Workers of the world, unite!

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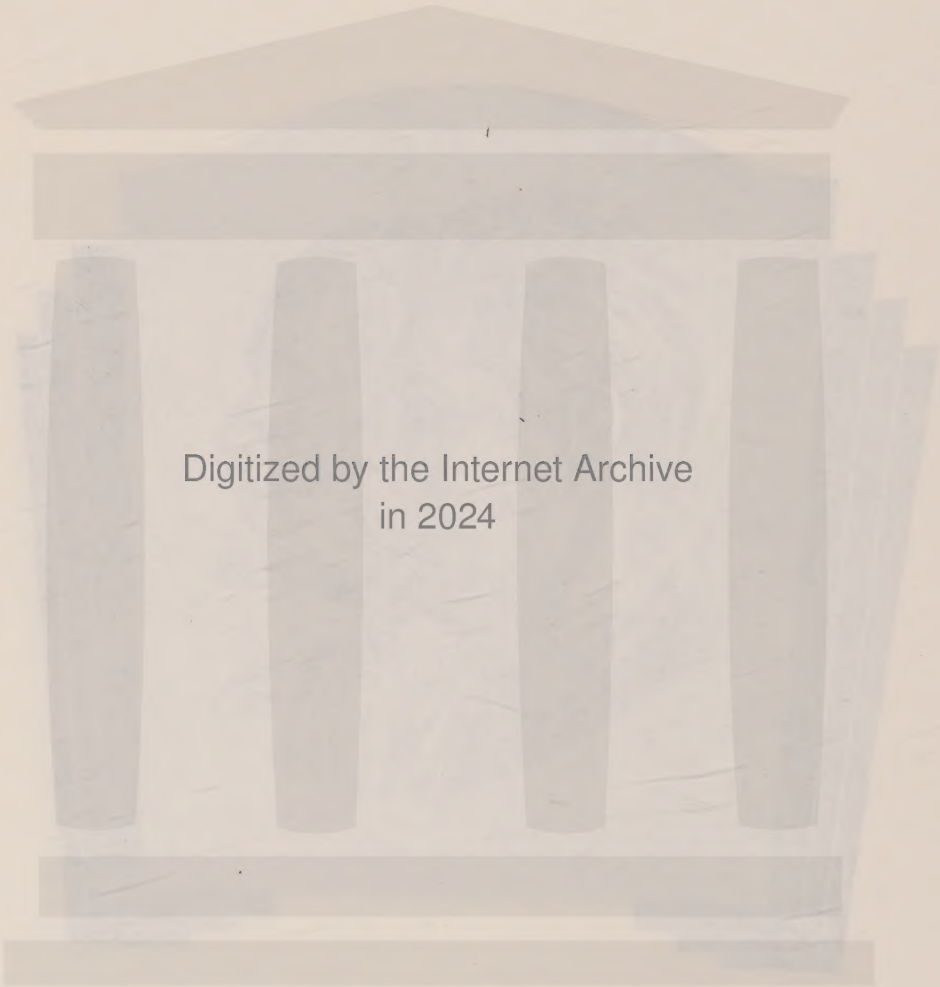
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TODAY AND TOMORROW

The central idea of the New York World's Fair—to show the world of tomorrow—is one worthy of the great overseas democracy. Long before the October Socialist Revolution, V. I. Lenin more than once pointed out that America was the freest and most advanced country of the capitalist world. He contrasted tsarist Russia of that day with the United States, which, he emphasized, was the most advanced state, with its almost full political freedom and most thoroughly developed democratic institutions. With irrefutable statistical data he demonstrated that tsarist Russia of the twentieth century was in its general development more backward than the United States even of the period preceding the Civil War, the period of "slave America." In those days the United States, in relation to capitalist Russia, was, so to speak, the model of what tomorrow would bring. Now, after only some three decades, how radically has the situation changed!

The tomorrow of mankind! The world's best minds during the evolution of society have pondered this question, striving to pierce the mysterious veil obscuring the future. More than one alluring picture of a free and happy life for men has been painted by the classic prophets of social utopia. But this was a goal to be reached by unexplored, unknown and unclear paths. There was no guide. Imagination took his place. Dreaming of a free and happy life for the people, the great utopians frequently painted most enticing visions of mankind's future, but they failed to point out any real paths leading to it.

Cabet and Fourier, Thomas More and Campanella, as well as other great utopians, succeeded in great measure in divining the characteristic features of the free and happy social order that was to come. The utopian quality of their prophecies consisted not in their delineation of the new order, but principally in the impracticability of realizing their dreams.

It took the genius of Marx to combine the dream of a liberated future for mankind with a scientific prognosis of the ways leading from the realm of necessity, such as the capitalist world represents, to the impending realm of freedom of Socialist society.

"Miraculous prophecy is a fairy tale, but scientific prophecy is a fact," said Lenin. The law governing the development of human society, discovered by Marx, enabled him not only to foresee and predetermine the basic outlines of the new Socialist society which is to replace the capitalist world; not only to show the only possible practical ways to its achievement, but also to foresee, even in its details, the course of the changes in the social map of the world. On December 31, 1858, Marx concluded his regular article from Berlin in the *New York Daily Tribune* by foretelling the inevitability of an uprising of the Russian people against tsarist despotism. And if they do, the Russian 1793 will be at hand, — Marx

wrote.—It will be the second turning point in the history of Russia which would then become a "country of real and general civilization."

"Imagine, if you can, that transition period—the tremendous scope of construction and production, the development of industry and trade, the activity of hand and brain, the tremendous number of discoveries, inventions and improvements in the arts and sciences. In the course of thirty years the nation fulfilled a tremendous task and advanced in its development more than in all its preceding history," was the inspired prophecy of Etienne Cabet in his *Journey to Icaria*. What genius and vision! This is a utopia which has already become a reality in one sixth of the world—where the triumphant Socialist society is creating a real and general civilization.

This was predicted nearly a hundred years ago by Vissarion Belinsky, the great Russian citizen and critic, who wrote: "We envy our grandchildren's great-grandchildren, who are destined to see Russia in 1940—leading the civilized world, giving laws to science and art, and enjoying the sacred admiration of the entire enlightened humanity."

From press reports we know that the organizers of the New York exposition, aiming at showing the world of tomorrow, did not proceed from a scientific forecast of it based on the economic law discovered by Marx. However, the realistic approach characteristic of the bourgeois mind prevented them from taking the road of senseless innovations or scientific fancies like those in a Wells novel. The aims and tasks of the World's Fair, according to the press, are to exhibit everything discovered, invented and produced in the last 150 years to aid progress and lead us into the world of tomorrow. In other words, the capitalist world at the New York World's Fair is to exhibit in its various pavilions only the façade of its present social and state structure, with the emphasis on the technical and economic achievements, and is leaving in the shadow the social contrasts of a world divided into the "haves" and the "have nots," to use Hemingway's pointed expression.

The Soviet Union is taking part in the New York exposition in order to show what the Land of Socialism is like today. Soviet achievements in the field of technical invention and economic progress are far from mean, but they are not the main thing the U.S.S.R. has to bring to the fair. To none other than the Soviet Union falls the honor of showing mankind's real tomorrow at the World's Fair. The exhibits of the U.S.S.R. will demonstrate that this is a country where the institution of private ownership of the means of production has been abolished, where exploitation of man by man has been uprooted forever, where a free community of many peoples has been established and is moving confidently ahead with the construction of a life that grows happier every day.

The U.S.S.R. exhibits a social order where the problem of seeking work no longer exists, where all citizens, no matter what their race or nationality, are absolutely equal before the law. The U.S.S.R. exhibits a society in which the Stalinist Constitution guarantees all citizens the right to work, the right to education, the right to rest. And today, indeed, is not all this truly the tomorrow of the rest of the world? Not everyone may be convinced of this. The Soviet people do not impose their social system on anyone. When interviewed by Roy Howard, Stalin remarked that "American democracy and the Soviet system may peacefully exist side by side and compete with each other. But one cannot evolve into the

other." It is quite indisputable, however, that "the new Constitution of the U.S.S.R. will serve as moral assistance and real support to all those who are today fighting fascist barbarism." (J. Stalin, *On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.*).

The World's Fair will be one of the places where this competition of two social systems will take concrete form in the exhibits to be seen by many millions of visitors. The exposition is opening at a time when the Soviet people, after discussion, have adopted a long-range plan for the further advance of our country toward Communism. In the course of the Stalinist Five-Year Plans the Soviet Union has accomplished a genuine cultural revolution, and the time is not far off when our whole people will have at least a secondary education, when the distinction between mental and manual labor will be finally erased, as will the distinction between the city and the countryside. That will be the Communist society whose main contours were characterized by Stalin in his interview with the first American workers' delegation, a society in which the individual should feel himself truly free. And that society is already on the threshold of the tomorrow of our country.

The esteem the Soviet people have for the citizens of the greatest country of the New World is well known. We respect the businesslike attitude of Americans, their simple ways, their efficiency and the democratic spirit that prevails in the United States in technique, science and literature. We have the greatest admiration for the heroic struggles of the American people for their independence, and we hold in great esteem their leaders, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and such brave fighters as the abolitionist John Brown.

One must go back to the middle of the last century to find the sources of our feeling for the people of the United States, to the time when Marx and Engels, standing at the cradle of scientific Socialism, followed the fortunes of the American people and their country with warmth and close attention. The two were completely on the side of the advanced, progressive, democratic leaders who headed the struggle for abolishing the shameful institution of slavery. Marx drafted greetings to two presidents of the United States, Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. In the greeting to Lincoln, Marx wrote: "The workingmen of Europe feel sure that, as the American War of Independence initiated a new era of ascendancy for the middle class, so the American antislavery war will do for the working classes."

All progressive Russians paid close and sympathetic attention to the struggle of the American people. The great scholar, philosopher and writer, N. Chernyshevsky, wrote that "the day that brought victory to the party whose candidate was Lincoln was a great day—the beginning of a new era in the history of the United States—a day which marked a turning point in the history of the great North American people."

In various articles and speeches, Lenin repeatedly stressed his admiration for certain events in the heroic past of the American people. "The history of modern civilized America," he wrote, "opens with one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few among the large number of wars of conquest . . ."

In his celebrated letter to American workers, Lenin laid special emphasis on the fact that "the American people has a revolutionary tradition adopted by the best representatives of the American proletariat,

who gave repeated expression to their full solidarity with us, the Bolsheviks. This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the eighteenth, and the Civil War in the nineteenth century."

Recall, too, similar ideas voiced by Stalin, leader of the peoples of our country, regarding the great significance of American practical qualities; he characterized them as an "indomitable spirit that neither knows nor will be deterred by any obstacle, that plugs away with businesslike perseverance until every impediment has been removed, that simply must go through with a job once it has been tackled even if it be of minor importance and without which serious constructive work is out of the question."

More and more often the gaze of the peoples of our country is directed across the ocean to the people of the United States, while the latter in turn show an ever greater interest in the life of the peoples of the Soviet Union, in their Socialist construction, in their struggle.

Memory is still vivid of the flights of our glorious aviators over the North Pole to connect these two great states by an air route. We have grown closer to each other and that rapprochement strengthens day by day; it cannot fail to strengthen, for our peoples, faced with the grim events now taking place on the international arena, faced with the rapidly increasing insolence of the fascist aggressors, feel with every passing day a greater responsibility for the fate of the world, of culture, of humanity. All the best and most advanced elements of the American people are rallying behind the progressive policies of President Roosevelt. The Soviet people watch with sympathy and attention the efforts of the Government of the U.S.A. to strengthen the cause of peace and they hope and believe that the people of the United States will rise to the historic tasks which at present are putting the American people in the forefront of the struggle against aggression.

In his conversation with H. G. Wells, Stalin remarked that undoubtedly of all the captains of the contemporary capitalist world, Roosevelt is the strongest figure. He pointed out the outstanding personal qualities of the president of the United States, his initiative, courage and decision. It is precisely these qualities that are most prized by our people.

At present we are witnessing in the Soviet Union the flourishing of a new, Socialist patrictism, a feeling which has taken possession of the minds and hearts of all our people. Unlike bourgeois patriotism, Socialist patriotism is international; hence our warm sympathy and intense interest in the struggle of peoples for national liberation and independence. Hence our hate of the fascist aggressors, of all who base their policies on oppression, on violence, on destruction of cultural values and the physical extermination of those who create these values. These sentiments of our people are near and understandable to the people of the United States, to the best and most advanced representatives of their culture.

We are doing little to achieve a greater mutual understanding, we are doing far too little to keep each other informed of the life, work and struggle in our respective lands. The World's Fair should be a factor which will give the impulse for an improvement and further development in this important work. In his recent radio address for the United States, M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., dwelt particularly on this basic task of the New York exposition:

"Mutual understanding and mutual respect among nations acquire particularly great importance at the present time. They fortify international collaboration, so necessary to safeguard peace. The New York World's Fair should serve this lofty purpose. It is with this aim in mind that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics participates in the World's Fair. The Soviet pavilion in New York will enable millions of Americans to get acquainted with the life of the peoples of our country, to understand their aspirations and to appreciate the results of their labor.

"This will contribute to the strengthening of friendly relations between the Soviet Union and the United States."

In his message to the Congress in January this year, President Roosevelt called the attention of the American people to the danger threatening from across the sea. He came out against the new philosophy of force which has become the prevailing doctrine among the ruling circles of the aggressor states. "We . . . reiterate our readiness," Roosevelt stressed, "to help the cause of world peace." The struggle against aggression demands collective efforts. This view finds an ever increasing number of adherents among the American people! Eighty years ago, John Brown, in his last letter written a few hours before his death, acknowledged his mistake in thinking that his ideals could be realized without sacrifice of life, without struggle. These words of old John Brown, whose "soul is marching on," have a ring of testament, of a behest, to Americans of today. This is a behest which we, Soviet citizens, understand very well, for we have never shrunk from defending our cause and our independence by all means, including arms.

Like the American people we remember, and are proud of, the valor of our country's best sons in the past. Hence springs the intense interest of our whole people, of the flower of our artists, in those stirring epochs when the Russian people hurled back foreign invaders. Friendliness and generosity are inherent in the Soviet spirit, but these traits, when it comes to the grim moment of danger, in no way preclude stern, unyielding courage and determination to crush the enemy and destroy him on the territory from which he attempts to encroach on the sacred frontiers of the Land of Socialism. These feelings, this determination of ours are, we feel certain, understandable to the American people, who themselves have had the experience of defending in two wars their national independence and, in the fires of the Civil War, laid the foundation for the American democracy of today.

* * *

This special issue of our magazine which we are dedicating to the New York World's Fair aims to show the birth of the new man of Socialist society, to show how the ideas of Socialist humanism are being embodied in the real life of our country. We wish to show the American reader various sides of the intellectual life and activities of the Soviet people. It is our purpose to show the birth in people of the Socialist society of a new consciousness, a process which started already during the years of the Civil War. A chapter from the fourth book of *And Quiet Flows the Don*, just completed by Mikhail Sholokhov, writer and academician, portrays the sources of this process. The difficulties of forging this Socialist consciousness met with during the years of the Second Stalinist Five-Year Plan are depicted by the young writer Vera Ketlinskaya.

The paths which brought them into the ranks of the new Soviet Socialist intelligentsia are described by the People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. M. Reizen, the Stakhanovite D. Kontsedalov and a simple Russian woman, P. Pichugina, who today is a member of the Soviet parliament.

The future belongs to him who has won the young generation. Nowhere has this been proved so clearly as in the Soviet Union. We are publishing a number of articles depicting the life and environment in which Soviet children are brought up, the loving care and attention which surround every youngster; the means employed by society to insure that every youthful talent, from the moment it begins to show itself, shall have all possible opportunity to develop unhindered.

To the people of the United States, composed as they are of many races and nationalities, the life of the peoples of the Soviet Union should be of special interest. We wish to show the absence here of national antagonisms, so common in the bourgeois world, and to portray the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., so masterfully depicted in the story by the Jewish writer D. Bergelson and in the sketch of life in the Far North by I. Kratt. The flourishing of national art is shown in an article by J. Altman and another by M. Yanshin, one of the directors of the only Gipsy theater in the world.

Material published in this number shows still another characteristic feature of the life of Socialist society. This is something that Campanella once upon a time dreamed of, when he wrote that in his City of the Sun men and women alike would occupy themselves with abstract sciences and with crafts. In the studies by Soviet writers of such famous women of our country as Maria Demchenko and Praskovya Pichugina, one sees clearly the new woman of the people, unknown in the bourgeois world, who enjoys equal rights with men in public and private life.

There is still another characteristic feature of the Soviet social order which must be mentioned, for it insures a maximum development of the creative powers of every talented individual. Nowhere in the world have men of arts and letters been given such conditions for creative work as in the U.S.S.R. The Soviet people love and honor their protagonists of culture.

In this issue we publish a number of greetings from outstanding Soviet writers to the country that lies across the ocean. These greetings not only express the sentiments of their authors; they are also a reflection of feelings which today are shared by the whole Soviet people. They constitute a unique Gulf Stream which is destined to play its positive role in the cause of strengthening mutual understanding between the peoples of the United States and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

Mayakovsky was and remains the best
and most talented poet of our Soviet epoch.
J. STALIN

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

(EXCERPTS)

Better to rebuild
with the same hand—
I could smash half
my fatherland.

Name me with
the builder, the weaver,
whom work raises
to joyous fever.

I praise
what the fatherland
is,
And thrice
what it will be.

Of the vast plan
and its creator
I am the loud
celebrator
with song, with pride,
like our will's
two meter
stride.

Into work
into battles
we march
and my song
is our
triumphal arch.

Under bare earth
under the compost heap,
meters below,
I see our communes
and their firm tissues
grow.

We omit now
to Nature
the bow;
we omit thanks
for her paltry
hanks;
the prayers that pay,
for the dull pood
of hay.
Toward tractors start
our peasantry's heart.

The hopes
once stalled
before poverty's dead
end;
On infinite
horizons
their energies
spend.
The crippled plans,
the dreams ingrown
now stand erect
in steel and stone.

And I
sing praise to my fatherland,
humanity's
early spring
born of struggle
and toil,
my republic,
to you,
I sing!

Over almost
this whole round earth
I've bounced;
that's my warrant
to announce.

Good living's
here,

it's good to live
here,
in the plunge
and risk
of creation.

In the cities
that star
the nation,
longer, brighter
the rays of streets.
Me
each winking
lamp globe greets.

The street
it's mine!
My houses
line it!
The windows smile
a happy mile.
The bulging shops
their luscious windows
push at me
like trays.
Here's glowing fruit
and glowing wine
and glowing days.

Inside
how neatly, cleanly
veils of tulle repulse
indecent flies.
Of those fresh cheeses
gleaming there,
edible amber
rich and fair,
now my ruble
brings me
more.

Cheerfully drop
the added slices.
The lamps headlight
"lower prices!"
Oh my plumed
cooperatives,
crowing
abundance!

Good health!
I am jubilant with you,
increasers of
my wealth.

I,
Moscow bookshops
cannot pass;
my swelling breast
near breaks the glass.
Whole ranks of books
march with my name,
proclaim
that the labor of
Mayakovsky,
poet
cogs with the labor—of
the republic!

Those thick-lipped tires
on my truck
carry my load;
they twirl,
they spout dust
on this, my road.

My deputies sit
in the red assem-
bly; not a sleeper
among them.

My red cheeked
militia man pats
his tan holster;
courage slung in his heart
still more's the
law's bolster;

It's me
he guards
day and night;
On more than street crossings
his traffic rules
set me aright.

"Good!"
I say:
He smiles my way
"Good!"
We salute:
"Good!"

Covering me
what tapestry!
Seamless,
infinite,
cordial to the eye,
the blue silk

vastness
of my sky!
In its great folds
my airmen play;
sunlights, moonlights
their wings inlay.
Peaks vaulted,
clouds lanced,
my hurrahing airmen
speed their way.

I am stiff with pride,
I stand like a tree
with my arms
upspread.
Let war come; the world
at the deeds of my airmen
will wag
its head!

My eye strides far
into the daily paper.
I want to see
where else
the workers caper;
where else the workers
have their knee
in the small
of the back
of the
bourgeoisie;

The world's afire,
oh, how it rages;
a world big flame
rustles these pages.
A world's goods stalled
on their usual journeys;
a spasm
rocks a thousand
district attorneys.

Good,
let their editors
froth.
Let them lie
whole cloth.

Fear's wild scream
is in their throat;
That pallid glitter
is fear sweat;

that plea
the whimper of the banished.
Soon, aye,
on history's ear
it all will die
to the far faint echo
of the vanished.

My armies
I review.
Good!
Keen trumpet,
clean rifle,
good shoe.

You well built marchers,
you bright of eye,
firm footed,
broad chested,
heads held high!
Now the artillery
crashes by!

Listen, red-starred man
I, the red bardman,
keep pace,
see face
with you!

I'm
in line.
Your foes
are mine!
Do they edge in? Good.
We know our orders!
Like flying dust
we'll send those
who soil
our borders!

Smoke spuming train
be watchful of
our Soviet air.

Breathe deep,
my deep lunged factories—
but take care!
my swift pulsed machines
is every wheel awhirl?
Don't stop. More cloth
for our Komsomol girl!

Wind fanned
I walk
in my garden;
Spring scented
I walk
the wood.

Ah,
how good!

Past towns,
the tillage,
in the tillage
the village;
In the village
is reared
the peasant
with the broom beard

Each dad
on a box
eyes fixed
like a fox.
Behind
the ploughtines
he breaks clods,
he makes rhymes.

In early
burly
labor
He vies
with his
neighbor.

So earth
is sown
and cows
milked,
and bread
baked,
and streams
fished,
and the world
waked.

Our republic
builds itself
so;
so,
[sees itself
grow.

Other lands
mumble
funeral histories.
Out with
those coffin breaths;
superfluous
mysteries;
be done
with deaths!

Here is
young truth,
a history with
the fresh breath
of youth!

Creating
inventing
experiencing,
and joy in the action
overabundant,
brimming.

Hold out your hands
nations
for the overflow.

You follow our people
through time;
you will see
our centenarians
still lads,
still lasses,
will be.

Our energy
budding each year
like new branches,
new truth;

Hammer and poem
praise
land of youth!

Translated by Isidor Schneider

Vladimir Mayakovsky at a bull fight in Spain (1925)

Illustration by S. Korolkov to "And Quiet Flows the Don" (Volume I)

MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

And Quiet Flows the Don

A warm wind had been blowing from the south for two days. The last of the snow had melted in the fields. The tumult of foaming spring waters filled the air, the valleys and streams of the steppe had regained their liberty. When the third day dawned the wind dropped and a thick fog spread over the steppe; the clumps of last year's feather-grass were silvered with moisture; ravines, villages, church-spires and the tops of the tall, pyramidal poplars—all were enveloped in the dense, whitish vapor. Spring was at hand, the bright azure spring of the broad Don steppes.

Axinya went out into the foggy dawn for the first time since her illness, and stood for a long while on the door-step; the heady sweetness of the fresh spring air was intoxicating. Fighting the faintness and sickness that threatened every moment to overcome her, she made her way to the well in the garden, set down her bucket, and seated herself on the edge of the well.

The world now seemed to her strangely, miraculously rejuvenated and tempting. Her eyes shone and she looked about her eagerly, picking vaguely at the gathers of her dress like a timid child. The mist-wreathed distance, the apple trees standing in pools of melted snow, the wet garden and the road beyond with its deep last year's ruts filled with water—it looked more beautiful to her now than anything she had ever seen, it all bloomed anew with rich and tender tints as if bathed in sunlight.

A rift in the fog disclosed a glimpse of clear sky so cold blue it dazzled her; the scent of rotting hay and thawing soil was so familiar and so pleasant that she heaved a deep sigh; a gentle smile hovered about the corners of her lips. The song of a lark away in the mist-veiled steppe reached her ears, and the simple melody touched the springs of an unknown despair. It was this song, heard far away from home, that made Axinya's heart beat faster and forced two big tears from her eyes.

She sat enjoying the sensation of returning vitality without thinking about it; she felt an overpowering desire to touch and examine everything; she wanted to touch the black-currant bushes, dark with damp, to press her cheek against the boughs of the apple tree that were covered with velvety bluish bloom, to step across the broken fence and wander through the mud away, away to where beyond the

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This is a chapter from Book IV, just completed by Sholokhov.

broad valley a field of winter wheat blended its magic green with the hazy distance.

For several days Axinya waited, expecting Grigory to turn up any moment; then she learned from neighbors who dropped in to see the master of the house that the war was not over yet, that many of the Cossacks had left Novorossiisk and gone by sea to the Crimea, and those who remained had either joined the Red Army or gone to work in the mines.

By the end of the week Axinya had made up her mind to go home, and it was not long before she found a fellow-traveler. It so happened that one evening a little bent old man entered the house without knocking. He bowed to them and immediately began to unbutton his outer garment, a dirty, English military overcoat that had burst at the seams and hung on him like a sack.

"Why, what's this?" the master of the house demanded, peering at the uninvited guest in astonishment. "You don't even bother to say 'good evening' before you start to settle down here."

The newcomer calmly proceeded to take off his coat, gave it a shake over the threshold, and hung it up carefully. Then, smoothing down his clipped grey beard, he said with a smile:

"Forgive me, for Christ's sake, but that's the way times like these have taught me to behave: first you take your things off and then you ask if you can spend the night, otherwise they won't let you in. Terrible uncivil folks have got these days, they're none of them too glad of a visitor."

"Where can we put you? You see how little room we have," the master of the house objected, though in a milder tone.

"Well, I want no more room than you'd swing a cat in. I'll curl up just here by the threshold and go to sleep."

"And who might you be, grandad? A runaway, like enough?" the mistress asked inquisitively.

"That's the very thing, a runaway, that's just what I am. I ran and I ran till I got to the sea, but from there I came on a bit easier like, fair worn out with running I was," the old man replied chattily as he squatted down by the door.

"And who are you? Where do you hail from?" the master persisted.

The old man drew a large pair of tailor's scissors from his pocket, twirled them round on his fingers; the smile never left his face, as he explained:

"Here's my identification card as you might call it, I've brought it along with me from Novorossiisk itself, but my native place is a long way off, beyond Veshenskaya. And I'm on my way there now, after going through seas of sorrow in more senses than one."

"I'm from Veshenskaya, too, grandad," cried Axinya, her face lighting up with pleasure.

"You don't say so! Well, I never did!" the old man exclaimed. "To think of meeting anyone from my part of the world down here! Though indeed it's nothing strange these days, when you come to think of it: we're scattered like the Jews all over the face of the earth. Over to the Kuban River, now, if you only chuck a stone at a dog you hit a Don Cossack. They're stuck all over like pins and needles, and you never know where you'll light on one, and as for them that's six feet underground—they're past counting! I've seen some sights, I can tell you, good folks, in this last retreat. The poverty people are suffering—it's past telling! Only the day before yesterday I was sitting at the station, and alongside of me, there was a lady in spec-

tacles, and what was she doing but inspecting the lice on her—through her spectacles, mind you. And the lice were just trotting about all over her. There she was picking them off between finger and thumb, with a look on her face as if she'd just bit into a crab-apple. Then she'd start squashing a poor unfortunate louse and pulling a face as if it was turning her near inside out to do it, it was that disgusting! Whereas another can kill a human being and never turn a hair nor twist a mouth on himself. I saw with my own eyes how a young pal of ours killed three Kalmyks one after another. And afterwards he just wipes off his sword on his horse's mane, gets out a cigarette, and rides up to me. 'What's up, grandad? Are your eyes going to pop out, or something? Want me to slice your head off as well?' 'Lord bless you, sonny!' says I. 'What would you want to go and do that for? What'll I chew my bread with if you slice my head off?' At that he just laughed and went off with himself."

"There's those that'd kill a man easier than squash a louse once they've got their hand in. Life's a deal cheaper since this here Civil War came in," his host observed profoundly.

"That's a true word for you!" the visitor rejoined. "Folk aren't like cattle, they can get used to anything. So I asked this woman: 'Who might you be, now? Judging by the look of you, you'd hardly be from common folks.' She looked at me and the tears came into her eyes. 'I'm the wife of Major-General Grechikhin,' says she. There you are, thinks I to myself, there's the major and there's the general for you and as many lice as there's fleas on a mangy cat! So I says to her: 'See here, your excellency, if you're going to try to catch your private insects (if you'll excuse me mentioning them) one by one, you'll have work enough to last you till autumn. And you'll break your little claws into the bargain. You've got to smash 'em all at one swoop!' 'How do you do it?' she asks me. So I advised her. 'Strip off your things,' I says, 'lay them out on a hard place and roll 'em flat with a bottle.' Before I had the words out of my mouth, my general's lady had gathered her things together and was off behind the pumphouse, and what do I see but she's rolling her shift out with a green glass bottle, and the way she does it is a treat to see; you'd say she'd been doing it all her life! Well, I couldn't help but admire her, and thinks to myself: 'God's got plenty of everything ready to his hand, he sends down beetles and the like on gentlefolks, too, as much as to say, let the poor things have a suck of sweet blood now and again, they can't always be drinking the sap out of working folks.' God's no looney. He knows his job. There are times even when he feels kindly to folks and does so well by them you couldn't wish anything better."

The tailor chattered on and on, never pausing for a moment, and, observing that his host and hostess were listening to his tales with great interest, he contrived to throw out a hint that if it were not for the hunger making him feel so sleepy, there was many a curious thing he could tell them yet.

After supper, when he was settling down for the night, he turned to Axinya and said:

"Are you thinking of staying here long?"

"No, I intend to start home soon," she replied.

"Then let's go together. It'll be all the cheerier."

Axinya gladly agreed and next morning they bade farewell to their hosts, and soon left the settlement of Novo-Mikhailovskoye far behind them in the steppe.

On the night of the twelfth day they reached a village called Milyutinskaya, where they begged a lodging for the night in a big prosperous looking house. In the morning Axinya's companion decided to rest here a week until his bleeding, blistered feet were healed. He could tramp no further. Some odd jobs were found for him in the house, and, glad to be back at his trade again, the old man settled down by the window. Here, getting out his scissors and a pair of spectacles held together with string, he started to unpick an old garment.

When the time came to say goodbye and he was blessing Axinya, the jolly old fellow who had kept everyone in good spirits suddenly broke into tears. He brushed them away at once, however, and said in his customary tone:

"Need makes all of us kin, though she's not our own mother. I feel very sorry for you. Well, there's no help for it, you'll just have to go on your way alone, my lassie. To tell the truth, we've done a long march, me and you, much too long for my seventy years. If it should so happen that you see my old woman, tell her that her mate is alive and well; they pounded and squeezed the life out of him, say, but he's still going, and he's making pants for decent folks as he goes along and he'll be home before she has time to look around her. Just tell her that and say the old fool has done with retreats and he's making an advance on his home now, he can hardly wait till he gets back to the old stove again."

Axinya spent a few more days on the road. She got a lift on a cart from Bokovskoye to Tatarskoye. It was late in the evening when she passed through the swinging gate of her own yard. She glanced over to Melekhov's cottage and almost choked with the sobs that rose suddenly in her throat.

The deserted kitchen smelt as if it had not been lived in; here she wept out the bitter, woman's tears that had been accumulating for so long. Then she rose and went down to the Don for water. When she had lit the stove, she sat down at the table. Her hands lay idle on her knees. She fell into a reverie and did not hear the creaking of the door as Ilyinichna entered. Then she came to herself with a start.

"Welcome home, neighbor," said Ilyinichna softly. "You've been a long time away from home and no news of you."

Axinya gave her a frightened look and stood up.

"What are you staring at me like that for? Can't you open your mouth? Is it bad news that you've brought, then?" Ilyinichna came slowly over to the table and sat down on the bench without taking her penetrating gaze from Axinya's face for a moment.

"I've brought no news at all. I wasn't expecting you; I got thinking about things and so I didn't hear you come in," Axinya muttered in a bewildered sort of way.

"You've gone that thin, you'd wonder how the soul keeps alive in your body."

"I've had the typhus."

"What about our Grigory? Is he.... Where did you part from him? Is he... still alive?"

Axinya told her briefly. Not a single syllable did Ilyinichna miss; when Axinya had finished, she asked her:

"He wasn't ailing, was he, when he left you?"

"No, he wasn't ailing."

"And you never heard anything more about him?"

"No."

A sigh of relief escaped the old woman.

"Well, thank you kindly for the good word you've spoken. There's

all manner of nonsensical rumors going around the farms here."

"What do they say?" Axinya asked, in a scarcely audible voice.

"Ah, just rubbish. You couldn't be bothered listening to them all. Vanka Bezkhlebnov is the only one from round here who's come back. He saw our Grisha sick in Katerinodar. And I don't believe any of the others."

"But what else do they say, granny?"

"We heard tell—some Cossack out by Singin's farms set it about—that our Grisha had killed a lot of the Reds in Novorossiisk. I tramped to Singin—the heart of a mother can't bear not to know the whole truth—and I found that lout of a Cossack. He denied every word of it. 'I neither saw him nor heard of him,' says he. Then there was talk that Grigory had been put in prison and died of typhus there. . . ."

At this point Ilyinichna's gaze fell. She was silent for a long while, staring at the gnarled old hands that lay heavily in her lap. Her shriveled face was calm, her lips sternly compressed. Then all at once a dark crimson flush spread over the olive skin and her eyelids quivered. She cast a swift glance at Axinya out of dry eyes that smoldered dully, and said hoarsely:

"But I don't believe it! That I should lose my last son—it surely couldn't be! There's nothing god could punish me for like that. I've not long left to live now, and I've had my share, and more than my share, of sorrow! Grisha's alive! There's no foreboding of death in my heart—that means he's alive, my own dear lad's alive still!"

Axinya turned away and said nothing.

There was a long silence in the kitchen. Then a gust of wind blew open the door; they could hear the hollow roar of the spring waters among the poplars beyond the Don and the warning cries of wild geese down on the flooded river.

Axinya closed the door, and then stood leaning against the stove.

"Don't worry yourself about him, granny," she said. "A lad like that—what ailment could get the better of him? He's hard as iron. They don't die, those kind. He rode the whole way in the bitterest weather without a glove to his hand."

"Did he ever talk of the children?" Ilyinichna asked wearily.

"He often talked of you and of the children, too. How are they? Are they well?"

"They're well, of course, what else would they be? But our Pantelei Prokofich died in the retreat. We're all alone now."

Axinya made no remark; but as she crossed herself, she wondered at the calmness with which the old woman spoke of the death of her husband.

Ilyinichna got to her feet, leaning heavily on the table.

"Here I'm sitting talking to you this long time, and the night's setting in."

"Sit a while longer with me, granny."

"No, I'd better be going, Dunyashka's there all by herself." As she arranged her shawl over her head, she looked around the kitchen, and made a little grimace of disgust. "The stove's smoking. You ought to have let someone come and live in the place while you were away. Well, goodbye." Her hand was on the latch of the door when she added, without turning her head, "When you've settled down, drop in and see us. Maybe you'll hear news about Grigory—tell us if you do."

From that day on there was a marked change in the relations between Melekhovs and Axinya. Their anxiety about Grigory brought them nearer to each other and made them more like kindred. The following

morning Dunyashka saw Axinya in her yard and called to her. She came up close to the fence and, throwing her arms around Axinya's thin shoulders, smiled into her face frankly and affectionately.

"Why, how thin you've got, Ksyusha, there's nothing left of you but a bag of bones."

"A life like this makes you thin, soon enough," said Axinya, smiling in her turn. She looked into the rosy, girlish face, remarking, not without envy, the ripe bloom of its fresh beauty.

"Did mother go in to see you yesterday?" For some reason Dunya dropped her voice to a whisper.

"Yes, she did."

"I thought that was where she'd gone. Did she ask you about Grisha?"

"Yes."

"Didn't she cry about him?"

"No, she has a strong character."

Dunyashka looked trustingly into Axinya's face.

"It would have been better if she'd have cried, it would have eased her a bit. You don't know, Ksyusha, how queer she's been this winter, not like she used to be. When she heard about my dad, I thought her heart would break; I was terrified, but she never shed a tear. All she said was: 'God send him rest in heaven, his torments are over now, poor dear man.' And not another word did she say to anyone till evening. I tried to get at her, first this way and then that, but she just waved me off and she wouldn't open her mouth. What I went through that day! But in the evening, after I'd looked after the cows and the rest, I came in from the yard, and I said to her: 'Are we to get anything ready for supper, mamma?' And it seemed as if her heart got lighter then and she started talking again." Dunyashka sighed and, gazing thoughtfully somewhere past Axinya, asked:

"Is our Grigory dead? Is it true what they say?"

"I don't know, darling."

Dunyashka gave Axinya a curious glance out of the corner of her eye, and sighed still more heavily.

"Mamma's just worn to a shadow thinking about him. She never speaks of him but to call him 'my youngest, my baby.' And she can't believe he's dead. You know what, Axinya; if ever she hears for certain that he's dead, she'll die of grief herself. Her life's gone by, the only thing she clings to is Grigory. She doesn't seem to care even for her grandchildren now, and as for work, she can't put her hand to anything properly. Just think, four out of our family—all in one year. . . ."

Stirred to sympathy, Axinya leaned across the fence and, throwing her arms around Dunyashka's neck, kissed her cheek hard.

"Try and keep your mother's attention busy on something, my pretty, and don't let her worry too much."

"What is there to keep her attention on?" Dunyashka wiped her eyes with a corner of her shawl. "Drop in sometimes for a chat with her," she begged, "it'll brighten her up. There's no need for you to feel a stranger with us."

"I'll come."

"I've got to go out to the fields tomorrow. Me and Anikushkin's wife, we're going to try to sow six or seven acres of wheat anyway. You're not thinking of doing any sowing yourself, are you?"

"What sort of a sower am I?" said Axinya with a cheerless smile. "I've nothing to sow on and no one to sow for. I don't need much myself, I'll manage without."

"You never heard anything about your Stepan?"

"Nothing at all," Axinya replied in a perfectly indifferent tone. Then, quite without thinking, she blurted out:

"I'm not wearing myself ou worrying about him." This unexpected confession was a shock even

to herself, and to cover her embarrassment, she said hastily: "Well, goodbye, lassie, I've got to go and tidy up in the house."

Dunyashka pretended not to notice Axinya's embarrassment, and looking past her, said:

"Wait a bit, there's something else I wanted to say to you; would you care to come and give us a hand? The ground's drying up, I'm afraid we'll not be able to manage all the work; there's only two Cossacks left in the whole place and they're maimed."

Axinya gladly agreed, and Dunyashka, delighted, went off to get ready for the morrow.

She was kept busy all day with her preparations. The widow Anikushkina helped her to sift the seed and repair the harrow. She oiled the wheels of the big cart, and put the sower in good order. And that evening she took some wheat seed in her kerchief to the cemetery and scattered it on the graves of Peter, Natalia and Daria, so that the birds would gather in the morning on the family graves. With childlike simplicity she believed the dead would hear the twittering of the birds and be glad.

Just before daybreak a calm fell over the banks of the Don. In the half flooded woods the water still gurgled, washing the pale green trunks of the poplars, swaying the tops of the young oaks and aspens. Bowed by the water, the heads of the reeds rustled in the full lakes. Out on the flooded river and in remote little creeks—there where the spring waters lay still, as if under a spell, and reflected the twilight tint of the starry sky—barnacle geese were calling to one another; a sleepy cry would come from a drake among the teal, and, at rare intervals, the silvery trumpeting of a flock of swans that had broken their flight to spend the night at their ease. An occasional splash in the darkness meant a fish growing fat in the spaciousness of the floods, and the ripples would spread far out along the gold flecked waters, startling the birds to a chorus of warning. Then again peace would descend on the river side. But at break of day, when the spurs of the chalk-hills were barely touched with pink, a southeasterly wind arose and blew hard and strong against the current. The Don was churned to seven foot waves, the waters gurgled and bubbled madly in the woods, where the trees tossed and moaned in the wind. It blew all day long and only died down late at night.

This weather lasted for several days. Lilac-tinged smoke hung over the steppe. The ground was parched now, the grass had ceased growing, the ploughed fields showed sharp ridges. Hour by hour the soil was becoming weathered and bleached, and there was not a soul to be seen in the fields about the Tatarskoye farmsteads. There were no men left but the old and feeble, and the Cossacks who had returned from the retreat, sick or with maimed, frost-bitten limbs. Only women and young lads could be seen working in the fields. The wind whirled the dust about the lonely farmsteads, slammed the window shutters of the cottages and lifted the straw thatch on the barns.

"There'll be no grain this year," the old folks prophesied. "Nobody but women to work in the fields and only one out of every three farms doing any sowing. Dead land won't bear fruit."

It was the day after the sowing and just before sunset Axinya had driven the bulls down to the pond to water. Near the dam she saw Obnizov's ten-year old lad holding

the head of a saddled horse. The animal was munching and from its velvety, grey nose drops trickled down, while its rider, who had dismounted, was amusing himself by throwing lumps of dry clay into the water and watching the widening circles they made.

"Where are you off to, Vanyatka?" Axinya asked.

"I've been to fetch dinner out to my mother."

"How are they all getting on up there at the farm?"

"Not so bad. Grandpa Gerassim caught the grandest carp in his net last night. And Fyodor Melnikov's back from the retreat."

Rising on tiptoe, the boy slipped the bit into the horse's mouth, seized a lock of its mane and sprang into the saddle with impish dexterity. He rode away from the pond at a foot's pace, like a sober farmer, but a minute or so later he glanced round at Axinya and set off at a gallop that made his faded blue blouse belly out like a balloon.

While the bulls were drinking, Axinya lay down on the dam; she made up her mind to go up to the farm. Melnikov was a Cossack who had been in service and he would be certain to know something about Grigory. When she had driven the beasts back to the field-camp, she said to Dunyashka:

"I'm going up to the farm now; I'll be here early tomorrow."

"Something special you want to go there for?"

"Yes."

Axinya returned next morning. As she came towards Dunyashka she was swinging a long switch with a careless air, but her brows were knitted, and bitter lines showed about the corners of her mouth.

"Fyodor Melnikov's home. I went there to ask him about Grigory, but he didn't know anything," she explained briefly, then turned away sharply.

When seed-time was over, Axinya set to work on her own allotment. She planted vegetables, cucumbers and the like, daubed the cabin with fresh clay, then whitewashed it as well as she knew how and mended the thatch of the shed with the remains of the straw. Work made the days pass, but never for an hour was she free of anxiety for Grigory's life. She remembered Stepan with reluctance, but whenever any of the Cossacks turned up, she invariably inquired first of all: "You don't happen to have seen my Stepan?" and only later attempted cautiously to bring the conversation round to Grigory. Everybody knew about her connection with him, and even the most inveterate gossips among the women had ceased to cackle about them, but Axinya was shy of showing her feelings. Only occasionally, if the Cossack in question was inclined to be taciturn and did not mention Grigory, she would screw up her eyes and, with some embarrassment, inquire: "Did you come across a neighbor of ours, Grigory Panteleyevich? His mother is terrible worried about him, she's worn to nothing with anxiety."

But none of the local Cossacks had set eyes on either Grigory or Stepan after the surrender of the Don army at Novorossiisk. About the end of June a young fellow who belonged to one of the Kolundayev farmsteads and had been in service together with Stepan, called round to see Axinya on his way home.

"Stepan's gone to the Crimea, honest truth," he informed her. "I saw him boarding the ship, but I didn't get a chance to talk to him. There was such a rush that they were walking over people's heads." To her questions about Grigory he replied evasively:

"I saw him on the wharf, he was all in epaulettes. After that I didn't see anything of him. A lot

of the officers were taken to Moscow. Who knows where he is now?"

A week later Prokhor Zukov came home, wounded. He was brought on a cart from Millerovo. As soon as she heard of it, Axinya stopped milking, let the cow feed her calf, and, flinging her kerchief over her head as she went, hurried off to Zukov's place.

"Prokhor will know, Prokhor is sure to know! But suppose he should tell me that Grisha's no more in the land of the living? What'll I do, what'll I do then?" she kept thinking on the way there. Every minute her pace slackened; she pressed her hand to her heart, dreading to hear the black news of death.

Prokhor received her in the best room. He grinned broadly, trying to hide the stump of his left arm behind his back.

"How do, old pal, how do! Glad to see you alive again! We thought you'd given up the ghost back there in that settlement. Oh, but you were took real bad then. Well, and what does the typhus do to our looks? You can see what the Poles have made out of me. May they get a cart-shaft in their own jaws!"

Prokhor showed her the empty, knotted sleeve of his khaki shirt.

"As soon as the wife saw it, she set up a howl. 'Stop yowling, you fool,' I says to her. 'Other folks get their heads knocked off and make no fuss about it; what's an arm, anyway? They make wooden ones to fit nowadays. Wooden arms don't feel the cold, nor bleed if you cut them.' The only trouble is that I haven't learned to manage with one arm yet. I can't fasten my pants nohow and that's all about it. I came all the way from Kiev with them undone. It's a disgrace and a shame! So you'll just have to make allowances for me if you notice anything untidy about my clothes. . . . But come on in and sit down, you're my visitor. We'll have a chat while my woman's out. I sent her, devil take it, for a drop of moonshine. Here's her husband back from the wars without an arm and she's got nothing in the house to treat him with. You're all alike, without your husbands, you rattailed imps, I know you in and out!"

"You might tell me if. . . ."

"I know, I'm going to tell you. He told me to make you a bow like this." Prokhor made her a mock obeisance. Then he raised his head and looked at her and his eyebrows went up in astonishment. "Well, what do you think of that! What are you howling for, stupid? All you women are alike, full of fads and fancies and silly ways. If a fellow's killed, they start their caterwauling, and if you're left alive, they're at it, too. Wipe your eyes and nose, I say, what are you snuffling and snivelling about? I'm telling you he's eaten so much he has a face like a harvest moon! At Novorossiisk we both joined up in the fourteenth division of Comrade Budyonny's cavalry. Our Grigory Panteleyevich was made a *sotnik*.[1] I was one of his men, and we marched to a spot near Kiev.

"Well, my girl, we gave those Poles something to remember. While we were going there, Grigory Panteleyevich says to us: 'I've done for a good many Germans and tried my sword on all sorts of Austrians and the like, surely the Polish skulls can't be any harder. I've an idea they ought to be easier to kill off than our Russians, what do you think?' he says, grinning at me and giving me a wink. He changed a lot as soon as he joined the Red Army, he got that jolly, and as smooth as a gelding.

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[1] Captain of a hundred men.

"But we couldn't manage without a family row. Once I rode up to him and said, just for a joke:

"'Time we were making a halt, your honor, Comrade Melekhov.'

"The way he rolled his eye at me!

" 'Chuck these silly jokes of yours, else it'll be the worse for you.' That same evening he called me over to speak to me about something or other, and I don't know what the devil got into me, but I had to call him 'your honor' again. Well, if you saw the way he clapped his hand to his revolver! He went as white as a sheet and bristled up like a wolf, and a mouthful of teeth on him—not less then a hundred, I reckon. I spurred my horse and off I went. He'd have killed me for two pins, the devil.

"Well, we came to the Ukraine, and got at those Poles. Not much as fighters, they aren't, a miserable, puny lot, on the whole. And stuffed as full of false pride as a fattened pig of muck. They can run, too—like rabbits—when you press 'em hard."

"Maybe he'll be coming on leave," Axinya stammered.

"Not a chance of it!" Prokhor crushed that hope at once. "He says, 'I'm going to serve till I've paid for all my sins.' And he'll do it; a fool's job is the easiest job of all.

"He led us in an attack outside a little town, and cut down four Uhlans before my very eyes. He was left-handed from childhood, so he could get at them this way and that way. Budyonny himself shook hands with him after the battle and thanked the men and him. Those are the kind of tricks he plays, your Panteleyevich!"

Axinya listened, spell-bound. She came to herself only when she had reached the Melekhov's gate. Dunyashka was in the passage, straining the milk. Without raising her head from her work, she asked:

"Have you come for the souring-stuff? I promised to bring it to you and I forgot." Then, glancing up and seeing Axinya's eyes, shining with happiness and wet with tears, she understood everything.

And Axinya hid her flaming cheeks on Dunyashka's shoulder, and, breathing hard with joy and relief, whispered:

"He's alive and well.... He sent his regards.... Go quick, go and tell your mother!"

Illustration by S. Korolkov to "And Quiet Flows the Don" (Volume I)

NIKOLAI ASEYEV

MAYAKOVSKY EMERGES

"I never saved a ruble out of my writings."
MAYAKOVSKY

No disquiet of regrets
impels me to begin
this chapter;
nor hope to tempt
Fame proper or unkempt.

I do not flinch
under his white hot eye
nor fear his strength;
I fear lest my portrait pinch
his giant length,
be flat and dry
and give to the seeing
no sense of his fluid
hot tumultuous being.

Here on the wall
framed and glassed in,
silent and close,
his portraits peer out
dour and morose,—
stippled ash
of his living fire,
that was its own gust
to lift it higher.

Is this
that biographers
of every degree
drag to the publishers—

is this stuff
he?

His every little vein
ran with life
and in others
incited
answering life.

The Crimean nightingales
singing today,
as they sang then—
he does not hear.
The same mists
huddle the peaks,—
and he not near.
The same Judas tree
wears its Spring wreath
that he no longer
walks beneath.

His thunder's
unstrung,
his last song
sung.

The since-born people
fill the land—so much,
only the statistic eye
can see them all—
whom his friendly life
can never touch,
nor his jokes call
to laughter—
and once
he joked with a mountain;
and his lips
courted the siren ships
and turbulent ocean;
and he had a drinking bout
with the sun—
the earth
their potion.[1]

Ah, how many events
without him to use,
have stepped into place
in the marching news!

[1] A reference to a poem by Mayakovsky describing a visit of the sun to him.

He was not there to tell
when tense Barcelona
felt the first shell.

And new bees
their honeycombs fill,
and new snakes
their draught distil.
And earth
making its checks and crosses
counting its losses
knows of the profit to be,
the maturing
inevitable
century.
The river deeps
will bear it;
the ore depths
will hear it.

Then sweat-gilt toil
self-emblazoned
will greet
life, honored and sweet.
We will know
what we waited so long
and knew before only
in the urging of song;
when with dry tongue
we called,
and behind stiff lips
hummed—
"Come!"

And the falcon voice
will startle the depths,
his song new sung!
Near us again
we shall hear him;
see him
unwasted
and young!

Translated by Isidor Schneider

DAVID BERGELSON

Trapezoid-in Russian, Trapezoid

Gorgeous in the fading colors of autumn, late October wandered dazedly over the sun-scorched hills and valleys. The bitter, teasing odor of wormwood was tangy and sharp, like a mixture of ginger and cinnamon. The odor was imbued with a wanton savagery, like the dense thickets of virgin forests, like this Birobijan taiga surrounding me, stretching up into the mountains which seemed to just touch the very edge of the overhanging sky.

I was returning afoot from Lake Tyoply in the mountain settlement which still bears the old Tungus name of Londoko. Here Jewish settlers are building a large fertilizer plant.

I was wilting in the heat. My head felt heavy after a two-hour lecture. In that wild mountain settlement, which even today is sometimes visited by Ussurian tigers, I had just heard a lecture on methods of breeding fish.

There was only a narrow trail along which to walk. It bore me now up, now down along the hillsides. Heat engulfed me like a wave. The virgin land stretched endlessly, to all four corners of the earth. The buzzing of grasshoppers wearied and weakened one as monotonous droning would.

It was the principal of the Londoko school who roused me from this state. We met suddenly at a sharp turn in the trail. The perception of reality came flooding back, and I became my old self again. I was brought back to the realization that here, in these boundless, primitive reaches a young, difficult and joyously intense life was breaking through like an underground torrent. The school principal herself is a little rill of this torrent. In this distant mountain settlement she had built and equipped a splendid, truly remarkable school, the shining windows of which look out upon the flourishing settlement joyously and cheerily, like children's eyes.

The principal is no longer young. She speaks slowly, drawing out

the words in a sing-song. That's the way they talk where she was born and brought up. I pictured her mother to myself—the local Jewess in an old-fashioned wig.

"What pulled you out in such weather?" I asked.

She shielded her eyes with her palm and frowned as she stared ahead at the Russian settlement pitched at the foot of the hills.

"'Pulled me] out' is right!" she said. " 'Dragged me out' would express it even better! I'm just about all in!"

She nodded in the direction of the village:

"I'll give them an earful of something they never heard before! I'll pour over their heads everything that's boiling up inside me!"

"What's the matter?" I asked in surprise.

"You'd better not ask! Trouble—and no end of it! It's my fault, of course, I shouldn't have let them do it."

"Let them do what?"

"Ekh! With my own hands I lent them one of our teachers!"

"What do you mean?"

"Just that! I gave one of our teachers as a loan to the Russian comrades of that settlement."

"What? What?" I asked. "What did you say you lent them?"

"A teacher," she replied. "The mathematics teacher."

"A teacher?"

"Yes, of course, a teacher. A real, live teacher. What makes you so surprised?"

"No, it's nothing," I said. "Only, you know. . . . I thought one

The Jewish Autonomous Region Birobijan: A geography lesson in a Jewish School

could lend money, a pot, household implements, well and even a wash-tub for clothes, perhaps. But to lend someone a teacher, why I never heard of it."

"I quite agree with you," the principal remarked. "Can one lend out one's own eye? Do you think we've crowds of teachers just loafing about, eh? We don't have enough ourselves! But what else can you do, when people come around and beg day after day? And they're our neighbors, too. We celebrate the holidays together. When any of us has some trouble we run off to the other for help and advice. And here the school year has all but started and our mathematics teacher hasn't come yet! It interferes with the opening of the school on time. We lent them our teacher. We agreed that it would be for only ten days. Well, they've kept him almost three weeks now, and there's no telling when he'll set about returning. So here I am, forced to drop everything today and go off to fetch him! I'll show them, I'll make such a fuss that they'll remember me until the seventh generation...."

"Wait a minute," I said. "I'll go with you."

I was curious to see a teacher who is lent out, and I wanted to see how my principal would collect her arrears on the loan, how she would conduct her teacher home.

We found the inhabitants of the Russian taiga settlement at work in the street. A group of men, sweating in the sun to the point where salt crystallized on their shirts, were rough-hewing thick logs. The chairman of the village Soviet was working with them—a tall, well-knit man of forty with the bearing of a Red Army man. He was bent over a heavy log, axe in hand.

"Doesn't your conscience bother you, Pavel Alexandrovich? Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" My principal launched the attack and even tried to employ me in the capacity of a witness. "Just look what you've done! We did you a favor. Lent you our teacher. Agreed it was to be for ten days. And what do you do? You keep him three weeks! And you like to talk about friendship of peoples and other such subjects!"

"Just a minute, just a minute!" The chairman had a laudable habit of pausing to think a bit before he answered. Slowly he turned his head to the right and then to the left.

"Wait a minute, wait a minute! What's that you said? That you did us a favor? Gave us a loan of your teacher?" he repeated.

He wiped his face, thought a bit and looked the principal straight in the eye.

"Well, and what about us?" he went on. "Didn't we give you something in exchange for the loan? What do you call that? Ventilation, I suppose?"

He pointed to the empty window frames of a big building on the opposite side of the village street. A sign hung over the building which indicated that it was a club.

My companion and the chairman continued to argue. I learned that the principal of the Jewish school in Londoko needed glass for double windows for the winter. The Russian village was expecting a shipment of glass, so they decided to help out their neighbors. But in order not to make them wait for the shipment they gave up the glass from their club windows. In return the Jewish school lent its Russian neighbors its mathematics teacher. One good turn deserves another.

"Well, all right," the principal had to admit. "We'll assume

that. But didn't we agree that we'd lend you the teacher for no more than ten days? Did we or didn't we?"

"What's true is true, there's no gainsaying it," confessed the chairman in turn. "The agreement was for ten days and no more. But look at the kind of teacher you sent us! He doesn't understand a damned word of Russian! We had to assign one of our teachers to teach him the terminology in Russian. As soon as he learns it he'll start in with the children here and we won't keep him more than ten days. Then we'll send him back. What did you think, that we wanted to rob you of him?"

"Lord!" the principal wrung her hands. "Do you mean to say it's taking him all of three weeks to learn Russian terms? Where is he?"

"Over there," Pavel Alexandrovich pointed in the direction of the school building. "Do us a favor, go and speak to him. Maybe he'll listen to you. You're an imposing sort of woman. Try to induce him speed things up a bit!"

Pavel Alexandrovich again took to his axe.

In the school the janitress was scrubbing the floors and pouring boiling water over them from a big tin kettle. The windows were wide open. The wind from the mountains carried a pungent wild odor — a mixture of ginger and cinnamon. It merged with the odor of the dust settling on the wet floors.

Behind the wall, in one of the classrooms, a lively conversation was going on. Someone laughed heartily. We followed the sound.

At a pupils' bench sat a young Jewish lad with a shock of thick black hair. A blonde Russian girl of nineteen or so, her hair cut in a boyish bob, stood with her back to the window. A narrow blue belt clasped her small waist. Her nose was turned up. She was looking at him gaily and there was merry laughter in her eyes, light, translucent, large as hothouse grapes.

When they saw us they seemed embarrassed. The girl turned her face to the window, and the lad sat motionless for a moment. Suddenly he seized the notebook lying in front of him and, digging his elbows into the desk, mumbled earnestly:

"Trapezoid—in Russian, trapezoid; integral—in Russian, integral; pyramid—in Russian, pyramid."

The principal fixed her intent gaze upon the Russian teacher. Then she turned slowly to me, bit her lip and whispered softly into my ear:

"Isn't she pretty? Everything's clear now. Quite clear!"

For a moment her eyes rested on the lad, this time, I thought, even with respect. Then she asked me:

"Well, what's to be done now? Advise me. What does one do in such cases?"

"Radius—in Russian, radius," the lad mumbled. "Parallel—in Russian, parallel; diagonal—in Russian, diagonal; perpendicular—in Russian, perpendicular."

My principal looked worried. She was silent.

"Look here, my lad," she said to the mathematics teacher after a pause. "I'll stay here a day or two and help you study the terminology. I think you'll learn it more rapidly if you study with me. What do you say?"

"Wh-wh-what?" The mathematics teacher froze in his seat. The girl turned from the window and looked at the lad expectantly. Their eyes met.

"No," the lad mumbled in embarrassment. "Why should you

stay? I believe . . . I think I know the terminology. That is . . . I guess I've learned it already."

He held the notebook out to us as if requesting us to examine him:

"Trapezoid—in Russian, trapezoid; pyramid—in Russian, pyramid; perpendicular—in Russian perpendicular."

"Why, of course!" I said to the principal. "What more do you want? He knows the terminology perfectly! Splendid. Now he can work here ten days and then return to you in Londoko!"

I walked back with the principal. Dusk was coming on. Gorgeous in the fading colors of autumn, late October wandered dazedly over the sun-scorched hills and valleys. The principal talked of her school affairs. I could still hear the lad's voice ringing in my ears:

"Perpendicular—in Russian, perpendicular; diagonal—diagonal; parallel—in Russian, parallel."

A street in Birobijan

VSEVOLOD VISHNEVSKY,

of "We from Kronstadt," fame, author of "Optimistic Tragedy," "We, the Russian People," etc.

American literature is part of our own biography. For who of our generation was not brought up on James Fenimore Cooper? Who among us did not scalp a kid brother, smear his body with paint and stick feathers in his hair? Who did not strut about as "Leather Stocking," "Hawk Claw," "Big- Game Hunter"?... We learned to crawl noiselessly on our bellies, tracking down enemies and felling them with a single blow of our tomahawks .... Ah, those childhood days!

With Maine Reed we roamed all over Mexico. Somewhat later we wept with Harriet Beecher Stowe over the fate of the Negroes. Along with Bret Harte we were gold mine desperadoes.

The years passed. We revelled in Mark Twain and, of course, we tried out all his suggestions on the spot, sometimes to the despair of irate parents and our own grief! But that didn't matter, for the Tom Sawyers of this world are tough youngsters.

I was terribly glad to learn that Mark Twain was a sailor.

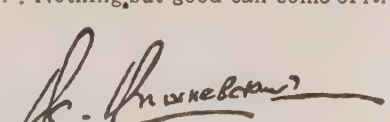
And how we loved Jack London!

The years went by. Volumes of poetry appeared on our bookshelves: Longfellow, Bryant, Edgar Allen Poe, Walt Whitman.

We learned the militant song of the Northerners, *John Brown's Body*. Later on, when we were in the throes of our revolutionary struggle, we read Upton Sinclair's novels in the intervals between rifle shots.

Sinclair's *Jimmy Higgins* made a deep and lasting impression on us. After the war we read O. Henry, and the long, entrancing novels of Theodore Dreiser. Books by Langston Hughes and Erskine Caldwell stirred us. And recently we have read Ernest Hemingway's novels with the greatest interest. His *The Sun Also Rises, Farewell to Arms, To Have, and Have Not, Fifth Column* and his work on the film *The Spanish Earth* have aroused our sympathy and approval.

Thus, our friends across the ocean can see how close American literature is to us. We appreciate America's energy, humor, lust for life and its quests for new ways. We appreciate the progressiveness of America's writers. We are going the same way! ... Let's shake hands. We must meet you Americans, and you us. .... Nothing but good can come of it.



VERA KETLINSKAYA

Courage

Below we publish an excerpt from the novel *Courage*, by the young Soviet authoress Vera Ketlinskaya. The book deals with the history of the construction of Komsomolsk, a new city in the dense taiga of the Far East. Its heroes are the builders of the town, young men and women, members of the Young Communist League for the most part. The novel tells of the hardships that had to be overcome by the young builders, of their enthusiasm and courage. It describes how they grappled with their difficulties, how they battled cowardice and weakness, how the characters of the great majority of them were steeled by the rigorous life which they embraced of their own free will.

The episode we publish here describes one of the initial stages of the work when the foundations of the new city were laid. The grim, forbidding landscape of the Far East and hard toil frighten some of the Young Communists. The work is held up threatening to undermine the morale of the collective and do irreparable damage to the huge undertaking. Ketlinskaya shows how the more advanced and intelligent section of the young people succeed in influencing their wavering comrades and giving them leadership.

The significance of *Courage* is in its depiction of the rising Soviet generation, of how it is growing and being steeled. The author of the novel is one of the young people who built Komsomolsk, and her direct participation in the struggle for the city has enabled her to tell her story with passion and conviction.

A CITY IS BORN

It was shortly after noon when the small group of Komsomols gathered on the river bank to unpack the tools. They were surrounded by a crowd of onlookers.

All sorts of tools had been expected, for every kind of job, but there was nothing except axes and saws.

"Why, I don't even know how to handle the thing," Kolya Platt said, looking contemptuously at one of the saws.

Werner's powerful voice could be heard roaring, "Komsomols, form into brigades!"

But there were no brigades. Those that had been formed in the train had broken up, and the members could not find one another. So they formed themselves according to friendships, according to the cities from which they had come, or in any old way.

A new command was heard: "Two hundred people for the second section!"

"Two hundred people for the third section!"

People in the group were asking each other: "What's that—the second section?"

"The repair shop."

"And the third?"

"The lumber mill."

The Komsomols ran about from group to group. It developed that there were a great many volunteers for the second section.

The chief of the second section was a short, stout, middle-aged man named Pavel Petrovich Mikhalev, who wore glasses on his purplish nose. It was clear that he had no idea what to do with the Komsomols and, as he dashed to and fro, first to Werner and then to Granatov, he peered about over the tops of his glasses in great perplexity.

Kolya Platt walked up to him and said, with a courteous bow: "I should like to ask you to keep in mind that I am a first-rate mechanic."

Pavel Petrovich stared at him helplessly, in silence, and then made a wry face, saying:

"And I, my lad, am a construction specialist with thirty years experience. You keep that in mind too."

The second section—the future repair shop—was located far back in the dark and soundless taiga. Underfoot there rustled last year's half-rotted leaves, and the sodden ground gurgled softly. The thick branches of the trees were so closely locked together overhead that they barely permitted the sun's rays to penetrate.

The young people carried their saws and axes with them, and after them trailed their travelling kitchen and provisions.

"Hey, you comrades with the kitchen! Will you please stop over there!" shouted Pavel Petrovich, pointing to a dry rise in the ground, marked by a pair of birch trees.

Klava and Lilka went to work with vigor, unpacking their larder, interested in the task of cooking dinner in the thick of the forest. Sema Altschuler came to their aid, in order to build a stone hearth for the campfire.

"We-e-ll," drew out Pavel Petrovich at length, peering about him in alarm. "This is the future repair shop. The first thing is to clear the ground. We'll have to fell the trees, strip them of branches, and clear away the stumps. All right, get to work, everybody!"

The Komsomols joked about not having the training for the job. There were not enough axes and saws to go round.

Kolya Platt gave away his saw with alacrity and stood there, shrugging his shoulders angrily. Valka Bessonov lost his footing, stumbled into a hole filled with water, and clambered over to a fallen tree trunk to clean the mud off his boots with a branch.

The first tree crashed heavily to the ground, whistling through a clump of underbrush.

Petya Golubenko appealed to the chief in an affectedly sweet voice: "And what are we supposed to do? Count the ravens?"

Pavel Petrovich himself was not sure how to go about things. This was his first time in the taiga. He had been told to let some of the young people under his charge fell the trees, others do the sawing, and still others clear away the stumps. Petya, Kolya Platt and Valka Bessonov were in this third group, supposed to root up the stumps of the fallen trees.

Forty persons gathered around them.

"Your job is to uproot the stumps," said Pavel Petrovich, waving his hands vaguely. "Root up the stumps, you understand, don't you?" he added angrily, and turned his back to them.

Petya Golubenko was first to reach a large tree stump. He kicked

at it, tried to pry it loose with his hands, then jumped on it and shouted loudly, winking mischievously:

"Pavel Petrovich, it won't come out!"

When Pavel Petrovich, panting, walked over to him, Petya said good-naturedly: "We don't know how. What about showing us?"

"Aw, what's there here to know?"

Pavel Petrovich approached an obstinate stump.

"Let's have your axe," and he began to chop at the deep-rooted stump. "All together now! One—two!" But the stump refused to budge. The young people stood around in a circle. "Oh you devil!" panted Pavel Petrovich, perspiring heavily, as he struggled to uptorn the stump with the help of Petya and Kolya Platt. The roots groaned a little, but the stump would not budge.

"What's there to understand about that?" Petya exclaimed in a tantalizing voice.

Pavel Petrovich pulled with all his strength; then he spat in disgust and gave a long curse.

"After all, I'm not a wood-cutter."

And he glared at the young people over his glasses with the air of a wronged man. Genka Kalyuzhny was trying out his own strength on the stump when there was heard a clear, distinct and angry voice:

"After all, I'm not a wood-cutter, either. I'm a first-rate mechanic, and it's my opinion that to utilize my experience on such work is simply stupid. I resign. I demand work in my own line. I wasn't sent here for this!"

Kolya Platt pronounced this little speech loudly and distinctly, watching Pavel Petrovich with steady, angry eyes. He had always been looked up to at the factory, he was accustomed to respect. He had expected to be greeted with still greater respect, in the Far East, to be given a more responsible job, and to be regarded more highly than before. But here he was, and no one distinguished him from the mass of young people. He was sent into the taiga with a saw, his boots were soaked from the swampy ground, he was treated as an unskilled worker, and all this, he was confident, was nothing but a sad, easily-repaired mistake.

Valka Bessonov shouted furiously:

"If you're a specialist, who am I? They didn't send me here to root up stumps, either. If you want to know, pal, I'm the finest plasterer in Leningrad!"

Then Genka Kalyuzhny's powerful voice rang out:

"What's the big idea! You think you're the only experts! I'm an experienced turner."

At this point all the young people threw down their axes and saws.

"I'm a repair man!"

"And I'm a locksmith!"

"I've got first-rate qualifications, too!"

"What do you mean, mine are higher, and I'm keeping still about it."

"I'm talking about all of us," Kolya Platt pronounced loudly. "We're not being utilized properly. I suggest that we get Werner here."

Tonya Vasyayeva, who was busy cleaning the branches off the fallen trees, suddenly cut into the midst of the young people and called out in a ringing voice:

"All this is rubbish, comrades! I'm not a wood-cutter either, I'm a weaver. But do you suppose I'm going to demand that they bring a loom out here for me."

Her words were persuasive, but Valka Bessonov cut her short by shouting:

"To hell with your loom. I was

The taiga is retreating.
In the rear are seen the buildings of Komsomolsk

sent out here to be a plasterer. It's ridiculous the way things are being done. Why did Granatov make up that list of specialties? For the swamp? And the devil knows what kind of ground there is here! Let Werner explain things! Werner!"

"Werner, Werner!" they all took up the cry.

"Comrades, this is shameful!" Tonya cried out.

Pashka Matveyev seconded her: "Discipline, everybody. We'll ask tonight, this is no way to do things!"

"Werner! Werner!" the lads yelled, drowning out their voices.

Petya Golubenko observed the proceedings watchfully. Yellow freckles stood out prominently on his pale face. Without knowing what to do, he dashed out in front.

"I'll run over there in a jiff!" and off he galloped toward the village.

When the roofs of the village were visible ahead of him, Petya stopped in indecision. He did not know what to tell Werner. Werner might get angry and demand: "What are you anyway, Komsomols or not, the devil take it?" Petya felt himself the representative of the new "pirates'" revolt. But he didn't want to be. "Comrade Golubenko," they would tell him, "this is the second time in three days that you have disrupted discipline." And why in the world had they been given that funny Pavel Petrovich?

Slowing down his pace, he reached the village. Everything was quiet on the barge. Werner was not in sight. It didn't pay to involve the newspaper *Amur Crocodile* in this affair.

On the gangway Petya ran into a sturdy unshaven man wearing a beige cap.

"What are you doing here?" the man in the beige cap asked.

Petya recalled that this was the man who had arrived late the previous evening by plane and had examined the tents in the night.

"Nothing," Petya answered, "I'm from the second section. I've been sent to see Comrade Werner."

"What's happened?"

Petya explained confusedly that the young people were disorderly.

"If only you'd go there!" he added.

"Listen, lad," said the man in the beige cap. "I don't even intend to speak to Werner. You go back and tell your comrades that Morozov said they were sent here not as turners and locksmiths, but as the best Komsomols. And that's all. They should understand things for themselves; they're not babies."

Petya bent his head, and then ran back. But as he left the village he stopped once more to think it out. Who would listen to him? They'd tell him that it was none of his business.

He heard the far-off chopping of the axes, and ran toward the sound, seeking Kruglov. The first section was working at top speed. The young engineer Fedotov had placed his people intelligently. Petya saw Kruglov at once, dragging a sadly drooping birch tree behind him.

Petya helped carry the birch and whispered, so the others would not hear:

"Andrusha, things are going badly. Come along with me, will you!"

Andrei asked what it was all about. After speaking quietly to Fedotov, the engineer, he called Katya Stavrova.

"Katya, let's go and calm them down. Your Bessonov wants to plaster the pines."

"He's not *my* Bessonov!" Katya retorted, but she went along.

At the second section, they were awaiting Werner. As a result of the heated argument, the Komsomols had divided into two opposing camps. The smooth reasoning of Kolya Platt had influenced many of them. Those who could not and would not agree with him threw themselves into the work with a will. Pashka Matveyev felled one tree after another, he was drenched in perspiration, but he didn't give himself a moment's rest. Leaving her pots and pans, Klava grabbed hold of one of the saws.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourselves—and boys, at that!" she exclaimed in good-natured derision. And several of them grumbled but took the saw from her and began to work.

Sema Altschuler was still tending the fire. He had no objection to partaking in the quarrel, but he felt that well thought-out methods were needed here. Pavel Petrovich would not do, he was not able to organize his people. But the young people, too, were all wrong—Sema was ashamed of them and particularly of Genka, his friend. He thought a long time before calling Genka over.

Genka came unwillingly. He was ready for argument and bore a determined look of resistance. But Sema pointed to a heavy stone fixed in the ground.

"Let's go, strong man, help me!"

Genka wrenched the stone out of the ground and easily carried it away.

"What a heavyweight you are!" said Sema admiringly. "And now go and show these good-for-nothings how to work."

Genka snorted, his face red with shame.

"I've got an idea for you," said Sema. "Look here, look at this old log. I've scraped off the bark and sharpened the end to a point. Dig

it under the roots, to get leverage. Understand?"

Genka took hold of the log, but did not make a move.

"Honestly now, do you know what they were raising such a fuss about?" Sema asked serenely, trying to hide his face.

"Oh, rubbish."

"Well, all right. Now go and try what I've told you. Remember, the same principle as a lever; dig it in under, and press. It ought to work."

Genka, ashamed but satisfied that a way had been found out of an unpleasant situation, threw himself at the stumps recklessly. He selected the same one that Pavel Petrovich had unsuccessfully tried to uproot. Valka Bessonov was perched on the stump.

"Scram!" barked Genka, and inserted his lever under the roots.

The lever held firm. Genka took a good hold on it, spat on his palms, and pressed with such ferocious strength that the horny roots loosened with a loud groan, and the liberated stump rolled heavily over on its side.

Looking around, he saw the grateful look on Sema's face and shouted, moved by a wave of warm friendship:

"All right fellows, go to it! Three or four together. Let's go now!"

Some of them joined him. Tonya chopped off the tops of the fallen trees, sharpened points at the end, and offered everybody the levers.

But just the same there were about fifty people still fiddling around without work, awaiting Werner's arrival.

"He's coming!" somebody shouted.

Kruglov came up, accompanied by Petya Golubenko and Katya Stavrova. Kruglov walked unhurriedly.

"Well, what's going wrong here?" he asked.

"Everything," answered Valka Bessonov, and turned around noticing the mocking look on Katya's face.

Tonya tossed down her axe and rushed over to Kruglov.

"It's a disgrace!" she shouted, looking angrily at the boys. "The devil only knows how these people were selected! They've disgraced the entire section! You understand, Andrei, they are to be given work according to their specialty," she sneered. "They're not accustomed to this sort of thing! They don't like swamps! They're highly qualified! Huh!"

"I'm a first-rate mechanic!" announced Kolya Platt.

Andrei took a good look at the Komsomols. Among them were a great many qualified workers. But there was his old acquaintance, Nikolka! Andrei knew his type well—a village lad, who had been an unskilled worker, an ordinary navvy. What was he grumbling about? And all around him a group of the most loud-mouthed lads was already gathered.

He went up to Nikolka and took him by the shoulders.

"What kind of special work are you waiting for?" he asked.

Nikolka tore himself away, wheeled around, and roared:

"I'm not the only one. . . . I'm like everybody else. . . ."

"I'm asking you, what is your specialty?"

Nikolka was silent. Then Andrei turned to Kolya Platt.

"Just look at yourself. You were sent out here as an outstanding Komsomol, as a proletarian, and what are you doing? Just a self-seeker! Breaking up our work! And you, Bessonov, the same applies to you! The buildings aren't up yet, and you want to be plastering! I suppose that if war comes and

you're sent to dig trenches, you'll refuse to do that too!"

"Don't you dare to say that!" shouted Valka, turning red as a beet.

"Why shouldn't I dare? You have to show what sort of stuff you're made of! And you've disgraced the entire construction site! It's a damned shame, fellows! You've been sent out here because you were the best Komsomols. The Party figured that we weren't afraid of hardships. Surely we aren't going to fall down on the job!"

"No, we won't fall down! The Party hasn't made a mistake!" shouted Tonya with tears in her voice. She was ashamed of her comrades and was really suffering. Afraid of bursting into tears, she marched off to one side and took hold of an axe.

"Let me have it!" screamed Valka Bessonov right in her ear, and with mad energy began, not to chop, but to completely demolish the first tree at hand.

Kolya Platt raised his hand:

"Maybe I was mistaken. But look here, even now there's other work. There are machine tools lying on the river bank. Isn't it possible to put them in a shed for the time being?"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Tonya, throwing herself into the fray once again. "We've got something better to do. In three days we've got to clear the ground here of stumps. In three days we must put up the repair shop building. In a week we must open it! And then, Comrade Platt, you can work according to your own specialty. Is that right, comrades? Andrusha, what do you say?"

"Yes, it is," someone said in a quiet low voice.

Everyone turned to see where the voice had come from. Over at the side stood Morozov, a well-built, unshaven man wearing a beige colored cap. He removed his cap and immediately became much older; above his youthful face his hair was white.

"No need to get angry about it," said Morozov. "The girl is right. You've got to do everything with your own hands to build this city. And what's more, in the shortest possible time, an unparalleled short time. Don't think I've come to persuade you. Persuasion isn't needed here. I remember a time three years ago when we were having trouble in the villages. There weren't enough people. The Party took twenty-five thousand workers Communists, off their jobs, and sent them to the countryside. Remember they were born and bred in the city, proletarians who hadn't the faintest conception of farming, and they built model collective farms. Or take this: Kronstadt during the wartime. Delegates to the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party marched in the front ranks during the storming of Kronstadt. They died, they perished under the ice. These were the best, the most qualified people of our country. There are lots of things like these that could be cited. Do I have to give you any more instances?"

"It's clear!" Kolya Platt exclaimed.

"It may be," Morozov went on, "that there are certain people among you who simply aren't capable of withstanding hardships, who are afraid of trouble. People like that can only cause harm. Times are such right now that we've simply got nobody to play nursemaid for them. So I suggest that anyone who feels that he's not up to the job should leave. There'll be no fuss and no argument, we'll simply send them home on the first boat."

No one spoke out, but the noise all around grew. Morozov's last

words were drowned in a roar of indignation. Klava dashed over to him and shouted in a trembling voice:

"But there's no one like that here! We're Komsomols!"

Within a few minutes Andrei Kruglov was making out a list of names for the Komsomol shock brigade.

"Put me down," Petya Golubenko rushed up to say. "We've all got to stick together!"

Valka Besscnov could no longer restrain himself.

"Over here, fellows! Announcing the super-shock brigade, to be named after the new city! Sign yourselves up in the super-shock, invincible, indestructible brigade!"

Fifteen minutes later everyone was hard at work. The new brigades challenged one another to competition. Pavel Petrovich went off with Morozov, smiling and casting sheepish glances at the log levers that were tearing the heavy roots of the tree stumps out of the ground.

Road construction in Komsomolsk

YANKA KUPALA

ALESYA

As day dawned in Polesye
A cuckoo sang loudly.
With her small girl Alesya
A mother played proudly.

Dark came at the day's ending,
The pines rustled faintly.
By the dear cradle bending
The dear one crooned gently.

"Sleep, my blossom, it's night.
Asleep the birds lie.
Sleep, my bell of delight,
Lulla lullaby.

"Sleep, and grow up unladen.
Sleep, and grow strong.
You'll stand a straight-backed maiden,
And comely, ere long.

"You'll weave and reel till late
In the winter-hours,
And wait for joy at the gate
When spring thaws the flowers."

As day dawned in Polesye
A cuckoo chimed out.
But still the fate of Alesya
Was shrouded in doubt.

A fable is it, or true?
The daughter grew strong—
Up into skies of blue
Flew tearing along.

The plane carried her gaily.
Sky-high she would roam
Above her blithe land daily,
Her "khata," her home.

Above a woodland scene
Or backwaters she'd pass;
With parachute of green
She'd drop on the grass—

Then again upsoar and wheel,
Swing high and more high,
And shake with wings of steel
The clouds in the sky.

At a window her mother, staring,
Sat every day.
Who past the sun goes daring
And dazzling away?

The cuckoo hailed the morning
Over meadow-dew.
Not vain the mother's yearning—
The goodluck came true.

Translated by Jack Lindsay

GREETINGS ACROSS THE OCEAN

YANKA KUPALA,

famous Byelorussian poet and folklorist

American literature at present is one of the most interesting and brilliant literatures in the world. In the Soviet Union American writers are widely known and diligently read. Poe and Whitman, Cooper and Bret Harte, among the older authors; Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, Ernest Hemingway, Erskine Caldwell and many others are published and republished and find numerous and eager readers.

We writers of the Soviet national republics are greatly interested in the development of American literature, which though seemingly so far away across the ocean, is close to us because of its realistic tendencies.

I should like to say a few words at this point about an artist in whom these tendencies, it seems to me, find particularly powerful expression. I mean Theodore Dreiser, whom I have read and reread. I am always greatly moved by the pictures of life in contemporary America which Dreiser reproduces with painstaking completeness, with documentary accuracy and with the profundity of a scientific investigator. He is a master of true and bold characterization, a penetrating and thoughtful artist who ranks with writers of world significance in his powers of observation and in the scope of his creative work. His novels are a genuine documentary record of a whole epoch in the history of modern America.

But Dreiser's realism is even more to be prized because the great canvases he creates are an exposé of the negative features of contemporary capitalist society. He boldly challenges many of the decayed conventions of bourgeois society, against philistinism against the tragic contradictions of the capitalist system.

I am fond of Dreiser's short stories, where he shows himself to be a subtle and sensitive psychologist in depicting the tragedies of ordinary people, and this, moreover, almost always against the background of their social environment. Naturally so important a representative of the Western novel of social problems as Dreiser is of the utmost interest to Soviet readers.

I should like in a word or two to express my admiration for the work and personality of Ernest Hemingway, that tireless, talented and impassioned author, whose writing in defense of Republican Spain is a great service to the cause of peace and to the triumph of ideals of progress and humanism.

No doubt it will come to pass as I hope, that the New York World's Fair will be a means of fostering closer relations between American and Soviet intellectuals, of stimulating their interest in the literatures of each other's countries, of uniting them in the service of the ideals of humanity.

Янка Купала

MIKHAIL PRISHVIN

Nerle

We were expecting it on March 14, but on the evening of the twelfth there were signs that it would take place that night, so I hurried to the chemist's for chloride acid and carbolic, while my wife went to the shed for clean straw. When I came back the straw was already in the kitchen; I sprinkled it with chloride, placed it in the corner and fenced off the whole corner with a board, which I nailed to the wall to keep it in place. Our Kate knew the purpose of these preparations from previous experience and waited patiently. The moment I had finished she stepped across the board and turned round and round in the corner among the straw.

We were not wrong: that very night Kate presented us with six puppies—three bitches and three males. The bitches were smaller than the males and were exactly like their mother, a German pointer with big coffee-colored spots, the white part of her skin thickly freckled. One had a farthing-mark on the bald white spot on its head, another, two farthing marks, and the third none at all, but only a white tonsure—this one was much smaller and weaker than its sisters.

But the males were all like their father, Tom; their spots were slightly darker, two of them had no spots on the white, and the third was much bigger than the others, and all over spots. His skin was so thickly freckled that it seemed to be quite dark, and it was heavy and somehow "oaken." The word "oaken" came into my head, reminding me of duck-hunting along the *Dubetz* (the Oak River). That had been good hunting and I thought it wouldn't be a bad idea to call the new dog Oaken, in memory of it. Anyhow it was time to give up the traditional dog-names and find some with local associations—after all, every streamlet and hillock in the world got its name without the help of Greek mythology.

I decided to keep one dog and one bitch for myself from the litter. A name for the bitch came into my head directly after naming the dog. I decided to call it Nerle, because great numbers of woodcock had been found nesting in abundance last year on the marshy banks of the river Nerle.

This inconstant river held for me other charms, besides hunting. It was so winding that in some places you could reach from one of its bends to another with an oar

across the dividing banks. I remember going with the current in a canoe, steering with an oar to keep free of the marshy shore, every now and then rowing, and turning sharply. In front a church seemed quite near, but the river suddenly took a turn in the opposite direction, and the church disappeared, and a long time after, when I had turned again, the village seemed much further away than it had been at first. I could hear a young shepherd practicing on a birch flute, the sounds sometimes loud, sometimes soft, but audible all the time—the same shepherd, the same melody, the same mistakes. I got to the village by dinner time, but it turned out to be quite far away from the banks, and there was no point in my going there. I rested on the bank. The shepherd had fallen silent. And then I went far away down the river, and the shepherd again pursued me with his flute right up till the evening.

Only when the sun had gone down was there any mercy for me: the river straightened out and carried me far away from the village, and on the steep wooded banks the singing of birds drowned the memory of the faulty melody. The water carried me swiftly, all I had to do was to hold the oar fast. I never missed a pike in the stream, a blue dragon-fly on the grass, a clump of yellow flowers, a family of snipe on the rotting edge of a submerged canoe, the broad leaf of some waterplant glistening in the rays of the evening sun, the reeds following me with low bows along the shivering ripples. What a fruitless day on the river, and what delight! I will never forget it and never cease to love its memory.

Wild river Nerle, I will give your name to a living dog, whose greatest joy will be to gaze lovingly at her master, even when he gets entangled in the turns and twists of his life!

Ever since the birth of the puppies I had got into the habit of dining in the kitchen: it was very pleasant during the meal to look down from the heights of the dinner table and consider the fate of the little creatures. Below me was a seething, piebald mass, and from out of it the eyes of their mother were continually fixed on my face, endeavoring to probe my expression and discover her fate. But I didn't know yet which of them I would call Nerle and Oaken. I know that weight and form are not everything for a hunting dog. Most important for a dog is that which we have decided to call "mind," and it was impossible to discover it at once in the blind descendants of the beautiful Kate. My hunting dog must, first and foremost, be wise; even a feeble sense of smell might be compatible with my ideas of cleverness in a dog, and you get more game with a clever dog whose sense of smell is faint than with one which is stupid, however sharp its physical senses.

And so at dinner, supper and tea I kept on thinking of my dogs, and talking to my wife, never taking my eyes off the litter. Even while reading the paper I could hear them dreaming: hardly able as yet to open their mouths, in their dreams they barked like real dogs. The moment they woke up I threw aside the paper, enthralled by the spectacle of their struggle for survival. Each pup exerted its strength, mind, agility, cunning, in the struggle for the hindmost, milkiest teats. The moment the sleeping, piebald bunch of little dogs woke up they rushed to the attack on the teats. They clambered over each other, some

falling down, half crushed by the weight of those on top; the unlucky ones rolled down, their pink, pig-like bellies flashing, got themselves right side uppermost again, and once more turned to the attack. Some even emitted victorious sounds as they rushed to the attack, the unlucky ones squealed their mortification, while those who gained the biggest teats gave smacks of pleasure—here is everything which is found in the struggle of men for their daily bread. It would, of course, be perfectly possible to separate the strong from the weak, and feed them separately. But who is to say which are really the strong, and which are the weak? One day the battle is won by strong muscles, the next the most agile mind has seized the biggest teat from a larger dog, and is sucking away in the best place. I restrained my pity for the weaker-looking ones, and, till I should have found my Nerle, decided not to meddle in the business of Nature.

The black-muzzled pup which suggested the name of Oaken gained strength so rapidly that it could soon knock all the rest out of its way, seize the very best hindmost teat, and lie like a log, paying not the least attention to the double layer of dogs lying on top of it and thinking of nothing but sucking. Worst of all was the state of the little bitch with the white unspotted tonsure on its dark head; it never attained any but the tiny teats on the very top, and was probably always half-starved.

In the mind of a dog we are, of course, veritable gods: the gods sit at the table as in Olympia, eat and discuss the fate of their dogs.

Every day my wife and I argued. The woman was sorry for the little dog, and assured me that it was the daintiest of all, and exactly like its mother, and we simply must interfere with Nature and not allow the puppy to die. Her pity enabled her to discover ever fresh beauties in the favorite dog and to tempt me with them. It was hard enough for me to insist on my plan even with my wife alone, but one day a new goddess of mercy reinforced her in our Olympia. This was a friend, slight of body but wiry. She immediately took the side of a fellow-woman, and both of them began to implore my mercy for the weak little animal. I have the greatest respect for this Anna Vasilyevna, and I had to exert all my resources.

"Don't waste your pity," I said. "Keep it for human beings! Why, most people simply drown unwanted puppies, and I am planning to choose myself a friend, while respecting the laws of Nature. We often spoil what is good by unwise pity."

Anna Vasilyevna tried to adopt my rational viewpoint.

"But it's worth a lot of money. You are sacrificing money as well as the dog in your experiment."

I could hardly believe that the unmercenery Anna Vasilyevna was sincere in her financial considerations, and I replied firmly, to put an end to the argument, and change the subject:

"It's not money I want. Let the pup die, keep your money for human beings; in that world . . ." (I broke off, pointing downwards towards the perpetual struggle for the teats) "they don't fear death, death is regarded there as one of nature's graces."

We sat down to dinner in silence. My wife handed Anna Vasilyevna vegetarian food—mushrooms and *kissel*. I like vegetarian dishes. My beef rissoles acquire a special flavor when others are eating fleshless diet. I eat beef rissoles and uphold vegetarianism.

I apologized to Anna Vasilyevna

for my rissoles and with the idea of toning down the harshness of my previous words began to tell them of the numbers of people whose digestive troubles had been cured during the compulsory fasting of revolutionary days.

When we had come to the end of our meal the small animals at our feet had done with their sucking and had begun yawning, leaning on one another till they had arranged themselves in their usual sleep-pyramid. We covered them with my old hunting jacket for warmth and quiet, and the mother was at last free to go to the basin of oatmeal waiting for her in another corner, oatmeal flavoured with bone soup. Kate finished her dish quicker than we ours, and returned to her place, lying down beside the puppies.

But when arguments are left unfinished, the thoughts which were forcibly abandoned, ferment in our consciousness, and, finding no room there, again come to the surface and insist on being carried to their logical conclusion.

We began by speaking of the healthfulness of fasting, all the time looking into the litter. Suddenly a slight, quiet, cauticus movement could be observed beneath the jacket, a white-tonsured head appeared and at last the whole of the weakest and daintiest bitch, on whose account the whole dispute had been waged. All the other puppies were fast asleep. There could be no doubt that the little bitch had her own ideas. At first, however, we thought that, like all the puppies, she was moving aside from the litter to relieve her bowels. But, freeing herself from the jacket, the little bitch shambled across the straw to its mother, took a long pull at the hindmost teat, and fell asleep there under her leg, warm and sated, much better than under my hunting jacket. Naturally we were all greatly struck: we had all been discussing pity and here was the bitch perfectly satisfied, with no interference from outside.

"You see, dear Anna Vasilyevna," said I triumphantly. "You have often told me yourself that you attained unexpected happiness during the hard struggles of those years for a crust of bread, happiness unknown to the well-fed and prosperous, and that you bless even those who meant evil by you. How grateful this little animal ought then to be to me for not allowing it to be artificially fed, and stimulating its tiny, rudimentary brain to form its own simple plan."

The next time the puppies woke and resumed the attack, the evening of that same day, the little bitch with the white tonsure took no part in the struggle. But in the morning I found her not under the jacket, but again under her mother. Everyone was very pleased, but, as I could not make up my mind for this alone to acknowledge the pup as my Nerle, we began calling it Anna Vasilyevna, whom we all loved. In a few days' time, our new little Anna Vasilyevna was much fatter and we noticed that she was much firmer on her feet than the other puppies; in addition she had learned a new trick. She wandered about the straw, venturing into the far corners and getting farther and farther from her mother. The others had only two ideas—to sleep and to wrangle for the best teats. Anna Vasilyevna had discovered how to escape from the brutal struggle for existence. She grew stronger every day, and my wife and I were in full accord, and rejoiced to see the pup using her liberated energy for purposes of investigation. It was so pleasant, day by day, absorbed

in studying the nature of the dogs, to try to understand also one's own life. Somehow I, too, had wandered a good deal in my childhood.

The limit of Anna Vasilyevna's voyages of investigation was a four-inch board. This was the end of all journeying for the little creature: the most she could do was to put her front paws on the board and from this vantage point look over at the great stretch of the floor, just as we humans gaze over distant fields. Her mother would plunge into this remoteness, go to her bowl, do something or other there, and return. Anna Vasilyevna got into the habit of waiting for her mother at the board, creeping up to her when she lay down again and putting her tiny paws round the mother's nose, licking her lip, thus gradually becoming familiar with the taste of oatmeal soup. One day when Kate had stepped across the plank, Anna Vasilyevna watched her from over it, lapping up her soup, and began to whine piteously. The mother left her food and went back, knocked her daughter down off the plank with her nose and, thinking, no doubt, that she could not relieve her bowels, began to massage the little belly with her tongue, the traditional form of massage in such cases. The little bitch soon quieted down, and the mother returned to her dinner. But the moment Kate had gone Anna Vasilyevna climbed to the barrier again and began whining more piteously than ever. The mother glanced at her in anxiety, and, turning her eyes towards me, also began to whine.

"I don't understand what's wrong. Help us, oh, good master!" said her eyes.

"Peel!" I said.

The meaning of this exclamation depends on the intonation; just now it meant: "Take no notice, get on with your meal and don't cosset the pup!" The mother resumed her lapping and the daughter, hurt by such neglect, made a desperate plunge, jumped across the barrier and waddled across the room straight to the bowl.

It amused us enormously to see mother and daughter eating from the same bowl; Kate, with her beautiful pink udders, by no means a large dog, had suddenly become a monster, while beside her—her copy in miniature, with exactly the same coffee-colored marks, the same freckles, the same stump of tail—stood the tiny Anna Vasilyevna, trying to do exactly what her mother did. Very soon, however, she was tired of merely licking the edge of the bowl, and, rearing on to her hind legs, perched her front paws on it. The edge probably seemed to her another kind of barrier, which it would only be necessary to overcome in order to master all the secrets of the bowl. She repeated the desperate movement that had carried her across the plank, and suddenly splashed into the middle of the oatmeal soup.

Kate had already eaten most of the soup. The pup clambered quickly out of the bowl without the aid of her mother, all covered with yellowish oatmeal. She then waddled back and began to whine at the barrier. Just then Oaken happened to wake up, and, hearing a noise at the barrier, came up to it. But little Anna Vasilyevna had already clambered up and suddenly fell right on to Oaken on the other side. Oaken sniffed at her, and began to lick her, liking the new taste of her coat.

But most wonderful of all was that when the next day Anna Vasilyevna crept out from under the jacket she was followed by the massive jowl of Oaken, who, scrambling over the barrier after her, also waddled to the bowl, plunged

his front paws into it and began to lap up the soup. After this it was clear that Anna Vasilyevna's first voyage to the bowl had been equivalent in the world of small dogs to the discovery of a new country for human beings. Once Columbus had discovered America everybody began to rush to the new country, and now all the puppies discovered the bowl. The little tonsured bitch had taught Oaken the way, and, he being so big, with such a splendid area for licking, the two bitches with one and two farthings on their tonsures soon found him out, and began also to travel to the bowl. But it was a long time before the two big white pups without many freckles and dip muzzles, who kept themselves apart from the rest of the merry company, knew that America had been discovered. We had to take the savages to the plate and dip their noses in the milk before they understood and began to drink for themselves.

The first to understand our coaxing *"Tiu-tiu-tiu"* was Nerle, soon followed by Oaken, the bitches with one farthing and two farthings on their tonsures, and, at long last, the aloof savages with the rosy muzzles.

But when, one evening as we were at dinner, the dog contingent woke up and also wanted dinner, and hungry Anna Vasilyevna leaving her whining brethren trotted up to Olympia and began to pull at the trousers and skirts of the gods, we had no more doubt that the dainty little bitch with a pure white tonsure was indeed our wished-for Nerle.

GREETINGS ACROSS THE OCEAN

EVGUENI PETROV,

co-author with the late Ilya Ilf of the world-known novels "The Golden Calf," "Little Golden America," etc.

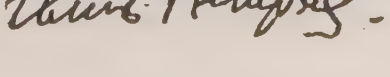
It is hard for me to add anything to the characterization of the American people the late Ilya Ilf and I gave in our book, *Little Golden America*.

We both liked America exceedingly. These are not empty words. We came to like America after extensive observation.

Since childhood I have loved American literature. Contemporary American writers whom I had the pleasure of meeting during our trip through the United States laughed at me a little for the almost maniacal passion I feel for Mark Twain. It is true, I do have a very great admiration for him. None but an exceptionally talented people could have given the world this brilliant, scintillating and jubilant writer.

I have great love and admiration for Ernest Hemingway. It seems to me that he is destined to become a classic of world literature. I am impressed by the courage and honesty with which Upton Sinclair is struggling for the cause of the working people.

It would take too long to list everything that I like about intellectual America. I take this opportunity to express my deep respect and admiration for the American people.



KONSTANTIN PAUSTOVSKY

Music by Verdi

A visiting Moscow theater troupe was staging *Traviata* on the armored deck of a cruiser under the open sky.

Grey-mustached boatmen crowded up to the planked pier in their ancient tubs, shouting hoarsely and insistently:

"Who's bound for the cruiser? Who wants to hear the music? We take you right up alongside and park there right through the performance. There's no swell, upon my word! D'ye call that a swell, comrades?"

The boats bumped aimlessly against one another, bobbing up and down on the light ripples as though bowing to the shore. Old carters' nags toss their heads just like that.

An evening haze spread over the tranquil waters of the bay. The signal lamps flickered steadily in the water by the rocky shores. The autumn night settled down slowly. It lingered at every step and could not quite drive the last rays of the sunset from the deepest bays.

But when the lights flashed on the cruiser night fell all at once, filled with the sounds of troubled waters—gurgling, rippling and splashing.

The hubbub of the port became audible, the hurried dipping of oars, the whirring of engines, the distant shouts of the steersmen, the malevolent scream of sirens and the rippling of the waves, coursing over the bay in all directions.

All these sounds emanating from the shores and piers floated to the cruiser, where suddenly a bassoon sounded in the orchestra. Motor boats tore through the sea in the direction of the alluring sound, their festive flags swirling across the water.

Tatyana Solntseva was to play Violetta.

She was busy putting on her make-up in the commander's cabin, which was brightly illumined by high-power lamps installed by the Red Navy men.

She pinned a camelia in her corsage and powdered her drawn face. It was hard for her to play tonight. In Moscow her young brother, little more than a boy, was lying in a hospital ready for a serious operation.

Solntseva was worried, and so she noticed nothing; she did not see the town rustling with dry autumnal leaves and breezes, nor the myriad lights that hovered over the harbor like golden bees; she did not notice the pungent air that fill-

ed the streets of the town with the tangy odor of wet rocks and bitter grasses.

The operation was to have been performed that morning and there had been no telegram from Moscow.

Solntseva went up to the deck, which was enclosed on either side by canvas awnings. The necks of 'cellos leaned incongruously against the grey muzzles of guns.

Verdi's melodies vibrated in the stillness of the steel vessel. Hundreds of young sailors listened breathlessly to the sorrowful voice of Violetta. The throbbing of the violins echoed over the neighboring shores.

The boats swayed and bobbed at the ship's side. People craned their necks upward to gain a glimpse of the cruiser's deck. The boatmen tried hard to avoid clattering with their oars and when their boats jammed they contented themselves with a silent show of fists instead of the customary exchange of loud abuse.

The assistant regisseur stood nervously on the armored turret which served as the wings. In his pocket lay a telegram addressed to Solntseva. He did not know what to do, whether to open it himself or hand it to her after the performance. He beckoned to the theater manager and asked his advice in a whisper.

The manager snatched the telegram from his hand and tore it open:

"Nothing much," he said, chewing the end of his cigarette. "The operation has been postponed owing to the critical condition of the patient. We can tell her during the intermission."

The assistant regisseur frowned and nodded his assent.

Vasya Chukov, the stoker, who, like all men in his profession, was known as the "underground spirit," had been stationed at the curtain, a flamboyant affair of signal flags sewn together.

Vasya, short, thick-set and red with exertion, did not take his eyes off the assistant regisseur. This fidgety, nervous young man was to signal Vasya when it was time to drop the curtain.

Vasya overheard the entire conversation at the armored turret. The broad smile gradually left his face as he listened.

During the intermission Solntseva read the telegram and her head reeled.

When in the fourth act Alfred dropped before her on his knees, she bent over him and kissed his youthful temple. A fine blue vein, just like her brother's, stood out on the temple.

Her breast heaved and she wept. The tears streamed down her cheeks but she continued to sing. Her voice trembled. Large misty globes of light swam before her eyes and she could not tell whether they were the footlights or the stars reflected in the water, or the white faces of the sailors.

It was then that Vasya Chukov rang down the curtain, paying no heed to the wrathful shouts from behind the armored turret. Chukov had disobeyed orders.

His face looked as if it were made of stone. To the indignant whispers of the assistant regisseur he replied tersely:

"Ycu may complain to the commander of the vessel if you like. I shall tell him everything."

The deck resounded with applause. The simple audience did not doubt that the act was over after the tense and dramatic scene culminating in Violetta's tears. None of them knew that the scene had been cut short by the "underground spirit."

Chukov approached the commander of the vessel, who was sitting in the front row, and told him what had happened.

The commander rose. A silent, grey-headed man, he had seen a great deal of death during revolutionary battles, he had witnessed many storms and lost many comrades. He

knew the mercilessness of struggle and the relentlessness of fighting orders. All that had existed before the Revolution was lost in a dim blur of a Donbas mining village, the squalid village school and the people of those days, whom he remembered as a tired and bewildered crowd. The Revolution had wiped out the past with a firm hand, filling his soul with simplicity and clarity. To the Revolution he was devoted as a fighter, as a former miner and as a man of clear and perspicacious mind.

The commander rose from his seat and went onto the stage. The deck still thundered with applause and stamping of feet.

Behind the scenes the commander met the manager, who was pale with indignation.

"Please don't worry," he began hastily, "Everything will be in order. Women's nerves, you know. She'll sing all right."

"She will not sing," said the commander calmly, looking the manager squarely in the eyes. "Stop the performance, please!"

The manager shrugged his shoulders and gave vent to a mirthless laugh.

"Impossible. We cannot stop a performance just because of the mood of the actors. And why all the fuss? She is quite all right now and will be able to sing quite well."

The commander turned to Solntseva. She nodded without looking at him.

"You see, she agrees," said the manager, flinging his cigarette onto the deck. This whole affair was irritating. He began to feel awkward and embarrassed.

The commander glanced involuntarily at the cigarette stub and Vasya Chukov stooped swiftly and threw it overboard.

"You are on board a vessel of our Red Navy," said the commander. A tremor passed through the scar on his cheek. "You must excuse me, but I am in command here and therefore I take the liberty of remanding your orders. The consent of the artist is of no importance at the moment. I forbid the performance to continue. That's all."

The commander raised his hand and Vasya Chukov moved back the curtain. The hubbub of conversation among the audience died down.

"Red Navymen," said the commander quietly. "Comrade Solntseva has had bad news from home. It is difficult for her to play her part."

A low murmur passed through the crowd of sailors. All rose to their feet before the commander had announced that the performance was postponed. Words were unnecessary, everyone understood.

"Lower the launch," ordered the commander.

"Lower the launch," the order was echoed down to the lower decks.

A few minutes later the commander and the singer climbed into the boat. The Red Navymen helped the singer to descend the rope ladder. A tall sailor carefully placed a bouquet on the seat beside Solntseva, reddened, and shouted the order:

"Full steam ahead!"

The launch nosed its way through the water, leaving swirls of light-studded foam in its wake.

"I have communicated with the commander of the fleet," the commander told Solntseva. "There is a place reserved for you on the express train to Moscow. We have forty minutes. We'll make it."

Solntseva bent her head and fingered the flowers—she could not trust herself to speak.

"You know, Comrade Commander," said the tail steward softly, but so that Solntseva might hear,

"I read in the newspapers that there is a Moscow professor who performs heart operations as easily as though he were cracking nuts. It would be good if they could get hold of him."

"Never mind, Kuzmenko," said the commander.

An hour later the express train, shrieking and emitting clouds of steam, tore through the last tunnel. The lights of the city and the harbor disappeared behind the tall overhanging crags.

Solntseva sat in her compartment in her hat and coat. She dimly remembered the lights of the passing stations, snow on the roofs of freight cars, Moscow, sunk in wintry night, the taxicab and the shaded lights in the hospital corridors.

Just as blurred was the memory of her brother's face smiling up at her from the hospital cot. "Everything went well," said the professor with the pointed, angry-looking little beard. "Very well, indeed."

Solntseva tenderly kissed her brother on the moist young temple, through which the fine blue vein was faintly visible.

And a few hours later it was night again; once more the station, the pock-marked porter, the roar of railway bridges, snow, a gloomy sunset in the steppes beyond Kharkov and, finally, the blue haze of the azure harbor, the sun high in the heavens and the soft air of the maritime autumn.

Solntseva rushed to the window—yes, there was the dark blue silhouette of the cruiser still standing in the harbor. She began to tug nervously at the window strap. She wanted to lean out and wave to the cruiser, to wave and wave with her little white handkerchief.

But the window was shut fast and Solntseva remembered that it was winter.

"If only our troupe has not left! If only I can still reach them in time!" thought the singer.

She found them all in the town when she arrived.

The next day the performance that had been so recently interrupted was repeated on the cruiser.

When the "underground spirit" rang up the curtain and Solntseva made her entry, the sailors rose to their feet and the thunder of applause shook the surrounding shores. Modest wild flowers fell at the feet of the singer and mingled with the old silks and blue velvet of the Venetian costumes. The commander stood in the first row and smiled his friendly smile.

Solntseva bowed her head, she felt the tears start once more to her eyes, but these were tears of gratitude and warmth.

She swallowed them, raised her head and laughed out loud. Whereupon the orchestra came to life and the poignant melodies of Verdi drowned out the splashing of the waves.

Solntseva removed the camelia from her corsage and threw it on the deck, pinning a dry and dusty field flower in its place. It was a flower plucked on the outskirts of the town and thrown at her feet by Vasya Chukov.

She sang brilliantly. Her voice echoed and re-echoed over the harbor. The old fishers sitting at the water's edge listened and marveled at the power of youth.

The commander listened and thought that nothing makes talent bloom so much as friendship and comradeship.

It was as though Violetta was singing in her native Venice. The star-studded sky hung low over the cliffs. The radiance of the lights penetrated the very bottom of the bay, so clear were the depths. Notwithstanding the darkness the hor-

izon over the sea was visible for scores of miles as though at twilight.

After the performance the Red Navymen crowded round Solntseva, but suddenly they stepped back to make way for a tall sailor with gold bars on his sleeves—the commander of the fleet.

"I want to thank you on behalf of the whole fleet," he said. "You have given us great pleasure. How is your brother? Has he recovered?"

Solntseva wanted to tell him that these young, sun-tanned sailors—now humorous, now serious, but always calm and generous, taught her the meaning of real happiness. Mozart and Beethoven, she thought, might well envy her such an audience. But she said nothing. All she could do was to speechlessly shake the commander's hand.

A fresh breeze rose from the sea, where the lights of distant lighthouses twinkled in the darkness to the roar of the breakers.

The amateur jazz orchestra of the Red Navymen

ALEXANDER TVARDOVSKY

Mother and Son

Silently a mother
Looks in her son's eyes,
Wonders what to wish him,
What he'd mostly prize.

Wish him to be happy?—
He who happy is!
Wish him strength of body?
Youth and strength are his!

Ask him as his mother:—
"Make a longer stay!"
He's in the Red Army,
Must be soon away.

Or perhaps remind him
Never to forget her?
He who sent his mother
From the Pole a letter!

Warn him to be careful,
Not to catch the flu?
But he dresses warmly
As all pilots do!

Find a girl to marry?
That he'll do—don't fear!
All she may advise him
Is already clear.

Silently a mother
Looks in her son's eyes.

Nothing can she wish him—
Not that she's not wise:

Well she knows, this mother,
How her son can fly.
Nothing can she wish him
Howso hard she try.

He can well look after
Health and keep his glow.
Nothing comes more easy—
Mother ought to know!

He has seen much flying,
He will fly still more.
Hurts? He grins and bears it.
Tough? He'll not feel sore.

Burning with devotion,
Serving but one aim,
Working for his country,
Furthering her fame!

If he falls in battle,
Struck by fascist lead,
He, her son, not vainly
Will lay down his head.

She, this Soviet mother,
Kindly is and wise.
Silently this mother
Looks in her son's eyes.

Translated by Padraic Breslin

ANDREI PLATONOV

Midsummer Storm

Nine-year old Natasha and her little brother Antony took a long time to get to the village of Panyutino. The distance from their collective farm was only four kilometers, but the world is a big place for children. . . . Natasha alternately picked her brother up, when the mute appeal of his eyes was too much for her, and set him down to walk on his short legs, for the child was plump and heavy and she drooped under his weight. The tall rye grew on either side of the sun-baked path; it was already beginning to bow earthward, as if the ears were exhausted from the long summer and continual sunshine, like men ageing prematurely under a tropical sun. Every now and then Natasha cast frightened glances into the rye, to make sure that no one was peeping out of its depths, for she knew there were strange goblins who live in the rye, and she wondered where she could find a place to hide her brother, so that he, at least, should not lose his life. Perhaps she ought to put her shawl over his head, so that little Anthony would look like a girl (they don't notice little girls so much), or hide him in the sandy hollows of the landslide; but here there weren't any landslides, only near their village. So the older sister put her shawl over her brother's head, and went on bareheaded, having eased her mind that way.

The rye rustled gently all around the children. The cloudless sky weighed upon Natasha in the midday heat; she thought longingly of the cool night, with its stars over the cottage and yard, and she decided that night was much nicer; in the night the only sounds were the singing of the crickets, the croaking of the frogs at the edge of the pond and the snorting of the bull locked up in the cowshed for the night. Her mother would come out into the porch and call her in, her voice going on to different levels as if she were intoning: "Natasha, come and have supper, it's time you were in bed, don't stop out there counting the stars; the day will come again tomorrow."

Natasha clasped Anthony's hand more firmly and ran with him past the rye; she was longing to catch sight of the cottages in Panyutino, the village where her grandmother and grandfather lived. But the little boy couldn't keep up with her; he slipped in the dust and began to cry, and Natasha had not the sense to let go of his hand at once, but dragged him along the ground a little way without meaning to. Picking him up again and coaxing

away his tears, she carried him to the top of a hillock. The rye grew low here, because the earth was poor, and you could see a long way from the top of the hillock, you could see the dark passage of the wind over the rye fields and the stream of light over the gilded ears of corn, where the wind did not cast its dark patches. Natasha looked all round—when would Panyutino come in sight? And then her glance fell on the sails of the windmill rising and sinking over the distant fields. After that it wasn't so frightening walking under the solitary sunlight, amid the mournful rustle of the rye, in the silence of the level midday wind which felt so kind on her face and all over her body. Natasha heaved a sigh of satisfaction—now she could see the windmill itself, and people threshing grain, and there was probably granddad himself carrying a sack; he knew his grandchildren were coming and that fresh-milled flour would have to be prepared for pancakes; they had used up all last year's flour, and anyhow the batter from it wasn't good any more, and the pancakes wouldn't come as light and fluffy as from this year's flour.

Natasha sniffed the air. It smelled of straw, milk, sunbaked earth, of her father and mother. It was near and precious, and she trudged on with her brother, who had his arms round her neck and was dozing, his head against her shoulder.

They went on and on along the pathway through the rye. Suddenly Natasha stopped with a scream. From out of the rye a lean, poor-looking old man was approaching the children, an old man with a strange face. He was scarcely taller than Natasha herself, and wore bast shoes, tied with strips of sacking, patched here and there with soldier's khaki. A sack hung on his back. He stopped in front of the children, looking at Natasha with mournful, faded, but kindly eyes, which seemed to have seen everything long ago; he took off his hat, bowed, and went on.

"Harmless," thought Natasha. "If he had dared to touch us I'd have given him a terrible blow and he would have fallen dead. . . . Skinny, feeble old thing—not one of ours, you can see."

The old man, turning aside toward the rye, glanced cautiously at the children passing him. He could still see before him Natasha's face—the grey eyes, thoughtful and sensitive, the childish mouth open in surprise, the chubby cheeks, and fair hair, sunburnt, wind-dried. "She'll make a good wife when she grows up," thought the old man. Then he tried to make out the face of the child carried in the little girl's arms. "Like her," he thought. "Fallen asleep in the heat. He's all right." And the old man went on, his eyes raking the ground at his feet and the fine grass on the path.

When he saw the children's faces he felt a desire to die that minute, to shake off the longing for a young happy life—or else to live for ever. It seemed to him that the true desire for life only came in old age, and that when people are young, they don't know what life is, they just live. Most of all old men feel wistful about little children, and he felt a tender, painful joy in his heart whenever he saw them, a joy ever new and strange to him, not fully explored, as if it had been overlooked for lack of time to examine it, as if it had long been waiting for him to notice it.

He sat down in the shade, close to the ripening grain, feeling the need of contemplation. "What next!" he whispered. "Go on living, old man! Go on trying! Oho, I'm still as good as the next one! What's wrong with me? My body's whole,

the cottage is full of food, I don't drink, I'm not ailing. . . . " And the old man stretched himself out in complete satisfaction, laying his head on his sack. It was too hot for him to walk; the summer day is long, there would be plenty of time. Through his doze he could still feel a sweetness at his heart which was the memory of the children who had passed him in such timid silence, and, passing, had seemed to be summoning him to share with them a far-off, immortal life.

The stifling wind over the rye subsided—everything was silence, as if before thunder or before a great drought; and the old man also was silent. He was asleep, a prey to the flies and ants which crawled over his all-enduring face.

Natasha's grandparents lived in a cottage on the edge of the village. The communal rye fields began just outside their wattle fence, and the path went through the field from the collective farm in which lived the old couple's daughter, Natasha's mother, and went on further to other great fields, thick with corn and overgrown with trees, watered by gleaming rivulets, flowing towards a warm sea.

Since early morning, Natasha's grandmother, Ulyana Petrovna, had been going to the gate to look out for her grandson and granddaughter. A few days ago she had told the postwoman to be sure to see her daughter in the collective farm and ask her to let the grandchildren come to Panyutino. "The postwoman must have forgotten to tell her," thought Ulyana Petrovna, gazing at the hot path through the rye. "And she getting a day-and-a-half pay for every day's work! She's one of the lucky ones! All she has to do is to walk about, sweeping the dust with her skirt. A plague on her, the useless creature!" And the grandmother closed the wicket-gate.

She had put the straw ready in the stove from the morning, and the white batter had been standing since the evening before. Grandmother had twice turned it out of the pot into an earthenware bowl. Everything was ready to begin frying the pancakes, but the little visitors had not yet arrived, and her old man had gone out in the morning to fish in the lake, and had not been seen since. Probably sitting in the smithy again and wasting his time in idle talk! What do they care? One of them tells a lie, another backs him up, and her old man believes them all, for all he wanted was that life be interesting and astonishing. He just waited and hoped for something to happen: for the sun to go out suddenly, or a star to shoot down to the earth and light it up with golden light for everyone to gaze at for ever, or sweet, nourishing greens to grow all of themselves on a barren neglected field, good for people to eat, and not having to be sown, only harvested.

Ulyana Petrovna looked at the batter and sighed heavily: "I don't know how I've got through life with such a man! He's never cared about anything. All he wants is to sit somewhere and talk to people about a marvelous life, about what will happen and what won't happen, or sit at home and look at his goods and wonder when they'll all be burned up, or when everything will change so as to make life more interesting for him. Still he's good-natured, and lets a person alone, he puts up with me."

Grandmother kneaded the batter earnestly: it ought to be used, otherwise it would soon go sour.

Ulyana Petrovna had set light to the straw in the stove, when she suddenly heard a cock crowing in her yard, the neighbor's cock that was always invading her yard to fight her own cock and enjoy his hens. Ulyana Petrovna was jeal-

ous about her property. She caught up a broom and sallied forth to eject the intruder. This done, she looked up and down the village street and the path leading into the rye field, in the hope of seeing someone approaching. But there was no one in sight, only waves of heat over the earth, the familiar cottages and the neighbor's dusty hens scratching in the ruts.

Then Ulyana Petrovna closed the wicket and went in to fry the pancakes. The very first turned out a beauty. After all, why shouldn't it? How many had grandmother cooked in her life? They browned of themselves and asked to be taken off the pan, only there was no one to eat them now. Ulyana Petrovna herself always ate last of anything she cooked, taking what was left of the batter and cooking from the scrapings, so that nothing should be wasted—all food was equally good in her eyes.

Suddenly someone tapped gently on the window. "It might be a beggar," thought the grandmother. "But they've stopped coming, or I could give one a pancake. The harvests are good nowadays, there's no denying that." She took the pan off the fire, so that the pancake on it should not burn, and went to the window.

Her granddaughter Natasha was looking through the window, and at her back, his arms round his sister's neck, was little Anthony, still asleep, his big head in his sister's shawl on Natasha's shoulder, so that the little girl was bowed under his weight; with one hand she held on to Anthony's clinging hands, with the other she grasped the leg of his trousers, so that the boy's legs should not dangle, and to keep him from slipping down. Natasha leant her brother's legs against the turf bank below the wall of the hut, released her hand and once more knocked gently on the window.

"Granny," she said. "Open the door, we've come to see you."

Ulyana Petrovna noticed that Natasha was improving in appearance, so thoughtful-looking, more and more like Ulyana herself when she was a little girl. Touched by this kindness of life in repeating her own childhood in her grandchild, so that everyone who saw Natasha would remember Ulyana Petrovna after she was dead, the grandmother, consoled and content, said: "My poor little ones! Come in, come in, you're all I have to live for!"

In the cottage the grandmother tried to put Anthony on the bed, but he stretched and opened his eyes.

"Granny!" he said. "Make us some pancakes. We've been walking and walking."

"Why, they've been ready long ago," said grandmother. "Sit down on the bench there, I'll make you some fresh ones, those are cold."

"And give us some cold *kvass* to drink," said Natasha. "We'll dip our pancakes in it."

"In a minute! I'll just get the stove ready and then I'll go out to the larder," said the grandmother. "Then I'll make you a cake and heat the tea, and when grandpa comes we'll have dinner; I put some *kvass* down yesterday and I made some brawn. What else would you like?"

"And wild strawberry jam, and mushrooms," said Natasha.

"Everything, my darling, I'll get it all, this minute," said Ulyana Petrovna, remembering what she had and going towards the earth-larder, happy that she had plenty with which to feed her guests.

The cottage smelt of warm earth, fried pancakes and smoke, and through the window the sun shone on the unfamiliar grass of an alien village.

"Don't sniffle!" said Natasha to Anthony. "You've come to see

granny, what are you sniffling for? Here, let me wipe your nose."

Anthony stopped sniffling. He was seated on the bench at the empty table. Natasha peeped into granny's light-filled bedroom. Everything was spotlessly clean. Two fat flies bumped against the window pane, and their buzzing had a hot, stinging sound. A big kerosene lamp hung over the table, which with its embroidered cloth had a festive air. From somewhere in the village a knocking against the side of a barrel could be heard; someone was nailing on a hoop.

The pitiless heat stared through the window.

Natasha went up to the corner covered with pictures, to have a look at them and see what was written on them. There was a picture of grandfather, a picture postcard. Grandfather, a young man, with a black mustache, in a waistcoat, with a watch chain stretched across it, his hair slicked down on his head, looked like one of "the rich," or somebody from town, or like the tractor drivers in autumn; and grandfather's eyes looked straight in front of him, very serious.

Natasha seated herself on a chair at the table and began examining the pattern on the cloth; they had no such table cloth at home, and they didn't need one: Natasha's mother washed the table every day and scraped it with a knife; their table was lovely and clean.

The cocks in the village crowed, first one, then another, and then all together, and the broody hens clucked, gathering their chicks closer beneath them; a wind sprang up on the road and carried the stifling dust into hollows.

"Natasha, come here, the flies are bothering me!" called Anthony from the other room.

"Never mind them, I'll come in a minute!" replied Natasha.

She went to the window and leaned her face against the glass; she longed to see something familiar or homey out-of-doors, as familiar as the dear old wattle-fences in the collective farm and the grass and the trees. Outside granny's window nothing grew but a little bush; its leaves were coated with dust, its branches moved slightly, it was drooping from heat and drought, and seemed to be half asleep.

"Take me home, I want to go to mamma," begged Anthony.

Natasha went back to her brother. He was desolate and scared. "I want to go home," he said. "I don't want any pancakes, I want porridge. Mamma made some yesterday."

Natasha took a cooling pancake from the pan and stowed it in the front of her dress.

"Perhaps you'll get hungry on the way, you always ask for something when there isn't any," she said to her brother, and picked him up.

Grandmother was still in the larder; the low, moss-grown door leading to the turf-covered larder in the yard was open; the old woman was muttering to herself; she moved something out of the way, and took what was probably jam from a half-hidden pot. Natasha went to the larder door to see where granny had got to. It was dark in the larder, and she could see nothing; she could only hear granny muttering to herself, probably saying how she went on and on living, though she wanted so much to die.

Natasha, holding her brother close to her side, went across the potato patch to the path, to avoid making a noise with the wicket—which had given two piteous squeaks as if it had been hurt when she opened it before—and then over the fence to the rye field.

The rye had not grown very high. In the heat and stillness the ears bowed towards the earth, as if fast asleep, and the clouds cast a shadow

on their repose. Natasha looked round at the unfamiliar field, to see what had covered the sun. A distant flash of lightning angrily divided the whole of the visible world in two, and from the opposite side, behind the village of Panyutino, a column of dust reared itself; then came a clap of thunder, at first hollow and not at all frightening, but gradually rolling on and growing, till it got so close to Natasha that she felt a pain in her heart.

Natasha crept into the rye to hide herself and Anthony. She wanted to cut through the rye and go along the road, away from the cloud, home to father and mother, but then she changed her mind, for fear of trampling down the rye, and kept close to the edge. Anthony had already taken note of everything, the cloud and the dust and the lightning; he pressed against his sister, nestling his head against her hot cheek, as if he were in his mother's arms.

Natasha came out on to the road again and ran homeward, away from granny's. Anthony's legs hung down, he kept knocking them against his sister's side, though he was doing his best to keep still and hold on tight; it was all he could do.

Natasha hurried as fast as she could. Her only thought was to get Anthony home, and not to be caught by the storm and the thunder in the middle of the field. The rye was still hushed, the wind had not reached it yet, perhaps everything would pass over, perhaps the terrible cloud would burst far away from them, and leave behind it a clear cool sky. Natasha stopped and noticed how still and sleepy everything round her was, how dry the scraping of the grasshoppers, and how it gradually died away, because the earth was being more and more enveloped in darkness and silence, and the grasshoppers thought night had fallen; and then Natasha went forward slowly, Anthony not saying a word; he was afraid of what might happen to him, but he was interested in the clouds and the lightning and wanted something terrible to happen, so that he could see it; only he didn't want to be dead. He looked back across his sister's shoulder at the village. He could still see granny's hut. They could still have gone back, but he blinked, when the rye seemed to leap up and then lie down—the storm had fallen upon it.

"Natasha, hide me, quick, quick!" Anthony said crossly. "Can't you see what's happening, you silly!"

"Wait till I get you home! Won't I give you a good hiding!"

"We'll never get home, the thunder will kill us," he whispered. "Go quicker. You're only walking again. Run!"

The whirlwind had reached the children and was flinging sand, earth, leaves, twigs and grass at them. Natasha hid herself and her brother in the rye and they crouched on the earth; but the wind beat down the rye so low that Natasha could every now and then catch a glimpse of granny's cottage, the village and what was going on far away in the fields.

Hail came rushing through the hot dust of the whirlwind and began to beat down the rye, and hit the earth and Natasha and Anthony. Natasha covered Anthony with her body, lying right over him, trying especially to cover his head, and pressing him against herself. The hail beat upon her head and back, but she said not a word, glad to think that Anthony was all right; he even moved a little from under her, looking at the earth round the roots of the rye and in last year's furrows.

The hail was followed by heavy, chilling rain. Anthony got tired of lying under his sister, he wanted

to see what was going on, he wanted to get wet in the rain. "Let me go," he said. "I want to look!"

"Lie down, or else the thunder will kill you," admonished Natasha.

"It's gone by," said Anthony, and wriggled round under his sister.

Natasha sat up, taking her brother on her knees and shielding his head from the wind and rain with her arms. Anthony rose and looked round, blinking before the storm, the ears of rye and the raindrops beating at his face. He could see the black, lowering, rushing sky, with black clouds hanging motionless and letting down long tresses of rain, like an old beggarwoman's uncombed hair. The clouds kept changing their form, melting and disappearing under Anthony's eyes.

He decided to wait and see what would happen next, but his sister told him to keep closer to her so she could bend down and cover him. Anthony himself felt a desire to cover down and shelter his head against his big sister, and keep warm and dry, but it was dull there, while from here he could see everything, and so, disobeying his sister, he went on looking at the sky. But the ears of rye prevented him from seeing far, and Anthony asked Natasha to hold him up in her arms and let him look.

Natasha took her shawl off Anthony's head, stuffed it into the neck of her dress, wiped Anthony's wet head with her sleeve, and smacked him on the back of his head.

"You'll catch cold," she said. "Little silly! He wants to look at the whirlwind! I'll tell mamma, and she'll smack your head for you."

Anthony wanted to answer that his mother never smacked him on the head, and his father only on the forehead, but he caught his breath under the shock of the storm which flattened the rye. He could see granny's village and the meadows behind it, even on the other side of the river, blue in the wind and thunder. The terrified, trembling grass seemed to be running toward him, away from the wind.

Suddenly the rain stopped, but the wind went on, gathering force in the empty patches in the field. And he could see everything; but the light was different, pale blue and yellow, pure and kindly as in a dream; it lit up the grass, the flowers and the rye, and they, all by themselves, lit up the fields and cottages, and the cloud itself was illuminated from below by the dazzling earth. When he saw the grass and the rye and the cottages all unhurt, Anthony stopped being afraid of the cloud and the lightning.

The wind sank, a hush fell over everything, but the heavy rye did not straighten up. Anthony looked towards granny's home and saw her. She had come out on to the porch and was looking at the storm. She was anxious about her grandchildren's sudden disappearance. "Were they tired of being with me?" she wondered. "How could they be? They had only just come. Perhaps they've gone to look at the village, and they'll be back soon. If only they don't get caught in the rain! Look how dark it's got!" Ulyana Petrovna had no anxiety for her old husband. He was sure not to come home now till the storm had gone: he would be sitting somewhere looking at the lightning.

"I'll go and call the hens, they'd better stay in the shed," decided Ulyana Petrovna, but she started at the clap of thunder, quite near, which now broke out again and again, so that the rickety door of the cottage banged all of itself. (If the master of the house looked after his own home, the door wouldn't slam just from a noise, said granny to herself.) Granny stayed where she was till the thunder had quite exhausted itself, till its re-

motest growlings had become inaudible.

Anthony could see the lightning coming out of the darkness of the cloud and stinging the earth. At first it fell headlong far away from the village, but seemed to be dissatisfied and went back into the heights of the sky, and from there came straight down and killed a solitary tree growing in the middle of the village street, next to the smoke-stained wooden smithy. The tree burst out all blue, then it was suddenly illuminated, and as suddenly went out and died, and the lightning, too, died. The prostrate rye moved beneath the gathering thunder, and granny fled into the porch. Anthony laughed at granny because he saw she was afraid.

On the heels of the lightning the rain came, thick and fast, and everything grew dusky. He could no longer see granny behind the noisy screen of rain. But the far-off lightning again lit up the rye and the village, and then Anthony could see black smoke and a red flame in the center of the smoke, slowly ascending from under the roof of the old smithy, but the flame could not spread, because the rain kept putting it out. Anthony understood that the lightning had not died after it had killed the tree, but had run from the roots of the tree to the smithy and again become a flame.

Natasha clasped her brother, pressed him to herself as hard as she could, and went out of the rye on to the path with him; she wanted to run back to granny as fast as she could, to shelter Anthony from the rain and lightning, but the rain began to grow less violent, the drops came slower, a steamy heat filled the air and again everything round the alien village seemed stuffy and dreary.

Natasha stood still in the path and let her brother down to the earth.

The roof of the smithy was now alive with fire; the flames had licked the soaked boards dry and were now setting fire to them. People from the village fire-brigade were already running out, some with buckets of water, some with axes; the handle of the well was squeaking, and a few peasants were standing about doing nothing—they probably thought the fire would go out of itself, because the very biggest cloud, packed with thunder and lightning, had only just come up to the village of Panyutino; now it was the other side of the river, blue-black, heavy and silent, and the lightning was flashing in and out of it, though the thunder was not yet audible.

From the other side of the river a long, terrible night approached; you could die in it and never again see father and mother, never more play with the children in the street near the well, never again see all the things that Anthony saw every day in his father's yard. And the stove on which Anthony and his sister used to sleep in the winter would stand empty. He pitied the gentle cow which returned home every evening with its milk, the invisible crickets calling to someone before bedtime, the black beetles which lived out their lives in dark, warm crevices, the leaves in the yard, and the old wattle-hurdle, all probably looking for him and missing him. And he felt that he dwelt among them to gladden their hearts and that he did not want to die because they would all miss him so.

Anthony snuggled into his sister's arms and cried in terror. He was afraid the smithy would be burned down, and the cloud would send down more thunder and lightning to kill trees and burn cottages. Burrowing into his sister's side Anthony noticed that she smelt like everything in their hut—of bread and hay and wooden spoons.

Natasha looked round. She saw that the cloud was still a long way off, and thought that she and Anthony would have time to get home.

"Here you are!" she said and drew the cold pancake from out of her dress. She handed it to her brother.

Anthony climbed on to his sister's back, put one arm round her neck and began to munch the pancake. Soon he had eaten it all up. All this time his sister was running home, trying not to fall under her brother's weight.

She ran in the dusk of the approaching cloud, between the two walls of hushed rye.

But the darkness and the cloud soon overtook the children and enveloped them. The rain began falling again, thicker and faster after each angry flash of lightning. The sky once again released from its darkness an unbroken sheet of water, striking the earth with such force that, like a plough, it broke it up into clods.

Natasha found it difficult to breathe in the thick downpour; she shifted Anthony from her back to her arms, to try and shield him from the rain, and so that the lightning should not strike him first; and again she started forward.

The torrents of rain became more and more impenetrable before her, and it was hard and painful even to go slowly, as if the children were in the thick of a dark forest hard and prickly, piercing their skins to the very bone.

The claps of thunder drowned the noise of the rain; nothing but lightning flashes could be seen. From time to time there was so much lightning that it spread around it a long halo, but this halo only illuminated the tops of the gloomy mounds in the sky, and made everything still more terrible.

Natasha was quite worn out. She stopped for a moment and put the dripping Anthony on his feet. She didn't know which was nearer now—mother and father or granny, or how far she had gone from granny's house, and how far it was to their own home.

She sat down beside the rye and held Anthony to herself with all her might. But suddenly it occurred to Natasha that Anthony might be killed and she remain alive, and then she cried out, in the hope that someone would hear and come to their help.

After a few minutes her little brother said:

"Let's dig a hole and hide in it and live in it. Look, it's sandy here. Don't cry, you frighten me."

Soaked and haggard, the children began to dig a pit near the rye, where the soil was light. When they had made a tiny hollow the brother and sister saw that the heavy rain was digging their pit for them and washing away the sandy soil in rivulets; but they could not get into this pit.

Natasha and Anthony crouched under the torrents on the bare earth, trying to shelter their heads with their arms.

"Why did you take me to see old gran?" whined Anthony. "It's better to stay at home. I like being at home. You're a great silly!"

"You keep your mouth shut," answered Natasha. "Who wanted to run home from granny's in such a hurry? I didn't even taste a pancake."

"I was tired of being at granny's," said Anthony meekly.

The lightning quivered several times quite near Natasha and Anthony. The brother and sister seized each other's hands in terrified anticipation of the thunder. Anthony's face was against his sister's breast, and hers on his shoulder, so as not to see anything more. But in the noise of the downpour the thunderclap was not so terrible.

"It's passed over again," said Anthony.

The children had long been shivering with cold and now they pressed to each other in search of warmth; they were getting used to their discomfort and already feeling drowsy.

"Who are you?" asked a strange, husky voice quite near them.

Natasha raised her head from Anthony's shoulder. Bending over them was the thin little old man with the unfamiliar, hairless face, whom they had met on the way to granny's. But now this old man had his sack on his head.

"Tired or frightened?" the old man asked Natasha, approaching the children still nearer, so that they should hear him.

"We were frightened," said Natasha.

"Anybody would be," said the old man. "Frightening enough—rain and thunder and lightning all together. I wasn't afraid, because I'm old and silly, but you're only children—it's proper for you to be frightened."

"We're not frightened any more," said Natasha. "We got used to it. Who are you, and where do you come from?"

"I'm from far away," replied the old man. "Twenty *versts* from here it is, the Victory Stock Farm, haven't you heard of it? That's where I come from. I'm a cattle expert. I go everywhere they send me. I've just been in the Common Life Collective Farm. They told me their collective farm needs a breed bull. They have a right to a bull. Let them send a drover for it."

"This is where we come from," said Natasha. "The Common Life Collective Farm. Did you tell them to send for the bull?"

"Yes. And now I'm going back."

With the curiosity of childhood Anthony examined the little old stranger. The downpour had become a solid torrent breaking into bubbles, the lightning was already far away, and the thunder now died out before it could reach them.

"We've needed a bull in the collective farm ever so long," said Natasha.

The old man gazed at the children in silence through the dusky, long-drawn-out rain.

"I must be going on," he said reluctantly. "It's time for me to be off."

He began preparing for his long walk. He fastened his pack firmly on his back again and took off his hat.

"You'll never get there," he said to the children. "The road has been washed away, the soil is thick, it's good earth, and look, the rain's coming on faster."

He placed his own hat on Anthony's head and, bending down, his hands resting on the ground, told the child to creep into the sack on his back, and hold on tight. Anthony got in at once and felt very comfortable in the pack.

"Where are you going to take him?" asked Natasha breathlessly, ready to scratch the old man's eyes out. "Who told you to take him?"

"I'll take him back to his father and mother, that's where," said the old man. "To your collective farm. I'll take you, too."

He bent over once more, took Natasha in his arms, and went on in the rain along the road to the Common Life, carrying both children.

"Don't be afraid," said Natasha to her brother, who was comfortably seated in the sack. "I'll keep an eye on him."

"He's not like you. He's strong," said Anthony.

The veins stood out on the old man's neck, he bent over, his face and body wet with sweat and rain, but he walked firmly and patiently through the mud and pools.

The children fell silent, looking

out for their cottage. Natasha was secretly afraid that their home might have been struck by the lightning. The old man, to save his energy, also said nothing, only once whispering to himself: "Thank goodness there was no hail! Sometimes it's as big as a pigeon's egg. The children might have been killed."

The rain was now coming down in fine fast drops, but there was no more thunder. And soon Natasha could see the fence of the house in the outskirts of their collective farm; the Chumikovs lived there. She had not thought that the collective farm was so near, and she smiled in her joy. So everything was all right and there hadn't been a fire, because if there had, people would have gathered. Or had their cottage already been on fire and extinguished? Natasha began to worry again.

But there stood the tree which grew outside Natasha's home; it was alive. And there was the thatched roof of their cottage and the chimney with the iron weathercock. Natasha turned her face away from Anthony and cautiously wiped away the rain and tears with her sleeve.

Just outside the house, Natasha sprang to the ground, but the old man carried Anthony in the sack on his shoulders right into the porch.

Inside sat several persons waiting for the rain to pass. Natasha's father was entertaining them with tea and home-baked bread, and there was a bowl of lump sugar on the table. The guests were Igor Yefimovich Provotorov, the chairman of the collective farm, grandfather himself, and a stranger.

Natasha's mother undressed her daughter and Anthony and put dry clothes on them, saying repeatedly she would never, never let them go out visiting again. The old man, who had wrung some of the water out of his clothes, was already seated at the table, drinking tea and talking business. Igor Yefimovich knew him; the old man from the stock farm had just been to see him about the bull.

"How is it you send your children to Panyutino in a thunder storm?" Igor Yefimovich was asking Natasha's father.

"It was quite fine when they left," answered her father mildly.

"The storm broke out in the middle of the fine weather," said Igor Yefimovich, "and the children might not have had time to get to Panyutino. You're a fine fellow! We've been sitting here chattering over an hour, and you never once thought of your little boy and girl."

"What's the good of talking?" said the father, vexed. "Nothing happened to them, they came back safe and sound."

"That's true," said the chairman of the collective farm, and looked at Anthony and Natasha, who were standing in the doorway looking at the guests; their mother had put clean clothes on them and once again they were happy. "Their own grandfather," went on Igor Yefimovich, "he knew his grandchildren were coming to see him, and all he does is to come to his son-in-law through the storm, to sit and talk and drink tea. He doesn't worry."

Grandfather kept silent, and so did everyone else.

"I came here early in the morning, to the cooperative store," muttered grandfather. "I needed fish-hooks and I had business with your saddler. We haven't got the right hooks in our general store, and mine are all worn out. I thought I might find something in your cooperative."

"Well, it's over now," said Igor Yefimovich good-humoredly. "Give me back the order for the bull." And the chairman of the collective farm stretched out his hand to Natasha's father.

Her father handed over the paper hesitantly.

"Look, Yefimovich, a breed bull needs some understanding," he said. "Or don't you trust me with a bull any more, just because my children got wet?"

"Not for a bit," said the chairman, "I don't trust you."

"Who's to bring the bull, then?" enquired the father. "There's no one but me in the collective farm who could do it."

"Perhaps I'll arrange it with him," said the chairman, pointing to the old man.

"Just as you like," said the father. "You're very careful, all of a sudden, aren't you? . . . But a bull's one thing and a girl and a boy are quite another."

"So they are," said the chairman, stowing the paper away in his pocket after reading it through once more. "You can't buy children, but if you lose a bull you can buy another."

"Listen to him!" exclaimed the old man from the stock farm suddenly, as if from the depths of his heart. Pushing aside his saucer, he tossed a bit of sugar into his mouth in his excitement.

He stopped drinking and looked steadily at the chairman, a sandy-haired peasant of about forty-five, who cast slow glances at the world from thoughtful grey eyes.

Natasha and Anthony, tired of listening to the conversation, went out on to the porch.

The rain had turned to a faint drizzle. Stillness and dusk reigned. The leaves and grass seemed to be tired and to have gone to bed for the night. Far, far away there were still occasional flashes over dark, unfamiliar fields, as if the clouds were blinking now and then from weariness.

"Let's go and see granma again tomorrow," said Anthony to his sister. "I'm not afraid any more. I like the storm."

Natasha did not answer. He was only a little boy, and he was very tired, you couldn't scold him.

Their mother opened the door and called her children in to supper. She had boiled some potatoes for them and poured eggs over them, and sour cream on top. May they grow and be strong!

GREETINGS ACROSS THE OCEAN

KONSTANTIN PAUSTOVSKY,

eminent Soviet writer of travel and true stories, including the thrilling novel "Kara-Bugas."

In the nineteenth century Western Europe was flooded with the light of poetry and human wisdom. Suffice it to recall those illustrious names: Byron, Hugo, Goethe, Flaubert, Balzac, Dickens, Burns, Heine, Maupassant, Walter Scott.

In the twentieth century the sun of poetry shifted from Europe to the west. It is shining today over young America. I do not speak of my own country, which is creating a new and significant literature. I should say that in our day literature is flourishing in two parts of the world — in the United States of America and in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

I have loved American writers since childhood. I have thrilled with delight while reading the works of Edgar Allan Poe, I have laughed over Bret Harte, I love Mark Twain as every child in the Soviet Union, with the worshipful, comradely love of a schoolboy. I have read and re-read Jack London and wept over his grim stories. And fi-

nally I bow before O. Henry as the master of the short story, the story with an ending as sharp and unexpected as a punch.

I must admit that I never liked Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her sentimentality and piety seemed hypocritical to me. On my grandmother's table there stood a porcelain figure of a weeping lapdog. We, children, used to call it "Beecher Stowe's reader."

A new generation of American writers has come to take the place of Whitman and Irving, Longfellow and Poe. This is a generation of people more stirred by life, more rebellious and, perhaps, more sad than their predecessors. It is difficult to select one's favorite from among this new generation of American writers, but I think, after all, that Ernest Hemingway would be my choice. I admire his relentless mind, his tremendous insight into human nature, his magnificent style. In the simplicity of Hemingway's style, through what appear to be primitive and insignificant phrases, one perceives the terrible tragedy of a generation mentally maimed by the war.

I love Hemingway for helping the Spanish people to fight for their independence. I love Hemingway for his courage and the way he looks you straight in the eye, for his integrity and his noble spirit. I admire Hemingway for loving nature, the way animals and children, hunters and explorers love her. The majority of us look at nature with the naked eye. Hemingway looks at it through prisms that reveal to him the most inner, imperceptible manifestations. It is as though he can actually *see* the grass grow, hear the gentle fall of seeds and the whisper of the trout's fins.

And last but not least (let the serious-minded not censure me for this!), I love Hemingway because he is not only a first-class writer but a good angler. Only he who has experienced the passion of an angler knows how tremendously important it is in bringing the writer closer to nature.

VICTOR FINK,

Soviet publicist and writer who is best known for his novel based on personal experience "The Foreign Legion."

The first book I ever read was *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. This mischievous little fellow appealed to me at once, for in him I recognized something of myself. He became a sort of brother, a third pal in the pranks and games I played with Misha, now a respectable architect.

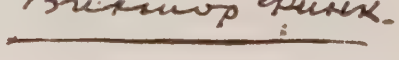
My father, a merry and lively man, read Mark Twain aloud to us children, and although he had read the books scores of times he never tired of this splendid American writer, every line of whose writings breathes life, merriment and great-heartedness.

I think that such a writer could have risen only from a courageous, diligent people which is never discouraged by life's reverses. I have always imagined Americans to be like that.

My favorite author today is still an American. I consider Ernest Hemingway the most interesting, most brilliant, in a word, the finest writer of our time.

That which he depicts—the devastated soul of the post-war bourgeois intellectuals—is clad in a form which I am certain will win for Hemingway a permanent place among the classics. It is because I admire him so much as a master of writing that I am so happy to see that he is searching for social truth.

In his recent works one feels that the mind and soul of the citizen as well as the artist cannot reconcile themselves to the emptiness, the hopelessness and darkness which is all that the bankrupt bourgeoisie, frantic with hatred, has to offer the intellectuals of the world. Hemingway understands that humanity has colossal reserves of strength, will, vigor and talent, and that these qualities are being injected into life by the new class which until now was doomed to mute submission but has begun to awaken, to raise its voice and fight, the world over. This new *leitmotif* in Hemingway's works brings him closer to us Soviet writers and makes him dear to us. We greet American literature and the great democratic people of the United States of America who have given the world such a fine and courageous writer as Ernest Hemingway.



IVAN KRATT

MULTA

The dogs were harnessed to the sledge and were whining impatiently at the porch. The head of the census-taking group for the Far North was giving last instructions to Boris Petrovich Mudri, census clerk.

"The main thing is to cover the whole district. The hamlets are scattered. As far as Annensky I know you'll be all right. Multa knows the tundra like the palm of his hand. What else? Explain the significance of the census. That's all, I think."

Boris Petrovich pursed his lips, with the home-rolled cigarette between them, lit it cautiously, stuck the dead match back into the box and extended a leisurely hand to his chief.

"So long!"

Outside Multa was going over the packing of the sledge and shouting at the dogs. Keko, the leader, a pure-bred white Alaskan dog, with a black chest and black hindpaws, watched his master out of the corner of his eye. He knew that a dog didn't have to pay attention every time a man shouted. And the present shouting was just a show of discipline. So Keko lazily helped to keep order, growling and showing his teeth at disobedient dogs.

The chief and Mudri came out on the porch. The dogs got more excited than ever. Multa shouted at them harshly and the team fell silent for a moment. The chief went up to Multa.

"Now, Multa, look out, old man! Don't miss a single hamlet, a single person! See that he writes every single one down in the big book. The Great Executive Committee wants it—see?"

"What's the good of talking so much?" said Multa. "Multa will see to it. Hi, there!"

The *kayur*[1] suddenly leaped toward the team. Seeing the men were busy talking, the dogs started a scuffle. Multa unbuckled the ringleader, restored order and, without leaving the sledge, called out irritably to Mudri:

"Get in! Time to start!"

Mudri seated himself in the sledge. Multa gathered up the reins and shook them, and the team dashed forward barking furiously. The chief jumped to the side, all covered with snow, waved his hand and went into the house. The team ran on. Beside it ran Multa, every now and then jumping on to the sledge. The *kayur* Multa was the best driver on the shore of the Behring Sea. His team, powerful and hardy, had been carefully picked in the course of two winter seasons. Multa was proud of his team, especially of the leader Keko. Man and dog supplemented each other's work.

[1] The musher.

When Multa was tired and took a seat on the sledge, the dog led the team alone. And it was seldom that it became necessary to call a halt or urge on the young inexperienced dogs.

Keko could always tell when a dog was cheating. His sharp fangs would remind the defaulter of his duty. A dog thus admonished would pull more zealously than the others, and go for a long time without attempting to shirk.

When Multa ran beside the sledge or helped the team to climb a slope Keko knew that the master himself was looking after the dogs, and Keko could devote all his attention to the track and to trotting as evenly and powerfully as possible.

Multa had much to say to Boris Petrovich, but the track demanded all his attention, and they drove all day in silence. Almost the whole time Mudri stayed on the sledge. The old wound in his thigh was giving him trouble again. He felt miserable.

Multa could see that his passenger was in pain, but they had to get to the hamlet of Eiva without calling a halt. There was something about the tundra the experienced Multa did not like. The *kayur* looked up at the grey sky, strained his eyes watching the horizon, listened attentively to something or other, and shook his head anxiously.

The team was tired. Multa never got a moment on the sledge now. He cast worried glances at the bowed figure of Boris Petrovich, at the weary dogs, and seemed to be trying to figure out something. Time went on. Multa glanced at Mudri again. "He's quite sick," thought the *kayur* sadly. "We won't be able to go on. The dogs can't hold out, either—it's a heavy load for them." Then Multa left the track and stopped the dogs.

"We'll camp here," he said curtly.

Mudri opened his eyes, cleared the icicles from his mustache and compressed his lips.

"We must be at Eiva's before nightfall."

Multa looked at him in astonishment.

"He doesn't want to rest!" he thought. But he shook his head.

"We can't. The dogs can't go on. A heavy load! Why don't you want to rest?"

Mudri got off the sledge in silence.

"I'll walk."

Multa looked at him curiously.

"I'll have to stop to feed them."

"Feed them!"

Boris Petrovich took off one mitt and rapidly lit a cigarette. His fingers became numb instantly—it was fifty degrees below zero.

Multa fed the dogs. Each one got a small fish, the reward for ten hours of exhausting labor. Multa saw to it that there was no fighting, and when the dogs had finished their meal he silently led the team back to the track.

It had become quite dark. The stars twinkled high up in the heavens. The frost grew sharper. Once more the team bounded forward. And Mudri trotted behind. He threw his heavy coat on to the sledge, it interfered with his stride. He ran in a short fur jacket.

But still they would arrive late to Eiva, for he could not keep pace with Multa and the dogs. The barometer in the village had shown a change; a blizzard was expected. They would have to hurry. This was Mudri's second year in the north, and he was beginning to understand something about it.

Multa ran in front of his companion, thinking about him. He had proposed a halt out of pity for him. "I must have offended the Russian," thought Multa, and glanced back at him. "There's endurance for you!"

Two hours later Mudri fell. Multa

noticed it only three hundred paces further on. He returned quickly and was just going to pick him up when Mudri suddenly said "Thanks," rose and walked firmly toward the sledge.

Multa said not another word to him.

Now Mudri held on to the overhead hoop of the sledge as he walked alongside. Every step seemed as if it were his last, it seemed impossible that he should lift his feet again, but the sledge slipped on and Mudri trudged on.

The pain in his left thigh had spread over his whole body. His heart seemed to be filling his chest as if it wanted to escape from his body. He could hardly breathe.

Multa turned back every now and then, his eyes reflecting his utter astonishment. Never before had he met such a man from the far-off lands!

The struggle went on for a full hour. At last Mudri stumbled and fell heavily across the track.

Multa set him on the sledge and went on. He was intolerably weary himself, and the dogs were worn out, their paws trembled, their steaming sides froze, but Multa and Keko would not let them stop.

Seven hours later they got to the hamlet. And only just in time. The blizzard was beginning. Multa carefully helped Mudri to get to the tent.

Almost the whole population of the hamlet had assembled in the tent. They knew Multa here and wanted to know where he was taking his passenger and what for. Multa said nothing. He now listened to Mudri's every word with the greatest respect. That quiet man who looked so weak, had shown out there in the tundra what a real man was. Multa believed in him.

The chairman of the local Soviet, the owner of the tent, Eiva, proudly placed the letter in the big white envelope with a red seal on a packing case, so that everybody could see it. He couldn't read.

"The Great Executive Committee has sent a messenger to us. Hi, there, cook lots of food for our good guest!"

Eiva was dying to know what Mudri would say, but he knew the great rule of the tundra, "first feed the traveler, then question him." While every one was busy eating, and washing down the food with strong black tea, Mudri was thinking over his speech. He knew that, despite the great respect for and confidence in the "Great Executive Committee," any act in the least incomprehensible to the local population might drag matters out unnecessarily, or fail in its effect entirely. As this was the first hamlet, it would be an example for all the others. "I must make a good beginning," he thought.

The meal was finished. Mudri got out several packets of tobacco. Smoke ascended from many pipes. He could read in the eyes of guests and host their all but irrepressible curiosity. He took the envelope, opened it with care, and handed the letter first to Multa and then to Eiva. A hush fell upon the tent. Eiva turned the letter round and round in his embarrassment. Mudri, still maintaining silence, handed the envelope to the next man. The letter went the rounds. When it again came into Mudri's hands, and only then, the *Chukchi*[1] began to speak.

"What is it? All white!"

Mudri rolled himself a cigarette, lit it and said to Multa:

"I'm going to speak."

Mudri spoke for a long time choosing his words carefully. Eiva, who knew very little Russian, smiled joyously whenever he heard a familiar word, and repeated it loudly. And

[1] A people in the Soviet Far North, inhabitans of Chukotka.

Multa entered with zest into his translation, flooding Mudri's lean exposition with light. Mudri was even a little anxious when he heard how long Multa's translations were. The Chukchi listened to him with bated breath. Even the children desisted from their crying. Multa embroidered on the theme. The greatest chief of all, the Great Executive Committee, had sent them there to write down in the great book all the hunters of the great earth, all the women, all the children, and even the sucklings. The Great Executive Committee wanted to know how many people there were on its earth so as to be able to distribute food and tobacco, so that no one should be left out, to build schools and libraries. And every day the great leader would look at this book and think:

"I wonder what old Karavya is doing now? And how is Lavtirgin getting on with his hunting?" And it would be joyful to live on the earth, because people would not be lonely.

Multa stopped. A sigh of profound joy filled the tent.

"*Kaive!* Joyful tidings!"

The first to get to his feet was Attikei, a young and passionate hunter:

"I want to be in the book! Come on, write me down!"

Eiva angrily pushed him aside: "I'll be the first."

The older ones nodded in approval. Attikei turned away to hide his embarrassment.

By the end of two hours the whole hamlet had been entered on the census papers. The most difficult question to answer turned out to be that of age. Everyone argued, shouted and helped each other to calculate. The fingers and toes of one man were inadequate, they had recourse to each others', lost count, and began all over again.

The blizzard kept Mudri for three days in the hamlet. For three days the people did not leave the tent.

The blizzard raged furiously. It seemed as if the heavens had burst and the maddened tundra was trying to force itself through the gigantic rent.

The tanned hides of the tent trembled like sheets of paper, it seemed as if the storm would rend them any minute. It was only the snow, banked to the very roof, that saved the tent.

But on the third day the blizzard quieted. The yellow sun, dull, forlorn, lit up the tundra. It lay white and silent. Right up to the horizon there was not a spot on the white, downy snow.

Before leaving, Multa visited all the tents a last time, counting everyone on his fingers.

From the hamlet the track turned to the right. Before they got to Annensky a great curve had to be described. But Multa would be able to return without deviating from the direct route. Mudri would go on with another team and driver.

The grey curtain veiling the horizon grew lighter. Day dawned.

Multa dragged out the sledge, threw fish to the dogs, tested the harness. During the three days both men and dogs had had time to rest. Multa had risen before Mudri. "Let him sleep! The road will be hard for him," Multa thought. But when the *kayur* went into the tent Boris Petrovich was already up and dressed, his fur-lined coat over his arm.

"Time to be off, Multa," he said.

Multa was not surprised. He was used to such ways.

They bade farewell to their hosts. The horizon was still veiled. The morning rose like dusk in late autumn, and the day was like the morning. In front of them lay the

virgin snow of the tundra. It was pathless and trackless.

They knew they had a hard, stubborn way before them. The dogs no longer ran, but dragged the loaded sledge with difficulty. Multa went ahead, marking a track through the deep, powdery snow. Mudri, leaning on the shaft-bow, helped to drag. Soon they were all warm. Only the icy necklace on the collars, beneath the dogs chins, showed that the frost had not diminished.

They called a halt and Multa made a bonfire and fed the dogs. Then the dogs lay in a half-circle round the fire.

Profound stillness prevailed. The grey sky hung low. The world seemed small and deserted.

Mudri shook himself and got up.

"Time to go on!"

The dogs got to their feet unwillingly. Even Keko growled sullenly. Ten minutes later the lonely team was toiling over the snow, mile after mile.

Twelve weary days of travel dragged out—days of smoky tents, of meetings sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes mistrustful, of skillful speeches and the inextinguishable fire and enthusiasm of Multa.

Multa's travels were coming to an end. There was only one stopping-place, before Annensky. Multa had got very fond of his imperturbable companion—a silent fellow it is true, but what of that? Multa could always talk to himself, or to Keko. At the beginning of the journey the *kayur* himself had not quite realized the aim of the tour. He had given his word, and would, of course, keep it. But he only thoroughly understood what it was all about during the discussions and explanations in the tents, and in talks he had had with Mudri.

"So we are all equal—Russians and Chukchi and Samoyeds. Why wasn't it like that before?" he asked Boris Petrovich.

Mudri inhaled the smoke of his cigarette.

"It was. But the *shamans* didn't want people to know."

"Ugh, those *shamans*, evil people!"

"We've liquidated them."

Multa repeated the new word: "Liqui-dated."

Mudri laughed.

"You liquidated them yourself. You discovered that they were only trying to frighten you so as to keep the best food for themselves and deceive the people. So you drove them out."

"Drove them out. Li-qui-da-ted! Good!"

And Multa laughed his free childish laugh. A very interesting new word, that.

Keko also seemed to listen to Mudri when he spoke.

He no longer bared his fangs at him; now when he heard Mudri's husky voice from a distance, Keko barked joyfully. Still he wouldn't let him touch the harness. Here only two were master—himself and Multa.

They arrived at Annensky late at night. Multa stopped the team before the district executive committee office. The chairman was not there—he had gone to a nearby hamlet, but they were led by the caretaker to the room for travelers. The samovar was lit. Mudri drew from his battered briefcase a scent-bottle filled with spirit. They took a drink from it. At dawn Multa was to take his way home.

Mudri asked him to call Keko into the room. The dog came in with uneasy glances at the lamp, stepping cautiously over the wooden floor. Mudri stroked him and gave him a piece of meat. The dog ate it delicately. How unlike the savage Keko of the tundra!

Mudri felt sad, as if he were parting with an intimate friend.

He went out on to the porch. The stars winked frostily overhead. The world seemed cold and lifeless.

Suddenly there was a distant roar and the sky was lit up. There was a slight cracking sound in the ensuing hush. Torrents of color came rushing out of the heavens. Their cold flame trembled, new colors appeared. . . . And the world no longer seemed lifeless—it was stately, powerful, full of beauty and life.

"The Northern Lights! It's going to be cold," thought Boris Petrovich.

The beauty of the north calmed his sorrow. He went back to the room, tore a clean page out of his notebook and began to write a letter to the head of the census-taking group.

Multa and Keko sat quietly by the stove. Tomorrow they would part. "Why must good people part?" He sighed and put his hand on the dog's head.

"See, Keko! Tomorrow we'll go home. Do you want to?"

The dog looked silently into his eyes.

"Multa helped Boris well. Multa did everything. But you helped too. Well done, old man!" Keko wagged his tail. "Everyone but foxes and hares have been entered in the book. Everyone! Multa will be able to meet the chief's eyes."

Mudri folded up the letter and slowly sealed the envelope.

"Here you are, Multa! Give it to the chief! I've written that you did your work very well, that but for you. . . . Well, anyhow, I've written to tell the chief to thank you in front of everyone."

Multa took the letter with respect.

"Thank you, Boris." He was moved. "Come and see us, Boris! Keko will miss you too."

They parted. Firmly, like men. They would never meet again perhaps. In two days Mudri would go on further, and then take another way back. And Multa and Keko were going home.

From Annensky to Eiva's tent it is a hundred kilometers. One day's journey for Multa's team. The dogs trotted smoothly. Multa's sorrow over the parting was succeeded by a feeling of pride in honestly fulfilled duty. "All but the foxes and the hares are in the book! Nobody could find a single soul missed up by Multa."

Multa arrived at Eiva's tent before nightfall. The dogs were weary, and Multa was weary. He longed for sleep, his legs and arms ached. "There'll be another blizzard," he thought drowsily, and laughed in satisfaction. "Let it come! I can wait in Eiva's tent. There's no hurry!"

He unharnessed the dogs and threw them their evening meal. They fell upon the food, fighting and snarling. But Multa was too tired to try and separate them. "Keko'll look after them," he thought.

The fire had burned out in the tent. Odds and ends of food and unwashed dishes lay about.

"There must have been a great feast," thought Multa.

When the owner of the tent came in he went up to Multa:

"Back again? Where's your chief?"

"Boris went on further."

"What? Isn't he coming back this way?"

"No. He won't be here any more." Multa could hardly speak for weariness. His eyelids seemed to be sticking together, he was dying for sleep.

Eiva called out in alarmed tones: "He won't be here?"

"No."

Eiva rushed to the tent flap. He slipped under it, and came back holding a new-born infant in his arms.

"Look! You went away, he was born! Four nights after! Look! He isn't written down in the book!"

Multa started.

"It can't be!"

"May the ravens devour my liver! A son! A hunter! He isn't in the book! He can't live!"

Multa sat down for a minute. A bitter emotion was stifling him. "Everyone but the foxes and the hares are in the book, Boris!" He remembered his own words. And this was how he had fulfilled his promise. How could he have known? But that wasn't the point. Now Multa would never be able to meet the chief's eyes. How could he hand over the letter now? And what about Eiva's son? He wasn't in the book, was he? Would he ever be a proper man? Multa was suffocated with despair. From behind the curtain appeared Eiva's wife, and began to wail. Children cried. Eiva showed his son to Multa.

Then Multa took his decision. He became calm and business-like.

"What's his name?"

"Vairgin."

Multa rushed from the tent. His thoughts worked feverishly: "Boris is leaving Annensky tomorrow. If only I can catch him!"

Before Eiva could say a word Multa had angrily rounded up the dogs, harnessed them, seized the reins, and turned the team back towards the impending blizzard.

Multa drove the weary, indignant dogs a whole hour. Even Keko seemed to have lost confidence. At first he couldn't understand what his master wanted. But when he realized that rest and warmth were gone and that there was a long, hard way before him, Keko submitted to the will of the man.

The dogs breathed heavily and unevenly. The sky was covered by dull clouds, and the weather grew warmer. Keko had to sniff out the track. Even Keko's sides heaved with his heavy breathing, and his chest was covered with icicles.

Multa ran alongside the sledge. At first it seemed as if his fatigue had left him, but soon every step seemed to shake his whole body, and he would have fallen had he not held on to the shaft-bow.

The wind rose. Whirling over the snow, it struck harshly at Multa's face. It began to snow.

The wind soon became a hurricane, and the sledge stopped. The exhausted dogs could not drag it over the soft, sticky snow.

Multa went forward, and the wind almost knocked him off his feet. He tried to resist it. He fell to his knees and crawled ahead of the dogs. He had to be in Annensky by tomorrow. . . .

Two dogs fell, unable to go on. Multa could hardly clasp his hand to get his knife out. With a feeling of dumb despair he severed the traces of the two doomed dogs. Man and team crawled on another hundred paces. The wind was no longer striking harshly in his face, it was blowing in a powerful, unceasing, unrelaxing stream. His mouth and eyes were full of snow.

Then Multa let go of the reins. Suddenly he became indifferent to everything. He only wanted to lie down and sleep and sleep.

He fell down in the snow. It felt warm and comfortable. Far away the hurricane raged, but here, in the snow drift, it was peaceful and calm.

The team, entirely bereft of strength, stopped in its tracks. The dogs fell down on the snow. Only Keko remained upright. He

sniffed the air, tore at the traces, and suddenly began to whine. He whined eerily, with a long-drawn-out howl. The scream of the hurricane drowned his voice. The blizzard was unremitting.

But at last it did die down. A dull dawn lit up the drift. The dogs crept out from the snow. They looked around them and howled.

The sound woke Multa.

Keko had saved him. Gathering its last strength, the dog had crawled up to its master. The other dogs crept after their leader. They lay round the man, and the sledge had formed a sort of shelter.

Multa got up. His rest had refreshed him a little. He fed the dogs and went on with new strength.

Now it was still harder to progress. The snow lay in high downy masses. The track had to be trodden across them. And once more, every joint aching, Multa trudged on, the eight dogs toiling after him.

At the end of two days the exhausted team reached the district executive committee. Multa reeled into the room.

"Boris," he said huskily, falling on to the bench.

"He left an hour ago."

But he did not hear the words. He was already asleep.

Three hours later Multa's team was again on the track. The going was easier, for they could follow in the track of Mudri's team. But the dogs, worn out by the incredible task imposed upon them, moved as if in their sleep. Keko's eyes were filmed over. He could not see the track, he went ahead mechanically, as if in a trance.

Night fell. Keko turned anxiously towards his master, but of no avail. Suddenly Keko stopped short and began to howl. The halt woke Multa from his stupor.

Before them on the slope ahead a black speck was moving. Multa was seized with a trembling in all his limbs.

"It's them! It's Boris!"

Gathering his remaining strength he urged the dogs on.

The speck came a little nearer. Now Multa could see the team, but his dogs could go no further. Two more dropped in their traces and Multa had hardly cut the traces when a third fell. Even Keko turned on Multa with bared teeth. And the team ahead moved on without stopping. Multa was overcome with despair. He took out his rifle and fired into the air. Once, twice, thrice. The team did not stop. Then Multa fired his last bullet and fell in a heap on the sledge.

He woke up in a tent. Mudri was carefully rubbing his cheeks and nose. Round him lay Keko and the remaining six dogs, stretched out.

"Boris, write down Eiva's son in the book. . . . Vairgin, fifteen days. . . ."

And, sighing like a child, he fell asleep again.

JAMBOUL

Song of a great Caravan

From Tien Shan's irridescent peaks, pearl white,
To Crimean orchards, Karelia's wooded strand,
Beautiful, majestic in its might,
Stretches our land.

From the tundra wild with wind and dim with snow,
To the clear steppe, warm in the sun's hand,
Glory's eternal glow
Lights our land.

From Daghestan's heights to the Russian plain,
Ukrainian mines to far sea sand,
Gaiety, seething, unrestrained,
Floods our land.

Velvet over us the sky's blue sheen,
Silken under us the grasses green,
The sun arrays us in robes of light—
But we remember the frozen night;

The brutal torturer's leering lips,
The lashes of the bey's long whips;
The groans, the shame, the bloody claw
Of their bestial, tiger law.

For all whom Red October woke
Our wise law shines, a sun to folk.
Never before have people known
Such law of justice, law their own.

On our joyful labor it stands guard,
And gives us rest, lest toil be hard.
Women find in its kindly word
Liberties, till this day unheard.

With schools for all, our minds unshades,
To stooping age, it gives its aids;
Now from our lips the free word starts,
Nourished blossoms of our hearts.

And of our rights, the honored, most—
To stand in arms at the border post;
That the crawling foe be seen and met
With faceted steel of our bayonet.

Translated by Isidor Schneider

"Jambul sings about Stalin"
A drawing by Korpusov on display at the exhibition of folk art

THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION GRANTS THE CITIZENS OF THE U.S.S.R. THE RIGHT TO WORK...

Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Extract from "Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," Chapter X, Article 118

Re-echo, my singing in every aul!
Hearken, oh, steppes, to the singer Jamboul,
Hearken, oh, Kastek, Kaskelen, Karkol!
I sing of the greatest, the Soviet law,
The law under which this joy came to earth,
The law under which there shall never be dearth,
The law under which we burst into song,
The law under which our youth lasts for long.

By Jamboul, National Bard of Kazakhstan

Silk embroiders our meadows sweet,
Fragrant flowers about our feet.
. . . . . .
Horses by the thousand gamble like elves,
Horses that ask to be saddled themselves.
. . . . . .
Wealth is ours uncounted, untold,
Land that's not land, but carpets of gold.
Land that belongs to the common folk,
Freed from the chains of the ancient yoke;
Each Kirghiz is rightly proud,
Gone are the days when he scraped and bowed.
Proud as well that other folk too
Won their freedom from the wealthy few.

Kirghizian folk song

Land of peasants, Chuvash country!
Land where we were born and bred
Here where we, as years sped onward,
Learnt to love the ground we tread.
Came a girl as morn was breaking
To our Mother Volga's bank,
On her lips a song of Stalin,
Song with melody that rang:
Supreme above all singers is the nightingale—
I would I were a nightingale—how I would sing!
Of what tints resplendant I would weave my words. . . .
I would be as rainbows are to showers in spring—
Vibrant words of love from all the Chuvash folk
Unto him, the leader, I in song would bring.

Chuvashian folk song

Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to rest and leisure. The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers, the institution of annual vacations with full pay for workers and employees and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

Extract from "Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," Chapter X, Article 119

In May, when through our fair Ferghana, the scent of gardens in the night
Spices the air with scents commingled, whose richness overpowers me,
Pomegranate branches bending downwards, I drink their odor with delight
And in the unpretentious blossom, sense all of spring and all spring's glee.
Traversing snow-white fields of cotton, with my sack firm in my hand
I see the gowns newly embroidered, I hear the hum of the textile mills,
I sense, in every boll of cotton, the joys that fill my native land,
In every fluffy boll I'm picking, I feel its pulse that never stills.
I contemplate my mother country; my gaze is filled with dazzling light;
My startled eyes are overpowered, life's majesty o'erwhelms me quite.
I see no bound to our abundance; of my wild joy there is no telling —
I utter then the name of Stalin—it voices every thought upwelling.

Uzbek folk song

... THE RIGHT TO REST ...

And instantly hearts are kindled
And all around there is singing,
For, spreading warmth, Constitution,
Thy every letter glows,
The bards, unsought for, unsummoned,
Have filled the air with their music.

Azerbaijan folk song

Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by education, including higher education, being free of charge; by the system of state stipends for the overwhelming majority of students in the universities and colleges; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

Extract from "Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," Chapter X, Article 121

Byelorussia's people in darkness lay fettered,
As her language in bonds of captivity lay —
Now Engels and Marx, and Lenin and Stalin
In this language with us hold converse today.
Byelorussia's language was nurtured thru' ages
As we've struggled with foes, so our language has grown.
Balzac and Tolstoy, Rust'hveli and Gorky
And Pushkin and Goethe we claim as our own.
All the treasures of popular wisdom we garnish,
All the wealth of our proverbs we cherish and store.
We are telling new tales filled with mirth and blitheness
And our songs are more merry than songs sung of yore.
Our achievements were won in fires of battle,
To the joys that we know 'twas the Party that led.
We were taught by the genius of Lenin and Stalin!
By the friendship of peoples our power was bred.

Byelorussian folk song

Our life is so bright and sprightly— oh,
Our children in schools are studying,
Above fly our falcon laddies—oh,
On tractors in fields see our lassies—oh,
And the homes that we live in burst with abundance,
And our work hums on like a merry game.

. . . . . .

From the eagle comes the eagle-child,
And the falcons rise in falcon flights
And oceans are to oceans as two brothers are
And Lenin is to Stalin as a brother is.
In work accomplished with an eagle's sweep,
And in flights accomplished as the falcons fly
As one we are with Stalin, and as one with Lenin.

T. A. Dolgusheva, Russian folk singer

...THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

GEORG LUKACS

ON SOCIALIST REALISM

Socialist realism is primarily realism.

When we speak of realism it is not, of course, the contemporary distorted and narrowed conception of it that we must have in view. Under realism we understand the truthful representation in literature of the essential features of reality. From the point of view of content it means that the really essential features are grasped and represented. From the point of view of form it means that these features are depicted in the shape of living people, of people irradiating genuine life, it means that the intrinsic destinies of human life are fully embodied in individual characters and their individual destinies.

We are thus concerned with a definition of realism according to which Homer and Sophocles, Dante and Rabelais, Cervantes and Shakespeare, Goethe and E. Th. A. Hoffmann, Pushkin and Balzac, Tolstoy and Gorky—while representing various historical trends and stages of realism—are all representatives of the great school of realism.

Out of this follows that Socialist realism cannot possibly be viewed as something that has made its appearance quite suddenly, springing from nowhere, as it were. It is not something fundamentally new, and does not represent a break with the traditions of historical cultural development. Those who expected something of this sort must find themselves disappointed by the actual development of Socialism, not only with regard to literature and art, but with regard to every other sphere of culture as well. Lenin vehemently combatted such notions in all spheres of culture. To be sure, Socialist change represents a revolutionary act, since the power of the old ruling classes can be broken only by the armed force of revolution. Similarly, the foundations of Sccialist economy can be laid only as a result of a revolutionary act, namely, the expropriation of the means of production, their transfer from the hands of the exploiters to the hands of the working people. But further development of the Socialist elements of economy is a protracted, complicated and frequently contradictory process.

Socialist culture—the culture of people creating a new economy, the economy of humanity liberated from the ycke of exploitation; of people who, in this process of the emergence of a new form of existence, are themselves being remolded and transformed—such Socialist culture can only be the result of these processes of real revolutionary change in an emancipated human society. Consequently the exercise of

leadership and direction in this process does not imply the enforcement of any ready-made schemes, the setting up of a culture that has been specially invented by some people.

Socialist culture develops on the basis of the economic and social life of a Socialist society; and just as the latter inherits, comprises and masters all the economic achievements of humanity in its struggle to subjugate nature, and just as it raises them to a higher level, so does Socialist culture proceed with regard to the inherited cultural achievements and values.

It must be said that the mechanical distinction drawn between economic activity and culture, which has become quite the vogue in the imperialist era, and which proclaims the existence of an antagonism between civilization and culture, contradicts the facts and is objectively wrong in regard to every stage of historic development. But it is particularly wrong in regard to Socialist society; for here the inherent tendency and purpose of the new culture is to bring about a close connection between the productive work and mental activity of all people, to abolish every distinction between physical and mental work. It is therefore quite obvious why Lenin, from the very outset, sharply criticized the tendency, which made its appearance after the seizure of power by the proletariat, to nurture artificially a specific proletarian culture "such as has never existed before."

In view of these facts relating to the development of Socialism, literary and artistic development in the land of Socialism proceeds along the lines not of eradicating the classical traditions in art, but rather of cultivating them on an unprecedented scale, of propagating them, of making them the spiritual heritage and property of the people—a situation which is nothing less than astonishing to some literary-minded people in the capitalist world. Moreover, the literary and artistic development proceeding in the land of Socialism actually signifies a declaration of war against the super-modern developments in the field of the arts which are characteristic of the imperialist era.

The artistic "vanguard" of the era of imperialism has indeed come forward again and again with slogans that have been represented as "revolutionary slogans," calling for a revolutionary annihilation of the inherited art which has supposedly lost its value in modern life and has allegedly become a brake on the development of art of the new man. (This tendency has found its most vociferous and determined expression in futurism, expressionism, dadaism, etc.)

This "surprising" truth about the literary development going on in the land of Socialism—a truth which seems all the more surprising and contradictory in view of the fact that the social and political views of many of the important writers of the past were actually conservative and at times even reactionary—becomes comprehensible when we keep in mind the definition of realism given above, and when we subject the literature of the imperialist era to criticism from the standpoint of genuine realism.

It is quite clear why the people of Socialist society demand a realistic literature. They live in a society which is their own handiwork, a society which they are themselves creating anew, and which represents the product of their own free activity. They do not regard this society of theirs as something arbitrarily imposed or alien and hostile to them.

Not only does the man of Socialist society create his own social

world, but this world is constantly developing, at an amazing pace, advancing each day new problems of growth which the people of Socialist society must and can cope with. In such a society there is no reason for concealing the truth concerning the laws of social development, the truth concerning the destiny of man as a product of society. The more unreservedly and truthfully the profoundest mainsprings of this development are depicted in literature, the greater is the service it renders the Socialist man, and the more important and useful is the writer as a factor of Socialist construction. It is because of social necessity that the literature of Socialism is a realistic literature.

It is also because of social necessity that the super-modern literature of the imperialist era fosters tendencies which aim at weakening realism, and that this literature is rapidly and openly becoming anti-realist. The bulk of literature and art abroad is subordinated to the aims of imperialist capitalism. The latter demands that capitalist society be represented in an embellished form, that its contradictions and horrors be glossed over. A great part of the literature of the imperialist era is dominated by deceit.

Naturally, the best among the intellectuals rebel against this capitalist distortion of literature and of culture. However, under the social conditions of imperialist capitalism only a relatively small group of the rebelling intellectuals can become part of the democratic opposition and express its views in the form of a genuinely realistic portrayal of the inhumanity of contemporary society (Romain Rolland, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, etc.).

In the case of a very large part of the intellectuals of the opposition, the fight is directed only against the immediate symptoms of decline—against contemporary art and literature and against the contemporary conception of the classics. However, as long as this opposition is confined to the narrow bounds of purely literary phenomena, the justified hatred of and comprehensible contempt for that literature gives rise to attempts to arrest the decline of literature by means of a "revolution of form." Literary currents thus supersede one another in rapid succession. But, in spite of their subjectively honest intentions of reforming literature, they result in either detraction from realistic representation of society, confinement of literature to a photographic copying of superficial and immediately perceptible manifestations (naturalism), or—impelled by a socially equally comprehensible tendency to overemphasize their rebellious subjectivity—to turn away from realism altogether (expressionism, surrealism, etc.).

If we keep in mind these main social currents in the development of contemporary art, we begin to understand the attitude, theory and practice of Soviet literature in regard to the past and the present. In Socialist life the tendency toward genuine realism springs from inner necessity. Under the cultural conditions attending the beginning of the Socialist era it is necessarily the literature of the present that forms the starting point. Under the tempestuous pressure of life itself the writers evince a stronger tendency toward genuine realism, and the demand for realism is particularly growing among the new and ever increasing masses of the working class reading public. In consequence, the literary style, the literary means of expression and the artistic tendencies of the immediate present begin to be perceived as hindrances. Both writers and readers begin to "discover" and turn for support to the realist literature of the past.

In the Soviet Union this development is proceeding all the more rapidly and easily, since here—as a result of the delayed development of capitalism in Russia and the almost immediate transition of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian revolution—the traditions of the great realistic school in literature have been more recent and alive than in the West. Maxim Gorky, the greatest and most popular writer of this period, is both the heir and continuator of the great realistic traditions of world literature in general and Russian literature from Pushkin to Tolstoy in particular; and at the same time he is the first classic of Socialist realism. The living popular tradition of classical realism has thus considerably facilitated the rise and development of realistic tendencies in Soviet literature.

But it is obvious that this kind of development does not proceed smoothly, without hindrance or friction. To be sure, the dialectics of the development of Socialist life urge realism upon both writer and reader. It is natural, however, that there still are many writers who are more or less profoundly affected by the ideological survivals of the period of bourgeois decline, and who find it very difficult to rid themselves of these ideological and literary traditions of bourgeois decadence.

The history of the struggle of the various currents in Soviet literature becomes comprehensible once we conceive it as the history of the struggle for realism. We see that the theoretical as well as practical conception of realism is being grasped ever more clearly and profoundly, and the resistance to realism is necessarily becoming ever weaker. The great discussion on formalism and naturalism in 1936, the criticism which was leveled during this discussion against empty and abstract subjectivism, as well as against empty and abstract objectivism, marked the culmination of this struggle.

However, it would be wrong to assume that Soviet literature has already become thoroughly permeated with the principles of the genuine realistic school and that the ideological survivals of capitalism have been fully eliminated from the sphere of literature. A struggle between various currents is still going on in Soviet literature. But it is no longer a struggle for or against realism, but rather one concerning the concrete problems of the development of realism to a higher stage.

These literary conflicts have been closely related to the struggle against the vulgarization of the history and theory of literature, to the struggle for the annihilation of vulgarized sociology. The vulgarized conception of literature as the mechanical product of the class position of the writer has sprung not from the soil of Marxism, but from that of the bourgeois ideology of decline. (Hippolyte Taine was one of the founders of this theory.) The development of the realistic school of literature has shown ever more clearly that this theory is unable to fathom either the real social significance of art or the artistic problems of genuine realism, and that the application of this theory in criticism could only resolve itself to an apology for bourgeois decadence and an attempt to circumscribe the tasks of literature. It was therefore no accident that the last great critical campaign against this theory took place in that same year, 1936, parallel to the fight against formalism and naturalism. In this case, too, it is obvious that the struggle is still not over.

The victory of Socialism in the

Soviet Union has thus brought about the victory of realism in the sphere of literature. It brought with it a revival of all the great traditions of truthful representation of reality, a comprehension for and popularization of all the past literary development of mankind. Socialist realism has come forward as the heir of everything that has been important and progressive in the previous history of humanity. It represents no "radical innovation" such as the short-lived literary fads of contemporary capitalist society, but rather a new stage in the history of world literature.

Socialist realism represents a higher stage in the development of realistic literature. This higher stage of realism has not been ushered in by the style-creating peculiarities of any individual writers, great as they may be. It has sprung rather from the needs of social development, from the emergence of a new mode of social existence and the necessity of its consequently novel representation through the specific medium of literature.

If we wish to obtain a correct understanding of this social necessity of the appearance and peculiarity of Socialist realism, we must avoid two errors that spring from a mechanical conception of the interrelation between existence and consciousness. The first error is committed by those who believe that Socialist realism becomes possible only after society has been completely remolded along Socialist lines or, at least, after the proletariat has overthrown the power of the bourgeoisie. This idea is refuted by the fact that Maxim Gorky, the most significant representative and first classic of Socialist realism, created a great part of his most important works before the overthrow of capitalist society, and that these works already embodied the essential features of Socialist realism. And Gorky is not the only writer whose works created under conditions of a capitalist society are already molded on the new form representing reality—it is sufficient to refer in this connection to such an interesting and original work as Martin Andersen Nexö's *Pelle the Conqueror.* The historical error which is contained in this idea consists in the fact that Socialism is conceived of as a ready-made state of society which bears no organic relation to the class struggles of the proletariat that preceded it, and that consequently Socialist consciousness is not a continuation and further development of proletarian class consciousness.

But a wrong interpretation of the fact that the new literary conception of reality begins in capitalist society harbors the second error. It is committed by those who believe that the capitalist society contains elements of the Socialist mode of social existence and that therefore —if we should draw from this the logical conclusion—capitalist society can develop into a Socialist society without a revolution. A most elementary analysis of modern capitalist economics shows that such a conception is absolutely untenable.

How, then, are we to explain the fact that it has been possible, as in the case of Gorky and Andersen Nexö, for the new conception of society to find expression under the conditions of capitalism? Only a correct understanding of the class existence and class consciousness of the proletariat—such as we find in the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin—provides a scientifically satisfactory answer to this question. The proletariat emerges as a class in the soil of capitalist society and forms a part of this society. But its position in capitalist society and

in its development, conditioned by the economic necessities of its existence, is quite peculiar: it is the gravedigger of capitalism, produced by capitalist economics. This role of the proletariat finds its extreme expression in revolution. But it manifests itself as an active tendency from the very beginning of the proletariat's social existence, particularly ever since the proletariat has become conscious of itself as a class; and this tendency forms an increasingly important factor, not only in economics, but in the entire cultural life of this era as well.

In this short essay it will be impossible to trace this idea through all the spheres of economic, political and cultural life. The fact itself was recognized even by bourgeois thinkers—before bourgeois ideology had become entirely preoccupied with the business of apologetic embellishment. It is sufficient to mention in this connection young Disraeli's expression concerning the "two nations," or Thomas Carlyle's works prior to 1848.

As regards the literary problem, with which we are here primarily concerned, the fact of the existence of "two nations" assumes significance for the reason that, from the class standpoint of the proletariat, the social existence and consciousness of the bourgeoisie, too, and of all the classes of bourgeois society, appears in an entirely new aspect. On the other hand, the social existence of the proletariat develops—at first in the form of a tendency—those qualities which subsequently enable the proletariat not only to effect the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, but also to bring about the political, economic and cultural transformation of society; those qualities which enable the proletariat to assume the necessary role of the leader of all the working people (the peasantry, the intelligentsia) in this process of transformation.

That is why the great proletarian writers, who, even if they work in the era of capitalism, are intimately linked with the revolutionary proletariat, are able to grasp the dynamics of the social movement in all classes, which lead with objective inevitability to revolution—and to depict them in such a singular manner that their adequate literary representation imperatively and inevitably leads to the creation of a new literary style. It needs no detailed analysis to prove that the portrayal of the proletariat in works such as Gorky's *Mother* is qualitatively different from the way Zola, for instance, portrays the working class in *Germinal*. No matter how much Zola may sympathize with the misery and the justified indignation of the workers, he is unable to discern in their movements the revolutionary tendencies which reorganize society and build it anew. And wherever he approaches Socialism he portrays utopian conditions subjectively invented.

A writer working in capitalist society can discern and portray in its specific peculiarity the inherent unity of the revolutionary destruction of old society and the embryo, the tendency towards the emergence of the new Socialist man only if he is as intimately tied up with the revolutionary proletariat as Maxim Gorky was; if his consciousness and his entire literary make-up are imbued with the spirit of the proletariat and its necessary class struggle.

However, this penetration manifests itself in the portrayal of other classes of bourgeois society as well. Compare Gorky's *Artamonovs' Case* with such a significant story of the decline of a bourgeois family as Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga*; or Gorky's *Klim Samgin* with, say, Flaubert's *Education Sentimentale*;

or Gorky's *Yegor Bulychev* with the depiction of the tragic end of a capitalist by Zola, or Mirbeau. In all these cases it is not a question of a difference in tendency. It is rather that the entire conception of society, of its moving forces and tendencies, of the inner structure of human psychology in an environment of social struggles, etc., has so radically changed that the general view of reality as a whole,of its entire domain—from economics to psychology and morals—requires a new manner of depiction, a new style.

While before the seizure of power by the proletariat this was possible only in exceptional cases, only in those rare cases when the writer combined within his person a great and original literary genius with supreme devotion to the cause of the proletariat, it becomes an increasingly general social phenomenon after the victory of the proletarian revolution, after the socialization of the means of production.

But here again it is necessary to emphasize that this development represents a process whose stages are determined by the transformation of life under Socialism. On the one hand, it takes some time before the Socialist consequences of the socialization of the means of production can manifest themselves in all spheres of human existence, in all the economic and cultural phases of everyday life. The stronger these manifestations become, the greater is the number of people who are all the more profoundly inculcated with Socialist consciousness, of people who have learned to grasp the essence of Socialist society, to love it and to comprehend it as their own.

On the other hand, this process of the extension and consolidation of Socialism as a mode of existence—the Socialist construction in economic and cultural life—is very closely linked with the class struggles that mark the initial stages of Socialist society. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie is but the beginning of a period of embittered class struggles which cannot be considered to have been finally concluded until the economic basis for any sort of class division has disappeared in Socialist society.

It is clear that the various classes from which the old intelligentsia has been recruited, and those from which the new intelligentsia of Socialist society is springing, become involved in these class struggles. The understanding of the new Socialist society and the love toward it therefore necessarily becomes universal only during the final period of these struggles and especially during the period of accomplishing the construction of Socialist society in the main.

The stages of this economic and political development, and of the parallel development of the cultural revolution, determine the nature of the various stages of Socialist realism. The dictatorship of the proletariat in its initial stage does not signify an already existing and universal Socialist mode of life, it signifies only the determined will of the working class to realize Socialism. Similarly, the literature of Socialism must in its first period be more in the nature of a literature of propaganda rather than of broad portrayal.

But this constitutes no contradiction to Socialist realism. For real revolutionary propaganda in literature takes its source in the passionate and profound comprehension of the actually existing tendencies shaping the development of Socialist society. It derives its fervor from the embittered struggle of the new against the old; from the passionate proclamation of the truth, correctness and irresistible force of the real tendencies leading toward Socialism; from its hatred and con-

tempt for the moribund forces of the old order who resort to whiteguard intervention and sabotage in their efforts to bolster up the collapsing system of inhumanity, ignorance, philistinism, etc. It was from the profound understanding of this stage of development and the tasks it involved that Mayakovsky, the great tribune of the first period of Socialist realism, derived his vehement ardor and his annihilating satire.

As the victory of Socialism becomes more secure and Socialist construction advances more triumphantly, the writers' conception of the new phenomena of life becomes more realistic and gains breadth and depth. However, the period of the recent class struggles in the U.S.S.R. (the liquidation of the kulaks as a class) has created extremely complicated situations in which it has been very difficult for a number of writers to find a correct political and literary attitude to the new complicated manifestations of life. On the one hand, there has appeared among the writers of the revolutionary vanguard the wrong sectarian tendency to condemn those sections of society which are still groping towards a correct understanding of Socialist life. On the other hand, the difficulties of the transition period have caused some writers to evince real ideological vacillations, sometimes to the extent of succumbing to the enemy's ideology and of beginning to doubt the possibility of building Socialism, to the extent of becoming opponents of Socialism. These difficulties of the transition period have been further aggravated by the fact that they were taken advantage of by the enemies of the working class for their own ends. (The RAPP period. RAPP—Russian Association of Proletarian Writers.)

It was no mere chance that the expression "Socialist realism" was first uttered in 1932 at the time of the liquidation of the RAPP. The outcome of the last great class struggles exerted a tremendous influence on the widest sections of the population. The victory of Socialist construction in town and country and the irresistible advance of the cultural revolution have wrought profound changes in the ranks of the old intelligentsia, of which the best sections have become transformed into staunch supporters of Socialism; at the same time it has brought to the fore a large section of the new intelligentsia, recruited from the working class and the peasantry. This great process has been reflected in a new advance of literature. It is sufficient to point to the heroic figure of the late Nikolai Ostrovsky, who died young, to realize what an inexhaustible source of moral greatness and literary talent this new intelligentsia offers.

Socialism has triumphed. Socialist construction permeates every sphere of life in town and countryside. The rise of the Stakhanov movement already represents the first buds heralding the rise towards a higher stage—the elimination of the gap between manual labor and mental labor. It is obvious that Socialist realism, which has been growing in breadth and in depth, strives primarily to produce the literary embodiment of these problems of Socialist development.

The reading public abroad is acquainted with some of the most important representatives of this literature. Those who have read their works are in a position to judge for themselves how far and how completely the social-human side of this great change has been reflected. It would be interesting and worthwhile to show not only how these various literary works portray the different stages of Socialist construction, of the collectivization of the countryside, etc., but at the same time, and in close connection with this, also

in what way they are representative of the different stages in the development of Socialist realism. This, however, requires a special discourse. Here we can only refer to the long list of works dealing with Socialist construction in industry—from F. Gladkov's *Cement* to the recently published novel, *Tanker Derbent*, by Yuri Krymov—and remind the readers of M. Sholokhov's and P. Panferov's well-known novels dealing with collectivization.

The rise of a new society signifies the rise of new relationships among people, the rise of a new type of man. The foremost representatives of this new type in Soviet life—people like I. Michurin and T. Lysenko, A. Stakhanov and Maria Demchenko—are widely known far beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. The creative efforts of the school of Socialist realism are necessarily concentrated on the comprehension of the socio-human peculiarity of this new rising type of man. Literary-ideological development at the same time results in the increasing elimination of the prejudices handed down from bourgeois society, according to which the collective, Socialist character of this new man would be opposed to the individual singularity of his many-sided and rich personality.

The ideological repudiation of bourgeois individualism, as well as of the bourgeois abstract movement against individualism, signifies in literature the tendency to refrain, on the one hand, from mechanically deducing the singularity of this new type of man from a so-called environment and, on the other hand, from explaining it psychologically as something purely individual. We find in literature the growing tendency to depict the living interrelations between being and consciousness, the real movement of a life broadly and profoundly comprehended. We find this tendency to depict the new type of man in the works of all the leading Soviet writers. We find a particularly significant embodiment of this tendency in A. Platonov's excellent story, *The Immortals*.

This tendency implies that the depiction of contemporary life necessarily constitutes the central theme of Socialist realism. But it is by no means its only theme. The new man emerges gradually and dialectically in the course of a long and difficult historic process. It is therefore quite natural that important representatives of Socialist realism go back to the initial periods of Socialist development, to the heroic struggles of the Civil War, in which they attempt to trace the beginnings of this process of development. Sholokhov's broad canvas, *And Quiet Flows the Don*, A. Fadeyev's novels, D. Furmanov's *Chapayev*, are all—each in its own way—interesting milestones marking this development.

This, however, by no means exhausts the necessary variety of the subject-matter of Socialist realism. The Socialist world outlook furnishes the key to a new interpretation of the entire history of humanity, not in the sense of introducing into history our viewpoint of today, but, on the contrary, in the sense that it is only from the watchtower of Socialism that we can really comprehend the history of humanity as the great struggle for the emancipation of mankind that it has been—as the struggle between progress and reaction.

All of Socialist literature is permeated with this historical conception. Socialist realism rears literary monuments imbued with a new appreciation to the heroes of humanity's struggle for emancipation, the Pugachevs and Razins, who have been slandered or deliberately consigned to oblivion. At the same time Socialist realism fights for

a new understanding and depiction of historic figures who, although full of contradictions, were in their main tendency historically progressive. Alexei Tolstoy's *Peter I* is one of the literary works representing this tendency of Socialist realism to master and depict the whole history of humanity and everything that has been progressive in it.

No one considers the development of Socialist realism already completed and final. Vehement critical struggles are still being waged, and their object is to raise literature to a still higher level of content and realistic depiction. But every objective observer of literature will have to concede that, at a time when in capitalist countries the bulk of literature is in a state of precipitous decline, and when individual highly talented democratic writers must swim against the general tide of bourgeois literature and carry on a heroic struggle for the salvation of culture, for the salvation of truthful literature—that at this time a broad and great realistic literature has sprung up in the Soviet Union, a literature which has already truthfully and convincingly depicted very important moments of the present and of the past that have led up to it, and which in every respect contains within itself the possibility of extraordinary further development.

GREETINGS ACROSS THE OCEAN

LEONID LEONOV,

important novelist, author of the novels "Barsuki," "The Thief," etc.

For the advanced European, for the Soviet intellectual, the United States is not a distant trans-oceanic country. Genuine culture destroys both time and space. The talented American people have produced many great writers, artists and actors whose work has become the heritage of cultured people the world over.

This interchange of cultural values during "peaceful" world conditions aided the two peoples to know one another, but it did not actually bring them really close together. The events of the last few years, however, have given us an opportunity of realizing what an impetus would be given to human progress by their joint forces, united in the struggle for the highest ideals of mankind. It seems to me that in this struggle one would find not merely empty indifferent collaboration, but genuine and vital unity of our two great peoples. The Soviet Union has become the center of the struggle for peace, for happiness, for the realization of the ideals of freedom and humanism. It is natural that the Soviet intellectuals should be inspired by the same ideals, the same final ends, as the Soviet people as a whole.

We welcome the anti-fascist movement in the United States, which is embracing ever wider circles of the population. One hears with satisfaction, above the clash of arms and the explosion of bombs dropped by the fascist barbarians on the peaceful inhabitants of Spain and China, the voice of European intellectuals and the voice of the American people, calling on all advanced mankind for solidarity and for the destruction of the fascist aggressors.

We intellectuals of the Soviet Union feel an especial sympathy for the national-liberation struggle of peoples who are actively fighting, with all means in their power, against the hated, barbarous, inhuman, destructive tendencies of fascism.

We feel and we know that the progressive American intellectuals will not stand aside from those vital political events which are deciding the fate of peace today. We do not doubt for a moment that this fate will bring a triumph for the forces of light. Precisely because humanism and not misanthropy must be victorious, participation in this struggle is man's duty to the world, to freedom and human dignity. Let us look into the future!

Alexei Tolstoy (right) and Alexander Korneichuk

PROTAGONIST OF CULTURE

When Maxim Gorky talked about Soviet writers, he usually avoided the use of the word "writer." He preferred to call them men of letters, as if giving a more profound and, so to speak, a more weighty meaning to their profession. He demanded that they not simply "scribble" (for the Soviet reader, in turn, does not simply "read through" a book), but that they should be real protagonists of literature and, speaking still more broadly, of culture, that they should further the progress of the cultural revolution with their ideas expressed in artistic form.

In order to achieve this, according to Gorky, they ought to make the life, interests and aims of the working people their own, spend much time in self-development and in work on their literary output, and in this way work for others, for those who are building and fighting for Socialism, for mankind. Such a protagonist of culture is Alexei Tolstoy, man of letters, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., academician, and holder of two Government Orders.

He was one of the best of the young Russian writers of the pre-revolutionary period and is now one

of the most talented and outstanding Soviet men of letters. In Alexei Tolstoy we have a living connection between the great Russian literature of the past and the young literature of the Soviet Union.

Beginning his career in the years of reaction, after the Revolution of 1905 had been crushed by tsarism, the young writer possessed the strength to break away from the decadency of the symbolists who had influenced his early writings. His second book of verse, *Beyond Blue Rivers*, based on folklore themes, reveals his keen interest in peole's art.

Gradually turning to prose Tolstoy wrote *The Magpie's Fairy Tales*, in which he sought to reflect his first impressions of nature. Thus the Russian landscape and the art of the Russian people were among the first components of his literary palette.

His acquaintance with nature, folklore, and the simple language of the people, dated from his very childhood; it was, indeed, not acquaintance but rather a natural comprehension of his daily environment, which, as it were, had grown to be a part of him. Referring to his childhood, the author writes in his autobiography:

"Here is the garden. Ponds surrounded by willows and overgrown with rushes. The little river Chagra in the steppe. The village children my playmates. Horses to ride. The grassy steppes, where the monotonous line of the horizon was broken only by rolling hills. . . . Changes of the seasons, like tremendous and ever new events."

From childhood, too, comes something else that is so characteristic of Alexei Tolstoy as a masterful writer: "When winter came and house and garden were buried in snow, the howling of wolves rang out in the night and the dogs whimpered in fright. When the wind began to sough down the chimneys, a hanging lamp was lit over the round table in the dining room, a poorly-furnished, plastered room, and my stepfather usually read aloud from the works of N. Nekrasov, Lev Tolstoy and I. Turgenev many times over, or something from a fresh number of a magazine."

Lev Tolstoy, Nekrasov, his favorite writer Turgenev, and still another, Pushkin, constitute indeed the literary heritage closest to Alexei Tolstoy: this lofty literary tradition, together with a feeling for people's art and an unusual sense of nature's splendor, is characteristic of his works.

This classic tradition made itself evident in his first book, *Under the Old Lindens*, an important document which depicts the life of the landowning gentry, who were forced into retreat by Russia's new masters, the bourgeoisie. Tolstoy's first novels, *The Lame Squire* and *Eccentrics*, followed the stream of Russian critical realism in its last stages.

The social significance of Alexei Tolstoy's realism was pointed out by *Pravda* as early as 1914. In *Put Pravdy* (*Pravda's Path*, one of the many names which that revolutionary paper was forced to adopt because of censorship difficulties) for January 26, 1914, the following appeared:

"A certain turn in the direction of realism is becoming noticeable in our fiction. There are far more writers now who depict 'life in the rough' than in recent years. M. Gorky, A. Tolstoy . . . and others do not depict 'fanciful vistas' in their works, nor exotic 'Tahitians,' but the true life of Russia with all its horrors, its everyday routine." Remarking that "now it is precisely the realists who are read with great interest by the democratic circles of society," *Pravda* the central newspaper

of the Communist Party, correctly affirmed that this"... social change is in great measure the result of the upswing of the labor movement."

In these conditions, for all its merits, Russian critical realism of that day was inevitably approaching a difficult period in its history. From the point of view of historical and literary perspective, the past belonged to it, but the future lay with Socialist realism. This was felt by the sensitive writer that Alexei Tolstoy is. In his autobiography he characterizes that period as follows:

"The symbolists retreated into abstractions, into mysticism, took refuge in their 'ivory towers,' where they intended to wait for that which was inevitably approaching. I loved life, all my temperament was opposed to abstractions and idealist world philosophies.... I clearly understood that it was impossible to go on like this. I had always worked hard; now I worked more persistently than ever, but with sorry results: I did not see the true life of the country and the people." As a matter of fact, here in this great social and historical advance, a feeling for nature, knowledge of folklore and literary tradition were distinctly not enough.

Knowledge of the country and the people did not come at once or without shocks: it came in the course of the imperialist war and the Great October Socialist Revolution. And when knowledge of the country did come, it was not as "pure" knowledge, but as an ardent love for his people, their past and present; love for his country which had cast off the fetters of the landlord and capitalist rule, and was progressing in the struggle for the building of Socialist society.

Now, in the Socialist state, in the land of Soviets, the artist found on his palette all the colors he required and began to paint one masterful canvas after another. One of the last representatives of Russian critical realism, Alexei Tolstoy naturally and consistently became one of the first protagonists of Soviet Socialist realism.

Maxim Gorky listed three basic elements of fiction: language, theme and plot. Alexei Tolstoy is a real master in all these fields.

His language is clear, precise and simple; it bears no "ornament," or "frills," no pretentiousness. But this simple and laconic language of Tolstoy's is unusually plastic, expressive and vivid—true Russian literary language. It seems as if Alexei Tolstoy in his "language laboratory" possesses no special "trade secrets," and the secret of his style is a simple one: Tolstoy, in the words of Maxim Gorky, "... rejects from the elemental flow of language all that is accidental, temporary and unstable, capricious, phonetically corrupt, all that fails for various reasons to correspond with the basic 'spirit,' that is, with the structure of the common language of the community."

Alexei Tolstoy himself, speaking of his work on ancient Russian manuscripts, says: "Before me were revealed the treasures of the Russian language in all their brilliance, in all their genius and force. And at last I comprehended the secret of an artistic phrase so constructed that it is determined by the gesture—inner or overt—of the story teller." Yes, this secret is simple, but it can be learned only by a master of the art of writing.

Tolstoy is a master of theme, of its ideological development. Most striking of all is the richness and variety of themes in the work of this artist: from contemporary events to the historical past, the heroic epoch of the Civil War (the novel *Grain*, the play *Path to Victory*, the novel *1918*), pre-revolutionary

Russia (the novel *Sisters*), Russia before the war and further back all the way to the epoch of Peter I (a novel, a play and scenario); on the other hand a group of fantastic tales (*Aelita*, *Death Box*); and never, it should be noticed, is there any break with contemporary reality, though the theme be historical or fantastic.

This result is achieved through the great ideological significance which Tolstoy imparts to his works. In his novel *Grain* and the unfinished work *Darkness and Dawn* the basic idea is the struggle and triumph of the working people over the madly resisting forces of the bourgeois-landlord order. *Peter I*, as the author himself says, is the search for "a clue to the Russian people and the Russian state system."

The variety of literary forms and genres in which Tolstoy works is astonishing: novels, tales and short stories, plays—both drama and comedy—film scenarios, children's tales. Moreover, the author is at home in all these forms, knows all the "ins and outs," for he has mastered the laws and specific requirements of each genre.

To employ a literary aphorism that has come down from eighteenth century France, one may say that there is only one genre which Alexei Tolstoy does not know—the dull: for he is a master of plot. His novels, tales and plays grip the imagination and keep one's unflagging attention. This is due both to skillful composition and to the full-blooded character development, where the narrative and the personalities of his men and women are interwoven with consummate skill.

One is inclined to think that Tolstoy's great mastery results from the fact that he understands plot as Gorky did, that is, not as a mere exposition of events, the "course of the action" (at which he is a virtuoso), but also as ". . . the ties, conflicts, sympathies, antipathies and in general the mutual relationships of people — the history of the growth and organization of one or another character or type." It is just in this manner that the plot of *Grain* is constructed, where in addition to giving us the mounting climax, the author draws masterful portraits of Stalin and his comrade-in-arms Voroshilov, at the time of their victorious struggle with the whiteguards on the Tsaritsyn front.

Alexei Tolstoy rises to the stature of a great protagonist of culture as soon as we recall his tremendous organizational and propagandist role in the general advance of the cultural revolution; he is organizing and directing the compilation of a textbook for secondary schools on the history of the literatures of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.; he is undertaking the publication of a complete collection of Russian popular art; he appears at meetings in defense of culture against fascist obscurantism.

His activity in Soviet public affairs was climaxed by his election to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. as a candidate of the Stalinist bloc of the Communists and the non-Party people. The scientific forms and methods of his work received due acknowledgement in his recent election as a member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. The bestowal upon him of a second Government Order bespeaks of a well deserved recognition of his great services to literature.

IVAN LUPPOL

FYODOR GLADKOV,

novelist of the older generation of Soviet writers, author of "Cement," "Energy" etc.

The influence of literature is determined by the force and depth with which it reflects the spirit of its people. Undoubtedly literature is progressive and constructive only when it expresses the dreams and ideals of advanced mankind, when it struggles for the liberation of the oppressed and exploited classes, when with all the relentlessness of the written word it unmasks the ruling class of exploiters.

American literature is worthy of its great people. This is a world literature, one whose best works are close to the people of all countries.

Such noble names as those of Mark Twain, Longfellow, Whitman and Bret Harte have entered deeply the minds of Soviet readers.

Many generations in our country have been reared on the joyous books of Mark Twain. He is one of the writers best loved by our young people.

Some of the books which have had great significance in the revolutionary struggle of the Russian people against autocracy, against the landlords and capitalists, have been Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and the books of Jack London. This writer is one of the most popular in our country. His strong, energetic and purposeful characters, who develop iron will and determination in the class struggle and in the struggle with nature, are favorite heroes of many millions of Soviet readers.

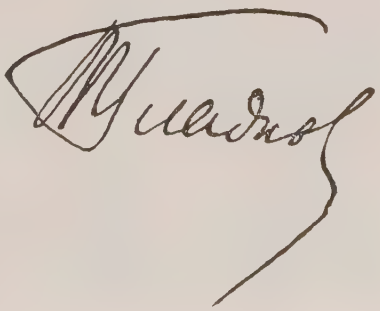
Incidentally, the deeper the social significance of the works of American writers the greater their influence on the Russian reader.

Every Soviet reader seeks answers to the questions and vital problems that interest him. The brave, militant personality, the positive hero, has always appealed to him as a fighter against exploiters, parasites and despots, as a fighter for the happiness of the people, for the freedom of the toilers, for joyous labor, for the highest democracy, the Socialist ideal.

That is why the works of Jack London, O. Henry, Theodore Dreiser and Upton Sinclair are near to the hearts of Soviet readers. Millions of people learn from their books, which are published in tremendous editions in the Soviet Union.

Literature in our country holds a place of honor because it is an effective guide to thought and behavior. Suffice it to point out that the 80,000 large libraries, exclusive of the trade union, club and collective farm libraries, are still not sufficient to satisfy the needs of people. Books by American authors occupy a prominent place on the shelves of these libraries, they are always in the greatest demand.

Ours is a healthy, vigorous, courageous and optimistic people. They are building a new world and creating a literature that expresses their revolutionary spirit, their creative drive forward. And every writer in democratic America whose books help us build a new world and affirm our strength is our friend and comrade-in-arms.



VERA INBER,

well-known poetess and short story writer.

There are writers who remain constant companions throughout one's life. Printed in large type, their books stand on our shelves during our childhood days. In our mature years, when the current of life is most rapid, we still remember them. But we return to them with genuine understanding and redoubled love in that time of life when our spectacles enlarge the fine print to the big letters of childhood.

Among such writers Mark Twain occupies first place in our hearts.

Someone has said that a whole city could be populated with Balzac's personages. Without in the least desiring to belittle the significance of the great French novelist, I nevertheless am bold enough to confess that I should not like to live in such a city. But how gladly, on the other hand, I would settle down in a locality peopled by Mark Twain's heroes! And I would be still more eager to travel with them along the Mississippi River.

The "father of waters" Mississippi gained an incomparable chronicler in Twain. His descriptions of the great waterway, then the main artery of the country, most vividly brings America to life before our eyes.

He himself afterwards acknowledged that in this period he came in a close contact with nearly all the varieties of human types one meets in literature. He further stated that he is convinced that an ordinary job on shore would take at least forty years to equip a person with knowledge of this kind.

The best qualities of the American people—their austere energy, softened by a marvelous sense of humor, their industriousness and, above all, their genuine feeling for democracy—all this is reflected with the utmost completeness in Mark Twain's work, which may be characterized thus: the national character in a setting provided by the national river.

The Soviet reader of Twain inevitably recalls another great writer, our pride, Maxim Gorky, whose ties with the Volga are as inseparable as Mark Twain's are with the Mississippi.

However different the creative methods of these two artists may have been, there is much that makes them kin. They are akin in the scope and profundity of the vital flow of their observations, in the similarities of their biographies, in the many trades and professions at which each worked, and, most important, in their love and respect for labor. One has but to recall with what care and love Mark Twain describes the pilot's trade and compare this with Gorky's description of, say, work in a bakery in his early tale, *Twenty-Six Men and a Girl*.

Our Gorky felt that there was nothing on earth more moving, grand and worthy of admiration than the processes of labor. This same note is struck by the American, Mark Twain.

Without being a revolutionary in the strict sense of the word, Mark Twain was, nevertheless, a fighter for a new, more perfect human society, for he loved and honored labor, he keenly felt the greatness of the human community, he branded hidebound prejudice and pious cant, he advocated genuine democracy.

With different weapons and in a different language, he did what our Gorky did. That is why I, for example, keep Gorky's *My University Days* and Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* side by side in my bookcase on the most convenient shelf, where they are easiest to reach.

Вера Инбер

VLADIMIR LIDIN,

novelist and short story writer, author of "The Price of Life".

After finishing a book by Erskine Caldwell, one realizes that here is a new friend, whose books are to be placed on the shelf with one's favorites.

Our reader has known contemporary American literature chiefly from the large social canvases of the great novelists of the last few decades. The short story, behind whose laconic technique may be glimpsed no less profound social problems of the relations between people, was little known to our reader.

Superficially it seemed that there was an irreconcilable contradiction between Russian literature and the literature of America. Noble aspiration for truth always distinguished the works of the most progressive Russian writers of the past. American writers to a greater or lesser degree shared this aspiration, but in their descriptions of the tangled and clashing relationships of a society with which they were dissatisfied, they found no way out of its contradictions.

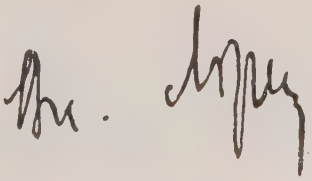
One can hardly say that Caldwell sees the way out or that Ambrose Bierce saw it. But their note of irony, their protest against the hard-shelled spiritual limitations of certain layers of people in America is in unexpected and profound harmony with Russian classical literature. Caldwell would scarcely deny that one of the writers most closely related to him is Chekhov. In a manner similar to that great master of short tales, Caldwell suddenly begins to speak with the voice of the average American, expresses the latter's views on life, depicts his "mental horizon" and the interests that stir him. The logic of the conclusion is dictated not by the author himself but by the people he describes. One must admit that it is a bitter conclusion.

The unobtrusiveness of Caldwell and Bierce inspire confidence and influence the reader more than would the most extensive conclusions drawn by the author. Caldwell's *Tobacco Roap* is written with a simplicity that seems naive, but this is the moving naivété of a great master, who has elevated the short story to the heights of a great social canvas.

The works of our Soviet men of letters are gradually penetrating to America and so we are really beginning to get acquainted with one another; the American reader can judge from these works what tremendous advances we have made. Chekhov's petty people, middle-class philistines, ignorant and backward peasants and intellectuals with their pessimistic fancies have been replaced by the active and strong-willed men and women of our Soviet society.

Those American writers from overseas whose books we have only recently become acquainted with have every right to an honored place on the shelf together with our favorite books. And so American literature, which seemed alien to us in its methods and outlook, is coming nearer to us, and the ocean that divides our continents is on this occasion no wider than a little stream across which men of arts and letters may reach out to give each other a friendly handclasp.

As for the cinema, many times have our hands affectionately and gratefully pressed that of the great master Charlie Chaplin, spiritual brother of the best American writers.



At an exhibition of paintings by S. Chuikov recently held at the Moscow Writers' Club. S. Chuikov (on the extreme left) speaks to a group of Chuvash writers and poets

HOW WE LIVE

Our life is so rationally arranged, it seems to me, that one needs but a word or two to describe it, but to write about it one would require the scope of a large treatise. Let me then limit myself to a general sketch.

Let us say a young and quite unknown writer is working on a book. As yet his work has attracted no attention. He is an engineer, a student or a collective farmer, and no one is inclined to regard him as a future man of letters. In search of critical advice and financial aid he turns to the Union of Soviet Writers, an organization with affiliated branches in every large city of the U. S. S. R.

Let us suppose that his first manuscript reveals a gift for writing and the author himself inspires confidence. The Writers' Union then delegates one of its members to read the manuscript, and assumes any incidental expenses such as retyping the draft. It organizes necessary consultations for the young author, and, upon completion of the manuscript, assumes the task of presenting it to a publishing house, with detailed criticism.

The book appears and the fledgling author is taken into the Union of Soviet Writers. Encouraged by his first success he launches upon a new book. It turns

out, however, that he has neither means nor time for such work if he continues at his job on the collective farm or in the factory. He needs leisure now. He must travel about the U.S.S.R. and spend days of reading and research in libraries. All this requires money and our tyro still has little of it.

In such a case the Writers' Union assumes part of the expense of his literary travels from a special Literary Fund, consisting of obligatory contributions from State publishing houses which are required by law to pay a percentage from every book issued. The Writers' Union also offers the young author the opportunity of a trip to one of its artists' sanctums in the Crimea, the Caucasus or on the Volga. The author signs a contract with a publishing house for his future book. Since his first book has brought him a certain reputation and he is already known as a person of ability, no publishing house will hesitate to offer him a contract if he will present a short outline of his new work. He will receive in advance 25 per cent of the royalties provided by the contract, the terms of which are agreed on provisionally by author and publisher.

If the subject is of particular interest to the publishing house and if the author can furnish proof of the seriousness of his intentions, he may also be given money for traveling. Now let us suppose the career of the young writer, so auspiciously begun, suddenly encounters obstacles. He falls sick and cannot finish the book. Or, still worse, he completes it, but the book fails to come up to expectations. The publishing house will not print it and our young author is left stranded and penniless. He needs still another year to work on his next subject, which he is confident will be successful. Here the Writers' Union steps in again and gives him financial support until he can overcome his difficulties.

A person without talent, who by chance has happened to write one good book, would not find such an arrangement any too profitable as we have seen. When the publishing house is finally convinced that the young man in question does not deserve serious consideration, it cancels its contracts with him and the Writers' Union likewise stops its subsidies.

But for those who develop, though slowly and with difficulty, our method allows every opportunity for growth.

The Union of Soviet Writers is an organization which encourages the growth of creative literature. We have our clubs, our magazines and newspapers, our publishing houses, our rest homes and homes for creative work, our literary institute, where young people study in their spare time without leaving their regular jobs. We see to the treatment of sick members, send writers on trips for literary material, handle their business with the publishing houses and protect their financial interests. It is our task to seek out new authors and help them in their development.

We derive no material profit from our work and therefore are in no hurry to get our young comrade off our hands and abandon him to live and work as best he can. The Union of Soviet Writers is a rather wealthy organization; our annual budget amounts to anywhere from fifteen to twenty million rubles, a large part of which goes for the education of young writers.

There is food for thought in an analysis of the ages of our men of letters. Here are some typical facts. Of one hundred writers in Moscow and Leningrad with whom I am

acquainted, only four are over fifty, twenty are under thirty, and the rest are between thirty and fifty.

In the fraternal Soviet republics the average age is still lower. It is noteworthy, moreover, that books are published in the languages of all the peoples of the Soviet Union and we therefore must train a colossal number of translators, who, translating what is most valuable and important from one language to another, help our national groups to know each other better. In its care for the young men of letters throughout the U.S.S.R., the presidium of the Writers' Union is undertaking many educational measures. One of the most effective has been the system of conferences of young writers.

The writers associations in the republics each send to Moscow several delegates from among their most capable young people. For a month the delegates spend their time visiting Moscow theaters, conferring with regisseurs, visiting the studios of famous painters and sculptors, touring museums, meeting writers and poets of the older generation, discussing new books, giving readings of their own works at the Writers' Club. They return brimming with impressions and with a strong feeling that they are members of one large family of writers; they realize that their own creative growth is the business of our whole organization, that we are fully responsible for the fate of each one of them.

Even the writer engaged on his first book is not neglected or isolated from comradely help in our country, since before he has finished his first work he has already come within the sphere of influence either of a writers' organization or of a publishing house, which, through its sector for work with young writers, is nearly always aware of what books are being written and by whom. But even in cases when a person enters the literary world as an outsider, it never happens that afterward he remains isolated from us. Even when a man of letters is unsuccessful for some years, we do not abandon him but help him in every way, remembering constantly that our task is to provide gifted, talented people with the best possible living and working conditions. We have indeed several authors, known both here and abroad, whose lack of output arouses understandable and even justifiable irritation. But this does not prevent the Writers' Union from showing solicitude for such comrades, since their earlier books have proved to be of enduring worth.

This brief and business-like sketch, it seems to me, gives an idea of our life. But it is worthwhile adding a few words as to how we are protected in our relationships with the publishing houses. According to our laws, the publisher has no right to arbitrarily set the author's fee. There is a minimum below which the publishing house has no right to pay. I have heard that in the West there are occasions when an author gives his book to a publisher without compensation, simply for the satisfaction of having it printed. This is impossible in the Soviet Union. Our laws dealing with the rights of authors provide for a fixed minimum fee, and prescribe that the fee shall be dependent on the size of the edition. There is a fixed fee for an edition of 10,000, a higher one for 20,000 and a still higher one, more than double, if the book appears in 100,000 copies. All new editions must be paid for as well, and if the author in this case makes extensive additions and corrections, he is paid as if for a new work. The entire system of authors' rights is based upon the principle that a writer should be able to live and work without anxiety for the

morrow, without fear that he may be cheated by a publisher.

The difficult and complex work of the writer, and its significance has been strikingly characterized by Comrade Stalin. "Writers," he has said, "are the engineers of human souls."

The Soviet public regards the writer as one engaged in production, as a builder in the realm of the spirit, as a great influence in the development of esthetic taste, and ranks the writer among the practical builders of Socialism.

From this conception stems not only the tremendous interest of the country in our work, but also the desire of groups of people performing an important task to have their work depicted in literature. Hence the readers' striving to interest the writer in themes from their own lives. Workers of the gold-mining industry invite the writer to come to them; men and commanders of the Red Army, collective farmers, young scientists, inventors, hunters, deep-sea divers all try to interest authors in subjects from their everyday life and work. The simple and fruitful thought that art should not fail to reflect all that is heroic, all that is great in the life of our peoples, creates the conviction that the people should bring to art and entrust to the artist all that they would like to see thus recorded for our generation as well as those to come.

This explains the extraordinarily exacting standards applied to the writer and the zealous interest taken in his work, and this is the reason for the unusual length of time his name is remembered. With us anyone who has written even one good book can feel secure of his future, and, most important, he gains readers who, with deep sincerity, are prepared to contribute to art all that enriches their own life.

All this, of course, implies a number of none-too-simple obligations for the writer to fulfill. Here it is impossible to write without an audience in mind. Art, as I have already said, for us has become a necessity. People speak of art as of food, without which it is impossible to get along and, consequently, our art must have nourishing substance. In our environment the writer is indeed an engineer of human souls; he must be a builder, he must contribute to the struggle for making man's soul strong and clear, to the struggle against everything that is evil and corrupted by survivals of the old.

The writer is a builder. He builds, he gives form to the dreams and hopes of people. Consequently he is that person without whom life would be colorless. It is upon this basic proposition that all our working and living conditions are founded, and from this proposition the material support given us follows as an inevitable corollary.

PYOTR PAVLENKO

A VISIT TO MIKHAIL SHOLOKHOV

Mikhail Sholokhov, author of *And Quet Flows the Don* and *Soil Upturned*, lives in the Cossack village Veshenskaya, on the Don. He was born in 1905 in the hamlet of Kruzhilino, near the village in which he now resides. His books are laid in the neighborhood in which he was born and lives.

Sholokhov's home is about a hundred feet from the ancient Cossack church described in *And Quiet Flows the Don*. The square on which the Cossacks mustered for their marches has changed considerably since the Civil War events described in Sholokhov's novel: today there is a small park there with an obelisk over the common grave of those who died for the Revolution.

One is haunted here by thoughts of the remarkable characters portrayed in *And Quiet Flows the Don*. One cannot help seeing this Cossack village and its people through the prism of the novel. Here is a file of carts, laden with hay, moving slowly along the street. A young Cossack woman sits on the front cart, drawn by a pair of bullocks, and bawls angrily at the animals. She might almost be Axinya, the heroine of Sholokhov's novel, in the flesh.

The village of Veshenskaya is about a hundred miles from the nearest railway station. When the automobile road now being built between Millerovo and Veshenskaya is completed, communication with the residence of the writer will be easy. In the meanwhile, however, a visit to Sholokhov is not always a simple matter. In the spring, autumn and sometimes in the winter the roads in the steppe around Veshenskaya become impassable for either automobile or horse. On such occasions the only means of communication is the airplane which daily delivers Sholokhov's voluminous mail.

The last time I visited the writer was at the end of December, 1938. For four days the airplane could

not make its regular flight to Veshenskaya because of a heavy snow storm.

Sholokhov himself does not particularly mind such interruptions. He enjoys the quiet of his village, far from the bustle of the capital and the noise of big cities. He is an enthusiastic hunter and fisherman. Communion with nature is his greatest joy in life. It is with great reluctance that Sholokhov occasionally leaves his Don and his home village. He is never keen on taking trips to Moscow or Rostov. He is ill at ease in a big city, feels like a bird in a cage.

Sholokhov lives in a small house painted sky blue. It was built in 1934 according to a plan drawn up by Sholokhov himself. The interior and furnishings of the house are such as may be found in the home of an average Soviet family.

On one of the tables in Sholokhov's spacious kitchen one may always find an array of cartridges, buckshot and hunting accessories. Several times during the day the writer's family, consisting of his wife, Maria Petrovna (a Cossack girl), four children and his mother, meet at the massive table in the dining room. Sometimes there may be a guest from some distant part of the country or one or two old Cossacks. A large part of the small and scantily furnished sitting room is taken up with a grand piano.

Sholokhov does his creative work in the attic, which consists of two small rooms—a library and a study. The library is modest, but one can see that the books in it have been carefully and discriminatingly chosen. One book case contains Sholokhov's own works in the numerous editions that have appeared in nearly all languages. The lower shelves of the book cases are hidden behind doors of solid wood, instead of the glass that covers the upper shelves. Here the writer keeps his manuscripts and the thousands of letters which he regularly receives from all parts of the world.

Sholokhov's study is devoid of ornaments or decorations. Only a barometer is fastened to the wall above the writing desk—a necessary item for a man who often ventures into the steppe with gun and greyhound. Two small doors lead to balconies from which one can admire the picturesque panorama of the Don. Next to the desk is a couch with a pillow and a plaid or fur coat on it. Sholokhov writes mostly at night, and he uses the couch for an occasional brief rest.

Sholokhov is of medium height, and is practically always seen with a pipe in his mouth. He smokes the plain peasant's tobacco—"makhorka." He dresses like a man of the outdoors: he wears leather or felt boots and a semi-military khaki suit, and sometimes a sweater.

Adjoining the house is a yard with barns, a pigeon cote, a small apiary and a garage with two cars. One is a dilapidated old "GAZ" (an old model passenger car of the Gorky Automobile Works) in which Sholokhov makes his hunting trips along roadless country, sometimes even driving into the water at the edge of the river on Don fishing trips. The other car is an attractive "ZIS—101," in which he usually takes out his family or goes to Rostov.

Sholokhov loves his grey Don pigeons. If he happens to miss a pigeon he will walk for hours looking for it all over the village.

The history of world literature knows of writers who fled the noise of the capitals to work in the seclusion of the provinces. Flaubert is a case in point. But with most of these writers it was a sort of self-imposed exile, a withdrawal from contemporary life. In the case of Sholokhov, however, we see an or-

ganic fusion of the writer with his "material."

Sholokhov is known and loved all over the country. But in his own district Sholokhov enjoys a popularity which can only fall to the lot of one whom people consider a close friend and one of their own. When a husband has left his wife it is no rarity for the wife to come to Sholokhov to seek his advice: how should she go about making the man provide for his family? A wrong decision has been passed in court, and those concerned come to Sholokhov to discuss the matter with him. People come to him from all over the Don Region, and the writer receives them all and listens attentively to every visitor. The number of visitors has increased since his election as Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

Sholokhov carries on an extensive correspondence with readers, electors and budding authors. He keeps no secretary because he does not want to relinquish the direct contact with people which he obtains through personal handling of his correspondence. But this correspondence is growing at an alarming rate and already takes away much of the writer's time and creative energy.

Sholokhov has been instrumental in founding a Cossack theater in Veshenskaya—the first of its kind in the Don Region. It is now in its third year.

Sholokhov's first published work was *Tales of the Don*, a book of short stories which appeared in 1925. He started to work on *And Quiet Flows the Don* the same year. One cannot help marveling at the vision and confidence in his own powers displayed by the young Sholokhov when he boldly launched into a work of the magnitude of *And Quiet Flows the Don*.

Today, thirteen years later, the writer is working on the last chapters of this monumental epic. *And Quiet Flows the Don*—a novel running to over sixteen hundred pages—is perhaps the greatest and most significant work in Soviet literature. It has been published in millions of copies, translated into dozens of languages and brought its author world fame and recognition. A film version of *And Quiet Flows the Don* was made, and an opera based on this novel is now performed in the best opera theaters of the Soviet Union.

I asked Sholokhov how he came to write *And Quiet Flows the Don*. Here is his answer:

"I began to write the novel in 1925. At first I did not conceive it as a work of the scope that it subsequently assumed. My idea was to show Cossacks in the Revolution. I set out to depict the part taken by the Cossacks during the Revolution in the march on Petrograd. The Don Cossacks then formed a division of the Third Cavalry Corps. After I had written about a hundred pages I felt that it wouldn't quite do. The reader was bound to wonder: Why did the Cossacks take part in the attempts to crush the Revolution? Who were those Cossacks, anyhow, and what kind of a place was that region of the Don Cossacks? I myself began to wonder whether it was not *terra incognita* to the reader.

"Therefore I dropped the first idea and began to think about a novel on a more extensive scale. When my new plan took shape I set out to gather my material. Of course, my intimate knowledge of Cossack life proved to be invaluable.

"I started to work on *And Quiet Flows the Don* in its present form approximately at the end of 1926."

"There is a great deal of speculation as to the prototypes of your characters. Is it true that your characters have been modeled after people who actually existed?"

"It is true that a real person served as the prototype for Grigory

Melekhov. There actually lived such a Cossack in the Don region. But I must stress the fact that all I used in the novel was his military biography: the period of his active service before the war, then in the World War and in the Civil War.

"I wrote and rewrote everything a number of times," he went on. "I did a great deal of thinking over every detail. I followed the main outline, but as for the details—and not only details—I kept changing them a great many times before I was fully satisfied.

"In general outline I saw Axinya from the very beginning. But only in general outline. Her specific features did not appear to me all at once. Still there was no particular need to spur up my imagination, for we have fine women, plenty of fine women—with strong characters, strong wills and warm hearts. The situation depicted in the novel does not literally reproduce anything that happened in real life. But life in the country, life in a Cossack village, abounds in stories and situations of this nature."

"You were born in 1905. You were a young boy at the time of the World War, and a child in the years preceding it. How is it that you know the old Cossack life so well?" I asked.

"It's hard to tell. Perhaps a result of constant study and of life in a Cossack environment. The main thing is to become merged with one's material. As you know, the theme of *Anna Karenina* was suggested to Tolstoy by an actual episode—there was a similar family, with similar experiences, with a similar tragical *denouement*. But to us, the readers of the novel, it makes not a whit of difference. We know only one Karenina—the one created by Tolstoy. It is this Karenina we hold dear to our heart. I had set myself the aim of creating a living Axinya—with all her actions justified and convincing.

"I have not experienced what is known as resistance of my material. My work on *And Quiet Flows the Don* was held up only by the writing of *Soil Upturned* and then—by life itself: Communist Party work and community activity in my own village. But this is something that enriches a writer, it furnishes material for creative work."

"Has the outline of the novel, which you conceived thirteen years ago, been changed in the process of the work?"

"Only details have changed. I have eliminated some superfluous episodic characters. Sometimes it has been necessary to exercise restraint. A casual episode or a chapter that did not seem to fit in—all this had to be abandoned in the process of the work."

"About how much of your original version of *And Quiet Flows the Don* have you published?"

"The published version of *And Quiet Flows the Don* runs to about sixteen hundred pages. Altogether I wrote about eighteen hundred pages. Two hundred pages had to be eliminated."

"What aspect of the novel did you find most difficult to deal with?"

"From my point of view, the historical-descriptive aspect of *And Quiet Flows the Don* was the most difficult and the least successful. I am not at home in the sphere of historical chronicling. Here my possibilities are limited. My imagination needed a great deal of prompting in dealing with this aspect.

"I can remember days and hours when I would sit over some one page, grappling with it. Sometimes I would have difficulty in finding the proper word. Sometimes a whole episode would seem out of place. I would substitute another for it. And so *ad infinitum*. The dialogue presented particular difficulties.

Sometimes I would read it and re-read it, examining it from every aspect, and the conclusion would be: It's dead!"

"You told me once that you spend a great deal of time on 'checking' your material. What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that I must be careful in selecting my facts, and that I investigate and verify them again and again. It is my conviction that it is the duty of every writer to 'check' his material. No error, even the slightest, escapes the reader's attention. I work very carefully, and I take my time. Still I have had quite a number of errors pointed out to me by readers. When a writer sins against the truth—even it be in small things—he arouses the reader's distrust and sets him wondering whether he may not be lying in big things as well."

Here Sholokhov produced some letters from a book case. He read the letter of an old man—a collective farmer of Leningrad Province: ". . . I like this novel of yours. . . . You have not written like some others that the Red Army always gained easy victories. You have written the truth about the adversities and privations which our Communist Party and the Red Army had to pass through in defending the Revolution. In the same way, you are truthful in your descriptions of nature. You do not use any embellishments."

"Have you been influenced by any writer in creating *And Quiet Flows the Don?* Is it true that Lev Tolstoy had a strong influence over you?"

"I am influenced by every good writer. Every good writer is good in his own way. Take Chekhov, for instance. At first glance there may seem to be nothing in common between Chekhov and myself. Yet Chekhov has also been an influence. And the trouble with me and many others is that we are not sufficiently influenced."

"What do you intend to write next?"

"I shall first finish *Soil Upturned*. I shall not bring it up to date. *Soil Upturned* will reflect only the period during which the collective farms got on their feet. I am thinking of a new novel, a novel dealing with our wonderful life of today. We must strive to depict the life of the people. Stalin has said: 'Only the people are immortal.'"

Sholokhov is now busy gathering material for this new novel. The artist is eagerly absorbing all the facts and phenomena of Soviet reality. He reads every new work in Soviet literature dealing with the burning problems of our times. And often he is incensed when he finds a schematic approach to life.

In conversation Sholokhov speaks, as a rule, about "small" people, most often about people of his own village. Plain, obscure people—but when Sholokhov talks of them each one assumes a form of his own, as if molded by a sculptor. Two or three words, a single feature—and the figure at once becomes distinct as if lit up by a flash of lightning. One sits and listens to him as to a conjuror. One is reminded of Chekhov who once, during a conversation, picked up the first object that met his eye—it happened to be an ash tray—and said:

"If you wish, I shall have a story written by tomorrow. Its title will be *An Ash Tray*."

There is an episode told by one of Sholokhov's villagers, a companion of his fishing trips, showing how thoroughly engrossed the writer Sholokhov becomes in his ideas and images. On one of these trips, when Sholokhov cast the line and sat down on the shore, rod in hand and pipe in mouth, the villager noticed that the writer had become as if

dead to everything around. For more than an hour Sholokhov sat there rigidly, motionless, his eyes fixed on one point in the water. His companion addressed him several times, but received no reply. Alarmed, he decided to watch the writer closely. Finally Sholokhov, as if waking from a trance, began to gather his fishing tackle and then rushed home. That whole day and the night following he sat at his desk, writing without a stop.

Sholokov has recently been elected member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. He fully deserves high honor, for he works with the thoroughness of a scientist, with the keenness of an explorer.

Sholokhov goes on living in the village Veshenskaya amid the nature which he loves, next to the prototypes of his characters.

The village is asleep under the star-studded sky. One can hear the crackling of ice on the Don. A faint ray of light can be seen through the closed shutters of Sholokhov's house. Sholokhov is awake. Dressed in a sweater and felt boots, a leather coat thrown over his shoulders, he sits in his study. Line after line appears on the white sheet of paper. Again the people of Sholokhov's world are coming to life, struggling, suffering, loving. . . .

ISAAC EKSLER

The Soviet Press and Its Makers

NOTES BY AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST

The *Soviet Trans-Baikal*, a Chita Province newspaper, was recently raked over the coals in a letter to the editor of the *Bolshevik Press*, a magazine for newspapermen. The *Soviet Trans-Baikal*, wrote the author of this letter, is a fairly large newspaper for the district in which it is published; it has a full staff of seven men; and yet it receives only four or five letters a day from its readers!

But *The Red Sormovite*, a Gorky Province paper, has reasons to be proud: 725 of its readers were listed among its contributors within a period of two months. And *The Gorky Commune* boasts that of the 167 items in which the candidates to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were discussed, 140 were written by readers.

Such figures are the pulse beat of Soviet newspapers. Do the readers take active part in making their newspaper? Do they write for it? Do they come to it with their problems, their complaints, their demands? Here is a standard by which the Soviet newspaper measures its success, as capitalist newspapers measure success in advertising lineage.

The standard is a high one. A Soviet newspaper which does not receive dozens of letters a day from readers—no matter how small the paper—isn't worth its salt. Of such a newspaper the Russians say that it has "lost contact with the masses"—one of the most serious charges that can be leveled against a Soviet publication.

The active participation of the reader in the creation of his own newspaper has always been a basic principle of the Bolshevik press. As far back as 1904, when one of the early Bolshevik newspapers, *Vperyod* (*Forward*), was founded, Lenin wrote:

"It is a misunderstanding to assume that only literary people (in the professional sense of the term), and only they, are capable of successfully participating in the work of a newspaper. On the contrary, a newspaper can be alive and vivid only if for every five leading and permanent contributors there are five hundred, five thousand non-literary contributors." [1]

Pravda (*Truth*), the central organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, has been a living embodiment of Lenin's words from its very first days. The *Pravda* was founded May 5, 1912 (April 22, old style), under the direct leadership of J. V. Stalin. V. M. Molotov, now Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, was managing editor of the *Pravda* when it began to appear. In its first hundred issues *Pravda* printed 1,783 letters from workers.

This principle, established by Lenin and Stalin, has been carried down to the present day and will always be a hallmark of the Bolshevik press. An indication of the extent of reader cooperation in the making of the Soviet newspaper today is the fact that in 1937 the *Pravda* received an average of 983 letters a day from readers.

What inspires this flood of letters?

First, the Soviet reader feels it his social duty to express his opinion on matters of public interest. He looks upon his newspaper as his organ, as an instrument of democracy, a register and organizer of public opinion in the genuine sense of the word. The widespread public discussion in the press of the Constitution, of the recent changes in the regulations on labor discipline, or of the abortion law, before each of these was adopted, are examples in point, not to mention the discussion of candidates during the elections. A recent case in point is the countrywide discussion in the press in preparation for the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Ideas and suggestions were thoroughly argued out in letters from Party members.

[1] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. VI, p. 374, "A Letter to Comrades."

The "Pravda" building in Moscow

Second, the Soviet reader knows that the press is an effective medium for bringing a proposal to light or registering a complaint. Almost all Soviet newspapers carry a column of so-called "Signals"—extracts from letters calling attention to bureaucracy or inefficiency—and "On the trail of our signals," a record of action taken upon complaints sent in by readers. Newspapers maintain whole staffs to deal with complaints and suggestions.

The complaints and proposals are often brought in person to the newspaper office. More than seventeen thousand persons a year visit the *Pravda* office with the most varied requests. An inventor comes to ask the *Pravda* to look into the reasons why his brain child has not been used by industry. Citizen N. comes to state that the repairs of the apartment house in which he lives have been conducted in wrecking fashion, in the opinion of the residents. Citizen B. requests that the public prosecutor investigate her statement that a milk delivery station dilutes milk with water. A technician sent to select a site for a new grain elevator protests that his objections were overruled and an unsuitable site finally selected; he asks the *Pravda* to act in the matter. (It is significant that most of the complaints are motivated not by personal interest but by interest in public welfare.) All these matters must be investigated, action taken, the guilty punished, errors corrected, injustices rectified. And the newspaper is a powerful factor of social control. Not long ago the *Pravda* criticized an order of the People's Commissar of Health which the paper claimed had no basis. Hardly had this criticism appeared in type before the commissar's order was corrected. That incident is typical.

Reader-contributors are organized by the so-called worker correspondents' movement. This movement has an unusual history, a history filled with heroic exploits. It began with the birth of the Bolshevik press. Workers wrote to their newspapers about working conditions and their daily life. Before the Revolution many a worker-correspondent went to jail for writing about factory conditions. Since the Revolution every encouragement has been given to the worker-correspondent to expose abuses, and the Soviet law protects him in his criticism. Interference with criticism is punishable, and revelation of the identity of a worker-correspondent without his permission is a criminal act.

The movement grew with giant strides,

and began to embrace, in addition to workers, large numbers of peasants.

In the early days of the Revolution some of these amateur correspondents were murdered by enemies of the Soviet state for exposing wrecking and sabotage. One of these was Spiridonov, a *Pravda* worker-correspondent employed in the former Zindel Factory, who was done to death April 12, 1922. Wherever you hear of the history of the worker-correspondents' movement you hear the names of Spiridonov and his brave fellows who fought for justice and truth.

In 1924, when the second countrywide conference of worker and peasant-correspondents was held, there were already over fifty thousand such contributors to the press. "Wall newspapers," typed out or copied by hand and hung up in public places, began to appear in large numbers. In the days of Civil War and intervention Vladimir Mayakovsky, the great poet, edited such a "wall newspaper," the *Rosta* (Russian Telegraphic Agency) *Window of Satire*.

At the Thirteenth Congress of the All-Union Communist Party Stalin declared: "The organizations of the worker and peasant-correspondents have a great future ahead of them. Under certain conditions of development these organizations can become the mouthpiece and mighty conductor of the will of proletarian public opinion."

By 1926 there were already 250,000 worker and peasant-correspondents, and two years later there were three million of them.

The Trotskyite-Bukharinite fascist spies tried to undermine the activity of the worker and peasant-correspondents, whose exposures of wrecking hindered the enemies of the Soviet State. There were enemies who crawled into high newspaper posts and used all sorts of methods against the worker-correspondents—suppressing their reports, ignoring their letters, sending their stories to be passed on by the very people criticized, and so on.

With the uprooting of the enemy nests in newspaper offices came a great growth in the worker-correspondents' movement. District and province conferences of worker and peasant-correspondents in 1937 revealed this growth and spurred it on. In Ivanovo Province alone, for instance, 120 worker-correspondents participated in the discussion. At the Sverdlov Province conference were Marii, Komi-Permyaks, Chuvashians, Tatars, and members of many other nationalities hitherto for the most part illiterate. To the Archangel conference Ivan Pireiko, reindeer herder of the Malo-Zemelskaya tundra, came by plane. . . .

There are now twenty-five thousand "wall newspapers" in Moscow alone—five hundred of them dailies. More than a quarter of a million of Moscow's population edits and writes for these handwritten or typed newspapers, which are to be found at factories, offices, schools, theaters, everywhere.

Maxim Gorky was a devoted friend of the worker and peasant-correspondents' movement. He saw in it a mighty spring of new talent, a source from which many a writer would come. He corresponded with many of the amateur newspaper contributors, and constantly reiterated his faith in the movement.

"The workers' and peasants' urge toward literature is one of the greatest 'positive' developments in Soviet Russia," he wrote in 1927. "This is a perfectly natural striving of new creative forces to occupy the 'commanding heights' of culture. This urge should grow powerfully and rapidly, for we have twelve thousand peasant-correspondents, and no fewer worker-correspondents. That is a respectable-sized army, and it will inevitably grow and bring forth from its midst dozens and hundreds of young writers. The figures are almost staggering, but if we recall the fact that we have a hundred and fifty million inhabitants who will not be slow to turn themselves into readers, the present figures will immediately seem insignificant."

To one of the worker-correspondents Gorky wrote in the same year:

"Naturally, you understand how glad I am to know that my voice has reached such a 'backwater.' But when people like you worker and peasant-correspondents live in such places and begin to build a new culture, those 'forgotten backwaters' cease to be backwaters. In my opinion, *the army of worker and peasant-correspondents is a future mighty force of our country* (italics Gorky's): all these people are candidates for the intelligentsia. . . ."

To Tula worker-correspondents Gorky wrote in 1928:

"I follow closely the work of the amateur correspondents, and I value it highly. From your ranks *must come splendid journalists.*"

The Soviet newspaper strives not only to attract a large number of outside contributors, but also to train them and help them learn to write. Here is a typical example: *Gudok* (*The Whistle*), the railwaymen's newspaper, recently sent out brigades along the Southeastern, Kuibyshev, Ashkhabad, Tashkent, Tomsk railways and L. M. Kaganovich railway to

conduct seminars for worker-correspondents.

When a newspaper does not teach its worker-correspondents it hears about it soon enough. One worker-correspondent writes to a newspapermen's magazine:

"Seminars for worker-correspondents of the district newspapers and for editors of wall newspapers were recently held in most of the collective farms of Orjonikidze district. At the seminars many pointed out that the *Shock Worker's Banner* (editor Comrade Fomenko) pays little attention to helping its peasant-correspondents; it does not teach them how to improve their writing. If a poorly written story is submitted the author is curtly informed: 'We cannot make use of your story.' "

From among the ranks of these amateurs often rise professional newspapermen and writers, and every effort is made to develop latent talent. "The pride of our staff," writes an employee of *The Building Worker*, "is the literary society organized by our paper in January, 1938. It includes fifty-eight building workers who are young poets and writers. After a series of discussions of their work and lectures for them, the editorial office held an evening devoted to readings from their works. About a thousand persons attended this evening.

"The newspaper devotes special pages to the amateurs' writings. In addition, the office is trying to organize amateurs from among the workers to aid in illustrating the paper. A worker-cartoonists' circle and an amateur photographers' group have been organized."

However, the bulk of the material which comes from worker and peasant-correspondents is criticism. Criticism, criticism, more criticism. Sometimes the impression one obtains from reading Soviet newspapers is that everything is going to the bowwows, so predominant is the element of criticism. Often it is from the criticism published frankly by the Soviet press that anti-Soviet newspaper correspondents abroad obtain material which they distort into a false picture—"neglecting," of course, to mention the original source.

Criticism is a healthy sign, and the Communist Party and the Soviet Government have always encouraged it. "Self-criticism" is the term used.

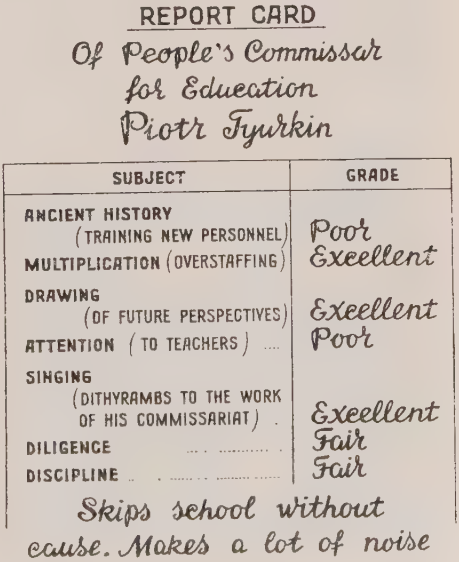
"Self-criticism is a symptom of the strength and not of the weakness of our Party," Stalin declared. "Only a strong party, a party rooted in life, a party that is marching forward to victory, can indulge in so ruthless, a criticism of its own shortcomings, as it has and always will indulge in before the whole people. A party that conceals the truth from the people, a party that fears light and criticism, is not a party, but a clique of frauds, doomed to failure."

The criticism voiced in the press is a good indication of the fact that Soviet readers see in their newspapers defenders of their interests, expressors of their will; it shows, too, that Soviet newspaper readers are not willing to put up with shortcomings, inefficiency, bureaucracy, injustices committed by individual wrongdoers.

In its appeal of June 2, 1928, the Central Committee of the Communist Party called upon all members of the Party to develop self-criticism "from top to bottom and from the bottom to the top," "without respect of person."

That still holds true today, and will continue to hold true. In his article, *Against Vulgarization of the Slogan of Self-Criticism*, Stalin declared that "the main thing is not to displace mass criticism *from below* by critical blather *from above*: allow the teeming masses of the working class to draw themselves into affairs and to show their creative force in the correcting of our shortcomings, in the improving of our construction."

A characteristic illustration of Soviet "self-criticism" "without respect of person" is the following "report card" published in the New Year issue of the satirical magazine *Crocodile*:



REPORT CARD

Of People's Commissar for Education Piotr Tyurkin

SUBJECT	GRADE
ANCIENT HISTORY (TRAINING NEW PERSONNEL)	Poor
MULTIPLICATION (OVERSTAFFING)	Excellent
DRAWING (OF FUTURE PERSPECTIVES)	Excellent
ATTENTION (TO TEACHERS)	Poor
SINGING (DITHYRAMBS TO THE WORK OF HIS COMMISSARIAT)	Excellent
DILIGENCE	Fair
DISCIPLINE	Fair

Skips school without cause. Makes a lot of noise

With all this criticism flying about, comes the inevitable question, "who criticizes the critics? Who controls the press?"

The answer is—in the final analysis, and directly, too, the readers, again.

In the first place, contact with the reader does not begin and end with the letters he sends to his paper or the criticism, complaints and suggestions he brings in person. Soviet newspapers make it a practice to hold regular readers' conferences to discuss faults in the paper and how to correct them, as well as matters which the readers wish the paper to take up . . . and the editor who does not react promptly to such criticism would not be a Soviet editor. Not for long, anyway!

Flick through the pages of the *Bolshevik Press*, and you will find dozens of items like this one :

"The newspaper *Red Tataria* has conducted ten readers' conferences in the major agricultural districts of the Tatar Republic. All in all more than a thousand readers attended these conferences. They criticized the newspaper in business-like fashion, noting particularly the weak work of the Party Department and the insufficient reflection of the republic's cultural life in the pages of the paper. The newspaper is preparing to hold similar readers' conferences in the major industrial regions of the republic."

Or this:

"*Workers' Moscow* is organizing a series of readers' conferences. The first is to be held at the Stalin Auto Plant."

At such meetings the editor and his staff report on their conduct of the work entrusted to them—the Russian word is "*otchitivatsya*," "to render an account"—the same term used for an elected official's report. Criticism is trenchant.

What happens when an editor soft-pedals criticism in his paper?

He may get away with it, but those are the rare exceptions. He must answer to the Communist Party, to his publisher (be it Party, Young Communist League, Soviet, trade union or other public organization) and to the readers. He is answerable for soft-pedaling criticism, as he is for libel. When the case is serious he may be removed from his post, expelled from the Party, given a demotion or a reprimand. If he gets off lightly, it is as the object of a satirical article in one of the magazines devoted to the press or in the "press review" column carried by almost all newspapers. In these "press reviews" the newspapers discuss the work of other papers, criticizing their defects and holding up their good work as examples. A part of the newspaper staff does nothing but study the exchange copies for this purpose.

There is an old chestnut told by American newspapermen and cherished by every cub reporter about the war correspondent who wired the bible to his paper to keep the only telegraph line occupied until his story was ready—and thereby scooped his rivals.

The story inevitably comes to mind when one reads the following paragraph from an article by F. Vigdorovich, a correspondent who was present at the Lake Hassan battle in the Far East, when Soviet troops repulsed and smashed Japanese would-be invaders:

"My story was ready, but how was I to send it? No easy task! The telegraph wires were loaded with military correspondence. Even the most influential person could not have helped me, and, to be perfectly frank, it would have been embarrassing to ask for such aid. I realized that to clog the wires with my story would inflict a certain degree of damage on the military operations. So I left my story with the telegraph operator with the request: 'When you have a clear wire, please send this.' "

Now it may well be pointed out that in conditions of warfare anywhere in the world, newspaper correspondence must wait upon military despatches, but what is important here is the attitude of the correspondent himself. The interests of the newspaper were identical with those of the men fighting. The correspondent clearly realized the unity of their interests; he was not aiming to "scoop" a rival or push his correspondence ahead of the military despatches.

This social-minded attitude dominates the Soviet press. It is significant that the Soviet Union is the only country in the world where pornography has really been wiped out, where crime news is really handled with the aim of fighting crime, where the newspaper is an instrument for the community welfare.

"But where, then, is initiative, if you count out the competitive in man?" comes the question. The bourgeois journalist must fight for his job, he must attract readers by any means, get there first in competition fair or foul, to win profits for his publisher. Does the Soviet journalist have a spur to do good work, to get his story in first, to write a better story than the next man?

That the initiative is there, and the competition, too, is evident from the facts. But the aims and methods of that competition are different from those of money-spurred competition.

A characteristic example:

A lunar eclipse was due. Readers were awaiting the account of the eclipse. Newspapermen, astronomers, scientists gathered to observe it.

And then heavy clouds interfered.

What to do?

The *Pravda* solved the problem. It sent up a plane above the cloud layer, carrying a reporter and an astronomer. The next day *Pravda* had photos of the eclipse and the full story. . . . But it did not stop there. Astronomers had material they would not otherwise have obtained—and now they use planes frequently for their observations. Initiative?

Another example: the North Pole expedition. If ever there was newspaper competition, it was certainly among the Soviet papers in covering that story. But note: the competition expressed itself not in a race to break the story first or to provide sensations to sell papers; the standards were scientific thoroughness, good writing, accuracy, fullness of coverage. And when a correspondent of the newspaper *Light Industry* pushed his way to the Papaninites at their reception in Leningrad on their return, in order to get the first interview on land, he came in for scorching criticism for his *faux pas*—Soviet journalists do not interrupt family reunions like that in order to pester heroes for interviews! Their competition expresses itself in worthier ways, the men who condemned this "enterprising" reporter pointed out.

A hallmark of the competition between Soviet publications is that in this competition the rivals help one another. Why not? This is no fight for a market of readers and advertisers, but an effort to improve service to all readers. Socialist competition agreements so common among Soviet newspapers usually stress as a point in the competition that the rivals promise to show each other how to work better!

The kind of satisfaction Soviet journalists derive from exercising their initiative are of a new order, too.

"In 1931," one Soviet journalist writes, "*Pravda* sent me to cover the oil transport situation. I traveled two months by water from Astrakhan to Moscow. During that time fourteen of my articles were carried by the paper. When I came to Gorky (formerly Nizhni-Novgorod) on my way back, I already saw the effect of my critical articles. I saw my stories being discussed and decisions adopted on the basis of my criticism. I saw the direct results of my work. In that lies the highest satisfaction of the journalist."

Here is initiative whose aim is to improve the working of the Soviet system, and with it a standard for the Soviet journalist to measure his work. A lofty standard, when the test is, "Have I helped change human nature?"

It is obvious from everything related above that there are no parallels—or parallels which are only rare, exceptional cases—to use as a comparison between the Soviet journalist and his colleagues abroad. As Soviet journalism is new, so is the Soviet journalist. Who is this new man?

Let us look into the staff of the Kaluga *Commune*, a young paper, fairly typical in most respects of the run of the smaller Soviet newspapers.

The *Commune* is a newspaper with a young staff. Most of the staff are people who have come from the factory or the collective farm. The "old timer" of the office is the responsible secretary (in America he would be called "managing editor"), Comrade Kabanov, a former Youth Correspondent, who has three years' experience. The rest: Comrade Ganchurin, a former village librarian, an active peasant-correspondent and editor of a collective farm wall newspaper, who now works in the Agricultural Department of the paper. Comrade Pankin, the best Stakhanovite of the railway repair shops, a former worker-correspondent, is now in the Factory Department of the paper. Comrade Lysova, a former Party organizer of a candy factory, heads the Mass Department (which checks up on complaints and suggestions, follows them through and conducts organizational work). The city desk is headed by Comrade Kolenko, a woman, a former worker of a clothing mill. And finally Comrade Chernikov, the editor, has also worked in a newspaper office only a year and a half. He came to the paper from the weights and scales plant where he was a foreman.

Counterbalancing the youth and inexperience of a large number of Soviet journalists is the fact that the outstanding men of Soviet life and letters from academicians to housewives are frequent contributors to the press. To see a half page of *Pravda* or *Izvestia* taken up with part of M. Sholokhov's latest work or an article by Alexei Tolstoy or a story by any of dozens of noted men of letters is not at all rare; indeed it is the rule. Soviet *literati* do not scorn to write for Soviet newspapers. On the contrary, they consider it an honor.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that great men of all walks of Soviet life are frequent contributors to the press, it is

but natural, when the experience of many Soviet journalists can almost be counted in months, that the quality of the Soviet newspaper is not all it could and should be. Soviet newspapermen are frank in admitting this—self-criticism!—and they point to the fact that the press itself has grown so rapidly and is so young that time is needed to mend matters.

"The press must grow not by days but by hours—it is the strongest and sharpest weapon of our Party," said Stalin at the Twelfth Congress of the Communist Party.

Here is how it has grown:

The number of newspapers on the territory of the U.S.S.R. has soared from 859 in 1913 to 8,521 in 1938. Their daily circulation has jumped from 2,729,000 in 1913 to 37,500,000 in 1938, and the number of languages in which they are published from 24 to 70, in the same period. And still there are not enough newspapers (more paper is needed!), for in that time the percentage of the literate population has changed from under thirty to nearly one hundred. And the cultural revolution goes on: during the Second Five-Year Plan the number of pupils in the elementary and secondary schools grew from 23.3 million to 33.3 million; the number of pupils in the fifth, sixth and seventh grades doubled, while the number in the eighth, ninth and tenth grades increased fifteen times over.

In the Third Five-Year Plan, ten-year schooling is to become universal in cities and seven-year schooling in the countryside and in national republics, with increased facilities for ten-year schooling, so that the number of pupils in cities and industrial settlements is to grow from 8.6 to 12.4 million, and in the countryside from 20.8 to 27.7 million. [1]

When one glances over the facts on the growth of the Soviet press, one is struck by certain aspects which sharply illustrate its Soviet character. Take for instance the growth of the press in the Soviet republics. It is based on the principle of the Leninist-Stalinist national policy of giving every nationality an opportunity to cultivate its own culture, "national in form, Socialist in content"—in sharp contrast to the tsarist policy which made Russia a "prison of peoples." Here are significant figures:

	1913	1938
RUSSIAN FEDERATIVE S.S.R.		
Papers in all languages except Russian	35	419
Papers in all languages	569	5,761
UKRAINIAN S.S.R.		
Papers in all languages except Russian	13	950
Papers in all languages	172	1,570
TAJIK S.S.R.		
Papers in all languages except Russian	0	72
Papers in all languages	0	56
GEORGIAN S.S.R.		
Papers in all languages except Russian	25	103
Papers in all languages	51	134

By 1923 newspaper circulation had reached the pre-war level, and from then on the curve rose sharply. Two years later more than 1,120 newspapers were appearing, their circulation totaling eight million copies daily.

It was the Five-Year Plans, however, which brought the great increases. By the end of the First Five-Year Plan the number of papers had soared to 7,536, with a total circulation of 35.5 million. By comparison with 1928, the year of the beginning of the Plan, the newspaper network had grown more than six times over and circulation more than four times.

In 1938 there were ten times as many newspapers as in 1913. Their circulation was fourteen times the circulation of papers in 1913.

Most of the categories of Soviet newspapers were unknown in tsarist Russia: university papers, factory papers, village papers, Arctic papers . . . there is even a chess and checkers paper and publications for semi-literate readers.

An interesting category is that of the youth papers. There are 95 Young Communist League papers (circulation 2,082,000) and 48 Young Pioneer papers (2,618,000).

Each of the children's papers receives from 150 to 200 letters a day from readers. Forty thousand children are permanent contributors to their own children's papers. These newspapers carry news of the world, written very simply, of course, articles, pictures, games and so on, but one does not feel an attempt to "play

[1] V. M. Molotov, Theses of Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

down" to their readers. Their staffs are composed of youngsters, too. The questions of children's conduct, their relations to their elders and to each other—the "ethical" problems of youth—form a major part of the content of these papers. They make fascinating reading. One of them, *Pioneer Pravda,* has a circulation of 455,000.

What is the character of the Soviet newspaper's contents?

First of all, one must point to the comparatively small proportion of "news" in the American sense of the word. Sensation is missing, crime is confined to one or two paragraphs a day, personals, scandal are barred.

When one speaks of the contents of the Soviet paper and the structure of the newspaper office one must constantly bear in mind the aims and approach of the Soviet paper. It is a fighter, a crusader and an educator. It strives, not to give the reader entertainment or empty facts, but to give him a rounded picture of the world and to stir him to action.

Characteristic is the predominance of articles, feuilletons, sketches. Foreign news, for instance, is told in short, highly condensed telegrams, enlarged upon in analytical articles. The "propaganda" material—educational articles on questions of political theory—takes a large part of the paper. Anniversary dates call for full pages—for instance, on the anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko, the great Ukrainian poet of the last century. The biggest item in 1938 in *Pravda* was a textbook, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)* which ran for days, full pages at a time. Truly, it has been said that one can receive a liberal education by reading the Soviet press. Not for nothing do Soviet people consider it a *sine qua non* of the cultured man to read a newspaper. The number of newspapers subscribed to by members of a collective farm is always mentioned in any discussion of culture—it is considered a barometer of education and growth and is pointed to with justified pride in a country where three quarters of the population was illiterate not so many years ago.

The newspaper is meant to be studied, and it is. Often one sees photos of study circles—not only in the collective farms!—reading and discussing material in the press. Speeches of Communist Party and Government leaders, of Foreign Office officials, and Government decrees, are published in full. Not only does the Government thus "render account" to the people through the press, but it is also providing readers an education in current events.

The conditions under which the Soviet press is read and its educational aims explain much that may seem strange to a foreign eye—the absence of "leads" on news stories, the lengthy, solid articles by authorities, the frequent "follow-up" or "second-day" news stories which instead of repeating the previous day's developments refer the reader to "No. so-and-so of our paper."

Like his reader, the Soviet newspaperman is a student, too. He studies at study circles in his office—the staff which did not have study circles in current events, history, and the technique of their craft would not be a Soviet staff. He studies at his clubs, too.

A Press Club is found in every important center. The Moscow Press Club (The Journalist's House) occupies a three-storey building which was once a private mansion, has its own library, reading room, cinema hall, auditorium for previews, restaurant, game rooms, etc. It conducts study circles in English, German, French and Spanish, stenography, photography, history of the Communist Party, the art of making up the paper; it has dancing classes, a glee club and other amateur art circles. Members have at their command tennis courts, swimming pools, winter sports, riding, motoring and shooting facilities. Their children are invited to parties, puppet theaters, concerts and meetings with children's writers. For the adults there are concerts, theater performances, film previews, meetings with noted men, lectures on the press, on art, on music, on the theater, on science, on history, on current events and world politics, art exhibitions, conferences on problems of their craft. Membership fees are absurdly low. The clubs are subsidized by the trade unions.

It's "the cultured life," as our Russian friends put it.

LEO GRULIOW

ALEXANDER KORNEICHUK

Frost hung heavy over old Kiev that January morning and a cold wind swept down the streets and sidewalks, swirling the newly-fallen snow. Alexander Korneichuk, a student at a factory school and a Young Communist League member, had risen very early and was hurrying to a news-stand. But a few minutes more and he would see the newspaper with his first attempts at writing. The budding author could scarcely restrain his excitement. His first published ideas, the impassioned words of a Young Communist, would be read by thousands.

That was a day never to be forgotten. In moments like those one recalls the most important and most precious things in life. Alexander could see again his native village of Khristinovka and the district of Zvenigorod, the shady gardens, the railway depot where his father had always worked. Even in his childhood Alexander knew of the difficult life of the people. For long years Zvenigorod, along with the entire Ukraine and all the working people of tsarist Russia, had suffered hunger, cold and poverty. Overbearing Polish and Ukrainian nobles then ruled the lands of Zvenigorod.

Evenings little Alexander would sit listening to the talk of the grown-ups and, noting their troubles, would try to understand everything in his own childish way. One evening the members of the local revolutionary committee gathered at the home of Alexander's father, an engine-driver at the Khristinovka depot.

"We must not allow the locomotives out of the depot," said his father. "We must unite our forces against the armies of occupation."

An echelon of German interventionists had been quartered at the station for several days. The Germans were scouring the neighboring villages, plundering, burning and killing, hauling off cart loads of stolen grain and driving away stolen cattle. Alexander witnessed all this and burned with rage. It would bring tears of shame to his eyes and he would clench his little fists, still too small to hold a rifle.

Not one locomotive left the Khristinovka depot. The engines stood there cold and lifeless. The railwaymen refused to transport the marauders.

Those were unforgettable days. The Ukrainian workers and peasants, supported by their Russian brothers, waged a war of liberation against the armies of occupation.

Today when the hero's mother in Korneichuk's play *Platon Krechet* tells her son how his father gave his life for his country, the audience is deeply stirred with gratitude to the loyal son of the working people.

By 1923 Alexander Korneichuk had developed excellently. Besides his work on a road gang he studied in school. That year he joined the Young Communist League

and, active and energetic by nature, he threw himself heart and soul into the work of the organization. It was not long before the district Y.C.L. committee sent him with other Young Communist League members to Kiev to study.

There his first creative work took shape. And we find that every step in his literary career was closely interwoven with the life of the Soviet Union, the League, its active members and outstanding young men and women.

While gathering the material for his new book, *The Loss of the Squadron*, based on an incident in the history of the Black Sea Fleet, Korneichuk visited the fleet and talked with his heroes-to-be.

Watching Korneichuk at Y.C.L. and Communist Party meetings, at the Union of Soviet Writers, at literary gatherings, one is impressed by his inveterate enthusiam, energy and good spirits. He is a young man both tireless and passionately fond of work.

The people of Zvenigorod elected Korneichuk to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., the Tulchinsky District voted the Young Communist dramatist to the Supreme Soviet of the Socialist Ukraine, at whose first session he was elected vice-chairman. The Young Communist League develops its members into fine political leaders, devoted to the cause of the working people.

In his play *Truth* Korneichuk has given a stirring portrayal of V. I. Lenin, the great leader of Communism. One of the heroes in the play, Kuzma Ryzhov, a worker at the Baltic Plant, introduces Taras Golot, a poor Ukrainian peasant, to Lenin. Before the departure of his Red Guard detachment for the front, Taras asks Lenin to accept him into the Bolshevik Party and Lenin agrees to recommend him.

In all his writings Korneichuk raised and presented solutions to problems of vital interest to the people of the Soviet Union. His dramas deal with the burning questions of the day from the point of view of the Communist Party, of which he is a member.

His latest play, *Bogdan Khmelnitsky*, is based on the popular uprising in the Ukraine led in 1648 against the Polish nobility, who as a result were expelled from the country. Korneichuk has called this play "a tragedy of the people." Its contents and character could not be better defined. This is no biographical drama about Bogdan Khmelnitsky, but a drama of the people who created their leader. The people, strong, freedom-loving, devoted to their fatherland and despising their enemies, are the chief characters. It was a difficult and important task which the young dramatist set himself and carried out successfully. In this drama Korneichuk has expressed the sentiments of the Ukrainian people of those days, and their sentiments today:

"That's how the working people of the Ukraine nearly three centuries ago smashed the arrogant Polish nobility. Incomparably superior in stamina, organization, passion and determination, aided by the Russian workers and peasants, they routed the Polish, German and other interventionists during the Civil War. That great struggle for liberation was led by Lenin and Stalin. And if today in the Stalinist era, when the peoples of the Soviet Union have acquired the greatest happiness in the world, Socialism—if today the fascist aggressors decide to encroach upon the happy life of the victorious Ukrainian people, the hangmen will suffer defeat and complete annihilation."

VLADIMIR TORIN

"Mikhailovskoye," from an old engraving

At Pushkin's Village

I do not remember which of the poets it was that said: "Poetry is everywhere, even in the grass. One needs but to stoop to pick it up."

It was early morning. A fine drizzle was falling as the cart trundled into an ancient pine forest. Something gleamed white amid the grass bordering the roadway. I jumped from the cart, bent down and discerned a small wooden tablet overgrown with convolvulus. There was some black lettering on it. I moved aside the moist stalks of the clinging flowers and read the almost illegible words: "Oft through the years under your friendly shadow, Mikhailovskoye[1] woods, I appeared."

"What is this?" I asked the driver.

"Mikhailovskoye," he smiled. "This is where Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin's land begins. You'll find such signposts all over the place."

And sure enough I subsequently ran across similar little tablets in the most unexpected places—in the uncut grasses of meadows above Sorotya, on the sandy slopes *en route* from Mikhailovskoye to Trigorskoye, on the shores of the little sparkling lakes of Malents and Petrovskoye—everywhere, from out the grass, the heather, the dried sprigs of wild strawberries, sounded the simple words of Pushkin.

I have traveled up and down the country, have seen many remarkable places, but none that possessed the startling lyrical power of Mikhailovskoye. All was deserted and quiet here. Clouds floated tranquilly overhead, casting soft, silent shadows over the green swards, the lakes and the pathways of this century-old park, the majestic silence broken only by the humming of the bees.

[1] Mikhailovskoye—the lands which belonged to the Pushkin family.

The bees gathered honey in the tall avenue of lime trees under whose spreading branches Pushkin used to meet Anna Kern.[1] The lime-trees had already flowered. On a bench in the avenue a little old lady with a pleasant face and a book on her lap might often be seen. She wore an antique turquoise brooch pinned to the throat of her blouse. The old lady was reading *Cities and Years*, by Konstantin Fedin. This was Anna Kern's granddaughter—Aglaya Pyzhevskaya, formerly a provincial dramatic actress.

She remembered her grandmother and could be persuaded to talk about her sometimes, though very reluctantly, for she had cherished no affection for her.

I met Kern's granddaughter on the sandy slopes where three famous pine trees once grew. They are no longer there. Two were struck down by lightning before the Revolution and the third was felled under cover of night by a pilfering miller from Zimari village.

The attendants of the Pushkin preserves resolved to plant three new young pines in place of the old. But it was no easy task to find the exact spot where they had grown, for not even the stumps remained. And so all the aged collective farmers were consulted and the original site of the three pines was finally located.

The old lady told me, laughing a little at herself, that she had grown so accustomed to these Pushkin grounds that she could not tear herself away to return to Leningrad, as she ought to have done long since. In Leningrad she was in charge of a small library. She lived alone, having no close kin.

"No, no," she said. "You won't be able to dissuade me. I shall certainly come here to die. This spot has bewitched me so that I do not want to live anywhere else. Every day I invent new excuses to delay my departure. Now I am trudging from village to village, recording everything the old people remember about Pushkin. Unfortunately, they are unconscionable liars, these old people."

The Kern granddaughter was indefatigable. She spoke willingly about her past life, about the famous provincial theatrical producers and the besotted tragedians, before the Revolution. Finally, she told me about her innumerable love affairs.

"You see me now as a bustling old woman," she said. "But I was once a gay and beautiful woman. I might leave some very interesting memoirs behind me, but I cannot get around to writing them. After I have recorded the stories of the old villagers I shall have to prepare for the summer festival."

Every year on Pushkin's birthday a summer festival is held in Mikhailovskoye. Hundreds of collective farm carts, gaily decorated with ribbons and bells, meet on the meadow beyond Sorotya, opposite Pushkin Park. On that day women take their old-fashioned sarafans out of musty wooden chests and the men don the old-style striped trousers and pancake hats. Enfeebled old men and women watch the festival from seats in the carts. The festival tradition has existed for a number of years. The holiday is known throughout the neighborhood as "mask day," a corruption of the word "masquerade."

Bonfires are lighted on the meadows, the peasants sing in chorus, and prizes are awarded to the best ploughers and cattle-herds, spinners and gardeners. Old songs and new ditties are sung:

Our lakes and pines
Are very fair.
We tend Mikhailovskoye
With loving care.

The local collective farmers pride themselves on being Pushkin's countrymen and tend the preserves as zealously as their own fields and gardens.

I lived in Voronichy in the house of Nikolai, a caretaker in the Trigorskoye Park. His wife grumbled all day long as she went about her household chores—what was the good of a husband who spent day and night in that damned park, running home for an hour or two, only to take a bite of food—and even then he would send out his old father-in-law or some of the boys to watch over the park?

One day Nikolai came home for tea. Scarcely had he removed his cap than his irate wife stormed into the room.

"Get back to the park, you lout!" she screamed. "I was rinsing out the clothes by the river and saw one of those rascals from Leningrad sneaking into the park. You'd better go and see that everything's all right!"

"What harm could he do?" I asked timidly.

Nikolai caught up his double-barreled gun and dashed out of the door.

"You never can tell," he replied from the threshold, "before you know where you are, another branch will be broken."

But all ended well. The "rascal" proved to be none other than Nathan Altman, the artist, and Nikolai's fears were allayed.

[1] Anna Petrovna Kern, niece of the landowner Osipov with whose family the Pushkins were on friendly terms. The Osipovs were the former owners of Trigorskoye. Pushkin dedicated one of his best known lyrics to Anna Kern.

There are three vast parks in the Pushkin preserves; the Mikhailovskoye, Trigorskoye and Petrovskoye, and all of them differ from one another as greatly as did their former owners.

The Trigorskoye park is flooded with sunshine. One gains this impression even on cloudy days. The light radiates from its fresh green grass, the leaves of lime-trees, over the steep inclines and on the "Eugene Onegin" bench. Because of these bright splotches of sunshine the depth of the park, which is submerged in a blue summer haze, seems mysterious and unreal.

This park is an ideal spot for family picnics, friendly chats, for dances under the dark spreading foliage, for girlish laughter and jocular declarations of love. It is full of Pushkin and Yazykov[1].

The Mikhailovskoye park is a hermit's retreat. It is not made for merriment. Here the landscape is conducive to solitude and meditation. The park is solemn with its venerable firs; it is tall, silent, merging imperceptibly into forests that are just as ancient, majestic and deserted as itself. But on the edge of the park, the twilight that reigns eternally under the arches of the old trees suddenly gives way to a smiling field overgrown with bright-eyed forget-me-nots, as fresh as though they had just been bathed in gentle rain, and a pond in whose tranquil water tadpoles swarm.

But Mikhailovskoye's chief charm is the cliff over Sorotya and the little cottage that once belonged to Arina Rodionovna, Pushkin's famous nurse—it is the only house of the Pushkin epoch that has survived the years.

The cottage is so touchingly small that one almost fears to climb its delapidated porch, but from the cliff over Sorotya one is afforded a breath-taking view of two azure lakes, wooded hills and the innocent blue sky with its slumberous clouds.

In the Petrovskoye park stood the home of Pushkin's grandfather, the gloomy, taciturn Hannibal. Petrovskoye Park is clearly visible from Mikhailovskoye. It is black and damp. Horses graze among the burdock. Nettles choke the flowers and the evening air is loud with the croaking of frogs. Everything here is heavy with mould and moss, and hoarse-voiced jackdaws nest in the dark crests of the trees.

I recall the woods, lakes, parks and sky—all that remains of Pushkin's time. Nature here has been untouched by human hand and is jealously guarded. When it was found necessary to install electricity in the preserves, the wires were laid underground to avoid erecting poles that would have broken the enchantment of these deserted old-world spots.

There was an old ramshackle wooden church in Voronichy. Everyone called it the "little old church." And indeed no other name was more fitting for this frowsy old building, whose roof, covered with a thick layer of yellow fungi, was scarcely visible through a thicket of elder bushes surrounded by dark lime trees. Here in this church Pushkin held a memorial service for Byron.

The porch of the church was littered with tarry pine shavings. A large new school was being built alongside. Some village urchins were playing in the pine shavings, reciting Pushkin's *Snowstorm* and telling each other in awed whispers that the wedding described in the tale took place in this very church.

Only once during my stay in Voronichy did I see the old, hunched priest in his shabby straw hat lean his fishing rods against a tree and open the massive rusty lock on the church door. That day an old centenarian had died in Voronichy and there was to be a funeral service for him. After the service the priest took his rods and shuffled off toward Sorotya to fish for minnows.

The carpenters paused in their sawing and hammering to gaze after him as he went.

"The clergy have come down in the world," said one. "In Alexander Sergeyevich's time the priest in these parts was a regular general around the place. A vicious hierach. No wonder Alexander Sergeyevich nicknamed the priest Old Crab. And now look at this fellow, trailing his straw hat through the grass."

"Aye, and what has happened to their power?" muttered another. "Where are all their 'silks and velvets' now?"

The carpenters wiped their perspiring brows and resumed their hammering, and again a shower of fresh pungent shavings rained down upon the urchins.

Once or twice during my walks in the Trigorskoye Park I had encountered a morose man. He strolled along the echoing paths, pausing now and then among the bushes to subject the leaves to a careful scrutiny. Sometimes he would clip off a stalk of flowering grass and study it through a small magnifying glass.

One day while on a ramble near the ruins of the Osipov mansion beside the pond I was caught in a heavy downpour of soft summer rain. I took shelter under a venerable lime tree and was presently joined by the morose man. We started

[1] N. Yazykov, a prominent Russian poet and personal friend of Pushkin.

to talk and I learned that he was the geography teacher in the Cherepovets school. Laughingly and haltingly he told me why he was so attached to Mikhailovskoye.

"My father was a bookkeeper in a Vologda hospital," he said. "He was a miserable old chap on the whole, a drunkard and braggart. Even in the days of our greatest poverty he would sport starched cuffs and boast of his origin, for he was a Russian Pole of the Vishnevetsky family. He used to beat me unmercifully when in his cups.

"There were six of us. We all lived in one room, in filth and squalor and amid constant quarreling and abuse. Not a very pleasant childhood, on the whole.

"When my father was drunk he used to read Pushkin's poems and weep aloud. The tears would flow onto his starched cuffs and he would claw at them, crying that Pushkin was the only ray of sunshine in the life of such accursed paupers as ourselves.

"He never remembered a single Pushkin poem from start to finish. He would start to recite, but never finished, and this irritated me beyond words, although I was no more than eight years old and could barely read printed letters. I resolved to read Pushkin's poems from beginning to end and I made a trip to the city library. I stood for a long time outside the door until the librarian called me in and asked me what I wanted.

" 'Pushkin,' I said gruffly.

" 'You want his fairy tales?' she asked.

" 'No, not fairy tales, Pushkin,' I repeated doggedly.

"She handed me a thick volume. I took it into a corner by the window, opened it and burst into tears. I cried because on opening the book I found I could not read it, and that the wonderful world of enchantment that lay behind these lines was closed to me. At that time, from my drunken father's paroxysms of poetry, I had learned only two lines of Pushkin's verses:

I see a distant shore beyond,
A magic land of daylight,

but this was enough for me to envision a better, brighter life than I had known.

"Imagine a man who has spent many, many years in solitary confinement. At last someone arranges his escape, the keys of the prison gates are thrust into his hands, he staggers to the gates beyond which is freedom, people, woods and rivers and all of a sudden he realizes that he does not know how to unlock the door. He is within a few inches of the great bustling world. He can hear it distinctly behind the heavy sheet iron of the gates, but the stupid secret of the lock is unknown to him. He hears the hue and cry behind him and knows that he will be caught any moment and clapped back into his cell where everything—the filthy window under the ceiling, the stench of rats and the blank despair—will close in on him to the end of his days. That is approximately how I felt as I sat there over the volume of Pushkin. The librarian noticed my tears, came over to me and said:

" 'What's the matter, little boy? Why are you crying? Don't you see you're holding the book upside down?'

"She laughed and I ran out of the room. From that day on I loved Pushkin. I have visited Mikhailovskoye regularly for the past three years."

On a tall hill a few kilometers from Mikhailovskoye stands the Svyatogorsk Monastery under whose walls Pushkin lies buried. The village of Pushkin Hills lies huddled around the monastery.

One has to pass through deserted monastery courtyards and climb a stone stairway to reach Pushkin's grave. The steps lead to the top of the hill, to the decayed walls of the ancient church, their plaster peeling.

Under these walls, at the top of a steep incline, in the shadows of old lime trees Pushkin's grave nestles in the earth beneath a carpet of yellowed leaves.

There is the brief inscription: "Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin"; emptiness and stillness, broken by the distant clatter of cartwheels on the road below, and the clouds hanging pensively in the low sky—and that is all. Here is the end of a splendid, stirring and brilliant life, here is the grave known to all mankind, here is that "pleasant boundary" of which Pushkin spoke. There is an odor of weeds, bark and the ripe scent of summer in the air.

And here as you stand by this simple grave, listening to the hoarse crowing of roosters from the village beyond, you perceive with sudden clarity that Pushkin was indeed our first people's poet. He is buried in the rough sandy soil out of which grow flax and nettles, in the heart of the people's land, and from his grave mound you can see the dark forests of Mikhailovskoye and hear the murmur of distant thunder rumbling over the fields.

KONSTANTIN PAUSTOVSKY

VERA INBER

Journey Diary

(Excerpt)

We go to Bagdadi — Mayakovsky's birthplace

No grave can hold the familiar voice interred.
Still, in the Polytechnical Museum,
As on the arena of Rome's Coliseum,
A lion's roar of memories is heard.
The pagan echo still comes tumbling out:
The rumble of applause, the laughing shout.

Vladimir Mayakovsky, yet your voice
(Time has no hush to make such voices mute)
Out of the urn of death speaks resolute.
Our schoolboys, in declaiming you, rejoice—
Our leaders too. And Mayakovsky's line,
Like Pushkin's, breasts the years with victor sign.

Translated by Jack Lindsay

He Knew Sholom Aleichem

"Here's Novik the cobbler! He knew Sholom Aleichem. He can tell you all about him."

My young guide pointed a tanned arm at a little old man who had just emerged from a garden immersed in a rosy haze of blossoming apple trees.

The old man approached me slowly, and asked in a pleasant, hollow voice:

"Do you wish to see me?"

"Yes."

"Let's go into the cottage."

We walked into a bright, spacious room. There was a strong smell of leather. An old-fashioned pot-bellied samovar stood proudly on the tall sideboard. On the walls hung portraits of the leaders of the Communist Party and the Government, and old, faded snapshots.

"Sit down," the old man said in a friendly tone.

I told him why I had come to the village.

"Are you a writer?" he asked.

"No, a painter."

"A painter? You are the first one. All the others who came to see me were writers. So you want me to tell you something about Sholom Aleichem? Well, I've already told everything. . . ."

He sighed, shook his head and added:

"When I begin to think about Sholom Aleichem, I forget that I am seventy-four. I feel as if large wings, wings of youth, were sprouting on my bent back."

He fished his tobacco pouch out of his pocket, rolled a thick cigarette and lit it. I began to scrutinize the old fellow. A small expressive head set proudly on a thin, sinewy neck; deep wrinkles, and eyes that gave off a happy golden glow. He reminded me, somehow, of Rembrandt's Jews.

"You go on speaking and I'll sketch you," I proposed.

"I remember," he began, squinting as if before him stood a bright picture of the past which dazzled the eyes, "I remember him very well as a boy. He was the most mischievous youngster I ever saw. I remember his countless fooleries, for which both he and we, his playmates, were punished. Especially did he like to mock at the rich and religious Jews. He would pull their coat-tails and play all sorts of practical jokes on them. We liked him very much; he was our leader."

A minute of silence, and the old man continued:

"Sholom Aleichem's father, you know, was not of the whining kind. He was a wide-awake man. He used to say that if a man was unlucky on one side of the street, he should try the other side. When business became bad he gave up his wine cellar and started an inn. Sholom Aleichem drew a rich store of impressions and observations from both the inn and

The house in Pereyaslavl where Sholom Aleichem lived *Drawing by A. Nurenberg*

wine cellar. Peasants, landlords, officials and including, of course, Jews, used to put up at the inn. Sholom Aleichem helped his father. Many a time did I see him in the yard among the peasant horses and carts and carriages.

"At that time he was beginning to write short plays and short stories. The traveling small-town Jews were his first readers. Well, they laughed at them but most likely were not overjoyed. Then his father's business again began to get bad. You know, when failure takes a liking to you she hangs on for a long time. Sholom Aleichem's parents were forced to give up the inn and leave our little town. For a long time we did not hear of Sholom Aleichem. Then we learned that he was a student, in Kiev."

His tale over, Novik rose, looked at my drawing and, smiling, added:

"What do you find so remarkable in me? I'm not a famous writer. I'm only a simple cobbler. Ah, I understand! Now a good cobbler is respected no less than a good writer."

In the evening he asked me if I wanted to draw the house in which the famous writer was born. We strolled down the quiet dusty village streets lined with enormous limes. Novik pointed out the house, a simple white structure with carved brown shutters. A sturdy old tree stood by the house, its heavy branches leaning on the roof and touching the walls.

"We residents of Pereyaslavl love and respect our famous fellow-villager," Novik said. "I expect to see the day when a fine monument to Sholom Aleichem will be erected on our main street."

Three months passed.

The above sketch and my drawing of Sholom Aleichem's friend was published in a Moscow magazine, *The Spark, (Ogonyok)*. I became engrossed in work in Moscow, and time covered the quiet Ukrainian town and the remarkable old Novik with a romantic tinge. Recollections of my visit to the town dimmed.

Then—not long ago—I received a letter which moved me deeply. Here it is:

"Greetings, my dear comrade,

"I'm very glad you published your article on Sholom Aleichem's home town in *The Spark*. But you've involved me in a lot of work. Newspaper correspondents come to me from Kiev, Odessa and Nikolayev to ask me for material on Sholom Aleichem. I receive letters from all over the country. I have no time to think about myself or my cobbling; I do nothing all day long, but write and talk to interviewers and people seeking material on our great writer. It seems I've become a lecturer and writer!

"March 2 is the date of the big celebration of the eightieth anniversary of our Sholom Aleichem's birth. We're going to have a meeting to mark the date. Guests from all the republics of the Soviet Union are coming. We are opening a Sholom Aleichem Museum and a library in his honor, and in the spring a monument to him will be erected. If you are interested, please come March 2. With regards,

M. Novik

"Your *Spark* has started a whole fire."

AMSHEI NURENBERG

JAMBOUL, A BARD OF THE STEPPE

The Negro sang in English—the old Negro spiritual *Go Down, Moses.* "Let my people go"—so Moses had pleaded with the Egyptian pharoah. The centuries of sorrow and suffering endured by the Negro people is stored up in the lament of this song. The Negro did not sing—he wept.

Jamboul sat on a divan, wearing his round hat of marten with the blue top and his white silk gown. On his chest shone two Orders. Young students, men and women of thirty-two different nationalities, surrounded the venerable Kazakh bard. His face is the wise, calm face of a man of ninety-three. He listened uninterruptedly to the singer, he was all attention and understanding. It seemed as if the words of a strange tongue could not hinder his comprehension of the meaning of the song.

Later he said to us: "How sadly the black man sang! He was singing of his people, wasn't he?"

Beyond the Volga, from the Caspian to China, from the spurs of the Pamirs to Siberia, lies a vast level plain. The splendid Kazakh steppe stretches for thousands of kilometers, flanked by the luxuriant alpine meadows of the Altais, intersected by the abundant waters of the Irtysh and dozens of other rivers. It was here in this steppe—burning hot at noon and cold by evening—where the sun unexpectedly flashes from the mirror-like surfaces of lakes and the very air is filled with the bitter aroma of wild grass, that Kazakh song was born hundreds of years ago.

The Kazakh poem or song is composed as the bard intones it for his listeners. From generation to generation these talented people keep alive the tradition of the *akyns*—improvising bards.

From ancient times the Kazakh people have been accustomed to expressing themselves in poetic language. There is a song for every occasion in life from the cradle to the grave.

The doors of life are opened to thee—by a song.
And the embraces of earth are opened to thee—by a song.

Abai Kunanbayev

Popular holidays were always the occasion for unique singers' contests, called *aitysu*. At these tournaments the only weapons were songs, improvised on the spot, songs full of meaning, profound sensibility, dead-

ly irony or flashing wit. The real reward of the victor was not in the gifts bestowed by the *khan* but in the plaudits of the people.

Song was so integral a part of the life of the Kazakh people that at these holidays ordinary young men and women took part along with the *akyns* and other bards in singing improvised verses. However, in this song contest the requirements made upon the participants were far from child's play. For example, a horseman—not a professional *akyn*—had to sing twenty-four couplets. The first six were to celebrate a horseman chosen by the "*khan*" of the festival, and the girl he loved. The next three must contain a compliment to a neighbor of the fair sex. Three couplets must be devoted to the qualities of things, three to the qualities of cattle, three to obviously fantastic themes. Five couplets were to sing the praises of the singer's beloved and the last might be on any theme, but so constructed that it would preserve its meaning if sung backward.

A people which exacted such high requirements from participants in a contest of song naturally demanded a very high order of mastery from those to whom it accorded the title of *akyn*. One can understand, therefore, why throughout the ages the Kazakh folk poet was a talented improviser.

Jamboul is truly an unexampled phenomenon in the history of literature.

It was seventy-six years ago that he sang his first song as an *akyn*. The first few years he entered into competitions, or *aitysu*, with none but the lesser-known *akyns*; when he met famous bards he was content to listen to them, storing up experience and knowledge.

But it was not these meetings with renowned bards that taught him his songs, it was life itself, the life of the Kazakh nomads. "The mother of the road is the horse's hoof and the mother of the word is the ear," runs the proverb. And Jamboul listened to what was being said among the people.

But of what could the Kazakh people speak? The time was in the 'sixties of the past century; the last uprising of the Kazakhs had been crushed ten years previously by tsarism. The nomad camps groaned and the steppe was filled with wailing, the mighty wailing of a people. To their own masters, the native beys, had been added another and more cruel master in the person of tsarist officials and merchants.

Weeping and wailing were all that Jamboul could hear in the *auls*, or native villages, and he seized upon this sorrow of his people.

For gifts of robes and sheep, fawning *akyns* sang the praises of the beys. But their songs died under the white hangings of the rich tents where they were uttered, and the people did not take up these affected verses, for "the tail of a lie is no longer than the palm of one's hand."

Jamboul's songs flew far and wide over the far-flung steppes. Frequently Jamboul, coming to an *aul* he had never seen, found his songs already being sung there; they had crossed the steppe faster then he could urge his lean and feeble horse.

The fame of Jamboul spread throughout the steppe. At singing contests, where the people were the judges, Jamboul conquered his rivals one after the other: the famous *akyn* Shashaubaya, the invincible Sar-Yrys, the gifted Sa-Basa; and at last in a contest for supremacy of the whole steppe he met the unconquerable Kulmagambet.

Kulmagambet sang a splendid, sonorous paean to the beys, the district bailiffs and the mullahs who were present at the contest. He praised their wisdom, generosity and

justice. Jamboul in answer sang of the same people, but his was not a song, rather an angry indictment. He mocked them as only an *akyn* knows how to mock at one of these popular singing contests; he flayed them with his verses as with a braided cattle whip. He pounced upon them as a hawk upon partridges. "A club beats the body, but a word penetrates to the bone," runs the proverb. The people would not allow Kulmagambet to sing his answering song, and Jamboul became the leading *akyn* of the steppe.

This victory secured Jamboul's fame, which shone over the steppe like the morning star, visible from afar. And for forty years Jamboul traveled the steppe on his gaunt nag.

But a life of fifty-five years of poverty at last undermined his strength and Jamboul fell silent. It seemed that his talent had been crushed forever under the heavy oppression of tsarist Russia.

In those same years the second great giant of Kazakh poetry, Jamboul's contemporary, Abai Kunanbayev, was also silenced forever. Jamboul had brought the art of oral poetry to great heights; Abai laid the foundations of Kazakh written poetry.

At the time of Abai's death and Jamboul's silence (the beginning of our century) Kazakh poetry, deprived of these two giants who, though so different, were equally devoted to the interests of the people, fell under the influence of bourgeois nationalist bards.

But the inextinguishable poetic genius of the Kazakh people again flared up during the uprising of 1916. Again, as they had during the period of uprisings at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the *akyns* with their songs urged their people into battle against the oppressors, and again oral literature proved its organic ties of loyalty to the people. The uprisings continued until the Revolution and the songs of the people's *akyns* crossed swords with written nationalist literature, just as the pikes of Amangeldy's partisan detachments, uniting with the Bolsheviks, crossed with the bayonets of the bourgeois nationalists, who had merged with Kolchak's whiteguard armies.

The Red Army, flying the banners of the proletarian revolution, came from the west to help the defenders of the Kazakh steppes. The names of Lenin, Stalin, Frunze, Chapayev, Voroshilov, Amangeldy, Zhalbyr and Bek Bolat figured in the songs of the *akyns* along with those of the legendary heroes of the Kazakh people.

And the first voice to greet the Revolution from the depths of the steppe, seared as it was by the war and devastated by the whiteguard bands, was the unexpectedly rejuvenated voice of seventy year old Jamboul. What took place has no parallel in the history of literature: a poet who had been silent for fifteen years, an old, old man worn out by a long life of poverty, again captivated the steppe with his golden songs, songs such as no one ever dreamed would again be sung by him. Moreover, for the two decades following, in the late evening of life, he has not ceased to sing his songs, deeply inspired, deeply truthful, deeply moving.

This seems like a miracle.

And miracle it is—the miracle of the liberation of his people from the slavery of a thousand years. The miracle which is the life-giving and creative essence of the proletarian revolution. The miracle which lies in the mighty power of the millions of Jamboul's liberated brothers; it was to these people to whom forty years ago he sang of the fairyland of Zhidely Baisyn, sought by the legendary hero Utegen, wher

Surcease from sorrow and pain,
O Kazakhs, O my people so dear;
From oppression freed and fear,
You'll know happiness, long sought in vain.

A new instance of the amazing creative powers of this venerable *akyn* was manifested when he went to Tbilisi for the jubilee in honor of Shot'ha Rust'hveli, author of Georgia's classic epic. In somewhat less than a month Jamboul composed sixteen songs, each of some hundred verses, making a whole book of fine poems that in vivid images record his journey to the Caucasus step by step. In Makhach Kala, capital of Daghestan, Jamboul sang a *Farewell Song* to the late Suleiman Stalsky, another people's bard; it contains the following lines, revealing Jamboul's sense of pride at being a poet:

Decay and oblivion dare not touch us,
In the hearts of each new generation we'll live again.
And deathless, they'll say, are Kazakh and Lesghin,
For deathless the people's great cause that they sing.

At Gori, in the little house where Stalin was born, Jamboul for the first time in his life was unable to immediately compose a song on what he saw. The emotion which seized him was so profound that he reached out to the clay wall for support. He was given a chair.

Sinking into it, he sat for a long time in profound silence, absorbing the little house so like the *kstau*, the poor little winter habitation with its clay walls, where he himself had spent his childhood and youth. It was only when he had returned to Tbilisi that Jamboul sang his beautiful song of Stalin's homeland.

Someone has said that true poetry cannot be paraphrased in prose, that this is the test of poetry. Such are Jamboul's songs. The poet's free play of fancy employs elusive and subtle associations, passing from one theme to another by almost musical modulations. This marvelous harmony of thought is dampened and dulled in the paraphrasing: the thought has been embodied in verse precisely because verse alone can encompass the play of imagery which the poet needs to express his thought.

Like the gleaming snow-white mountain peaks which are visible from every remote corner of the steppe, two mighty themes stand out above the broad plain of Jamboul's poetry—the fatherland and Stalin.

Stalin is present in all Jamboul's songs just as he is present in every event of Soviet life. As the thoughts and feelings of every son of the Soviet people, whether in joy or sorrow, turn first of all to Stalin, so every line in Jamboul's songs is directed to Stalin, to the great heart of the world, the great mind of humanity.

In this lies Jamboul's greatest service. To compose so great a wealth of highly poetic songs which immortalize for the centuries the living spirit of our epoch, and which touch the reader no matter how often re-read, transmit to posterity the vital figure of the greatest man of this epoch—this is the task which Jamboul alone has succeeded in accomplishing.

Jamboul's songs are our own thoughts and feelings cast in the lofty poetic mold of the Kazakh songpoem. In this marvelous literary form, which has stood the test of centuries, our thoughts will travel on and on through the ages. And fortunate the poet or writer whose works shall live as long as Jamboul's poetry which many centuries hence will still be transmitting to our posterity the living spirit of our epoch, the great epoch of the beginning of Communism.

LEONID SOBOLEV

Pushkin, Gorky, Mayakovsky in Moscow Museums

Pushkin Museum, Moscow

The traveler who arrives in Moscow from Western Europe finds himself on Gorky Street, one of the busiest thoroughfares of the capital. The Byelorussian Station stands at the source of this noisy river of asphalt, over whose smooth shining surface scuttle scores of taxis maneuvering around the ponderous bulks of trolleybuses and autobuses.

With a graceful bend the street slopes sharply downward toward the Red Square, into which it pours through two broad channels separated by an old-fashioned red brick structure which houses an exhibition dedicated to the memory of Alexander Pushkin.

Opened in February, 1937, this exhibition was part of the nation-wide commemoration of the poet's death. How really extensive and far-reaching was this Pushkin festival may be judged from the following. The Pushkin days found me in the Far North beyond the Arctic Circle. Our icebreaker, the *Sadko*, famed for its numerous high latitude expeditions, was busy hunting Greenland seals in the ice fields of the White Sea. I can remember an evening when the sailors and hunters who dwelt along the shores of the White Sea crowded into our little wardroom to talk about the poet who had been killed in a duel exactly a hundred years before.

What, one might think, could these people of stern and dangerous calling, these hunters, stokers and steersmen, know of Pushkin and his poetry? What could his gentle muse convey to these people who daily expose their leathery faces to the biting Arctic winds, who battle with the elements in a land shunned by the sun for long months?

Yet here was Pavel Seliverstov, a bearded, wind-tanned, horny-handed man of forty winters, a man of few words, for men who track down animals for weeks at a time are not inclined to be garrulous—here was Pavel Seliverstov reciting verses

from memory, verses written by Pushkin about the Caucasus, about its sunny valleys and mountain peaks crowned with eternal snows. And here on this lonely vessel jammed in the ice of the Arctic Sea, the poet's prophetic words rang out:

My fame shall travel o'er all great Russia.
My name shall be on all men's tongues.

Whenever I read these words, which are hewn in marble on one of the walls of the Moscow exhibition, I recall that evening beyond the Arctic Circle, and those bearded hunters of the Far North who were absorbed in the exquisite music of Pushkin's lyrics.

The first hall of the exhibition takes one through the childhood and early youth of the poet. For the thousandth time we pause before the engraving of the boy with the kinky Negroid locks and the large pensive eyes. In the last room we come across a drawing by the poet's friend V. Zhukovsky, *Pushkin in his Coffin*. The same high forehead and the mouth with its faintly childlike expression. There are only thirty-eight years between the record of the birth in the church register and the death certificate issued by the police. Yet not before a whole century had passed, not before a Socialist Revolution had taken place in Russia, ushering in a new epoch, was the brief span of the poet's life appreciated and a fitting monument erected in the hearts of one hundred and seventy million people.

Manuscripts. Letters. Annotations on the margins of books. Documents. Drawings. Portraits of contemporaries, relatives and friends. Albums. Close to four thousand books that once formed the poet's library. Newspapers, magazines and thick folders of documents and data on the case of the Decembrists, [1] Pushkin's friends and admirers of his freedom-loving poetry.

This is a truly rich exhibition. All that has been preserved through the years is collected here and distributed by loving hands over seventeen halls.

Roaming through these rooms, even after many visits, one invariably makes some new discovery shedding light on one more detail in the life of this brilliant and versatile man. His creative genius, his interests were unlimited. A note is inserted in the yellowed pages of a volume of Heine; the note was written

[1] The Decembrists were the organizers of the movement which culminated in an uprising against Nicholas I in December, 1825.

A Red Army man recites a poem by Pushkin

by Pushkin in French. "The liberation of Europe," we read, "will come from Russia, since only there blind faith in the aristocracy is non-existent. In other places people believe in the aristocracy; some do in order to scorn it, others in order to hate it and still others in order to derive profit from it, out of vanity, etc. There is nothing of the kind in Russia. No one believes in the aristocracy." And in the same showcase in which lie these prophetic remarks we find the lines from the *Bacchic Song*, this boisterous hymn of youth and gaiety:

We'll lift up our glasses, let merriment fuse us.
Long life to reason, long life to the Muses.

Another huge case contains folios written by gendarmes, the testimony of the revolutionary Decembrists before the tsarist court. Glancing through them we see that the reading of Pushkin's poems was regarded as damning evidence by those who investigated the case.

Pushkin founded modern Russian literature, combining in his brilliant works the age-old traditions of folk art with the best of European literature. It was he who laid out the paths followed by the Russian writers N. Gogol, I. Turgenyev, Lev Tolstoy, N. Nekrasov and Maxim Gorky. This was literature of and for the people, humanist, independent and realistic. "We may be truly proud," he wrote in a letter to A. Bestuzhev included in the exhibits, "for if our literature yields a point to the literature of some other countries in luxury of talent, it does not bear the stamp of servile degradation. Our talents are noble, independent."

There are a great many portraits of Pushkin, the work of leading painters, from O. Kiprensky and A. Tropinin, his own contemporaries, to painters of our day. Here one finds the magnificent canvases of I. Repin and I. Aivazovsky, pictures by I. Kozlov, A. Naumov and scores of others. One large hall is devoted to works of Soviet artists. One pauses at length before the picture by P. Sokolov-Skalya. Over a narrow track on a mountain ledge trundles a pitiful conveyance, with coffin for freight. The carter is replying apathetically to a horseman who is having diffi-

A corner in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow

Some Pushkin editions abroad

culty in restraining his frightened steed. The horseman is Pushkin. In the coffin lies the body of A. Griboyedov, the poet who met his death in Persia. This dismal encounter is reproduced with great power and expressiveness. Another picture which gives one ample food for thought is painted by N. Ulyanov. Pushkin, with his wife, one of the greatest beauties of the time, are seen at a court ball. The poet is short of stature, his wife considerably taller than he. He is not handsome and this is emphasized by his wife's dazzling beauty. The high collar of the tight-fitting *kammer-junker* uniform of the rank conferred on him by the tsar to mock and humiliate him, obviously hinders his movements. They stand in front of a tall mirror—the complacent beauty and the great poet. A group of courtiers and their wives, proud, smug, stupid and malicious, are casting scornful glances at the ridiculous figure of the short *kammer-junker*, the lowest of all court ranks; they see the startling incongruity of his appearance beside the stately elegance of his wife, but they do not see, they cannot see the powerful mind and the talent that radiates from his gloomy countenance. These are the people who scoffed at his emotions, who baited him with their gossip, their anonymous letters, their calumny.

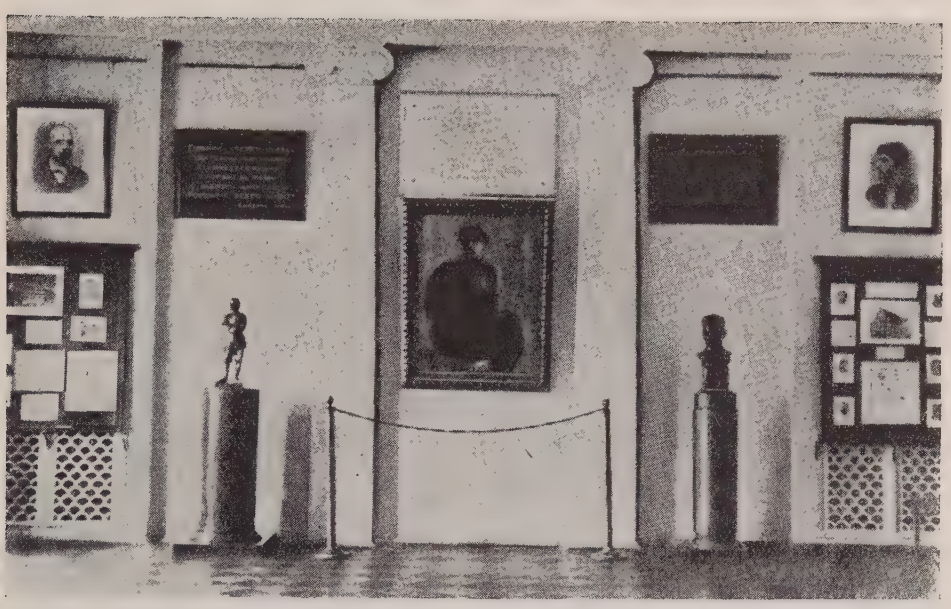
There is nothing in the picture that outwardly presages the poet's tragic end yet the alignment of the forces that brought about his death are clearly set forth. He is a stranger in this environment, he is hated and he will be killed with exquisite perfidy, with all the consummate skill of these court lackeys.

In another hall at the exhibition we see the conditions of the duel signed by the seconds G. Dantes and d'Archiac, and the last letter of the doomed Pushkin.

Maxim Gorky in 1934

* * *

Not so long ago people came to Moscow to see Maxim Gorky. Now they come to visit the museum dedicated to his memory. And while in the first halls of this beautiful old building you see the relics of a distant age, an age that seems like antiquity to those who live in the Socialist epoch, the latter rooms, those assigned to the Gorky whom even our school-children can remember, pul-



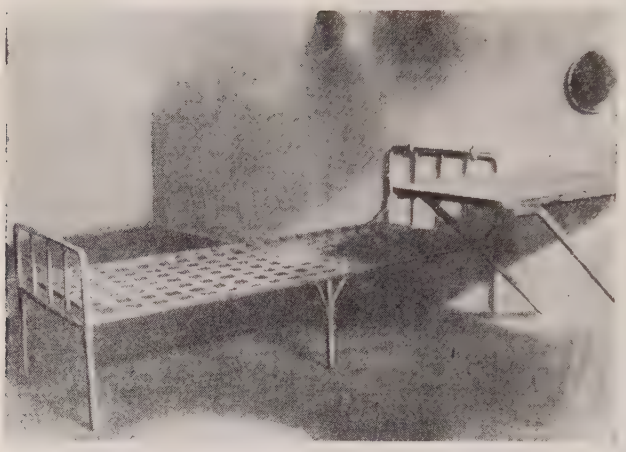
A room in the Gorky Museum

sate with the life of today which is not relegated to the past but, on the contrary, is transformed into the future, the tomorrow of the world. For such was Gorky: striding from century to century, he not only helped sweep aside the "kingdom of darkness" from which his prophetic voice was once heard, but, together with the people of a new generation, he was helping to build the kingdom of freedom—Socialism, and lived among us as a citizen of a Socialist society, was the youngest of the young, the happiest of the happy.

The life of a great man passes before the visitors to this museum. Of his own childhood he wrote ". . . at times I was crushed by an inexpressible pain, as though my whole being were weighed down, and I lived for long periods as in a deep black chasm, bereft of sight, hearing and all the senses, blind and half dead. . . ." We see the squat building surrounded by a sturdy fence, the tiny windows with heavy impenetrable shutters—and we remember what an unutterably dismal existence, full of hatred, envy, cruelty, passed behind these shutters and outside of them in the town that belonged to the "dull-witted tribe" of money-grubbers, drunkards, rapers, obscurantists, a town of merchants and policemen, unfortunates and paupers. Here Alyosha Peshkov lived as a boy. A few score years passed, and we saw him the proud, triumphant, humane and gentle man who smiles at us from the photographs on walls. Did we not see his tears of joy as he sat beside the Lenin Mausoleum, his coat thrown carelessly over his shoulders, applauding the sports parade? Did we not see him among writers, among Red Army men in the shooting gallery, side by side with K. Voroshilov, among children, "the snub-nosed crew," when they came from Igarka beyond the Arctic Circle, among peasants who came to visit him?

What an indomitable spirit must have been his to have preserved the freshness of human emotions, the youthful perceptions, inexhaustible vitality, and retain these noble human qualities to the very end of his life.

On a yellowed sheet of newspaper we read an item under the heading: *Attempt at Suicide:* ". . . On the bank of the River Kazanka . . . in an attempt to take his own life, Alexei Maximovich Peshkov,



The cell in the Peter and Paul fortress where Gorky was imprisoned in 1905

a Nizhni factory hand . . . shot himself through his left lung . . . ''

This happened once to an adolescent who was baited, persecuted and tormented. Happily he did not succeed in killing himself. Happily he lived to be able to write: ''I . . . am convinced by personal experience that suicide is a humiliating stupidity. . . .''

Serious beyond his years, having endured more than his share of hardships, Alexei Peshkov set out to roam through Russia in quest for truth. His wanderings took him along the Volga, the Don, through the steppes, along the shores of the Black Sea, through the Ukraine and back again to the Volga towns.

But this interminable journey is only a small part of the great path traversed by Gorky. Here is his first story *Makar*

Gorky at a writers' banquet in his honor, New York, 1906

Gorky among Soviet children

Chudra, a masterpiece written by a man who did not yet know he was an artist, a story written by a vagabond, a laborer. And a few years later the proud song of the stormy petrel, the harbinger of the Revolution, was heard throughout the world.

Farther on we come across an enlightening detail. Gorky is elected a member of the Academy. Nicholas II, the emperor of Russia, is greatly disturbed by this and dashes off a wrathful order nullifying the election. Here is the letter written by the last tsar of Russia: "The news of the election of Gorky to the Academy of Sciences . . . impressed me painfully. . . . Neither Gorky's age nor the few short works he has produced are sufficient reason to confer such an honor upon him. The fact that he is under police surveillance is considerably more important. . . ." Thus, we see how Gorky's first steps as a writer earned him the hatred of the ruling classes. Not only did they abhor the thought of him as a member of the Academy, but they kept him in prison and sought his death. In one of the showcases we see Gorky's wooden cigarette case, smashed by the dagger of a hired assassin in 1903. One night in Nizhni-Novgorod, the town that now bears his name, a man approached Gorky, stabbed him in the side and disappeared. The cigarette case saved him . . . We now know that Gorky's murderers, who poisoned him thirty-three years later, belonged to the same band of curs who shadowed the great proletarian writer all his life, as they shadowed Lenin, as they shadowed and killed Kirov, Kuibyshev and Menzhinsky, the great leaders of the people.

The museum is like a huge book, a book about a magnificent life, a book we can read for days at a time. From the standpoint of the philistines whom Gorky so passionately despised, his was an amazingly successful career, a lucky deal that lifted an obscure and beggarly young man to the heights of glory and prosperity. But we know that this life was one continuous struggle, that Gorky devoted himself utterly and to the very

Gorky sees off Romain Rolland and his wife

last to the cause of the working class, the cause of the Socialist Revolution, the building of Socialism. This is clear not only from his books that are full of wrath against the oppressors and of belief in emancipation, but from those documents, letters and manuscripts that are collected in the museum.

What is perhaps the most moving page in Gorky's life is the story of his friendship with Lenin and Stalin. "His (Lenin's) attitude to me was that of a severe teacher, a kind and solicitous friend," wrote Gorky. We see a photograph of Lenin and Gorky, at one of the sessions of the Second Congress of the Communist International. We see Lenin's notes to Gorky, written during the Civil War when the leader of the Communist Party steered the great locomotive of Revolution, when the map of Russia was criss-crossed with war fronts, when the enemies advanced their hired bands to the gates of both capitals and stabbed from behind corners in the capitals themselves. . . . In those days Lenin wrote to Gorky, inquired after his health, asked whether he was in need of anything, suggested that he take a rest in the country or go abroad for a cure. . . . And Gorky replied with similarly warm feeling. "We are acting in a country illumined by the genius of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin," he wrote, "in a country where the iron will of Joseph Stalin works indefatigably and miraculously."

As the last hall of the museum is reached the visitor pauses before a large but plain writing desk, the desk at which the great writer worked in the latter years of his life. How simple were his tastes: the plain blotter, the unadorned inkstand, the strictly utilitarian desk lamp. . . . There lie his glasses, as though he had just taken them off to rest his tired eyes. One feels that any moment he may enter the room—tall, with his light, sure tread—seat himself at the table and pick up his pen. . . .

But no, he is dead. In the next room lies the plaster-of-paris mask taken from his lifeless countenance and a modeling of the cold hand.

"Since Lenin the death of Gorky is the heaviest loss for our country and for humanity," stated Comrade V. Molotov at Gorky's funeral.

The image of Gorky and the characters created by his artistic genius will remain eternally fresh in the memory of mankind. In his writings capitalism read its death sentence, relentless, scourging, and just. But Socialism, the happiness of mankind, too, radiates from his brilliant works. In his declining years he wrote: "All my life I saw as the only real heroes the people who love work and know how to work, people whose goal is the liberation of all human forces for creative endeavor, to adorn our land, to organize in it a life worthy of man."

* * *

On a quiet little side street, not far from Taganka Square, there is a gateway leading to a neat two-storey house where Vladimir Mayakovsky once lived.

On a hook in the tiny hallway hangs an overcoat, hat and stick. They are huge, for the man who wore them was a giant. In the center of the living room stands a table covered with a cloth. A sideboard is piled high with dishes, for the poet was hospitable and here in this room Mayakovsky's friends—poets, artists and actors—were wont to gather evenings.

It was here that Mayakovsky, as nervous and embarrassed as any novice, for the first time, recited thunderously his poem *Good!* Here it was that the big, brawny man, known throughout the world, exulted when A. Lunacharsky said: "Your poem is the Revolution cast in bronze."

We step into Mayakovsky's study, a small but cozy room. Beside the window stands a large writing desk. To the left is a wardrobe and, beyond, a low divan. This completes the furnishings. The dining room, we are told, Mayakovsky shared with the Bricks, his best friends, who lived in the same apartment.

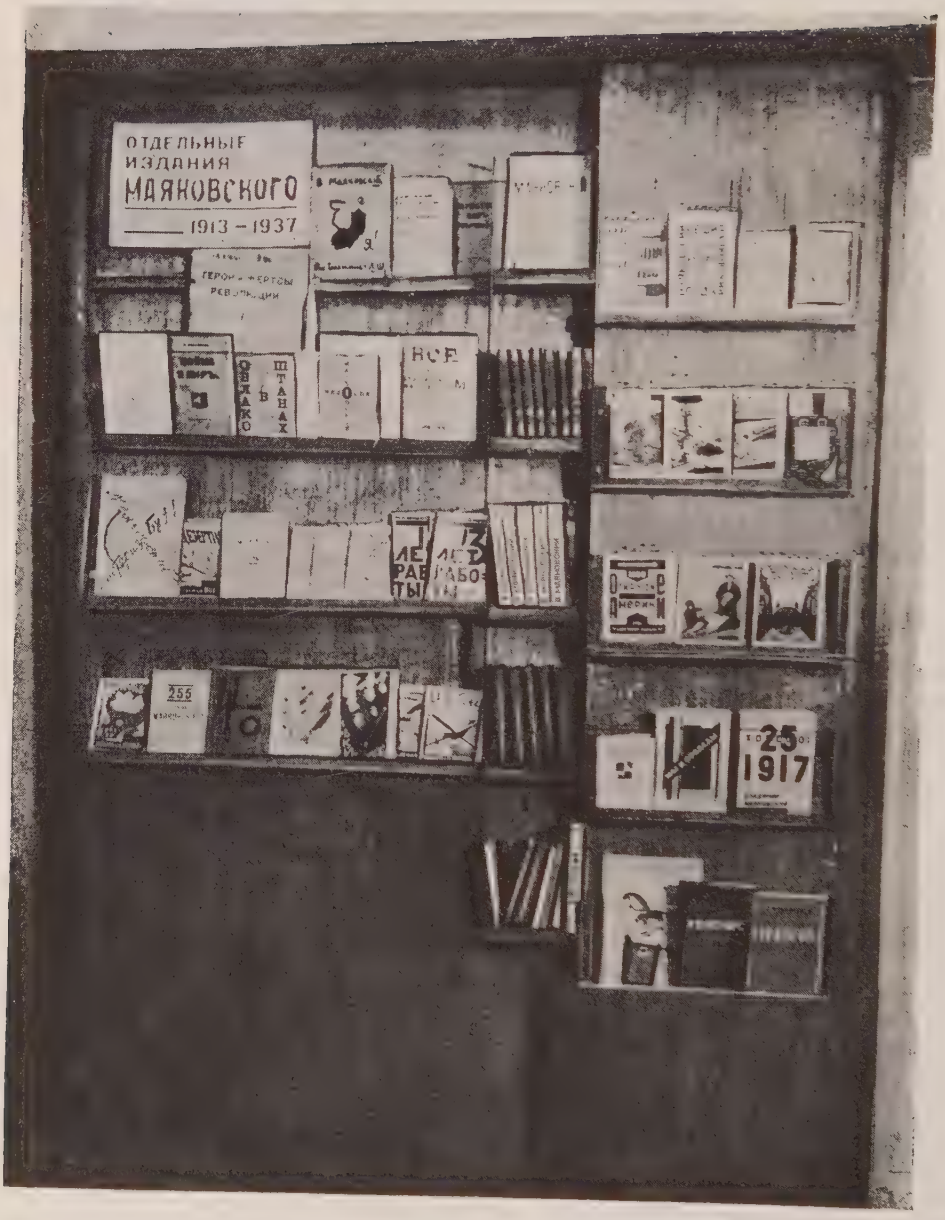
The wardrobe is made by hand. The poet called in a carpenter, drew a design and together they contrived to produce the finished article that stands in his room.

Into the door of the wardrobe a small mirror is fixed at the level of the poet's face. Beneath it is a narrow shelf with shaving articles. True, when you shave the entire interior of the wardrobe is there before your eyes, but that is not important, for the pile of linen is neat and the seven or eight ties are in excellent taste. The poet meant it when he wrote: "Apart from a freshly laundered shirt, believe me, there isn't a thing in the world I need." On a lower shelf lies the woolen sweater so well known from the numerous photographs of Mayakovsky. Two pairs of good strong shoes stand on the floor of the wardrobe. The poet did a great deal of walking. He was always on the go. Even when talking on the telephone he would pace up and down the room so that his telephone had to have a longer cord than anyone else's. He often said that shoes were as much his tools of work as his pen. Some unpleasant memories were associated with shoes. In his youth he was forced to be his own cobbler, for he couldn't afford to have his shoes mended. Many a time while visiting someone he would suddenly discover to his embarrassment that his soles were flapping loose. He would rush to the kitchen and hammer them in place with a few nails, causing himself excruciating pain. It is not surprising that in his poem *A Cloud in Trousers*, Mayakovsky says that "the nail in my shoe is more of a nightmare than anything Goethe could imagine."

On top of the wardrobe stands a solid-looking suitcase, a traveling pillow and a small globe. The latter Mayakovsky acquired when he decided to make a trip abroad. He would hold it between his hands, fingering this little planet with a whimsical familiarity.

The map of Mayakovsky's travels hangs in the vestibule. Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, the United States, South America, Spain. . . . With ease and assurance the huge man strode through the streets of strange towns. The eye of the poet saw through the enticing subterfuges by which the large cities of Europe and America tempt the uninitiated traveler. In his notebooks he jotted down his observations of the parasitic luxury and glamor, the ugliness and bitterness of life in these cities. He saw how the masses lived, their poverty and struggle for existence.

Fifty-six towns in the Soviet Union are marked on this map. With a suitcase full of notes and letters from his readers and listeners, Mayakovsky toured the U.S.S.R. At factories and in barracks, in clubs and in theaters he recited his

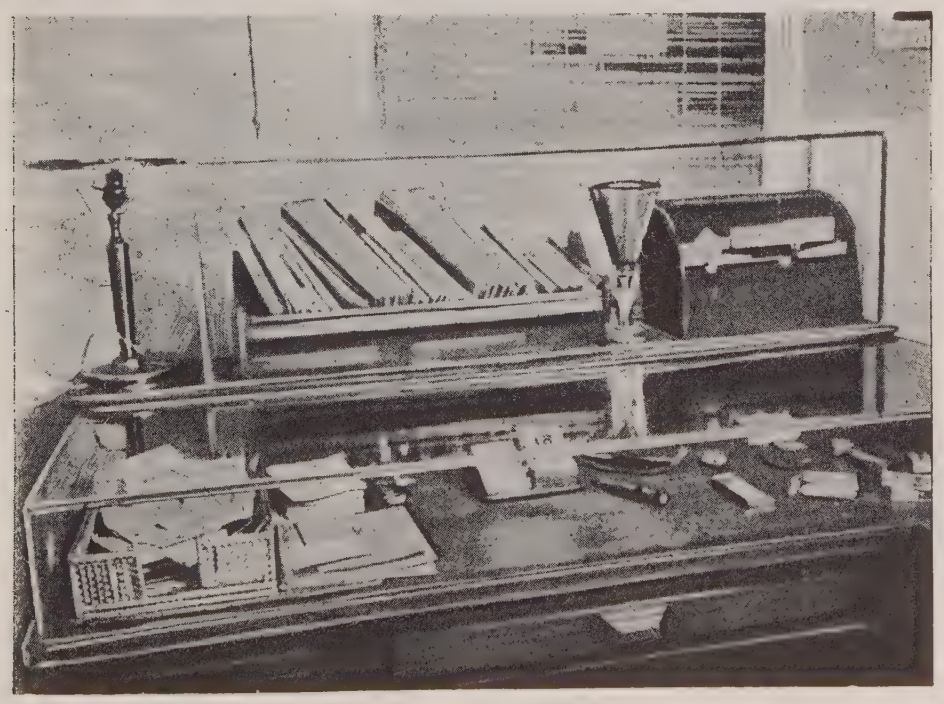


Some editions of Mayakovsky's works

poems, lending a sensitive ear to the voice of the people. He felt more at ease on the platform than at his own table. He loved the masses and wrote for them alone. On the wall hangs a montage the poet made himself of newspaper cuttings in which he replied in poetry and satirical verse to his correspondents. These replies touched upon some of the most important problems of the new life that was being built. A portrait of Lenin hangs above the poet's writing desk. To him the poet addressed his words: "Comrade, with your heart and name in our thoughts we breathe, we fight, we live!" Lenin is the theme of Mayakovsky's whole life. We are conducted into a hall where we are shown the sources from which the poet gleaned the material for his poem *Lenin*. These are pages in the life of the great leader of the Revolution, political documents concerning the history of the Communist Party.

We examine a number of photographs. Here is Mayakovsky at the age of fourteen—already drawn into the vortex of political life. The Moscow Committee of the Party entrusted him with the highly responsible task of working in an illegal printing plant. Secret police reports follow one after another, for his every movement was shadowed. When finally arrested, the brave lad swallowed a piece of paper on which the addresses of revolutionaries were written. He spent less than a year in prison, but it was a good schooling for him. While in jail he read a great deal of modern poetry and learned to hate the ivory-tower attitude to life, deliberate vagueness and the mysticism that leads readers away from struggles. It was in jail that he resolved to become a poet.

Another photograph shows Mayakovsky in a school of painting and modeling. This talented young artist designed close to three thousand posters for the Revolution. There is an interesting collection of his *Window of Satire* series which played an important role in combatting the devastation in the country, and in the battles that were being waged on so



Mayakovsky's desk

many fronts during the Civil War. Economic devastation, Wrangel, bribery and sabotage, priests and wreckers, all came in for their share of biting scorn and satire in the six thousand verses and lines, as brief and annihilating as rifle shots.

"You are a genius," said D. Burlyuk, who studied with Mayakovsky in art school, when the poet read him his first poem. Portraits of Burlyuk, V. Khlebnikov and V. Kamensky remind us of the friendship from which arose the futurist group. Then follow Mayakovsky's first public appearances. Mayakovsky leapt into the limelight with the speed of a meteor. The literary philistines against whom the futurist group leveled the barb of their satire were outraged and furious. Then came Mayakovsky's poem *A Cloud in Trousers*. Here lie the pages of this poem, speckled with dots. The censorship obviously had a hard time with it. This edition, of course, does not include these prophetic words:

The century's sixteenth year.
Comes crowned in Revolution's thorns.

The poet miscalculated by only a few months. On the first page of the magazine *Solovei (Nightingale)*, we find the lines:

Guzzle your turkey
Swill your brew,
The last day is coming,
Bourgeois, for you.

It was not until after the Revolution that the poet learned that the workers, soldiers and sailors had sung this couplet as they stormed the Winter Palace.

The first years after the Revolution find Mayakovsky editing the magazine *Art of the Commune*.

On a lower floor of the museum we find a library in which all Mayakovsky's books, letters and notebooks are carefully preserved; here also are books on literary theory and poetry that came out during his time, all that he read, every book in which he was interested.

In another large showcase Mayakovsky's press cards are laid out. He was one of the most efficient newspapermen in the Soviet Union. For of such was the stuff of his Muse. "That the pen should equal the bayonet" was his fondest dream; he compared himself to a factory "manufacturing happiness." He did not write for amusement, he did not want his verses to be intoned reverently by esthetes.

His pen served one great cause, the cause to which he dedicated his life and his talent—the cause of Socialism. When the Revolution was endangered by the interventionists, he composed songs, slogans in verse and drew his famous posters which were nailed to the walls of railway cars transporting Red Army men to the front. Here we see the posters, painted with a hasty and passionate brush—their grim message potent to this day.

When the country restored its devastated economy and built a new Socialist economy, Mayakovsky worked hand in hand with the people. He wrote thousands of lines in these years, lines inspiring courage, organization, discipline and vigilance. Here lies a heap of newspapers and magazines with his verses, in which he reveals himself as an agitator and a lyricist. The secret of the great influence of Mayakovsky's propaganda verses is their lyricism and the fact that the theme of Revolution and the building of Socialism was for him a subjective theme, a theme that came straight from his soul.

To you,
attacking class that none can cower,
I give as due
my verses' ringing power!"

SEMYON NAGORNY

By the absence of exploiting classes, which are the principal organizers of strife between nations; the absence of exploitation, which cultivates mutual distrust and kindles nationalist passions; the fact that power is in the hands of the working class, which is an enemy of all enslavement and the true vehicle of the ideas of internationalism; the actual practice of mutual aid among the peoples in all spheres of economic and social life; and, finally, the flourishing national culture of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., culture which is national in form and socialist in content—all these and similar factors have brought about a radical change in the aspect of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.; their feeling of mutual distrust has disappeared, a feeling of mutual friendship has developed among them, and thus, real fraternal cooperation between the peoples was established within the system of a single federated state.

As a result, we now have a fully formed multi-national socialist state, which has stood all tests, and the stability of which might well be envied by any national state in any part of the world.

J. STALIN. ("On the Draft Constitution of the U.S.S.R.")

One Day in Soviet Land

The wind was born in the center of the polar basin, in those waste regions where Papanin's famous North Pole Station began its long drift to the south. Profound night enwrapped a solitary ship frozen in amid the chaos of ice floes. The lonely man on watch seemed to have congealed on the ice-coated deck of the vessel. Drifting slowly, the *Sedov* was approaching the 86th parallel of north latitude. The wind raged across the deck and whistled in the rigging. It snowed.

A polar bear, shuffling along phlegmatically, drew near to the living quarters of the wintering party at Tihaya Bay. Light shone through one of the windows; the radio operator was buzzing away at his key, transmitting meteorological data to the mainland. The bear halted, sniffed and, rearing to his full height, poked his nose through the kitchen ventilator, which emanated appetizing odors. The radio operator, hearing a noise, ran out into the entrance passage with a rocket in his hand. Like the rest of his comrades wintering here, he was already used to the visits of polar bears and the necessity of driving them away from the house with rockets.

Over the entire boundless expanse of the Soviet Union, the winter night hovered.

The wind, born in the white silence of the heart of the Arctic wastes, sped on its way southeast, on to the peaks of the Pamirs where the borders of the U.S.S.R. meet those of India and Western China. On this same night a Tajik mountaineer, battling the wind, was making his way down a precipitous path, fit only for goats. Below in a narrow and gloomy ravine the River Gunt sped along with a dull roar, rolling boulders in its torrent, impatient to join the Panja. The mountaineer was making for the

capital of the Soviet Pamir, the town of Khorog; he brought long-awaited news of Tushmanov's scientific expedition from far-away Sarez Lake.

The history of this high mountain lake, by the way, is extraordinarily interesting.

In 1916 a severe earthquake shook the Pamir range. The mountains roared and quivered as an avalanche of rocks and stones, the Usoisk Landslide, made its way into a narrow valley through which a river ran. Like a wild beast caught in a trap, the torrential river thrashed about in its stone cul-de-sac, vainly seeking an exit. Gurgling and foaming, the muddy waters demolished the little mountain village of Sarez and submerged it with all its inhabitants. In its place the great Sarez Lake was formed.

From day to day and from year to year, people raised their eyes in terror to the heights of the Muzkol Range. The local inhabitants very well understood the eternal laws of the melting of mountain snows and glaciers, and knew that up there, behind the wall formed by the Usoisk Landslide, tremendous masses of water were accumulating, only to pour down some frightful day in a torrent that would wipe cities and villages off the face of the earth.

Last September Tushmanov's expedition left Tashkent for the purpose of spending a winter at Sarez for scientific investigation. The party safely reached the shores of the mysterious lake, but then disappeared without a trace. The only news from Tushmanov has been that brought by the Tajik mountaineer who came to Khorog on the night we are describing.

Making a journey of terrific difficulty over nearly impassable glaciers and moraines, he brought a letter from the head of the expedition, reporting that the research work at Sarez Lake was in full swing, the party in good health, full of energy and determined to carry out the task entrusted to it. The message explained that the expedition's radio was out of order, and the scientists would therefore remain cut off from the rest of the world until summer came and the mountain passes above the snow line were open.

At the same hour of the night when this news reached the capital of the "roof of the world," in another distant part of the Soviet Union, at the boundary between Kazakhstan and Siberia, Pelageya Nabokova of the Awakening Collective Farm in Voroshilov District gave birth to triplets, two boys and a girl. In spite of the late hour, the Nabokov cottage was crowded with neighbors and friends, who congratulated the parents on the happy addition to their family and wished them a still more prosperous life, to which they drank home-made brandy and dispersed an hour before dawn.

And exactly at this time, an hour before dawn, the telegraph office at Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan, received a message by direct wire from Moscow, that 315 Uzbek collective farmers, tractor drivers, agronomists, directors of machine and tractor stations, and Communist Party functionaries were awarded Government decorations for their excellent work in agriculture. As the girl operator on duty at the Tashkent end of the wire pasted the contents of the momentous Government message on to telegraph blanks, she read the decree, issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

"Award the Order of Lenin to:

". . . Majid Kurbanov, leader of a sub-brigade at the Communism Collective Farm, Karshin District, Bukhara Province, who grew 13.3 tons of cotton per hectare . . .

Rea ɔquare, Moscow

". . . Akhmejan Tashbayev, leader of a sub-brigade at the Belsky Collective Farm, Tashlak District, Ferghana Province, who grew 13 tons of cotton per hectare . . .

"Award the Order of the Red Banner of Labor to:

". . . Akhmed Mirzaliyev, leader of a sub-brigade at the Collective Farm, Balykhchi District, Ferghana Province, who grew 11 tons of cotton per hectare . . .

". . . Richard R. Schroeder, academician, director of the Schroeder Selection Station in the Uzbek S.S.R. . . ."

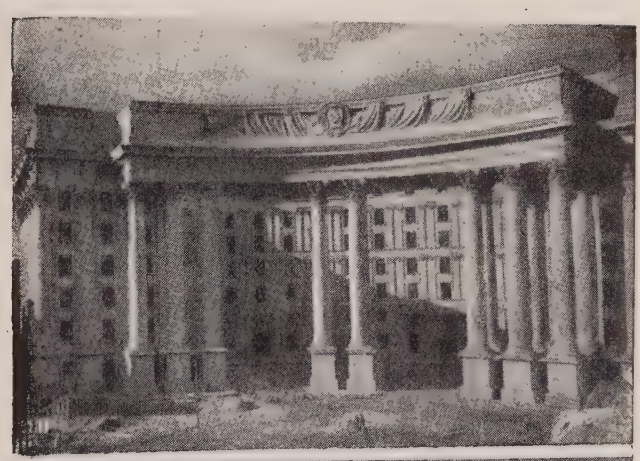
Thousands of telegraph sets in all parts of the land of Soviets ticked out this message, lineotypes hummed in the nighttime quiet of newspaper printing offices, setting the names of people who had made world records for cotton crops. In the villages of the green and fertile Bukhara oasis, of the rich Ferghana valley and far-away Kharezm, these modest heroes of labor slept soundly—Uzbek collective farmers, brigade leaders, agronomists, academicians. In the jungles of the Amu-Darya and the Panja, in the Arctic tundra, in Byelorussian swamps, in the crevices of the Tian-Shan mountains, on the heights of the Pamirs, in the slumbering taiga of the Far East, on the seas which wash the Soviet mainland—along the whole 65,000 kilometers of the borders of the U.S.S.R.—fearless frontier guards were completing their night watch, guarding the peace and toil of the peoples who inhabit the eleven Soviet republics.

Snow had been falling the whole night. Now dawn was breaking. . . .

After the snowfall a strong thaw set in in the Gulf of Finland. The wind, coming from the heart of the polar basin, broke in a sudden storm over the ice in which the gulf was fettered. Border guards, wearing white hooded robes over their knee-length coats, gripped their rifles more firmly and strained their eyes through the blizzard. The storm cracked off an ice floe on which a detachment of border guards were stationed and carried it down the neck of the gulf toward the open sea. Visibility dropped to zero. . . .

The storm which had broken over the Gulf of Finland raged in a fierce blizzard over the Don steppes. Morning found Mikhail Kondratyevich Glebov half frozen on the open steppe. The wind knocked him off his feet and whirled the snow with a malicious howl. Glebov crawled on all fours, stood up, and ran staggering to his flock, trying to warm his frozen fingers with his breath. The sheep, which were driven from their pens into the open steppe, belonged to the Order of Lenin Collective Farm, Orlov District. Glebov, the farm's senior shepherd, hastened in search of the flock. Finding the sheep about a kilometer and a half away, he tried to drive them back, but the head wind barred the way. Then the shepherd led the flock further into the steppe in the direction of the wind. He lost track of time, walked for eighteen hours battered by the icy wind, and led his 525 sheep through the blizzard to a place of safety, without losing a single animal.

Morning came. . . . In response to an alarm signal four planes of the Red Banner Baltic Fleet rose into the air. Manned by flyers Reidel, Tomashevsky, Usachev and Chernov, the airplanes flew to the Gulf of Finland in search of the ice floe on which the frontier guards had drifted away. They found it, and circled for a long time, studying the dangerous natural landing field on the ice floe. They came down skillfully, took the men on board and shot up again into the air. When the border guards were returned to their post, they refused to rest and continued



Government House at Kiev, capital of Soviet Ukraine

Supreme Soviet Building in Kiev

their interrupted watch, guarding the approaches to the Baltic Sea.

The same morning another group of planes landed on the ice near the northern coast of the Caspian Sea. Men of the fishing collectives loaded the craft with fresh white-fish just caught from under the ice. The planes taxied along the ice, gathered speed and took off, heading for Guryev with its fish-canning plants. In the air they met scouting planes returning from Kulala Island, where they had been surveying the sealing grounds. The transport planes with their cargo of fish dipped wings in greeting to the scouting planes and held their course toward Guryev. The scouts continued their flight to the southwest toward the open water, where their return was awaited by a flotilla of 115 ships of the Caspian sealing expedition. The ships' bells sounded. It was 10 a.m.

Geologist Chertushenko was leading his exploring party over the mountains of Southern Altai, guided by traces of the Chuds. This mysterious tribe inhabited the Altai a thousand years ago; with bronze hammers and stone picks they worked the gold, silver, copper and lead ores of Altai. Exactly at 11 a. m. on the day we are describing, the Soviet geologist Chertushenko, making his way through the mountains on the trail of the primeval geologists of the Chud tribe, found a rich deposit of tin in the region of Kadurbai.

The country that morning received two other gifts from two districts separated from each other by some 8,000 kilometers. At the headwaters of the Kitoi and Irkut rivers

in Eastern Siberia, the geological expedition headed by Engineer Shestopalov discovered a rich deposit of diamonds, obtaining several hundred fine stones at a very shallow depth. At Romny in the Ukraine heavy oil was discovered in limestone strata at a depth of 240 meters.

The morning was fine and frosty. The wind which was born in the heart of the Arctic basin had lost its strength and died down by the time it reached the plains of the Middle Volga. The beautiful river slept under a thick blanket of ice.

Ivan Ivanovich Ivanov of the Civil Air Fleet piloted his fast mail plane above the snow-covered collective farm villages that nestled on the banks of Russia's mighty river.

The cargo compartment of pilot Ivanov's plane, en route from Moscow to Kuibyshev, was filled with leather bags stuffed with air mail, packages, newspapers and magazines. When he had guided his craft as far as the Volga, he dropped to a height of 500 meters and nodded to the second pilot, Sasha Nikolayev, member of the Young Communist League. They had worked together for two years and had learned to understand each other at a glance. Nikolayev took over the stick, and Ivanov, grunting with pleasure and inhaling the invigorating morning air, flung himself back in the upholstered seat and began to rummage in the capacious pockets of his fur flying suit.

He extracted a flat thermos flask with hot tea, several sandwiches and the latest issue of *Pravda*, laid all this out before him with a domestic air and, having settled comfortably in his seat, started with his

Government House. Minsk, capital of Soviet Byelorussia

breakfast. As he gulped the hot, aromatic tea, he read his newspaper.

The paper devoted a whole page to a discussion that had sprung up in connection with the forthcoming Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The discussion covered a wide range of questions connected with the many-sided activity of the Party and the life of the country with its population of one hundred and seventy millions. Two Red Army commissars, Vinogradov and Smirnov, replied to an article by the old Bolshevik, the Academician, E. Yaroslavsky, devoted to inner Party questions. Their reply was entitled "Unconvincing Conclusions of Comrade E. Yaroslavsky." Mikheyev of Leningrad raised the question of requiring that members of the Party who had been expelled without due cause, and non-Party people who had suffered as result of slanderous accusations, should have their records cleared through the press; he demanded severe punishment for slanderers.

The newspaper *Pravda* was receiving a tremendous number of lengthy letters and comments on the theses of the report of V. M. Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, on the Third Five-Year Plan. Among the writers were workers, secretaries of Party committees; chairmen of city executive committees; academicians, professors and directors of factories; engineers of various specialties; agronomists, geologists, doctors. They advanced concise, concrete proposals to complement the theses, suggesting still more rapid progress in the economic and cultural life of the great land of Socialism.

Folding his newspaper for greater convenience, Pilot Ivanov turned to attentive perusal of an article on the Kuibyshev hydro-electric project, that great construction job of the Third Five-Year Plan on the Volga, along the course of which his speedy plane was now flying.

The propellers cut through the cold air with terrific force. Frost gathered on the pilot's fur helmet. Flying high above the earth, Ivanov had a bird's eye view of the dream which was becoming a reality down there on the ground.

Beneath the plane, where the domes of the ancient churches of Uglich shone with their gold caps, motor trucks crawled back and forth no bigger than miniature match boxes; excavators bowed, with their trunks flung to heaven like elephants; caterpillar tractors crawled about; people scurried, a whole army of them. Here and at Rybinsk work was in full swing on the construction of the first two hydro-electric units of 110,000 and 330,000 kilowatts.

It is difficult to grasp all the grandeur of this tremendous construction job—the Greater Volga Project which during the Third Five-Year Plan will make a deep waterway of the Volga, furnish cheap electric power to the great industrial enterprises of the U.S.S.R. from Moscow to the southern Urals, and provide irrigation for the regions beyond the Volga, which are subjected to drought.

At the Samara Bend, about twenty-five miles from the city of Kuibyshev near the village of Krasnaya Glinka, a tremendous earthen dam will be erected, blocking the Volga. In addition, a concrete dam with spillways will be built in order to let the river through. One of the two hydro-electric stations will be erected here; a lock is being built at the right bank for river shipping.

The dam will raise the level of the river by thirty-two meters and create a tremendous reservoir 7,500 sq. km. in area, or the size of Lake Onega. The valleys of the little streams which fall into the Volga in that region will be submerged

Porch of the House of Culture and Rest on top of Mt. David overlooking Tbilisi, capital of Soviet Georgia

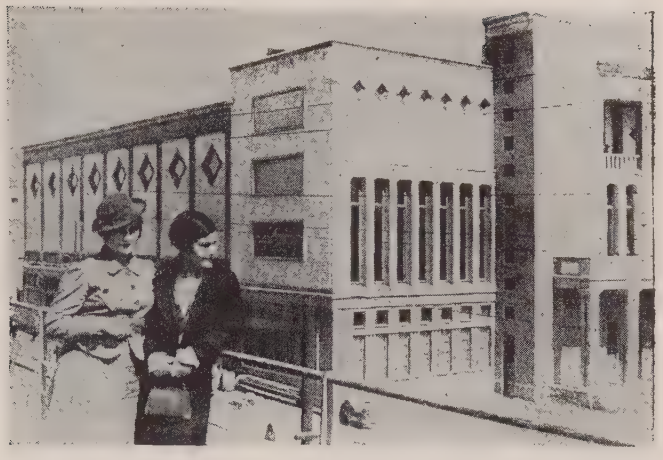
and they will become deep navigable waterways. Some 70 kilometers below Kuibyshev, one of these streams, the Usa, a tributary of the Volga, will be separated from the mighty river, by a narrow strip of land about two and a half kilometers wide, with the level of the Usa more than thirty meters above that of the Volga. Two canals will be dug here, one with locks for shipping and another for draining water to feed a hydro-electric power station.

The dam built near the city of Kuibyshev will make it possible to turn the Volga's waters into power at stations the combined capacity of which is rated at 3,400,000 kw. The entire Kuibyshev power project will annually turn out five times as much electric power as all the stations of Poland.

The scope of the Kuibyshev hydro-electric project can be judged from the equipment which is being manufactured in Soviet plants for the future power stations. Here will stand seventeen turbine-generators of 200,000 kw. each, bigger than anything now in existence anywhere. Each unit will weigh 2,350 tons and will be brought to the job for assembling in a train consisting of eighty cars. And how many trains will be needed to bring the cement and iron for the twelve million cubic meters of reinforced concrete required by the great project?

Kirov Prospect, Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan

A new cinema theater in Yerevan, capital of Soviet Armenia



. . . The morning was clear and frosty, the beautiful Volga wound its way below in the snow-white trappings of a Russian winter. Pilot Ivanov of the Soviet Civil Air Fleet turned back the warm fur cuff of his sleeve and glanced at his watch. It was 12 noon. The plane was approaching Kuibyshev. The thermometer dropped lower. . . .

At that moment in the village of Geoncha, the Turkmenian collective farmer Ishan Pulat looked at the clock. There was an hour left before the end of the chess tournament. Ishan Pulat was uncertain: should he move the knight or the castle? Pushing his tall woolly hat to the back of his head and rubbing his perspiring brow, Ishan Pulat advanced the castle:

"Check!" he said.

The last round of the chess tournament among collective farmers of Geoncha was taking place on the open veranda of the Socialism Collective Farm, whose champion was Ishan Pulat, rated as a second category player for the whole Soviet Union. The sun was blinding. The thermometer stood at 60° F. The spectators who had crowded around the participants in the district chess tournament for collective farmers, whispered softly. A little old man in a rusty fur hat inordinately large for him—it seemed half a yard high—clasped his hands in despair:

"He's crazy! I would never have moved my castle!"

Such collective farm tournaments were in progress in almost every district of sandy Turkmenia. The matches were hard fought at Mari; in the *aul* of Keshi at the Sverdlov Collective Farm, twenty contested for the *aul* championship.

This was splendid recreation after a year of good, hard work. The collective farmers of Turkmenia had received a hundred million rubles more for their cotton than in the previous year; the number of farms with an annual income of a million rubles or more had tripled.

In Geoncha where the old man in the rusty hat was so agitated, the chess tournament had reached its tensest moment, but in Iolotani where the tournament was finished the day before, the traditional trading of the East was being carried on in the square. Broad-shouldered, swarthy men with strong sunburned faces felt the legs of horses, looked at their teeth, shook hands vigorously and made deals. Representatives of collective farms, they were buying for their farms pure-blooded Akhal-Tekhin steeds from the few remaining individual farmers.

The House of Soviets in Ashkhabad, capital of Soviet Turkmenia

Remarkable for fire and beauty, the Akhal-Tekhin strain traces back to a famous Arabian breed of racehorses which have a spot on the crupper. From ancient times the Turkmenians have been famous as daring riders and tireless horsemen. Their old men have handed down from generation to generation a legend about the origin of the spot on the crupper of the Akhal-Tekhin strain, a somewhat romantic tale. The prophet Mahommed, running after Ak-Kous, his mare, grew angry and in order to stop her, hit her across the crupper with his palm. From that day on, according to the tale, the spot is on the crupper of a real Arabian steed. . . .

The animated trading of the East went on in the square; reins were torn from the hands of would-be buyers; the demand for horses was much greater than the supply. On the flat roof of a clay-walled building appeared the spare figure of the old mullah; covering his ears with his palms and rolling his eyes, he emitted a prolonged cry. Seven old men, hearing the mullah's noonday summons, shook their gowns and proceeded to the mosque. The *aul* knew them all; they were the last seven clients of the village's savior of human souls. . . .

While the old man in the mosque of the Turkmenian *aul* prayed for forgiveness for their sins, People's Judge Zotov was hearing in Moscow the case of Citizen Nikolai Grigoryevich Korolev, accused under Article 109 of the criminal code.

Korolev, formerly the manager of a wholesale food trust, was detected in embezzlement. With the help of a bookkeeper Goryunov, Korolev would charge certain retail organizations more than the standard prices, pocketing the difference. To hide his crimes from the head office of his trust, he doctored the copies of the bills to make it seem that he had sold a greater quantity of goods. Thus he had a surplus of wares which he sold on the side. He thus stole about 4,000 rubles of the people's money.

The embezzling took place at the end of 1937. In 1938 bookkeeper Goryunov voluntarily appeared before the authorities and confessed to his share in the crime.

People's Judge Zotov and his assistants, taking into consideration that this was Korolev's first crime in the course of many years of service, found it possible to give him no heavier sentence than eight months of compulsory work, during which time he was obliged to remain at his present job and to pay a portion of his earnings to the state.

New apartment houses in Tashkent, capital of Soviet Uzbekistan

Goryunov was let off without punishment in consideration of his voluntary confession.

It was exactly 2 p. m. when Citizen Korolev left the building of the Moscow People's Court. At that time in Minsk, capital of the Byelorussian S.S.R., the secretary of the local division of the Western Railway posted on the wall an order signed by L. M. Kaganovich, People's Commissar of Railways of the U.S.S.R. The People's Commissar was awarding bonuses amounting to a month's extra pay to seventy-three men of the Minsk division of the Western Railway for distinguished Stakhanovite work. Ten locomotive engineers of the Minsk depot received a bonus of 1,000 rubles each.

At very nearly the same moment two locomotive engineers, one of the Mariupol depot and the second of Stalinabad, took two fast passenger trains out of Moscow.

Brigade Commander Slepnev, a participant in the rescue of the *Cheluskin* crew, the flyer who found the body of the American airman Col. Ben. Eielson and took it by plane to Alaska, was on the train bound for Mariupol where he had an appointment with some Young Pioneers, the children of Stakhanovite workers at local factories. Commander Slepnev had promised his young admirers to tell them of his amazing adventures as flyer. The meeting took place in the Mariupol Palace of Pioneers.

In the fast Moscow-Stalinabad train, a delegation of twenty-five Tajik collective farm chairmen and brigade leaders was returning home after a visit to Moscow at the invitation of the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition Committee. They had examined the Tajik pavilion with the critical appraisal of responsible owners, jealously comparing it with the pavilions of the other ten Union republics, now under construction. They also studied the great plan for the reconstruction of Moscow. Before their departure the Tajik collective farmers visited the Lenin Museum. They were deeply stirred by the visit to the Museum dedicated to the memory of that noble fighter for the liberation of the peoples of the East from colonial slavery. The Tajik delegation brought the total of visitors to the museum up to 1,282,367 since January 1, 1938.

While the Tajiks, upon arrival in Stalinabad, were making for the cars which their farms had sent for them, a correspondent of TASS—the telegraph agency of the Soviet Union—was received by a member of the board of the U.S.S.R. State

A new cinema theater in Stalinabad, capital of Soviet Tajikistan

Bank. At 3 p.m. he was given the following laconic communication.

"The income of collective farms rapidly increased during the Second Stalinist Five-Year Plan. Whereas on January 1, 1934, the current accounts of collective farms throughout the U.S.S.R. totaled 322 million rubles, the total sum of the surplus funds which the collective farms had on deposit in current accounts at affiliated institutions of the State Bank of the U.S.S.R. on January 1, 1939, amounted to 2,519 million rubles."

Another TASS correspondent on the same day arrived in the Cherkess mountain *aul* of Elistanzhi, Vvedensky District, and at 4 p.m. heard the following amazing story from two of its inhabitants, Gunakbai Geziyev and Khansimurad Dadayev. Gunakbai Geziyev, who is a member of the Stalin Collective Farm, said:

"I recently marked my 166th birthday. I was one of the horsemen of Shamil, the famous national hero of Daghestan, and fought under him against the troops of the Russian tsar Nicholas I. I was born in the reign of Catherine II, and have outlived the following Russian rulers—Catherine II, Paul I, Alexander I, Nicholas I, Alexander II, Alexander III, Nicholas II. Now I am happy to see that my people have gained the right to a free and happy life."

"I am much younger than my friend Gunakbai," said Khansimurad Dadayev. "I am only 147 and I have outlived but six emperors. I may add to my friend's words that, in case of need, we two can provide the Red Army with a detachment of a hundred expert horsemen, made up entirely of our sons, grandsons, great-grandsons and great-great-grandsons."

The same hour a conference on the problem of prolonging life was taking place in Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, where Academician A. Bogomolets read a paper on "The Tasks of Experimental Medicine in the Struggle Against Premature Senility of the Human Organism." Professor Shereshevsky followed with a paper on "Old Age and the Endocrine System." The agenda listed thirty-eight more reports on prolonging life.

In Baku, capital of Azerbaijan, three important congresses were winding up their work. At the House of Physicians there took place the Caucasian congress of physiologists, biochemists and pharmacologists, to which had come 228 distinguished scientists from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi, Yerevan, Ashkhabad, Batumi, Sochi and other cities.

A new cinema house in Alma Ata, capital of Soviet Kazakhstan

The Palace of Culture housed a conference on rug weaving, its participants being the best weavers and designers of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenia, Daghestan and the Ukraine. In the house of the Azerbaijan branch of the Writers' Union, philologists, writers and teachers discussed the problem of introducing a new Azerbaijan alphabet.

Evening was coming on. The "rush hour" began in Moscow. Workers of the first shift and office employees, having finished their six or seven-hour day, hurried to autos, trolleybuses, autobuses or the Metro. The rotary presses hummed, turning out the first copies of the evening newspaper *Vechernaya Moskva*. As usual, the back page was full of "Help Wanted."

Numerous organizations advertised for people of diverse specialties: typists, stenographers, head and senior bookkeepers, accountants, economists, file clerks, physicians, bacteriologists, pediatrists and balneologists, nurses, hospital orderlies, construction engineers and technicians, foremen and assistant foremen, designers, electrical engineers, lumber and woodworking engineers, mining engineers of all kinds, technological engineers for the fishing industry, shipbuilding engineers, marine engineers, refrigeration experts, silicate specialists, geologists, sea captains, sea and coastal navigators, marine and shore radio operators, rubber industry engineers, specialists in trade turnover, planning experts on labor questions, statisticians, chauffeurs, charwomen, dock workers, mechanics of all kinds.

The ancient chimes on the Spassk Tower of the Kremlin struck the hour. On short and long wavelengths, the radio carried the sound far and wide, heralding the time of rest. Throughout the country at the hospitable entrances of Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, Azerbaijan, Armenian, Georgian, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tajik, Turkmenian and Uzbek theaters the first electric lights were turned on.

The kaleidoscope of the country's daily cultural life took another turn.

The doors of the Scientific Institute of Music Research in Yerevan were thrown wide and visitors flocked to a most interesting exhibit of Armenian national folk instruments. In a little district center, Akarmara, in Georgia, a cinema festival for the miners of the Tkvarcheli coal mines was opened with due ceremony. On the shores of Lake Balkhash, which three years ago were still uninhabited, an olym-

Government House. Frunze, capital of Soviet Kirghizia

piad of children's amateur art opened with 800 youngsters, sons and daughters of Kazakhs, Kirghizians and Russians participating. In the Tajik *kishlak* of Kostakoz, the musical comedy theater under the auspices of the local village Soviet gave a performance.

In the village of Klyusy, Grodnensk District, where the boundaries of the R.S.F.S.R., the Ukraine and Byelorussia meet, a memorial evening was held in honor of the great Ukrainian poet and revolutionary, Taras Shevchenko. The 300 guests, Byelorussian and Russian collective farmers from the Telekhovsk and Klin Districts, traveled to the club in the Ukrainian village of Klyusy in the machines which belonged to their own collective farms, or in sleighs to which they had harnessed their prize thoroughbred racehorses.

The *aul* of Tekhes, lost amid the ranges of the Tian-Shan, was witness to an odd celebration. Uraz Daukenov, Kazakh collective farm hunter, threw a party in honor of his trained eagle, called Steel Claw. The eagle had caught its hundredth fox for the season and Uraz's friends came to his *yurta*, or skin tent, to drink *kumiss*, play their native instruments and sing songs.

In Moscow at the Writers' Club an evening devoted to Kirghiz poetry was in progress. This was one of the Club's traditional evenings, devoted to the literature of one or another national republic. Alymkul Usenbayev, folk singer and story teller who knows by heart 400,000 lines of the Kirghiz epic *Manas*, sang a song about the new Moscow.

The profound darkness of the night settled down over the limitless expanses of the country. New groups of border guards took up their watch in the snowy tundra, in Byelorussian forests, in the mountain ravines of the Tian-Shan, on the heights of the Pamirs, on the volcanic hills of the Far East, on the seas which wash the great Soviet mainland. Slowly drifting, the ice-locked *Sedov* was carried toward the North Pole. The radio operator sent a weather report from the 86th parallel to the mainland. . . .

MAXIM GORKY

On Arts and Crafts

It is a recognized and well-established fact that speech originated in early antiquity as a result of labor processes of man. This art arose as a result of man's striving to record his labor experience in word combinations that would most easily and firmly fix themselves in the memory: in the form of couplets, proverbs, sayings, in the labor slogans of antiquity. Speech was a direct outcome of labor; the spoken word was the genesis of the science of struggle against the resistance of nature inimical to man's labor activity. Undoubtedly, speech must have appeared tens of centuries earlier than any primitive religion. This is indicated by the fact that primitive man considered the spoken word to have a magic effect on wild beasts and natural phenomena.

Reasoning with that logical, honest straightforwardness which the mind receives from labor, its most conscientious teacher and organizer, we have the right to assert that by the time man had learned to speak articulately he was already cognizant of the fact that he was the wisest and most perfect of all animals. Labor, fire and speech—these are the forces that helped man to create culture, which is a second nature. Speech was more than a means of mutual understanding and close contact among people in the primitive communist society: it infused man with pride and joy in the achievements of his labor and, naturally, influenced the productivity of his labor.

We, people of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, are daily finding confirmation of the fact that the more productive our free labor, the faster, stronger and more beautiful grows man, who is the most complex and perfect of living creatures.

The bourgeois history of culture pictures the life of primitive man as a continuous fear and horror of the unknown and the incomprehensible, it pictures man pondering over the meaning of sleep, death, fire. This assertion must be reconsidered and examined, along with all the other assertions of bourgeois science about the cultural development of mankind.

Ancient fables and myths do not reflect man's fear of nature. On the contrary, they speak of man's victories over it, of the miraculous power of the word, which is capable of overcoming the evil resistance of matter and natural phenomena, and placing them at the service of the aims and processes of labor. Earthquakes, floods and natural catastrophes in general did not occur daily, and not every generation suffered from them. As animals who do not know man as a hunter do not experience fright at the sight of him, so the "savages" of Africa, Australia and New

Zealand were peaceful and trustful towards Europeans during the first contacts with them.

Social tragedy and terror appeared on the scene with the division of mankind into masters and slaves and the birth of religion was simultaneous with this division.

Individual members who had broken away from the community became the theoreticians, deists, preachers of the tragedy of life. Also in our day they continue their sermon, justifying the division of people into masters and slaves, into sinners and righteous, into those deserving the tortures of hell and those meriting heavenly bliss. It was they who conceived the naive, sly and melancholy religion of Christ, the bitterness of which is amateurishly sugared with a measly pinch of primitive Communism.

People could not live without happiness. They knew how to laugh; they composed happy songs; they loved to dance. Delighting in the successes of their labors, they introduced songs, dances and games into even the religious ceremonies of the priests; even the murky Christian church of the Inquisition was compelled to include happy singing in its holidays.

Especially great was the happiness art brought into the burdensome life of the slaves, and it was they, the slaves, who were the creators of the beauty we see in the Etruscan vases, the beauty that we know from ancient ornamental work in gold, from arms, from sculpture, from the ruins of ancient temples in Egypt, Greece, Mexico, Peru, India and China, from the medieval cathedrals of Europe, from eastern rugs, from Flemish tapestries, and so on.

Who was it who turned burdensome daily toil, at first for himself and then for a master, into art? The founders of art were the potters, smiths and goldsmiths, weavers, both men and women, stone workers, carpenters, wood carvers, bone carvers, armorers, house painters, tailors and artisans in general—people whose artistic creations gladden the eye and fill showcases in museums.

What moved people to lend exquisite shape, bright coloring and intricate design to common articles of necessity, to "household articles"; what in general prompted man to decorate both himself and things? The striving toward perfection of form, a biological striving at the basis of which lies man's desire to train himself to be agile, to have strong muscles, light and lithe movements—this striving towards physical culture was especially vividly embodied by the ancient Greeks in their unsurpassed sculpture. People know that good health goes hand in hand with full enjoyment of the pleasures of life; the greatest of joys—the joy of being creators of the new, the unusual—is open to the working people, people who transform matter and the essence and conditions of life.

People love melodious sounds, bright colors, they love to make their environment brighter and more cheerful. Art aims at exaggerating the good, so it appears to be still better; it exaggerates the bad, that which is inimical to man, that it may arouse disgust, rouse the spirit to destroy the shameful, loathsome things of life, born of foul and pitiful philistinism. Fundamentally, art is a struggle for or against: art that is indifferent does not exist, for man is not a camera, he does not "fix" reality, but confirms, changes or destroys it.

When man was in his cultural infancy people strove to outdo one another in adornment; later society broke up into classes, labor became slave labor, involuntary labor, and creation an object of barter; hon-

est competition gave way to competition among masters, aroused by man's struggle for his daily bread, and competition, increasing the quantity of commodities "for the masters," lowered their quality. Working people invented the first primitive machines in order to lighten their labor; the masters, through their mercenaries, perfected these machines in order to increase their profits. In the hands of the masters the machine became an enemy of the workers; in the hands of the worker it is his assistant; it economizes his strength; it increases his leisure.

Well, we have lived to see the rise of technique in the capitalist states, throwing millions out of work, frightening the philistines of Europe, who cry: "Down with technique! Back, back to hand labor!" This is a call to stop the growth of culture, a call for a return to medieval slavery. It is the death rattle of capitalism.

Insurmountable barriers were set up in the face of the working man's free creative talents. But there always have been Don Quixotes and we find them in our day—people in whom still burns bright the ancient desire to make a beautiful thing at all costs, an unusual thing. There are not many people of this sort. Still I have met dozens of them among our handicraftsmen. A Vyatka [1] man from Kukarka Sloboda stands out clearly in my mind. I met him on a boat running between Kazan and Nizhni. He was traveling to the All-Russian Exhibition of 1896. Small, thin and bald, with tiny beady eyes and an angry little face lost in a yellowish tousled beard, he walked around the third class deck in worn bast shoes and, looking about cautiously, whispered to the passengers:

Chapayev leading an attack. Woodcarving by D. Bogdanov, amateur sculptor.

"Buy a little toy!"

The toy, carved out of the root of a juniper, was the figure of a man wearing a hat and long trousers, leaning against a tree, a stick in his hand. His face was distorted with rage, he was biting his underlip, his mouth twisted into a sneer. The face was made very skillfully, accurately, while the body was carved only as far as the waist; the other half sort of grew into the wood. It was hinted at carelessly, but in this carelessness craftsmanship, taste and knowledge of anatomy were clearly evident. The figure was about eight inches high. He asked two rubles for it. The passengers insultingly offered fifteen or twen-

[1] Vyatka—a handicrafts' center.

ty kopeks and he moved on silently.

Someone called after him:

"You're wasting your time, old fellow."

"And it's poorly done," added another passenger.

I had a ruble and a half but I did not wish to hurt the old fellow's feelings.

"Did you carve it yourself?" He was surprised at the question and asked:

"Why, what do you mean?" — Then he muttered:

"I don't sell other people's work."

He went up to the bow, sat down in a corner, fished a root out of a bag and a carving knife out of his pocket. I sat down next to him. We got to talking and he showed me four more figures, the first a pot-bellied, thick-lipped *muzhik* with a long apostolic beard. He was barefooted, in a long shirt without a belt. His eyes were cast heavenward and he was crossing himself, pressing a hand to his left shoulder; his mouth was open showing his teeth. Then a tall monk with a long nose and jolly squinting eyes; a dishevelled, bare-headed witch of an old woman threatening someone with a fist, and, last, a drunken squire with a nobleman's hat tilted on the back of his head. All five figures had one feature in common: they were amazingly ugly. I asked why he, an artist, mocked at people in his carvings. Looking at me askance, he answered, not without fire:

"I carve from life. What I know, I carve. I've been doing it since I was thirteen and now I'm fifty-seven. I'm taken for a fool, of course. But that isn't a drawback, it's a help: fools are let alone."

He paused, then continued:

"Certain figures have to be carved uglier than they really are; others, nicer than the real thing. What's nice I make nicer and what I don't like I'm not afraid to distort, however ugly it may be."

He spoke somewhat unwillingly, looking askance at me from under his bristly eyebrows, to see whether I was listening attentively. I felt that he needed a listener and I easily got him to tell me the story of his sad and miserable life. A foundling, he began as a shepherd's helper, then served in the army as a non-combatant, and half a year in a disciplinary battalion; later worked for cabinet-makers.

"But I can't get along with people, I don't let anyone step over me."

The ordinary life of a solitary artist, afire with creative talent, which finds no appreciation.

I have met quite a few such men and it was they, most likely, who made me confident that the proletariat can give rise to its own art, its own culture, even though enslaved by the bourgeoisie. How many gifted people have fruitlessly wasted their native talents in petty, deadening toil, to keep body and soul together? There have been many among the woodworkers of the Volga district, among the armorers in the Caucasian tribes, the silversmiths of the Great Ustyug, among the embroiderers in gold, the needleworkers, those hundreds of thousands of men and women workers who wasted their lives in the "arts and crafts industries" for the embellishment of the opulent existence of the large and small shopkeepers. Could one have imagined that through ikon-painting, the most conservative of crafts, that through painting, the most conservative of arts, the masters of the villages Palekh and Mstera would reach their present high skill, which arouses the admiration even of those whose tastes have been spoiled by subservient painters?

I have called painting a conservative art because it has for ages served, and even now fawningly serves, primarily the interests of the church, picturing its mournful

myths, its Jesuit morals, its sermon of patience, meekness, of the inevitability of suffering, senseless martyrdom for the sake of Christ. In thousands of portraits painting immortalized—and immortalizes—tsars, generals, bankers, *demi-mondaines*, shopkeepers.

The October Revolution, carried through by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, freed the working class and the peasantry from the inhuman bondage of capitalism and restored to all working people their birthright of free labor for themselves. The result of this heroic Revolution is that within less than two decades poverty-stricken, illiterate, weak and broken Russia of the tsar, landowners, manufacturers and bankers, has been transformed into a mighty union of fraternal republics, into a land which the bourgeoisie the world over hates, but respects because it fears.

No less strikingly do children reflect the victory of the revolutionary proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party and the tireless efforts of the entire population of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The talents of our children are developing with amazing rapidity. Each year sees new hundreds of young musicians, glider pilots, inventors and poets; it sees young heroes who bravely give battle to the enemy. And the country is already erecting monuments in memory of those who have fallen in this struggle.

1935

"Papaninites" by Moldavian women rugweavers

AMATEUR ART IN THE U.S.S.R.

Amateur art, theater and song and dance groups are widespread in the Soviet Union. Factory workers, office employees, school teachers, housewives—men and women of all ages and occupations—devote much of their spare time to these groups. Some of them develop into full-fledged professional companies. Many individuals become famous and join regular theaters, operas, etc. Annual reviews of amateur art are held regularly in various parts of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The following pages present a series of photos illustrating the work of some of these amateur groups and individuals.

"Lenin and Gorky on the Island of Capri." Drawing by a young woman worker M. Gruzdeva.

Above: a popular folk dance performed by two girls from "Bolshevik," a collective farm in the Gorky region.
Below: "Gopak," a Ukrainian folk dance performed by kolkhoz youngsters

"Engine Driver," a sculpture by fifteen year old Nathan Levant, exhibited at the exposition of children's work organized in honor of the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

A scene from "Tartuffe," by Molière, at the kolkhoz theater in Sverdlovsk district.

Above: Donbas miners' jazz-band
In the center: a performance by a Nenets (a people in the Soviet North) dramatic circle
Below: a bandura orchestra of Poltava (Soviet Ukraine) railway workers

A Scene from "Tartuffe" by Molière at the Buryat-Mongolian Theater at Ulan-Ude, capital of Soviet Buryat-Mongolia

JOHANN ALTMAN

The Soviet Theater Today

Two celebrations marked the opening of the 1938-39 theatrical season in the Soviet Union: the seventy-fifth anniversary of the death of M. Shchepkin, a great Russian actor of the realist school, and the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Gorky Moscow Art Theater.

The attention of all Soviet actors was focused on the Shchepkin celebrations. Problems of dramatic realism and the traditions of the Russian theater were discussed anew with the spirited keenness inherent in Soviet creative thought.

The Soviet theater aims to give the most complete realistic expression to the emotions, thoughts, actions and aspirations of the Soviet people, and quite naturally the trend is toward a more profound realistic art. Realism, as interpreted by the Soviet theater, is neither a photographic realism nor a realism of "bare facts." It is a realism of a considerably broader scope, aiming to portray a many-sided life in all its complexity, its contrasts and in all its greatness. From the heights of ideals shared by advanced and progressive people, Soviet realism endeavors to look into the future and portray the life of tomorrow as a dream being realized by mankind. The Soviet actor is a dreamer and he regards his visions as attainable in real life, or more truly as being achieved now.

Speaking at a meeting of art workers in Moscow on January 9, 1939, M. I. Kalinin, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., correctly defined the essence of Soviet Socialist realism. He said: ". . . The new Socialist relations require vivid artistic description in the novel, the short story, the play, the stage,

in painting and sculpture. Socialist realism manifests itself in that it not only portrays new features quite obvious to all, but shows as well those traits which, unobserved by many, are typical, widening one's horizon and opening up new vistas.

"In his work every artist aspires to express definite ideas. The Socialist realist should portray the existing Socialist reality, but his work should at the same time stimulate the development of thought and the growth of men's noble aspirations. The best of Russian classic literature was significant also in that it aroused human thought, bred noble feelings, taught love for toiling mankind. Therefore the artist who does not put before himself those aims cannot be called a genuine artist.

"The Socialist realist must inspire people with the best, the noble, the elevated. And in our land the very best, the most elevated and noble is love for our fatherland.

"To nurture the best traits in people by one's work is to fulfill the role of a fighter for Socialist society, is to be a Socialist realist."

In its estimate of the activity of art's greatest representatives in the past, Soviet artistic thought approaches from this lofty modern conception of the task of realism. Shchepkin was one of the realists who devoted his entire creative work to the people, to the service of the advanced ideas of mankind. The son of a feudal serf, and himself a serf until he was bought out of bondage, already a celebrity, Shchepkin had a profound comprehension of democracy's essential tasks, and his entire creative work, like that of the leading Russian writers, belonged to the people.

That the names of Mikhail Shchepkin and Konstantin Stanislavsky, two of Russia's greatest realists of the stage, are associated in the minds of Soviet actors and audiences is not at all surprising. One of them founded the realism of the Russian stage of the first half of the nineteenth century; the other created a new kind of a realist theater forty years ago, at a time when the old realism, the old theater, and a considerable number of Russian intellectuals had come to an impasse.

Stanislavsky and the Art Theater are a new and stirring page in the history of Russian theatrical realism.

Stanislavsky carried on the best traditions of Shchepkin. He himself was fond of stressing this. But Stanislavsky not only assimilated the best traditions of the old realism. As we already indicated, he gave realism a new direction. Stanislavsky made stage realism more profound and subtle. He penetrated into the psychology of contemporary characters. In this he utilized every achievement of the realistic school of Europe. In his theory he combined the theater of performance with the theater of experience, of life itself. Moreover, Stanislavsky created a system for training the realist actor.

Despite many shortcomings of his theatrical method, and none will deny that shortcomings there are, Stanislavsky's activity, as actor, regisseur, and theoretician of theatrical art was more fruitful perhaps than that of any other master of the theater. His books, *My Life in Art* and *The Actor's Work on Self-Improvement*, which have already appeared in foreign languages, including English, are invaluable contributions to the best in theatrical esthetics.

The jubilee of the Moscow Art Theater focused the attention of theatrical circles all over the world on the unusual collaboration of the two great artists who founded this

theater—K. Stanislavsky and V. Nemirovich-Danchenko.

The 1938-39 theatrical season opened with productions of *Wit Works Woe*, A. Griboyedov's classic play, at two of the best Russian academic theaters—the Maly and the Moscow Art Theaters. This was not at all accidental. Competition in the best sense of the word has become one of the basic methods of work in the Soviet theaters. Both at the Maly and at the Art Theater, *Wit Works Woe* was conceived as a program play of a specific kind. All of the greatest Russian actors of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries appeared, at one time or another, in this play. It is said with some justice that if a Russian theatrical company has actors to fit all the parts of *Wit Works Woe*, the troupe can be called a theater.

Moscow theater-goers displayed the greatest interest in the performances of *Wit Works Woe* at the Maly and the Moscow Art Theater. The production of the first of the two was the more monumental. It had greater sharpness and emphasis of touch, its characters were more typical and it revealed a deeper feeling for old Moscow. Its mood is generally inherent in the Maly Theater, fostered there in his time by the famous dramatist Ostrovsky. But the mood of fashionable aristocratic Moscow was beyond the reach of the Maly Theater. The Moscow Art Theater succeeded better in depicting this aristocratic, titled Moscow society.

The performance of the Moscow Art Theater shows evidence of greater care, of greater stage culture and more originality. It was directed with a broader and more subtle conception than the Maly Theater revealed. Unfortunately, however, the cast did not execute this conception fully.

A. Griboyedov's great comedy has aroused long and heated disputes. It was variously interpreted as a trenchant satire, as a comedy of characters, as a didactic epigram. The critics aimed their fire chiefly at Chatsky, the hero of the play, a young man of the nineteenth century who hurled a stirring challenge to the society of his time. Misunderstood by this society, Chatsky was declared insane, was spurned by the old "Moscow of Famusovs. . . ."

The question was asked: why does Chatsky, an intelligent, sensitive person, address his passionate monologues to high government officials and titled aristocrats ready to do anything for the sake of rank, of obtaining a higher position and wealth? Why does he cast his pearls before swine?

The people who raised this question did not comprehend that Chatsky was not simply a "solitary figure" or an "undesirable." He was a brilliant representative of the young generation, from whose ranks sprang many distinguished progressive persons of Russia.

The greatest difficulty in producing *Wit Works Woe* is the portrayal of the representative of old Russia, Famusov, and young Chatsky, the rebel of that period. The Maly Theater succeeded in portraying the former; the Moscow Art Theater the latter. The actors M. Klimov and P. Sadovsky perform the role of Famusov in the Maly Theater with a wealth of color and give the proper interpretation of Griboyedov's Famusov, whereas M. Tarkhanov of the Art Theater gives a sketchy portrayal dangerously approaching the grotesque. The strongest moment in Tarkhanov's acting is in the second act, when Chatsky meets Skalozub; and this is not accidental, since it creates an opportunity for Tarkhanov to put to use his great gifts of mimicry. But Famu-

sov played by either Klimov or Sadovsky of the Maly, is rounded, complete, from the moment they make their entry until the last curtain.

The role of Chatsky in the Maly Theater is played by the actor M. Tsaryev. His Chatsky is irrepressible and genuinely lyrical. He is indignant and at moments even sarcastic. But the spectator is somewhat dubious about this sarcasm and indignation, and it seems to him that the accusing monologue of Chatsky is a consequence of spurned love. Personally I felt all the time that Chatsky hurled his bold challenge at society not only and not so much because he objected to the vices of this society as because he, Chatsky himself, was "at sea" and because he found no response in Sophia, the girl he loved.

V. Kachalov plays the role of Chatsky in the Moscow Art Theater production. Despite his sixty years, this actor endows Chatsky with so much charm and youth, so much profound emotion that you believe him and in him. True, Kachalov's Chatsky is not convincing at the very beginning; he is only convincing from the second act on, for although he is a great actor he cannot drop forty years from his shoulders and completely reincarnate his youth, as he has to in the first act when Chatsky, young, clumsy, impatient and romantic, rushes like a whirlwind into the Famusovs' house.

However, as the play unfolds, Kachalov's Chatsky moves you. His monologue is void of any shade of moralizing, any hint at rationalizing. It is wrathful thought, boiling emotion. The monologue of Kachalov's Chatsky is "a million torments." Genuine art, Kachalov has proved once more, knows no age limits. We recall that Sarah Bernhardt in her declining years played in *L'Aiglon*, that the old man Rossi played many youthful roles, and other similar cases. One only has to forget that before him is a sixty year old actor; Kachalov compels one to do so. Then we see a portrayal of Chatsky, reminiscent of that remarkable Russian Chaadayev, whom tsarism drove to insanity.

I. Moskvin of the Moscow Art Theater plays with inimitable artistry the small and essentially episodic role of Zagoretsky, a rogue, swindler and liar. The distinguished actress O. Massalitinova of the Maly Theater presents a powerful portrayal of the old self-willed Khlestova.

These two productions of Griboyedov's comedy have evoked a dispute reaching far beyond the scope of criticism of the productions themselves. The theatrical press, stage directors, actors and critics discussed the question of what place the given productions have in the artistic system of both theaters and what would be the future development of these theaters. The All-Russian Theatrical Society devoted several evenings to a discussion of these questions. This once more emphasizes the struggle now waged in Soviet theatrical circles against the monotonous and the trivial. It points to the trend toward ascertaining that which is peculiar and inimitable, inherent only in the given theater itself, and which creates genuine art.

The production of Maxim Gorky's *Dostigayev and Others* during the celebration of the Moscow Art Theater's fortieth anniversary was another important event. Gorky had conceived a trilogy: Bulychev, Dostigayev and Ryabinin; but his death came before he completed it. Dostigayev is a continuation of the play *Yegor Bulychev*. While the

Art Theater production of it is interesting, the performance is by far not a faultless one. This play also evoked many spirited disputes. Today, just as forty years ago, public interest is focused on the Moscow Art Theater.

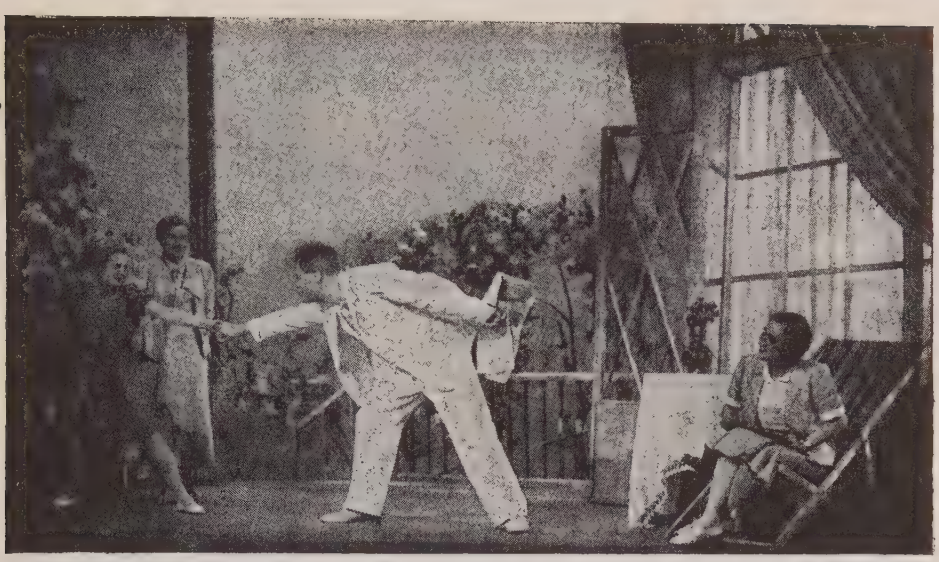
V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, the director of the Moscow Art Theater, recently declared that the theater did not intend to discontinue experimentation now, any more than at the beginning of its career. The creative searchings of Nemirovich-Danchenko, one of the Art Theater founders, his painstaking work at rehearsals and his exacting demands go to show how little this theater intends to travel along the beaten path.

This year marks the three hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of the birth of William Shakespeare. Without exaggerating we can say that plays by Shakespeare will run or are already running in all the important theaters in the eleven capitals of the Soviet Republics.

A. D. Popov's striking though debatable production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Moscow Theater of the Red Army opened the Shakespeare memorial year. Soon the Vakhtangov Theater in Moscow will put on *Measure for Measure*. This theater also is working on a production of *Macbeth*. Among many other theaters working on Shakespeare memorial productions is the Moscow Art Theater which is now rehearsing *Hamlet*.

During the past three years one hundred different productions of *Othello* have been staged by Soviet

A scene from "The Taming of the Shrew" (Act I) at the Moscow Red Army Theater



A scene from "Marina Strakhova" at the Moscow Kamerny Theater

theaters, according to the incomplete records of the Shakespeare Section of the Soviet Theatrical Society. Sitxy-seven theaters performed *Othello* in the Russian language; thirty-three in other languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. A mere list of other Shakespearean productions is impressive: thirty-six *Twelfth Night*, thirty-five *Romeo and Juliet*, twenty-three *Taming of the Shrew*, twenty-three *Hamlet*, nineteen *Much Ado About Nothing*, seventeen *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The total for the past three years runs into nineteen plays, two hundred and ninety-seven new productions. Seventy of these productions were presented in languages other than Russian. The Armenian Theater produced sixteen plays by Shakespeare, the Georgian produced eleven, the Azerbaijanian nine, and so on all along the line. Whereas in 1937 one hundred and five theaters produced Shakespeare plays, the 1938-39 theatrical season saw two hundred and four Soviet theaters present plays by Shakespeare. As these dry figures indicate, the interest in Shakespeare steadily grows. And this is the best evidence of artistic growth of the young Soviet theater.

We now turn to modern plays and it is logical to begin with a review of the two most recent productions of Soviet plays. These are *Stronger Than Death* (or *Marina Strakhova*) at the Kamerny Theater and *Pavel Grekov* at the Theater of the Revolution.

Stronger Than Death tells a simple story. A Soviet woman, the physician Marina Strakhova, is working on a medical problem of immense importance. She is searching for a method of combatting the black plague. She labors all the more ardently because a certain fascist "scientist" proclaims with the cynicism of a cannibal that a bacteriological war is essential in the future. Inspired by her love for humanity, the Soviet scientist Marina Strakhova and her laboratory assistant, a young woman, dedicate their lives to the solution of the problem they are working on. After

overcoming many impediments and passing through tormenting disputes with colleagues, Marina Strakhova performs an experiment on herself, despite warnings of would-be friends who in reality are seeking to delay the completion of the experiment. She tests the anti-cholera virus by inoculating herself. Several critical days pass with Marina Strakhova in agony. But she recovers. Victory is hers.

This theme is stirring and we can remind the reader that an analogous episode actually took place, and was reported at the time by the Soviet press. The theme has unfortunately not found a sufficiently imaginative development in the play. The Kamerny Theater, however, succeeded in turning it into a highly impressive production.

The actress Alice Koonen as Marina Strakhova moves the spectators by her talent as a tragedienne and by her personal charm. The moments of highest drama are when she quarrels with her friends and when she fights death in the isolation ward. In these scenes Alice Koonen gives free play to her dramatic talents. Her acting here is on a level with that which she displayed a few years ago as the woman commissar in V. Vishnevsky's *The Optimistic Tragedy*.

The spontaneity, sincerity and timeliness of *Pavel Grekov* are responsible for the tumultuous approval of the audiences at the Moscow Theater of the Revolution. Here we see how a young Communist surmounts one obstacle after another, fighting his enemies, the agents of fascism who have slandered him in an attempt to deprive him of active participation in the life of his fatherland, the Soviet Union.

Plays by the anti-fascist playwrights Julius Hay, Willie Bredel, Lion Feuchtwanger, Friedrich Wolf and others, will soon be presented in Moscow.

The Fifth Column by the American author, Ernest Hemingway; *Mother* by the late Czech author Karel Capek, and *The Bloody Wedding* by the Spanish writer Garcia Lorca have aroused great interest.

Having touched upon the anti-fascist themes, we would like to dwell here on two striking units of Moscow's theatrical world—the Jewish State Theater and the Gypsy Theater.

At a time when hundreds of thousands of Jews who have lived for generations in Germany are being persecuted with barbaric and unparalleled cruelty; at a time when the Italian, Hungarian and other fascists imitate the bloody deeds of the Nazis; at a time when the raging wave of anti-semitism threatens to inundate many so-called democratic countries, the culture of the Jewish people is flourishing in the Soviet Union. Together with other nationalities who inhabit the U.S.S.R., they are building a new life. There are many Jewish theaters in Byelorussia, the Ukraine, the Caucasus, in Birobijan; but the best of them all is the Jewish State Theater in Moscow, which has attained world-wide fame. In recent years this theater has produced many notable plays, among which the best are *King Lear*, *Sulamith* and *Bar Kokhba*.

In connection with the eightieth anniversary since the birth of Sholom Aleichem, the greatest representative of Yiddish literature, the Jewish Theater produced *Tevye der Milkhiker*, based on a work by Sholom Aleichem. In this play the prominent Peoples Aritst S. Michoels has created an impressive character of a man of the people who, though persecuted by the tsarist government, does not lose his sense of humor or allow his spirit to be crushed and compre-

Scene from "King Lear" at the Moscow Jewish Theater

hends the ideas of the new times. Tevye is a Jew evicted by the tsarist government from the village where he was born and where he spent his entire life, as had his father and his forefathers. He becomes friendly with the Ukrainian peasants, his neighbors, and finally sees clearly that the root of the evil that has befallen him and the Ukrainian peasants lies in the tsarist regime of oppression. This, in brief, is the content of the play, which is in a way a reply to fascist barbarism.

We are informed that the same theater is working on a production of *Nathan the Wise*, the immortal play by Lessing, which the fascists have dropped from the list of works by this great German democrat.

A scene from "Menchi' by Sholom Aleichem at the Birobijan Jewish Theater

We have not, of course, named even a fifth of the Moscow plays which were launched this year. Theatrical life in Moscow is so rich we could not possibly mention all the premieres.

After Moscow, Leningrad is first in importance in the theatrical world of the U.S.S.R. Several very engrossing plays were presented in Leningrad during the opening months of this season. Having seen some of these myself, I can briefly comment on them.

V. Meyerhold's brilliant production of *Masquerade* at the State Academic Theater, formerly the Alexandrinsky, is extremely significant. This romantic play of Y. Lermontov has always attracted Russia's most distinguished stage directors. Twice before this Vsevolod Meyerhold produced *Masquerade*, but he saw Lermontov's drama through the eyes of Russia's symbolist poet Alexander Block. Now he finally succeeded in freeing *Masquerade* of all that tended to make his former productions mystical.

The romantic drama, it should be noted, always harbors the danger of symbolism and, if incorrectly handled, even of mysticism. This danger is not unlike the perils which threaten a realistic play in the hands of a naturalist. Meyerhold succeeded in liberating himself from symbolism, and Lermontov's remarkable drama was revealed in a new light on the stage of the oldest Russian theater. This was due in no small degree to the acting of Y. Yuryev, an outstanding old actor of the romantic school, who played the part of Arbenin.

Dachniki (Summer-Cottagers), an old play by Maxim Gorky, was another successful production in Leningrad. For twenty-five years the metropolitan theaters had not touched this play. The regisseur B. Babochkin, who is best known for his film portrayal of *Chapayev*, was able to reveal in Gorky's play the impasse in which the Russian bourgeois intellectuals found themselves on the eve of the Russian revolution. The play gives a stirring picture of the process of decay and degeneration among these intellectuals who were ready to sell their ideals for the sake of a peaceful, prosperous and placid life. At the same time B. Babochkin presented with a great sense of tact those few positive characters who subsequently, as the Revolution and Soviet construction progressed, were able to join the ranks of the builders of a new life and actively participate in the creation of a new society.

Mention should be made of yet another very instructive play in Leningrad, *Mary Stuart* at the Novy Theater. This tragedy by Friedrich Schiller, as is known, is far from being progressive. But the producer B. Sushkevich succeeded in reading Schiller in a new way and presenting the tragedy of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth as a tragedy of the conflict of irreconcilable forces. For this very reason the personal passions of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth are depicted not as subjective but as social and national passions. The death of Mary Stuart shocks the spectator—otherwise there would be no tragedy, since there would be no tragic "catharsis," but her death is perceived as the inevitable punishment for a wrong conception of the real interests of her people. *Mary Stuart* may be a debatable production, but it affords excellent material for reflection on how plays by Schiller as well as Shakespeare can be produced.

There are many other important plays now current in Moscow and Leningrad, but we can speak of them only briefly. For example, the Leningrad Theater directed by S. Radlov produced *Key to Berlin*,

"Robbers" by Friedrich Schiller, at the State Theater of the Volga German Republic

a play based on the history of the Seven Years War, by the Soviet dramatists K. Finn and M. Guss. With the aid of its keenly conceived analogies this play may well serve as a reminder to German fascists of the crushing blow dealt by the Russians to their "ancestor" King Friedrich II. (An article by M. Guss on this subject was published in our issue No. 12, 1938.—*Ed.*) An interesting production of *Silver Hollow*, a play by N. Pogodin, can be seen at the Moscow Red Army Theater. This play shows how the peace-loving Red Army defends the Far Eastern frontier and ruthlessly routs the fascist invader. Not long ago the Len-Soviet Theater in Moscow presented a play in which the central character is Lenin's comrade-in-arms, the great humanist, Felix Dzerzhinsky.

Pogodin's play *The Man with the Gun*,[1] in which V. I. Lenin is the central character, was first produced in Moscow. The state theaters in the eleven Soviet Republics as well as many provincial theaters followed suit. The presentation on the stage of Lenin constitutes for our playwrights and stage directors a task of great significance, and many plays and films about Lenin have already been produced in the U.S.S.R. So much has Soviet dramaturgy grown and matured that it can now attempt to solve most complex problems. The portrayal of Lenin is the most important of all the tasks faced not only by the Soviet theater, but also by all branches of art all over the progressive world.

Aspiring to show Lenin to contemporaries, the Soviet theater aims as well to help posterity know and understand one of the greatest men of all times, who launched a new era in the history of mankind. The earnestness with which the theaters set to work on the portrayal of Lenin is natural. Praiseworthy results have already been attained by our theaters and

[1] See No. 7, 1938 of *International Literature*

the cinema, but specific difficulties have been revealed simultaneously. The image of Lenin, a man of paramount importance, tolerates no superficiality of approach or treatment simply as an illustration.

Soviet actors and playwrights have approached this great task with an ardor and depth which promises in a few years' time to result in the creation of monumental new plays that will depict Lenin, the man and the leader, with a striking completeness.

Our review would be incorrect should we fail to point out the remarkable recent growth of the largest theaters of the national Soviet republics.

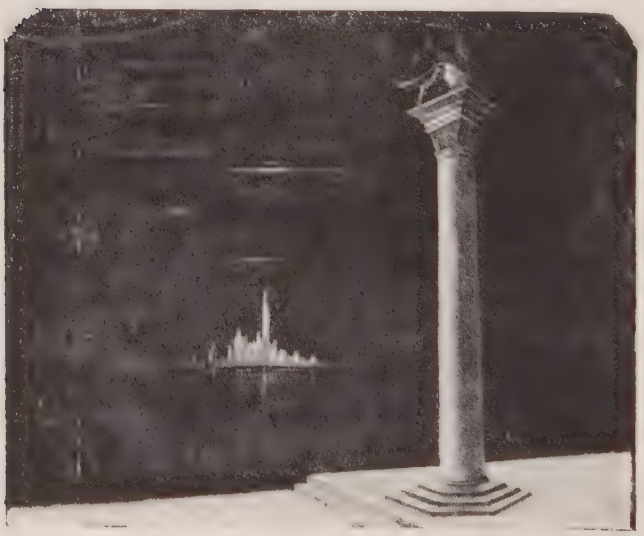
In the Ukraine many notable plays were produced this year by the Kiev State Theater, N. Gogol's *Inspector-General* being the most outstanding. This play, the author regrets to say, he was unable to see. But judging from press comment, it was the best play staged in Kiev this season.

In Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, and in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, the author was fortunate enough to see many outstanding plays this year. Of the several large theaters in Tbilisi, which perform in the Georgian language, the best are the Rust'hveli and the Marjanishvili Theaters. For its distinguished work, the former was given the Order of Lenin, supreme award in the U.S.S.R.

Last year the People's Artists of the U.S.S.R. A. Khorava and Vassadze of the Rust'hveli Theater created remarkable portrayals of Othello and Iago. During this season the theater produced A. Ostrovsky's *Guilty Though Guiltless.* The high level of craftsmanship and stage culture attained by the Rust'hvelli Theater places it among the most prominent playhouses in the Soviet Union.

In *From a Spark*, by the Georgian playwright, the People's Artist Shalva Dadiani, and *Guilty Though Guiltless*, the Rust'hveli Theater displayed great mastery of detail and sensitive plastic movement. All the component parts of the performance were strikingly merged into one complete unit.

At the other theater, the Marjanishvili Theater in Tbilisi, I saw



"Othello," (Act I, scene 2) at the Rust' hveli Theater, Tbilisi. Scenery designed by I. Gamrekeli

several new productions this year: Of these the most outstanding were *Uriel Akosta* by Gutskov and *Marriage of Figaro* by P. A. Beaumarchais. The founder of this theater was Marjanishvili, a notable master of the stage, whose ideals were monumental dignity, flaming passion and philosophic depth.

If the trend of the Rust'hveli Theater is toward harmonic unity, the Marjanishvili Theater searches for passion of dramatic clashes. Its actors strive for unexpected dramatic collisions which as a flash throw light on the entire play and give the spectator the key to its main idea. After seeing *Othello, Guilty Though Guiltless, Marriage of Figaro* and *Uriel Akosta* we were convinced of the high standard and great achievements of the Georgian theater. It did not come as a surprise to us, for it is well known that the Georgian people have a profound feeling for the stage.

In Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan and the most important oil producing center in the U.S.S.R., I saw several performances at the Azizbekov State Theater, the most outstanding of which was *Vagif*. Vagif, a prominent poet of the eighteenth century, is a national hero of Azerbaijan, who fought against Persian shahs. The play *Vagif* is a monumental drama in verse by Samets Vurgun, a young Azerbaijanian poet. The epigrammatic verse and lofty poetic style of the play make a strong impression. Scattered throughout the text are Vagif's cues and monologues, sharp as daggers, to which the audience responds with thunderous applause.

Many other performances are interesting and worthy of mention but we hope the reader will pardon us for omitting them. It is apparent from what has already been said that the oldest and most honored theaters of the Soviet Union, as well as the young theaters scattered throughout the country, are working with an enthusiasm and an ever increasing mastery which are in step with the general growth of Socialist culture.

A. Khorava as Othello

There are sixty thousand actors in the Soviet Union, a great cultural army constantly at work on new productions, ever aware of the necessity to grow and mature as artists. The Soviet people love the theater and frequent it not only for diversion; it helps them acquire knowledge, culture which moves them onward. The Soviet actors are inspired by lofty ideals of service to mankind, and they are conscious of the trust and support they are given by their Government and by the Soviet people as a whole.

THE STORY OF AN OPERA SINGER

Mark Reizen

Every real actor knows the sensation of anxious expectancy and uncertainty that precedes each new appearance. The thought that runs through his mind is: will I succeed from the very first moment in finding the contact with the audience without which success is inconceivable, and the creative bond between the actor and the spectator impossible? Audiences change. They are all different, these thousands of people for whom you are to sing. Some accept you at once, delightedly and unthinkingly, others must be convinced and won over.

Even applause does not always mean the same thing. Standing behind the footlights, you learn to distinguish in the general chorus the approving applause of the connoisseurs, the polite and almost inaudible clapping of the indifferent, and the stormy torrent of appreciation poured out by grateful youth.

We, Soviet actors and opera singers, are in a privileged position. Rarely is the public at our performances cold and indifferent. It loves art and appreciates its finest points. The life of a stage artist in our country is the life of the whole people, life with the people. Art to us is but a means, a distinguished and brilliant means, of serving our people.

If a poet, writer, artist, musician or singer wishes to keep pace with the progress of the entire country, it is not enough for him simply to be talented. He must work persistently, day after day, on improving his art, on making his creative work more profound, on attaining mastery. That is the sacred duty of every person who has talent and honestly wishes to serve his people.

I began to sing when I was very young. In my schooldays I was always in our school choruses, but no one ever paid any attention to me at that time or thought of giving my voice necessary training. Later, when I was already in the army during the World War, I was sent to the western front, where I sang in the regimental chorus.

Panneau by P. Williams, the designer of the settings for "Ivan Susanin." The Russian forces routing the Polish invaders in 1613

My voice was so powerful that if I stopped singing it was immediately noticed and remarked upon by my commander.

After demobilization in 1917 I entered the Kharkov Technological Institute. There I often sang at parties and gatherings. Once, after I had sung at a mass concert in the university garden, someone suggested that I enter the conservatory. This idea sounded good to me.

When I heard the examiners call my name, I jumped up and, my army training not quite forgotten, strode smartly up to the table.

"Sing a scale," the examiners told me.

"I don't know what that is," I answered. "I can sing some kind of folk song or romance."

The examiners assented and I sang *Coachman, Don't Whip up your Horses.*

Then they played scales and arpeggios for me, asking me to repeat them, and I did, following the piano.

I was accepted into the Conservatory, and Bugamelli, an Italian professor, suggested that I enter his classes. I was given a scholarship. Unfortunately I was not to study long; lessons were broken off by the Civil War. Nor was I able to finish the Technological Institute because of financial difficulties and a long, severe bout of typhus followed by influenza. Having recovered, I joined a dramatic group. Life was dull without the theater. I played small parts among which that of Atlas, holding up the sky on his shoulders, stands out in my memory. Evidently my tall, powerful figure impelled the regisseurs to pick me for this role.

It was only in 1920 that I was able to take singing lessons again. I began to appear at concerts for Red Army units and sang mostly folk songs which are so beloved by Red Army audiences. At this period I joined the opera studio of the Kharkov Conservatory where I worked with concert masters and learned parts of operas. I then began to appear at workers' clubs. Our presentations had almost no stage direction, and settings and properties were so primitive that sometimes even the most necessary things were lacking.

Finally in 1921 I made my debut at the Kharkov opera. I sang the part of Pimen in *Boris Godunov*, and was terribly excited. Pimen, of course, is a venerable old man of epic calm, restrained in gesture, slow of movement; and I was young and very wrought up, moreover, at the thought of my first appearance on a professional stage before a large audience. The debut went off well and I was given a permanent position in the cast. I began to sing Nilacantu in *Lakme*, Gremin in *Eugene Onegin*, Mephistopheles in *Faust*. In 1923 I first appeared in the difficult role of Dosifei in Musorgsky's *Khovanshchina*, and the following year I sang Ruslan in Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmila*.

In 1925, after four years with the Kharkov opera, I was invited to the Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet in Leningrad (the former Mariinsky Theater). The first important new role I sang there was that of Ivan the Terrible in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Maiden of Pskov*. Later I sang the title role in *Boris Godunov*, where I had formerly taken the role of Pimen. One role followed another and I was head over heels in work: Galitsky in *Prince Igor*, Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, Holofernes in *Judith*. In 1928 I was invited for guest performances at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, where I appeared in *Boris Godunov* and *Faust*.

A tour to Paris, London, Berlin and Monte Carlo gave me a wealth of impressions in 1929. I had an opportunity to make the acquain-

M. Reizen as Ivan Susanin

tance of many outstanding singers of Western Europe. After my return to the Soviet Union I entered the cast of the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow.

I am often told that nature has generously bestowed her bounties upon me, but for all that it is a matter of common knowledge that it is only with hard work that one can make nature bear fruit most abundantly. The Soviet theater and opera audiences have matured a great deal in recent years, and they demand of an artist not only a good voice, but the ability to control it to perfection as well. They demand a vivid, truthful, artistic production, excellent singing and first-rate acting.

Therefore every new role for every Soviet singer is a new, difficult but precious task. One feels that one wants to put something of one's own into it, something that was lacking in previous interpretations of the role; one wants to show the spectators that the artist is worthy of that trusting, expectant joy with which they come to the performance.

When you are working on a new role, it occupies all your thought and attention. You think out and live through even the slightest detail. You persistently seek some new apt touch, some characteristic feature or intonation that will serve to enrich the role you are creating.

At present, for example, all my thoughts are absorbed by the magnificent role of Ivan Susanin in the opera of that name by the great composer M. Glinka. The history

Valeria Barsova as Susanin's daughter Antonida

of this opera is interesting and instructive. Written some hundred years ago, it had its premiere in the Bolshoi Theater on September 7, 1842. The plot was suggested to Glinka by V. Zhukovsky, the well-known Russian poet, who was to have written the libretto, but found no time for it. The composer himself sketched the story of his truly popular opera *Ivan Susanin.*

Baron Rosen, a "zealous German *literatus,*" as Glinka ironically called him, was commissioned to write the text of the opera. In complete contradiction to the composer's conception, Rosen substituted the basic theme of the opera, which was the great popular movement to defend the country against foreign invaders, by the thoroughly false theme of saving the monarch. By the order of Nicholas I the title of the opera was changed from *Ivan Susanin* to *Life for the Tsar.*

Its first performances did not meet with any great success. The fashionable theatrical public of that time, which favored only French or Italian opera, thought Glinka's music, based on native folk airs, vulgar. In their opinion it was "coachman's music." Later the opera was revived a number of times in theaters of the capitals and the provinces until 1916-17. F. Shaliapin at one time sang the role of Susanin.

Now, when the theme of patriotism, of love for the fatherland has taken on a quite different significance from what it had in times past, the

cast of the Bolshoi Theater has decided to stage Ivan Susanin, reviving the opera in all the greatness of Glinka's true conception. The libretto was edited by the poet Sergei Gorodetsky, together with the conductor S. Samosud, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R., and the Bolshoi's chief regisseur, the Honored Artist of the Republic B. Mordvinov.

Glinka paints the joy and sorrow of the Russian people with a wealth of color. The choruses of the prologue are marvelous and full of lyricism; the choruses of the first act are imbued with decision and confidence in victory, and, finally, the invincible might of the great hymn of the people swells to the crowning finale of the opera.

The best characteristics of the great Russian people—modesty, moral purity, strength and perseverance—are merged in the central figure of Ivan Susanin, a character drawn with the utmost clearness by Glinka. Melodies of simplicity, profundity and tragedy—all these are characteristic of the music.

Susanin is a sort of composite type of the Russian patriot. In him are embodied thousands of Susanins who lived in all ages, in any part of our fatherland, who live today and daily perform hundreds and thousands of patriotic deeds.

In the third act Susanin is warmly portrayed as the head of a family, with his loving and beloved daughter, adopted son and son-in-law to be. Particularly impressive is the scene of his parting from his daughter, saturated as it is with an incomparable lyricism and great tragedy.

The world's musical literature has few pages to equal the final scene which depicts Susanin's death. His last aria is a great confession, amazing for its powerful revelation of deep emotion. This lyrical aria is simultaneously heroic. In his hour of death, Susanin does not fear thoughts of his family. He is calm; memories cannot soften or break his spirit. Nothing can force him to betray his fatherland.

My interpretation of Susanin's part is based wholly on Glinka's music. The composer was not only a great musician; he also understood the psychology of the singer. The whole score is so written that the singer does not for a moment feel himself fettered. Along with brilliant arias, the composer has given the performer recitative passages which afford an opportunity to act, thus helping create a complete characterization.

I was given the honor of playing the role of Ivan Susanin—a simple man, the like of whom there are millions among our people. He performed a heroic deed which everyone who really loves his fatherland dreams of accomplishing. He gave his life for his country and he did it modestly, without affectation or pose. In this we see a feature characteristic of the Russian people: the heroism of its sons and daughters is always simple and its greatness loses nothing thereby—rather, it gains thereby.

The presentation of *Ivan Susanin* on the Soviet stage is an event of the utmost political and artistic importance. The Soviet opera theater is experiencing a genuine renaissance. The exacting standards of public taste, the new and vital thematic material are making the operatic art more fruitful, and are converting opera from a gorgeous, but none too significant spectacle into an art that stirs by its vital content.

MARK REIZEN

Finale of "Ivan Susanin"

THE RED ARMY SONG AND DANCE ENSEMBLE

Professor A. Alexandrov

I very often recall—not without a smile—this incident which occurred during the Civil War: a certain Red Army regiment on the southern front, left without provisions because its supply train had been cut off by the foe, broke through the enemy's lines and contacted another Red Army regiment, which was well supplied with provisions. The men of the latter regiment readily agreed to give up a week's supply of food but with mock seriousness demanded that the musicians of the first regiment be given in exchange, inasmuch as they had no orchestra of their own! When this was made known to the first regiment they declared to a man that they would rather starve than give up the musicians. Needless to say, the provisions were yielded unconditionally.

During the Civil War orchestras, buglers, and singers were in great demand among the Red Army men on all fronts. This love for music and songs became in time a tradition of the Red Army. However, immediately after the close of the Civil War new songs were scarce. Inasmuch as the Civil War songs were no longer appropriate to the times, new words were often set to pre-revolutionary music. At one time the old revolutionary songs of 1905 were very popular.

Under the circumstances the organization of a group to popularize new Red Army songs seemed of paramount importance. Thus a little troupe was formed which began its career on the stages of Red Army clubs and camps. It consisted of only eight singers, two dancers, an accordion player and a declaimer. Its first appearances met with great success, and by December 1928 the Moscow Central House of the Red Army had become its headquarters.

Thus, a repertoire of Red Army songs and dances gradually evolved. In 1929 the troupe, already known as the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble, toured the country, performing in Red Army units. As soon as the conflict over the Chinese Eastern Railway broke out,

the ensemble left for the Far East, where it spent four months, sometimes performing to the extremely unpleasant accompaniment of whistling bullets and rattling machine guns. During this period a song which is still very popular today, called *Through Valleys and Hills*, made its appearance. This song of the Amur River partisans is mentioned in Ernest Hemingway's *The Fifth Column*.

Of all our numerous concerts the one given at the station of Otpor stands out. Though shells kept bursting near the platform on which the ensemble was performing, the concert continued to its close.

Before leaving the Far East, members of the ensemble were decorated with the badge of the Special Far Eastern Red Army for their work in assisting the defense of their fatherland. Since that trip the ensemble has traveled almost everywhere in the Soviet Union. We have performed in all the Red Army districts, before our fleet and before the guards stationed along the borders of the Soviet Union. We have given concerts for the workers in the Siberian gold fields and the Donbas coal mines, for the builders of the Turksib railway, the workers of Kuznetsk and Magnitogorsk, the people of Odessa, Baku, Leningrad, Kiev, Murmansk. In all, we have covered 281,250 miles.

Everywhere, in song, word and music we have glorified the exploits of the fearless Red Army, the defense of Tsaritsyn (today the city of Stalingrad), the Chelyuskin epic. We have told our audiences about the leaders of the Socialist fatherland, of the First Marshal of the Soviet Union K. E. Voroshilov, and of the great Stalin.

Our list of triumphs includes performances in France and Czecho-Slovakia. At the World's Fair in Paris in 1937, and in Lille, Lyon, Prague and other cities of western Europe, the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble won enthusiastic praise.

A performance by the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble

We were frequently asked during our tour whether all the members of our ensemble were really Red Army men. Yes, we would answer, most of them are. The people of France and Czechc-Slovakia expressed great surprise at the combination of two such words as "army" and "art."

For us, however, there is nothing strange in such a combination. The Red Army is a real patron of the arts. Since the Civil War it has trained thousands of singers, musicians, actors and dancers. Today every Red Army unit has its own little ensemble.

Wherein lies the secret of the success of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble both at home and abroad? The song of the Amur River partisans is popular in many countries today. Soldiers of Republican Spain sung it as they marched into battle against fascist and interventionist troops. It is heard when the Chinese partisans rush into action against the Japanese invaders.

Undoubtedly one of the reasons for this success is the fact that we make considerable use of the inexhaustible sources of folk art, such as Russian folk songs and the songs of the other Soviet peoples. Secondly, the items in our repertoire are familiar to the audience, which is consequently very responsive. And thirdly, we strive to give the best that is in us, both in our performance and in the choice of our repertoire. Every dance we strive to execute with all the skill of a professional, every song we seek to render as beautifully as any opera chorus would. The most gifted men in the Red Army are drawn into our ensemble where they work unremittingly to develop their talents.

There have been innumerable interesting experiences in our work. I very often recall the concert which we gave for the working class organizations of Paris and the Society of Friends of the Soviet Union. The huge Pleyel concert hall was filled to overflowing. We had just concluded our last number when suddenly a voice was heard from somewhere in the hall, singing a beautiful melody very near and dear to us. Other voices joined in and soon the entire audience of 2,500 was lustily singing the *International*. The anthem of the proletariat seemed to be flowing from one tremendous throat.

Another stirring incident occurred in Lille. As we were singing a marching song in French, I suddenly heard the same tune swelling behind me. The crowded hall had joined the ensemble in the song. I turned around and began to conduct a chorus of 2,000 voices.

Ten years after its creation, the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble returned to its birth place in the Far East. When fighting broke out in the district of Lake Hassan last August, every member of the ensemble expressed the desire to be with the Red Army men in the front lines. We immediately wired Marshal K. E. Voroshilov for permission to go to the zone of military activities. This was granted and we set out.

We arrived in the Far East the day after a typhoon had swept over it. In addition, rain had been pouring steadily for several days. Our way proved to be long and tiresome, and most of it had to be done on horseback. Before us lay Lake Hassan, surrounded by high hills. In military formation we rode up to the foot of Zaozerny Height, on whose summit the red Soviet Flag already was flying. It had been planted there during a fierce battle by Comrade Pozharsky, a splendid commissar who died the death of a hero. Two or three hundred meters from us on the slope of the height on the other side of the border, we could see a Japanese unit. We hastily constructed a platform out of

boards and started the concert. From where we stood we could plainly see the Japanese officers driving their soldiers, who were eager to listen to our ensemble, back into the trenches.

Our five-month stay in the Far East and our contact with the heroes of Lake Hassan inspired the many new songs which appeared in our repertoire at that time.

In the very near future the ensemble plans to prepare several musical compositions and sketches dealing with famous units of the Red Army, and the heroic men defending our great fatherland.

The ensemble has also decided to include in its repertoire songs and dances of the eleven Soviet national republics.

At the present time the members of the ensemble are undergoing considerable training in musical theory, singing, ballet and classical dancing. Lectures on the history of the theater and choreography are given by well-known authorities.

The Soviet Government has twice rewarded us for our work. In 1935 the ensemble was awarded the Red Banner and the Order of the Red Star. On January 7, 1939, the occasion of the ensemble's tenth anniversary, several of our members were decorated by the Government of the U.S.S.R.

Our concerts, both along the borders of our country and at the sites of new construction projects, have been so replete with experiences and impressions that every member of the ensemble could write a book on the subject. Undoubtedly, this will be done sometime.

To sum up, the aim of the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble is to bring artistically executed songs and dances to the country's outposts, under war-time conditions as well as in time of peaceful construction. Our aim is to bring joy to the listener and inspire him for new exploits both in the military sphere and in the sphere of peaceful work.

ALEXANDER ALEXANDROV

A Red Army Unit in the Far East at a performance by the Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble

A scene from "The Bloody Wedding" by Garcia Lorca at the Moscow Gipsy Theater

The Gipsy Theater

Gifted with an emotional temperament more than other people, the Gipsies are adept singers and dancers. They have great potential qualities as actors, and quite naturally they are strongly attracted to the stage. That is why the idea of establishing a Gipsy theater has proved so successful.

But while the innate talents of the Gipsies contributed to the development of their own theater from the very outset, their extremely low level of cultural development was a great hindrance. One should not lose sight of the fact that only recently have the Gipsies acquired their own alphabet. Living the age-old nomad existence that they led prior to the October Revolution, deprived of all rights, a passionate love for freedom was inculcated in them together with a peculiar reticence and reserve, a negation of all culture, a stubborn striving to retain their independence in the face of the alien and hostile "civilization" of the oppressors. The Soviet national policy, which gave the Gipsy people the right to receive guaranteed employment and freedom to develop their culture, has changed these former nomads beyond recognition. The Soviet system flung open the doors of schools, collective farms and factories to the Gipsies; together with all the other peoples of the Soviet Union they have been taking part in Socialist construction—a cause which has become near and dear to them. For the first time in history the Gipsy people have the opportunity of attaining all-around development; the Gipsies actively cooperate in the creation of the new, Soviet art.

The Gipsy Theater was founded in January, 1931. In the initial period of the theater's organization most of its actors consisted of members of Gipsy choruses which performed primarily in restaurants. Later the theater attracted Gipsy members of amateur art circles in collective farms, in industrial cooperatives in the cities, and from Gipsy camps.

These were people who were in the main semi-literate or even completely illiterate, people utterly unaccustomed to discipline, let alone theatrical discipline. Not only theatrical training, but also considerable general educational activity had to be carried on.

M. Golblat, the first director of the theater, together with composer Semyon Bugachevsky, the chief of the musical department, have accomplished wonders in training the actors. A great part of the theater's eight years of life was essentially a period of formation and training of its cast.

Life on Wheels, a play by A. Germano

with music by S. Bugachevsky, was the first presentation of the theater; it was staged in 1931 by M. Golblat.

Rather primitive from the dramatic standpoint, the play was rendered colorful by a number of songs and dances, frequently independent of the plot, which strongly predominated over the dramatic content of the play. It should be mentioned that these features were also present in the later productions of the theater, such as *Pharaoh's Tribe*, *Between Fires*, *Marriage in the Camp*.

All these presentations made use primarily of the innate musical gifts and plasticity of the Gipsies.

In its next production, *Carmen*, after P. Mérimée, and in the first presentation of A. Pushkin's poem *Gipsies*, the theater came face to face with problems of real drama. But in those years the theater's attention was concentrated chiefly on the spectacular, showy side of the presentation. The regisseur and the scenic artist were in the forefront, while the actor was considered to be of minor importance and was left to be tossed about by the vagaries of the director.

That is why both *Carmen* and *Gipsies* in their first presentation were formalistic. When people working in the field of Soviet art began a resolute struggle against formalism as alien in spirit to genuine folk art and Socialist realism, the Gipsy Theater, realizing the mistakes in its work, undertook to thoroughly revise the staging of *Gipsies*. Later *Carmen* was also revised.

In the special circumstances under which the Gipsy theater developed, even the negative formalistic tendencies that marked these plays had some positive influence on the training of the Gipsy actors. Thus, the regisseur, who then was a veritable dictator, taught them to carefully observe the delineation of a part, and the *mise en scéne*; he taught them to maintain discipline on the stage. True, frequently the actor did not understand why he had to assume one pose and not another. But, we repeat, stage discipline became firmly instilled in his mind. After Soviet art overcame the diseases of formalism, the Gipsy theater, like many other theaters of the Soviet Union, was faced with the problem of the actor. But, like a caged bird who has grown so used to its captivity that when released it does not fly away at first, the actor who became accustomed to the regisseur's cage, to the all-domineering director, for a long time did not know what to do with his freedom, his newly acquired right to take a major part in creating a character.

At the present time, though some steps in the proper direction have already been taken, the actors of the Gipsy theater find themselves precisely in this position.

The first step in this direction was the staging of Gipsy song and dance performances. In presenting songs and dances of the Gipsy camps, first of all it was essential to free the actor from that showy, vaudeville manner of acting which was partly preserved in the theater's productions. The actor obediently, though perplexedly, performed his part as dictated to him by the regisseur, but the moment he had a chance to sing or dance a bit he tried to outdo himself. The result was that the plays frequently smacked of vaudeville.

Although by no means neglecting the dancing and vocal abilities of the Gipsies, but, on the contrary, developing them, the directors of the theater at the same time considered that future plays should be staged so that the songs and dances would be organically bound up with the plot of the play, with its dramatic theme. The second, thoroughly revised, production of *Gipsies* is a successful attempt in this direction. The dance of Zemfira and a young Gipsy is one of the strongest, if not the strongest episode, adding considerably to the dramatic intensity of the whole presentation.

In undertaking the second presentation of *Gipsies* the theater was faced with a serious responsibility.

It is easy to understand the natural desire of the theater to commemorate the centenary of the tragic death of Alexander Pushkin, the great poet of the Russian people. But there was considerable doubt, strange as it may seem, as to whether the Gipsy Theater could stage *Gipsies* properly. A translation of Pushkin into the Gipsy language, which is not very expressive, could not convey the music for the flavor of the poem. Introducing a character to speak in the name of the author, as was done in the first production, was also out of the question.

Nevertheless the theater undertook to present the play.

Both the Gipsy language and Russian are spoken in *Gipsies*. The text of the poem forms its basis and the verses are recited in Russian. The theater, however, has taken the liberty of introducing additional text and switching some parts. These changes were fully approved by authorities on Pushkin. The supplementary text is given in the Gipsy language, and occurs mostly during the folk scenes in the first act.

The actors are aided by their natura

Lyala Chornaya in "The Bloody Wedding"

feeling for music and their natural sense of rhythm in reciting poetry. While scarcely any special training in declamation was given the actors (as is done in other theaters), their recitation was good. The text in the Gipsy language, the songs and dances, which mostly go into making the background of the action, help to create the atmosphere which is felt in the poem, but for which there was no text in the poem itself.

Both theater-goers and critics gave a warm reception to the new play, which is now one of the favorites with theater audiences in Moscow.

The theater has recently completed its work on the play *The Bloody Wedding*, by the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca, who was murdered by the fascists in Granada.

The idea of staging Lorca's play was suggested by the Spanish writers Raphael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon. After witnessing performances at the Gipsy Theater they became confident that the remarkable drama of Lorca, one of the greatest contemporary Spanish poets, would find a worthy staging on our boards. The more we studied this play the more confident we became that it could be presented in our theater in all its poetic force. We undertook the work of staging it with great enthusiasm and loving care. The play was particularly near to us for its bright romanticism and folk character. This is a play of power and passion, of sorrow and wrath, of lofty human sentiments stirred by genuine honesty and profound truth. In Lorca's peculiar dramatic form we sense much more of the traditions of genuine folklore, the traditions of folk spectacles, than the influence of any literary school. "Garcia Lorca was not an esthete," Pablo Neruda wrote of him in an obituary, "for genuine human passions filled his poetry and dramatic art, and the sorrow of the people filled his verses. The people, with a remarkable sensitivity, realize the essence of his poetry and sing his songs, throughout his country, over the entire globe."

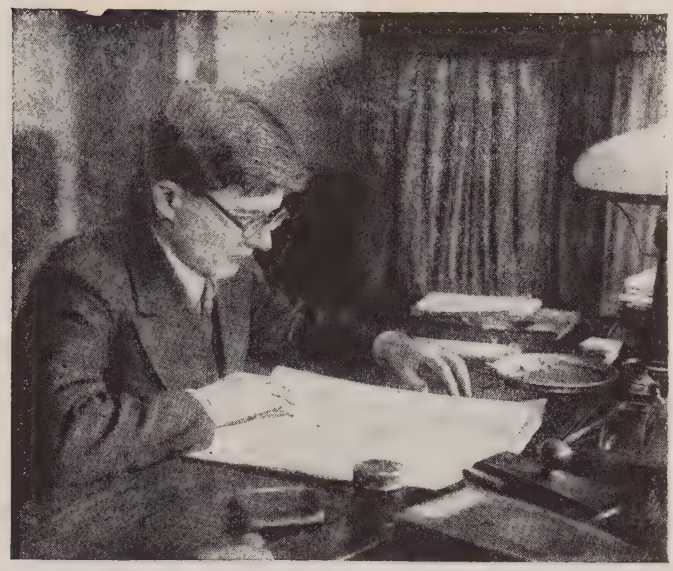
The main characters in *The Bloody Wedding* are not hazy symbols nor allegoric masks. They are generalized characters and yet they are bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh of real people with an intricate and complex psychology.

Observe the list of characters in the play. They are called merely Father, Mother, Bride, Servant, Neighbors, Woodcutters and so on. Only one person bears a name, Leonardo. He personifies all-powerful passion which knows no bounds, no obstacles and no mercy. A man must be true to himself, true to his real emotions; this is the essence of Lorca's play.

Folklore occupies a considerable part in the play. Lorca spent several years in Andalusia collecting folk songs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and made use of them in his *Bloody Wedding*. Genuine Spanish choral and folk songs as well as orchestral compositions were drawn upon by the composer in our presentation. Many of them were recorded by Lorca during his stay in Andalusia. Both in the music and dances we had to abandon some traditions adopted by the Gipsy theater, traditions resulting from the natural plasticity and musical aptitude of our actors. Moreover, the staging of *The Bloody Wedding* led us to believe that we could with full confidence attempt a psychological portrayal of each character in a manner reflecting life itself. The music and dances are organically bound up with the dramatic theme of the play, reinforcing and supplementing it. The staging of *The Bloody Wedding* marks an important and joyous period in the life of our theater.

MIKHAIL YANSHIN

From a Composer's Notebook



Dmitri Shostakovich

Noteworthy events are taking place in the musical life of our country. Until quite recently it seemed that we abounded only in outstanding young pianists and violinists. The first contest of Soviet orchestra conductors, however, brought to light remarkable talents: the honors accorded them were well deserved.

Soviet symphonic compositions were performed in all the rounds of this contest. Both the jury and the conductors themselves had no difficulty in selecting excellent Soviet works. What a long cry this is from those none too distant times when the works of Soviet composers were performed only on very special occasions!

A second outstanding event is the contest of string quartets. Chamber music is one of the most complex forms of musical art and, it was held formerly, only a few "select" connoisseurs are able to appreciate it properly. With the growing interest of audiences in a deep understanding of all forms of music, and of chamber music in particular, the number and quality of our string quartets has grown. The Soviet Union now has a considerable number of spendid string quartets. Their excellence may be judged from the rather unusual fact that all the eight ensembles competing in the first round were allowed to participate in the second. And, I must mention, we members of the jury were very strict and demanding.

Hitherto our quartets arose spontaneously, on the initiative of their members. This chance organization of ensembles leads to a situation where the various members of one quartet do not form a true musical whole, are not linked by a single artistic background. It is precisely such unity of musical grounding, school and style which is perhaps the main requisite for a successful ensemble of this type. Thus it is not surprising that in certain quartets one notices an unequal relation of forces, differences in timbre and various styles of execution, despite the talent and polish of their individual members.

These shortcomings may be eliminated, however, and our conservatories are to be commended for

opening special courses for quartets. In these courses, the future members of quartets will acquire, while still in their student years, the requisite unity of background, school and style.

Although Soviet chamber music is none too plentiful, there was enough for each of the quartets to perform it in both rounds of the contest. However, the question must not be limited to quantity alone, for our chamber music also furnishes proof of new achievements in the art of composing. Our chamber music has been enriched by N. Myaskovsky's splendid quartets, the fine one-part quartets of V. Nechayev, and the compositions of Satyan and N. Narimanidze. The excellent quartets of D. Kabalevsky and V. Shebalin, although not performed at the contest, fully deserve a place of honor in our concert repertoire.

The current 1938-39 music season was opened by a ten-day review of Soviet music, one of those splendid art festivals that are becoming a tradition in our country. Noteworthy at this festival was the abundance of important new works by S. Prokofieff, R. Gliere, A. Khachaturyan, V. Muradeli and two quite young composers who then made their debut: N. Zhukovsky (Kiev) and I. Finkelstein (Leningrad).

I would like to dwell somewhat on the work of one of our composers who has not yet bidden farewell to his student days. I have in mind I. Finkelstein, who studies in Leningrad under Professor M. F. Gnessin, and who wrote a concerto for violin and orchestra that was included in the program of the ten-day review of Soviet music held in Moscow. The young composer has an excellent knowledge of the violin: in his concerto everything is in accord with the features and possibilities of the solo instrument. The wise economy of descriptive means in his orchestration is gladdening: nothing but the essential is included in his score.

I believe that Finkelstein has a great future ahead of him. This is evident from his *First Symphony*, which he is now writing. I think the depth, significance, melody and splendid development of theme in this work will make it one of the glorious pages in the history of Soviet symphony music.

At the first concerts of the ten-day festival Moscow audiences became acquainted with excerpts from Kabalevsky's opera, *The Master of Clamecy*. Kabalevsky has achieved splendid musical character delineation; his portrayal of the French national spirit is excellent. It is a pity, though, that while he finely sensed the folk qualities of *Colas Breugnon* he did not use sufficiently expressive means to convey to our public the "Gallic jollity, at times merging with audacity," which is so characteristic of Romain Rolland's Colas.

The more profound and serious the criticism during these ten-day reviews, the more beneficial will they be to us, composers. In this connection I deem it worth while to mention E. Golubev's *Second Symphony*, first performed in Moscow during the recent festival. Golubev undoubtedly is a capable composer. And this is precisely why the serious shortcomings in his symphony must be pointed out in a friendly manner, but honestly and severely. Golubev is not yet a master of full-blown symphonic style. His themes are unexpressive and abstract; his symphony bears evidence of false scholasticism. He is shackled, he gives the impression of being afraid to develop freely any fresh ideas. There is no full orchestral sweep in his symphony. The composer, evidently, does not yet realize the possibilities of that splendid musical organism that is the symphony orchestra.

The blame for the execution of

such an immature composition at the festival must be laid at the door of its organizers, who did not take a sufficiently critical approach in drawing up the repertoire of that review. I sincerely hope that Golubev will draw the only logical conclusion from this comradely and honest criticism: that in order to grow it is necessary to study much, persistently and continuously.

We Soviet musicians must study thoroughly our Russian and European classical legacy. Only when a composer really knows his great predecessors and learns from them will he be able to find his own original musical language, his own creative style. The history of music is replete with examples that confirm this statement. Beethoven experienced the beneficial influence of Mozart and Haydn. In turn, Beethoven's musical ideas in the Adagio of his *Sonata Op. 106* had a strong influence on such a genius as Chopin. Verdi, a composer with an exceptionally vivid individuality, took a negative attitude towards Wagner, yet at various stages of his career he reveals traces of Wagner's influence.

All great musicians have known the music of their day and that preceding it to perfection. Each one, however, assimilated and used this knowledge in his own individual fashion.

Our young composers, unfortunately, have a poor knowledge both of their native and of foreign musical history. I have even witnessed cases of dangerous nihilism, of people saying that the less you know of others' music, the more original will be your own.

At last year's examinations at the Leningrad Conservatory there were several future composers who were much weaker in the knowledge of musical literature than the singers and instrumentalists. Some of them could not even say in what keys Beethoven's or Chaikovsky's symphonies had been written.

This is the second year that I am teaching practical composition and instrumentation at the Conservatory, and I must say that my conditions of work leave nothing to be desired. The majority of my pupils have genuine talent. How do I teach them to become composers? Day in and day out we not only compose, but we also study the musical classics.

In conclusion I would like to say a few words about my own work. One of my most recent compositions is a string quartet, my first venture into this field. I have also worked a great deal on the music for the films *The Return of Maxim, Defense of Volochayev, Great Citizen, Friends* and *Vyborg Side*.

I have long nurtured the idea of writing an opera based on Lermontov's *Masquerade*. Each time I reread this marvelous work I wonder that no Russian composer has ever attempted it.

But I will tackle this opera only after I have written a symphony dedicated to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. To portray in music the titanic figure of our leader is an unbelievably difficult task, and I am fully aware of this. When I speak of the subject of my symphony I do not have in mind historical events or biographical data on the life of Lenin, but only a general theme, as a general idea for the work.

I have long and conscientiously been pondering on how to depict this theme in music. As I plan it, the symphony will be performed by an orchestra with chorus and solo singers. As preparatory work, I have studied minutely the poetry and prose dedicated to Lenin, for I will have to compose a text for the singers. This text will consist in the main of verses from Mayakovsky's poem

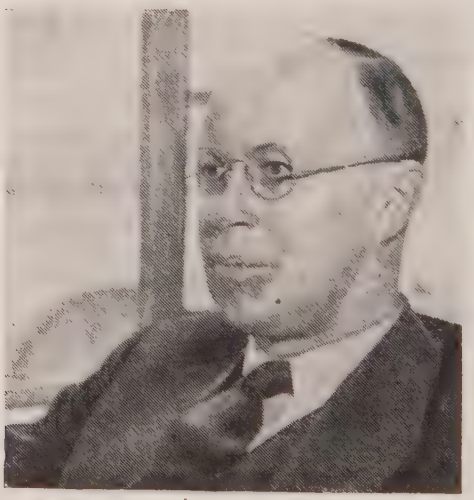
about Lenin. In addition, I expect to use the best folk tales and songs about Lenin and verses composed by the poets of the fraternal republics. At present I am collecting material.

I am not afraid to combine in my symphony the works of various poets about Lenin. The inner artistic unity of the text will consist primarily in that love for Lenin which permeates every word of the people about him. The melodies of folk songs about Lenin will be used along with their words.

Naturally, our Soviet music arises and grows out of the great ideas of victorious Socialism. My work on the symphony has been greatly aided by the theses of V. Molotov's report on the Third Five-Year Plan at the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and by the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, which is being studied by every Soviet intellectual. Molotov's theses give a splendid outline of the further flourishing of the U.S.S.R., which is steadfastly following Lenin's behests and marching along the path to Communism. In the history of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, in the history of the great battles and victories of Marxism-Leninism, each one of us draws new strength and will to strive for new victories, fresh inspiration.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

MUSICAL AMERICA



Serge Prokofieff

Contrary to the assertions of some insufficiently informed Europeans, Americans are sincerely interested in music and many of them really love it. There is a very great desire in America to know good music and make it a part of the country's culture. The famous American slogan of having the best of everything at all cost impels them to spend large sums in attracting those who have succeeded in winning a reputation in Europe. Thus, the most talented performers are drawn to the United States where very fine orchestras are formed, enrolling musicians from various countries. The French provide the wood winds; the Germans, the brasses; Russians and

Italians,—the string instruments. Such orchestras as the Boston Symphony, the New York Philharmonic or the Philadelphia Orchestra are undoubtedly the best in the world.

Concert life in the United States provides a real treat for the visiting European, for he can hear all the famous soloists and enjoy marvelous ensembles.

As for the Americans themselves, they have learned to appreciate and expect fine performances, and I noticed that many musicians arriving from Europe have to be on their mettle in order not to have their failings shown up.

The situation is somewhat different when it comes to composers. Whereas performers can be attracted from Europe, it is obviously impossible to create a composer in the same fashion. Of course, many European composers visit the United States, but their own, national, American creative work has not yet fully blossomed forth.

In this connection the American music lover has come to have a psychology somewhat different from ours. Whereas in the course of the past hundred years we have had an uninterrupted procession of important composers who gave the listeners problems to solve, America has been visited, though with some delay, only by composers already recognized in Europe.

Our public, as well as that of France and Central Europe, is accustomed to pass its own judgment on the quality of the music of a new composer. I would even go so far as to say that the public has grown to love this practice. Audiences are interested in hearing a new work, they argue over it, praise or condemn it. True, good things are often condemned, and worthless ones loudly praised. However, the misunderstanding is cleared up sooner or later, "real" compositions triumph, even though sometimes not at once. But after all this reflects the pulsation of genuine musical life.

In America the public is little accustomed to such practice. For this reason it is hard for a new composer to make his way. The music critics reason somewhat like this: out of a hundred composers hardly more than one will achieve immortality. So, the critic thinks, if I do not understand a new piece and write that it is bad, the chances are ninety-nine to one that I shall prove to be right. The critics forget that it is exactly their business to discover that certain "one" out of the hundred. I have been making concert tours in the United States for the past twenty years and see how much more pointed and precise are judgments of Americans about performers and performances than about the new idiom of a new composer. This does not mean that Americans lack interest in composers. But it comes with some delay. Thus, Brahms, a composer who is not given to superficialities, whose works are imbued with a rich inner life, is in great vogue in the U.S.A. now. The interest in him bears witness to the high level of American musical culture. But Americans began to understand and love him only many years after his death.

At present there is a great desire in the United States to create its own music, I might say a longing for a national American composer. And while this desire has not yet been completely fulfilled, certain musical manifestations characteristically American are quite apparent.

In this respect it is interesting to analyze the potential role of jazz music which is on the one hand a typical American product and on the other stands apart, as it were, from real, great music.

Jazz grew out of altogether different elements. Here we have,

for example, the florid, syncopated rhythm of Negro origin. We find here, too, melodic devices from the Anglo-American folk song, by which I mean, a song partly English and partly English with an American twist. We also have the sentimental wailings of the dance hall and cabaret which are of lower origin.

Many serious musicians are repelled by jazz. Others are interested in it. I think it all depends on which element in jazz one stresses: if it is the element of vulgarity, then jazz is tiresome and even repulsive; if, however, one chooses what is best in rhythm, melody and instrumentation, one may come across great riches. The many orchestral effects which we find in the best jazz music are particularly interesting. Moreover, some of the performers in a jazz orchestra, as for instance those who play the trompets, trombones, clarinets and percussion instruments, have developed a technique of which corresponding musicians in a symphony orchestra have not ever dreamed. To listen to those masters of the jazz band is interesting and useful not only for composers, but for performers as well. Some of us think that a jazz orchestra is necessarily something noisy, fit to split the eardrums. On the contrary, the most famous jazz bands in America are rich in nuances and parade their *pianissimo* effects.

It is in these best elements of jazz that contemporary American composers try to find the basis for their national music, attempting to sift out the vulgar and preserve what has unquestionable value.

In this connection one's attention is drawn by the composer George Gershwin, who recently died at a comparatively early age.

First brilliantly successful as a composer in the light genre (jazz, lyrics, musical comedies, films), he later tried to apply his talents to serious music.

His piano concerto and a number of other works have been performed by symphony orchestras, and an opera of his was staged by grand opera companies.

Gershwin undoubtedly possessed great talent, but his early work in the field of light music was like a millstone hung round his neck when he turned to serious composition. More precisely, he never could establish definite criteria for the things he composed in the field of symphonic music. Gershwin had worked so long on music of doubtful taste, that in a piece in which he would reveal his talent as a composer of serious music, he would unintentionally slip into some trifling *motif* in poor style. Patriots of American music were ready to proclaim him the long-awaited star, and Gershwin might have possibly made good this claim. He died all too soon, unfortunately, but the very fact of his appearance gives grounds for supposing that one must look in this direction for other composers who will create and develop a new style in American music.

I would like to speak not only of Gershwin, but of several other American composers as well. This—in my next article. I began with Gershwin for he is the most typically American composer, at least from our European point of view.

SERGE PROKOFIEFF

A still from the film "Alexander Nevsky." Alexander Nevsky leading his troops against Russia's enemies.

Films of Soviet Patriotism

Millions of American filmgoers are familiar with Soviet films. Films like *Chapayev, Deputy of the Baltic, Lenin in October, Peter I* and many others including the recently shown *Professor Mamlock* have been acclaimed by American audiences and critics alike. Among the new pictures by prominent Soviet producers which recently appeared in the United States are *Alexander Nevsky*, directed by Sergei Eisenstein; *Vyborg Side*, by Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, *Lenin in 1918*, by Alexander Romm, who produced *Lenin in October*, scenario by Alexei Kapler. Our readers probably remember *Lenin in 1918* which appeared in the March issue of *International Literature*.

I mention only the most important of the new films that are especially popular here in the Soviet Union. But apart from these superior films there are not a few on a lesser scale which have won no small measure of approval from filmgoers. I think that the American democratic filmgoer's appraisal of these pictures will on the whole coincide with our own, for I have found that this has been the case with regard to the vast majority of the Soviet films demonstrated in the United States.

What is the secret of this success and what is the reason for this identity of opinion? Let me give an example to illustrate my point. Not long ago David Platt, the American correspondent of *International Literature*, writing of the success of *Professor Mamlock*, (scenario by the German anti-fascist writer Friedrich Wolf) mentioned that it had its premiere on November 7, the day of the twenty-first Anniversary of the October Revolution.

The audience accepted the film as a

A still from "Alexander Nevsky." An episode from the battle on the ice between the Russians and "Dog-Knights"

major event. Four days later the entire world was shocked by the news of unheard of persecution launched by the Brown Beast against the German Jews. Cruel reality added a new significance and force to the flaming message of *Professor Mamlock*.

Another American film critic stated that when the people leaving the Cameo Theater where *Professor Mamlock* was shown read the latest news on the electric bulletin of the New York Times Building, it seemed to them as if they were reading a continuation of the film. "It is all true," they would say to each other, "what we have just seen is a true depiction of what is now taking place in Germany."

The truthful depiction of life, in other words, realism, has always been the basis of genuine art. This is what has always attracted the masses; that is why works of art live for centuries. But how could the film *Professor Mamlock* give such a faithful, well nigh documentary picture of what took place in the Third Reich already after the film appeared on the screen? Because Socialist realism demands from the artist a deep insight into the life around him, the ability to understand the conflicting forces in this life, the ability to see and perceive whither these conflicting forces are leading.

Our Soviet protagonists of culture are armed with the sharpest scalpel, one which enables them to penetrate deeply into the essence of contemporary life; they are armed with the most accurate instrument enabling them to analyze social forces. This instrument is the Marxist-Leninist theory. Scientific analysis, plus genius of artists who boldly and realistically picture life, who foresee coming events—this is what makes Soviet films alive and pertinent; these are the factors guaranteeing their success. This is particularly true in the case of *Professor Mamlock*, and will undoubtedly be true also of the *Oppenheim Family* produced by Grigori Roshal after a novel by Lion Feuchtwanger. This applies as well to some of the less important films like *Naval Outpost* and *Incident on the Frontier*.

Only one of the main threads of the novel have been used in the *Oppenheim Family* and the center of gravity has been somewhat shifted. The author's underlying ideas, which have undergone a certain change in the years since the novel was written, have been brought out, with his permission of course, with greater emphasis. In the intervening years between the writing and filming of this novel, life had shown Feuchtwanger a great deal of what he formerly could only guess. That is why the German worker Weller appears in the film, only for a brief time, it is true, but he is, nevertheless, an extremely important and memorable character. In Weller, Feuchtwanger and Roshal have shown a composite image of those German proletarians to whom the whole cultural past of the German people really belongs, and who will come into their own in the future free Germany after the fall of the Hitler regime.

It is here that the voice of Feuchtwanger is added to that of Heinrich Mann, the leader of the German People's Front, who immortalized Edgar Andre (the Communist executed by the fascists), by writing of him as of one personifying the greatness of the German people.

A scene in a cafe, from the "Oppenheim Family". A fascist breaks to pieces a beer jug with a portrait of Heinrich Heine on it.

The success of *Professor Mamlock* and the *Oppenheim Family* is the success of the joint creative work of the German anti-fascist writers and Soviet film producers. Driven from their native land the German writers have taken their art with them; the true literature of the German people is now in exile. But the cinema is an art that demands great technical means, considerable investment of money and special equipment; to make a picture showing the terrible face of the Third Reich today requires more than the mere efforts of emigré writers. Only the cooperation of the powerful Soviet cinema industry with them could have

A still from the "Oppenheim Family." The fascist prison-guard refuses to leave food for Professor Oppenheim who is then undergoing a "Third degree." The Communist Weller insists that the professor be given food.

achieved the desired results. The knowledge of the life and the atmosphere of the Third Reich, and the talent of a writer who loves his native land, have been combined with the skill of Soviet cinema workers and all the resources of the cinematography of the great Socialist state. The basis for these combined efforts was the joint struggle of the German anti-fascist writers and the Soviet cinema workers for peace, culture and democracy, against the danger of fascist aggression.

The films *Soviet Border* and *Naval Outpost* are based on the same subject but approached from different angles. Both pictures deal with the attempts of the Japanese *samurai* to attack the Soviet frontier districts. Both films show how the courage and heroism of Soviet border guards, Red Army and Navy men, frustrate the schemes of the enemies whose forces brazenly crossed the Soviet frontier. These films were planned and made many months before the battles at Lake Hassan which stirred the whole world. Yet all who view them will see how the far-sighted Soviet cinema workers anticipated events that occurred so shortly afterwards. These pictures reflect the calm assurance of the Soviet people who know that the war danger today lies in the same place which Joseph Stalin pointed out so unerringly several years ago. This is the attitude of a people who know the strength and the cunning of the enemy but who are confident of their own powers and invincibility.

Both pictures depict average Soviet citizens, who love their Socialist land, who are ready to give their lives for its sake, and for the sake of its people. Every Soviet citizen feels that when he fights for the Soviet Union he is, at the same time, fighting for all cultured and progressive mankind. He feels bound by a thousand ties to the great democratic traditions of the past. Hence the love of Soviet people for those pages in the history of their country which extoll the courage of the Russian people.

Responding to these feelings and to the interest of the people in the major events from past history, Soviet cinema has reproduced on the screen some of the most important events in the history of Russia. *Alexander Nevsky*, *Peter I*, the second part of which has already been released, and *Minin and Pozharsky* (an episode from the victorious struggle of the Russian people against the Polish and German interventionists in the beginning of the seventeenth century), are among the new films of this genre. The latter film is now being produced by

A still from "Naval Outpost." A group of Japanese spies disguised as fishermen are detained by Red Navy men in Soviet waters

the Moscow Film Studios after the scenario by Victor Shklovsky, the novelist.

Soviet historical films, of which I have had occasion to speak on the pages of this magazine, are not pompous, operatic pageants of the past. Reproducing episodes from the past, the Soviet historical film carefully strives to portray the hopes and aspirations of the "common people" at that time. The Soviet film producers and actors who work on historical films cannot but feel that they are the heirs to the great democratic and freedom-loving traditions of the Russian people of the past. Hence the patriotism of *Alexander Nevsky* which so profoundly reflects the age-old love of the Russian people for their native land, their readiness to fight against invasion. And surely these feelings are today close to the hearts of the people of all those countries who are sharply aware of the danger of fascist aggression. These emotions are particularly comprehensible to the great American people with their glorious democratic tradition of struggle for independence.

In depicting the past, the Soviet historical film always sees in it the conflict of the new progressive trends and the old reactionary tendencies. This struggle is particularly well presented in the second part of *Peter I*, adapted from the novel by Alexei Tolstoy. Peter and Alexei (his son) personify the struggle between progress and reaction. The drama is heightened by the fact that Peter's consciousness of his historic mission, his love for his country, for his people are in conflict with his love for his son. But the moment this son proves to be a traitor and connives with Russia's enemies, Peter's paternal feelings give way to a more powerful emotion—his love for his country and his concern for its safety. And the same inner conflict between statesman and father takes place in the case of an average Soviet citizen—the overseer of the lighthouse in the distant Soviet frontier bordering on Japan (*Naval Outpost*). Here too the son of an honest patriot proves to be a traitor and the father, without hesitation, refuses to have anything further to do with him; like a surgeon he cuts off the gangrened section of his organism. And this is easy to understand, for every Soviet patriot can rightfully say of himself, repeating the famous words of Louis XIV, "*l'etat, c'est moi.*" And when he, the Soviet patriot, and his state, are threatened with danger, his love for his country, his devotion and loyalty to his fatherland, supersede all other emotions.

Thus does history echo the present and even the future, for many Soviet films are to a certain extent intended for tomorrow. Lenin once remarked that miraculous prophecy is a fairy tale but scientific prophecy is a fact. That the Soviet film draws the future with as much authenticity as the present aptly illustrates the point Lenin made.

A still from "Soviet Border" The heroine resists an attack by Japanese soldiers

The border incidents as shown in the films *Incident on the Frontier* and *Naval Outpost* did not actually take place. And the plots of these films are purely fiction. But today, after the events at Lake Hassan, one feels that they must have been photographed from life itself. And when the powerful Soviet air squadron wipes the Japanese destroyer off the surface of Soviet waters, our spectator hears not only an echo of the Hassan battles, but he welcomes the picture as a truthful portrayal of the strength, technical equipment and invincibility of Soviet arms.

Love for one's country and for the cultural traditions of the past, for a determined struggle for independence cannot but be understood and appreciated

N. Simonov as Peter I (Part II)

by the citizens of the great democratic country beyond the ocean. In the desire to preserve their age-old democratic traditions and safeguard their independence, the American people, like the Soviet people today, are turning more and more to their historic past, to their great national heroes like Washington and Lincoln. Hence much, if not most, of what inspired the producers of recent Soviet films must be comprehensible to the American people, and that is why the Soviet cinema is destined to become an ever growing factor in the cultural rapprochement between the people of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., and to cement their friendship and their resolve to stand firm in the defense of peace, culture and democracy against fascist barbarism.

* * *

Several new films appeared after this article was written. It permits me to add to the above analyses one major point.

Soviet films are distinguished primarily in that they are for and about the people. No matter what their theme—past, present or future—the underlying idea of all Soviet films is the understanding of folk traditions and demands, the people's age-long struggle for their freedom and independence. The people have always dreamed of a happy life. Folk art has given the world many beautiful legends about the road to happiness. One of these folk tales forms the motif of the film *At the Pike's Bidding* whose hero, a poor peasant lad, vanquishes the tsar's troops, marries the princess and wins happiness for himself and for his people. The film conveys most successfully the spirit of the old Russian fairy tale and reproduces the characteristic national traits of the Russian people. In the sincere and simple goodheartedness of the hero, one recognizes the noble spirit of one who thinks of the common good as well as his own welfare. This is a humanism nurtured by centuries of wisdom, the wisdom of the common people who cast aside the dog-eat-dog law of a society of exploiters.

In his new novel about King Henry IV, Heinrich Mann, in speaking of his hero, calls him a militant humanist. The writer wishes to emphasize humanism in its new sense, which he has but lately perceived, a humanism capable of fighting to put its ideals into life. But this is precisely the humanism which was always the basis of the folk art that has created many a courageous fighter for the people's cause.

N. Cherkasov (on the right) as Peter's son Alexis

Such a fighter for the people's cause, a fighter who rose from its midst, is the hero of the film trilogy by the producers Kozintsev and Trauberg.

The American cinemagoer is already familiar with the first two parts of the series: *The Youth of Maxim* and *The Return of Maxim*. The third and last part, *Vyborg Side*, will be shown shortly.

Maxim, a simple young worker, is hero of all the three parts of this film epic. We see his gradual metamorphosis from an ignorant, backward worker, politically undeveloped, to minister of the first Socialist state in the world. Maxim grows from scene to scene, from picture to picture, as rapidly and as naturally as his people who fought and freed themselves from the exploiters.

In *The Youth of Maxim*, part one of the trilogy, one of the hero's comrades dreams about Maxim becoming "the worker's tsar." These were the naive dreams of freedom and happiness as real as the dream about the "miraculous ruble." Both these visions were the expression of longing for better living conditions and an uncertainty as to the means of attaining them. Maxim found the means. A member of the Communist Party, he worked for the realization of the dreams of his comrade who perished on the tsarist gallows. The complete elimination of unemployment, security for all the working people of the Soviet Union—that is the "miraculous ruble." Maxim in the role of head of the State Bank—the dream of a "workers' king" come true.

Maxim in this film trilogy is a genuine militant humanist. He has a clear understanding of the truth contained in the words of Henri Barbusse that true kindness extends into the future as well. Maxim never forgets this truth in the struggle. It is in the name of the future that Maxim, rifle in hand, drives out the gang of bandits, sent in by the whiteguards to make pogroms and create disturbances; arrests the plotters and demands the execution of the traitors, and goes off to the front to defend Red Petrograd, the cradle of the Revolution, from the oncoming hordes of German imperialism.

Implacable to the enemies, merciless to traitors, Maxim, in his relations with his fellow-comrades, with workers for whose happiness and freedom he is fighting, shows himself to be capable of self-sacrifice and heroism.

Maxim has deservedly become the favorite hero of Soviet audiences who love him for his firmness, for his selfless loyalty to the cause of the people, for his optimism, his happy disposition and lyricism. Maxim is the symbol of the people who have a future and assert it in their struggle with the old social system that has outlived itself.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

A still from "At the Pike's Bidding." The pike is begging Yemelya, the hero of the film, to let her free, for her little children may perish without her

Illustrations by V. Lebedev to one of S. Marshak's books

SAMUEL MARSHAK

CHILDREN PEEP INTO THE FUTURE

I have always been interested in discovering how our children envision the future. But this is easier said than done. Children are absorbed in the present perhaps more than we, and they are chary of trusting grown-ups with the play of their imagination, which is frequently naive and sensitive.

Yet it would be well to pay more heed to their pictures of the future, for now and again they reveal the character and outlook of the people to whom we will some day entrust the work we have begun.

Some time ago I had occasion to talk about the future with some Young Pioneers in a camp outside Leningrad. It was raining cats and dogs and there was nothing for us to do but sit and talk in the camp dining room, which looked like a cross between a summer theater

Illustrations by A. Pakhomov to S. Marshak's books

Illustrations by M. Rodionov to a book by L. Kvitko "When I Grow Up"

and a barrack room. There were about a hundred and fifty youngsters, ranging in age anywhere between eight and fifteen.

Very likely my question came as a surprise to them. We had just been reciting verses together and telling stories, and I daresay they were all set to listen to me. And all of a sudden out of a clear sky they were asked to imagine what life would look like ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred years hence!

Our conversation began with a sepulchral silence.

Then the children began to exchange glances and by their expression I divined that although my question had taken them unawares our talk would take place after all.

Sure enough, a voice piped up from one of the back benches.

"I don't know what will happen. You can't very well guess. But I do think that it will be even better than the present."

"You bet it will!" was the response from another corner.

"Now what do you think," I ventured, to keep the ball rolling, "what kind of camps will Young Pioneers have ten or fifteen years from now?"

At once the conversation took a lively, business-like turn.

"There'll be lots of balls and games. And all the beds will have spring mattresses so you won't fall through," said one little chap, throwing a mischievous glance in the direction of the group leader. Obviously, this youngster had fallen through his camp bed, mattress, blanket and all, more than once.

"Is that all you can think of?" said his neighbor disdainfully. "I bet every camp will have its own parachute tower!"

The parachute tower at once lifted us right off the earth and all the mundane things like camp beds. The next Young Pioneer transported us to Mars.

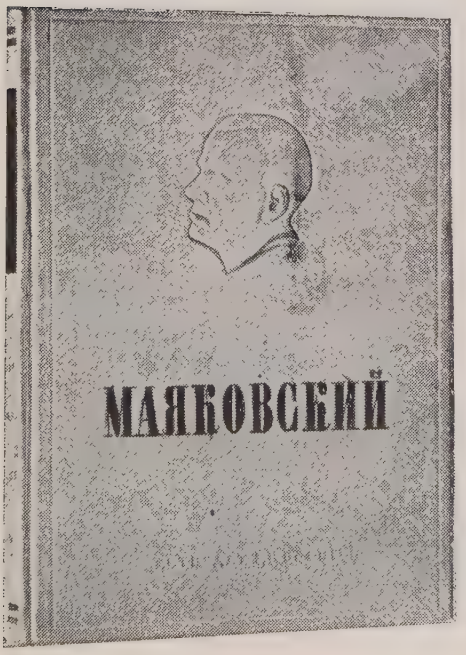
"I can't wait for someone to reach Mars. I do hope they'll get there as soon as possible so that people will be able to reach it as easily as they travel now from Leningrad to Moscow."

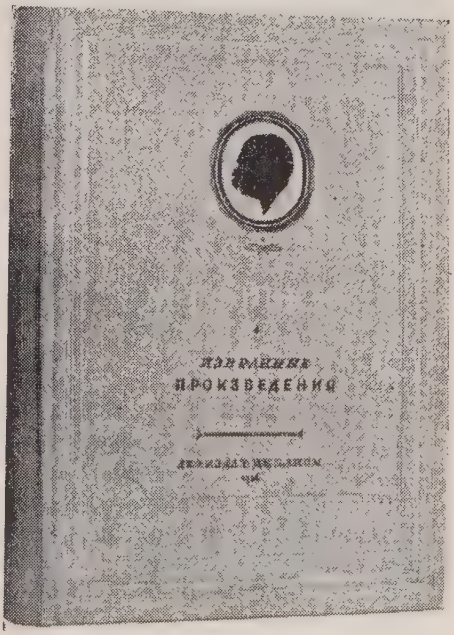
Now we were off. Hands began to shoot up all over the room.

"But there isn't any air on Mars. Men can't live without air and water," one skeptic remarked.

"What of it! I think the man of the future will be able to do without

Cover designs of children's editions of selected works by Pushkin, Shakespeare, Mayakovsky, Gorky





water or air. He will be able to move freely over the entire universe."

It was some time before the subject of inter-planetary voyages on "rocket planes" was exhausted.

There is nothing surprising about this. When we were their age did we not all fly to Mars in rockets? No doubt youngsters in America, in England and in Sweden dream just as earnestly of "moving freely about the whole universe."

But there is something about the dreams of Soviet children that is absent in children brought up under a different social system.

Even while giving vent to such a classic dream of childhood as the flight from planet to planet, one twelve year old Pioneer girl expressed her thought in this wise:

"Perhaps we will be able to organize industry and agriculture on the moon or on Mars! Set up communities there!"

Evidently this little girl had in mind something like a lunar state farm or a Martian collective farm.

"The world will no longer be broken up into countries," the same girl said. "People will live in climates instead of countries. Negroes, for instance, should live in warm climates, I think."

Who but an internationalist from head to toe could say a thing like that?

Indeed, they are all great internationalists, these citizens born after the October Revolution.

"And what would you like to be yourselves when you grow up?" I asked them.

"An aviator!"

"An engineer!"

"A horticulturist like Ivan Michurin! I want to grow apples on birch-trees."

"Wouldn't any of you like to be a manufacturer or a landowner?" I asked in deliberate provocation.

I read blank amazement on the ces before me.

"It wouldn't be a bit interesting," said one, deprecatingly.

"Some fun to exploit people!" was another acid comment.

"And the workers would rise up against you," said a third.

Obviously my question, which in any other country would be taken in all seriousness, was received here as a joke at best.

To our children the "future" and "Socialism" are identical terms. Every now and then the words were used synonymously in our conversation, but no one seemed to notice it.

The girl who wanted to "grow apples on birches" described the future to me as follows:

"There won't be any trams, only airplanes. The conductor will announce Tolstoy Square! and the citizen will leap down on a parachute. And if one tries to get off before the plane stops the air militia will fine him."

"What if he is carried away by the wind?" she was asked.

"There won't be any wind by then!"

"What do you mean, there won't be any wind!" chorused the children.

"By that time they will have learned to regulate the weather, that's all," was the triumphant retort.

"Under Socialism," said one boy, who had been introduced to me as the leading musician in the camp, "under Socialism, everyone will learn music as we learn to read and write and then there will be lots of talented people and geniuses. I have read that even animals are sensitive to sounds. The telephone and the radio transmit sounds over great distances. I think it will be possible to entice wild animals by sounds. And sounds will be transmitted from planet to planet."

The children had a great deal to say about the future. One about the planets, another about the possibility

Children's books are illustrated by the best artists.
Above: illustrations by Kukriniksi to N. Gogol's "Dead Souls"
Below: illustrations by S. Koboladze to Shot'ha Rust'hveli's "The Knight in the Tiger's Skin"

of constructing moving sidewalks of varying speeds: slow for those who wanted to stroll and faster for those who were in a hurry to get somewhere; others wanted to know whether it would be possible to introduce new brain cells so people would be cleverer; others spoke of movable houses, air bicycles, gas-filled costumes like divers' suits, to make giant leaps through space, about bringing warm currents of air to the Arctic.

But one thing was common to all of them. There was not the slightest doubt but that the future would be a happy one.

Only when the talk turned to longevity did one round-faced, broad-shouldered girl rise in her seat and say in a sad voice:

"I don't know why we should live at all if we have to die anyway. Suppose you do become a professor, you'll die in the end and that will be all."

The children pricked up their ears. This was clearly a question that demanded a serious answer. And they found it.

"I think she's wrong," said someone with animation. The speaker was a black-eyed boy of about nine years with a lock of dark hair falling over his forehead. "There will be people living in the world after she dies, won't there? If she makes some discovery it will benefit the people who live after her."

Whereupon he plumped down in his seat to a shower of approving clapping from children and grown-ups alike. This was the first and only applause that day and it was obviously accorded in appreciation of the energetic rebuff to pessimism, something which is completely alien to our children.

But the next minute everyone was laughing at something else this youngster said, expressing in all sincerity one of the typical emotions of his age.

"There is one other thing I should like," he said. "It often happens that two pals get together and decide what they want to do. One says: 'Let's go for a walk,' and the other says: 'No, I'd rather stay home and read.' Well, I should like that in the future people should learn to agree on such things."

All the children, regardless of age, spoke of the future with great sincerity and solemnity. It was as though in the very next room there sat someone endowed with the gift of bringing their dreams to life. Hence every trivial and flippant proposal was vigorously thumbed down by the children. There were few enough of such proposals.

Only one of the younger Pioneers voiced an altogether improbable hypothesis.

"I think," he piped, "that in the future all the houses will be golden and a thousand stories high, and autobuses and cars will seat thousands of people."

This little chap is obviously still at an age when all that glitters is beautiful, and thousands are invariably better than hundreds, and hundreds than scores.

As I listened to what the Pioneers in the camp near Leningrad had to say about the future, I was happy to think that there are so many more children like them in our country.

Young glider-enthusiasts. Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan

The Life of a Moscow Child

There are six hundred thousand children of school age in Moscow. In the early morning a whole army of Soviet children fills the streets and lanes leading to the six hundred and sixty-four schools of the capital.

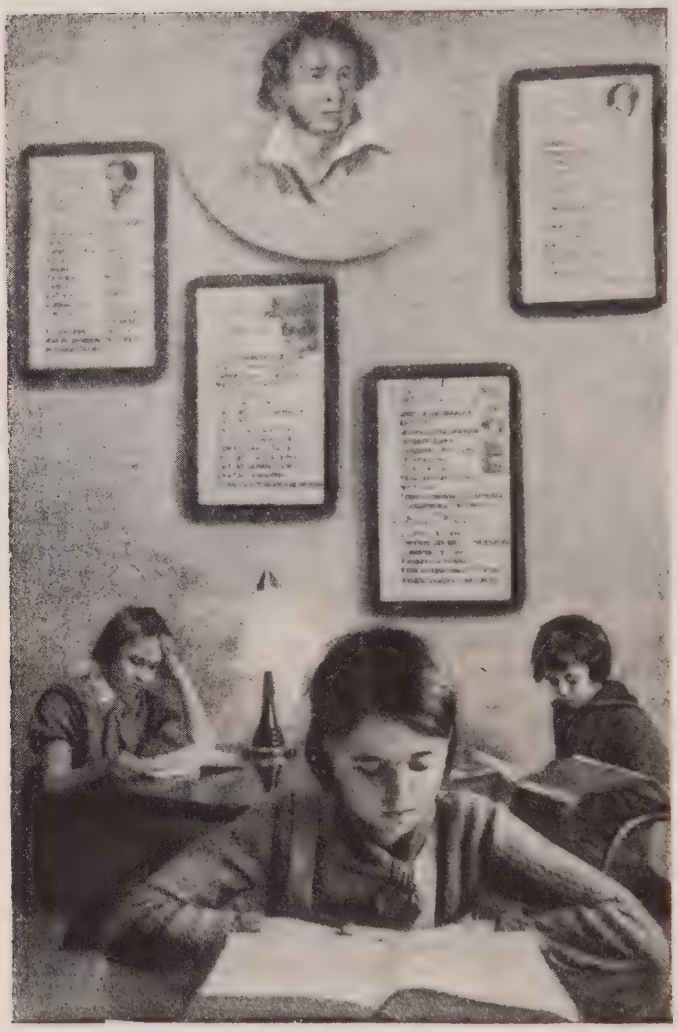
A bell rings, and the children settle down at their desks in the big, sunny classrooms. More than half the schools in Moscow have been erected by the Soviet Government during the last four years. They are fine, well designed buildings in an unpretentious but expressive style.

While the children are at their desks the children's newspaper, *Pioneer Pravda*, is being set and printed in one of the largest printing works in the Soviet Union. Though not very large in size, its circulation exceeds that of many papers for grown-ups, and it is highly popular with Soviet children. From his paper the child learns what is going on in the world. He himself is one of those who help to fill the paper, a regular correspondent, the author of verses and tales that appear on the literary page, as well as the chronicler of news. Another exciting thing about *Pioneer Pravda* is that you can find out how to make a drill out of a knitting-needle or fix up a camera with a pinion filed out of a two-kopeck piece and a lens of the glass out of somebody's spectacles.

While fresh issues of *Pioneer Pravda* are being turned out, people are busy in the five big Moscow theaters for children, preparing for the evening's performance. Today it is Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* in one theater, Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire* in another, Friedrich Wolf's *Trojan Horse* in a third; plays by Soviet dramatists are performed, too.

Films produced by the children's cinema studios are distributed first and foremost among cinema houses where everything from the program to the furniture is specially designed for school-children.

A many-storeyed building, in the center of the town, belongs to the Children's Publishing House, where books and periodicals with a circulation of millions are published in all the languages spoken in the U.S.S.R. Hundreds of editors and writers for children are employed by the Children's Publishing House.



Pushkin corner in the Moscow Palace of Pioneers

There are four large institutes in Moscow devoted to scientific research on children's diseases and ailments. Several score children's dispensaries and polyclinics are open daily for the sick. Schoolchildren undergo examination for their health regularly.

In the Soviet capital there are special chrildren's department stores and children's barber shops, where, seated triumphantly on a huge wooden elephant or camel, a child may have his hair cut and trimmed in style. As for the children's museums, clubs, reading rooms and stadiums, they are beyond counting.

Moscow is proud of its fourteen Children's Houses of Culture, the majority of which are mansions that belonged at one time to the gentry and to millionaire merchants.

In a by-street in the center of the city stands a beautiful house where once a tea merchant named Vysotsky lived. In his day visitors to the house were struck by its gloomy grandeur. The walls were paneled in darkest oak and walnut, ornamented by skillful craftsmen with carvings of weird and fantastic beasts and fishes. Now the gloomy house is changed; the best of the Moscow artists have spared no pains to make the walls and ceilings bright and cheerful. It has become the Moscow City Pioneers' House, a club where several thousand Soviet school children spend their evenings.

Let us look into the studio of this club. Budding artists are sitting at their easels,

A still from "Doctor Aibolit," a new Soviet children's film

making drawings of an old man with a long grey beard. The model is sitting in an armchair.

In the next room, which is circular in form, and very bright, the dancers' circle is practicing. Parrots of all the colors of the rainbow observe the scene impartially from their cages high up under the ceiling, giving a screech when the occasion seems to demand it. Another room is fitted up as a luxurious theater, and here the children's theatrical circles of Moscow produce their own plays.

The large new block of buildings in the yard has been given over to young technicians and botanists. Here there are fine laboratories, the equipment of which has been presented to the Pioneers' House by various factories and scientific institutes.

The cinema circle, which has already produced a film on the activities in the Pioneers' House, can be seen at work here.

A vast bright room is known as the "toy-library," where the very tiniest children "take out" toys; some sit quietly hugging huge plush teddy bears, others prefer riding on wooden chargers.

Children of millionaires are hardly likely to possess such toys as those the Soviet land provides for its children. In a beautiful country place—Otdykh—near Moscow, a real little railway has been built; it stretches for six and a half kilometers. The places of the engine driver and mechanics are taken by children. The Moscow Pioneers' House has its own navy, with a flagship named *Komsomol* (Young Communist League). The youthful sailors have already made several voyages with their flotilla. The children of the Far East are as well-off

as these in Moscow: the marines have built for them a miniature port on the River Amur. Kharkov children have a gigantic toy to play with, a real pottrey-works. The children of Kremenchug, in the Ukraine, have a miniature sugar refinery.

Once, it is said, the toys that had belonged to the children of the tsar were brought to the Leningrad Pioneers' House (formerly the Annichkov Palace). The royal playthings looked poor and mean beside the new toys of the Soviet children.

Many of the Moscow's industrial giants have built excellent clubs for the children of their workers and employees.

Take, for example, the Pavlik Morozov [1] Children's House of Culture in the Krasnaya Presnya District of Moscow. Here the children of Trekhgornaya Textile Mill workers spend their leisure. One of the rooms is devoted to the Stradivarius circle, the members of which make the violins that are played by the children of the music circle.

The Pavlik Morozov House is remarkable for the interesting work it carries on among homeless children, of whom there are still some remaining in Moscow. Not long ago the Culture House organized a trip for these children to a government preserve Askania Nowa.

Nearly three floors of the lofty club belonging to the Stalin Automobile Works have been placed at the disposal of children. Youthful sailors-to-be, radio fans and amateur photographers can work at their favorite hobbies here. The library consisting of fourteen thousand volumes occupies several rooms.

There are several score of children's libraries as remarkable as this in Moscow; they do not confine their activities merely to receiving and lending books. They arrange readings and recitals, and meetings of prominent children's writers with their young readers and critics.

The Moscow Museum of Juvenile Literature can not only boast a magnificent collection, but a very special kind of activity, for it has its own printing and book-binding works. The members of the children's "black-and-white" art circle design and produce little illustrated volumes here.

The technical side of things greatly interests the young Muscovite. Only the professions of air pilot and sailor can compete in the juvenile heart with that of a designing engineer.

[1] A twelve year old Pioneer, who was killed in 1932 by kulaks whose counter-revolutionary work he had exposed.

Two Moscow boys, Shura Sidorov and Vasya Vorobyov, once almost started a big fire through their enthusiastic interest in rockets. They got a bamboo rod, filled it with gunpowder and decided to launch this home-made rocket into space. Instead of being taken up by the militia, however, they were sent to the Central Children's Technical Station, and in one of the laboratories the young amateurs of rocket navigation had the good fortune to meet Fomin, a prominent Soviet scientist. Now both boys are making rapid headway at the construction of real models of rockets in Professor Fomin's laboratory.

The Children's Technical Station has produced no small number of technicians who are now well known. Yakovlev, an important Soviet designer of sports planes, received his initial training in the Central Children's Technical Station.

In one of the laboratories a fifteen year old girl, Raya Nagornaya, the inventor of a clever tractor trailer arrangement for harrowing, was pointed out to us. She comes from a collective farm, just like another young inventor who showed us a trick lock she had made for the collective farm barn. Volodya Kurbatov, now a student at one of the Moscow universities, used to work in the laboratories of this station as a child, and many of his fifty inventions and devices have been patented.

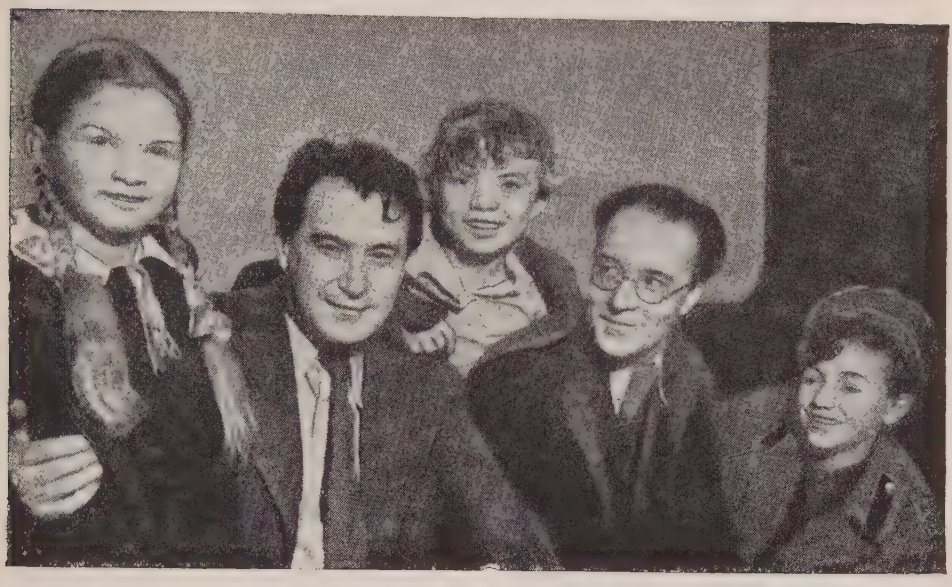
A prominent Soviet designer-engineer was vexed to think that work prevented him from attending the congress of young model designers.

"Those imps sometimes think of things that would never occur to a grown-up," said the mature scientist.

Like children the world over, youthful Muscovites are fond of games, and they are provided with excellent opportunities for indulging in them. In a single month Moscow opened and equipped twenty-three big children's parks, with playgrounds, "forts" and various amusements. There are branches of the Children's Technical Station and Young Naturalist Station in all the parks.

Sport is popular, of course. There are ten district sports schools for children, and one general city sports school, where those who show outstanding abilities in this field can go in for higher training.

The Young Pioneers' Stadium, which is situated near the Moscow airport, is in the international class. Many remarkable records have been made here, and the young people's teams produce champions of the future. On the rinks of the Soviet capital one can often see the juvenile skater, Anatole Melnikov, who is in the same team with his father, Yakov



Valentin Katayev, the author of "A Lone Sail Gleams White," and film director V. Ligoshin among the central characters of the film version of Katayev's novel

Melnikov, ex-champion of Europe. Igor Ippolitov, son of the ex-champion of the U.S.S.R., has already achieved big things in sport. Julia Kochetkova, who is only sixteen, recently set three records in swimming; young as she is, she beat K. Aleshina, the woman champion of the U.S.S.R.

A force that impels Soviet children onward and renders life interesting for them is the fast friendship that exists between children and grown-ups. The problem of "fathers and children" that troubled Russian society so greatly in the olden days and was so vividly reflected in Russian classical literature, does not exist in present-day Soviet society. The same is true of the attitude between teachers and pupils. Old members of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. are delighted to accept invitations to visit the children's schools and clubs. The best writers, most famous actors, engineers and public figures in the Soviet Union, people who are up to the eyes in work, never miss an opportunity to see children and tell them about their work.

Once an eight-year old citizen was brought into a Moscow railway station children's room (there are comfortably furnished children's rooms at every railway station). The young traveler was dressed in a warm sheepskin coat with the wool inside and looked cheerful and well fed. He was labeled like a parcel; across his coat his destination was written clearly in indelible pencil. The explanation was simple enough: he was on his way from the Soviet Far East, where both his parents had died. The child had traveled safely all those thousands of miles, cared for by people whom he did not even know. In the children's rooms at the stations he was supplied with food and a railway ticket. The conductors on one train handed him on to the conductors of the next as something precious that must be treated with the utmost care.

In old Russia people were in the habit of frightening their children with references to the armed representatives of the law. The man standing at the cross-roads with the revolver at his belt was a bogey for many. We were standing near one of the taxi stands when, to quiet his little boy, who was evidently annoying him about something, a man said, pointing to a militia man:

"If you don't behave yourself, the militia man will catch you and carry you off."

Unexpectedly, the militia-man squatted down on his heels, picked up the smiling offender, and said:

"Don't you ever be frightened of militia men, young 'un. If your daddy disobeys the law, we'll have to talk sharply to him."

The father had obviously put his foot in it; he reddened with embarrassment.

Are there juvenile offenders, child criminals in this great city? Yes, of course,

there are. But they are fewer than in the capitals of any other country. The U.S.S.R. is still paying for the war that deprived so many children of their fathers. The children's departments of the Moscow militia, which employ special teachers, carry on their work with tact and consideration for the juvenile offenders. They investigate the circumstances in which the child lives and are often obliged to send up for trial parents who have brought up their children badly. Only the older children—adolescents—guilty of repeated offences, are sent to special labor schools.

Occasionally, runaways from various parts of the vast Soviet Union are brought into the children's section of the militia. But it is not tales of Redskins which fire the imagination of Soviet children nowadays, they do not run off to join Indians; recently six twelve year old boys arrived in Moscow without their parents' leave, to ask the High Command of the Red Army to accept them in the cavalry.

Moscow goes late to bed. The militia men on duty at the asphalted crossings are wide awake; watchful sentries stand guard over the treasures of the Soviet capital, on the bridges, at the power stations. And if you ask these plain Soviet men what is the most precious thing their city contains, you will hear them speak with gruff tenderness of the children.

At these hours they are safe in their beds—the future Soviet engineers, aviators, artists, composers, engine drivers and builders—the little citizens whose happy childhood is so carefully guarded in the land of the Soviets.

EVGUENI MAR

Kornei Chukovsky, children's writer, in the game room of the Moscow Palace of Pioneers

MARIA DEMCHENKO

"May I?"

"Come in, do come in."

A little woman in a new coat with a high sealskin collar entered the room. Her head was wrapped, peasant-fashion, in a knitted silk scarf. Quickly she slipped out of her coat. Frowning into the mirror, she patted the bow under her chin, adjusted a long-fringed shawl around her shoulders and straightened her crimson jumper. It was new, perhaps worn for the first time. Then she walked into the living room and sank into a corner of the couch. Stubbornly she compressed her small mouth with its stern chapped lips and sat motionless for a long time, staring fixedly in front of her. A gentle pink on her small set face with its broad forehead betrayed her inner confusion. She was clearly making a strong effort to hide her embarrassment. She was angry with herself for being embarrassed, but she could not help herself.

This young Ukrainian peasant girl, Maria Demchenko, remains as simple and unaffected as she had been before her name became known throughout the Soviet Union.

What she accomplished was very simple, great by the virtue of its very simplicity: she gave her Komsomol[1] word of honor, and she kept it.

As one of the best shock workers in her district, Maria Demchenko was sent as a delegate to the Second All-Union Conference of Collective Farm Shock Workers.

She came to the conference having raised 18.4 tons of sugar beet to the acre, at a time when the average yield per acre throughout the country was not more than four tons. But until her arrival at the conference she did not know she had set an all-Union record. She thought she had merely won first place in her district.

[1] Young Communist League.

She was elected member of the presidium.

It was at this conference that she met Comrade Stalin.

"What yield are you setting as your goal for next year?" he asked her.

Maria Demchenko was overcome with confusion.

"Could you raise twenty tons to the acre?"

She did not answer at once. For a while she pondered, calculating whether she could or not. Finally she decided.

"I'll do it," she replied firmly.

She returned to her collective farm, set to work, and the next fall raised 20.948 tons of excellent sugar beet to the acre. That is all.

But it wasn't easy.

The beets came up well. The lovely green shoots glistened in the bright May sunshine. Then suddenly, bang!—frosts. They never occur so late in the season in the Ukraine. It was almost as though for spite.

"And the main thing, just imagine, was that my section was the most unfortunate of the whole farm," Maria Demchenko broke in quickly with her lively yet soft Kiev dialect, frowning. "It's been nicknamed 'reptile land' because it's so low. Probably at some time or other reptiles did crawl there. Now right next to my section there's a pine-covered hill, fairly high. Well, you know, near a thicket the frost is always sharpest. Just as though deliberately. So all around me no one else's beets were freezing, and there were ours, freezing and freezing. Well, you know, we almost went crazy. We, that means I and three other girls, my brigade. And there were our beets, freezing. What would you say to that?"

Maria Demchenko flushed angrily at the memory of that fierce May frost; angrily she tugged at the kerchief on her head.

"You know, I simply didn't know what to do! Here I had promised Comrade Stalin, and then suddenly such a disgrace. Tell me, in the name of heaven, when I gave my word, how could I have foreseen something like that awful frost? You can imagine, I was almost ready to drown myself for shame. But finally I decided; come what may, we must save those beets somehow.

"I don't even know where the idea came from—to save the beets by smoke. All around the edge of the section the girls and I began to burn straw. Day and night we kept the straw burning, and not a step away did we go."

"Did you save them?"

"We lost forty per cent of the crop, but that forty per cent I afterwards sowed over again. However, that's not the worst. Here the frost attacks the beets, the crop is threatened with ruin while the kulaks, who had not yet been uprooted, began to spread their lies at the market place.

"At our collective farm there is another Demchenko, only not Maria but Fyodora. She's also a brigade leader. The frost didn't touch her plot at all. Mine was the only one that suffered from that frost.

"Can you imagine what kind of scandal they were spreading at the market place? They said that since our names were the same the collective farm would transfer me to her plot and her to mine, in order to hide the fact that my beets froze. Well, don't such snakes deserve to be spat at? But, you know, although I was boiling inside, I only smiled nervously and told Fyodora Demchenko:

" 'What a fool you are,' I said, 'to believe the enemy. I'll get twenty tons an acre from my frozen section just the same and you

won't reap a thing from yours, which wasn't touched by the frost, if you don't make an effort.'

"It came out the way I said it would."

Maria Demchenko broke off with her story, jumped up and strode across the room, crunching on an apple.

We went out on the balcony. From there one had a wonderful view of the Kremlin. With avid curiosity Maria Demchenko looked at the new ruby stars, glittering with a crimson flame, on the old Kremlin towers, at the bright flags atop the buildings of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars, at the massive, many-storied building of the Council of Labor and Defense.

A fresh breeze ruffled her boyishly-cut hair. Above the jumper gleamed her snow-white shirt. Clearly outlined by the cold November sun, she stood for a long time among the green flower-boxes on the balcony, in which the asters were in second bloom and the petals of the nasturtiums swayed under the weight of the lusterless dew. She could not see enough of this city called Moscow.

Suddenly, in the middle of the conversation that had drifted on to some other topic, she remembered her beets.

"Well, you can't begin to imagine what I went through that year! All summer we watered, hoed, weeded . . . weeded, watered and hoed. . . . Not a single weed did we allow to grow on our section. And right at that time, as though for spite, people began to come to visit me from all over the Union. Every day five or six would arrive. Newspapermen, photographers, writers, artists, agricultural instructors from the district center, from the province center, from the capital. I had to work and they followed me, followed me and followed me about. Oh, damn them all! They gave me a headache. All the time they picked on me: 'Look out, Maria, don't falter.' 'Be careful, Maria, keep your word.' One snapped my photo, another drew a portrait of me, a third was writing a novel about me. And they buzzed around and around me. . . . I thought surely they would trample down all the beets for me. Things even went so far that I had to set up a sign on our section: 'Outsiders are strictly forbidden to walk among the beets.' And one woman came with a whole excursion! Walked right onto our section and plop!—pulled up the very largest beet. Well, at that I lost my temper and yelled at her. So she said to me: 'I'm so-and-so. I pulled up that beet with a scientific aim.' And I said right back, 'Citizen scientist, you drop that. No matter who you are, you have no right to pull up our beets. You have to answer for your work and I shall have to answer for my beets to the Communist Party and Comrade Stalin. Excuse *me*.'

"I received all sorts of silly letters, including proposals of marriage, and one fool sent me the Gospel with underlined places, meaning something like how god will punish you for all this.

"Well, then there was a regular heat wave. In August something new—drought. As if in spite! Can you beat it, not a drop of rain! And without rain everything would be ruined.

"I saw that again my crop might fail. Here I had given my word of honor to the country, and nature, as though deliberately, was standing in my way: first frost, then sun! Phfoo! There was nothing to do but water the fields. And it was nearly two miles to the river. Well, I mobilized literally everything under the sun: barrels, pails, pots, pans. . . .

"To tell the truth, my friend and rival Marina Gnatenko helped us a lot. She and her brigade watered our section in addition to their own. But, of course, not for nothing. We had an exact account: so much for so much. Tit for tat. On my part, I helped her fight the moths on her section. I have my own method for fighting moths: lighting bonfires at night. The moths fly into the fire and of course shrivel up. But you can't imagine how much unpleasantness I went through because of that system. 'You will only scare away the moths for a time, they won't fly into the fire anyway, but will fly back again onto the plants and the beets may be scorched,' they said. Anyway, I persevered, lighted the bonfires and destroyed the moths, and the beet plants did not suffer at all."

"How did you come to think of burning the moths in a bonfire?"

"Quite simply. One night I was riding home in the district Party committee's Ford and noticed how whole clouds of moths flew at the headlights. Right there and then I got the idea of burning the moths."

In connection with that I mentioned how at Magnitogorsk in 1931 the young concrete workers used to think up all sorts of devices to lighten and hasten the laying of the concrete.

Hearing the word Magnitogorsk, Maria Demchenko perked up and smiled:

"Were you at Magnitogorsk?"

"I was."

"In what year?"

"In 1931."

"Why, I was also there then! I was a concrete worker!"

"In which section?"

"The sixth."

"I was in the sixth, too."

"Well, what do you think of that!"

The famous sixth section. The famous competition with Kharkov. So that was it! It was there that Maria Demchenko got her inventiveness, that keenness of observation, that efficient eye, that labor discipline!

She had gone through a splendid proletarian Komsomol school, this dogged, persistent, purposeful Ukrainian girl!

She finished her story:

"Well, of course, when the harvest began, no one slept at all, hardly. For seventeen days without a break we camped out. We dug up the beets at night, by the light of bonfires. We went to bed at three in the morning and rose when dawn was just breaking. Mamma used to bring me pancakes. You know, I love our pancakes very much. At five one evening we dug up the last beet.

"You can't imagine what followed. From all sides they came, on foot, in cars and wagons, running. A regular crowd of people. Two newsreel cameramen were there, cranking away. At eight o'clock the last five-ton truck loaded with my beets left for the sugar refinery. We all waited. There, at the factory, they were weighing my beets and it was not yet known how many there would be. Would it come to twenty tons an acre or not? You can easily imagine how nervous I was.

"Suddenly, an hour later, they telephoned from the refinery that they had already reached twenty an acre and were still counting. And then, from goodness knows where, tables appeared, lanterns, wine, beer, roast chickens, pancakes, pork—everything under the sun. A regular feast. There was an orchestra, of course, from the sugar refinery, and dancing.

"David Burda, chief of our section, proposed the first toast to me. He said:

" 'I lift my glass to Maria Dem-

chenko, because she firmly kept her Komsomol word of honor given to our Comrade Stalin. Hurrah!'

"Then, all of a sudden, a plane arrived with members of the staff of the Kiev *Visti (News)* and landed on our collective farm airdrome. We already know: when someone flies overhead we must light bonfires at the airdrome because sure enough it's for us.

"I danced all night, although I was dreadfully tired after those seventeen days. And all night I dipped glasses of wine right out of the barrel and passed them around to all my friends, to the guests and musicians, to everyone who was at our party. It's a pity that you weren't there, you would have had a good time.

"And then they put me in an automobile—and to Moscow! But still, a human being needs to rest. I thought I would be able to rest on the train, but no. There was an artist traveling and as soon as he saw me he began to sketch. And, can you imagine, he sketched me all the way to Moscow."

And Maria Demchenko smiled her angry, charming smile.

VALENTIN KATAYEV

The Man Who Restores Eyesight

Professor V. Filatov at his desk

One of the most popular Soviet scientists is Professor V. P. Filatov, who has been awarded an Order by the Soviet government.

"The man who restores sight to the blind" is the way Professor Filatov is spoken of in the Ukrainian city of Odessa, where his institute is located, and even far beyond the boundaries of the Ukraine.

A brief description of the brilliant operations performed by Professor Filatov will serve to give the reader an idea of one of medicine's greatest accomplishments—the restoration of man's sight.

Experiments in restoring sight are nothing new, and medical literature contains numerous instances when the cornea, removed from the eye of another patient, has been grafted into a sightless film-covered eye, with the result that the patient has once again seen the world. Such experiments have been brilliantly successful, but they have been only isolated cases. These operations were rare and difficult ones, since they involved grafting

the cornea of a living man—which can be obtained only in cases of injury or serious illness demanding the immediate removal of an eye. And so of necessity operations of this type were seldom performed and systematic work under such conditions was out of the question.

Professor Filatov, who bears the title of Honored Worker in Science, and is affiliated with the Odessa Medical Institute, was the first to have successfully solved this problem. Basing himself on the individual experiments of his predecessors, he proved the possibility of grafting the cornea from the eye of a dead man into the eye of a living person. Further experiments confirmed the correctness of his assertions. His experiments also indicated the possibility of working unhurriedly; the cornea would be kept for several days and then grafted into the diseased eye without having lost its capacity for life. Carrying his experiments further, the professor was able to prove after a time that grafting the cornea from the eye of a corpse was more effective than grafting that of a living person. The individuality and peculiarity of the living tissue struggle against the body in which the tissue is grafted, resist it, fight to overcome the frequently unwelcomed presence of alien blood, cells and organism. This does not exist when the cornea of a corpse is used, the only thing remaining is capacity for life. This type of cornea is living tissue which has lost its individuality and its biochemical incompatibility with alien cells, and which remains acquiescent and adaptable to the tissue of any organism.

In continuing his wonderful experiments, Professor Filatov observed still another phenomenon: the aqueous humor around the grafted section of cornea gradually becomes lighter; the acclimatization of the alien tissue seems to spur the activity of the cells and to excite all their functions into operation, leading to their agitated and turbulent restoration. The life force of a section of the cornea taken from a corpse is tremendous. The diaphanous quality of the cornea is restored, the process of exchange and dissolution that is going on between the living and the dead tissue excites an increased activity of all the cells.

Professor Filatov experimented in grafting the cornea as a cure for ophthalmia. This yielded no less important results; the section of the cornea taken from the corpse and grafted into the diseased eye aroused the functions and defended and strengthened the activity of the eye.

Four hundred cases of restoring sight, more than in any other clinic in the world, have been successfully accomplished in Professor Filatov's clinic. This was made possible only through the help of the Soviet Government, which supported the professor's research and gave him every necessary aid for carrying on his experimental work. Professor Filatov has also designed improved instruments, no less than twenty of which are already being used in Soviet medical practice. The work of this man is known the world over.

Statistics reveal that there are about seven million totally blind and some fifteen million partially blind persons in the world. This vast army of people suffers under a tremendous handicap. After hearing a lecture on the subject the workers of a plant in Odessa adopted a resolution requesting that a special new institute of experimental ophthalmology be created. It was an act of the greatest humanity and showed the deep interest in others' fate, care for the health of the people.

A decree of the government established such an institute, and Professor Filatov was named its director. The extent and scope of the institute's work are tremendous. Besides its experimental work, the institute trains doctors who later travel over the country and utilize these new methods in an effort to restore sight to the blind.

Anyone who has once witnessed such an operation will remember it all his life. Never does the human eye look so exposed and awful as when it has been prepared for an operation. A sheet covers the face and body of the patient, leaving nothing

uncovered except the eye, incapable of sight and extremely bloodshot. It has already been treated with an anaesthetic, so that it neither sees nor feels.

The professor wears transparent rubber gloves, his head is covered by a white cap, and his assistant ties a gauze mask over his face.

Around the operating table stand assistants and doctors who have come from other parts of the country to study here. The patient is ready for the operation, he lies stretched out on the table. What are known as "bridle" stitches hold his upper and lower eye muscles in place. This prevents the eye from moving, since the bridle-like device does not permit independent action of the eye. The professor bends over his patient. With a small pair of scissors, he cuts out a thin ribbon from the mucous membrane and deflects it slightly to one side. It is fearful to watch those sharp scissors enter the eye, the most sensitive organism in the human body, and slowly remove from it that blood-red shred. The professor now moves over to another table and his instruments are handed to him. The trepan which he handles bears the trademark "FM-3," the initials being those of its designers, Professor Filatov and a technical expert Martsinkovsky. A round purplish eye, which has been removed from a corpse, lies on the table. It has been extracted several days earlier, and has been kept in a cold place. With the help of the trepan a section of diaphanous cornea is sliced out of the eye. Now comes the most awe-inspiring moment of the entire operation: this bit of dead organism is to return sight to a living man, to begin its second life in his body.

The surgeon returns to the operating table. With a second trepan he extracts a disk from the center of the film that covers the diseased eye. Into the aperture he has made he places a section of the cornea taken from the dead eye. The patient is silent, his body completely motionless, he experiences no pain. The professor's face is invisible, hidden behind his gauze mask; his even breathing is felt through the mask, and there is a faint trace of perspiration on his fleshy, yellowish brow. It is not possible to make stitches in the transplanted section. The process of growing a section of tissue from a dead eye into a living eye is one of greatest delicacy and mystery, since an eye does not allow any alien body to enter. This was one of the reasons which, in the past, frequently contributed to the failure of such operations performed by oculists working on the problem of grafting. The transplanted section would merely be deposited in the aperture of the diseased eye, and having nothing to fasten to, it would slip out of place and thus fail to take root. But now we see how, after depositing the transplanted section into the aperture made in the film, the professor carefully fastens it from above with a thread cut from the mucous membrane, and strengthens it with three stitches. This shred of mucous membrane holds the transplanted tissue firmly in place, allowing it no chance for movement, and helping it to take root in the alien tissue. Within four or five days the thread is removed. The section of cornea from the dead eye begins its second life, giving the blind man a chance to see the world.

Let us turn our attention to some of the formerly blind people who have undergone this operation. Their eyes have a wild and stern look, as though they were seeing something that the rest of us could not see. In the dull blueish cornea may be clearly distinguished a transparent, brightly shining little window. Here is a patient named Georjyan, who had not seen the world for seventeen years. Here is Tokmanov, who was blind for fifteen years. A cornea that had been kept in a cold place for seventy hours was grafted into his eye, and today his sight, using the figure one as the average, equals seven-tenths. There is an eight-year-old boy who was blind from the age of five, and had already forgotten colors and shapes. Here is another, blind from childhood, who had to be told the names of objects which he saw for the first time.

The person with normal sight who is able to witness a moment such as the

following will remember it all his life.

"What's this?" asks a man, pointing with his finger.

"A cat," his mother replies, tears running down her face. "It's a cat."

"What's the name of that tree?" asks the man, smiling in perplexity. "What's that flower? Where's an automobile? Show me an apple. . . ."

The world, filled with colors and lines, stuns him by its novelty and grandeur; it is tremendous, splendid and unfathomable—and the man shudders and mutters: "Let me look out of the window. Show me a horse. What's that machine?" And he cries and does not even wipe his tears. His wet face is almost terrible in its animation.

Professor Filatov's work in grafting corneas called forth new problems. The life capacity of the tissue taken from a corpse, the vibrant energy which the process of insertion created among the cells, the powerful internal processes responsible for the disappearance of the scars and the clarifying of the film, indicated the possibility of new and important discoveries. Professor Filatov tested the grafting of tissue on a patient suffering with lupus. A collective farm woman named Reznichenko arrived from the countryside with a face monstrously eaten away by ulcers, swollen and devoid of all mobility. Cutting away one of the ulcers, the surgeon replaced it by a piece of skin taken from a dead body that had been lying for five days. Within a few days the patient's largest ulcer had closed up. The resistance of the tissue to the action of the bacteria had strengthened, a struggle had begun in every cell, the ulcers had closed up, the inflamed condition was improving, and life-giving forces vitalized the skin. This was the first experiment in medical history in grafting the skin of a corpse for the treatment of lupus, and the results were astonishingly successful.

A patient named Ribak, suffering with a serious form of tuberculosis of the right arm, had the skin of a corpse grafted to his own skin around the diseased tissue. Very soon he showed a decided improvement, and all malignant growths were healed. Another worker, Sakschneider, burned his arm with molten metal. The arm was paralyzed and covered with scars. After skin from a corpse had been grafted on to this arm, the scars began to fade away, the tissue again became elastic, and the arm regained its flexibility and strength.

It is still too early to predict all the possible results of these experiments. Professor Filatov is now planning to graft the skin of corpses in cases of such diseases as eczema, Pendinsk ulcer, and leprosy.

Soviet science is growing, and each day it presents us with valuable and wonderful discoveries. Our country accepts them with gratitude, helping, strengthening and encouraging all that contains genuine scientific value.

TATYANA TESS

How I Became a Soviet Intellectual

Dmitri Kontsedalov

In 1927 I arrived in Donbas to work at coal mining. I spent two years learning, being in succession a lamp boy, car loader and shaft timberer. Finally in 1929 I became a coal miner. To be perfectly frank, I was illiterate, although I had joined the Young Communist League and had a good reputation as a miner.

In those days some miners saw no reason why a coal miner should study at all: dig coal, that's enough. I'm ashamed to admit it today, but then I looked on things that way also, not, however, without feeling chagrin at times. When I heard the young folks at Y.C.L. meetings argue about books I just sat there staring blankly, for I understood nothing, did not even know the difference between a primer and Pushkin.

I recall one Y.C.L. member, Petya by name. He dropped in on us once, had a book under his arm. It was a day off and we were idling away the time, strumming on a mandolin and crooning some song, just which I don't remember. Well, Petya looked at us and said: "How about it, fellows, shall I recite you some poetry?" We roared, laughing at him. But he, not the least abashed, began to recite, a poem of Nekrasov's first, and then some Pushkin. We were a group of five or six, and all listened with bated breath. Never before had we heard anything like this.

When Petya finished reciting, I asked him:

"What must one do to recite the poems of Pushkin and Nekrasov as you do?"

He replied curtly:

"Study!"

But we had our own views about that. The other chaps, and I also, raised a hue and cry: "Why should a miner study? One can dig coal without an education. Here you are, an educated person, you know all these poems, but try to keep up with us in digging coal! Can you do it? No. We can leave you miles behind. So there you are."

When I recall this episode now it seems ridiculous, as though it took place a hundred years ago. So I began to pretend I was literate, and if anyone asked me why I didn't study or read, I used to say I had no time for it, I was too busy in the mine.

Then one day the district committee of the Y.C.L. sent me out to check up on the work of a rural Y.C.L. organization. When I arrived they handed me a document.

Well, I just had to act out a comedy. I took it, looked at it as if reading, when actually I didn't understand a darn thing. By dint of common sense I got away with this, but the desire to study was gnawing within me. I began to have my doubts that study was of no use to the miner.

I was ashamed to admit it, but I had to confess to the district Y.C.L. committee that I only pretended to be literate. The Young Communist League helped me.

Only then did I comprehend that study is not so simple. Before, it had seemed that no sooner would I learn to read than all books would be open to me at once, that I would go through them all and remember everything. But it did not turn out that way. However, I did not surrender.

I began to study, at first by fits and starts. No longer did I keep pace with my former mandolin-playing, vodka-drinking companions. I had to start with a primer. Then I saw myself making progress. Only after gaining elementary literacy did I comprehend how much there was still to learn. One could dwell long on how a person feels who, having taken his first feeble steps in study, suddenly realizes that learning to read is but a start, that difficulties lie in wait for him such as he cannot even imagine. This moment, I think, is crucial for the beginner. Many lose heart and drop their studies. Everyone who begins to study when already an adult must pass through such a crisis, it seems to me.

I had to go through it. To tell the truth, I was bewildered. I thought, now here I am, already twenty years old, and just beginning to learn to read and write. Why, to become an educated person I would have to study until old age! Thus my whole life would be spent; but what of work? By this time I liked my mining work very much. I had become a real miner and did not wish to change my occupation.

These doubts tormented me a long time; others began to notice it. Some of my comrades jeered at me, saying: "Look, Kontsedalov has decided to become an intellectual. He hasn't any guts, I guess. Digging coal is one thing; reading books is another." They even began to mock me, calling me an intellectual. Again I must say this was long ago, and some miners felt that way; no need to deny it.

I recall a talk I had with an old miner. He had been a fighter in the Civil War, and he, too, scoffed, calling me "intellectual." I put the question to him: "What did you fight for? Why did you shed your blood? That you might scoff at a fellow miner because he wants to study?" And what did he reply? "I fought that others might study," he confessed. "It's too late for me to begin now." "Well," I replied, "it's never too late to learn." But at the same time, that was just what worried me. . . . Despite everything, I continued to study.

I am telling all this in such detail because usually we read: here was an ignorant person and suddenly he transformed himself into a learned man. This is a lie. Miracles don't happen, and one has to surmount many difficulties to become an educated person. It's all nonsense to say: here's a fellow, what a dunce he was yesterday, but look at him today, he woke up just like that, now he's almost a professor. When I read such articles in the newspapers, I get furious. One must show how hard it was for him, what obstacles he had to surmount on the way.

Our Stakhanovite workers per-

form miracles in production and in science. Every literate person can name scores, hundreds of persons, men and women, collective farmers and factory workers, all of whom have become not only educated and intelligent persons, but scientists as well. Every school child in our land knows the names of scientists, flyers, engineers and others, led by the October Revolution and by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, to science and to knowledge. But to say that these people, as in a fairy-tale, made a wish and lo! they were scientists! — is sheer, pernicious nonsense.

Polina Osipenko, the great woman flyer, now a Hero of the Soviet Union, was once a hen-wife in a poultry farm, where she began to work, an illiterate girl. Now she has won world fame, she has become one of the greatest of women flyers, and, besides, she has learned the English language. Do you think she had an easy time of it? It stands to reason she faced obstacles quite different from those one must overcome in a capitalist country. But she had to have will power. Everything is done in our country to make the road to science easy. But miracles don't happen here, either, and to make progress toward science, one must always bear in mind that knowledge does not come by itself. This is my advice to those who begin their study as adults.

Children in our country have no such difficulties to overcome. All our children, both those of city workers and of collective farmers, get an education, and this makes it considerably easier for them to progress further.

My mind was much occupied with these thoughts; however, events crowded them out. Alexei Stakhanov and I began to make records in coal mining and became famous throughout the country. Then, following our example, the best of the miners began to increase the productivity of labor, to apply the new technique in mining coal. All this made me desire to study with renewed zeal. The practical work of mining I knew, and could learn nothing further; but in theory I was blind.

Just about this time I received a letter from Sergo Orjonikidze, the People's Commissar of Heavy Industry, addressed to both myself and Stakhanov. He wrote that we ought to study, ought to become educated persons. Hence we stepped out of the mines and entered the Stalin Industrial Academy in Moscow.

While preparing to enter the Industrial Academy, I came to learn yet another rule, one might even say, a law: after one obstacle has been hurdled, further difficulties are a great deal easier to overcome. This applies both to practical work and to studies. In the Industrial Academy everything seemed to go along as in a fairy tale.

Here we, miners, sit at school desks in a huge majestic building. Here one finds miners and machine builders and people of many other professions. It is a genuine factory turning out brain workers, one more indication of what great attention is paid to the individual in our country.

So many impressions, so much that was new for us! We saw Stalin, the greatest man of our time; we came into close touch with science; why, this alone is actually like a fairy tale.

So the miner Dmitri Kontsedalov became a student, prepared to join the ranks of Soviet intellectuals. Illiterate just a short time ago, this miner Kontsedalov, under the guidance of professors, studies the Russian language, physics, mathematics, chemistry, geography, political economy and

designing, and very much else besides.

But new dangers lurked here for me. For instance, no socner had I come to understand geography, to see our whole earth for the first time, to gaze on it with a comprehending eye, than it seemed I had surmounted all and that no man was better educated than I. Moments such as these are very dangerous for students, and here the Communist Party and science come to our rescue.

Our leader has spoken simple and great words about dizziness from success. One's first success is but the first gateway to science, behind that open ever more gateways and one must pass through them all.

Once you have crossed the threshold of science, you feel like going on and on. This is why I esteem the title of Soviet intellectual, hold it to be one of the most honorable titles in our country. The Soviet intellectual is not simply an intellectual or professional man. To the mass of the people the Soviet intellectual is bound by ties as vital as those which nourish an infant in his mother's womb.

History and literature were my favorite subjects. Every spare minute I spent reading and rereading Pushkin, Lermontov, Lev Tolstoy and the great classical writers of Western Europe. What a treasure is *Eugene Onegin* or *Poltava*! I know there are still people who ask: "How can *Eugene Onegin* help you to mine coal? Chemistry or physics, that one can understand—but *Eugene Onegin*?"

For these persons I have a ready answer. I say that in mining as in any other work, both Pushkin and Tolstoy as well as chemistry and physics have a place. In any work they are all helpful. One should be an educated person, no matter what one works at. And in our country we aim to have no uneducated persons. Everyone studies and when I look at my three year old daughter, Maya, I naturally think, she shall not have to overcome the difficulties her father had, nor those her mother faced. For my wife, too, studies, whereas not long ago she also was completely ignorant.

In my spare time I browsed in libraries, looking for books about miners, and I became convinced that Soviet writers have as yet produced no genuine books about miners: neither novels, novelettes nor short stories. And they are necessary. They are needed because the Soviet miner is as different from the old-time miner as day is from night. It is the duty of our writers to create these novels and stories.

Once I was asked:

"Now, Kontsedalov, confess the truth. Are not Mitya Kontsedalov, the former miner, and Dmitri Kontsedalov, the present student, two different persons?" To this I replied:

"No. You think so from reading tales about miracles that never happen. The miner Kontsedalov has joined the ranks of the Soviet intellectuals. That is true. He is mastering science. That is also true. He has become an educated person and that is true. But to say that he has become a different person, that is a lie."

Kontsedalov was a miner and Kontsedalov has remained a miner. For him there is no greater pleasure than to return at vacation time to the mine and show how one must dig coal in the Stakhanov way. In former times when the working man (if he had a chance, and we know his chances were one in a million) joined the ranks of the intellectuals, he broke loose from his own people, ceased to understand them, and they began

to hate him, because he had become alien to them.

Such things don't happen among us, they cannot happen. The intellectual Kontsedalov shall ever remain the miner Kontsedalov, and the miner's work and the miner's life shall always be his life and work. The more one studies, the more and better does one begin to appreciate this.

Once I was present at a meeting of our renowned flyers and engineers, among whom were world-famous people. But I saw that these are our people, there are no differences dividing them; and should our Donbas coal miners have come to the meeting, they too would have felt they were among their own people. It is a great thing when the scientist and the miner, the engineer and the carpenter, are not alien to each other, when they speak a common language. Perhaps this is true only in our country, only in our Socialist fatherland. My mother is a plain, illiterate woman. Sometimes even she casts a fearful sidelong glance at me as I study and asks: "Mitya, can it be possible that you have become a learned man?" A learned man, why for her that's something from another planet. So it was in the old days. But it is not so now.

Now, in conclusion. I have read over everything I've written, and am asking myself: have I given the correct answer to the question of how I became a Soviet intellectual? Have I given a true account of the path I traveled? I fear I've failed to tell everything just as I wished. One cannot always find the appropriate words, nor does one's memory bring everything back just right. This, it must be repeated, is a job for our writers, who thus far have written very little about miners.

But it seems to me that in the main I have conveyed what I thought. The road by which I became an intellectual was a pathway to science without giving up mining, without breaking ties with the masses. Comrade Stalin has once reminded us of the ancient story of Antaeus: we understood it very well. Our strength, the strength of the Soviet intellectuals, lies in not becoming estranged from the masses which have given us birth. That is why we have accomplished so much, that is why our fatherland has become one of the most cultured lands in the world.

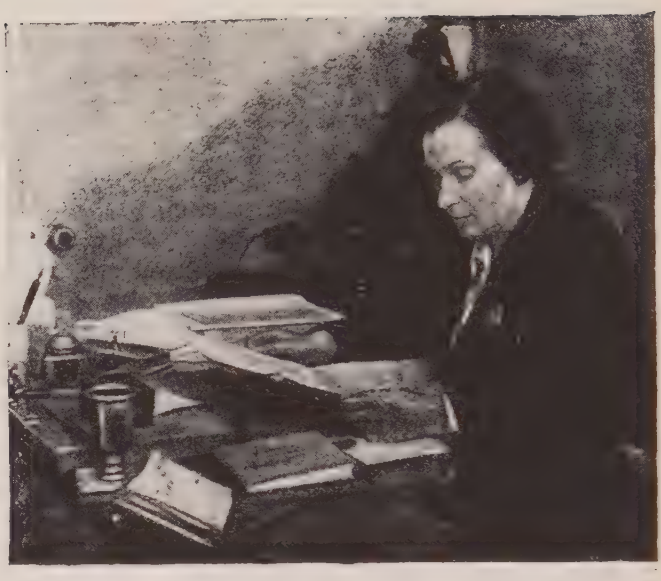
My most cherished desire is to justify the trust placed in me and to come back to the Donbas a really educated person so as to continue the work I love, and help our Donbas become the foremost coal basin in the world. I know what coal means to industry, what place coal, oil and other fuels occupy in our national economy. I also know something about the history of the struggle for coal and oil. A ton of coal now has new meaning for me. And the intellectual Kontsedalov will struggle for every ton of coal, just as the miner Kontsedalov fought for it, because these are not two different persons, they are one and the same person, one and the same Dmitri Kontsedalov, a loyal son of his great fatherland.

Nekrasov dreamed and wrote poems about those days when every peasant would read the great classics. I sometimes think:

"Ah, Nikolai Alexeyevich, might you but browse in the book shelf of the intellectual Kontsedalov. There you would find the classics, including your own books. They are welcome guests always, both in my brief-case and on my desk."

DMITRI KONTSEDALOV

A People's Deputy



Praskovya Pichugina at her desk

Fair-haired Praskovya Pichugina reminds one of those young but capable graduate engineers filling responsible posts. This woman with her calm assured air, a former factory worker, is today a Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. and a student in an industrial academy[1] in Moscow. She is a city-dweller, business-like, her every word clear and to the point.

Life bore no joys for the peasants in the large village on the Oka River in Ryazan Gubernia, where Pichugina was born in 1903. The tiny plot of land owned by her father could not support the twelve members of the family. Like the villagers the family began to break up. As the futility of the struggle with the soil grew clearer, husbands and wives and sons and daughters migrated into the cities.

Praskovya's father also left his tiny plot. He went to St. Petersburg with his wife and daughter. Jobs were scarce in the city, but he finally found one: assistant janitor in the home of a wealthy merchant on Vasilyev Island.

His work was arduous, and in St. Petersburg the janitors lived in basements. So damp were their quarters that boots became covered with mildew overnight. And here, too, it was hard to make ends meet, so Praskovya's mother worked as a servant for the same merchant. The little girl helped as much as she could and in her free time played in the narrow backyard. When she wanted to run around in the front yard her mother would warn her:

"Shush! You'll annoy the master!"

Not for a janitor's children to play in the spacious yard of a rich merchant's home.

Meanwhile, their people back in the village were worried lest the family return. "Don't come back," grandfather wrote. "There's no place for you. If you return you'll have to live in the sheep-pen."

[1] Industrial Academies are schools of higher learning where outstanding workers are trained to be executives.

This was poverty, not cruelty, for there actually was no place, just as there was no food.

Nevertheless they returned: without father, however, for the war had started and he was conscripted.

In those days it was the police that rounded up men for the army. You could see a poorly-clad crowd of future defenders of the country marching down the street, led by a policeman, their wives and children following. They were not crying, for then they would be chased away.

The commander of the regiment in which Praskovya's father served was a German. He turned himself and his men over to his countrymen as prisoners.

Pichugin was given a jacket with yellow stitching on the sleeves, trousers with yellow hems, shoes with wooden soles, and put to work for the Germans. They fed him bread and nettles.

Praskovya was growing up in the hut of her grandfather, who was too poor even to send his son a few rusks.

At the age of fourteen the girl went to work on the railway line as a day laborer. At that time there were many who sought work, but jobs were few and people feared one another; everyone was afraid that his neighbor would take the bread out of his mouth.

After the Revolution the father was released. Tired and broken, he returned to the village and settled down in an abandoned hut.

One day a thatched roof caught fire from a spark cast by a passing locomotive. Two hundred huts burned to the ground. Praskovya's father and mother perished in the flames.

Praskovya married a young man who had returned to the village from St. Petersburg, where he had been apprenticed to a house painter. He did not stay at home long, for the country was at war. Soon after the wedding he went to fight in the Civil War.

Then Praskovya went to live in her father-in-law's house, in the same village. He had also been an assistant janitor in St. Petersburg, had taken to drink, become venomous and now vented his spleen on his daughter-in-law and her children. When the youngsters would fall sick he forbade them even to cough.

He was so mean that, though the women in the house had no shoes and were forced to walk barefoot in winter, he refused to let them wear his son's felt boots; they were only to be looked at, he said.

There are many sad songs made up by village women about their hard lot. The women that composed these songs possessed genuine talent, but talent did not give happiness to simple folks in those times.

In the meantime great changes had taken place in Praskovya Pichugina's village: no longer were there landlords; the peasants had much more land; a village Soviet was elected.

The women in the village loved Praskovya, for she helped them a great deal, and willingly. She was a good person, and efficient, and they elected her to the Soviet.

Her husband was in Moscow, working as a boiler painter in a large factory. He and several of his comrades got together and built a little house and then he wrote for Praskovya to come to the big city. That was in 1929.

Praskovya left her drunkard father-in-law and came to the city with her two children.

The first year she did all the housework; she prepared meals for everyone and washed all the clothes. It was a pleasure to live in a large city, without her father-in-law. She felt lost without her work in the village Soviet, however. She had grown accustomed to giving aid and advice,

to defending a just cause, to teaching people read and write, to helping set up kindergartens. She had grown accustomed to this work, and now she missed it greatly.

She soon became accustomed to city life. It turned out that there was a great deal to be done here also, such as to help the house management committee. Not all who lived in the house were literate, not all the apartments were in good condition nor properly heated. Pichugina's first social tasks were in the housewives' group that looked after the heating. Later she devoted her energy to improving sanitary conditions in the house and teaching hygiene. Again, as in the village, women began to come to Praskovya for aid and advice. It was not long before she had a wide circle of acquaintances and friends. Her popularity spread to neighboring houses.

Community work did not completely satisfy her, however. She still had a great deal of latent, undirected energy.

On one of the city's former dump heaps the ground was being cleared for a ball bearing factory. It was going to be the first of its kind in the country, and the largest in Europe. But there was no factory yet. Only a cleared site and a pile of building materials.

Here Pichugina found work as a manual laborer. The work was carrying boards and earth. She found it difficult to see how all this would some day give rise to ball bearings, sparkling, clean, precise ball bearings.

The factory grew rapidly; it was finished in eleven months. A huge factory—the corridors connecting the shops were as wide as city streets. Pichugina was one of a brigade of women sent in to clean up the factory before it started operations. Lathes, hundreds of them, mysterious and complicated machines, already stood in place. The long tables in the assembly shop were empty.

First Pichugina worked in the factory as an apprentice, cleaning the bearings and supplying a foreman with tools and equipment. The foreman was a deaf-mute and gave his orders to her in writing.

Pichugina was a clever woman. She thought out ways to make the work easier; where to lay the tools and how to bring the supplies more quickly and efficiently. The foreman's output increased and he began to write longer notes to her, explaining the work in greater detail.

But she had more than quick and capable hands. Soon she showed herself to be a capable organizer and became known even outside her shop. She became well-known in the factory, as she had been formerly when she had worked in the village Soviet and in the house management committee.

The women workers of the factory liked and respected her. As brigade leader she knew each of the hundred women under her, and not only by face and name; she knew how each worked, knew her home life and family, what sort of a place she lived in and whether aid was needed.

Pichugina began to study, in addition to devoting more and more time to her community activities.

Her husband had long been a member of the Communist Party, and in 1932 she, too, joined the Party. Soon she became the Party organizer in her shop.

Whenever it was necessary to speak to someone and help him solve his problems, Pichugina was called upon. When a person was to be dismissed for unsatisfactory work, Pichugina talked with him once, twice, and if need be a third time: she tried to find out why he worked poorly. Usually after

these talks the person's attitude towards the factory, towards work, changed. He became conscientious and worked honestly. She grudged neither time nor energy when it was a matter of helping a person find himself.

Election time to the Moscow Soviet came around, and Pichugina's name was on the lips of all as a candidate. She was elected deputy and then chosen chairman of the group of deputies from her factory.

Her social horizon and the scope of work widened, for now it was necessary to look after the whole factory body. More than ten thousand men and women were employed in the plant. There were still numerous shortcomings in the work of the kindergartens, dining halls and in the distribution of apartments.

As a woman active in community life, Pichugina was invited to speak at the Lenin memorial meeting in the Bolshoi Theater in 1933, at which Stalin was present. This was the first time that she was heard by the entire country, but she was not at a loss for words, for she had something worthwhile to tell. She had accumulated great experience and wanted to speak of her ideas and conclusions.

Her work became known far beyond the confines of the factory, and Pichugina was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor. She became chairman of the Tagansky District Soviet, and she did not find the transition from community to government work difficult. In all of her community activities she had been concerned with the organization of better conditions of life and work, at first for her fellow-villagers, then for the people in her house, later in the factory. Now, as chairman of the Soviet of one of the largest districts in the city, almost a city itself, with its 230,000 population, her work changed only in scope; its aims and purposes remained the same. Her ability to size up people, to determine their good points and failings, to convince and to assist, grew along with the scope of her work.

When candidates for deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were being nominated, her name was brought up at several factories. She was unanimously nominated and elected.

Pichugina learned how to carry out State tasks, as she had mastered her duties at the factory.

In unison with the entire country Pichugina built her factory and her own happiness. She is a hero of our times. The destiny of the peasant woman has changed; she has become a Soviet woman, a member of the Supreme Soviet. And she will help change the destiny of the entire world.

VICTOR SHKLOVSKY

A Soviet Doctor at the Front

The Begoulevs were a numerous and poverty-stricken family of peasants who lived in the village of Durnitsino, Kotlass District, Archangel Province. Grain did not yield well in the grim north. Their harvest scarcely sufficed them till the middle of the winter.

The father, Pyotr Begoulev, went to town to earn extra money as a carpenter, but even this was not enough. The young Boris entered

school a year later than the other village boys because his father could not afford to buy him the warm felt boots he needed to walk over winter roads. The boy, however, was eager for schooling and when at last the long-desired boots were purchased and he entered school, he studied so hard that the teacher began to hold him up as an example to the others.

Boris Begoulev earned his right to study in the winter by working all summer in the forest, cutting firewood. After finishing the three years of the village school, he succeeded in getting a place in a city school, where again he distinguished himself for scholarship and had hopes of getting a free scholarship to the secondary school in the city of Solvychegodsk. But just at this time his father was drafted for the war. His elder brother died. Boris had to think not only of himself but of the family. He went to work on the wharves, where exiled criminals were employed in loading barges with coal. The eleven year old Boris was given a job as timekeeper.

In 1917 the father came back from the front, but not for long. The Civil War began and Pyotr Begoulev joined the ranks of the Red Army. Boris was again left as the head of the family. Life was hard and pinched. Boris worked at home farming his father's plot of land with a lean, weak and hungry horse and a wooden plough.

But the country began to build up its resources again after the hunger and destruction of the imperialist war and the intervention. The village needed people capable of breaking down the old ways of working and of building up a new life. Boris Begoulev was twenty when he organized a Young Communist League unit in his village and was elected its secretary.

Finally, when he was called to the Red Army for his term of service, he had a chance to gratify his most ardent and long-desired wish—to study. At first he worked in the signal service. But interesting and difficult as that specialty was, it did not wholly satisfy his yearning for knowledge. Happening to read in a Red Army newspaper that enrollment had been opened for a school for junior medical officers, Begoulev resolved that he would pass the entrance examinations at all costs. Pass them he did and made a good showing in the school. While at his medical studies, he continued to improve his general education and political training. He was accepted as a candidate-member of the Communist Party. Working for some time after graduation, he again took up study, this time in dental courses, and again returned to work. But he could by no means be satisfied with what he knew; he wanted to study more and still more; the dream of his life was to enter the Military Medical Academy.

At the time when the first shots were fired at Lake Hassan, during the Japanese attempt to seize Soviet territory there last year, Begoulev had already attained the post of assistant chief of the sanitary service of his regiment, and had been stationed in the Far East for seven years. He was completely absorbed in the details of his responsible and complex job, yet found time besides to give political instruction to Red Army men in the evenings.

Named chief of the regiment's field dressing station, Boris Begoulev, if he had been a cold and passionless man in a surgeon's white gown, might very well have waited in a safe shelter for the wounded to be brought to him for help. But that would have gone against the very grain of his nature. Together with his stretcher bear-

ers and assistants, he went to the front-line positions where the attacks of the *samurai* were being repulsed, and there attended to the wounded. From beginning to end of the fighting, Begoulev was in the front line on the hottest sectors. Crawling, digging in, going without sleep or food, risking his life, he cared for and cheered his patients, took them to shelter until he himself was wounded.

It was a frightfully hot day. The way to the front-line dressing station lay under a glaring August sun whose rays scorched unbearably. The ground was all dry and cracked. A soft, thick layer of dust covered the ruts in the road.

Ahead along the highway marched some kind of a detachment but the cloud of dust made it impossible to see what unit it was. Only when one came quite close did the dressing kits, stretchers and gas masks become distinguishable.

Their uniforms were none too smartly worn, their ranks not particularly straight. These were people from among the population of the Maritime Region, fishermen from the collectives along the coast, wives of commanders and of political workers, coming to help their Red Army drive the enemy from the shores of Lake Hassan, from the sacred soil of the Soviet Union. In spite of the heat and the fatiguing march of many kilometers, the faces of the women were resolute, their stride elastic and bold.

As Begoulev, military physician, drew abreast of the outfit, he was greeted with shouts and hands waving in recognition. He was well known to the people of the Maritime Region.

The dressing station was located at the foot of one of those conical hills of volcanic origin characteristic of the Far East; the opposite slope was under heavy fire from enemy batteries. The hill was quite bare. The only shade in the whole landscape was provided by the tent where the surgeon and a junior medical officer were at work.

The wounded, waiting to be dressed and evacuated to the rear, lay about on the parched, cracked earth. Many were quite weak from the heat and from loss of blood. The hurricane of the enemy's fire made it impossible to enlarge the dressing station, to spread extra tents and give the wounded even a minimum of comfort.

In order to protect the severely wounded from the scorching rays of the sun, stretcher bearers had crawled up the slope of the hill and cut down the few scraggly oak saplings, which grew there, none over three feet in height. These they stuck in the ground around the tent. The branches were but sparsely covered with leaves, and these were greenish-brown and hard as scales, so that they gave but little shade. Still, two saplings together with a sheet hung over them made a sort of improvised tent for several men.

Unfortunately the saplings were scarce, not nearly enough for all. Moreover, they grew far from the dressing station, in the zone within the reach of enemy shells. Every time the stretcher bearers went after them, it was at the risk of their own lives.

Begoulev replenished his supply of dressings at the station. Besides his kit and a large package of surgical gauze, he had a gas mask slung over his shoulder, and at his belt, beside the holster of his revolver, the little trench spade which never left him in these tense days of battle. He passed the dressing tent and went forward. At one place the way was blocked by a little river, shallow, not very wide, but with very swampy banks. The

samurai concentrated their fire on the place where our troops had to ford this stream in their advance.

Junior medical officer M. F. Kalinov was stationed here, and had his hands full of work. Men wounded while crossing the river were continually miring down on the swampy banks.

Under stiff fire from the enemy, Kalinov helped the wounded make their way out of the water to a place of safety and shelter, where he dressed their wounds. He sank in mud to his ankles when he had to make his way across the swamp, to his knees when he bore one of the stricken men on his shoulders. Clinging to stones, he made his way out of the quagmire and returned again and again to help others. That there was nothing extraordinary in all this was quite understood by everyone; so a Soviet medical officer should behave in time of battle.

Begoulev helped Kalinov dress the wounds of several men and again marched ahead. "Marched," indeed, is hardly the appropriate expression. He could only crawl, running a few steps at a time whenever there was a lull in the firing.

After he had worked for several hours under fire without respite, Boris Begoulev found a bit of shelter and sat down to rest a little. His eyes closed for a moment. But almost at once he felt a tug at his sleeve. Four Red Army men, bending low, were carrying Lieutenant Samoilov, who had been severely wounded. Taking the wounded man's pulse, Begoulev found that the heart was scarcely beating. He gave an injection of camphor and dressed the wound as best he could here on the firing line.

Then he selected six of the strongest men of the unit and charged them with taking the wounded commander to the dressing station. It was far from an easy task to carry the heavily wounded Samoilov to the station under such hot fire; but the men had a great affection for their commander and willingly undertook the mission.

Begoulev seemed to have somehow forgotten all about his fatigue, and again crawled along the lines. He came upon a wounded man and attended to him. Then another. Next he was caught a stiff blow by a flying clod; a shell had burst close by. The physician crawled off to one side, lay down and only then was conscious of pain. He lay still while it passed and crawled on.

A hot day in every sense of the word. The sun was scorching, unbearable. And it seemed as if the very heavens must feel the heat of the conflict here on earth. It was getting toward evening when Begoulev was again knocked off his feet. He had run a few steps and suddenly sat down on the ground. Just ahead, some three yards away, he saw a shell explode. Actually, he knew, several seconds before he really saw it, that the shell was going to burst. As it came flying over, his trench helmet bounced so on his head that his ears rang.

But after the explosion, everything suddenly became deathly quiet. Begoulev wagged his head and shook the dirt off himself. No harm done. He crawled off to the side. But as he crawled he noticed that the stillness continued. As if the firing had ceased.

"Well!" thought Begoulev. "So I've gone deaf."

But he had no time to give thought to the implications of this. As it happened, our lines were being regrouped. By the time the physician had fully got his bearings, he saw that the last group of men

from his outfit were moving to a new position. He remained alone on a strip of ground torn by fresh shell holes. Then as fast as he could he began to make his way in the direction where his unit had gone. However he failed to overtake his own men but reached another Red Army outfit. The fighting men shouted something to him, but he could hear nothing. It was only when he had quite come up to them that he could explain that he was a physician, had been attending to the wounded of his unit and had been knocked out by a shell. The men hospitably shared with him what little they could, a bit of bread and tobacco for a smoke.

It was only toward morning of the next day that Begoulev began to hear a little, first only indistinct noises and then separate sounds in the general bedlam.

Japanese grenades have this peculiarity, that after they fall they lie and hiss a couple of seconds before they go off. The men and commanders of the Red Army learned the trick of picking up the *samurai's* favors and tossing them back before they exploded.

On August 7 Begoulev was with his unit on Zaozernaya Eminence, stationed by the flag which had been planted there on the evening of the sixth. The enemy was but a few hundred meters away. The *samurai* wanted very much to shoot the flag down, but this had been quite impossible during the night on account of the darkness. At dawn they redoubled their efforts, using all manner of arms. They opened fire on the Soviet lines with machine guns, grenade throwers and hand grenades. They even succeeded in shooting a few holes in the bunting but the staff stood firm and the bullet-torn red banner continued to wave on the crest of the hill.

Begoulev had been attending to the wounded all night. Those whose hurts were light remained in the lines and those who could no longer be of service crawled down their own slope of the hill to the shelter of a cliff a little below.

When morning came the enemy's fire intensified.

Begoulevs stock of bandages was very nearly exhausted. He attended to minor wounds of two or three more men and found himself empty-handed. But the place was far from a suitable one to sit waiting with arms folded; and, indeed, the moment had come when there was no time for bandages, even if supplies had been at hand.

The *samurai*, enraged by the success of the Red Army, were pressing on with all their might. Stubbornly resisting the attack, the Red Army men themselves were making ready for a new and decisive offensive. Suddenly the physician was swept from his feet by a blow like that of a falling beam.

Begoulev thought at first that he had been hit by flying earth, as had already happened several times in these last few days. But when he tried to stand he felt a burning pain all down one side from the shoulder to the knee. A Red Army man standing nearby took a look and said:

"You've been badly hit, Comrade Doctor. Splinters. A grenade went off."

Begoulev crawled down the slope under the cliff where he had been sending other wounded men all night. Two lieutenants were sitting there whose wounds he had dressed quite recently; they stripped off his clothing and examined him. All the soft tissues of his side had been lacerated by the grenade splinters and blood was oozing out freely.

"You're lucky, Comrade Doctor," said one of the volunteer

first-aid helpers, "that the grenade burst to the side of you and not in front. That would have been a lot worse."

Individual first-aid kits were found in possession of two other wounded men who had taken shelter nearby. Bandages did not suffice, only some of the physician's wounds were dressed. Begoulev thanked the wounded men for their assistance and crawled to the dressing station at the foot of the hill.

The Soviet Government has rewarded this brave and modest man as he deserves. He is the first military physician to be given the highest of honors—the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and the Order of Lenin.

Simultaneously his most ardent dream is coming true. When Boris Begoulev recovered from his wounds, he entered the Military Medical Academy to study.

NATALYA VLASOVA

The bullet-riddled red flag raised at the re-captured Zaozernaya Hill near Lake Hassan

The Lighter side

by M. Cheremnikh

DEFENSE OF A FRIENDLY POWER

"Hush!... Be still. You're disturbing granma. She's got a test tomorrow!"

by N. Radlov

"You better get up, a train is coming!"
"But I'm not going nowhere!"

The Pole is Soviet

by K. Rotov

"Can you see anything in this darkness?"
"Of course I can. I see that the chairman of the City Soviet will not be re-elected at the next poll."

by A. Kanevsky

Courtesy of *Crocodile*

CHRONICLE

MASTERS OF THE WRITTEN WORD

One of the most outstanding events in the Soviet literary world recently was the award of Government Orders by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to one hundred and eighty writers in all genres—fiction, poetry, drama and folk song.

Among them was Alexei Tolstoy, distinguished representative of the older generation of writers, whose most important books, however, have been written since the Revolution, including his famous novel *Peter I*, now adapted for the films.

Another was Mikhail Sholokhov, the greatest Soviet writer of the post-revolutionary period, whose epic novels of Cossack life, *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *Soil Upturned*, have been translated into many languages.

Others of special note among the recipients of honors were Alexander Fadeyev, author of those splendid novels of the Civil War, *The Nineteen* and *The Last From Udege*; Valentin Katayev, novelist and playwright, who is known to our readers for his novels, *A Lone Sail Gleams White* and *I, Son of the Working People*; the young Ukrainian dramatist, Alexander Korneichuk, author of *Platon Krechet*, *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* and others.

Then there were Perets Markish, outstanding Jewish poet; the popular Ukrainian poet, Pavlo Tychina, a number of young writers, such as the poets E. Tvardovsky, S. Mikhalkov and Y. Krymov, the young novelist whose *Tanker Derbent* is familiar to our readers.

The significance of this distribution of honors to Soviet writers reaches far beyond a mere recognition of the merit of those awarded Orders. The multi-national and international character of Soviet literature was shown in the number of peoples represented on the list of awards, as well

M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, among the writers awarded Government Orders

as in the attention paid to translators and students of foreign literatures. Among the writers decorated were Russians, Georgians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Buryats, Chechens, Karelians, Bashkirians and representatives of other nationalities. B. Griftsov, noted Balzac scholar and translator; I. Kashkin, expert in English and American literature and outstanding translator; M. Lozinsky, one of the most gifted Soviet translators of Shakespeare, were among those awarded honors.

The close ties of Soviet literature with folklore are clearly seen in the number of people's bards and story tellers who received awards.

POETRY CONTEST AT A SOVIET FACTORY

Significant of the attachment of Soviet workers to their factories is the lively interest recently aroused by a contest held at the great Kirov Plant in Leningrad for the best song "about our beloved factory."

Hundreds of manuscripts were received from workers, engineers, office employees, members of their families and students of the school over which the plant has patronage. Some of the contestants were people who have participated in the factory's literary circles; others had never before even thought of writing poetry. The contest jury, which was made up of workers, writers and composers, makes a special point of the fact that the general level of the work submitted was much higher than in previous contests of this sort in Leningrad.

First prize went to young Nikolai Novoselov, a pupil of the above-mentioned school, for his song devoted to the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

The songs submitted, especially those of older entrants, described the factory's glorious history, from the pre-revolutionary time when it was the Putilov Plant, down to the present day. They told of the factory's outstanding role in the Revolution of 1905, in the Great Socialist Revolution of 1917 and later of its part in Socialist construction. The Kirov Plant was one of those which helped to "seat the collective farmer on a tractor," that is, supplied machinery for carrying out the revolution in Soviet agriculture.

The best poems are now in the hands of composers who are to write music for them, but a number of authors supplied music of their own. The song written by G. Safarov, a boilermaker, has already become popular throughout the factory.

FILM SCENARIO CONTEST WINNERS

Several thousand entries were received from men and women in all walks of life, from all parts of the Soviet Union, during the recent scenario contest sponsored by the All-Union Committee on the Cinema. The contest succeeded in discovering new talented writers for the films.

Of some sixty scenarios and librettos awarded prizes, fifty-three were written by authors just beginning to write. Three first prizes were given to *The Schoolteacher* by S. Gerasimov, *Women* by M. Smirnov and *Personal Matter* by O. Potapov.

The jury consisted of the writers, A. Fadeyev, P. Pavlenko, Alexei Tolstoy, K. Trenev and A. Serafimovich; the film directors, A. Romm, A. Dovzhenko, M. Chiaureli and S. Vasilyev; the historians A. Shestakov and E. Yaroslavsky.

Gerasimov's prize script, *The Schoolteacher*, depicts a representative of the new Soviet intelligentsia, showing his inseparable ties with the people and his active participation in the Socialist reconstruction of the countryside. *Women* deals with new family relationships and adjustments brought about by the increasing role of women in the community life of collective farms. *Personal Matter* is devoted to the Soviet school, the relations between its pupils and the formation of children's characters.

Two hundred and twenty-six of the scenarios were written in languages of Soviet peoples other than Russian. Among the prize-winners were Tselenko, a Red Army man in the Far East; Dyachenko, a student; and Natalyin, a Moscow factory worker.

Twenty-seven scenarios were so well done that they were turned over for filming immediately. Several dozen scripts, while judged not to deserve prizes, were mentioned by the jury as revealing the talent of the authors. In addition about three hundred budding scenario writers were invited to work permanently for the cinema.

Among the most popular subjects were the defense of the U.S.S.R., to which 451 scripts were devoted; themes from everyday life, dealing with new Socialist morals, new family relationships, children and the school, motherhood, which accounted for 889 scripts; the struggle against enemies of the Soviet people, 763 scripts. Among the other popular subjects were the Stakhanov movement, the collective farm village, Soviet intelligentsia and cultural improvement.

GORKY INSTITUTE OF WORLD LITERATURE

The decision to organize the Gorky Institute of World Literature was adopted in September 1932 in honor of the fortieth anniversary of Maxim Gorky's literary work.

Now the Institute has already gathered a library of some 260,000 volumes of rare and first editions; the Gorky section of the library, as might be expected, is almost complete, its file of Gorky manuscripts, correspondence and other documents amounting to nearly 64,000 items.

An affiliate of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., the Gorky Institute of World Literature is now devoting its principal attention to the study of literary history and is preparing a number of important works for the press.

One of its first publications is to be a hitherto unpublished work of Gorky's on the history of Russian literature, from a manuscript draft dated 1908-09. Other unpublished Gorky works which the Institute plans to issue include plays, scenarios, a libretto and a collection of letters and articles dealing with literary history.

The section for study of Soviet literature is working on a history of the literatures of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. since 1917. This will form the tenth volume of *History of Russian Literature* undertaken by the Academy of Sciences.

The Institute also plans a *History of English Literature*, which is to form a part of the Academy's many volumed *History of World Literature*. Research is being conducted for a forthcoming study on the influence of the French Revolution, that classic bourgeois-democratic revolution, on world literature. Emile Zola's work is being studied in connection with the observance next year of the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

Writers, literary critics, scholars and all lovers of belles-lettres throughout the world take great interest in the work of this Institute. M. Gorky, the great writer, who had long dreamed of such an institution and had taken an active part in the foundation of a publishing house for world literature in the Soviet Union, wrote with great satisfaction to Romain Rolland of the new project. At first devoted chiefly to the collection of books, periodicals, manuscripts and illustrations, the Institute has now become one of the most outstanding research centers in the Soviet Union.

INTERNATIONAL IN SOVIET

ON THE PANAMA CANAL
"You've done your job well today, Major, I think I shall soon appoint you colonel."

by K. Rotov

"But, Herr Lieutenant, please understand me, I am not a Trotskyite, I am an honest provocateur, and am not capable of such dirty work!. . ."

by L. Brodaty

POLITICS

CARICATURES

Courtesy of *Crocodile*

AFTER LAKE HASSAN

A knot — to keep the memory fresh. . .

by K. Rotov

by L. Soifertis

A HABIT BECOMES SECOND NATURE

"Is it true what I heard, Sir, that someone has slapped you?"
"Not that I know. I haven't yet received any official information to that effect."

About Our Contributors

NIKOLAI ASEYEV. A well-known Russian poet, a close friend of the late Vladimir Mayakovsky. His first volume of verse *The Nocturnal Flute* was published in 1914. In recent years has been working on a poem called *Mayakovsky Emerges,* an extract from which we print in this issue.

DAVID BERGELSON. A prominent Soviet Jewish writer, the author of several volumes of tales and novels about the Civil War and about Jewish life of today and yesterday. He launched his literary career in 1909 with a novel *At the Railway Station.*

MIKHAIL PRISHVIN. One of the most important Russian writers of today, began writing before the Revolution. His post-revolutionary works include *Kashcheyev's Chain* and *Ginseng,* which are well known abroad.

ALEXANDER TVARDOVSKY. One of the most gifted of the younger Soviet poets, was born in 1910. Is of peasant origin. His first book *The Way to Socialism* came out in 1930. In 1936, his poem *The Country of Muravia* attracted a great deal of attention in the Soviet press.

ANDREI PLATONOV. A well-known Soviet writer. A number of his stories have been translated into English and published from time to time in *International Literature.*

IVAN KRATT. Just beginning his writing career. Lives in Leningrad. His stories and sketches—for the most part dealing with the Far North—have attracted the attention of Soviet critics.

GEORG LUKACS. Hungarian writer, theoretician and historian of literature. The most important of his recent studies are *The Literary Theories of the Nineteenth Century and Marxism, The Aesthetics of Schiller, On the History of Realism,* and *The Historical Novel.*

PYOTR PAVLENKO. One of the most important Soviet writers. His first book, *Asian Stories,* was followed by a short biographical novel on Lermontov. One of his latest novels, *In the Far East,* enjoys immense popularity. The film *Soviet Border* based on the book was a great success here and was shown in the United States.

IVAN LUPPOL. Member of the Academy of the U.S.S.R., is a historian of philosophy and literature, and the director of the Gorky Institute of World Literature.

LEONID SOBOLEV. The author of *Complete Overhauling,* a novel which created a sensation a few years ago. It has been translated into English.

EL-REGISTAN. Journalist and the author of several travel books.

JOHANN ALTMAN. The editor of the *Theater* magazine, and one of the best known dramatic critics in the Soviet Union. He is the author of several studies on the aesthetics of Aristotle and Lessing, and a series of monographs on the history and theory of literature and the theater.

MIKHAIL YANSHIN. Actor of the Moscow Art Theater, and the art director of the Gipsy Theater.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH. The famous composer..

SAMUEL MARSHAK. One of the most popular children's poets in the U.S.S.R.

VALENTIN KATAYEV. Outstanding Soviet writer, is the author of a series of novels, tales, and plays. His most recent works, published in *International Literature,* are *A Lone Sail Gleams White,* and *I, Son of the Working People.*

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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. Cable address: *Moscow Interlit*

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV