, on the grain-stacks and the threshing barn. The guests were terribly drunk now; they just looked on and roared, laughing, and shouted 'hurrah!'

" 'Katrusya,' I said, 'Katrusya, my heart's delight, look, our granary is on fire; what shall we do?'

"Then I saw she was like dead. I turned to Katerina Lukyanovna, but she was stretched out in a dead faint, too.

"I sprinkled cold water over her and she came to herself.

" 'Save Katrusya and the baby,' I said, 'else they'll be burnt to death. The stacks are all burning now, and the fire will soon reach the house.'

"We brought her round at last, though it was very hard, and we took her under the arms and led her out of the house. I wanted to take the child away from Katrusya but she would not let go of it, she only whispered, 'I'll not give up my baby, I'll not give her up to anyone, I'll bury her myself.'

"We were terrified, it was dreadful the way she whispered all this. We led her out over the dam, straight to your house, Stepanovich, — god send you good health," the old woman said, turning to the master of the house.

"It was from your house that I watched that terrible fire. And lord knows where the wind came from, but it blew the burning sheaves out of the stacks on to the buildings. Then it seemed the wind changed

again, when the buildings were well alight, and blew the fire straight toward the village cottages. In another minute the whole village was ablaze.

" 'We're done for,' I said to Katrusya. But she, poor thing, only lay there and nodded to me; she couldn't move the tongue in her mouth.

" 'Katrusya! Katrusya!' I screamed. But she did not hear me. I stood, neither dead nor alive.

" 'Katrusya!' I called once more. Then all of a sudden up she jumped, and looked about her, and flung the poor infant down on the floor, and let out a screech and started to tear her hair.

"I saw that she wasn't in her right mind, so I took the child away to another house. Then I quieted and soothed the poor thing somehow, and wrapped her up in some coarse linen and started to pour cold water on her head. She came to herself then, and kept saying, 'I will not! I will not!'—but what it was she would not do she did not know herself, for she did not know what she was saying. Then she burst out laughing, then she started to sing; and she sang so mournfully, it was so awful to listen, we had to run out of the house. . . .

"So she lay in torment like that till morning. Just as the day was breaking she quietened down a bit.

"I sat down then by the window and watched that poor village of ours burning away. Here and there nothing but smoke was to be seen, nothing else was left. The house and the kitchen and the village—all was gone. Only the chimneys and the stoves were left of the master's house, and as for the peasants' cottages there wasn't even so much left, because they weren't built of stone. Only the garden, blackened with smoke, was left; but it was so black and frightful I was afraid to look at it. I wept, sinner that I was, seeing that fire. 'What are we to do?' I cried. But it's all his holy will!

"I roused Katerina Lukyanovna and said to her: 'What are we to do now? Where shall we find shelter? Where are we to go with our poor Katrusya?'

" 'Why?' she asked me.

" 'Because,' I said, 'she's out of her mind, she's gone crazy.'

" 'And the child?' she asked. 'I took the child away from her,' I said, 'for she all but strangled it.'

"The mistress jumped up and ran out bareheaded into the yard, calling for a *britzka* to be got ready. Then she saw she was in a strange yard, and she stopped and said nothing for a minute. Looking over across the bank, she gave a gasp and shivered, and fell into my arms like dead.

"When she came to, she asked me: 'Where is the princess?' (She always spoke of Katrusya as the princess.) 'Show me where she is.'

"We went to the room where Katrusya was shut up. When we went in, she was sitting on the floor in her shift with her braid of hair all untidy and hanging about her. She was burning hot, though it was chilly enough in the room, and she held in her arms her crumpled gown, pressing it to her breast. When we came in she looked at us and whispered: 'The baby's asleep, don't wake her!'

"We went out. It was dreadful to look at the poor thing, but Katerina Lukyanovna behaved as if it were all nothing; she did not even give a sigh, yet who but she was to blame for all this? Condemn her not, O lord, on thy judgment day!

"After a minute's silence or so, she said to me: 'We must get a *britzka* and horses somewhere and take her to Chernigov or Kiev. Kiev is nearer, I believe, but where will we find horses and a *britzka?*'

" 'Stepanovich will give us horses, I said, 'but he has no carriage, only a common peasant's cart.'

" 'Ask him for them,' she said, 'even for the commonest of carts.'

"I begged the loan of horses and cart from Stepanovich and he gave them, and I thanked him for them. We put a lot of hay in the cart and covered it with linen and laid my love in the cart; Katerina Lukyanovna sat down beside her and they took her away to St. Kiril's Convent in Kiev. So there is your princess for you, Katerina Lukyanovna. Now, when you look at her are you satisfied?"

The old woman ceased speaking and wept quietly.

"Yes, that there's a fine princess for you!" the host remarked.

"And what happened to the prince?" I asked.

"Lord only knows!" cried the old woman. "Just before St. Peter's Day the dragoons were moved away from Kozelets, and maybe he went with them; at any rate, we never saw him after that dreadful night."

"That was a prince, no doubt about it!" the host observed. "He might at least come and see his own child, curse him."

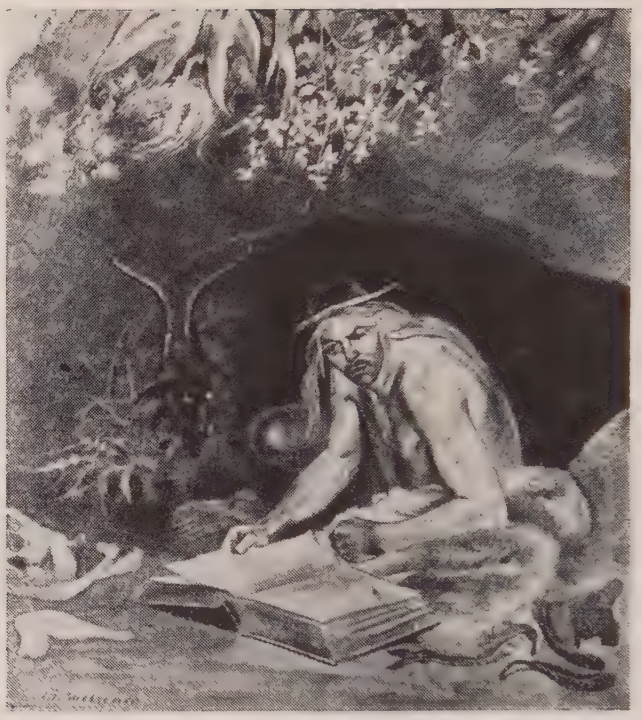
"Lord save us! Better that he should never do that," said the old woman. She bade us good night and left the room.

Next morning, while my driver was oiling the *britzka* and harnessing his lean horses, I sat down outside the cabin, gazing over at the mournful ruins of the burnt village on the opposite bank of the Trubezho; and I involuntarily exclaimed: "There's your village for you! There's your idyll! Here is your patriarchal life for you!" And many similar exclamations escaped me before my conveyance emerged into the street. After thanking my host for his hospitality, I traveled on.

A few days later I was in Kiev and after visiting the holy saints of the Pechera, went that same day to the Convent of St. Kiril.

Alas, it were better had I not! All I gained was a proof, only too convincing, of the bitter truth of the mournful tale that had greeted me so cheerlessly in my dearly-loved country.

An illustration by Shevchenko to "Robinson Crusoe." (Sepia, 1839-43)



Hut on the Bank

Drawing by T. G. Shevchenko (1843)

Narcissus — by T. G. Shevchenko. (Sepia. 1839-43)

T. G. Shevchenko drawing in a Kirghiz hut
Painting by T. G. Shevchenko (Sepia, 1848)

Diary of T. G. Shevchenko

(EXCERPTS)

June 13, 1857

I ought to have begun my diary from the time I was forced into a soldier's uniform, *viz.*, from the year 1847. By now it would have been a thick and tedious volume. When I look back on those ten sad years, I am heartily glad that the idea of keeping a diary did not occur to me then. What would I have entered in it? True, in the course of those ten years I saw sights that not everyone can see even if he pays for the privilege of witnessing them. But I saw them as a prisoner who watches a wedding procession pass by the barred window of his prison. The memory of those years is alone enough to set me a-tremble.

I received a letter from St. Petersburg, dated May 2, from Mikhail Lazarevsky, [1] with seventy-five rubles enclosed. He informed me, or rather congratulated me, on regaining my freedom. Since I have heard nothing from corps headquarters, however, I am collecting information about the Volga steamboat service to while away the time until the orders come for my release.

June 14

. . . What can I record today? There is this: yesterday's steamboat delivered a fair-sized sack of rubles. This is the four months' salary of the garrison. Today the officers received theirs and already they have disposed of some of it at the canteen and will send the rest, too, to the "alcoholmeter"; they have begun to make merry, or rather, to tipple. Tomorrow the soldiers will be given their pay and they will also begin to make merry, that is, to tipple. This will go on for several days, and will terminate in drunken brawling: the finishing touch will be the "hen-coop"—the guard room.

Self portrait by T. G. Shevchenko, drawn during his exile in the Orsk fortress (1847)

Soldiers are the poorest and most pitiful people in our Christian country, for a soldier is deprived of all that makes life sweet: family, home, freedom—in a word, every-

thing. If, from time to time, he drowns his orphaned, lonely soul in a half a bottle of weak vodka, one can make allowances for him. But in what respect does the conduct of the officers—who have everything, every human right and privilege—differ from that of the poor soldier? (I am speaking of the Novopetrovsk Garrison.) In no way. If the officers were upstarts and soldiers of fortune, there might be some excuse for them; but no; they are young men trained in cadet schools.

What a training that must be! An inhuman training. But it is a cheap and—what is, after all, the main thing—a rapid training. A youth of eighteen is already an officer; the hope and apple of his mother's eye, the support of his decrepit father. Pitiful mother, foolish father!

June 18

Toward evening the mail arrived, but brought nothing either for me or concerning me. So I am once more down in the dumps. Once more dejection and endless waiting.

Can it be that from the sixteenth of April until now they could not come to some decision about me at corps headquarters? Cold hearted, indifferent tyrants! I went back to the fort, and was ordered by the sergeant major to prepare for inspection; this was the only outcome of the long awaited mail and the freedom to which I had looked forward in trembling. Oh, it is hard, indescribably hard! It is sending me crazy, this endless waiting.

How promptly and eagerly an order for arrest is carried into execution! And how reluctantly and coldly an order for release is discharged. Yet both proceed from one and the same person. They are both executed by the same people. Whence does this difference arise? In June, 1847, it took exactly seven days to convey me from St. Petersburg to Orenburg. And now—god grant that after seven months the battalion commander issue the order for my army equipment and uniform to be turned in and my allowance stopped. A "matter of form." But I cannot see the sense of this inhuman form.

June 19

Yesterday the steamer left for Guryev, whence it will return with the second company and the battalion commander himself. The company that remained here, and to which I belong, is preparing for a review on the arrival of this important personage. Today we had to clean and polish our equipment for the occasion.

Can it be that this will not be the last time I am to be led out on the square like a dumb animal on show? It is a disgrace and a humiliation. It is hard and painful, impossible, in fact, to trample one's own human dignity, to stand at attention, obey commands and move like a machine. And this is the method used to kill thousands of one's fellow men's souls at once. Truly a great invention, a work of genius that does credit to Christianity and enlightenment! Strange that even sensible people like our doctor Nikolsky are fond of watching a man turn blue with the strain as he stands at the stretch for hours. I cannot understand it: there is something inhuman about this form of entertainment. Yet our worthy Hippocrates can spend hours, indifferent to heat or cold, observing the degradation of creatures like himself. It is plain that you are a hangman by vocation and a doctor only in name.

So far as I can remember, in my childhood I never cared for playing at soldiers, though so many chil-

Illustration by V. Kasyan to T. G. Shevchenko's book of poems, "Kobzar" ("The Minstrel")

dren do. As I approached the age of understanding, I felt an irrepressible antipathy towards Christian warfare, an antipathy which increased the more I came into contact with people of this Christian profession.

I do not know whether it was due to accident or whether it was inevitable under the circumstances, but I never happened to meet, even in the guards, a single decent man in uniform. If he were sober, then he was sure to be a boor and a braggart. If he had even a spark of sense and enlightenment, he was a braggart just the same, and a drunkard, a wastrel, and a debauchee into the bargain. Naturally, my antipathy deepened into loathing.

But an evil fate mocked me and drove me into the stinking dregs of this Christian category. Even had I been a tyrant or the most bloodthirsty of creatures, a more suitable punishment could not have been found than to draft me into the Orenburg corps as a soldier. Therein lies the root of all my inexpressible suffering.

And worst of all, I am forbidden to draw. To deprive me of the noblest thing in my poor existence! A tribunal presided over by Satan himself could not have pronounced a more hard hearted and inhuman sentence than this. And the soulless creatures who were responsible for seeing the sentence carried into execution did their work with revolting precision.

The pagan Augustus, though he exiled Nason to the barbarians, did not forbid him to read and write. But a Christian Nicholas I has forbidden me both the one and the other. Both were hangmen, but one of them was a Christian; a nineteenth-century Christian, before whose eyes the largest state in the world has grown up on the

foundations of the Christian faith.

The republic of Florence was a half savage medieval Christian state, yet how it dealt with its rebellious citizen Dante Alighieri! God knows I am far from comparing myself with the great martyrs and lights of mankind. I am only comparing a coarse pagan of a semi-enlightened medieval state with a Christian of the nineteenth century.

I do not know for certain to what circumstance I am indebted for the fact that in the whole of my ten years' service I have never been promoted even to the rank of non-commissioned officer. Is it the result of the antipathy I feel towards this privileged class, or to my own incorrigible Ukrainian obstinacy? To both the one and the other, it seems.

On that never-to-be-forgotten day when my sentence was announced to me, I told myself that they should never make a soldier out of me. And they have not. I have never learned even superficially, let alone thoroughly, a single exercise. This flatters my vanity. Mere childishness, nothing more. Major Meshkov[2] once said, with the intention of hurting my feelings, that when I became an officer I would not be fit to enter a decent drawing room if I did not learn the goose-step as a soldier should. My feelings were not at all hurt, however. And a soldier seemed to me less a human being than an ass. I was afraid of bearing the faintest resemblance, even in my thoughts, to the soldier type.

A no less important reason for my non-promotion was this: the soulless satrap and favorite of the tsar[3] imagined that, liberated as I was from serfdom and educated at the tsar's expense, I had as a mark of gratitude drawn a caricature of my benefactor. Such ingratitude must be punished, he decided.

I do not know whence this silly fable sprang; I only know that it has cost me dear. I can only surmise that it was invented when the conclusion of the sentence was read out: "strictly forbidden to write or draw."

I was forbidden to write because of provocative verses I had written in the Ukrainian tongue. But as to why I was forbidden to draw, the judge of the supreme court himself was ignorant. The enlightened executor of the tsar's orders explained for himself what had been left unexplained in the sentence, and crushed me with his soulless might. A cold and vicious heart. That rotten old debauchee is famous here as the generous and gracious benefactor of this district. How near-sighted or, perhaps it would be better to say, how low are those who sound his praises! The satrap robs the country entrusted to him and presents his immoral charmers with 10,000-ruble jewels, so they laud his generosity and benefactions. The villains!

June 20

. . . Having received a letter from Kukharenko [4] containing twenty-five rubles—a very substantial enclosure—I acknowledged it with a letter containing an enclosure of my own, the impossible tale of an imaginary convict entitled *The Soldier's Well.* I wrote this shortly after receiving a letter from our ataman Koshevoi. The verses proved to be nearly as good as those of former days. A little stiffer and more uneven. But that does not matter; god grant I may break free yet, and then they will flow more freely, smoothly, simply and lightly. Will I ever see her—the lame enchantress—Liberty?

June 26

. . . There are small minds that live on hope, said Goethe. A wise

man, but he expressed only half the truth. Hope is natural to both the small and the great, even to the most serious minds. It is our tenderest, most constant nurse and lover, true to us till death. It is she, the beautiful one, who is ever ready to lull the credulous fancy of the all-powerful monarch, the world-famous scholar, the poor ploughman, and a miserable fellow like myself; she soothes the mistrustful mind with fairy tales, each of us willing to believe; I do not say unquestioningly. Why should I not believe that by the time winter sets in I shall be in Petersburg again, and see the faces so dear to me, and visit my beautiful Academy [5] and the Hermitage (which I have not yet seen), and hear that enchantress—the opera? Oh, how sweet, how inexpressibly sweet it is to place one's faith in a lovely future! I would be but a cold, indifferent atheist did I not believe in that beautiful god, in that magic hope.

Naturally, I propose to arrange my material circumstances with the aid of my friends. There is no use in my thinking of painting now. I was not even a mediocre painter in former days, and now even that is out of the question. Ten years without practice can make of even a great virtuoso the most ordinary tavern guitar player. It follows, then, that there is no use my thinking of painting.

I am considering devoting myself entirely to aquatints. I intend to limit my material needs to the utmost and make a steady and persevering study of this art. My spare time I shall employ in making copies in sepia from famous works of art, and drawings for my future engravings. I think it should be sufficient if I apply myself for two years to this. Then I shall return to my own Ukraine, where the cost of living is low, and settle down to engraving. My first will be of Teniers' picture of the barracks, the picture of which my great teacher Karl Brullow, [6] of immortal memory, said that it would be worth while journeying from America just for the sake of a glance at that marvelous work. And the opinion of the great Brullow on this subject can be trusted.

Of all branches of the arts I love engraving most. And not without reason. To be a good engraver is to be a medium for distributing the beautiful and instructive; it means that one can be useful to people and please god. The engraver's profession is one of the finest and noblest. How many splendid works of art, accessible only to the wealthy, would hang idle in gloomy art galleries, were it not for thy magic burin? A divine profession—that of engraver!

Besides copying masterpieces, I intend, in the course of time, to produce my own works in aquatint,—the parable of the prodigal son, adapted to the morals of the merchant class of today.[7] I have divided this instructive parable into twelve drawings. Almost all of them are sketched out on paper already. But long and persevering toil will be required before they are fit to be transferred to copper. The general idea is fairly well suited to the taste of our vulgar merchant class, but the execution has proved to be beyond me. Nimble sarcasm, pointed, true, and, above all, dramatic rather than burlesque, is called for, and not mere ridicule. To attain this will require a great deal of hard work and the advice of people who understand these things.

June 27

Toward evening gnats made their appearance in my vegetable garden, so, seeking escape from these abominable insects, I went to spend

the night in the fort. But alas! an unrelenting Nemesis pursued me. I escaped from the gnats only to fall into a wasp's nest.

As, with all due respect, I passed the wing in which the officers are housed, Lieutenant Campinioni [8]—an engineer and an inveterate drunkard—staggered out into the square, for exactly what purpose I do not know. Upon catching sight of me, he took it into his head to do me a trifling service and show his patronage by introducing me to some newly arrived officers, mettlesome fellows he called them. So he seized me by the arm and dragged me into the corridor.

The new arrivals, the mettlesome fellows, were lounging about, dressed only in their red tunics, with a gallon bottle of vodka before them. Not wishing to make one of what resembled a Volga robber band, I flung off my patron's grasp and rushed out into the square. He ran after me, called the non-commissioned company officer on duty, and ordered him to put me in the guard house for personally insulting an officer.

This insignificant little officer's orders were carried out with the greatest precision. After the reveille was sounded the sentry officer reported the new arrest to the commandant, who said: "Let him sleep it off." So my attempts to escape the bloodthirsty gnats ended in my being delivered up to the bugs and fleas. Who, after this, would not believe in fate?

June 28

. . . Yesterday I went to the fort to pack up my few miserable belongings while waiting for the steamer. And, as usually happens when a man is expecting some good news, he builds rosy plans on it. Thus did I spread out the magic carpet, in anticipation of the blessed tidings of freedom, and in another minute I would have found myself in the seventh heaven of Mahomet. But before I reached the fort I met a messenger who had been sent by the commandant, Uskov,[9] to look for me.

"Hasn't the steamer arrived?" I asked him.

"No," he replied.

"What can the commandant want of me?" I asked myself as I quickened my pace. When I entered, the commandant, without greetings or preliminaries of any kind, handed me a paper. I gave a start, thinking that this must undoubtedly be the news of my release. I read it.

I could not believe my eyes. It was a report sent to the commandant by Lieutenant Campinioni, complaining that I had insulted him, using obscene words, while drunk; to which the newly arrived officers bore witness. In conclusion he requested, indeed demanded, that I should be dealt with to the full severity of the law, that is, sent up for trial.

I was dumbstruck when I learned of this unexpected villainy.

"What am I to do with this reptile? Give me your advice," I said to the commandant when I had recovered a little.

"There are only two alternatives," he replied. "Either you beg his pardon or discipline requires that you be placed under arrest. You can produce witnesses to prove you were sober and he can produce witnesses that you swore at him."

"I'm ready to take my oath it isn't true," said I.

"But he will take his oath that it is true. And he is an officer, while you are only a soldier."

Ugh, how ghastly was the recollection at that moment of a word I had all but forgotten! There was nothing to be done; I put my pride in my pocket, dressed myself in

Shevchenko's portrait of N. V. Maximovich (1859)

my uniform and went off to make my apologies. I was kept a good two hours waiting in the scoundrel's hall. At last I was admitted to his now more or less sober presence. After profuse apologies, much forgiveness and humiliation, I was pardoned on condition that I send out at once for half a dozen bottles of vodka. I sent for the vodka, while he went to the commandant to retrieve the report. The vodka was brought and he returned with the report and all his gentlemanly witnesses.

"Well, now," remarked one of them, offering me his flaccid and unsteady hand. "You didn't care to be introduced to us nicely of your own free will, as is the custom among gentlemen, so we forced you to."

This brief sermon drew a laugh from the already tipsy crowd, and I all but exclaimed: "You scoundrels! Downright scoundrels!"

July 1

Once, long ago, in 1836, if I am not mistaken, I was so fascinated by the tales told of the fairy fetes at Peterhof[10] that without asking leave of my master (I was apprenticed at the time to a house painter; a man called Shirayev, [11] a coarse and cruel fellow), and completely disregarding the consequences of this voluntary absence (for I knew he would never have let me go), I set out with a lump of black bread and fifty kopeks in my pocket, and, dressed in the same sort of ticking overall that apprentices usually wear, I went straight from work to the festivities at Peterhof. I must have been a fine fellow at that time.

Curiously enough, I was only half pleased then by the splendid Samson fountain and the other fountains, and with the fete in general, after all that I had been told about it. Was it that my imagination had been set afire by all I had heard, or was it simply that I was tired and hungry? The latter seems nearer to the truth. In addition to all this, I had caught a glimpse of my terrible master and his fat wife in the crowd. This finally dimmed for me the splendor and brilliance of the scene, and I hurried away without waiting for the fireworks and without marveling at what I had seen.

This prank of mine passed off without any ill consequences. Next day they found me asleep in the garret and no one even suspected that I had taken French leave. To tell the truth, I myself regarded it as something like a dream.

In 1839 I accompanied my great teacher, Karl Pavlovich Brullow, to the Peterhof summer fete. A rapid change in my circumstances had occurred and I had left the garret of my peasant housepainter for the

splendid studio of the greatest artist of our time. I cannot believe it now, yet that was how it was. I—a poor, mean little ragamuffin, I who lived in a dirty garret, I took wings and alighted in the magic halls of the Academy of Arts.

But of what can I boast? What have I to show that I profited by the teaching and the friendly confidence of the greatest artist in the world? Nothing at all. Until his marriage (which was a bad match) and after his very timely divorce, I lived at his home or, rather, in his studio.

What did I do there? How did I employ my time in that shrine? It seems strange to me now when I think of it. I was always busy composing verses in Ukrainian, those very verses which brought down such terrible consequences on my wretched soul. As I sat before his splendid paintings I used to ponder and nurse in my heart my blind minstrel and bloodthirsty Haidamaks.[12] Through the shadows of his tastefully luxurious studio, as through the wild, scorching Dnieper steppe, flitted the wraiths of our poor martyred hetmans. Before me stretched the steppe, before me I saw my unfortunate Ukraine in all her pure and melancholy beauty. . . . I would fall into a reverie and could not turn from this intimate, enchanting loveliness. It was a call that I felt.

This powerful call was strange, however. I knew well that painting was to be my future profession, my means of earning a living. Yet, instead of devoting myself to the study of its innermost secrets, particularly when I had such a teacher to guide me as the immortal Brullow, I spent my time writing verses for which no one paid me a kopek, which deprived me in the end of my freedom, and which I still compose in secret in spite of that all-powerful inhuman decree. I even think sometimes of printing (under another name, of course) these tearful, meager offspring of mine. Truly a strange thing, this insatiable calling of mine.

I do not know if I shall be here to receive Kukharenko's opinion on my latest effort, *The Soldier's Well*. I value his opinion as that of a man of noble feeling and an unaffected, truly original countryman of my own.

Last year the commandant here used to receive *The Reader's Library*,[13] and even if one only read Kurochkin's[14] translation of Beranger, still, one felt better. But this year there is absolutely nothing in the way of up-to-date literature to be had except the feuilleton in the *St. Petersburg Gazette*. And even this meager dole of modernity must be paid for in parsley and greens. If only the radishes would come up! I am ashamed to be treating the old fellows to the same garden produce all the time.

July 8

. . . This morning I invited Sergeant Kulikh[15] into the garden. Our talk, of course, turned on the battalion and particularly on Company Two. We went over all the people in it, one by one, and came at last to Private Skobelev. This Skobelev was, in spite of his name, a countryman of mine from Kherson *gubernia*. What I chiefly remembered him for was his singing of Ukrainian songs. He had a soft young tenor and a wonderfully simple and beautiful way of singing. There was a peculiar expressiveness in the way he sang:

A little river running
Through a cherry-orchard sweet.

When he sang I forgot that it was in a barrack-room I was listening to this lovely air. It wafted

me back to the banks of the Dnieper, to liberty, to my own dear homeland. Never shall I forget that poor, half-naked, dark-skinned fellow, sitting mending his shirt and bearing me so far away from the stuffy barracks with his artless singing.

In build and manner he did not at all resemble the soldier type and on this account I felt a great respect for him. In the company he enjoyed the reputation of an intelligent and honest soldier. And though his face was dark, coarse and pockmarked, courage and nobility shone from it. I loved him as a countryman and as an honest man, independently of the pleasure his songs gave me.

He informed me in confidence that he had been a runaway serf, a peasant who had become a vagabond; he had pretended that he did not remember home or family, and had been taken into the army, where he was given the name of Skobelev, in honor of the famous buffoon, the "Veteran."[16]

Kulikh told me a shocking story about this unfortunate private Skobelev.

Soon after Company Two arrived in Uralsk, Lieutenant Obryadin, who was in command of it, seeing that Private Skobelev was a sober, reliable soldier, though not much good in the line, made him his permanent orderly. Without intending it, Private Skobelev became the confidant of his commanding officer in all his love affairs, and the lackey of his officer's mistress. Before six months had gone by the awkward, kind Skobelev had, just as undesignedly, become her lover. Once, while lovers' confidences were being exchanged, the sly traitress told the orderly that two months previously Obryadin had received ten rubles in silver, sent to Skobelev from Moscow by some old comrade (probably of the days of his vagabondage) who had now become a shopman. To prove the truth of her assertion, the woman showed him the envelope, which bore five seals.

Now Lieutenant Obryadin, while still battalion adjutant and pay master, had been not only suspected but even accused of appropriating sums similarly sent, but he had contrived to cover things up and maintain his reputation of a decent fellow. When Skobelev learned what his commander and, as it were, regimental father, had done, he went straight to him with the empty envelope in his hand and demanded the money that had been taken out of it. Upon this, his commander dealt him a slap across the face, to which Skobelev replied with a sound box on the ear. Had it been *tête-à-tête*, it might have ended then and there, but since the scene was enacted before witnesses who were gentlemen and officers, the disconcerted Lieutenant Obryadin arrested Skobelev and reported the affair to the battalion commander. An enquiry was held which resulted in Lieutenant Obryadin's being ordered to resign his commission and Private Skobelev's being court-martialed. The court sentenced Skobelev to what soldiers call the "green-alley," that is, to run a gauntlet of two hundred blows; and then he was sent to serve in a convict company in Omsk for seven years. A sad story, and unfortunately by no means unique.

Poor, unhappy Skobelev! Honestly and nobly you returned that gentleman robber blow for blow, and for this honest deed you had to run the gauntlet and be sent in irons to the banks of the lonely Irtish and Om. In your new captivity will you ever meet, I wonder, as attentive and grateful a listener as I was, the comrade of your sweet and mournful songs?

August 5

. . . On July 31, Heraclius Alexandrovich [Uskov] suddenly decided to give me a permit to go straight to St. Petersburg. The next day he kept to his word and on the third day, that is, the second of August, at nine o'clock in the evening, I left the Novopetrovsk fort. After three days of good sailing by sea and by one of the many tributaries of the Volga, I arrived in Astrakhan.

August 27

Moonlit nights; calm, magically poetic nights! The Volga a limitless mirror, faintly clouded with a transparent mist, reflects softly the image of the pale enchanting beauty. Night, and the steep and dreamy banks, with their clumps of somber trees. A setting of ravishing loveliness that lulls one sweetly. And all this charm, all this visible wordless harmony vibrates with the soft and soulful notes of the violin. For three nights now, unrequited, this miracle worker, a liberated serf, has borne my soul away to the creator of the eternal with the captivating sounds of his fiddle. He says that a good instrument ought not be taken on board a ship, but out of even this poor one he draws magic sounds, particularly when he plays Chopin's mazurkas. I can never hear them too often—these intimately, profoundly mournful songs, common to the Slavs. I thank you, serf Paganini, I thank the noble fellow traveler whom I met accidentally! Out of your poor instrument issue the groans of the desecrated soul of the serf, to blend in one doleful, long-drawn out, painful groan uttered by millions of serfs. How soon will these piercing sounds reach thy leaden ear, oh, unmerciful, immovable god!

Under the influence of the sad, wailing sounds produced by the poor freedman, the steamer appeared to me in the funeral stillness of the night like some huge monster whose cavernous jaws emitted a hollow roar and were ever ready to swallow up the inquisitor-landowners. Great Fulton! And great Watt! The child of your invention is growing apace; soon it will have swallowed up the knouts, the thrones and crowns, but with the diplomats and landowners it will trifle awhile still, nibbling them as a schoolboy nibbles a sweet. What was begun in France by the Encyclopaedists will be completed in every part of our planet by this colossus, the child of your genius. My prophecies will undoubtedly come true. I only pray to a forbearing god that he may abate a little of his soulless forbearance. I pray that the heartrending wail uttered by his sincere and simple-hearted supplicants may by its very fullness reach his leaden ear.

August 28

Since the day the steamer left Astrakhan—August 22, that is—I find myself utterly incapable of taking up any regular occupation, even keeping my diary, as I did in Novopetrovsk fort. Only now do I realize the abominable influence of ten years of humiliation, only now do I feel to the full how firmly rooted in me is the barrack room, with all its degrading details. A simple, humane attitude now seems something incredible, something unnatural.

August 29

About sixty versts beyond Kamyshin, on the right bank of the Volga, the pilot pointed out to me the hillock of Stenka Razin.[17] It was just at daybreak, and I could hardly make out the contours of that remarkable but unpicturesque spot. This is a historic hillock—I do not know

why it is called a hillock, since it is not an inch higher than anything in its immediate vicinity. And if the pilot had not pointed it out, I would never have noticed the insignificant stronghold of that glorious warrior, Stenka Razin, the terror of the Muscovite monarch and the Persian Shah.

Volga fishermen and simple folk in general believe that Stenka Razin still flourishes in one of the gorges not far from his famous hillock. According to the pilot, some sailors coming from Kazan last summer rested near his hillock and, going into the aforesaid gorge, saw and talked with Stenka Razin himself.

The man who told me the story asserted that Razin was never a robber: he only collected tribute from ships sailing the Volga, afterwards distributing the tribute among the poor: in fact he was a Communist, it appears.

October 23

By the light of a magnificent conflagration, about nine o'clock in the evening, I met K. A. Schreiders.[18] He informed me that an official document about me had been received by the local military governor from the commander of the Orenburg corps. We dropped in to see Andrei Kirillovich Kadnitsky, manager of the military governor's office, one of the nicest of men, and read this paper. It announced that I was forbidden to enter either of the capitals and that I was under secret police observation. A nice kind of freedom—this! Like that of a dog on a leash. Such freedom is not worth being grateful for, your majesty.

What shall I do now without my Academy, without my beloved aquatints, of which I have dreamed so long and so sweetly? What am I to do? Appeal once more to that saintly mediatrix of mine, Countess Anastasia Ivanovna Tolstoy?[19] I am ashamed. I shall wait till tomorrow, and ask advice of my sincere friends, P. A. Ovsyannikov and N. A. Brylkin.[20] They are good people, sincere and sensible; they will tell me what to do in this dilemma.

November 3

This is Sunday, so like a well behaved person I put on my best clothes and went out with the intention of visiting my good friends. The first I went to was Mr. Grand. He is an Englishman from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. And it was at his house, the house of an Englishman, that I first saw Gogol's works, which were published by my friend P. Kulish.[21]

It was at Grand's, too, I saw for the first time the second volume of Iskander's[22] *Polar Star* for 1856. The cover, that is the portraits of our first martyrs,[23] made such a profound and gloomy impression on me that I have not yet recovered from it. It would be a good idea to strike a medal commemorating this dreadful event. On one side it would bear the portraits of these great martyrs with the inscription: "The first Russian messengers of liberty," while the reverse should bear a portrait of the not-easily-to-be-forgotten Hindrance[24] with the inscription "Not the first Russian hangman to wear a crown."

November 7

A few days ago as I was passing through the local Kremlin[25] I saw a big crowd of peasants with bared heads standing before the governor's palace. This struck me as unusual, but until today I could not discover the meaning of it. Today Ovsyannikov explained the cause.

The peasants belonged to the landowner Demidov, that very same rascal whom I had known as a cadet in the Curaissiers when I was in Gatchina[26] in 1837, and who had not paid me then for the portrait of his bride. Now, having squan-

dered what means he had, he was living at home in his own village and robbing the peasants. Instead of simply hanging the man who plundered them, the mild-tempered muzhiks had gone to the governor to beg for justice. The governor, however, being no fool, gave orders for them to be flogged, so that they would seek justice in the proper order, that is, beginning from the local policeman.

It will be interesting to see what will come of this.

December 8

For four days I have been writing a poem, but have not yet thought of a title for it. Perhaps I shall call it *The Neophytes*,[27] or *The First Christians*. I am dedicating this work to Shchepkin[28] and I am extremely anxious to read it to him and hear his true and friendly comments. I do not know when I shall start on *The Dervish and the Satrap*, but I feel a strong attraction to writing.

December 10

This evening Varentsov[29] came from St. Petersburg and brought me a letter from Kulish and a copy of his *Gramatka*[30] which has just been published. How beautifully, how cleverly and nobly this entirely new textbook is planned. God grant it may win a place for itself among our poor people. It is the first free ray of light with the power to penetrate to the minds of slaves kept down by the priests.

From Moscow Varentsov brought me greetings from Shchepkin, and more greetings from Bodyansky,[31] and a valuable gift—his book, *On the Times of the Origin of Slavonic Characters, With Examples of Ancient Slavonic Script*. I am sincerely grateful to Bodyansky for his invaluable gift. What an addition this work will be to our modern historical literature.

He [Varentsov] also brought to N. K. Yakoba a pencil portrait of our apostle Iskander, who is in exile. The drawing must resemble him, because it does not resemble other drawings of this kind. But even if it does not resemble him, I shall nevertheless make a copy of it in memory of that saintly man.

December 12

Today I saw Pushkin's *Stage-House Keeper* [32] at the theater. I have always been against variations and new versions and I went to see this one because I had nothing else to do. And what do you think! The version proved to be a work of art; the execution was inimitable; in particular the scenes in the second act and the last scene of the third act were played so naturally, so tragically as to be worthy of even the greatest actor genius.

All honor to you, Vladimirov, all honor to you, too, Aunt Trusova; you acted the role of Lepyeshkina and landowner so naturally and at the same time so spitefully, that even Korobochka herself paled before you. Generally speaking, the cast was excellent, a thing I never expected. And if some drunken retired hussar landowners (with a great deal of mustache) had not become noisy in the boxes, I would have left the theater in a perfect frame of mind.

Apropos of these landowners: swarms of them have crowded into Nizhni-Novgorod for the elections. All, without exception, wear beards and mustaches and the uniforms of hussar, uhlan and other cavalry regiments. Infantry and naval officers are hardly to be noticed. These people speak nothing but French to each other. They get drunk, are rowdy at the theater and, it is said, oppose the liberation of the serfs. Real Frenchmen!

February 14, 1858

I have finished, at length, the second part of *The Sailor*. [33] Copying

it out is the most tiresome task I have ever tried. It is about on a level with drill. I must read my handiwork over again; how will it turn out? What will S. T. Aksakov[34] think of it? I am terribly anxious that he and he alone should like it. Curious feeling!

February 21

I have written to Lazarevsky asking him to address all his letters in care of M. S. Shchepkin in Moscow. I have begun to copy for the press the poems I wrote between 1847 and 1858. I cannot tell how much good grain will be garnered from this chaff.

March 1

The local governor has received a letter from the minister of home affairs, permitting me to reside in St. Petersburg, though I am to remain under police surveillance. This is the work of that dissolute old "Japanese," Adlerberg.[35]

March 4

While awaiting Ovsyannikov and the police permit to go to St. Petersburg I took to copying out my *Witch*[36] for the press. I found a good deal in it that was wordy and unfinished. Thank god for this work; it will help to shorten the long days of waiting.

March 5

I sent a letter to Countess N. A. Tolstoy, telling her that at nine o'clock on the evening of the seventh I am leaving Nizhni-Novgorod. Will this really come to pass? That will depend on Ovsyannikov, not on me. Nonsense! I am going on with my work on *The Witch*.

March 18

I have finished copying out, or rather filtering, my 1847 poems. What a pity there is no one to whom I could read them intelligently. Shchepkin is no judge in this business. He is too easily carried away. Maximovich[37] simply holds my verses in veneration. Bodyansky too. I must wait for Kulish. He sometimes tells the truth, though harshly. But you must never tell him the truth if you do not want to spoil your relations with him.

March 25

My greatly respected M. A. Maximovich gave a dinner for me to which he invited, by the way, those old time friends of his, Pogodin[38] and Shevyrev. Pogodin is not as old as I imagined him to be. Shevyrev is older and, in spite of his grey hair and decent looking countenance, does not inspire respect. Cloyingly sweet. At the end of the dinner Amphitryon read his own compositions in my honor. And after dinner the most charming of hostesses sang several Ukrainian songs. Then the admiring guests left for their various destinations, while I went to Sergei Timofeyevich Aksakov's to bid him farewell. He was asleep, so I did not have the pleasure of kissing his beautiful hoary head. I stayed at the Aksakovs' until nine o'clock and listened with pleasure to the songs of my own country sung by Nadezhda Sergeyevna.[39] The whole of the Aksakov family is cordial and bears an unaffected sympathy for the Ukraine, its songs and its poetry.

At nine o'clock next morning I parted from M. S. Shchepkin and his family. He left for Yaroslavl, and I, after collecting my belongings, set out for the railway station. At two o'clock I was shut up in the train, leaving hospitable Moscow behind me. What had rejoiced me there above all was that I had encountered among the most enlightened Muscovites the warmest and most cordial attitude towards myself and a sincere sympathy for my poems. This was particularly the case in the family of S. T. Aksakov.

COMMENTARY

A few months before his death Shevchenko wrote a poem of amazing power: *As I Wander at Night by the Neva*. As the poet, absorbed in his dreams of liberty, wanders along the banks of the great river, he suddenly observes two cruel, cat-like eyes—the lights of the Petropavlovsk dungeon—watching him steadily.

These verses symbolize the whole life of the great Ukrainian poet. The story of Shevchenko's life is the story of an unintermittent, unequal struggle against the autocracy and the landowners, a struggle that sent him to his grave long before his time.

Shevchenko was arrested by the tsarist gendarmes on April 5, 1847, and on May 30 the sentence was pronounced. "For composing verses likely to incite rebellion and audacious in the extreme, the artist Shevchenko, since he is a person endowed with a strong physique, is to be sent into the ranks of the Orenburg corps."

Ten years of soldiering and exile was the punishment chosen for the poet and revolutionary by the autocracy.

Nicholas I added, with his own hand, "To be kept under the strictest surveillance and not to be allowed to write or draw."

On June 23, 1848, Schevchenko was brought to the neglected fortress of Orsk in the wild Kazakhstan steppe.

In 1849 Shevchenko was fortunate enough to take part as a draughtsman in an expedition to the Aral Sea. But the following year he was arrested again and exiled to the still more distant fortress of Novopetrovsk as a punishment for drawing in secret.

It was August 1, 1857, before Shevchenko was given permission to leave Novopetrovsk. He made his way by steamer to Astrakhan, and thence to Nizhni-Novgorod. Here, on October 23, he learned that the capitals—St Petersburg and Moscow—were closed to him, and that he was to remain under secret surveillance. While in Nizhni-Novgorod, Shevchenko saw for the first time Alexander Herzen's revolutionary magazines *Kolokol* (*The Bell*) and *Polar Star*, which had been published abroad. At last, on March 8, 1858, Shevchenko left for Moscow, and from there, on March 26, went to St Petersburg. But his health was already shattered, and he died three years later.

Apparently Shevchenko made some attempts to keep a diary during the first years of his exile, for we find, in one of his letters from Orsk, the following sentence: "I have been keeping a diary ever since my arrival in O[rsk] F[ortress]. I opened the diary today, thinking to repeat a page or so of it to you, but—! It was so monotonously sad that it frightened even me; so I burned my diary at the end of my candle. I did wrong; afterwards I felt as sorry for my diary as a mother for her child, ugly and misshapen though it may be."

After destroying these first records of his, Shevchenko did not take up the idea of keeping a daily journal for ten years. It was, indeed, hardly possible in the terrible conditions of a soldier's life in those days. When he learned that he was soon to be set at liberty, he resumed his notes and the result was the diary from which extracts are given here. The first entry is dated June 12, 1857; the last, July 13, 1858. The diary was written in Russian; it records the last days of his sojourn in exile, and includes a number of episodes that took place in previous years, his journey to Nizhni-Novgorod, his life there, and first meetings with Moscow and Petersburg friends. It is written in an easy, lively and graphic style and giving, as it does, a number of telling portraits of the poets' contemporaries, it provides valuable documentary material for a biography of the great Ukrainian poet.

1. Mikhail Matveyevich Lazarevsky (1818-1867)—a close friend of Shevchenko, who spoke of him as his "undissembling friend."

2. Major Meshkov—commander of the Fifth Orenburg Battalion of the line, in which "Private Shevchenko" served while at the Orsk Fort.

3. The soulless satrap and favorite of the tsar—Shevchenko is referring to Count Vasili Alexeyevich Perovsky (1795-1857), one of the influential people of Nicholas I's reign. He was in command of the Orenburg Corps, and, from 1851 to 1856, the governor-general of Orenburg and Samara. Perovsky was regarded by Shevchenko as the epitome of Nicholas I's regime, which he detested.

4. Jacob Gerassimovich Kukharenko (1798-1862)—a Ukrainian novelist and dramatist and a friend of Shevchenko. He was ataman (chief) of the Black Sea Cossack troops, hence the title which the poet gives him playfully—"our Ataman Koshevoi" (thus the Zaporozhye Cossacks called their atamans.) *The Soldiers' Well* is a poem

written by Shevchenko in April and May, 1857, after seven years' interval in his writing. He dedicated the poem to Kukharenko in memory of the day (April 7, 1857) on which he received a letter from Kukharenko with twenty-five rubles enclosed.

5. "My beautiful Academy"—the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg, founded in 1757 by the Empress Elizabeth, at the suggestion of I. I. Shuvalov. After his liberation from serfdom, Shevchenko attended the Academy of Arts, where he studied painting under Brullow. "Taking into consideration the fact that Shevchenko's work is well known and that he has already been awarded two medals for painting," the Academy in 1845 bestowed on him the title of "free artist."

6. Karl Pavlovich Brullow (1799-1852)—the famous Russian painter. Brullow took great interest in Shevchenko and played an important part in the poet's life. It was Brullow who painted the portrait of the poet Zhukovsky, a painting which fetched 2,500 rubles in a lottery. This sum was paid to Engelhardt, the landowner to whom Shevchenko belonged, and Shevchenko was thus set free from the condition of a serf.

7. The parable of the prodigal son—a set of engravings by Shevchenko. Only eight of them remain.

8. Campinioni—the commander of the artillery at the Novopetrovsk Fort. "A foppish young fellow, given to drinking bouts," according to A. E. Uskova.

9. Heraclius Alexandrovich Uskov (1817-1882)—commandant of the Novopetrovsk Fort. He and his wife, Agatha Emelyanova, were friendly to Shevchenko and endeavored to make his sad life easier.

10. The fairy fête—July 1, the day on which the fountains at Peterhof began to play. Peterhof is a picturesque little country place not very far from St. Petersburg (Leningrad). It was founded by Peter I, and is famous for its numerous fountains.

11. Shirayev—a house painter and decorator, a rough, uneducated man, to whom Shevchenko was apprenticed by his owner, Engelhardt, in 1832.

12. "The blind minstrel and the bloodthirsty Haidamaks"—characters in Shevchenko's longest poem, *The Haidamaks*. This poem was written in 1841 and is an account of the rising of the Ukrainian peasants against the Polish rule in the middle of the eighteenth century. Those who took part in this rebellion were called Haidamaks.

13. *The Readers' Library*—the first of the so-called "solid" Russian periodicals, it was published from 1834 until 1865.

14. Vasili Stepanovich Kurochkin (1831-1875)—a popular satirical poet who translated the poems of Beranger. Shevchenko valued Kurochkin's work very highly.

15. Kulikh—a non-commissioned officer, evidently from one of the exiled Polish families. Shevchenko was on friendly terms with him.

16. Skobelev, the famous buffoon, the "Veteran"—General Ivan Nikitich Skobelev (1778-1849). Under the pseudonym of "Russian Veteran" he wrote tales in a broadly humorous soldier tongue. Skobelev's talk was so thickly sprinkled with quips and jokes as to smack of buffoonery.

17. Stepan (Stenka) Razin, a Don Cossack, the leader of the peasant rebellion of the seventeenth century. He was executed in 1671. Many popular legends about him have been handed down, and his exploits are the subject of folk songs.

18. Konstantin Antonovich Schreiders (d. 1894)—one of the poet's friends during his stay in Nizhni-Novgorod; frequently mentioned in the diary. The fire which is referred to destroyed a considerable number of the timber structures in the famous Nizhni-Novgorod Fair.

19. Count Fyodor Petrovich Tolstoy (1783-1873), was vice-president of the Academy of Arts, and a well-known artist. His wife, Anastasia Ivanovna, influenced Shevchenko greatly in the last years of his life. It was as a result of their persistent efforts that Shevchenko was allowed to return from exile. Tolstoy, who was not even acquainted with Shevchenko, worked hard for the amelioration of the latter's lot. In this the count had the sympathy and aid of his wife, "my saintly mediatrix," as Shevchenko called her.

20. Shevchenko became acquainted with N. A. Brylkin (d. 1888) and his family during his stay in Nizhni-Novgorod, where P. A. Ovsyannikov, the architect, also became one of the poet's circle.

21. Panteleimon Andreyevich Kulish (1819-1897)—a writer on Ukrainian and Russian history and ethnography, also of fiction. He was closely connected with Shevchenko. He published Go-

gol's works and correspondence in six volumes, in 1857.

22. Iskander—the pen-name of Alexander Ivanovich Herzen (1812-1870), the famous Russian writer, scientist and revolutionary. He emigrated in 1847 and in London published a magazine called *The Bell* and a periodical *The Polar Star*, both of which had a tremendous influence on the growth of the revolutionary spirit in Russia.

23. On the cover of the *Polar Star* were portraits of the five Decembrists who were executed: Pestel, Ryleyev, Bestuzhev-Rumin, Muravyev-Apostol and Kakhovsky. Below these was a vignette showing a block and the executioner's axe in the foreground, with the gloomy silhouette of Petropavlovsk dungeon in the background.

24. Shevchenko's name for Nicholas I.

25. An allusion to the Kremlin in Nizhni-Novgorod, not in Moscow. In most ancient Russian towns the remains of fortifications, called "Kremlins," are to be seen.

26. Gatchina—a summer country resort near Leningrad. The favorite residence of the Emperor Paul I. His palace is still standing.

27. *The Neophytes*—a poem by Shevchenko, dedicated to M. S. Shchepkin in memory of their meeting in Nizhni-Novgorod on December 24, 1857. The subject is taken from the time of Nero, but the poem is actually directed against Nicholas I.

28. Mikhail Semyonovich Shchepkin (1778-1863)—a great Russian actor, the originator of the realistic school of acting in Russia. He and Shevchenko were the closest of friends all their lives. In 1857, Shchepkin, then a very old man, went to Nizhni-Novgorod to welcome Shevchenko on his return from exile, and spent a week with him.

29. Victor Gavrilovich Varentsov (1825-1867)—an educator and ethnographer. He made a collection of folk songs.

30. *Gramatka*—a Ukrainian spelling book, compiled by Kulish.

31. Ossip Maximovich Bodyansky (1808-1877)—a historian, professor of Slavonic dialects in the Moscow University. He wrote many works, in Ukrainian. Those mentioned further on in the diary were published in 1855.

32. *The Stage-House Keeper*—a tale by Alexander Pushkin, arranged for the stage by N. I. Kulikov, the producer at the Alexandrinsky Theater, St. Petersburg. Vladimir and Trusova are an actor and actress of the Nizhni-Novgorod theater.

33. *The Sailor*—the first title Shevchenko chose for his tale *A Pleasure Excursion With a Moral Not Wanting*, written, like all his prose, in Russian.

34. Sergei Timofeyevich Aksakov (1791-1859)—the author of *Family Chronicles*, *The Childhood of Bagrov's Grandson* and other works. Shevchenko was a constant visitor at Aksakov's comfortable home in Moscow, where they kept open house.

35. Vladimir Fyodorovich Adlerberg (1794-1884)—a minister at the imperial court from 1852 to 1870, greatly trusted by Nicholas I. The reason why Shevchenko calls him a "Japanese" is not clear.

36. *The Witch*—a poem written by Shevchenko at Sednevo in 1847, not long before his arrest.

37. Mikhail Alexandrovich Maximovich (1804-1873)—a scholar of Ukrainian and Russian, a botanist, philologist, historian and archeologist; active in the advancement of Ukrainian culture. One of his best-known works is a collection of Ukrainian folk songs (1827-1834), which had a great influence on the development of Ukrainian literature and on poetry in particular.

38. Mikhail Petrovich Pogodin (1800-1875)—historian and archeologist, journalist and playwright, professor of world and Russian history. Held conservative opinions like his friend and coworker Stepan Petrovich Shevyrev (1806-1864), a professor of Russian language and literature and of education in the Moscow University.

39. Nadezhda Sergeyevna—one of Aksakov's children.

Taras Shevchenko and Ira Aldridge

The few bright moments in the tragic life of Shevchenko are closely associated with the great Russian actor Shchepkin, who, notwithstanding the disparity in their age, was his closest friend. In September, 1857, Shevchenko was detained by the authorities in Nizhni-Novgorod and forbidden to enter the capital. Shchepkin, then seventy years old, went at once to join his friend. They were drawn to each other by their common lot, for even when he had achieved fame as an actor Shchepkin had remained the serf of Count Volkenstein and gained his freedom only after he had been bought out of serfdom by his friends.

Another ray of light in Shevchenko's life was his meeting with Ira Aldridge, the great Negro tragedian, two and a half years before his death. In December, 1858, Aldridge came to Petersburg. Shevchenko did not miss a single performance in which this famous actor took part.

They met in Count Tolstoy's home. The poet and the actor could not converse without the aid of an interpreter. Nevertheless, they were drawn to each other from the first and formed a firm friendship. These two great men were bound by a common love for art, a common hatred for tyranny and oppression.

In the United States, his native country, Aldridge was not permitted to act in the theater. He could only take part in amateur performances with Negro casts. In Britain he made his debut at the Royalty Theater and immediately won recognition. Four times he appeared in the Covent Garden Theater in London, invariably arousing enthusiastic acclaim. But the director of the Covent Garden Theater resented the fact that Aldridge, the Negro, should have to touch the white actress Ellen Frey, who played the role of Desdemona in *Othello*. And Aldridge was forced to leave the theater there. Later he appeared on the stage in Berlin. In 1858 he appeared in Moscow, Petersburg and, subsequently, in many provincial theaters of Russia (Nizhni-Novgorod, Kharkov, Odessa and Kiev), amazing the public everywhere by his magnificent acting. He was most successful in the roles of Shylock, King Lear, Macbeth and Othello.

Portrait of Ira Aldridge by Shevchenko

When Aldridge and Shevchenko met in the house of Count Tolstoy they sang their native songs to one another and Aldridge took a great liking to Ukrainian songs.

Shevchenko expressed the desire to paint the tragedian's portrait. Aldridge came to the sittings accompanied by Tolstoy's daughters. He would sit solemnly and quietly for a while, but before long his vivacious nature would get the better of him and he would begin to sing melancholy Negro melodies or old English ballads. Shevchenko would pause in his work to listen and gradually his brush would drop to the floor. Aldridge would then rise and commence to dance a jig.

Nevertheless the portrait was soon finished and signed by both the artist and the tragedian. Aldridge's acting impressed the poet so much that he

Aldridge in the role of Othello

could never refrain from expressing his admiration.

When Shevchenko's friend Starov would come to his studio and talk about Aldridge's acting, Shevchenko would wax ecstatic on the subject. Recollection of this or that trait in the tragedian's acting would put the two admirers in a "frenzy": they would commence to gesticulate, Lear would prevent Othello from strangling Desdemona, Shylock would not be allowed to renew his demand for the pound of flesh—anything within reach was used as an accessory to heighten the effect. A cushion on the divan was mercilessly done to death. . . . The young Sukhanov, who witnessed this enthusiastic behavior, would either laugh until the tears started to his eyes or consider in all seriousness the expediency of beating a hasty retreat.

In the memoirs of Mikeshin we find the following entry: "When the performance of *King Lear* was over, I went to the tragedian's dressing room. Reclining in a large armchair sat 'King Lear,' drooping with exhaustion, and there, literally all over him, was Taras Grigoryevich [Shevchenko]. The tears were flowing copiously from his eyes: he uttered disjointed and passionate phrases in a low voice as he covered the face of the great tragedian with kisses."

MIKHAIL FINKEL

GEORGI BAIDUKOV

The Last Breach

AN EPISODE FROM A WAR OF THE FUTURE

In the second month of the war against the fascists the army of the Socialist state had advanced 950 kilometers westward, pressing the enemy to his last line of fortifications.

A chain of concrete underground enemy fortresses with powerful artillery, a large number of enemy anti-aircraft guns of the latest design, a locality disadvantageous for attack—all this forced the troops of the Seventh and Tenth Armies of the Reds to halt their triumphant advance.

The first attacks on the fortified zone brought many casualties. Notwithstanding the fury and skill of the attacks, the heavy artillery and tanks could not force a breach in the fascist fortifications. Anti-aircraft fire kept the planes from rendering valuable aid to their troops—the enemy's anti-aircaft guns worked with great precision, reaching the planes even at high altitudes.

But all the fighters, from the commander of the front to the rank-and-file Red Army man, knew that there could be no delay; the conditions demanded that the enemy's fortifications be broken through swiftly.

The noon-day sun beat down relentlessly on scorched fields and mangled forests. A pungent odor of decay rose in the lowlands. The rumble of exploding shells and bombs made the earth tremble and the shocks reverberated for many kilometers, reaching the small airdrome where the 509th squadron of Red Army bombers was stationed under the protection of pursuit planes.

When the fighting again flared up at the front orders were given to take off. Under the shade of the trees bombs and cartridge belts were hurriedly loaded into the planes and the crews darted into the cabins. Several minutes later a group of planes rose into the air and disappeared in the purple-grey horizon.

After seeing the planes off into battle the mechanics waited many weary hours at the airdrome for their pilots. Time weighed heavily on their hands.

Suddenly three sharp machine gun volleys came from the direction of the forest. Captain Snegov, scanning the horizon, saw a fascist bomber rapidly approaching the airdrome with two Red fighting planes in close pursuit.

Snegov turned to Sergei Yeltyshev, his mechanic. "What the devil is this?" he said. "Can you make them out? Those two pursuit planes look like ours."

"That's so, comrade captain—those are our planes."

"Could this be a ruse?"

Snegov drew a miniature micro-

phone and earphones from his pocket.

"Lieutenant Shilov! Order the second and third units to take off at once! At the least suspicious move, shoot down all three planes! Get busy!"

Pursuit planes swooped into the air from the forest, and swiftly swung about to meet the oncoming trio. Those below noticed their planes circle over the fascist bomber and peacefully join the strange aerial procession.

"Can't make this out," muttered Snegov.

The entire group landed at the airdrome. Pilot Voronkov, commissar of the detachment, and Lieutenant Zhigalin climbed out of their planes.

"We attacked a plane from which the enemy was bombing their own countrymen in Salzdorf, which our troops have occupied," Voronkov reported to the commander. "We decided to teach the fascists a lesson. During the engagement we silenced their machine guns at the tail and in the wings. By radio I ordered these 'braves' to head east. Of course our machine guns brought pressure upon them. And so we forced the fascists to pay us a visit."

"That's splendid! Congratulations!" said Snegov, shaking the hand of the commissar and the lieutenant.

The prisoners and the dead were removed from the fascist bomber. Snegov and Voronkov walked off toward the airdrome, conversing in low tones.

"That's an excellent idea," Voronkov was saying when the conversation was interrupted by a messenger on motorcycle.

"Comrade Captain Snegov, the commander asks you to come to headquarters at once."

When Snegov arrived at headquarters he was immediately received by the commander of the air force.

"The bombing of fortification No. 3 was unsatisfactory," Snegov reported. "In the attack we lost three more planes. Medium-sized bombs are unsuitable for demolishing the objective. The fortified region is protected by almost solid anti-aircraft fire reaching all altitudes."

The commander listened attentively and then said thoughtfully:

"Nonetheless the fortifications must be broken through, and that as soon as possible. Failure in this threatens to halt the offensive on the entire sector. You know that this would give the enemy time . . ."

"Comrade commander! Permit me to present my plan. Today Pilot Voronkov and Lieutenant Zhigalin captured a fast enemy bomber. It's a machine of great carrying capacity, of the latest design. I propose to load it with eight tons of the strongest explosives, fly it into the enemy's territory, and then ram it into fortification No. 3. To make it look real we will stage a pursuit of the fascist plane by our craft."

"That's a good idea, but what about the pilots?" the commander interrupted him.

"I will pilot the plane myself," Snegov said firmly.

"And will you crash with the plane?"

"I see no other way," replied Snegov.

"You're a strong man, Captain Snegov," said the commander, placing his hand on Snegov's shoulder. "You love life, you love the Revolution, and therein lies your strength. Your idea is excellent. I will merely contribute to it by preventing the perishing of the crew. Listen to my orders:

"First, you are to tune up the fascist bomber at once. Second, install on the bomber and on one of the pursuit planes remote control apparatus.

"Third, load the bomber to the maximum with explosive PS-411 and CRN-9. Pilot the plane with a crew to the front; bale out there by parachute and let the pursuit plane direct the bomber on, to the fortification. The guiding pursuit plane is to be followed by a strong guard.

"That's all. Is it clear, Comrade Captain?"

"Perfectly. I will fly the bomber and Voronkov the pursuit plane."

"Go to it! Everything is to be done in great secrecy. In the meantime headquarters will bring the reserves up to the designated sector."

"It will be done, comrade commander!"

"Good luck!"

Snegov returned to the airdrome and outlined the plan of operation to Voronkov. They agreed to carry it out the next day.

The whole night through mechanic Yeltyshev was busy tuning up the fascist plane.

Snegov and an engineer from general headquarters installed the remote control apparatus, and the commissar with his pursuit plane pilots rehearsed the flight.

Yeltyshev, grime-smeared, ran over to Snegov and Voronkov. The sleepless night seemed to have had no effect on him, and he reported in a cheerful voice:

"I've tested everything again. Works like a clock! Only to make sure, better let me fly with you, comrade commander."

"You may leave! I'll fly alone."

Yeltyshev walked to the plane dejectedly.

Snegov and Voronkov exchanged glances.

"Our people are remarkable!" the commissar remarked. "This Sergei Yeltyshev is an excellent fellow. He can do great things."

"That's true, commissar! Well, shall we start?"

"It's time! Let's have your hand, brother!" Snegov and Voronkov approached the pursuit plane in which the remote control apparatus had been installed. Voronkov fastened his parachute, fixed his helmet and goggles and climbed into the tiny plane.

Snegov came to his side and reminded him:

"Don't forget that you have very few cartridges. Keep cool, my friend. Should anything happen to me, take charge. Well, so long!"

Carefully closing the hatch of Voronkov's plane, the commander shouted:

"To your planes! Start the motors!"

The pilots dived into their places in the tiny pursuit planes.

Snegov approached the fascist bomber. Yeltyshev stood near the plane.

"May I speak to you on a personal matter, comrade commander?" Yeltyshev asked.

"A fine time you chose! Well, what is it?"

"Permit me to fly with you. I have misgivings about the fascist plane," the mechanic answered.

For an instant Snegov was perplexed and then with a sudden tenderness in his voice he said:

"All right, Sergei! Only make it snappy!" And Snegov disappeared into the ship.

Yeltyshev hustled in after him.

Snegov pressed a button and all hatches were closed. A blue light flashed on the signal board—Voronkov's signal that everything was ready. A second later the bomber took off.

The bomber rose into the air without Snegov's control. The remote control apparatus worked perfectly. Eight pursuit planes rose behind Snegov, commissar Voronkov's plane in the center.

The commissar kept his attention pinned to the remote control instruments. He frequently switch

ed on the televisor and then clearly discerned Snegov's bomber. At times Voronkov manipulated the altitude handle, and the fascist plane, obediently climbing a hundred meters, again leveled off.

Voronkov's detachment followed half a kilometer behind, firing at random from their machine guns.

"Down below they most likely think that at any moment the pursuit planes will overtake the fascist and shoot him down," flashed in Snegov's mind. He smiled as he then examined the map. The front would soon be reached. Endless columns of infantry, tanks and artillery moved below.

"Our reserves are preparing to break through," Snegov said to himself.

Suddenly he noticed light puffs beneath his plane, the explosion of anti-aircraft shells.

Fearing that he would be shot down by his own anti-aircraft guns, the captain gripped the joy-stick. Shells kept exploding to the right and ahead of the plane.

"The devils! They'll get us! Of course they think the fascist is getting away."

Voronkov also guessed the danger and, shifting the lever of the remote control apparatus, forced the bomber to change its course sharply. Snegov grew calm. The front was near and he would soon have to bale out. Suddenly the plane sharply jolted and the captain grabbed the joy-stick again. A second later the bomber was again on its course, piloted from Voronkov's plane. White clouds of steam appeared on the left of the motor.

"The devil take you and your skill! You've ruined the operation!" The enraged Snegov showered curses at his own Red anti-aircraft gunners.

"A shell splinter broke the water pipe. A present from our own boys, comrade commander!" the mechanic reported, climbing over to the left side.

Yeltyshev had great difficulty in reaching the damaged pipe. A stream of boiling water and steam scalded his face and hands. Paying no heed to the pain, Yeltyshev patched the hole in the pipe.

"Everything is in order, commander," he reported gleefully.

"Where is your parachute? Why have you no parachute?" shouted Snegov.

"All my equipment is in the wing. I'll put it on in a jiffy!"

He produced his parachute and, donning it quickly, came and stood next to Snegov. The captain locked down. They were rapidly approaching the very inferno. Ahead of them lay a sea of fire; smoke and bright flashes, an artillery contest. It was time to jump for they were only a few kilometers from their objective.

Examining the instruments once more and checking the course, Snegov tapped Yeltyshev on the shoulder and shouted into his ear:

"Jump at once! Make it a delayed jump—otherwise our own boys may get you."

Voronkov switched on the televisor as he waited tensely for the moment when Snegov would bale out. The silhouette of the fascist bomber moved slowly toward fortification No. 3. Suddenly one dot and then another separated itself from this silhouette. Voronkov took his eyes from the screen and saw two figures whirling into space ahead of him.

"Why two?" Voronkov wondered, staring at the two figures until they disappeared from sight.

The fascist anti-aircraft service of the fortification kept a sharp lookout on the approaching aerial procession. Major Friedrich Hetzke, known as "the Black Friar" for his brutality and fanaticism, had already given the order to open fire, but a new report came from the observation post: "Our bomber is fol-

lowing course 270. It is pursued by eight Red planes."

"Permit the passage of our plane and cut off the Red pursuers by anti-aircraft fire. Call out our fighting planes immediately," ordered the Black Friar.

Within a few minutes the target would be reached, and everything was proceeding well. But suddenly a solid wall of anti-aircraft fire cut off the bomber from Voronkov's plane. The commissar again switched on the televisor: no, the bomber was untouched. He guessed that the fascist had decided to cut off the pursuit planes. Two minutes remained for the bomber to reach the objective. For an instant Voronkov took his eyes off the instrument. The very air seemed to be on fire. The explosions of the anti-aircraft shells came ever closer. A group of fascist planes appeared to the right and swiftly neared the Red pursuit planes. Voronkov's spirits rose: everything was working out perfectly.

"Now the anti-aircraft guns will cease fire and we will teach their fighting planes a thing or two!"

Then again the televisor was switched on, again the instruments and the delicate levers of the remote control. The bomber was within a kilometer of its aim. Seconds of inhuman tension. Voronkov had no chance to notice that the fire of the batteries had suddenly ceased, had not seen five planes of his unit hurl themselves into battle against twelve fascist craft. He instinctively pressed the trigger of the machine guns as the roar of a fascist plane sounded over his head, and then again he took to piloting the bomber.

Next to fortification No. 3 on the screen appeared a small hill, an excellent landmark. Voronkov hastily moved one lever, another and finally threw in the switch. The bomber went into a dive. The fortress appeared on the screen with the plane headed vertically for it, and a second later it was blown sky-high by eight tons of explosives.

The bomber disappeared from the screen and only the drawn line of the course remained.

Voronkov shut off the remote control apparatus and swiftly rose into the air.

Down below Snegov shouted to Yeltyshev:

"Did you hear it? Did you hear the explosion?"

Dense smoke rose, enveloping the entire horizon to the west. Snegov was listening to the rumble of the artillery, hammering away at the fascist fortification, where tanks and infantry rushed through the enemy's defenses.

Yeltyshev was lying on the ground with a broken leg, but he smiled through the pain. He watched the sky where the planes led by commissar Voronkov were engaged in battle.

"Comrade commander, look: the seventh fascist plane is in flames!"

Snegov lay down next to him watching the combat in the air.

"It's bad, it's bad. Look, Yeltyshev, how they've ganged up on one of our boys. They've shot him down! Jump, jump! Another of our planes is on fire, there, can you see the pilot baling out?"

Four fascist planes, still intact, beat a hasty retreat to the west. In flying formation, Voronkov and the surviving five planes turned about sharply and headed back for the airdrome.

Endless lines of heavy tanks, motorized artillery and infantry were passing near Snegov and Yeltyshev. Squadrons of fighting planes were flying overhead. The earth and air trembled under the tread of the mighty force headed to break through the last of the fascist fortifications.

Chu Teh

The journalist entered the headquarters of the Eighth National-Revolutionary Army. An elderly man in a plain soldier's uniform stood on the porch. "I would like to see army commander Chu Teh," the journalist said to the Chief of Staff.

The chief of staff led him out on to the porch.

"This is our army commander," he said.

The journalist was taken aback. "Men of our profession must be able to size up a man at a first glance," he said. "Up till now I always have. But today I've slipped up."

Without ceremony, without the usual introductions or petty talk about one's health and the weather, so customary in China even among military men, a conversation began. The journalist forgot that he was in the company of the army commander. Chu Teh spoke simply, sincerely. His intense gaze, his quiet and confident tone, his unhurried gestures—all these told the journalist that he was looking at an extraordinary man.

Answering briefly and without restraint to questions about himself, Chu Teh willingly spoke about the Eighth National-Revolutionary Army and its glorious past. And, becoming acquainted with the life of the army, the journalist became acquainted with Chu Teh himself. Indeed, the life of this man is inseparably linked with the life of the heroic national-revolutionary army.

The journalist and the army commander strode down the sunbaked road. Outside the mud huts scattered among the hillocks the soldiers of the Eighth Army were cleaning their rifles, drawing posters and rehearsing songs. Local peasants had come to visit them, the men carrying baskets loaded with vegetables, the women returning clothes they had laundered and asking whether there was anything that needed mending. Study circles were in progress. The peasants lent an attentive ear to the singers and the speakers.

Chu Teh removed his cap as a group of soldiers and commanders gathered around him. They entered into a lively conversation about their life and work, which developed into a discussion on the tactics and prospects of a defensive war.

The dinner gong sounded. Chu Teh sat down at the table with the men, inviting the journalist to do likewise. The guest was drawn into a heated discussion on the Eighth Army's main aims and its everyday affairs.

"We have to attack," a young soldier exclaimed enthusiastically. "That is the best defense."

Bidding farewell to the men and their commander-in-chief, the journalist left for home in the evening. And as he walked along the dark road bordered by rounded hillocks

and overgrown bushes, he recalled the legends the Chinese people have woven around the elderly man in eyeglasses, dressed in a plain soldier's uniform: "He is taller than the trees. He is wiser than all. At the same time, he is simple and kind. He sees everything for a hundred *li*[1] around. He stops bullets with a glance. He divines the thoughts of the enemy. When he sleeps, the entire people guards him. His army is victorious in every battle."

Chu Teh, a man in his fifties, is a soldier by profession. One of the few Chinese of his time to receive a modern military education, his great talent made itself apparent during his school days.

Immediately after graduating from the military school in Yunnan he commanded the "battalion of the brave," which fought for the republic. From the very first, his name was covered with military glory. Four gods of war, named the "golden guard," usually stand in Chinese temples. South China called Chu Teh "one of the four."

Chu Teh was disillusioned by the first Chinese revolution of 1911. It gave the Chinese people nothing: the place of one form of exploitation was taken by another. He felt that China needed a larger and stronger army, an advanced, modern military technique. Forty-year-old Chu Teh did a thing unusual for a person of his age and for his times: he completely changed his manner of living, broke connections with his relatives and friends, and moved to Shanghai.

[1] A *li* is a third of a mile.

Commanders of the Eighth Army. Left to right—Chu Teh, Ho Lun, Lukei Chen, Nen-nen shi *Photo by Anna Louise Strong*

Here he tried to make connections with the members of the Kuomintang and with the Communists. He did not fit in, however, for the Communists did not place much faith in General Chu Teh, nor did his ties with the members of the Kuomintang become really firm. It was then that General Chu Teh went to Germany with a group of students and began to study again.

Military tactics and strategy were what Chu Teh studied in Germany. He came into contact with European politics and culture; he studied the history of the World War. His mental horizon broadened. Soon a new period in Chu Teh's life opened up: one of the students told him about Lenin's book *The State and Revolution* and, aided by a student who translated for him, Chu Teh read it.

In his youth Chu Teh had worked as a coolie for a while. With his own eyes he had seen all the horrors of his country's enslavement by the imperialists. In Yunnan Province he had seen forty thousand young boys and girls sold into slavery. This human injustice hurt him; he was ashamed at the backwardness of his country. All this led him on the path to Communism.

Although a prominent general in the Chinese army and a wealthy man in addition, Chu Teh led an extraordinarily simple life. All his money went for the Communist cause, to help comrades.

He studied the theory of Marxism-Leninism patiently and conscientiously and, inspired by the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, he joined a group of Chinese Communists.

Armed with a new world outlook and new knowledge, Chu Teh returned to his native land. The Great Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 found him in China. For the first time, there was a united front between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party against the northern imperialists. On instructions from the Communist Party, Chu Teh worked as political commissar of the Szechuan army. His military fame and his prestige helped him to win over many army units to the side of the national revolution. Chu Teh met many army men who had known him in the past either as their chief or subordinate. Thus, he worked under the command of the Kuomintang General Chu Pei-de, his former chief and comrade. In this complicated situation the military glory of General Chu Teh often helped in the fulfillment of the political tasks of Communist Chu Teh.

The bourgeoisie betrayed the revolution. White terror raged in all the provinces. Thousands of Communists were murdered. General Chu Pei-de did not kill any Communists, but politely escorted them beyond the confines of his province. Chu Teh, however, remained at his post.

On August 1, 1927, there flamed up the famous Nanchang uprising, the beginning of the open struggle of the Communists, led by Ho Lung, Ye Ting and Chu Teh, against the reactionaries. The Communists marched their detachments to the south, but they were routed. Chu Teh remained with nine hundred men, four hundred rifles and one machine gun. The men were in rags and tatters, there was not enough food. In order to save his troops, he joined forces temporarily with the Kuomintang General Fan Shishen, his former comrade, who was commander of the army in South Hunan.

The influence of Chu Teh and the Communists in Fan Shishen's army began to grow daily. An "Anti-Bolshevik Society" in the army secretly began to plan Chu Teh's assassination. One night they raid-

Chu Teh on his bicycle
Photo by Anna Louise Strong

ed the house in which he and his friends were sleeping. Shots were exchanged and Chu Teh was captured, but he was not recognized in the dark. "Why should you kill a man who makes you good dinners? I am the cook!" he shouted. The raiders believed him and were about to release him when one of them put a lantern up to his face: "He's Chu Teh! Shoot him!" But Chu Teh shot first and put out the lantern. He escaped in the dark. After this incident his soldiers began to call their commander "our cook." (Chu Teh, by the way, is a native of Szechuan, and the culinary art in this province is famed throughout China. And indeed, Chu Teh can cook well.)

When his detachments were rested, armed and replenished with new men, Chu Teh led them to the borders of Hunan, Kiangsi and Kwangtung provinces.

Here, for the first time, Chu Teh began to put into effect the program of abolishing taxes, confiscating the landlords' estates and redistributing the land. The masses of the peasants supported him. His young Second Workers' and Peasants' Revolutionary Army occupied several districts. His troops endured severe hardships and deprivations, however; their only food for a whole winter was pumpkins. At this time of trial Chu Teh's heroic appeal sounded over the land:

"I am confident that we can grow into a large revolutionary army if we side with the workers and the peasants. All who want to carry our revolution through to the end, follow me."

This appeal raised the spirits of the people. Peasant detachments began to flock to Chu Teh in Hunan Province. His army grew. By 1928 he had ten thousand men under his command.

Entrenching himself and his workers' and peasants' army in the Chingkangshan Mountains after fierce battles, Mao Tse-tung sent his brother, Mao Tse-ming, to Chu Teh with Party instructions about the combining of forces and a distinct and definite military and agrarian program. The armies merged in May, 1928, and since that time the names of Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung have been firmly coupled in the annals of the Chinese revolutions. Their detachments were formed into the famous Fourth Red Army Corps, of which Chu Teh was commander-in-chief and Mao Tse-tung political commissar. The glory of the heroic "Chu Mao," as the people link the names of the two leaders, spread throughout the land. The Fourth Corps of the Chinese Red Army held five districts with a population of fifty thousand. Of these, four thousand were armed with rifles and ten thousand with lances, swords and pitch forks; the

remainder comprised the families of the fighters: women, old men, children.

The Chinese Red Army grew in fierce struggles with the enemy: by the beginning of 1930 it numbered twenty thousand men. The Soviet system strengthened. The Fourth Corps became part of the First Army, commanded by Chu Teh. After the First All-China Congress of Soviets, in 1931, Chu Teh was apppointed commander-in-chief of the Chinese Red Army and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council.

Under Chu Teh's leadership the Red Army grew both in numbers and fighting power. Chu Teh had many battles with an enemy superior in numbers, armament and training. Despite all this the Red Army units invariably emerged the victors, and this is to be explained by Chu Teh's exceptional military genius, his flexibility, his tactical inventiveness and mastery in maneuvering, which manifested itself both in attacking and retreating operations. More than once did he prove his superiority over experienced and famed generals who marched against the Red Army, as well as over their German fascist counsellors, headed by Von Seeckt.

Ever since his return to China from abroad in 1925-26, Chu Teh has faithfully carried out the policy of the Communist Party of China, in all his work in the army. He consistently carried out the policy of a united national front when he was political commissar of the Szechuan army, when he fought against the internal enemy and when he fought against the foreign aggressor, the Japanese usurpers.

In 1931 the Japanese occupied Manchuria. On behalf of the men of the Chinese Red Army, Chu Teh called upon the national armies of China to put an end to the civil war and to unite for a struggle against the Japanese. This militant slogan evoked a mighty anti-Japanese movement. When Japanese aggression increased in 1934, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China adopted a decision to shift the main forces of the Chinese Red Army from the Central Soviet District to North China in order to fight the Japanese invaders. Thus began the famous northwestern campaign of the Chinese Red Army.

The campaign was carried through under difficult conditions. For nine months Chu Teh led his army through twelve provinces, over inaccessible mountains, through deep and swift rivers—in rain, snow and blazing heat. He cared for his men as if they were his sons, frequently giving his horse to sick or tired soldiers. There are few episodes in the history of China, and of other countries, for that matter, that can compare with this "iron flood" from the viewpoint of military strategy and tactics.

In 1935 the main forces of the Chinese Red Army, under the command of Chu Teh, Mao Tse-tung and others, began to flock to Shensi, Kansu and Ninghsia provinces, where a base against Japanese aggression was established. The Japanese militarists were provoking internecine warfare, carrying on their policy of the "conquest of China by the Chinese."

The Communist Party of China bent every effort toward a peaceful solution of conflicts. Chu Teh factually concluded a peace with the northwestern and northeastern armies. "Chinese do not kill Chinese," and "Let us unite our forces against the foreign enemy" were the slogans of the Chinese Red Army.

In July, 1937, the Japanese militarists provoked the beginning of

large-scale military operations near Peiping. The struggle of the Chinese people to save their country flared up. Later in the summer, Chu Teh, Mao Tse-tung and Chow En-lai attended the first conference on national defense, at the invitation of the Nanking government. The People's Anti-Japanese Red Army became the Eighth National-Revolutionary Army. The Eighth Army, the initiator of the united anti-Japanese front, became an integral part of and support for all the anti-Japanese armed forces of the Chinese people. At its head stood Chu Teh.

The Eighth Army is a *people's* army because it is continually developing and strengthening its ties with the civil population; it constantly organizes and arms the local population; it establishes bases for guerrilla operations in the enemy rear.

Frequently the army passes through hamlets where the people have abandoned their homes and fled to the hills in fear. Then the soldiers and political workers find them out, explain the aims of defensive warfare to them and the reassured villagers return to their homes.

There are strict rules as regards the conduct of the soldiers toward the civil population. Obligatory for every soldier and commander, these rules have become, as it were, part of the army regulations. They read: "Return to the people everything you take. Pay for everything you damage. Do not ask for free service. Do not take beasts of burden for your own use. Help the people in their work as much as possible." By its exemplary personal conduct and discipline and by mass agitation the army gains the trust, support and love of the people. With the help of the soldiers, the people eagerly organize self-defense detachments, and frequently guerrilla detachments arise in this way.

The military operations and political work of Chu Teh's army are based on several definite principles. Worked out in the ten years of war, they serve as a model for all the anti-Japanese military forces in China.

The first principle is a combination of the three methods of warfare: maneuvering, position and guerrilla. The Eighth Army strikes simultaneously at the rear and flank of the enemy. Its lightning head-on blows, great mobility, the ability to swiftly assemble all resources for a big drive, and to scatter them just as quickly for guerrilla warfare, all ensure the gaining of the upper hand in battle. Chu Teh trains the commanders of his army to use their initiative and to conduct independent operations.

Propaganda and agitation in the ranks of the enemy occupy an important place in the army's activities. The political department distributes leaflets and proclamations in the Japanese, Chinese, Mongolian and Korean languages.

"It would be better for us if the Eighth Army dropped ten bombs rather than one leaflet," the Japanese declare. Leaflets dropped by the Eighth Army are frequently found on the bodies of dead Japanese soldiers and even on officers. The commanders and soldiers of Chu Teh's army study the Japanese language. Many Japanese prisoners of war, on completing short courses in the rudiments of political knowledge, remain in the ranks of the Eighth Army as specialists in Japanese affairs. More and more frequently do Manchurian and Mongolian soldiers kill their Japanese officers and come over to the side of the Chinese army.

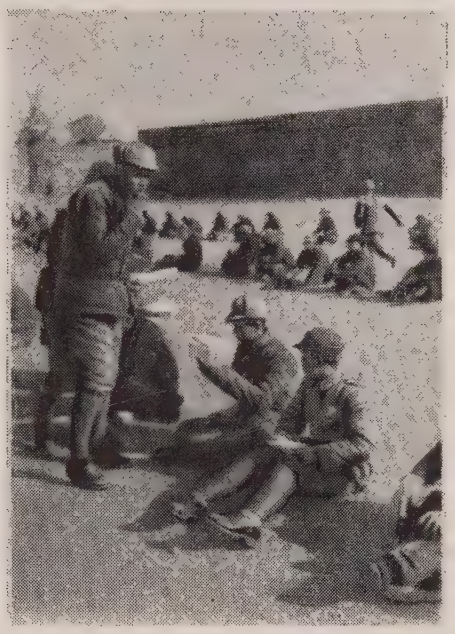
The present aims of the Eighth National-Revolutionary Army are

to exhaust the Japanese resources and demoralize the Japanese troops. Noteworthy in this connection are the activities of the guerrilla detachments, which force the enemy to shift troops from the front to defend the rear.

In the autumn of 1937 Japanese interventionists took a number of important cities in North China: Peiping, Tientsin, Paoting and Kalgan, and moved on Shansi. Outside Pingsingkwan the Japanese drive was checked by the Eighth Army. Here the Japanese suffered their first real set-back. The crack Japanese division, the Fifth, was routed by Chinese troops led by young Lin Piao, a pupil of Chu Teh. A Japanese brigade was almost completely annihilated. Chu Teh's army brilliantly displayed its strategy in this battle. After the encounter outside Pingsingkwan it moved into the rear of the enemy and, flanking him, cut off his lines of communication with north Shansi. This was China's first big victory over the interventionists in the last hundred years. Dispelling the myth that the Japanese army was invincible, it was an inspiration for the whole Chinese people.

In the rear of the enemy, Chu Teh's army and the guerrilla divisions struck a telling blow at the Japanese reinforcements. They seized more than a thousand trucks and a large quantity of bullets and guns. During the night at Yangmingpao, the "battalion of death," one of the most fearless units of the Eighth Army, destroyed twenty-one enemy planes.

Forty thousand Japanese soldiers were cut off from the remainder of the army in the region of Sinkow. Japanese tanks were forced to lie idle for lack of shells and fuel, although the Japanese were able to obtain an insignificant amount of food and ammunition by plane.



Examinations in the Anti-Japanese University of the National Revolutionary Army are held in the open air
Photo by Anna Louise Strong

Stubborn battles raged in the Sinkow district for more than twenty days. Chu Teh placed the Japanese in an extremely difficult position.

In ten months of the war the Eighth Army fought six hundred and thirty battles, recaptured more than ten districts from the Japanese, created a number of bases for defensive warfare: northwest Shansi, the border between Shansi and Suiyuan, east Shansi, the borders of Hopeh-Chahar-Shansi provinces, and elsewhere.

Six provinces of North China comprise the area of military operations of the Eighth Army: Shansi, Hopeh, Chahar, Suiyan, Shantung and Honan.

Between September, 1937, and May, 1938, Chu Teh's army inflicted casualties on the Japanese amounting to 34,000 killed and wounded. Thousands of Japanese soldiers and officers were taken prisoner; 6,500 rifles, hundreds of machine guns

and thousands of trucks and munition wagons were seized. The Eighth Army also suffered losses: more than 20,000 soldiers and commanders, among them 7,000 Communists, were killed and wounded.

Books by Chu Teh about the life and aims of the Eighth Army and about anti-Japanese guerrilla warfare enjoy great popularity among the people. Youngsters living in northwest China love to repeat: "If I become a soldier, I will join the Eighth Army; the Eighth Army knows how to fight."

When Chu Teh's army repulsed the fierce attacks of the enemy and victoriously concluded its famous Northwest Campaign a few years ago, one of the English newspapers stated: "One must admit that Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung are exceptionally talented strategists. The success of the army can only be explained by the fact that such men as Chu Teh possess remarkable ability. This ability attracts the people to them."

Hearing sayings and legends about him which the people tell, Chu Teh, an extremely modest man, answers that "his remarkable ability and the secret of his successes lie only in that he knows the needs of his people and defends their interests."

Chu Teh is constantly perfecting the army's methods of defensive warfare and he conducts splendidly conceived tactical operations. Even though the Japanese have studied the methods of other Chinese armies of the past, Chu Teh's operations are nevertheless unexpected and invariably take them by surprise.

Chu Teh constantly educates and trains new forces for the Chinese army. He returned as a teacher to the military school in Yunnan, from which he had been graduated. When he commanded a regiment, he turned it into a school where he reared brave young patriot-officers of the future national-revolutionary army. In 1933 he established a military academy attached to his general staff.

"The enemy may achieve some victories, but he can never destroy the people's army." Thus speaks Chu Teh, commander of the famous Eighth National-Revolutionary Army, a fearless and modest Communist, the people's general of revolutionary China.

EMI SIAO

My Work on the Film "Lenin in 1918"

The art world has never known a task so difficult and so gratifying as that of re-creating that genius of mankind, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Never have the people so jealously guarded any image from the most minute distortion in a work of art, never have they received every successful portrayal with such joy and appreciation.

Lenin's beloved image is implanted in the heart of every Soviet person, in millions of hearts of working people the world over.

The tremendous vitality of this vivid, living picture of Lenin in the minds of the people is an inspiration for the artist and at the same time a criterion of his work. The smallest discrepancy between the portrayal of Lenin in a work of art and the impression of Lenin among the people invariably rings out with unpardonable falseness.

In collaboration with T. Zlatogorova, the author began work on the scenario of the film *Lenin in 1918* immediately after the completion of *Lenin in October*. The task was a great one, difficult and interesting. In the early films about Lenin, the appearance of Vladimir Ilyich on the screen was enough to rouse an enthusiastic reception and the many shortcomings of the picture were more or less pardoned by the audience, but now the audience's demands are considerably higher. The task facing us was to present a production in which the figure of Lenin would be more complete and many-sided than in earlier films. We had no desire to repeat those films in which Lenin appeared only in a few episodes. We strove to work out a film whose hero would be Vladimir Ilyich Lenin himself.

We were helped by the letters which we received from filmgoers from every part of the country after the appearance of *Lenin in October*. These letters criticized deficiencies in the film and requested that such and such a thing be included next time; they contained valuable advice.

Our present scenario is built around events connected with the attempt on Lenin's life in August, 1918.

Those were grave days for the young Soviet Republic. The British and French interventionists had landed troops in the north. The Japanese interventionists were spilling blood in the Far East. The rebellion of Czechoslovakian prisoners of war had burst out along the Middle Volga and in Siberia. Cossack generals were advancing on Tsaritsyn, in cooperation with the Czechs. Starvation gripped the war-torn Republic.

In this tragic situation Vladimir Ilyich Lenin worked on in a little room in the Kremlin, leading the country through the trials it faced.

All the enemies of the working people had joined together: the foreign intelligence services, the whiteguard officers, the right and so-called "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries, the "Left Communists." The imperialists, together with all these traitors, decided to kill Lenin, Stalin and Sverdlov. At the same time, a secret officers' organization was to have penetrated the Kremlin to overthrow the Soviet government. These enemies of the Soviets stopped at nothing; every

A. Kapler, co-author of the script for the film "Lenin in 1918"

possible means was put into action—bribery, terror, provocation.

On August 30, 1918, after a meeting at the Michelson Plant in Moscow, now called the Lenin Plant, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was wounded by poisoned bullets fired by the Socialist-Revolutionary Fanny Kaplan.

The news of the shooting swept through the land like wildfire. "The entire country stands at your bedside," workers wrote to Lenin.

"Lenin is fighting for health," the *Pravda* stated. "He will be victorious. The proletariat wishes this, it is its will, it demands this of destiny!"

And Lenin conquered his terrible illness.

"It seems we've sent the angel of death to the devil!" Lenin joked during his convalescence.

Stalin, Lenin's beloved friend and companion-in-arms, having destroyed the whiteguard Cossack bands, left Tsaritsyn and went to Lenin. That was a wonderful meeting!

Vladimir Ilyich recovered, returned to his work, and once again guided the country along the path of victory—toward Socialism.

It is these events for the most part which we deal with in our present picture.

The scenario was completed early in the autumn. We tackled the work with fervor, with all the passion of the Soviet artist to whom has fallen the honor of working on a theme dear to all our people.

The production of *Lenin in 1918* was in the hands of the same group that completed the first picture in the series, *Lenin in October*.

Mikhail Romm, the director, one of the most talented men in the Soviet film world, has the rare faculty of imbuing all those working with him with the inspiration of the genuine artist, and thus has made of them one of the foremost collectives in Soviet cinematography. This is only Romm's fourth picture, but his name is already known far and wide in the cinema world.

In the Tsaritsyn scenes and during the convalescence of Lenin, the spectator sees Lenin's brilliant friend and companion-in-arms, Joseph Stalin. Stalin is played by M. Gelovani. In the scenes in which he figures, an inspired atmosphere reigns as though Comrade Stalin were really there.

Other prominent figures portrayed in the film *Lenin in 1918* are V. M. Molotov, Y. M. Sverdlov, M. I. Kalinin. F. E. Dzerzhinsky, K. E. Voroshilov, and N. K. Krupskaya.

The actor B. V. Shchukin took the role of Lenin. For us scenario writers and for the directors and actors, it is a genuine education to work with Shchukin; all of us learn from this magnificent artist. There has not been a single day of work with him that has not revealed some

unanticipated possibility in our search for truth in art.

Every detail in the scenario that even to the minutest degree rings false, is instantaneously brought out through contact with Shchukin. He has only to declaim a line about which he is in doubt, and authors and directors at once realize its weakness and see that they must do some more work on that particular place. Extremely demanding of himself, Shchukin is no less demanding of the dramatic material with which he works.

Not long ago we shot the scenes in which Maxim Gorky comes to Lenin after the latter has been wounded. Gorky, who is played by Nikolai Cherkasov, enters the room where Lenin is fighting death. The whole country is awaiting the outcome of this terrible duel with death.

Shchukin was pleased with this scene. But the artist in him revealed details which lent a great deal of power to the scene.

One really had to see how Shchukin played this part!

When we shot the scene as Shchukin proposed it, tears shone in our eyes. Romm made use of his handkerchief with suspicious frequency and the voices of the cameramen sounded constrained. Even here, in the studio, in the midst of a workday scene, among people who were making a moving picture, the remarkable artistry of Shchukin filled the hearts of everyone with fear for Lenin's life, with pain at the pain being experienced by Vladimir Ilyich. Moved by the great artistry of Boris Shchukin, we were all brought back to 1918 and the sickbed of the great Lenin.

N. P. Okhlopkov, as in the first of the series, plays the role of the worker Vasily. Okhlopkov has the classic virtue of the actor: it seems to him that everything in his role is insufficient—he is on such a brief time, and the situation does not show him to particular advantage, and he is not particularly heroic, and in general the entire role is too unimportant. We joke about his "greediness" and teasingly say that he is an "artist-kulak." Okhlopkov gets angry, demands, asks, threatens. "What do you think I'm doing here?" he shouts. "Do you think this is enough for Vasily? I only appear in this scene, and immediately go off!" But once Okhlopkov begins rehearsing, once he works together with Shchukin, his fine acting immediately becomes obvious, the scene no longer seems so weak to him, and it seems that there is really something to it, after all.

V. V. Vanin as Matveyev has only a small part but it seems to me that with his wonderful talent he has succeeded in making the scene in which he plays one of the most impressive in the whole film.

ALEXEI KAPLER

Notes on Art in the Soviet Ukraine

n his day, Gogol wrote about the picturesque village of Dikanka, down whose broad streets we are now strolling. And here before us is a small, tidy house, a handicrafts artel uniting the talented masters of folk art from this and the neighboring villages.

Enthusiastically they tell us about old Tatyana Kononenko, the rug weaver, who has passed on her art to hundreds, and about other famous women rug weavers and needle workers.

As lofty and stirring as poetry itself is this great art of the people: the gamut of red, yellow, green and blue shades; the colorful tapestries; the bright, decorative panels, and the skillful and elaborate embroideries.

Art and the life of the collective farmers are indivisible in the Soviet Ukraine. Indeed, in every cottage you will find panels and entire friezes painted on the plaster walls and stoves. Many of the women expert in this mural decoration have become famous far beyond their native villages. Purity of style, fineness of line and a charming picturesque quality are peculiar to this painting, which gives promise of finding application in other fields of the pictorial arts. Ever new artists stemming from the ranks of the women collective farmers are creating fascinating drawings and patterns for ornamental panels.

They are keen observers of nature, which they draw upon for their ideas for conventionalized designs.

Paraska Vlasenko, a former farm la-

Comrade Stalin Among the People

Tapestry by Ukrainian carpet weavers

borer, Hanna Sobachko and other women collective farmer artists of the village of Skobtsy, Kiev Province, have been awarded the title of Master of Folk Art. Their work testifies to the Ukrainian people's creative powers, developing against the background of the Socialist mode of life in the village.

Vlasenko's paintings are charming for their tones, which are tones of contrast, yet soft and pleasing. The rich flora of the Ukraine is one of the main themes in the compositions of the women collective farmers. Only people deeply sensitive to their environment, people who love nature and understand it, can paint, weave and sew with such warmth and buoyancy.

The famous Krolevets and Klembovka [1] embroidered towels used as wall-hangings have century-old artistic traditions behind them. These towels embroidered by peasant women are a striking testimonial to the fact that here there is no gulf between the so-called "lofty forms" of art and "applied" art.

Intricate ornamental designs were a heritage from the past. New, original features introduced by the Krolevets weavers and Klembovka needle workers, however, have greatly enriched the art.

Each district in the Ukraine, each craft has its characteristic features, its specific ornaments and technical processes, its color combinations. The Poltava double-seamed decorative towels, for example, differ greatly from those of Klembovka.

Characteristic of Ukrainian folk art are the wealth of ornamental motifs and the rich colorings. It is these features that distinguish the amazingly vivid tapestries.

It is only now that tapestry weaving is really developing in the Ukraine. Formerly no definite themes were used; the only designs were floral and geometrical. At present tapestries of the most intricate pattern, closely resembling the lines and color in paintings, are now woven in the Ukraine. Such monumental tapestries as *Lenin and Children, Comrade Stalin Among the People, Voroshilov Among Collective Farmers, Apple Tree, Harvest* and *Gathering the Crop* are truly remarkable works of art.

In a small studio in the village of Krishentsa, Vinnitsa Province, works Ivan Gonchar, well known Master of Folk Art. He specializes in small statues

[1] The village of Krolevets, Chernigov Province, is the oldest center of weaving in the Ukraine. Klembovka, Vinnitsa Province, is famed for its fancy needlework.

Decorative carafe by the Gerasimenko brothers (Vinnitsa Province)

in baked clay, and a certain similarity between his work and that of the master silversmiths may be traced; there is the same fine detail.

Connoisseurs of the plastic arts are impressed by the original style of this master who has never studied the history of art.

Gonchar's vases, with their flowing lines and complex scenes, are reminiscent of Indo-Chinese sculpture. His perspective may not always be correct, but his compositions breathe life and fantasy. Several of his statuettes are reminiscent of the North French masters of the early Gothic period.

Ukrainian art circles are greatly interested in Gonchar's work. At present he is fulfilling orders for the State Museum of Ukrainian Folk Art, which is attentively following the progress of this self-taught artist.

Not far from Krishentsa, in the village of Bubnovka, live the brothers Gerasimenko. Akim and Jacob Gerasimenko make decorative earthenware: cups, saucers, dishes and plates the like of which had never been known to the villagers. Despite the limited range of colors employed—brown, white and black—their products are extraordinarily well decorated.

Another source of such earthenware

The Apple Tree—tapestry woven by women collective farmers of Skobtsy (Kiev Province) on a design by the artist Padalka

is the village of Oposhna, Kharkov Province, whose products grace the shelves of many Soviet and foreign museums.

The old traditions of Ukrainian folk art have given way to new form and content; the artistic demands of the prosperous Socialist countryside are increasing and becoming more exacting.

Particularly noticeable in Ukrainian painting and the graphic arts since the Revolution is the strong attraction to historical themes. The history of the Ukraine rarely found expression in the canvases of the old painters, for although historical and social themes may have interested them, the tsarist regime made painting on such subjects well-nigh impossible. One of the favorite topics of contemporary Ukrainian artists is the figure of Ustim Karmelyuk, hero of the Ukrainian people who fought the landowners and Polish *pans*.

The Civil War is another of the subjects popular among Ukrainian painters. V. Savin and L. Muchnik have displayed fine mastery in their canvases on this theme. Savin is a master of the group portrait. In *Comrade Stalin on the Southern Front* he has with consummate skill pictured a small, poorly-lit room, in which, across a table covered with military maps, Comrade Stalin is conversing with Voroshilov and Budyonny. The picture breathes warmth and vigor.

The Sinking of the Armored Cruiser "Free Russia" in 1918, by L. Muchnik, displayed at last year's Red Army anniversary art exhibition, won high praise. Every face is drawn with such feeling and profundity that one obtains a clear insight into the artist's thoughts and feelings.

Ukrainian artists picture their native landscape with sensitivity and tenderness in which one feels an echo of the beautiful lyrical songs of the Ukrainian people.

With short strokes of his brush, reminiscent of the style of the *pointillistes*, Deregus depicts a group of young people resting on a river bank as dusk is falling. In the distance are two approaching figures. A silver sickle of a moon shows through the clouds. In spite of the dusk, the boldly outlined faces of the young men and women are discernible. One can almost feel the soft evening air in the pearly-grey twilight.

Landscapes are important in Ukrainian

Willows *by V. Zauze*

painting, even in the portrayal of scenes from life, as, for example, in M. Kuzik's *Mother* and V. Krichevsky's *Outing on the Dnieper*.

Ukrainian landscape painters, such as M. Burachek, N. Mishchenko, and A. Shevkunenko, who do industrial scenes, strive not to copy nature but to show their own moods and perceptions in their canvases.

In speaking of the graphic arts one must mention first of all the work of the venerable V. Zauze. His work carries out the best traditions of graphic workmanship. Lovingly he depicts the rich contrasts in Ukrainian scenery—the precipices, the clumps of trees, the fields and meadows—and creates unique graphic narratives of the beauties of the Ukraine.

Woodcuts occupy an important place in Ukrainian art, both as prints and as book illustrations. V. Kasyan, well known for his work in block-printing and etching, occupies first place among the block-printers.

In illustrating the classics, in the design of books, covers, title pages and colophons, Ukrainian artists, among them B. Blank, V. Fradkin, A. Dovgal, M. Kotlyarevskaya and D. Kulbak, have made significant progress.

The Ukrainian sculptors G. Tenner, B. Ivanov, K. Buldin and G. Petrashevich are masters of monumental sculpture. Tenner's work has as its inherent principles a pure plasticity and a feeling for weight. One must admit, however, that Ukrainian sculptors have not yet been able to adapt their art to architecture.

Art is not a "world in itself"; it flourishes in the life surrounding it, which cannot but influence the work of the artist, infusing it with the throbbing warmth and vitality so characteristic of the art of the Soviet Ukraine. And in its art one feels how far is the present Ukrainian people from those dark days when lived Taras Shevchenko, the great Ukrainian poet and painter.

LEV VARSHAVSKY

CORRESPONDENCE

A Letter From France

Jean Renoir's latest film *The Monomaniac (La bête humaine)*, based on Emile Zola's famous novel of the same title, has proved an outstanding success of the season. Probably the best film Renoir has produced, it is enjoying a long run at the Madeleine Cinema, Paris.

Renoir followed the text of the novel carefully, eliminating only a few scenes to make the action more concentrated and heighten the dramatic effect. However, he has not adopted the "physiological fatalism" of Zola, who was attracted by dubious scientific theories on heredity.

The hereditary insanity of Lantier, the locomotive driver, is depicted in the film not as a generalized explanation of crime, but as a pathological case. Nevertheless, the divergence between the film and Zola's novel is insignificant. The life of French railwaymen is portrayed in the film with considerable talent and knowledge of the subject.

Dramatic action develops with a force and tempo seldom to be found in French films. One of the best scenes is that in which Lantier kills Séverine. Never has Renoir, undoubtedly one of the greatest cinema directors in the world, reached such perfection as in this scene so imbued with tragedy.

The major roles are splendidly played. Simone Simon who plays the part of Séverine (she recently returned from America where for several years she acted in mediocre pictures) has created a full blooded, realistic character.

The actor Ledoux, from the Comédie Française, who gained fame by his brilliant creation of a modern Tartuffe type in François Mauriac's play *Asmode*, had been little known in cinema. In the new film he attracts universal attention by his performance as Roubaud, the station master. Jean Gabin, gifted French actor, outdid himself in the part of Lantier.

Some critics (the reactionaries, of course, who cannot forgive Renoir his films *Life Belongs to Us* and *The Marseillaise)* have vehemently attacked both Zola's novel and Renoir's film, declaring themselves "enemies of naturalism" in literature and the cinema. There were but few such voices, however, and even the press of the Right appraised the film as a triumph of realism.

The Monomaniac is a picture of considerable import in the annals of French and even world cinema.

Simultaneously with *The Monomaniac* Paris audiences were shown the film *Hotel du Nord*, produced by Marcel Carné. It is adapted from the novel by the late Eugene Dabit.

Marcel Carné, a gifted young director who for years worked as assistant to Jacques Feyder, gained prominence only recently and his success has been as phenomenal as it was rapid.

His best known films are *Jenny* and *Haven of Fogs* (based on the novel by Pierre MacOrlan). In both films all the main characters are prostitutes, pimps, murderers—the dregs of Paris's underworld.

It was to be hoped that Dabit's proletarian novel would give Marcel Carné the opportunity to break the vicious circle of his usual subjects. But Henri Jeanson, the scenario writer, it would seem, purposely strove to prevent the producer from getting away from his favorite heroes. Only a few characters have been retained from Dabit's novel, which describes life in a cheap lodging house for workers. On the other hand, two new characters who were given a central place in the film have been introduced—a prostitute and a pimp (the parts are portrayed with talent by Jouvet and Arletty).

The film does not attain a very high level despite several episodes like the ball of July 14 and scenes in the workers' dining room which have been screened masterfully. *Hotel du Nord*, which has shamefully distorted Dabit's work, is artistically inferior to *Haven of Fogs*. It is to be regretted that the new film has not delivered Marcel Carné from the

anarchist bog in which he eventually may be engulfed.

The Pathé Cinema, which played a dominant role in the French cinema industry for thirty years, has now been in bankruptcy for several years.

The bankruptcy of Pathé was of so fraudulent a nature that its director, a M. Natan, was recently arrested. As a matter of fact everyone was surprised that he had remained at liberty for so long—a fact to be explained by his influence in certain circles. Notwithstanding the bankruptcy, he had again begun to win a prominent place in the French film world, purchasing the Paramount Cinema in Juanville. It was this activity that brought Natan to jail, for, it is said, he thus stepped on the toes of the Thomson Houston power trust. This trust succeeded in having the French judiciary remove their enterprising competitor.

In connection with the scandal of the Pathé bankruptcy and Natan's arrest the Right press launched a vicious anti-semitic campaign. (Natan and his fellow directors of Pathé are Jews.) But the attention of the press at the same time has been drawn to another scandal in the cinema industry, that of the Gaumont Franco Film Aubert. In this scandal, which was followed by the crash of a large bank, a pure-blooded "aryan," Aubert, was involved; he is a member of the chamber of deputies and an irreconcilable enemy of the Communists.

Jules Romains, who in October seemingly expressed himself against the Munich policy and joined the demand of French writers to award the Nobel Prize to Karel Capek, has subsequently actively supported the Bonnet-Daladier government on questions of home policy. At the end of November and in December Romains, in newspaper articles and speeches over the radio, resolutely supported the emergency decrees of the government, which evoked the indignation of the entire French people.

A new magazine, *Les Volontaires*, began publication in December. It is edited by the young writer Reno de Juvenelle, and has among its contributors Philippe Lamour, Tristan Tzara, Leon Pierre Quint and others. The manifesto published in the first issue of the magazine declares that its chief aim is the struggle against the Munich policy. The appearance of the new publication was greeted by Julien Benda, who contributed an interesting article to the second issue.

Notwithstanding certain mistakes, the *Volontaires* group and the new magazine represent a healthy and interesting undertaking.

GEORGES SADOUL

Soviet Views on Some English Writers

It is only in the last year that the average Soviet reader has become acquainted with the works of J. B. Priestley, British playwright and novelist. The first of his works to appear in Russian was his play *Dangerous Corner*, published in the June issue of the Russian edition of *International Literature*. A Russian translation of his novel, *They Walk in the City*, soon followed. Priestley was thus introduced to his Soviet audience almost simultaneously as a novelist and as a playwright. Another of his works, *Angel Pavement*, is to be published in a Russian translation this year by the State Literary Publishing House.

That there is a lively interest in Priestley's writing is evidenced by the fact that the entire edition of *They Walk in the City* was sold out in a few days.

A number of articles on his work have appeared in the Soviet press.

"At first glance," states I. Zvavich in the Russian edition of *International Literature* (No. 6, 1938), "Priestley seems to differ but little from the refined intellectuals of the type of Aldington or the Oxford poets. . . . The main distinction between Priestley and writers like Aldington, however, lies in that his characters are ordinary 'small people' and not aristocratic intellectuals given to self-analysis. Priestley is well acquainted with the life of workers, office employees, small merchants, farmers, the unemployed; and he describes this life with all its burdens, worries and joys. . . .

"Although Priestley is somewhat old-fashioned and provincial—he was shocked by what he saw in the United States, which he visited twice—he nevertheless stands head and shoulders above the pseudo-realists, of whom there are so many in the bourgeois literature of the twentieth century," Zvavich continues. "His 'small people' are, in essence, strong-willed, ready to overcome difficulties and sweep them from their path, ready for struggle. And, arousing the reader's indignation at the oppression and misery synonymous with standardized civilization, Priestley has succeeded in presenting an interesting picture of contemporary England. . . . The basic feature in Priestley's ideology is his rejection of that which is standard, his disgust with the mass production of capitalist civilization. He presents present-day capitalism as a sort of Moloch which condemns the 'small people' not only to unemployment, poverty and hunger, but also to subordination to the standard, to the loss of their 'I,' of their individuality. . . ."

A review by Vladimir Rubin of *They Walk in the City* was printed in the November, 1938, issue of the Russian edition of *International Literature*. Dwelling on the episode of the fascist attack on the Communists on one of the squares of London, the author states:

"Priestley has given a very sympathetic picture of Fred Blair, Communist leader, whom he contrasts with Major Manisty, the fascist chief, a man who would go to any extreme 'so long as there was a good chance of knocking other people on the head or lining them up against a wall.' A significant feature of the episode is that Edward, who accidentally happened to be in the very midst of the cruel melee between the Communists and the attacking fascists, experiences an instinctive hatred toward the fascists."

As far as Priestley's dramatic works are concerned, he is as yet known only by his *Dangerous Corner*. Soviet critics contrast this play with Somerset Maugham's *Always at Five*, which is similar in theme. (*Always at Five* is running in one of the Leningrad theaters.) This juxtaposition gives a key for an appraisal of Priestley's writing in general. While Maugham sides with the ruined landlord family, obliged to keep company with *gauches nouveaux riches*, Priestley does not, in substance, sympathize with any of the characters in his play, not even

with Robert, who searches for truth and then is unable to bear its bitterness. Further, while Maugham shows us a decaying family held together only by surface tradition (tea is always at five!), Priestley goes farther and unfolds before us the family's complete disruption, covered merely by conventionalities. Finally, to complete the comparison, it must be said that Maugham's ideal is the bourgeois family hearth, which is being invaded by uncouth people; while Priestley tears the mask from the outwardly respectable but at heart false, perverse family relations, and from false conceptions of love and friendship; he sows a distrust in elegant but deceptive outward appearances. All these characteristics of *Dangerous Corner* lend it value, and since, in addition, it is splendidly written, it is not surprising that it has aroused comment.

Leonid Borovoy, giving a general appraisal of this play in the magazine *Literaturnoye Obozreniye (Literary Review)* declares:

". . . All this is very reminiscent of the well-known 'philosophy' of the symbolist drama, where illusions alternate with reality, and to the very end it is not clear where illusion ends and reality begins. And further: illusion is more powerful than reality; in fact, it is reality. Therefore, long live the lofty lie.

"Such, approximately, was Pirandello's approach.

"Applying the technique of the old symbolist drama with a serious mien, Priestley drives home a very important point at the very end, however: reality, he says, is of course more potent than any illusion, but now it is not even a question of that. Perhaps it would not be so bad to lie, to deceive oneself and others and to create illusions. But now this is simply impossible! Gentlemen, you no longer have this final resort, to create illusions for yourselves. Therefore, surrender!

"Such is Priestley's play," concludes Borovoy, "but it is not very characteristic of him. Although J. B. Priestley is usually outspoken, here he does not speak straight from the shoulder. He gives way to a certain dilletantism, as do several of his characters, and he gives freedom to his moods, which he formerly did not do. A definite and very interesting moment, by the way, is the appearance of Chekhov motifs even in Priestley. However, he deals unequivocally and bravely with illusions."

Priestley's straightforwardness and courage, and his deep and sincere attention to the "small man," plus his great artistic talent are what attract the Soviet reader to him.

These are the features of Priestley's work which led him to write the following lines in answer to a questionnaire conducted by *International Literature* on the international situation and the increasing fascist aggression:

"I do not believe that in the end fascism can win, because once the pressure outside becomes great the fascist regimes will not stand the strain. I also believe that the U.S.S.R. and the democracies should agree to forget all differences and form a united front against fascism."

It was through the October, 1938, issue of the Russian edition of *International Literature* that the Soviet reader first made the acquaintance of Cecil Day Lewis' first prose work, *The Friendly Tree*, although the June issue of the same magazine had carried a review of the novel. V. Barsov, author of the review, waxes ironical about "the tender words with which sober folk, in particular critics from the *Times*, *Manchester Guardian* and *Daily Telegraph*, express their views on the novel. What they say may be summed up in one word: charming. These critics display, in fact, an exaggerated understanding of 'the whims of the heart,' in order to gloss over another aspect of the novel, an aspect which is at once both social and lyrical."

The review points out that Steve Hallam, hero of *The Friendly Tree*, in distinction to the other Bolshevik-minded heroes portrayed in the contemporary English novel, is not at all a rationalist. "Steve Hallam," Barsov declares, "is an absolutely new type of 'Bolshie' in English literature. His convictions are very limited, but there is something extremely serious in this young man. And, moreover, the general tone of the novel is serious and clear. . . ."

The reviewer cites Ralph Fox's words in *The Novel and the People* that contemporary English novels are sometimes bad and sometimes good, but none are encouraging, none hold out hopes for a better future; the reviewer comes to the conclusion that C. Day Lewis' novel is the first to refute this statement. "Despite all its failings, it is both moving and encouraging," he says.

Although Lewis' second novel, *Starting Point*, has not yet appeared in Russian, it has been the subject of several reviews in Soviet magazines. Comment on this work, as on *The Friendly Tree*, has been highly favorable, the critics stressing the significance of the fact that Anthony Neale, one of the four Oxford students who are the main characters, "found

himself" by joining the Communists and going off to Spain to fight fascism.

"The main thread of the book," declares a review in the Russian edition of *International Literature* (No. 6, 1938), "the thread in which we must seek the book's significance, is the path taken by Anthony, who at first grasps at the idea of serving the people on the principle of the feudal *noblesse oblige*, and is finally compelled to arrive at a feasible solution of the problem of the modern world: after a period of wavering, he joins the Communist Party."

"In the new English novels," we read in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, "the characters frequently arrive at important and pertinent decisions, and then for some reason or other they immediately begin to fade. In the case of Anthony, it seems, we have the first diversion from this path: he reached his starting point, made a momentous decision, which cleared his mind tremendously, and after that he became a more vivid character than previously."

The conclusion to which the critic arrives is that in spite of the novel's shortcomings—a certain narrowness in the development of the theme, insufficient connection between individual characters and the social background, and disjointed unfolding of the action—on the whole it is "brilliant and cleverly written and is one more step forward by Lewis on his path to full literary maturity."

The third English novelist with whom the Soviet reader became acquainted last year is A. J. Cronin. This talented writer made his debut in the U.S.S.R. with *The Stars Look Down*, which may justly be called the most significant and most interesting of all that has come from his pen.

In *Hatter's Castle*, his first novel, published in England in 1930, Cronin continues the best exposé traditions of the naturalist novel of the second half of the last century. Presenting a stern but faithful picture of the birth of a petty-bourgeois family, the break-up of the family and the crash of social values, he shows, however, only one cell of bourgeois society, the philistine family wracked by social infirmity. In *The Stars Look Down* his outlook is considerably broader.

"Cronin sees the monstrous injustices of the capitalist system," declares P. Balashov in the magazine *Literaturnoye Obozreniye*. "He writes with indignation about these social injustices. 'A social system permitting such inequality is undoubtedly rotten to the core!' is the conclusion arrived at by one of the main characters of *The Stars Look Down*. In this novel Cronin once more relates the history of the rise and fall of a bourgeois family. At the same time, however, he paints a broad panorama of the life of various strata of English society from 1903 to 1933, paying special attention to the poverty-stricken English miners, fighting for their violated rights.

"The underlying idea of the novel is disclosed through its main personages: David Fenwick, a noble dreamer, and Joe Gowlan, a cunning businessman who breaks into society. David Fenwick's searchings, both personal and social, wind up in failure. His failure on the threshold of his public career is not fully perceived by the author, who attempts to fall back on abstract humanism.

"Cronin sees that the world of capitalism is a world of social evils and injustice. His desire, as that of his main character, David Fenwick, is for justice to triumph. Nevertheless, he does not see or does not want to see the correct path to this triumph. . . . In a word, short-sightedness is the main shortcoming in Cronin's novel."

Will Cronin be able to overcome this fault? There is every reason to answer in the affirmative, bearing in mind his thorough knowledge of the life of English workers—especially of the miners—which he has studied carefully, and the great warmth with which he characterizes Robert Fenwick, the brave miner, and his wife Martha.

The list of English writers with whom the Soviet reader has recently become acquainted would be incomplete without the name of James Barke, whose novel *Major Operation* appeared in Russian at the end of last year in the World Library Series.

Soviet critics note the fine qualities of this novel, and in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* we read:

"James Barke knows how to be ironical. His soft, dry Scotch humor both slashes at the enemy and laughs at the friend. Barke constantly appeals to the reader, seemingly making him a partner in the events lived through by the hero; he enters into familiar and unrestrained colloquies with the reader, into asides entirely unrelated to the main theme of the story, but which serve, as it were, to create a setting for the novel. He is a patriot of Scotland and a patriot of Glasgow. He is proud of his country and his people, for whom he desires happiness."

Major Operation is another English

novel in which a Bolshevik is portrayed. It must be noted that this character appears more and more frequently in modern English literature. This is undoubtedly a reflection of the English Communist Party's growing influence, which progressive writers cannot but take into account.

Noting the good points of Barke's novel, the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* at the same time points out its limitations:

"Although James Barke has apparently labored considerably over his novel, there yet remains a great deal that is superfluous. At times the reader is hard put to follow the many personages,who really do not deserve the special attention paid to them. Barke is still under the literary influence of Joyce, and this is most evident in the first half of the novel, the action of which takes place in one day. In the Joyce style also is the intermittent action, in which it is often difficult to follow the thread of the tale, and the merging of action with the psychological experiences of his characters and, finally, with their ideas, which follow one another in disorderly fashion and without visible connection."

A series of authoritative articles on contemporary English literature has been published in the Russian edition of *International Literature*. Notable among these is John Lehman's article, *Left Literature in Present-Day England (1935-1938)* and especially its first section, on the Spanish theme in English literature, in which he deals with Ralph Bates, Ralph Fox, Julian Bell, Christopher Caudwell-Sprigg, John Cornford, John Sommerfield, Margot Heinemann, Rex Warner, Jack Lindsay, W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender and others.

Of considerable interest also is Jack Lindsay's article, *Progressive Culture of England*, in which the author reviews the leading trends in contemporary English literature, gives a detailed description of the activity of the Left Book Club and also tells of the Unity Theater.

The Russian edition of *International Literature* also ran a series of literary portraits of outstanding figures in the world of English letters: T. A. Jackson, John Strachey, and Christopher Sprigg, who died a hero's death in battle near Madrid. At the end of 1937 the same magazine published many short biographies and literary portraits of anti-fascist writers the world over, among them Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley, Cecil Day Lewis, Amabel Williams Ellis, Sylvia Townsend Warner, Richard Aldington, Stephen Spender, John Lehman, W. H. Auden, Virginia Woolf, T. G. Wintringham, E. M. Forster, Ralph Fox, John Cornford and Julian Bell. The last three fell heroically on the fronts in Spain.

Returning to Lehman's article, *Left Literature in Present-Day England*, we wish to cite his closing words, which are of undoubted interest:

"The increasing tension of world politics, caused by the advance of the major imperialist groupings, led by the 'anti-Comintern' trio, towards war as the only possible solution of their difficulties if they are not to succumb to the menace of the proletarian revolution, has increasingly dominated the minds of the new writers, and brought about a convergence of various lines of thinking and technique towards a common point. Bourgeois intellectuals of several schools and proletarian writers have found common ground in the Spanish theme; the extreme individual dramatic experimenters of the New Country group seem to be discarding the greater part of their more obscure or fantastic idiosyncracies in the progress towards a style and a choice of subject matter where the proletarian experimentors of the Unity Theater are advancing to meet them from the other side; imaginative powers which a decade ago would have been employed in the creation of surrealism or romantic future-projections of the type in which H. G. Wells has shown himself to be such a master, are now being diverted towards the handling of revolutionary problems; and prose writers of both bourgeois and proletarian background are more and more devoting their art to contemporary themes where the frontier between fiction and autobiography or reportage is extremely uncertain; and developing at the same time speed and clarity in their technique. The common point—or circle—of meeting of these various lines may be far in the future, the whole tendency may even be violently set back by political defeats of the English people for a time, or retarded by the actual explosion in world war of the crisis, but on a long view, on an optimistic and Marxist view, it seems impossible to doubt that a new phase in English literature is in sight, a new humanism in which original barriers of class and race among the writers in as far as it affects their style and matter, will have all but disappeared."

CHRONICLE

THEATER

The richness and variety of the Soviet theater throughout the country is emphasized by recent theatrical events, which include a new production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Gorky Theater of Rostov, celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Marjanishvili Theater in Tbilisi, a staging of Verneuil's *Abduction of Helen* at the Noginsk Dramatic Theater, as well as a number of other new productions and the opening of new theaters.

The Rostov production of Shakespeare's immortal comedy, staged by Y. A. Zavadsky, follows the recent hit made with the same piece by the Red Army Theater in Moscow. Like the production in the capital, Zavadsky's interpretation finds in *The Taming of the Shrew* a story of the mutual love of two strong characters, Petruchio and Katharina. Petruchio is less obstreperous than manly; Katharina is "tamed" not so much by his treatment as by the love he arouses in her heart.

The critic S. Zamansky points out that much of the fun in the Rostov production comes from the delicate shades of acting which hint that the characters in the drama are, as it were, playing roles in real life. Thus Bianca, with inborn coquetry, gives a pretty simulation of womanly humility, which is seen to hide an independent and perhaps somewhat shrewish character. Katharina's final scene, too, where she preaches a homily on wifely duty, has this same knowing tinge of acting a part.

In contrast to the Red Army Theater, the Rostov Theater has carefully preserved the Shakespearian composition of the prologue and epilogue of the play.

Founder of the famous Rustaveli Theater in Tbilisi, as well as of the younger theater which bears his name, Kote Marjanishvili succeeded in leaving the imprint of his vivid and energetic personality on the repertoire of these sister playhouses. For instance, for its tenth anniversary, celebrated in Tbilisi recently, the Marjanishvili Theater revived his production of *Uriel Acosta* practically unchanged, and scored a great success.

A special exhibit devoted to the development of Georgian art and the growth of the theater was opened for the jubilee and a volume of articles on the theater is being prepared for publication.

One of the theater's most recent successes is *From the Spark* (containing an allusion to the revolutionary newspaper founded by Lenin in 1900; its name was *Iskra*, or *The Spark*). The play deals with the early revolutionary activity of Stalin, up till his meeting with Lenin at the Tammerfors (Finland) conference of the Party in 1905. The role of Stalin is played by V. Godziashvili.

Critics particularly note the effectiveness of the scene of the founding of the Social-Democratic organization in Batumi; the occasion was masked as a New Year's eve gathering to avoid the surveillance of tsarist gendarmes. At dawn Stalin proposes a prophetic toast to the day "when the sun will be ever shining."

Moscow critics give favorable mention to the production of Verneuil's *Abduction of Helen* in the industrial town of Noginsk and hint that the capital's theaters would do well to stage this comedy with its gangster hero and satire on modern bourgeois life.

The dramatic theater of Kuibyshev (formerly Samara) has just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. Since the Revolution, the development of the theater has proceeded at a rapid pace and it has built up a strong troupe, a number of whose members bear the title of People's Artist of the R.S.F.S.R. . . . New theaters to be established this year in the Far East include playhouses in Suchan and in Ocha on Sakhalin Island and collective farm theaters traveling out of Blagoveshchensk and Spassk. . . . *Silver Hollow* by Nikolai Pogodin is the first production of the newly-established Theater of the Pacific Ocean Fleet.

People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko is directing the

Actors who play Lenin in Nikolai Pogodin's "The Man With the Gun." They met to discuss their work on the role

new production of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, one of the two offerings the Moscow Art Theater is preparing for the latter part of this year. The other is Sheridan's *School for Scandal*.

The new historical drama, *Ivan Bolotnikov*, by G. V. Dobrzhinsky, at the Moscow Theater of the Revolution, deals with a famous leader of peasant uprisings in Russia in the seventeenth century. While congratulating the theater on its depiction of a dramatic moment in the history of the Russian people, critics point to shortcomings in the play because of over-simplification of the period and its trends.

A new theater of vaudeville and sketches has opened in Moscow, filling a long-felt want.

Characteristic of the Soviet way of doing things was a recent conference under the auspices of the Arts Administration of the R.S.F.S.R., to which were invited actors who play the role of Lenin in fifteen theaters now offering Nikolai Pogodin's play, *The Man With the Gun*. They discussed the merits and demerits of various stage interpretations of the great leader.

CINEMA

Soviet critical opinion is unanimous in its praise for the second part of the historical film *Peter I*, based, like the first part, on Alexei Tolstoy's novel of the same title. The invasion of Russia by Charles XII of Sweden and the battle of Poltava, the formation of a powerful coalition of foreign states against Russia and the successful repulse of an attack by the Swedish fleet on St. Petersburg are highlights in a film packed with stirring episodes.

As in the first film, which dealt with the early years of Peter's work, in the second part likewise the struggle between the forces of reaction and progress is crystallized in the figures of the tsarevich, Alexei, played by N. Cherkasov, and his father, Peter, played by N. Simonov.

Vain and cowardly, Alexei views with horror and aversion his father's work to make Russia a strong state, with a powerful army and navy. The tsarevich flees abroad and intrigues with Russia's enemies, promising to disband Russia's armed forces and give up part of her territories in return for help in seizing the throne from his father.

Reviewers agree that one of the most powerful episodes in the picture is the meeting of Alexei and Peter. Peter,

Winners of the All-Union vocalists' contest

in spite of his love for his son, is first of all the statesman devoted to upbuilding his country. He finds the strength to hand over his own son for trial and execution on a charge of treason.

The film concludes with the sea battle in which Peter's young fleet smashes the Swedish squadron, and the rejoicing of the Russian people at the repulse of the foreign invader.

So great is the historical compass of the film and so complicated the thread of the action that, according to press reviews, individual episodes are underdeveloped, schematic, and many an interesting personage is sketched only in bare outline. All are agreed, however, that the sequel is on the whole an even greater success for the producers than the first part, so highly acclaimed by millions both in the U.S.S.R. and abroad.

As Alexei Tolstoy himself has taken an active part in adapting his *Peter I* for the screen, so Lion Feuchtwanger worked with the scenario writers of the film version of his *Oppenheim Family*, and this is typical of Soviet practice.

Feuchtwanger not only talked over the problems of transferring his famous anti-fascist novel to the screen with Serafima Roshal, scenarist, and Grigory Roshal, director; he not only approved the final script but also made many a valuable detailed suggestion as to locale, settings, characteristic bits of action and the like, as related by producer Roshal and his sister in an article in the Soviet press. Although it differs from the book in making the young student, Berthold Oppenheim, the central figure, in allotting less attention to the older generation of the family, and in other details, the film version is considered by critics a successful anti-fascist film.

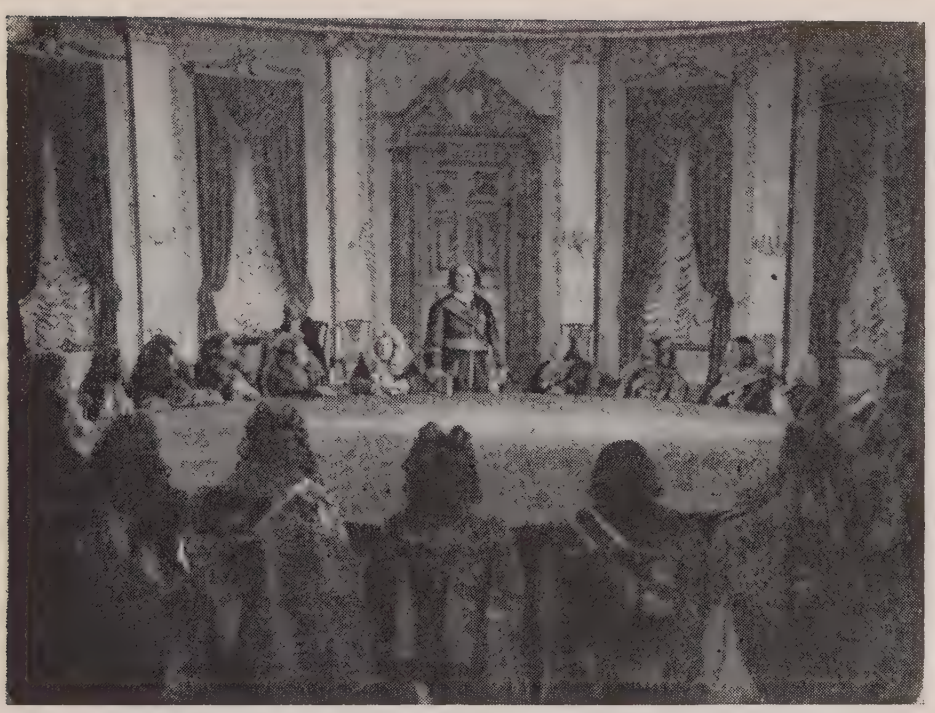
MUSIC

Bringing to light new talent from all over the Soviet Union and furnishing a striking demonstration of the development of the art of singing here, the All-Union Vocalists' Contest proved to be an outstanding event of the present season.

Chairman of the contest jury, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. Valeria Barsova, drew attention to the great number of contestants from the national republics.

"The very participation of representatives of these republics," she said, "bears witness to the existence of a splendid younger generation of Soviet singers."

No first prize was awarded by the jury, which included such famous Soviet opera stars as Barsova herself, K. G. Derzhinskaya, A. V. Nezhdanova and A. S. Pirogov, and the composer R. M. Gliere. Second prizes of eight thousand rubles each were given to three participants: D. A. Gamrekeli of Georgia, baritone, soloist of the Tbilisi opera; B. R. Gmyrya of the Ukraine, bass, student of the Kharkov Conservatory and opera singer; K. G. Semizorova of Leningrad, coloratura soprano. Money



Peter's speech before the Senate, condemning his son—from the sequel to "Peter I"

The naval battle with the Swedes—a moment in the screening of the sequel to the film "Peter I"

The Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble performs for N unit in the Soviet Far East

prizes of various amounts were also awarded to seven other singers.

An interesting sidelight is the fact that two of the second prizewinners have college educations in other professions. Gamrekeli is a graduate agronomist. Gmyrya has an engineer's diploma; he is the son of a stonemason and himself once worked as a stevedore.

Soviet music circles stress the mass character of the contest in estimating its significance. Conditions were strict and a difficult repertoire of classical and modern music was required. Nevertheless, four hundred qualified for the first-round auditions, which were held in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, Tbilisi and other large centers.

The successful first-round contestants, seventy-seven in number, came to Moscow for the second audition, with contest conditions calling for the selection of the five best for prize awards. The jury, however, decided to recommend ten singers for the honor of entering the last round, which conferred the title of laureate of the contest.

"Our whole country sings," says the art newspaper, *Sovetskoye Iskusstvo*, in its summing up. "Besides the veritable army of professionals, we have a host of glee clubs and amateur choruses. Hence the interest and scope of the contest."

But this newspaper and a number of critics add that defects in the musical training of many of the contest participants point to the need for further improvement in Soviet vocal education

A member of the contest jury, Maria Litvinenko-Wohlgemuth, Ukrainian opera star, stresses the same point in an article in the Soviet press.

"We are faced with the task of founding a Soviet science of singing," she affirms. She urges the cooperation of music teachers, singers, other musicians and medical specialists.

After the contest closed, the ten prizewinners gave a final concert at the Moscow Conservatory. An interesting moment was the ten-minute ovation accorded B. Deineka, radio soloist, for his rendition of *Old Man River*.

Travels of 400,000 kilometers to give special programs for Red Army units is the ten-year record of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble, whose rounding out of a decade of work was recently widely marked by Soviet press and public. Under the leadership of People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. A. V. Alexandrov, this unique organization has become internationally famous; the Red Army singers and dancers were given an enthusiastic reception at the Paris Exhibition in 1937.

A recent illustration of the ensemble's active part in serving Soviet defense forces was an incident at the time of the engagement last year near Lake Hassan. When Japanese troops violated the Soviet border and hostilities broke out, the Red Army ensemble was just ready to entrain for Moscow after a tour of the Far East. Arrangements were made by wire and the troupe

"The Soil Upturned," the opera based on Mikhail Sholokhov's novel, performed by the Theater of Collective Farm Youth at Veshenskaya, where Sholokhov lives

turned back to give more concerts for the Lake Hassan fighters. Some of them were performed quite close to the field of battle.

Premiere audiences accorded a good reception to *Mother*, a new opera by the young composer V. Zhelobinsky, at the Leningrad Maly Opera Theater. The work is based on Maxim Gorky's famous novel, but according to at least one critic, Ilya Gruzdev, the music fails to live up to the greatness of the book. The theater, incidentally, has just marked its twentieth anniversary; it is noted for its hospitality to new works by young composers.

Offenbach's *Orpheus in Hades*, revived by the Moscow Operetta Theater, is greeted as a colorful and entertaining spectacle by reviewers. They object, however, to the ineptly revised libretto, which they say is inconsistent with the music and structurally unconvincing.

Mussorgsky's contribution to Russian music, especially opera, is under discussion in connection with the hundredth anniversary of his birth on March 28. His profound interest in the Russian people, Russian music and Russian history is recalled and the expression of this interest is traced in his works.

An earlier and less well-known composer by whom Mussorgsky was strongly influenced was A. S. Dargomyzhsky. Dargomyzhsky's realistic use of the recitative in opera, his synthesis of the music of speech with the melodic line of his score, had a profound effect on later Russian composers. The "Big Five" in particular were strongly affected by his theories. The seventy-fifth anniversary of Dargomyzhsky's death was recently commemorated.

LITERATURE

Favorable attention has been attracted in the Soviet press by *Tale of My Stern Friend*, a collection of stories by Leonid Zharikov, a young writer from the Donets Coal Basin. His work deals with the life of the Donbas miners.

Critics praise the realism and sharpness of his portrayal of the life of the mining towns before and during the Great Socialist Revolution. The main personages in his book are two boys, miners' sons, one of whom dies fighting the whiteguards and interventionists.

Ignoramus, by a young writer, Gleb Alekhin, is sharply criticized for artificiality of plot and philistine treatment of character. Alekhin, taking the time-

honored theme of the gifted young man who wins an education in spite of tremendous obstacles, in the opinion of critic G. Munblit did not make his story true to Soviet reality. The obstacles the hero encounters are largely non-existent; hence his struggle to overcome them strikes the Soviet reader like knocking down a straw man. Alekhin seems to have overlooked the outstanding fact that educational facilities in the Soviet Union are open to all up to and including the university. His hero acquires knowledge but not through diligent study—and thus pursues a path as unreal as it is artificial. The style and use of colloquialisms and uncouth vulgarisms come in for strong criticism.

The wide range of interests of Soviet literary circles and the tremendous reading public is clearly indicated by the number and variety of literary anniversaries. Here is a partial list of some of the more important authors recently honored or to be honored in the near future: Lermontov, great lyric poet of the early nineteenth century, who with Pushkin was one of the founders of modern Russian literature; Mirza Fetkh-Ali Akhundov, great Azerbaijan poet, critic, and materialist thinker; the poet and father of Ukrainian literature, Taras Shevchenko; a man whose salty humor has passed into the language in many oft-quoted phrases, M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin, great Russian satirist of the middle of the century; that classic writer in the Jewish tongue, humorist and realist, Sholom Aleichem; the late Nikolai Ostrovsky, who produced a masterpiece, *How the Steel Was Tempered*, when already bedridden by a paralyzing illness; and, another contemporary figure, a people's bard of Georgia, Galaction Tabidze, the thirtieth anniversary of whose entrance into literature was recently marked.

A unique seminar course for thirty young writers from the various national republics was recently held in Moscow. The participants, all of whom have published works to their credit, were given opportunity to study the capital's museums, art galleries and places of interest, their tours conducted by competent guides. Professor Chemodanov spoke to them on music; Marshak, Chukovsky, Alexei Tolstoy, Fadeyev and Selvinsky lectured to them on various phases of the writer's technique; the sculptor Merkurov showed them his studio and spoke of his work. The aim of the courses was to stimulate the young writers' interest in their own and other arts and aid them to find the road to broad cultural development and study.

The hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library in Leningrad found this famous old institution with some seven million books, manuscripts, engravings and volumes of music in its basic collection and about two million in the reserve fund.

A turning point in the life of the library was a decree which Lenin found time to write in the heat of his organizing work immediately after the Great Socialist Revolution in 1917. The library was thrown open to the public and directions given to ensure maximum use of its books. In 1938 about 777,000 readers made use of its facilities.

The newly-established State Public Historical Library, with more than a million volumes, was recently opened in Moscow. It includes, among others, the former collection of the Historical Museum.

Readers About Our Magazine

A number of replies have been received from readers of *International Literature* to the editors' request for criticism and suggestions on the content and general make-up of the magazine. Replies have come from various parts of the world and represent, we think, a fair cross-section of the opinion of readers of *International Literature*.

M. G., a school librarian in Philadelphia writes that she is impressed by the international character of the magazine. "In no other magazine of which I know, do I find the variety of different cultures so represented," she says. "I believe that a magazine such as yours can do much in an educational way to develop understanding between peoples through its realistic presentation of the everyday lives and traditional cultures of the many groups in our world."

Another reader, H. Oser, also a Philadelphian, likes the fiction and articles on the whole. He suggests, however, that more space be given to stories describing the development of various national regions in the Soviet Union.

From British Columbia, Canada, comes a request for popularly written scientific stories and articles.

A California reader, Ruth Wood, thinks the material of the magazine is too heterogeneous and the contents not sufficiently planned. However, she finds the biographical sketches absorbing and urges the presentation of more articles like "One Day of the World" (March, 1938, issue).

The editorial policy of the magazine in selecting the person who would like most to do the task at hand is approvingly noted by one reader, a teacher. "Thus" she says, "N. Pogodin has the privilege of interpreting his own work" (*International Literature*, July, 1938). "The work of the great Russian landscape artist Levitan is presented by a close friend and fellow artist" (*ibid*).

From Brisbane, Australia, Sid Kelly writes of the August, 1938, issue that the amount of space taken by *Doberdo* is "too great for the size of the magazine." He adds that though *Doberdo* is well written there is "little demand here for stories of 1914-18," as the subject has been worn pretty thin.

Mr. Kelly also points out that the caricatures do not appeal either to the English, American or Australian sense of humor. He also mentions *Circle* (August issue, 1938) as a type of feuilleton which is not very humorous.

Granville Hicks, the well-known American critic, thinks that *International Literature* should be primarily devoted to literary material. Of the issues he has read he liked No. 4—containing both theoretical material and examples of historical fiction. This, he says, is stimulating and useful. Mr. Hicks suggests three main tendencies for the magazine: 1. Critical articles, especially theory; 2. Examples of Soviet writing; 3. Examples of Peoples, Front literature from other countries.

From Paris Dorothy Brewster sent an appreciative review of the magazine. She finds the articles by Georg Lukacz on Walter Scott and the historical novel particularly interesting and suggests subjects for articles of special interest to American readers, for example, theaters for children (an article on this subject appeared in No. 5, 1938); the methods used to reveal talent in children and the care taken to properly develop such talent; reviews of works of American authors by Soviet critics. This last suggestion has already been taken into consideration, and in No. 1, 1939, we published such an article.

A suggestion for the improvement of the cover of the magazine is made by Jerome Davis, who writes us from Connecticut. He urges that paintings of scenes from the Crimea, the Caucasus and other sections of the U. S. S. R. be used on the cover.

In presenting this brief abstract of some of the points from letters received, the editors would like to express their appreciation to readers for their friendly criticism and suggestions. These will all be taken into consideration as the work for bettering the magazine goes on. It is hoped that other readers will likewise assist *International Literature* in performing its role as an organ devoted to the cultural interests of the advanced and progressive people throughout the world.

The editors would be grateful if readers when sending in suggestions would also comment on the various proposals outlined above.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

ALEXEI KAPLER and TATYANA ZLATOGOROVA. Brilliant young scenario writers. Alexei Kapler also wrote the script for *Lenin in October.*

MIKHAIL FINKEL. Student in the Literature Department of the Moscow University.

GEORGI BAIDUKOV. Hero of the Soviet Union. One of the daring Soviet trio that made the historic Moscow-San Francisco flight *via* the North Pole. A book by Georgi Baidukov, *Tales of a Pilot*, has just appeared. He was recently accepted into the Union of Soviet Writers.

EMI SIAO. Chinese poet and short story writer.

LEV VARSHAVSKY. Soviet journalist and art critic.

GEORGES SADOUL. French anti-fascist journalist and literary critic.

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