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FAIRY TALES BY M. SALTYKOV-SHCHEDRIN

Among the great Russian writers of the nineteenth century Saltykov-Shchedrin occupies a place of honor. In commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of his death, the Soviet people are honoring a progressive public man, a distinguished publicist and brilliant satirist who branded the baseness and knavishness, the meanness and horror of the social life of Russia in the middle of last century. The boldness with which Saltykov-Shchedrin laid bare the rottenness of the social foundations of tsarist Russia of his day, the relentlessness with which he tore the masks from its rulers, was unrivaled by any of the progressive men of his epoch.

The scion of a wealthy family of landowners, Saltykov-Shchedrin broke with his own class at an early age and went over to the side of the people. He was one of those men of whom Marx and Engels, his contemporaries, wrote in their famous *Communist Manifesto:* «...in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the process of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joines the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands.» It is precisely these "bourgeios ideologists," emphasized the founders of scientific Socialism, "who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole."

Like Ludwig Feuerbach, however, Saltykov-Shchedrin was prevented from rising to an understanding of the doctrine of Marx-Engels by the backwardness of the social conditions under which he lived. Having sided with the people and hating its oppressors with all his heart, Saltykov-Shchedrin nevertheless could not see in the proletariat the class that was destined to bring about the emancipation of mankind. True, in his later works, Saltykov-Shchedrin frequently spoke with the greatest tenderness and compassion of the bitter lot of the proletariat, but his hopes for a better future for Russia were linked up with the peasantry, which as a matter of fact was characteristic of most progressive Russians of his epoch.

Saltykov-Shchedrin died in 1889. Within a few months of his death, the famous prophetic words of George Plekhanov which ushered in a new phase in the revolutionary movement in our country were sounded at a Congress of the Socialist International in Paris. "The revolutionary movement in Russia will triumph only as a workers' movement or it will never triumph."

Combatting the dark forces that were crushing the people, Saltykov-Shchedrin was obliged to resort chiefly to allegory. Hence so much in his writings that was clear to his contemporaries is difficult for the modern reader to comprehend owing to the numerous topical details. One ought never to forget Saltykov-Shchedrin's own words: "I am the Aësop and graduate of the censorship office." In combatting the enemy, in upholding his social ideals, the writer used chiefly the weapon of satire, a weapon of which he was complete master. In an article published in the English press in 1871, I. S. Turgenev justly classed Saltykov-Shchedrin with such satirists of world renown as Juvenal and Jonathan Swift.

The satire of Saltykov-Shchedrin flailed those who were openly hostile, as well as those who pretended friendship. The writer was opposed to any and all compromises or shilly-shallying, he abhorred hypocrisy, deceit, falseness and insincerity. He taught the people to rely on their own strength alone. V. I. Lenin wrote that Saltykov-Shchedrin had rendered an invaluable service by teaching his readers to perceive the beast of prey under the sleek, pomaded exterior of landowners and upholders of serfdom; by teaching his readers to hate the hypocrisy and heartlessness of those creatures, and by exposing Russian liberalism for what it

was really worth. Saltykov-Shchedrin's volume of fairy tales is a priceless contribution to world literature. Though dealing with topical subjects, like all genuine works of art, they transcend their day and become part of the golden treasure of world literature.

Below the reader will find three of these stories. They might have been written only the day before. For does not *The Self-Sacrificing Hare* seem to apply directly to the recent leaders of Czechoslovakia? Is not *The Liberal*, whose hero began by acting "within reason" and ended by "adapting himself to baseness," a merciless indictment of those who have conceived the notorious non-intervention policy?

Saltykov-Shchedrin wrote thirty-two tales and although many decades have passed since, we cannot read them without the deepest emotion. Such is the power of his pen.

It were a great mistake, however, to assume that the great satirist was a master of the minor literary forms only. He was equally great in his longer works, particularly in *The Golovlev Family*. Its leading character, Judushka (Little Judas) Golovlev, deservedly occupies a niche in the gallery of types created by such great masters as Shakespeare, Balzac or any other classic writer.

Saltykov-Shchedrin lived and wrote in an era of oppression and darkness. His friends and followers suffered, as he himself had, under the yoke of tsarism. Reaction reigned triumphant. Yet we are justified in speaking of the cheerful, vigorous optimism that permeates the writings of Saltykov-Shchedrin, and in applying to him the words uttered by a young heroine in one of his stories. Interrupting her elders who had been speaking with bitter skepticism of the futility of all hope for a brighter future, Yulenka exclaimed with passion and conviction: "No, you are wrong. The dawn will come and not only the dawn, the sun will come as well."

In these days when the life of the peoples of the Soviet Union is illumined by the sun whose rise was predicted by the great writer, we revere his memory and bow in respect and grateful acknowledgement of his genius.

The Sophisticated Gudgeon

Once upon a time there lived a gudgeon. Now, both his father and his mother had been very intelligent for their day; they had lived out their allotted span quietly and peaceably in the river, without once getting into a stew or falling prey to a pike, and they told their son to follow their example.

"You better look out, sonny," the old one said in his dying hour, "if you want to enjoy life, you have to keep your eyes open!"

Now, our young gudgeon had wits enough and to spare. So he wanted to put them to use, but he soon saw plainly enough that no matter where he turned he was checkmated. All the fish in these parts were great big fellows who would swallow you as soon as they cast their eyes on you, and he was the smallest of the lot and couldn't swallow any of them. Nor could he see why he should swallow anyone. A lobster could tear him in two with his claws, and a water bug could settle on his back and torture him to death. Even his own kind would gather round in shoals if they noticed that he had caught a gnat, and snatch it away from him. Yes, they would grab it and then fight over it until the gnat itself was good for nothing.

And as for men folks—what spiteful creatures they were! The tricks they would think of—all for the sake of bringing a gudgeon like himself to an unnecessary end.

The seines and nets and creels and of all things—the fishing line! Now, what could be sillier than a fishing-line? A string with a hook on the end, and on the hook a worm or else a fly . . . for bait. . . . And then the way the bait was fixed!—in the most unnatural position, you might say! Yet more gudgeon were caught that way than any other.

His father had warned him more than once about fishing lines. "Beware of bait!" he would say. "Although this hook-and-line affair is about the silliest ever invented, the sillier the surer with us, gudgeons, I must admit. Fishermen fling us a fly as though in kindness; you go for it—and there's death in that fly!"

The old one told him, too, how once he had all but found himself in a fish stew. At that time men folks went fishing in parties; they spread their seine along the entire width of the river, and dragged it for about two miles along the bottom. It was terrible even to think of the fish that were caught that time! Pike and bass and mullet and dace and loach and even that lazybones, the bream himself—from the mud in the river bed—the seine swept them all up. As for the gudgeon—there was a myriad of them—they were beyond counting. The horrors that he, old father gudgeon, went through while he was being dragged down the river—no tongue could tell nor pen describe. He felt himself being swept away somewhere, but where—was more than he knew. He saw a pike no one side of him and a bass on the other, and he thought one or the other would snap him up in a minute, as sure as fate. But neither of them did. They couldn't think of eating just then! Only one thing was on their mind: the end had come! But the why and the wherefore of it was beyond them.

At long last, the fishermen began to draw in the wings of the net, and drag it up on the bank and tumble the fish out of it onto the grass. Then it was that our gudgeon learned for the first time what fish stew was. On the sand something red flickered, and out of it grey clouds rose and the heat from it was such that he was ready to faint. It would have been bad enough without that, he was sick of thirst, but they kept adding to the "fire," as he heard them call it. And on this same "fire" stood something black with water in it bubbling like a lake in a storm. They called this "the iron pot." And after a while they said: "Throw plenty of fish into the pot and we'll have a grand stew!' Whereupon the men started to fling a lot of our fellows into that pot. A fisherman would pick up a fish and drop it into the water in the pot, the fish would plunge down first, then leap like mad, then plunge again and be still; it had had a taste of the stew, evidently. At first they threw in all and sundry, but after a while one old man looked over our gudgeon and said: "What sense is there in putting little fellows like this in a stew; let him grow up a bit first!" So he took our gudgeon by the gills and let him loose in the river. And the gudgeon being no fool, he put his best fin foremost and struck out for home! Home he came and there was his mate, half-dead with fright looking out for him.

Well, and what do you think! No matter how much he talked and talked, explaining to them all what a fish stew was and how it was made, rarely can you meet anyone in the river who has got a proper notion of it.

But the son bore his father's talks well in mind and drew a lesson from them. "I've got to keep my

eyes open, that's clear," says he, "else I'll come to a bad end before I know where I am." So he set about arranging his life. The first thing he did was to get a hole for himself that only he could get into. It took him a whole year to bore the hole with his nose. What he went through while he was at it! Sometimes he'd spend the night in the slime, sometimes under a water plantain or in the sedge. At long last, however, he made a grand hole for himself; it was clean and tidy and there was just room for one. The second thing he worked out was the way he would live; at night, when folks and beasts and birds and fishes were all fast alseep, he would take exercise, and in the daytime he would stay at home shaking and shivering for dear life. But since no one can do without eating and drinking, and since he neither drew a salary nor kept a servant, he would dart out at midday when all the fish were pretty full, and perhaps be able to snap up an insect or two. And if he couldn't, well, he would just have to lie down in his hole and content himself with quaking again. After all, it was better to live with an empty stomach than meet death with a full one.

So that was the way he had arranged his life. He took his exercise by night, bathed by moonlight and then lay at home trembling all day long. At midday he would dart out for a minute to grab something to eat—but what is there to be got at midday when even gnats seek shelter from the heat under the shade of leaves, and beetles and insects and the like hide under bark! So our gudgeon had to be content with a drink of water most times.

There he lay, the livelong day, in his den; he couldn't get to sleep o' nights, and he couldn't get a decent bite, but instead kept thinking to himself: "Well, I'm still alive, it seems, but oh, what will the morrow bring?"

Then, weakling that he was, he'd doze off and dream he had won two hundred thousand in a lottery. Thrilled to frenzy, he would turn over on the other side, and then find with a start that he had stuck half his muzzle out of the hole. . . . Good heavens, supposing one of those sharp young pike had happened along at that moment: why, he would have been dragged out of his hole in no time!

Once he woke up and what did he see but a lobster at the entrance to his hole! There he was, that lobster, standing stock still as if spellbound, staring with his cold, stony eyes at our young gudgeon; only his whiskers stirred in the current. What a fright that gave the little fish! For half a day until it grew dark, that lobster lay in wait for him, and the gudgeon stayed at home shivering and trembling with terror.

Another time, no sooner had he returned home, and begun to yawn, thinking how nice it would be to doze off, when—lo and behold! a pike came up and stayed, gritting his teeth, right outside the hole. And that pike kept watch over him all day long, as if just the look of him was as good as a meal. But our gudgeon was much too clever also for the pike; he stayed in all day and that was that!

This happened not once nor twice, but practically every day. And every day the gudgeon won the battle, quaking in his home, and every day he said to himself: "Thank goodness, I'm still alive!"

But that was not all. He never married nor did he have offspring, though his respected father had raised a big family. "It was all right for father," he thought. "Life was a joke in those days compared to what it is now. Why, even pike

were much more good-natured and easy-going, and bass wouldn't think of bothering small fry like us. And even if father did nearly get into a stew once, there was an old man handy to let him loose again. But nowadays, when there's hardly any fish left in the river, and even gudgeon come in for notice, there's no use thinking about raising a family. Keep yourself alive is as much as you can do nowadays."

Thus the gudgeon kept himself alive for over a hundred years, all in a tremble day after day. He had neither friends nor relatives; he never went to see anyone and no one ever came to see him. He neither gambled nor drank, nor smoked nor went after fast females. All he ever did was to shiver and shake and think to himself: "Thank goodness, I'm still alive, it seems!"

At last, even the pike, even they started to praise him: "My, if everyone lived like you, how quiet the river would be!" But they only said that on purpose, thinking he would be flattered and come out to show them what he looked like, and then they would catch him. But he was not to be caught like that, and his prudence helped him escape the enemy's snares once more.

How many more years he had lived after the hundred—we don't know, but at last the gudgeon felt he was dying. As he lay in his hole he thought to himself: "Well, thank goodness, I'm dying a natural death, as my mother and father did." Then he remembered the pike's words: "If everyone lived like that wise gudgeon lives . . ." and wondered: "Really, and what would it be like if they did?"

He set his brains to work, of which, goodness knows, he had enough and to spare, and all of a sudden he realized as plainly as if someone had prompted him: "Why, if that was the case, not a single gudgeon would be left in the river years ago."

For if the gudgeon tribe was to survive, the first thing they had to do was to breed, and he had bred no family. And in order that the gudgeon family should grow strong and prosper, and its members be hale and hearty, it was necessary that they be brought up in their native element, not in a hole like his, where he had grown almost blind in the everlasting twilight. The young gudgeon must get plenty of nourishment, not avoid society, share their bread-and-butter with each other, and take over the best virtues from one another, and so on. Only a life like that can perfect the gudgeon genus and prevent it from degenerating into smelts.

Wrong are those who think that only gudgeon who stay in their holes, trembling, half-crazy with fear, can be regarded as worthy citizens. No, they are not citizens, they are at best gudgeon of the most useless kind; they feel neither heat nor cold, neither honor nor dishonor, neither glory nor disgrace . . . they just exist, cumbering up the river and taking the bit out of other fishes' mouths.

The old gudgeon saw all this so plainly, so clearly that he suddenly felt a great desire to do something daring: "Supposing I were to come out of my hole and swim down the river as bold as brass!" But he was again struck with terror as soon as the thought had occurred to him. And he trembled as he lay there dying. He had trembled with fear when alive, and now, dying, he trembled still.

His whole life passed before him in a flash: what joy had he known? To whom had he given consolation? Or good advice? Or a kind word? Had he ever sheltered, warm-

ed or defended anyone? Who had ever heard of him? Who would ever remember his existence?

To all these questions he had only one answer: none.

He had lived and quaked—and that was all: even now, when death was upon him, he quaked for fear of something, he knew not what. It was dark and close in the hole, you could not turn in it, the sun never shone into it, it never knew warmth. In that damp dim hole he lay, unseeing, helpless, unwanted, waiting for the moment when death of starvation would bring him release from this useless existence.

He could hear other fish darting past his hole; perhaps they were gudgeon like himself, yet not one of them was interested in him. Not one of them ever thought: "Let me ask this wise old gudgeon how he has contrived to live over a hundred years without being either swallowed by a pike, or clawed by a lobster, or caught by fishermen's bait." No, they just swam on; maybe they didn't even know that in that hole a wise old gudgeon was counting his last days.

What hurt most of all was that he had never heard anyone call him wise. All they ever said was: "Have you heard about that blockhead of a gudgeon who neither eats, nor drinks, nor sees anyone, nor asks anyone to see him, but just goes on preserving his empty life?"

Many of them simply called him a fool and a disgrace and wondered how the river allowed such creatures to live in it.

Brooding thus he dozed off. That is, it was not exactly a doze; he simply drifted into an unconscious state. He could hear the whispering that comes before death, and a sort of languor came over him. And once again he dreamt his favorite dream; he had won two hundred thousand, grown half-a-yard and swallowed a whole pike.

As he was dreaming, his nose, gradually, gradually, poked itself out of the hole.

All of a sudden he disappeared. What actually happened—whether a pike swallowed him or a lobster tore him to pieces, or he simply died a natural death and floated to the surface—no one can tell, for there were no witnesses. The most likely thing is that he just died, because what pleasure would a pike find in swallowing a sick and dying gudgeon, and a sophisticated one into the bargain?

The Self-Sacrificing HARE

Once a hare sinned against the wolf. It was like this: the hare happened to be running along near the lair of the wolf, who caught sight of him and called out: "Stop for a minute, my lad, will you!" Instead of obeying the hare stepped on it faster than ever. In three strides the wolf overtook him. "Now," he said, "for not having halted at the first word I uttered, you are punished as follows: death by being torn to pieces. But since neither I nor my wife happen to

be hungry just now, and we have laid in a stock that will last us five days or so, you may sit under that bush and wait for your turn. And perhaps, who knows, but I may—ha-ha-ha—think fit to pardon you!"

So the hare sat there on his hind-quarters, under the bush, and never dared to stir. All he was thinking of was how many days and hours remained before his death came. He would cast his eye over in the direction of the wolf's lair and see a gleaming red eye fixed on him. But something worse than that would happen; sometimes the wolf and his mate would come out for a stroll in the clearing. They would glance at him every now and then, and the wolf would make some remark to his mate and then they would both burst out laughing. And the cubs would come gamboling after their parents and run up to the little hare and paw him, grinding their teeth. . . . The poor little hare's heart crawled up to his mouth with fright.

Never had he loved life so much as now! He was a steady young hare and he had picked out for himself a widow's daughter whom he intended to marry. It was to his future bride that he had been running at the moment the wolf caught him by the scruff of his neck. She would be waiting for him and thinking to herself: "Cross-eye must have changed his mind about me!" Or perhaps she had waited and waited vainly and then fallen in love with someone else. Or, perhaps, the poor thing had been caught by a wolf as she was playing in the bushes, and had been eaten! . . .

Thus the prisoner sat thinking, almost choking with tears. So that was all the dreams of a hare had come to! He had counted on marrying, had bought a samovar, anticipating how he and his young bride would sit drinking tea with sugar, and instead of that—look what had happened! And how many hours of life had he left now?

One night, as he was sitting there, dozing, he dreamt that the wolf had made him an official and sent him on special missions and that while he was out on these missions he would drop in and visit his bride. . . . All of a sudden, he fancied he felt someone nudge him. He looked round and there was his bride's brother.

"Your bride is dying," said the brother. "When she heard of your misfortune she pined away in an hour. All she thinks of now is: 'Can it be that I'll die without even saying farewell to my beloved?' "

As the doomed hare listened to these words, his heart was ready to burst. What had he done to deserve such a bitter fate? His life had passed before the eyes of all his kind, he had never played with revolution, never gone out armed, and had been running about his own private business when he was caught; could it be that death was awaiting him for this? Death! What a terrible word when you came to think of it! And it was death not only for him but for her, too, his little grey hare, who was guilty only of loving him with all her heart. How he longed to fly to her, and take the ears of his little grey love in his forepaws, and caress her and stroke her head.

"Let's flee!" the messenger was saying meanwhile.

When the doomed hare caught this word, he was as if transformed for a minute; he hunched himself up and laid back his ears; another moment and there wouldn't be a sign of him. He ought not to have glanced towards the wolf's lair at that moment. But he did. And his

heart crawled up to his mouth again.

"I can't," he said. "the wolf told me not to." The wolf, meanwhile, heard and saw everything that was going on, and he and his mate whispered something to each other; they were probably praising the hare for his honorable character.

"Let us away!" the messenger urged him.

"I cannot!" repeated the prisoner.

"What are you whispering about there? Up to some mischief, I suppose?" roared the wolf all of a sudden.

The two hares were turned to stone. So the messenger was in for it, too! The punishment for urging a sentry to desert his post was—what? Oh dear, oh dear, the little grey hare would be left without bridegroom or brother, the wolf would gobble them both up!

When the two hares came to, they saw the wolf and his mate standing before them, gnashing their teeth; their eyes glowed like lamps in the darkness.

"Oh no, your honor, we weren't up to anything, we were just having a little chat, this is a countryman of mine who dropped in to see how I was getting on," lisped the prisoner, fit to drop dead with fright.

"Thank your stars you weren't up to anything! I know you and the likes of you. You are no innocents. Now, then, give an account of yourselves!"

The bride's brother spoke up.

"It's this way, your honor," he said, "my sister, his bride-to-be, is dying and asks if he couldn't be released on parole just for a little while, so she could say farewell to him."

"Hm . . . it's a very good thing, as a matter of fact, that the young bride loves her intended," the she-wolf observed. "That means they'll have plenty of young ones and wolves will have all the more to eat. We ourselves are regarded as a devoted couple and we have quite a large family. There are four cubs still at home and any number roaming the forest. Wolf, I say, wolf, what do you think? Should we let the bridegroom off for a while just to say goodbye to his beloved one?"

"But he is to be eaten the day after tomorrow. . . ."

"I'll be back in no time, your honor. . . It wouldn't take me any time to speak of. . . . I'll . . . I swear by all that's holy I'll be back!" the prisoner hastened to declare, and in order to dispel any doubts the wolf might entertain of him, he pulled himself together and looked such a smart little fellow that even the wolf was struck and said to himself: "If only my soldiers were like him!"

The she-wolf had grown pensive.

"Imagine that," she was thinking to herself, almost with a sad tear or two. "Only a hare, and yet how he loves his mate!"

There was nothing for it but to agree to let the hare go for a while, on condition that he returned on the dot. The bride's brother was to stay behind as hostage.

"If you're not back within two days by six o'clock in the morning," said the wolf, "I'll eat him instead of you; and if you come back I'll eat you both, or perhaps, who knows, I may—ha-ha-ha . . . think fit to pardon you!"

The hare shot off like an arrow from a bow. The ground twinkled under his feet as he ran. If a hill happened in his way, he took it on the run, if he came to a river he never troubled to look for a ford, but swam straight across; if he came to a bog, he crossed it, leaping from the fifth hummock to

the tenth. It was no joke: he had to get to the world's end, go to the baths and get married ("for I am going to get married, no matter what!" he kept saying over and over to himself), and be back again in time for the wolf's breakfast. . . .

Even the birds were astonished at his speed. "They say in the *Moscow Gazette* that hares have no souls, only steam, and look at him, how he gets over the ground!"

He got there at last. And the joy there was over his arrival, no tongue can tell and no pen can describe. As soon as she set eyes on her loved one, the little grey hare clean forgot all her ailments. She stood up on her hind legs, slung a drum around her neck and beat the *Cavalry Gallop* (which she had learnt as a special surprise for her intended). As for her mother the widow, she went well-nigh crazy with delight, bustling about, wondering what place to give her future son-in-law at the table and what to feed him with. Sisters and cousins and aunts and uncles and kinsmen came running up to snatch a glimpse of the bridegroom, and, perhaps, a tasty morsel or so as well.

The bridegroom, however, was on pins all the time. He had hardly caressed his bride before he began:

"I'd like to have a bath now and get married as soon as possible."

"What are you in such a terrible hurry for?" the mother said, teasing him.

"I must be getting back. The wolf only let me off for twenty-four hours."

Thereupon he told them all about it. The tale was told with many bitter tears. He did not want to go back, yet he could not do otherwise. He had given his word: and the word of a hare is as good as his bond. Then the aunts and sisters talked it over and they all agreed. "You are quite right; be long before you give your word, but be strong once you have given it! Never in the whole history of our tribe has a hare been known to go back on his word."

Drawing by M. Cheremnikh

Though a tale is soon told, business among hares is done even sooner. Before morning the young couple were wedded and before evening he took leave of his bride.

"The wolf will eat me, that's certain," he said. "But mind you be true to me. And if you should have young ones, bring them up strictly. It would perhaps be best to send them to the circus; there they would be taught not only to beat the drum, but to fire guns loaded with peas as well."

Then, all at once, as if he had forgotten where he was (he must have had the wolf in mind), he added:

"But perhaps, who knows, the wolf may—ha-ha-ha—think fit to pardon me!"

Then he was off like a flash.

In the meantime, while the hare was enjoying himself and getting married, terrible calamities were happening in the country that divided world's end (where the bride lived) from the wolf's lair. In one district the rain came down in torrents, and the river which the hare had swum without difficulty was now swollen and had flooded the surrounding country for ten miles. At another spot King Aaron had declared war on King Nikita and the battle was at its hottest just when the hare had to pass. Cholera had broken out further on, and the hare had to go a hundred miles out of his way to avoid the quarantine cordon. . . . To boot, there were wolves, foxes, and owls lying in wait for him at every step.

Now, the hare had all his wits about him; he had mapped out his time so as to have three hours to spare. Still, when he came to one obstacle after another, his heart began to sink. He ran all the evening, half the night; his paws were cut by stones and pebbles, his fur was hanging in shreds, torn by the briars he had dashed through; his eyes were dim; blood-stained foam appeared about his lips, yet he had still far, ah, how far, to go! . . . The image of his friend and hostage kept rising before him; he could see him standing sentry at the wolf's lair and thinking: "Only another hour or so and my dear brother-in-law will be here and save me!" With this in his mind, our hare ran still faster. Neither hill nor dale nor forest nor marsh could hinder him! Many a time his heart was ready to burst, but he got control of it and would not allow its fruitless agitation and palpitation to draw him away from the main object. This was no time for tears and grief; all feelings must be quelled now if his friend was to be rescued from the clutches of the wolf!

The day began to break. Owls and bats were off to their retreats; there was a chill in the air. And suddenly all was still as death. The hare went on running with but one thought in his mind: "Oh, won't I be in time to save my friend after all?"

The east was reddening; at first, in the clouds along the distant horizon, a splash of fire appeared; it spread and spread until lo! the sky was all aflame. Even the dew on the grass glowed; the little daytime birds awoke, ants and worms and insects started their busy day; a wreath of smoke mounted slowly from somewhere and a whisper passed through the fields of rye and oats, and grew gradually louder and more distinct. But the hare saw and heard nothing save his own voice, saying over and over: "I've slain my friend, I've slain him sure!"

At last a hill hove in sight. On the other side of the hill lay a bog and in the bog the wolf's lair. Too late, Cross-eye, too late!

He made a last desperate effort to reach the hill top. . . . And reached it! But he could run no further, he stumbled and dropped exhausted. . . . Would he not reach his destination, after all?

He could see the wolf's lair; it lay before him as on a saucer. Somewhere in a distant church tower it was chiming six; every stroke was like the thud of a hammer on the exhausted little creature's heart. As the last chime rang out the wolf awoke and stretched himself and wagged his tail in pleasureable anticipation. Up he went to the hostage, gathered him in his paws and set his claws against his stomach ready to tear it in two; one half for himself, the other for his mate. The cubs sat around, watching their father

and mother attentively, and gnashing their teeth and learning how things were done.

"Here I am! Here I am!" Cross-eye called out in a voice sounding as if a hundred thousand hares shouted all at once, and rolled downhill to the bog.

The wolf praised him.

"Now I see," he said, "that a hare's word is dependable. And here is my decision: you're both to sit here under this bush for the meantime, and in the end who knows but I may think fit—ha-ha-ha—to pardon you. . . ."

THE LIBERAL

Once upon a time there lived a liberal in a certain land and so outspoken was he that where others would hold their peace he would shout out at the top of his voice: "Ah, gentlemen, gentlemen, what are you doing! You are ruining yourselves!" But no one ever resented his words. On the contrary, everyone said: "Let him give warning—all the better for us!"

"Every society," he said, "must be based on three factors: freedom, security and enterprise. A society deprived of freedom is a society that exists without ideals, without the fervor of thought, without the foundations for creative endeavor, or faith in its future. A society aware of its insecurity bears the stamp of dejection which makes it indifferent to its own fate. A society without individual endeavor becomes incapable of administering its own affairs and little by little it even loses the concept of fatherland."

This is how the liberal argued and in all justice it must be admitted that he was right. He saw people around him groping about like poisoned flies and he said to himself: "That is because they do not regard themselves as masters of their own destiny. They are galley slaves for whom happiness and misfortune come without any foreknowledge, who do not abandon themselves to their emotions, since they cannot decide whether these are really emotions or some phantasmagoria." In a word, the liberal was firmly convinced that only the above mentioned three factors can create stable foundations for society, and bring in their wake all the other blessings requisite for social development.

But this was not all: not only did the liberal think noble thoughts; he yearned to do noble deeds. His most cherished dream was that the ray of light which nurtured his thoughts should pierce the surrounding murk, illumine it and imbue every living creature with the spirit of charity toward all. All men were his brethren, and he appealed to one and all to bask in the sun of his cherished ideals.

Although this desire to transport his ideals from the realm of celestial spaces to the realm of reality was somewhat open to suspicion, the liberal was so sincere in his passion and was at the same time so pleasant and amiable that even this doubtful desire was readily forgiven him.

He had a way of speaking the truth with a smile, of playing the simpleton when necessary and of showing off his unselfishness. But, most important of all, he never demanded anything by a strong arm; invariably asked only for that which was *within reason.*

Of course, the expression "within reason" was none too flattering to his impetuosity, but the liberal reconciled himself with it in the first place for the sake of the common good which he always put before anything else, and secondly, for the sake of protecting his ideals from an unnecessary and untimely end. What is more, he knew that the ideals which inspired him were much too abstract to directly influence life. What is freedom? Security? Independence? All these are abstract terms which must be invested with a tangible content in order that society might flourish. These terms in their totality might educate society, might uplift its beliefs and hopes, but they cannot bring those tangible benefits which create a sense of plenty. To achieve this state of weal, to render the ideal accessible to all, it was necessary to break it up into small coin, and in that form apply it as a remedy for the maladies afflicting mankind. And it was right here, in the breaking up of the ideal into small coin that the expression "within reason" seemed to come into existence all by itself, an expression which forces one of the two conflicting sides to open up *to a certain degree,* and the other to curtail its demands *to a considerable degree.*

Our liberal understood all this perfectly and, guided by this line of reasoning, girded his loins for an encounter with reality. And first of all, quite naturally, he turned to the wiseacres.

"Freedom—I believe there is nothing reprehensible about that, is there?" he asked them.

"Reprehensible? On the contrary, most praiseworthy indeed," replied the wiseacres. "It is sheer slander to say that we do not desire freedom; indeed, all we yearn for is freedom. . . . But, of course, within reason. . . ."

"Hm! . . . 'Within reason. . . .' I see! And what do you say to security?"

"By all means, by all means. . . . But, of course, also within reason."

"What is your opinion of my ideal of mutual endeavor?"

"That is exactly what is needed. But, you understand, again within reason."

Within reason, you say? Well, let it be so! The liberal knew very well himself that it could not be otherwise. Just leave a wild colt[1] to himself—why, he will do more damage in one minute than you can put to rights in years! But reins, ah, reins are the thing! The colt trots along and tosses his head about: how now, little colt, what if I take the whip and give you a lash . . . like this!

And so the liberal commenced to act "within reason"; now cut down, now nip something in the bud, and now he'd disappear altogether.

And the wiseacres keep watching him, and are beside themselves with joy. At one time they even became so thrilled with his labors that one could think they, too, had become liberals.

"Go ahead, act!" they spurred him on. "Here fence around, there gloss over, still further evade altogether."

And everything will be plain sailing. You see, dear friend, we should be only too glad to loose

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[1] The Russian phrase *savrass bez uzdi,* rendered here as "wild colt," is untranslateable. It was applied to young sons of rich merchants, who led a fast life, indulging in orgies and absurd, sometimes cruel, "practical jokes."

the goat, that you are, into the garden, but you can see for yourself how high are the fences that surround it."

"Yes, I can," agreed the liberal, "but I am so ashamed to have to forego my ideals! What shame! Oh, what shame!"

"Well, go ahead, be ashamed for a while: shame won't hurt you! But after all you will be able to carry on with your little scheme even if 'within reason.'"

Yet, as the liberal scheme began to be realized, "within reason," the wiseacres divined that even in this form the liberal's ideals savored of something worse than roses. On the one hand they were much too far-reaching; and on the other hand they had not quite matured, and were not yet ready to be embraced.

"Your ideals are much too much for us," the wiseacres told the liberal. "We are not ready yet, we'll die in harness!"

And they estimated all their shortcomings and knaveries in such detail and so precisely that the liberal, however bitter the pill, was obliged to agree that his undertaking did contain some fatal discrepancy: it just didn't fit the trousers and that was all.

"Oh, how sad!" he bemoaned his fate.

"Foolish man," the wiseacres consoled him. "What are you wailing about? What is it you want—to secure the future for your ideals? —but, forsooth, we do not stand in your way. Only do not be in haste, for the love of Christ. If it is impossible to accomplish 'within reason' content. yourself with gaining *something at least*. For 'something at least' has its value after all. Slowly but surely, bide your time and trust in god—and before you know it you will have one foot in the temple! No one has yet peeped into that temple ever since it was built, but you did . . . and for that praise the lord."

There was nothing to do but make peace with the situation. So long as it is impossible "within reason," then try to wrest "at least something" and be grateful. The liberal did that and very soon he became so accustomed to his new position that he wondered how he could have been so stupid as to imagine anything else possible. And all sorts of comparisons and analogies came to his mind. Even a grain of wheat does not bear fruit at once, it also takes its time. At first one has to plant it in the soil, then wait until the process of disintegration sets in, until it gives shoots which will vegetate, develop a sheaf, form ears and so on. How many miracles a grain has to go through before it comes back to you a hundredfold! The same with the pursuit of ideals. Plant in the earth "something at least" and sit down and wait.

And so it was: the liberal planted "something at least" in the earth and sat down to wait. The trouble was that he waited and waited, but that "something at least" simply would not germinate. Had it fallen on stone, or rotted in a dunghill, perhaps? Who could tell?

"What can be the reason?" muttered the liberal in great dismay.

"For the very reason that you have dug it in far too deeply," replied the wiseacres. "And our people are weak and vile. You come to them with the best intentions, and they seek to drown you in shallow water. One must possess consummate skill to keep clean in dealing with these people!"

"For goodness' sake! Who is speaking of cleanliness! Think of all I had set out with, and have now ended by losing it by the wayside. At first I acted 'within reason,' then I switched off to 'at least something'—surely it is not

possible to go down hill any further! . . ."

"Of course it is possible. And what have you to say about *adaptability to baseness?*"

"What do you mean?"

"It is very simple. You say that you have brought us ideals and we say: very well; only if you wish us to enter the spirit of the thing, you must be adaptable."

"Well?"

"That means, don't soar up to the heavens with your ideals, but adapt them to our scale, and act. And later on, perhaps, if we see some advantage, we too. . . . We, too, brother, are baited wolves, we have seen some wise-guy dreamers in our day! The other day General Crocodilov, too, appeared before us and said: 'Gentlemen, my ideal is the dungeon. Step in, please.' We, fools that we are, believed him and now he has us under lock and key."

The liberal pondered a great deal over these words. As it was, labels were all that remained of his original ideals, and now here was dishonor being prescribed attached to them. Why, before you had time to turn round you would be classed with the villains yourself. Lord have mercy!

And the wiseacres, observing his pensiveness, began in their turn to egg him on: "You have made your bed, liberal, and now you must lie on it! You stirred us up, you must appease us. . . . Act!"

And he began to act. He adapted everything to baseness. Should he dare at times to try and slip away, the wiseacres would snatch him by the sleeve: "Now, liberal, what are you up to? Look straight ahead!"

Thus the days flew past and the "adaptability to baseness" thrived and prospered. Not a trace was left of his ideals—only a bad odor remained—yet the liberal did not lose heart. "What if I have plunged my ideals up to the ears in dirt? For all that I stand like a pike, unscathed! Today I roll in the mud, but tomorrow the sun will shine, the mud will dry up and again I shall be a splendid fellow." The wiseacres heard these braggardly words and echoed: "Just so, just so!"

And one day he was walking along the street with his friend palavering about his ideals as was his wont and praising his wisdom to the skies. And all of a sudden he felt something splash his cheek. What was it? Where had it come from? The liberal glanced upward: could it be raining? But there was not a cloud in the sky, and the sun was frolicking gaily in the heavens. A slight breeze was blowing, but since it was forbidden to throw slops out of the windows, no suspicion could be cast in that direction.

"What a miracle!" said the liberal to his friend, "it is not raining, there are no slops and yet something is definitely splashing my cheek."

"Ah," replied his friend, "you see that man hiding behind the corner? He has done it! He wants to spit at you for your liberal deeds, but he has not got the courage to do it to your face. So, using adaptability to baseness, he spat from behind the corner and the wind wafted the drops to your face."

MIRZA FET-ALI AKHUNDOV

The Stars Deceived

(Abridged)

The city of Kazvin was the residence of the shahs in the days when the Safawid dynasty ruled Persia. After a long and stormy rule Mahommed Shah Safawid turned the reins of government over to his son Shah Abbas the First. For six years Shah Abbas ruled the country in bliss, and at the turn of the seventh year occurred the event we are about to describe.

Three days had passed since the Novruz-Bairam, the festival of spring celebrated at the equinox. Shah Abbas was in the palace conversing with his favorite wife, when the head eunuch entered. Prostrating himself, the eunuch announced that Mirza Sadreddin, the head astrologer, begged for the honor of beholding the Protector of the Universe on a matter of grave importance.

After bidding his wife retire to the harem, the Shah ordered Mirza Sadreddin admitted.

The astrologer bowed to the waist, and then, crossing his hands on his breast, proceeded to offer a prayer for the health and long life of his ruler.

"What has happened, Mirza?" asked the Shah.

"May the almighty Allah safeguard the life of the Protector of the Universe," the astrologer began. "The stellar movement shows that fifteen days following the equinox the planet Mars will pass near the constellation of Scorpion, and in consequence of the meeting of these ill-boding heavenly bodies a great misfortune will befall our country of Persia. It is destined that the supreme ruler of the country perish on that day.

"Your most humble servant and faithful slave deems it his duty to forewarn the Protector of the Universe of this sad omen."

The Shah had just passed his twenty-second year. At that age life is sweet and dear to any mortal, but particularly is it precious to one who stands at the pinnacle of earthly fortune and wields the scepter of the Shah. A deathly pallor overcast the Shah's countenance, but he conquered his feelings.

"Very well, you may leave," he told Mirza Sadreddin.

Bowing low, the astrologer then retired.

When Mirza Sadreddin had left, the Shah became deeply engrossed in thought. Then he called his heap

eunuch and commanded him to dispatch runners to the grand dignitaries of state: Mirza Moskhun, the vizier; Zaman Khan, the commander-in-chief of the army; Mirza Gabib Khan, the lord high treasurer, and Akhun Zamet, the High Mullah.

They all assembled and stood in silence before the Shah, awaiting his bidding.

"I have summoned you to consider an important problem," began the Shah, "and you must find a solution to it."

Then he related the head astrologer's fateful message.

This unexpected intelligence stunned the high dignitaries.

The first to break the silence was the vizier, Mirza Moskhun.

"The merits of your most insignificant slave and his loyalty to the eternal throne of our glorious Shah are known to all," he said. "The Hope of the Universe, our great Shah of Shahs, himself well remembers the sorry state of the treasury in the preceding reign, when people of very limited vision held the post of vizier, because of the infinite kindness of the Shah's most worthy father. But no sooner did your devoted slave learn that the treasury was empty than he at once began to ponder ways and means to replenish it. It was decreed that each courtier, on receiving a new appointment to office, or powers for administering a province, should pay into the treasury a sum of money commensurate with the position. It was decreed that whenever the Hope of the Universe might bestow his attention on some dignitary of state and bring happiness to his home by a personal visit, the fortunate servant, in appreciation of the Shah's favor, should present his sovereign with a monetary gift and should also cover the threshold of his home with precious silks and rugs which must become the property of the high guest. Due to these measures—and not a full seven years have passed since the great Shah of Shahs mounted the throne—the state treasury is filled to the brim. Glory and praise to Allah!

"Your most humble slave has always facilitated the successful conduct of state affairs, and never has there been an instance when he failed; but he candidly admits that he is hard-pressed for a means to counteract the movement of the stars."

Zaman Khan, the chief of the army, spoke next.

"This most humble and loyal servant of the Shah has grown grey in the service of our great state," he said. "Ten years ago, when Persia was invaded by a Turkish army of seventy thousand, led by Bekir Pasha Demirchi-ogly, the great father of our most worthy Shah entrusted me to head Persia's troops. I ordered that all the peasants' crops along the border of Turkey be destroyed, their cattle driven off and all roads and bridges demolished. When Bekir Pasha crossed our border he encountered no military force, but found the roads in such a state that he was unable to move his cannon. After great difficulties and privations warriors on foot and light cavalry succeeded in reaching Tabriz. Bekir Pasha despatched warriors to the neighboring villages to forage for his troops, but they found not an ear of grain, not a single cow or ox. On the third day the exhausted and hungry Turks fled Tabriz amid derision and scorn. Thus was Persia saved from invasion.

"The demolition of roads and bridges proved to be so sagacious and beneficial an undertaking that our government deemed it necessary to leave them in this state after Bekir Pasha fled, so that foreign tribes might never dare to cross our border. Our victorious troops have remained the dread of our hostile

neighbors, while not a drop of blood was lost by our valiant warriors.

"In such instances your humble slave can apply all his cunning, but he is powerless to conceive of anything to stop the stars in their course."

The warrior fell silent, and fear gripped the heart of the Shah. Next spoke Mirza Yakhia Khan, the lord high treasurer.

"Your humble slave, being kin of the vizier, was reared under his experienced guidance. He is imbued with the same devotion and honesty as the vizier.

"It is a matter of record that our officials and warriors were paid from the state treasury on orders of the Shah, certified by my signature. I was greatly grieved to find that the treasury, as our esteemed vizier had the happiness to relate, was empty. Though I then signed all the orders for the payment of salaries and sent them to all the provinces, this was done merely to uphold the prestige of the government. For prior to sending these orders I dispatched to each ruler of the provinces secret instructions not to pay salaries on these orders and to await special advices on this score. Within a short time, due to these measures, the state treasury was more than replenished. As for the warriors and officials who were thus deprived of their salaries, they suffered no particular need, thanks to the peace and tranquillity reigning in the country and the unusually low prices.

"In difficult circumstances such as the one I have mentioned my mind is sufficiently cunning and penetrating, but it is unable to find a remedy against the will of the heavenly bodies."

Finally came the turn of the High Mullah.

The High Mullah had a feud of long standing with the head astrologer and was only looking for a pretext to settle accounts with him. Circumstances were now playing into his hands.

"May the all-benevolent Allah safeguard our noble Shah from heavenly elements and earthly misfortunes! Your humble slave prays constantly for the noble Safawid dynasty.

"When the great father of the Ruler of the World bestowed upon your most humble slave the title of High Mullah, half of the subjects of Persia did not recognize the dictates of the twelve imams, the direct descendants of the prophet. By persuasive sermons, as well as by persuasive threats, I succeeded in converting all the unbelievers and setting them onto the righteous path. Today, Allah be praised, there is probably no more than a score of unbelievers on the Persian soil.

"Now, when the life of the Ruler of the Universe is threatened by the inexplicable movement of the heavenly bodies, the heart of your humblest slave throbs with sorrow.

"My most insignificant mind tells me that this accursed astrologer is the one who can best find the way out of the situation.

"He is the base traitor who has revealed to you the evil purpose of the stars, and it is he who is concealing the means of combatting them. I feel certain his designs are sinister. Is it possible that, having pointed out a poison, he should not know its antidote? It is not in vain that our prophet (may his name be blessed forever and ever!) said: 'All astrologers are liars.' This pronouncement, in my opinion, refers to the actions of astrologers, and not their knowledge and science, for most of their accursed forecasts come true, it is they themselves who are cunning tricksters.

"It would be advisable to summon the head astrologer and order him to find the means against the impending danger to the Shah of Shahs. Should he attempt to deny it, com-

mand the executioner to behead him!"

Truly the head astrologer had been rather shortsighted. Why had he conveyed this horrible news to the Shah, frightening him, and thereby placed his own life in danger? Later on when people blamed him for this blunder, he would say in his defense:

"I hastened with this unpleasant information in the fear that other astrologers might communicate it before me. Then the Shah would have undoubtedly considered me a stupid ass and would most likely have deprived me of my post as head astrologer."

And, indeed, as soon as the astrologer had brought the unpleasant tidings, the Shah came to hate him bitterly. The words of the High Mullah so roused his rage that he shouted for a runner to be dispatched at once for the head astrologer.

In less than an hour the unfortunate man faced his ruler. Like an enraged lion the Shah rose to his knees and shouted with anger.

"How dare you threaten me with ill fortune hidden in the stars, you dirty dog, without giving me the means to combat it! Call the headsman!"

The headsman came in at once with a big scimitar in his belt and a rope in his hand. The head astrologer grew ashen grey and shivered like a leaf. Pointing at him, the Shah said:

"Take this dog away and chop off his head." Zaman Khan the commander-in-chief of the army was a brave warrior, but he had a compassionate and tender heart. He took pity on the astrologer and begged the Shah to be merciful.

"Who will deliver you from evil if the head of this dog be chopped off? I muster the courage to ask your majesty, out of respect for my gray hair, not to hasten the execution of this most insignificant slave, and instead to order him find the means of combatting the danger threatening you. Should he fail to do so then let the headsman put him to death!"

The Shah ordered the executioner to leave, and then commanded the astrologer:

"Despicable slave! Tell us at once how to avert the danger threatening us!"

The unfortunate astrologer was in a predicament for he knew no remedy against the ill-boding stars, but the fear of death made him conceal his ignorance. Trembling, he begged:

"I am as dust at your feet. Grant me but one hour to consult Zobkh Uleg-bek, the holy book, to ascertain what measures are to be taken to prevent such events."

It ought to be mentioned here that the Zobkh Uleg-bek carries no reference to remedies against the movement of heavenly bodies. The head astrologer had invented this pretext to gain time for advice from his teacher, Movlan Jemaleddin, the man best versed in astrology in all of Persia.

The Shah granted his consent, but no sooner had he given it than it was announced that Movlan Jemaleddin was begging for the good fortune to behold the Shah. The Shah bade him be admitted and commanded the head astrologer to remain in the palace. Movlan entered, bowed low to the Shah, and spoke as follows:

"May Allah prolong the life of the Ruler of the Universe! Your obedient slave is doomed by fate to spend his remaining years in the solitude of old age, but the ill-boding of the stars compelled him to appear before your serene eyes. Fifteen days following the equinox the planet Mars will pass near the constellation of Scorpion

and in consequence the greatest misfortune is destined to befall the noble Ruler of the Universe. That is why your humble slave deems it his duty to warn your majesty of the impending danger and of the means to avert it."

"We ourselves, esteemed Movlan, feel apprehension at these grievous circumstances, and are now holding a council. We have been informed of danger and await your advice," said the Shah.

Movlan thereupon declared that the Ruler of the World, the great Shah of Shahs, must relinquish the affairs of state during the ill-starred days, that is, for the fifteen days following the equinox. The Shah must then abdicate the throne, and turn his power over to some criminal who deserved punishment by death; he himself must retire from the eyes of the people and stay in hiding.

Then the destructive force of the stars would strike the head of the sinner who at that moment would be the omnipotent Shah of Persia. When the impious man, the sham Shah of Persia, had perished, the Ruler of the World could again make his appearance, again ascend the throne, and continue to rule in happiness and good health, to the glory of his mighty fatherland.

"But this change in the life of your majesty must be made in strictest secrecy," Movlan adjured, "and no subjects of yours must know that the Shah has been compelled by circumstances to abdicate the throne temporarily. On the contrary, all your subjects must consider the sinful culprit the real ruler of Persia.

"It is also necessary to break all the marriage contracts of the Shah and free all his wives of their marriage vows," Movlan went on. "Then it may be proposed to them that they remarry Abbas Mohometogly, who is no longer the Shah of Persia, but merely an ordinary subject of the great Shah. Those wives who, notwithstanding the poverty and privations facing theme agree to marry you again, should, be re-married."

The astrologer was delivered from the threatened execution. The Shah no longer felt any fear. The color returned to his cheeks while members of the high council showered praise on Movlan for his perspicacity and resourcefulness. With a face shining with joy the Shah turned to the High Mullah and asked him if he could think of any impious person who deserved death, and to whom the throne and the administration of the state could be turned over.

"May the Creator of the World safeguard the life of the most worthy and the most fortunate of all Shahs!" said the High Mullah. "There has recently appeared in the city of Kazvin a certain idler and sinner the like of whom it is difficult to find not only in Persia but in the whole universe. His name is Yusuf, and he is a saddle maker by trade. He has gained popularity among the rabble and has gathered around him rascals and loafers like himself. His sinful mouth is always open to disparage and reprove the servants of the holy religion. The accursed sinner incessantly propagates the claim that our most esteemed theologians deceive the simple folk and seek to keep the people in eternal ignorance. According to his words, a holy war is not obligatory and the payment of the *hums* and *imammaly* taxes for the maintenance of the prophet's descendants contradicts the Sharia[1]; he further alleges that the present-day theologians purposely disregard the teachings of their predecessors so as not to lose their prestige and to be able to deceive

[1] The collection of the Koran and all other teachings of Mohammedanism.

the people more successfully. In addition he has the audacity to regard with disfavor the existing system of government. He asserts that all officials, from the village elder to the Shah, are robbers and tyrants. In his opinion, the people enjoy no benefit from rulers who impose unjust taxes and levies on the people because of brute greed. In their deeds and actions they are not guided by the dictates of law, and they violate justice and honor at every step, he declares. He says that only scoundrels, thieves and robbers act in this manner. Your faithful slave dares think it best to entrust the temporary rule to this accursed rebel, that he may perish and find retribution in hell."

The grand dignitaries of state approved the proposal of the High Mullah and unanimously declared that Yusuf the saddle maker indeed merited heavenly punishment and deserved death.

Fully satisfied with the course of events, the Shah deigned to state that he had no objections to punishing the saddle maker and that everything should be accomplished by the next day. And on this the members of the high council retired.

Now we will acquaint the reader with Yusuf, the saddle maker.

Yusuf was born in a village near Kazvin. His father, a peasant by the name of Kerbalai Selim, was a pious and god-fearing man. He dreamed of making his son a mullah, thus enabling him subsequently to enter the circle of learned theologians. With this aim in mind he brought Yusuf to Kazvin and placed him in a religious school.

In order to perfect his knowledge in theology, Yusuf, on coming of age, went to Isfakan and later to the sacred city of Kerbela, where he heard the teachings and interpretations of the most learned theologians.

During the many years he dedicated to the study of Moslem sciences Yusuf observed the holy fathers at close range. Having become convinced that they were all hypocrites and liars, he chose not to become a mullah and retained in his heart an irresistible aversion for this calling. From Kerbela he moved to Hamadan.

At the age of forty he undertook to learn the trade of saddle maker and mastered it within a year. Then he returned to Kazvin, for this city, being the seat of the Shah, offered more opportunities to earn a livelihood.

It was there that Yusuf married and opened a saddle making shop. On observing the hypocrisy of the mullahs and the base deeds of corrupt officials this honest and noble man waxed indignant to the bottom of his soul and could not refrain from exposing them. Yusuf's uprightness and courage earned him many a sincere and devoted friend, but these same traits were the cause of his undoing.

On the morning after the day we have described the courtiers, the dignitaries of state, the most worthy theologians, the descendants of the prophet, and officials from the grand vizier down to street overseers, gathered in the palace on orders of the Shah. Each of them silently occupied his designated place in the huge reception room, and awaited with trepidation the appearance of the Ruler of the Universe.

The Shah soon entered attired in full regalia. A radiant crown was on his head; in his hand he carried a golden scepter ornamented with precious stones. Suspended from his belt was the scimitar of the Shah the symbol of power. The belt, hilt and scabbard of the scimitar, as well as the Shah's, cuffs were inlaid with precious stones.

Having mounted the throne, the

Shah addressed the following words to the assembly:

"It is now seven years, oh my faithful subjects, that I have been reigning over you by the will of the eternal Allah. To each of you I have shown attention and favors to the full of my ability. I have been satisfied with you all, for none of you was wanting in zeal, sincerity or devotion. For certain reasons which I do not consider necessary to disclose to you I am now compelled to abdicate the throne and to turn it over to a person more worthy and more experienced than I am in administering the state. This man will be designated by the High Mullah, the army chief, the vizier, the treasurer, Movlan Jemaleddin and the head astrologer. You must all go to him and bring him to the palace with appropriate honor and pomp. After placing him on this throne you must recognize him as the omnipotent Shah and faithfully obey his will. Misfortune shall fall on the head of anyone who dares to defy this order and to manifest the slightest disobedience to the new Shah."

After these words the Shah removed the crown from his head and laid it on the throne; he removed his splendid attire, unfastened his scimitar and donned simple clothes. Then he turned to those assembled and said:

"Henceforth I am not the Shah of Persia but an ordinary mortal, Abbas Mahomet-ogly; you shall not see me any more from this day. Farewell and may the almighty Allah safeguard you!"

He then descended the steps of the throne and made his way to the harem.

The participants of the grand council were greatly confounded and could not comprehend what had happened.

On the command of the Shah all his wives were gathered, impatiently awaiting the appearence of their ruler. On beholding him in simple attire the beauties were ready to burst into laughter, but his stern appearance and grim look compelled them to suppress their gaiety. The head eunuch was ordered to admit the Mullah Rasul and two more priests, who were waiting at the door of the harem.

After the mullahs were seated, the Shah told his wives the following:

"My dear friends, it is with great grief that I am compelled to bring to you sad tidings. May you know that I am no longer the Shah of Persia; I have no more magnificent palaces, a treasury or other wealth so as to be able to attire you in splendor and maintain you in luxury. Now I am a simple subject of Persia, propertyless and insignificant. That is why I am compelled to divorce you and to give each of you complete freedom to choose a husband for herself."

He then commanded the mullahs to perform the ceremony of breaking the marriage contracts between him and his wives. Mullah Rasul proceeded with the rites. The beauties of the harem were bewildered and struck by fear.

After the rites were completed, the Shah again turned to the fair ones and said that if any of them desired to become the wife of Abbas Mahomet-ogly, notwithstanding the poverty and privaticns facing her, the mullah would again perform the marriage rite and would restore the broken marriage contract.

All the women expressed the desire to again become wives of the Shah, for he was young and handsome; moreover,they took it all for a jest and could not become reconciled to the idea that Shah Abbas had voluntarily and inexplicably abdicated. Only two, lowering their eyes in embarrassment stated, that while they had been fully content

with marital union with the Shah, now, having been deprived of this happiness, they were unwilling to enter into marriage with Abbas Mahomet-ogly. Both were immediately granted their freedom.

One of them was a Georgian, who had been sent as a gift to the Shah of Persia by the ruler of Georgia. Having taken her jewels, magnificent garments and a great quantity of gold, she left the next day for her native land. There her story was not believed and it was decided that she had run away from Persia. Some even wanted to return her to the Shah, but soon the entire matter was forgotten.

The other, the daughter of a Kazvin merchant, had been betrothed to a young man. The Shah's servants had learned of her beauty and reported it to his majesty. She was taken from her father's home and placed in the harem. She made use of the fortunate chance to return to her father and subsequently married her former betrothed.

After the other wives had been remarried to Abbas Mahomet-ogly, the head eunuch was ordered to escort them to a house on the outskirts of Kazvin. Abbas Mahomet-ogly was the last to leave the harem, and he vanished from sight.

The shop of Yusuf the saddle maker was located on the square near the mosque of the Shah. Two hours had passed since the noonday prayer. Yusuf was working diligently, finishing the trimming of a bridle which had to be completed the very same day. Two friends sat next to him, listening as Yusuf spoke of the high prices which were ruining the poor people in this difficult year, for a drought had destroyed the crops.

The saddle maker waxed indignant at the indifference of the government to the welfare of its people.

Just then a thick cloud of dust appeared on the opposite side of the square. Yusuf raised his head and perceived a solemn procession. It never entered his mind that the procession was in his honor.

It was headed by twelve palace servants who always accompanied the Shah on foot, attired in bright robes. Following them were twelve standard-bearers, and a great throng of palace servants, one of whom bore a large tray on his head. Then came *farrashi*[1] accompanying the chief equerry, who was leading a magnificent Turkmenian horse. The expensive saddle and the caparisons were inlaid with precious stones, the breastplate was covered with gold, the bridle adorned with pearls and a string of emeralds hung from the horse's neck.

Next came the High Mullah, the vizier, the treasurer, Movlan Jemaleddin, the head astrologer, the most worthy theologians, the glorious descendants of the prophet, the most esteemed courtiers, state dignitaries and officials. Behind this brilliant entourage marched warriors on foot and horsemen. The solemn procession moved slowly and majestically, and came to a stop in front of the shop of Yusuf the saddle maker.

The High Mullah and the army chief advanced and bowed low to Yusuf. Yusuf rose and bowed in return.

The High Mullah was first to speak:

"By the destiny of fate, you, master Yusuf, are the Shah of Persia from this day. Shah Abbas has abdicated the throne. May you bring good fortune and joy to us! Pray come to the palace and mount the throne!"

Yusuf was overwhelmed by these words and could find no explanation for the strange proceedings. He did not trust his own eyes and

[1] Police officials.

ears. Finally he mustered the courage to tell the Head Mullah:

"Most highly esteemed Head Mullah! I consider you one of the most clever and influential men of Persia, but . . . in this case . . . I don't know. . . . Haven't you gone out of your mind? Perhaps you have taken to smoking opium? I am a simple craftsman and between me and the crown there is an impassable abyss. I swear by Allah, I cannot understand your words. I beseech you to leave me in peace and cease to mock me."

The army chief then advanced and spoke:

"You, master Yusuf, are now the mighty Shah of Persia and the Ruler of the Universe, and all of us are your obedient slaves. Your humble request is entirely out of place. You can only issue orders and commands to us. None of us has gone out of his mind and none have been doped by opium. We are all in good health and in full possession of our senses. But the predestination of the One above is inevitable. From this day you are the ruler of all Persia. As the Head Mullah had the good fortune to beg you, come to the palace that the coronation may be performed without delay."

Having pronounced these words he turned to the four servants of the court standing next to him, and ordered:

"Bring the garments of the Shah and clothe the Ruler of the Universe!"

The servants entered Yusuf's shop and proceeded with their task. Resistance was useless, and Yusuf gave himself into their hands. They attired him in the magnificent garments of the Shah. Then the head equerry brought forth the horse caparisoned with a blanket embroidered with gold and precious stones. Yusuf was mounted on the horse and in the same order as before, the entire procession returned to the palace. The streets were filled with the loud cries of the zealous police officials:

"Make way! Make way!"

All the inhabitants of Kazvin, young and old, men and women, came to the windows and climbed on roof tops to stare with curiosity at the splendid procession. But since none of the spectators was aware of what had happened, they were in a great quandary.

Near the Shah's palace the police helped Yusuf to dismount. The High Mullah and the army chief immediately led him to the grand palace and seated him on the throne of the Shah. The courtiers, the theologians, the descendants of the prophet and the high officials of state stood before him with their hands crossed on their breasts in reverent silence.

Having delivered a prayer, the High Mullah placed the crown of the Shah on Yusuf's head, girt him with a belt, fastened the scimitar to his side, and placed the scepter in his hand. Then he delivered one more prayer and, turning to the audience, proposed that they congratulate the new Shah.

Cries of "Glory be!" reverberated for a long time and the echo resounded in all the chambers of the palace. A triumphant hymn was played, a signal rocket set off and a salute of one hundred and ten guns fired.

Though Persian poetry had fallen into decay since the days of Saadi and Hafiz, on this happy day there were several bards who sang sonorous odes on the ascension of Yusuf Shah to the Persian throne. These odes told of the rare merits of the new Shah, whose wisdom was likened to that of Solomon, his generosity to that of Khatem, his courage to that of Rustam and his power to that of the elements and destiny.

After the coronation the High Mullah announced that all were free

and the entire court immediately dispersed. In the splendid palace remained only Yusuf Shah, several eunuchs, the servants and the guards.

Feeling as if he had been transported to the world of miracles Yusuf Shah became engrossed in thought for several minutes. Then, turning to the head eunuch, he asked:

"Who are you?"

"We are the most humble slaves of your majesty," was the reply, "the eunuchs of the harem of the Shah; I am the head of the eunuchs and these are my assistants."

Then Yusuf Shah turned to the servants:

"And who may you be?"

"We are the most insignificant servants of your majesty," was the reply. "I am the head of the servants and these are my subordinates."

"And who are those that stand in the court?"

"They are a detachment of guards, who await the orders of the Shah."

"Retire you all, and let only the head eunuch remain."

When all had left, the Shah beckoned to the head eunuch and said to him:

"I can perceive by your face that you are good natured and upright. For the sake of Allah, tell me what is happening here and how all this is to be explained."

And indeed the head eunuch was a good natured and upright man. Considering it unworthy to keep the truth from the Ruler of the Universe, he decided to tell him everything. He always stood behind the door of Shah Abbas' chambers so as to be at his beck and call. Consequently he knew all the secrets of his master. He was aware of the events of the preceding day, having heard everything that was said, and he related it all to Yusuf Shah.

"And where is Shah Abbas now?" asked Yusuf Shah.

"He has attired himself like one of the common folk and disappeared; his whereabouts are known to no one," the eunuch replied.

Yusuf Shah was a clever man and free from superstition. He had no fear whatsoever of the fatal influence of the stars. But this change in life, so unexpected and accidental, frightened and perplexed him. Having mounted the throne in accordance with all the requirements of law and custom, he could not voluntarily relinquish the duties of Shah. Thus Yusuf Shah was compelled by circumstances to undertake the administration of state affairs.

The first thing he did was to call the head of the police and sternly adjure him;

"Proceed at once to the city with twelve policemen and take under guard the Head Mullah, the army chief, the vizier, the treasurer, the head astrologer and Movlan Jemaleddin, and confine them all to the dungeon in Arika. After you have carried out my orders report to me."

Bowing low, the police chief withdrew.

Then, calling the head of the palace servants, the Shah said:

"I have not eaten a thing today. Give orders that supper be prepared."

The Shah then expressed a desire to inspect the palace, the harem and his bed-chamber.

The first hall was covered with expensive rugs of colorful design. The walls and ceiling were adorned with paintings of birds and flowers. In the second hall, the floors of which were also bedecked with precious rugs, portraits of the former Shahs of the Safawid dynasty and portraits of princes who had won distinction in the arts covered the walls. The third hall held the portraits of all the famous kings of other dynasties. The walls of the fourth hall were covered with frescoes de-

picting feats of the ancient Persian titans whose heroic deeds in their struggle against the evil spirits, the *devs*, are sung in *Shah-Name*. The campaigns and battles of Shah Ismail of the Safawid dynasty were depicted in the next hall. The walls of all the rooms in the harem were covered with pictures of youths offering maidens flowers and golden vessels brimming with wine. Each chamber in the harem had a luxurious couch.

Yusuf Shah selected one of the rooms in the harem as his bed-chamber. He then asked the head eunuch where the finery and the jewels of the harem's former inbabitants were kept, and he was shown magnificent articles of women's finery: expensive Cashmere shawls, fine silken robes, filigreed golden bouquets, diadems, diamond earrings, rings, pearl necklaces and many other precious objects.

Yusuf Shah had three daughters and two sons. The oldest daughter was fourteen and the other two twelve and eight years old. One of his sons was six and the youngest four years old. For each daughter he selected a bouquet, a ring, necklace, earrings, a fine shawl and a beautiful dress. For his wife he picked a similar shawl and dress. He gave all this finery and jewelry to the head eunuch commanding him to bring it to his home in Kazvin and to deliver them to his wife. At the same time the eunuch was to tell her to feel no anxiety for Yusufs fate and to send both his sons to him tomorrow.

The sun was setting, and on the respectful invitation of the head servant the Shah returned to the first hall, where candles stood in golden candelabra and the table was set. After washing and delivering the sunset and evening prayers, the Shah sat down to dinner. The servants brought dainty and choice dishes, and the Shah stilled his hunger. After dinner the servants produced a basin and a copper pitcher of water, and the Shah washed his hands. Coffee was served, a narghile was prepared and the Shah began to smoke.

By this time the *farrash-bashi* [1] had returned. He reported that the commission of his majesty was executed. The Shah expressed his satisfaction and dismissed him.

Next came the chief eunuch, to report that the gifts were all delivered, and the Shah's wife and daughters, enraptured by them, were dancing with joy.

Next the Shah questioned the eunuch and the *farrash-bashi* concerning certain matters that interested him, and when night fell he retired to his bed-chamber. His bed was made ready and after commanding the *farrash-bashi* to station the guard in the same order as hitherto, Yusuf Shah retired and soon fell asleep.

The next morning Yusuf Shah ordered his friends, Mullah Ramazan, Kurban-bek, Mirza J'alil, Mirza Zaki, whom he trusted implicitly, to be brought before him. When they came the Shah gave the post of Head Mullah to Mullah Ramazan; Kurban-bek he appointed commander-in-chief of the army, bestowing on him at the same time the title of Khan; he appointed Mirza J'alil vizier, and Mirza Zaki lord high treasurer; the post of head astrologer was abolished as harmful to the people and to the state.

On learning from his jailer that his opponent and enemy, Mullah Ramazan, had been appointed in his place, the Head Mullah, who had been confined to the dungeon, could not stand the blow and died from heart failure.

The Shah commanded that a strict edict be sent to all rulers of the provinces, enjoining them not

[1] Police chief.

to impose unjust taxes, not to impose unlawful fines on peaceful citizens for personal gain, nor to execute or subject people to punishment and torture. Next the Shah appointed trustworthy inspectors for each province, to gather information on the state of affairs and the needs of the populace, and to report personally to his majesty.

The Shah called to the palace all the newly appointed inspectors and delivered to them the following exhortation:

"Declare in my name to the governors of the provinces that they are to bear the fear of god in their hearts and rightfully administer justice; let them not resort to extortion or unlawful levies. Let them remember that such actions will eventually bring about their own misfortune and downfall. On more than one occasion have they witnessed how people who gained wealth by unlawful means finally lost their heads or ended their lives in horrible poverty. Every dignitary who gained riches in the service of the state was always called to account by the Persian Shahs under one pretext or another, all his property accumulated by violence was taken away from him, and he himself was subjected to a horrible execution or compelled to lead a sordid existence in poverty. The governors of the provinces are in this respect like leeches who become bloated from the blood they suck, but once removed from the body lose everything; many of the leeches perish or grow feeble and weak. If the rulers curtail their demands and are satisfied with the salaries set them by law, they will gain in standing, be loved by the people, be promoted in office, multiply their wealth and gain praise for their good name."

Court expenditures were reduced on the Shah's command. He concerned himself particularly with improving the means of communication; ordered the repair of roads and bridges, the building of caravanserais between all large cities, the opening of a school and hospital in each province and the digging of canals in places where water was wanting; and he instituted aid for widows, orphans, cripples and the blind.

Yusuf Shah ordered the persecution of all idlers whose love for leisure drives them to join the clergy. The Shah also decreed that each person desiring to have a clerical title was to be granted one only with the permission of the Head Mullah. It was also decreed that the number of clergymen should everywhere correspond to the needs and requirements of the population. The Shah appropriated a sum from the state treasury for the maintenance of the clergy, thus making them dependent on the state. All court cases were removed from the jurisdiction of the theologians and turned over to special government judges.

He also ordered that the funds collected for the poor should be kept by four of the most honest townsmen, who were to distribute these moneys in accordance with the needs of each case, and were also to present a report on the distribution of these funds.

Hums, the tax for the benefit of the descendants of the prophet, as well as the holy tax, *imammaly*, was abolished, so that the descendants of the prophet, may his name be praised, should finally abandon the shameful role of beggars and engage in honest pursuits. Learned theologians found in the books of the *Sharia* appropriate texts to justify the abolition of these taxes.

The Shah caused it to be made known in all provinces that hence-

forth no one should dare to present gifts to the Shah, to high dignitaries of state or to government officials, and that no one should seek rank by gifts, since rank was to be accorded only to persons who had proven their honesty and ability.

To augment the state income Yusuf Shah ordered a tax levied on all estates, including those of the clergy. The princes, the merchants, theologians, descendants of the prophet and all other citizens residing in towns were obliged to pay one-tenth of their income and those living in the countryside one-twentieth.

A strict decree was issued forbidding the witholding of payment of salaries to troops and government officials.

A definite procedure for the purchase and sale of real estate was established and a tax was imposed on all such deals. Pawning and security loans were banned, since those in possession of money oppressed the poor, compelling them to pawn their property at low prices in the hope that when payment fell due the owner will not be able to redeem his property.

It became known to Yusuf Shah that the head equerry, under the pretext of pasturing the horses belonging to the state on mountain meadows, brought them in the summer to the valleys, where he oppressed and fleeced the local population; that the artillery commander, while receiving salaries for all his men, did not pay them a single *shai*; that the manager of the state treasury utilized his official capacity and palmed off counterfeit money on the populace; that the head of the Kazvin police took bribes; that the tax collectors were oppressing the poor and displaying excessive leniency to the rich; that the street overseers were not caring for the cleanliness of the streets.

By special decree the Shah dismissed all these officials, and honest and conscientious people known to the Shah for their good behavior were appointed in their stead.

The Shah then commanded that the streets of Kazvin be widened and the pits in the gutters be filled.

By special order of the Shah wheat from the state granaries was distributed to the poor, who suffered great want due to the unprecedented drought.

A special council of experienced canal diggers and authorities was formed, charged with drafting a plan for bringing water to Kazvin.

In these days Dutch merchants resided not far from the Persian gulf, and their envoys arrived with attendants and a suite, to conclude a trade treaty with the Persian government. They were received by Yusuf Shah. Having concluded the treaty the merchants departed, filled with admiration for the brilliance and energy of Persia's ruler.

A week had passed since Yusuf Shah had ascended the throne and each day was marked for the people of Persia by new favors. A period of prosperity began, days of happiness and bliss. But alas! Man never values that which is really precious and beneficial. What did Adam and Eve lack in paradise? But they violated god's commandment and were driven from heaven for it. Such is human nature!

The inhabitants of Kazvin no longer saw lacerated human limbs hanging near the city gates, no longer witnessed the execution and hanging of people, no longer saw the headsmen gouge out eyes and cut off ears and noses, and this seemed strange and inexplicable to them.

At first they said that the new Shah was most probably kind and tender-hearted. But as time went on the people began to dispute as

to whether he was really good and benevolent, or whether it was merely lack of will and weakness of character. And his enemies spread all sorts of rumours about his many vices. In a word, the peaceful life under the sagacious and humane Shah soon began to seem monotonous and dull to the people of Kazvin.

The former officials who had been dismissed from their posts followed events carefully, took cognizance of the discontent of the masses, and, of course, hastened to make use of it. Each of them began to hatch plots against Yusuf Shah.

A conspiracy was soon organized in Kazvin.

Its initiator was the head equerry, who had been dismissed by the new Shah.

"For the sake of Allah I beseech you, Mirza Gabib, to tell me what the populace of Kazvin is saying about the new Shah," he begged the former head of the treasury on meeting him accidentally.

"The Kazvin people hate the new Shah from the very bottom of their hearts and consider him a despicable coward and indolent idler," replied Mirza Gabib.

"I swear by the almighty Allah, Mirza Gabib, that the plain folk are much smarter than we. What a foolish thing we have done by choosing an ignorant saddle maker for Shah. For our loyalty to the throne, for our honest and incorruptible service to the state, he deprived us of our posts; he degrades us so that the worst dog in the whole of Kazvin province stands in higher esteem than we. I swear by Allah, we ourselves are the cause of our disgrace."

"Was it we who chose him for Shah? It was the will of Shah Abbas. What else was there left for us to do but obey his will?"

"Very well, but then Shah Abbas was our ruler and his will was law to us. What is there now to prevent us from overthrowing the accursed Yusuf Shah, the impious scoundrel who, according to rumors, even believes in the reincarnation of the soul? After removing him from the throne we can put in his place the worthiest of the whole Safawid dynasty; such a Shah, due to his noble lineage, would be obeyed incontestably."

"True are the words you have spoken, and I fully concur with you, but after all there are only two of us. What can we do by ourselves? Is it not best that we proceed right now, without delay, to the former artillery commander and learn his opinion? He has recently been dismissed as we have."

So they proceeded to the home of the artillery commander, who was overjoyed at their visit. After carefully listening to their recital he agreed with them on every point and gave his full consent to take part in the conspiracy against Yusuf Shah, but added that without the participation of Bagir Khan, commander of the cavalry, the entire undertaking was doomed to failure.

"Bagir Khan is on the best of terms with me," continued the artillery commander, "and I undertake to win him over to our side. I intend to tell him that in the reign of Yusuf, that out-and-out unbeliever, he cannot hope for anything in the service of the Shah, and that sooner or later the same fate that has befallen us will strike him, too. Therefore he should take measures to stop the evil before it strikes. I feel more than certain that these words will influence Bagir Khan, all the more so since yesterday, at the general reception, the Shah reprimanded him severely for having entered a mosque in a state of intoxication. Once Bagir Khan agrees to throw his lot in with us, there will be no doubt whatsoever that Faraj Khan, commander of the infantry, will also join us. He is a

cousin and brother-in-law of Bagir Khan and will never go against him. Go immediately to the former *farrash-bashi* and, after gaining his consent, take his word that he will attempt to influence the *farrashi* and street overseers who were formerly under his charge."

So each plotter went his own way, to carry out the mission he had undertaken. Three days had hardly passed when all the participants of the mutiny had gathered in secret and arrived at the conclusion that everything was ready for the uprising. The plotters decided to surround the palace on Saturday morning, to break into the inner chambers, dethrone and kill Yusuf Shah, and put in his place a new Shah of the Safawid dynasty

Early in the morning on the day designated by the plotters, when the palace gates were still shut, rebels on horse and on foot, armed to the teeth, surrounded the palace. On learning of the mutiny Yusuf Shah gave orders not to open the gates.

To the new Shah the uprising came as a complete surprise, for, since the arrest of the former Head Mullah, the commander-in-chief of the army, the vizier, the lord high treasurer, the head astrologer and Movlan Jemaleddin, he had considered himself safe. The danger caught him unawares.

Yusuf Shah's well-wishers soon learned of the uprising. Hastily arming themselves, they swarmed to the palace. The entreaties they addressed to the rebels were of no avail. Soon the friends of the Shah realized that no compromise could be reached, and decided to give battle. Firing commenced from both sides.

The battle raged fiercer with each passing minute. None of these taking part wished to retreat, and each was ready to give his life to gain victory for his side. After brief cross-fire the enemies met in hand-to-hand fighting and threw themselves into battle with unsheathed scimitars. Blood flowed in rivers. The fierce battle lasted more than three and a half hours, with losses of nearly six thousand on each side.

Finally the ranks of the adherents of Yusuf Shah wavered. This was due primarily to the fact that the ungrateful city mob sided with the rebels; and, as a result, the adherents of Yusuf Shah finally suffered defeat and fled.

The rebels rushed to the palace; after battering down the doors they ran into the inner chambers and began to search for Yusuf Shah, but he was not to be found. He had vanished without a trace. Some maintained that during the battle Yusuf Shah was in the ranks of his adherents, inspiring them by his example, and that he perished in the battle. Others asserted that Yusuf Shah was not seen among the fighters, and that he had vanished at the very start of the mutiny. In any case Yusuf disappeared: he was not discovered among the dead and was not found among the living.

After pillaging the palace the mutineers headed for the bazaar, where they ransacked the shops; thence they proceeded first to the Armenian and then to the Jewish districts, ransacking and wrecking, and committing many base, heinous deeds.

With the setting of the sun the mutineers departed to their homes and the disorders ceased.

The next day the ringleaders of the uprising came to the dungeon in Arika and freed the vizier, the army chief, the treasurer, Moval Jemaleddin and the head astrologer.

After telling them all that had transpired since their incarceration, the mutineers asked their advice as

to whom of the Safawid dynasty they considered most worthy to ascend the throne.

Moval Jemaleddin addressed them with a query.

"In the name of the almighty Allah, what date is today?"

The head equerry replied that exactly sixteen days had passed since the equinox. Movlan's heart was filled with joy. He solemnly proclaimed that the threatening danger had passed.

"Everyone knows there is no worthy prince in the Safawid dynasty who could ascend the throne," he said. "All have either been crippled or blinded. Some were deprived of their vision by Ismail Shah, others were blinded by Shah Abbas; none of them can rule, and it is evident that Shah Abbas will again become the Ruler of the Universe."

To this the head of the police replied that all would be happy and overjoyed to have so just a ruler as Shah Abbas, under whom all lived in bliss, but, to his great sorrow, the Shah had vanished without a trace after voluntarily abdicating the throne.

Movlan replied that there had been a reason which had compelled the Shah to relinquish the throne temporarily, but now this cause was gone and the place where Shah Abbas was hiding was known to him.

Everyone immediately proceeded to the house where Shah Abbas was concealed, and with ceremony and pomp he was escorted to the Shah's palace. Shah Abbas again ascended the throne and became the ruler of Persia as of old. And everything proceeded in the old way, as if Yusuf Shah never had existed.

I am surprised at the poor judgment and foolishness of the stars. How is it they did not realize they were being deceived and that the saddle maker Yusuf was a sham Shah, placed on the throne temporarily in order to save Shah Abbas? How gullible and careless of the stars! How cleverly they were deceived by those cunning Persians!

The stars were relentless to the unfortunate and innocent saddle maker Yusuf, sparing the real ruler Shah Abbas. The next forty years they looked on with indifference at his despotism, cruelty and brutality. A striking example of his cruelty was the treatment accorded to his own sons: he had two of them blinded and caused the third to be put to death. Only his grandson remained to inherit the throne.

But perhaps the stars were also not to be reproached, since they bore no ill will toward Shah Abbas himself. It was necessary for them to destroy the man who on the fifteenth day after the equinox would occupy the throne of Persia. And on this day Yusuf the saddle maker was the possessor of the throne and it was on him that the wrath of the heavenly bodies fell.

How could the stars have suspected that the Persians might deceive them and substitute a sham in place of the real ruler of Persia?

POEMS

KORNEI CHUKOVSKY

Drawings by V. Konashevich

A Poem for Children

Buzzer-buzzer-buzzer fly,
Golden tummy, shiny eye.
Over fields she roamed and flew,
And she found a coin or two.
At the market, not so far,
She bought herself a samovar.

"Listen cockroaches to me.
Leave your holes
And come for tea."

Came the cockroaches in masses,
And they drank from cups and glasses.
And the little ones drank, too.
Each three cups with milk—
Like you.
Each one had some cake and pie,
For the buzzer-buzzer-buzzer fly
Had her birthday then.

With a present came the fleas:
High boots reaching to the knees
To protect the fly from cold.
All the snaps were made of gold.

To the party came the granny bee.
For the fly some honeycomb brought she.
Suddenly,
Without a word,
Unseen,
Unheard,
An old spider caught our fly:
"You shall die!"
"My dear guests, please help me, help me.
Stab the villain, my dear guests, and free me.
For I dined you,
For I wined you.
In my hour of need don't leave me!"

But the bugs and the worms
Took to flight.
Filled all cracks and all holes
In their fright.
The cockroach clan
Into a pan.
The clumsy bugs
Under rugs.
The frightened fleas
On their knees:
"Don't fight,
Plea—ease! . . ."
And none of them would help the fly.
"Buzzer, buzzer,
"On your birthday you will die."

And the grasshopper, the grasshopper!
Like a little man
Jumps, jumps, jumps, jumps
All he can.

Up, up, 'up, 'up—
Stop!
Under bridge, under bush.
Hush!

And the villain's getting ready.
He binds her steady, steady.
His teeth sink into her body.
They are near her heart already.

The fly weeps,
Screams for help
Heartbreakingly.
The villain sneers,
Binds her tighter
Painstakingly.

Of a sudden comes on wings
Out of the night
A mosquito.
In his hand
Shines a searchlight bright.

"Where's the villain old and grim?
I am not afraid of him!"

To the spider straight he flies.
Draws his shining sword.
Cuts the spider's head in two
Like a paper cord.
Puts his arms around the fly:
"Darling-buzzer, don't you cry,
For I killed him, he is dead.
Darling-buzzer, don't be sad.
Let's be happy, buzzer-fly,
Let us marry, you and I!"

All the cockroaches and bugs
Left the cracks and left the rugs.
"Glory, glory to the hero,
To the conqueror!"
Then along came fire-flies,
Lit their lights and rubbed their eyes.
Everyone was feeling good,
Everyone was gay.

Hey, centipede,
Show some speed.
Call musicians.
Let us dance!
The musicians came a-running.
All the drums began a-drumming.
Boom! boom! boom! boom!
The bride is dancing with her groom.
Chirping, skipping low and high.
The mosquito and his fly.

And the bed-bug jumps and hoots
In his patent-leather boots.

The little worms with the little bees.
The little bugs with the little fleas.

And the rich farmer-bug,
Horny, handsome and snug,
Waves his hat very high
Dancing with a butterfly.

Hop-hop-hop! Hop-hop-hop!
Skip and trot without a stop.

All are happy and gay.
The fly is married today
To the fighting dashing hero —
The mosquito brave.

And the ant, and the ant
Holds his wife's dainty hand
And he dances
and skips
and he winks
At the bugs
and he sings:
"Baby bugs,
Darling bugs,
Bu-bu-bu-bu-bugs!
Bu-bu-bu-bu-bugs!"

Translated by Robert Magidoff

SHAKESPEARE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED IN THE U.S.S.R.

"Julius Ceaser," illustration by F. Konstantinov

A Contemporary of Eternity

Shakespeare came to Russia rather late. The history of Shakespeare on the Russian stage dates from the beginning of the last century, but many a year passed before the public could hear the works of the great playwright in a faithful translation of the unmutilated text. Before the Revolution, only the advanced and cultured few in tsarist Russia were interested in Shakespeare. Below we give I. Turgenev's brilliant address on the three-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, the first of these anniversaries to be commemorated in Russia, and then only by a very narrow circle.

Seventy-five years have come and gone since that day. The old Russia has vanished forever. The peoples of the great Soviet Union now honor Shakespeare's memory in a number of ways that show how important to the citizens of our country has the poet of Stratford-on-Avon become, whose works even to this day remain an unattainable model and ideal for all mankind.

On April 23 of this year a Shakespeare Festival was held in seven hundred and ninety theaters of the U.S.S.R. Every theater that had a Shakespeare play in its repertoire put it on that day. Operas based on Shakespeare's plots were performed in the opera-houses. In every theater without exception, even in those that had no play of his in their repertoires, a commemoration speech on the great poet was given before the performance.

The celebration of Shakespeare anniversary is a matter of state importance here, a matter that concerns the whole of Soviet society. The Academy of Sciences, the Soviet Writers' Union, the Arts' Committee of the Council of People's Commissars, and the All-Russian Theater Association organized in Moscow a big general meeting of those who love and honor the great English poet. The special conference of producers of Shakespeare plays from all over the U.S.S.R. lasted several days. An exhibition, showing the history of Shakespeare in Russia and the progress made by the Soviet theaters in new productions of his plays, was opened for the anniversary. His popularity here may be judged by the uninterrupted run of the following plays: *Othello* at the Maly, *King Lear* at the Jewish State Theater, *Othello* at the Kamerny, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* at the Theater of the Revolution, *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Vakhtangov, and *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Red Army Theater. A new production of *Hamlet* has been painstakingly worked on for the past two years at the Moscow Art Theater. Several other Shakespearean plays are scheduled to have their premieres in the near future.

So much for the capital. A similar picture can be seen all over the Soviet Union. In Leningrad, S. Radlov, one of the most earnest and gifted of producers of Shakespeare's plays on the Soviet stage, is responsible for *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet* at the theater of which he is director. *King Richard the Third* is being performed at the Bolshoi Theater of Drama. Several comedies are running in other theaters. Very remarkable productions of Shakespeare can be seen in many important cultural centers of the U.S.S.R. *Hamlet* at Gorky, and *Macbeth* at the Kirov Regional Theater, play to crowded houses. The same can be observed in Rostov.

The numerous amateur theatrical societies formed by workers and collective farmers also test their powers with Shakespeare plays, and often achieve success. Excellent results were obtained by the workers' club of the Caouchouc Works, Moscow, with the staging of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

It is worthy of note that Shakespeare is now being performed in the languages of the peoples of the Soviet Union. Many of these had no theaters of their own before the Revolution. Among the best Shakespeare productions on the stages of the national theaters we may name *Othello* in the Georgian language at the Tbilisi theater, and *Hamlet* at the Khamza Uzbek theater, and others.

We already have a number of outstanding actors for leading roles in some of Shakespeare's most important plays: A. Ostuzhev and A. Khorava as Othello, S. Michoels as King Lear, R. Simonov and I. Mansurova as Benedict and Beatrice.

The brilliant success of Soviet interpretations of Shakespearean characters is to a large degree due to the fact that our theater is carrying on and developing the best traditions of the Russian stage. Hamlet, Lear, Othello, Ophelia, Lady Macbeth, Beatrice, and other central characters of Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies, have been portrayed by Russian actors of world renown. The traditions set by Mochalov, Shchepkin, Fedotova, Yermolova, Savina, the traditions of the Moscow Art Theater best represented by Stanislavsky and Kachalov, are carried on by the Soviet actors who undertake to interpret Shakespearean heroes, a difficult but gratifying task.

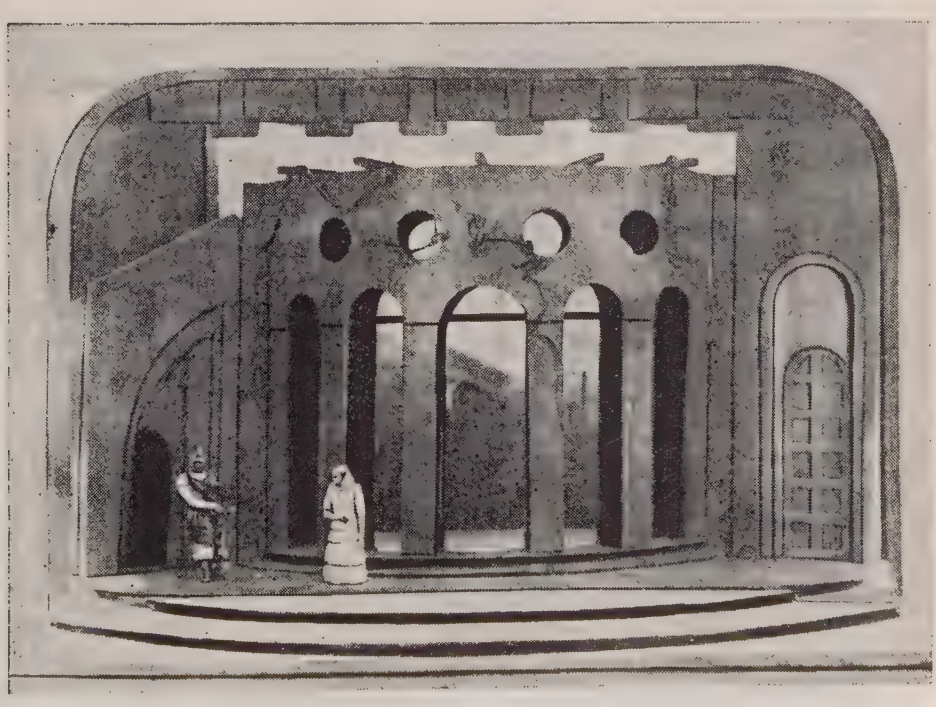
New editions of Shakespeare's works are being constantly issued by Soviet publishing houses. The

"Twelfth Night" at the City Theater of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, an important textile center near Moscow

"The Merry Wives of Windsor" at the Red Army Theater, Tashkent, capital of Soviet Uzbekistan

A. Smironidze as Toby, "Twelfth Night" at the Mardjanishvili Theater (Tbilisi)

A scene from "The Taming of the Shrew" as performed by the amateur dramatic circle at the Moscow plant Caouchouc



"Macbeth," at the Azerbaijan State Dramatic Theater

Illustration to "King Richard the Third" by F. Konstantinov

most recent are a two-volume and a one-volume edition of selected works, separate editions of *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet* and other plays, a complete four-volume edition in English, and selected works for young people. Besides, four volumes of an eight-volume edition of the complete works have already appeared. All these, however, by no means satisfy the readers' demands, any more than a spoonful of water satisfies a thirsty man. The best of our translators are working on new translations of Shakespeare and around these there is continual discussion, the purpose of which is to ensure a maximum of perfection in the rendition of Shakespeare into the Russian.

Only recently one of our best known translators, M. Lozinsky, who rendered *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night* and other Shakespearean plays into the Russian, was awarded by the Soviet Government.

I have intentionally said nothing of the work done by the Soviet Shakespearean scholars. But that does not mean that Soviet literary research can account for no achievements in this field. We have the extremely valuable and interesting studies by A. Lunacharsky, I. Aksenov and several other Russian critics. Still, I should like to emphasize that the most valuable contribution made by the U.S.S.R. to the interpretation of the immortal dramatist is the presentation of his characters on the stage, and this is the fruit of the labors of Soviet producers and actors.

We are printing in this issue an article by S. Radlov, who describes in detail how he came to take up the production of Shakespeare's plays and his experiences in staging his tragedies. Radlov's experience is typical; the success of most Soviet productions of Shakespeare is the result of long and serious research on the Elizabethan era, much contemplation of the Shakespeare texts, and study of all the best that has been written on him in the course of three and a half centuries.

In Shakespeare we see, above all, a great son of the English people. Here in the Soviet Union people are far from indulging in those futile, erudite discussions, so popular in the West, as to whether Shakespeare was really Shakespeare or not. Maxim Gorky repeatedly emphasised that many of the greatest creators of cultural values were men of the people. We accept this as an axiom. "The greatest playwright in the world, Shakespeare," wrote Gorky in his article "On how I learned to write," "was a plain actor, as was the great Molière." A man of the people as was Gorky himself, I might add. We understand perfectly the class significance of the theories, the authors of which claim that either Bacon or Rutland or some other English aristocrat is really

Shakespeare, and scorn the very possibility that such works of genius may have come from the pen of a mediocre actor, a son of a yeoman.

The efforts of the ruling classes of the capitalist world to claim Shakespeare as their own and place him entirely at the service of their interests are quite comprehensible and can be fully accounted for. But all this is of no more use than the recent attempt to justify the Munich agreement by a reference to some passage in *King Henry the Fourth*. It is, of course, possible to turn a quotation to the advantage of those who carried on these negotiations, but as soon as we consider the meaning of the entire scene from which it was drawn, we can see Shakespeare rise against those who treat him so unceremoniously. Therein lies the meaning of the recent protest reported in British newspapers by admirers of Shakespeare, who were roused to indignation by Chamberlain's attempt to quote Shakespeare's words in an attempt to justify his visit to Hitler.

Tens of thousands of books have been written on Shakespeare. While working on the production of his plays, a thorough study of his creative development has been made by Soviet producers, actors, critics, and those engaged in literary research. They are anxious to penetrate as far as possible into his thoughts and ideas, therefore they read practically everything that has been written on him for the last hundred years. It is not that we feel any undue reverence for the works of bourgeois scholars on Shakespeare. We are well aware that hardly ten in a hundred of these books are worthy of attention. We have not forgotten Marx's scathing comment on one of the quasi-Shakespeare "scholars" of that time. "Karl Blint," he wrote in a letter to Engels on April 19, 1864, "that louse with water on the brain, has joined the Shakespeare Committee; why, he hasn't got the remotest idea of Shakespeare!" It is easy to understand the indignation of one of the greatest men in the history of mankind, in whose home there reigned a tradition of Shakespeare worship. Scattered about in Marx's works are many brilliant comments on the poet, some of his plays, and his art in general. These remarks by Marx and those by his friend and comrade-in-arms Engels, are often more helpful to us in gaining an understanding of Shakespeare than the ponderous works of so-called scholars of Shakespeare. I should like to quote a little-known remark of Engels': "Blanqui's revolutionary instinct and ability to come to quick decisions is not given to everyone," he wrote in an article on *The Literature of the Emigration*, "whereas no matter how much Hamlet talked of energy, he still remained Hamlet." It is interesting to note that Stalin has expressed a similar idea in an article in which he points out the contrast between our revo-

"King Henry the Fourth," Part I, illustration by F. Konstantinov

lutionary determination and the spirit of "Hamlet-like doubts."

Confronted with the task of presenting *Hamlet* on our stage, we cannot neglect these profound observations. Soviet producers are very far from perpetrating those gross falsifications of Shakespeare, which so frequently take place in the West. Here it would be impossible to find a production of *Hamlet* such as was staged two or three years ago in Denmark by a pastor, Kay Munck. The said pastor turned the Prince into a fascist *Fuehrer*, all the characters were dressed in modern clothes and danced the tango at a ball given by the king.

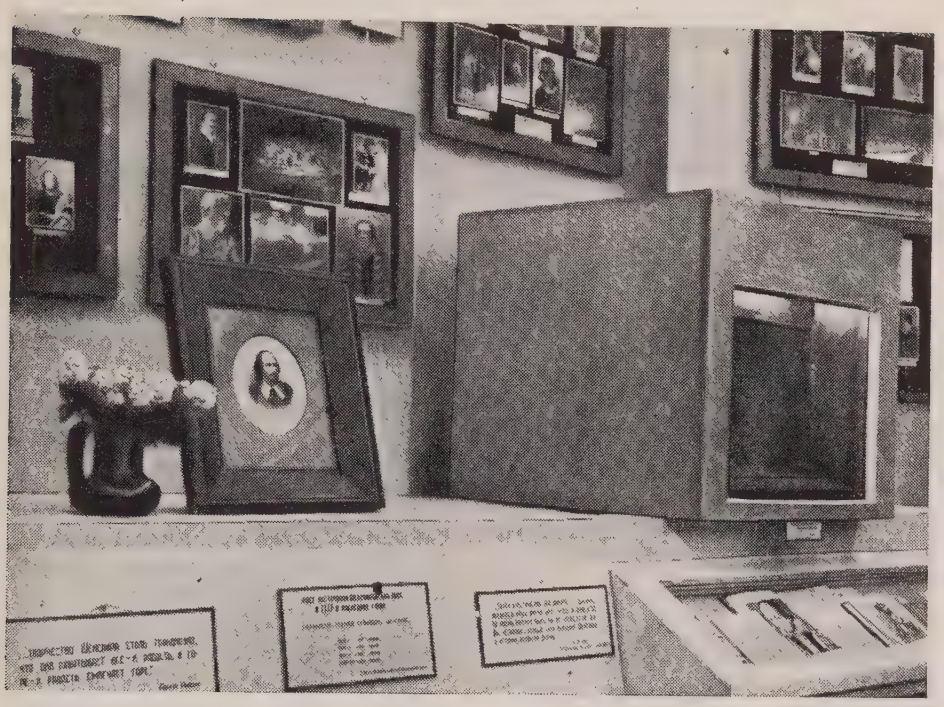
There was a time when, as Turgenev pointed out in his speech, Shakespeare reigned supreme on the stages of all the German theaters. But those days are gone now. Goebbels has forbidden the performance of *The Merchant of Venice*. Other plays have fallen under the ban, among them *King Richard the Third*, for the reason that the audience loudly applauded Scrivener's monologue against a regime established by a dictator, a regime under which people are afraid to utter their thoughts aloud.

Shakespeare's plays reign supreme on the Soviet stage. The tragedies, particularly *Hamlet*, are staged by our best producers, who compete with each other in striving for a deeper revelation of the philosophy of the Danish prince.

The best representatives of Russian literature and culture, from Pushkin to Gorky, have taught our people to value Shakespeare and love him. Pushkin referred to him as "the father of our theater," "the veritable genius of the tragedy," and stressed "that our theater falls in with the laws of Shakespearean plays." Concluding his article "On Plays," Maxim Gorky urged "to learn the art of writing a play from the old unsurpassed masters of this literary form, above all from Shakespeare." To this end, by the way, is devoted the activity of the Shakespeare research bureau of the Theater Society.

It would be wrong to neglect here to point out a number of major mistakes in some of the Soviet productions of Shakespeare. Our critics have drawn attention and objected to the liberties taken with the text in *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Red Army Theater, to the unnecessary and entirely unfounded stress placed on Hamlet's Catholicism at the Gorky Dramatic Theater, and so on. There is no doubt that drawbacks and sometimes even serious mistakes occurred, but they were subjected to severe criticism and corrected at once. The best of our productions, such as *King Lear* at the Jewish State Theater, *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Vakhtangov and *Othello* at the Maly and at the Rust'hveli Theater in Tbilisi, may, without exaggeration, be included among the world's best productions of Shakespeare. This, at least, is the opinion of such authorities as Gordon Craig, Huntley Carter, Paul Gzell and others.

Gordon Craig admits that it was with certain misgivings and prejudices that he attended the performance of *King Lear* at the Jewish Theater. But these rapidly disappeared under the spell of the art of the producer and actors. "I had never seen a Shakespeare like this on the stage. For the first time, in your theater, have I seen the real Shakespeare," he said to the cast and to Michoels, who plays the leading role. Huntley Carter expressed a similar opinion regarding *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Vakhtangov Theater. I am unable to quote here the exact words, in which he expressed the difference between the position of things with respect to the Shakespearean heri-



A corner of the Shakespeare exhibition at the Moscow Theatrical Museum

tage in England and in the U.S.S.R. Shakespeare, he said, is not popular in England. "For over thirty years efforts have been made to awaken interest in the great English poet and dramatist, but without success. . . . Quite another state of affairs exists in the U.S.S.R. I shall never forget the packed house, the animated faces. These convinced me of the enormous popularity of the English poet in the U.S.S.R." Carter's is not an isolated opinion; it is shared by many who attended the theater festivals held in Moscow. Simultaneously, a recent article in *Time and Tide* asserted that the time had evidently arrived in England for Shakespeare's public death.

One would like to believe that the three hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth would see a quickening of interest in the poet in the country he has made renowned. As for the U.S.S.R., our public needs no special jubilee celebrations to increase its esteem for Shakespeare. He is one of the writers most widely read and best loved in our country. His plays are performed to full houses, and are so popular that people queue up to book tickets for them. Our people love him for his great simplicity, for the inimitable magic power of his poetry, for the philosophic wisdom of his works, for the bold, militant spirit of his creative genius. The patriotism of some of his plays is close and comprehensible to our people. We whose love for our Socialist homeland is boundless, we who are, as Lenin pointed out years ago, imbued with a sense of national pride, we feel a strong sympathy with the patriotic mood of the poet who wrote of his country the following line uttered by John of Gaunt:

This precious stone set in the silver sea.

For us Shakespeare is first and foremost a people's poet. Soviet

Shakespearean scholars and theatrical critics have long abandoned the vulgar sociological theories of V. Frieche, who held that Shakespeare came from the feudal aristocracy, or A. Smirnov, who regarded him as a representative of the English bourgeoisie.

Guided in the study of his works by Marxist principles of class struggle, we can see plainly that—as his plays, particularly *King Lear*, prove beyond any doubt—he is the defender of the interests not of a special class, but of the whole of suffering humanity.

It is this conception of Shakespeare that serves as a basis for our interpretation of his characters on the Soviet stage.

To us, who have fought for ideas of humanism, the humanism of Shakespeare, to whom man was the most precious thing in the world, is something very near and very easy to understand. But Shakespeare's humanism has nothing in common with what has been called the "bleating" variety of bourgeois pacifism prevalent today. He was a militant writer of the Renaissance: his weapons were kept in readiness, turned against manifestations of evil, violence and injustice. We find ourselves in complete agreement with the poet who, in *King Henry the Fifth*, shows us as just retribution the execution of the men who betrayed their country.

It would be as fruitless to attempt to enumerate all the qualities for which the Soviet people love Shakespeare, as to attempt to describe the beauty, the charm and wonder of the ocean. Goethe once remarked that Shakespeare is immeasurable as the ocean. And the affection for him felt by his Soviet friends and admirers is boundless, too. In our country, Shakespeare's fame is growing day by day, and the growing will never cease.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

„King Henry the Fourth," Part II, illustration by F. Konstantinov

IVAN TURGENEV

A Speech About Shakespeare

Three hundred years ago today, on April 23, 1564—the year that Calvin died and Galileo was born—a little town in the English Midlands was the scene of the birth of a child whose then obscure name, entered in the register of the parish church, has long since become one of the greatest and most glorious of names—William Shakespeare. He was born at the zenith of the sixteenth century, an age justly regarded as well-nigh the most remarkable in the history of European development, an age abounding in great men and events, the age of Luther and Bacon, Raphael and Copernicus, Cervantes and Michelangelo, of Elizabeth and Henry IV. That year, the year we Russians are now commemorating with due solemnity, the youthful but already cruel tsar, Ivan the Terrible, sat on the throne of Russia or, as it was then called, Moscovy, and the ignominy and executions that foreshadowed the Novgorod massacres had already begun. Yet, as if to mark the birth of the great poet in 1564, the first printing press was inaugurated in Moscow that very year. The horrors of the time were not peculiar to Russia alone; eight years after Shakespeare's birth, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in Paris. The Middle Ages still cast their gloomy shadow over Europe, but the dawn of a new era was breaking, and the poet who was then ushered into the world was to be one of the greatest representatives of the new principles that have persisted ever since, destined to recreate the entire social system along the principles of humanism, compassion, liberty.

It is for the first time now that we Russians are celebrating Shakespeare's anniversary; but the other peoples of Europe cannot exactly crow over us here. The first centenary of Shakespeare's birth passed unnoticed even in his native land. England was just then emerging from under the rule of the Republicans and Puritans, who regarded drama as dissolute, and forbade the staging of plays. Even the Restoration theater of the time of Charles II had nothing in common with the pure spirit of Shakespeare and proved unworthy of him. Only by 1764, two hundred years after his birth, did England get to know her great poet and take pride in him. In Germany, Lessing drew his countrymen's attention to Shakespeare, Wieland translated him, and the young Goethe, the future author of *Götz von Berlichingen*, read his works with reverence. Still his fame had not yet reached the masses; it had extended no further than a section of the educated and literary circles. In England, where for almost a century no new edition of Shakespeare's works had appeared, Garrick, wishing to celebrate the anniversary by performing one of his plays, did not hestitate to give a version of *Othello* "adapted" for the stage, with another denouement tacked on. In France Shakespeare was known to scarcely anyone except Voltaire, who, to boot, called him a barbarian. Need we speak of Shakespeare in Russia? The reign of Catherine was just beginning and Sumarokov was acclaimed as our greatest tragedian. . . .

Another hundred years have passed and what do we see? It may be said without exaggeration that this anniversary is being celebrated in all parts of the world. Shakespeare's name is uttered with affection and

"Macbeth," illustration by B. Kravtsov

gratitude all over Europe, as well as in distant corners of America, Australia, South Africa, in the depths of Siberian forests, on the banks of the sacred rivers of Hindostan. His name is heard in mansions and humble dwellings, in the spacious halls of the wealthy and the crowded rooms of working men, among those who stay at home and those who travel in distant lands, in the soldier's tent and the trader's hut, on land and sea, among old and young; it is uttered by the lonely and by those surrounded by their families; by the happy, to whom it brings joy, and the miserable, to whom it affords solace.

Shakespeare has conquered the world, and his triumph is more lasting than all the conquests of Napoleon and the Caesars. Like an incoming tide, each day brings him new subjects, and each day these human waves reach further and further. No other figure has grown to such proportions as Shakespeare has in the course of the last hundred years, and the growth will never cease. How many editions of his works, translations in how many languages, have been published, how many artists, painters, sculptors and musicians have been inspired by him and have endeavored to give form to his characters—all in the course of the last hundred years? And how many of them are yet to come? How many future generations, how many peoples scarcely known as yet, how many dialects scarcely articulate as yet, will join in honoring his memory? We are celebrating his three hundredth anniversary, but we can already predict the thousandth. Yes, like his only rival, Homer, the greatest poet of the ancient world, whose name, honored for three thousand years, is still radiant with immortal youth and unfading power, the greatest poet of the modern world was born for eternity—and in eternity will he remain!

We, Russians, honor the memory of Shakespeare, and we have the right to do so. For us he is not merely a great name, to which we do homage at rare intervals, and from afar; he has become our heritage, too, one of our own flesh and blood. Go to the theater when one of his plays is being performed (and we may remark in passing that only in Germany and Russia are they never absent from the repertoire), go to the theater and take a look at the audience: see their faces, listen to their remarks, and you will be convinced that here before your eyes is a close and living communion between the poet and his audience, that to each of those present the characters of the play are dear and familiar, that clear and intimate are the words of truth and wisdom poured out from the treasure-house of Shakespeare's all-comprehending soul. Is not, then, the character of Hamlet nearer and more comprehensible to us that to the French? I would go even further and say—than to the English? Is not this character in our minds for ever associated with the greatest of Russian actors—an actor peculiarly Russian—Mochalov? Do we not welcome with particular sympathy every fresh attempt

to express Shakespeare's creations in our own tongue? And lastly, may not a special intimacy and tie exist between this most ruthless and, like old Lear, all-forgiving student of the human heart, a poet who has probed deeper than any other into the secrets of life, and a people whose distinguishing characteristic until now has been an almost unparalleled desire for self-knowledge, an unwearying study of itself; a people as unsparing towards its own failings as it is forgiving toward those of others; a people that fearlessly exposes its failings to the light of day, just as Shakespeare fearlessly exposes the darker side of the soul to the light of poetic truth, the light that at once illuminates and purifies.

Shall we speak now of Shakespeare himself? Shall we attempt, in a rapid and necessarily brief survey, an evaluation of his genius? This is hardly possible and is hardly necessary, the more so since he is about to speak to you himself. Like Nature, Shakespeare is accessible to all, and like Nature, each must study him for himself. Like Nature, he is at once simple and complex, plain to be seen as the palm of your hand, yet unfathomably deep, freedom-loving to the extent of flinging off all fetters, yet full of an inner harmony and obedient to that inflexible law, that logical necessity, which is the basis of all living things. Therefore we shall confine ourselves to quoting his own words regarding Brutus, perhaps the purest of all his creations:

. . . Nature might stand up,
And say to all the world, "This
was a man!"

Shakespeare found no stronger word by which he might show honor to vanquished virtue. Let this same word be our highest tribute to the genius we are honoring.

1864

Producing Shakespeare

On the Soviet stage Shakespeare has become a ruling favorite in recent years: our audiences love him as a friend and teacher, he is regarded as teacher and friend by our actors. What Soviet actor, indeed, if he has even once known the joy of interpreting one of Shakespeare's great characters, would be willing to forego that joy and give up his right to develop and refine his art by appearing in Shakespearean plays? For, interpreting Shakespeare, he learns to interpret the characters created by modern dramatists, with greater feeling, confidence and perfection.

I think it dangerous and harmful, and essentially hypocritical, either to set too high and boastful an estimate on our successes, particularly in Shakespearean productions, or to hypocritically minimize our efforts, as if we had achieved nothing in this field.

We are justified, it seems to me, in asserting that our experience, although a great deal is still left to do, in producing Shakespeare on the Soviet stage can already be summed up and taken into account. What our actors have done in interpreting Shakespearean roles and our regisseurs in producing his plays already constitutes a new tradition, our own tradition. It embraces such

S. Michoels of the State Jewish Theater as King Lear

fine presentations of comedies as *Much Ado About Nothing* at the Vakhtangov Theater and *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Central Theater of the Red Army, such classic interpretations of great Shakespearean roles as S. Michoels' Lear and A. Ostuzhev's Othello.

And if I am now speaking of our experience and our new tradition, this by no means signifies that I should want to regard them as in any way canonical, established forever; on the contrary, it seems to me worthwhile to analyze what we have done in order to make further progress.

How should a regisseur go about a production of a Shakespearean play? What facts, what knowledge should he be equipped with for this work? Is there a special science to be mastered before undertaking a Shakespearean production, and, if so, what is it?

First and foremost there is that simple little matter called talent. Michoels frequently quotes a wise saying of Sholem Aleichem's: "Talent is just like money: either you have it or you don't." The talent of a regisseur is demonstrated above all in his ability to read Shakespeare and hearken to him, that is, to understand him as a great, all-knowing interpreter of human nature.

Shakespeare's faculty for revealing men and the innermost secret springs of their actions; his profound knowledge of how just such a person with just such a character must act in any given circumstance; his unerring, brilliant imagination, which leads him to solve problems in the most unexpected way and makes his heroes act in most unlikely fashion, as it seems at first sight, but really in the only way possible for them—this, indeed, is what we prize most in Shakespeare, what is most precious and amazing to us; this is what fascinates us and makes him a captivating and indispensable author. One must learn to understand the content and the style of Shakespeare's plays.

On a dark, frosty night, the ghost of Hamlet's father appears to him out of the blizzard. The secret revealed by the apparition is the most horrible that could be told to a loving, warm-hearted and intelligent son. But what does the frenzied Hamlet do? Take his own life? Or with drawn sword fling himself on his father's murderer? No, with a convulsive, fitful gesture, he takes out his notebook and writes down that "one may smile, and smile, and be a villain." What could be more eccentric, more unexpected and truer to the character of the melancholy prince, the humanist and student? Othello sees his sacred gift—his mother's handkerchief—in the hands of the jade who has thrown herself at Cassio, that handsome young dandy. Desdemona's infidelity is apparently proved. There can be no more doubt.

But does Othello rush to kill his unfaithful wife? No! He is filled with pity for Desdemona. He sheds outraged tears to think that this lovely woman has bestowed her love on so miserable a man. This unexpected turn of affairs is incomprehensible to Iago, who for all his cleverness is limited by his malice. But Shakespeare knows very well that the "great heart" of the brave Othello can beat thus and only thus.

Thus, above all, one must have ears, eyes, a heart and a head. One must see, feel and imagine the real life of Shakespeare's people. And in order to achieve this, one must come face to face with Shakespeare himself; one must approach him and his works without any preconceived schemes, theories or formulas.

So it is necessary first of all to learn from Shakespeare himself, not from literature about Shakespeare; to try and learn what Shakespeare thought, and not what others thought of him. One must start with Shakespeare and find the way to him.

Shakespeare wrote for his time, his contemporaries, his England, and what he wrote will live forever. Therefore, in order to understand Shakespeare as truly as possible, one must know the epoch of which he was a son; one must picture to oneself the life, the interests and the main currents of thought of his native country in those years. Can one think of Pushkin's childhood and forget Napoleon's invasion in 1812? Can one understand the significance of sea battles and the destruction of squadrons in Shakespeare's tragedies, unless one remembers the great Spanish Armada, which, when Shakespeare was twenty-four, threatened to devastate and subjugate his country? Could anyone create a Lady Macbeth and never once think of those great and ambitious women of the sixteenth century, Catherine de Medici, Mary Stuart and Elizabeth Tudor? The ardor and recklessness of the first, the passion and vengefulness of the second, the splendid mind, refined by learning and politics, of the third—can anyone maintain that these great, remarkable women in no way influenced the creator of Cleopatra and Lady Macbeth?

Knowledge of the life and times of Shakespearean England will often help the regisseur avoid mistakes in his interpretation, the kind of mistakes which arise from misunderstanding or from ignorance of some chance fact. This knowledge will thus help in getting at the ideological content of Shakespeare's dramas. A certain familiarity with the life and social position of English actors, for instance, and with the patronage accorded them by advanced people of the day, has helped me to find the correct note in the scene of Hamlet's meeting with the actors, where he demonstrates as much affection, consideration and delight with them as Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern show scorn and rudeness. Sometimes our regisseurs are tempted to depict Friar Laurence, the priest and "servant of a cult" in *Romeo and Juliet*, as an absolutely negative, sly and cowardly person. Shakespeare, however, wrote this play at a period when all England was still rejoicing at the destruction of the Armada, and English patriots were filled with gratitude to the wise and courageous Elizabeth. At that time the state church, the Church of England, supported Elizabeth in her course of crushing the remnants of feudalism and destroying the hated regime of Bloody Mary, the Catholic. On the other hand, all Englishmen remembered how, in the dark years of Mary's reign, the Protestant clergy—men of culture, education and personal courage—were burned at the stake. Would it not be more

natural to suppose that Shakespeare wished to clothe such a conscientious, solicitous and sensitive man in the cassock of Friar Laurence, philosopher and naturalist? Such an interpretation is perhaps closer to the truth; at any rate it is far from groundless.

The necessity of showing the ghost of Hamlet's father upon the stage may cause regisseurs a great deal of needless bother and difficulty. One cannot disregard the fact that Hamlet unquestionably is ready to believe in the reality of the apparition; he is convinced that he has seen his father, returned from the other world, or else a devil who has tempted him by assuming his father's guise. Here a simple inquiry into the facts simplifies and solves the problem for us; widespread "scientific" opinion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries held that the appearance of ghosts was an undoubted and objective fact.

And for a last example (although they could be cited endlessly), why is Desdemona so captivated by Othello's tales of his travels? Because the great heroes of Shakespeare's day were seafarers, men who had sailed round the world and discovered new lands, just as in the Soviet Union today, people honor the heroic flyers, for instance, who set new world records. It is difficult to comprehend and feel the vigorous salt breeze in Othello's stories unless one remembers Sir Francis Drake and his squadron. Knowledge and understanding of the epoch may help us get the feel of it, and that is most important of all. And only then, when we have gotten the feeling of Shakespeare's epoch, can we plunge into the endless literature on Shakespeare of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ready to reject all that is alien and useless, and absorb all the useful remarks and observations.

As I have said, we must above all believe Shakespeare the poet, the legitimate creator of his vigorous and hearty personages. But this is not enough. We shall find it very worthwhile, I would even say essential, to trust Shakespeare not only as a bard and poet, but also as an actor and producer, a man of the theater and a stage expert.

The notorious theories attributing Shakespeare's works to anyone except Shakespeare himself—theories actually based on social scorn and a snobbery which cannot entertain the thought that these great works were written by a "miserable" professional actor—these theories do their greatest harm when they seek to exclude the author of the plays from the atmosphere of the theater itself. And yet of all great poets who have ever written for the stage, Shakespeare is undoubtedly the most professional showman. Attentive and thoughtful perusal of his plays is enough to give a clear understanding of the substance, the underlying ideas of those conceptions of his which relate purely to staging. An attempt to understand how Shakespeare directed and produced his plays does by no means signify that we should try to imitate his methods. It is a universally known fact that, except for the amazing splendor of the players' costumes, the technique of his theater was miserably poor (I am not speaking now of the exclusive court performances). Everyone knows that the inevitable stage direction about clearing away the bodies of the slain was inspired by the lack of a curtain. It is clear, too, that Shakespearean audiences were not pampered by luxurious films costing fabulous sums, which thousands see today for a comparatively small admission price. To maintain the external stage effects of the Shakespearean play would be to waste time with an empty, emasculated

and useless stylization, which in no way satisfies the audience of today. The point at issue is not stage effects but inner principles of staging.

I myself have spent many hours, perhaps too many, in reconstructions of Shakespearean theaters, study of old illustrations and theoretical attempts to allocate the action of his plays to the three sections of the stage in the open theater of those days. In 1921 I produced *The Merry Wives of Windsor* on the stage of a hall in the People's House in Leningrad, which is surprisingly similar in construction to English theaters of Shakespeare's times. Is it any wonder that this was one of my worst Shakespearean productions!

Nevertheless I feel that this work of reconstruction was not altogether valueless to me: it helped me gain a close and accurate conception of the scenic principles, rhythm and logic of the Shakespearean play. I must say that the more I have to do with Shakespeare, the more clearly I realize how precious and intimate is his knowledge of the most essential thing of all—the essence and technique of the actor's art. By way of an example, let me dwell on but one question. Many problems face the actor who dares to portray a leading Shakespearean character. They include problems of convincingness, sincerity, complicated relationships with those who play opposite him, in general, the creation of a rounded, full-blooded person. Besides, there arises a special problem of technique, which often decides the fate of the production, the question of the husbanding and proper expenditure of the actor's physical strength.

It is insufficient to understand Hamlet or Othello, insufficient even to feel these roles; one must be in condition, must have the muscular and vocal power to convey his conception to the audience from the

A. Ostuzhev of the Moscow Maly Theater as Othello

first act to the last. I use the term act in full awareness that it had no real significance in the Shakespearean production, since there were no intermissions. But I use the word as a convenient designation, to which we are accustomed, for the division of a Shakespearean tragedy into five approximately equal parts. And here are my observations (you may find as many exceptions as you like, of course, but they will hardly confute the general conclusion).

Shakespeare, it appears, divided the work of the actor as follows: great tension in the first act or part; something of a rest and slackened tension in the second; a tremendous flight of emotion in the third act; *almost complete rest* in the fourth, in preparation for the play's final and decisive strokes in the fifth act. It is precisely before Act V, with the strain on its denouement, and after the fatigue and strain for the actor of the first three acts, that

he is given a period of long and profound rest.

Thus Romeo does not appear at all in Act IV, so that he may open Act V with the scene at Mantua (incidentally, this act makes no demands at all on Juliet's physical strength). Or Lear, who has fallen asleep after his mad night in the storm, enters decked with flowers (or awakes in the tent if we are to take it that the meeting with the blinded Gloucester is a later insertion by Shakespeare himself), only after the greater part of the fourth act has been devoted to Gloucester's blinding and to the intrigues of Edmund with the two evil sisters. So in *Othello* the splendid half-comic scene between the two women, with its song of the willow, gives the actor who is playing the title role opportunity to rest before the terrible last act. Thus Hamlet, after the powerful scenes of the "mouse trap," and the interview with his mother, rests physically and emotionally almost till the fight with Laertes in the grave. For Shakespeare, concerned for his Hamlet after the fatigue of the loftily-pitched third act, created the wonderful mad scene for Ophelia with her four rambling little songs.

True, the question may be asked, why should we bother so much to take account of this, why go into such details, when Shakespeare himself has thought it out for us and done everything necessary?

My answer is that when we understand this inner law, when we understand how solicitous Shakespeare was for the breathing, physical condition and voice of the actor, we may conclude from the given example that all these central roles are so written as to take into account the necessary alternation of rising and slackened tension; that this wave-like rise and fall in the force and intensity of passion are characteristic for the playwright in all his leading roles. Proceeding from the conviction that such "safety islands," such rest periods must occur within the role, we shall find it easier to correctly understand and interpret the part throughout the play; easier to understand why not a single leading part in Shakespeare can be played throughout "in high C," like an unbroken shriek of frenzy and excitement. Putting our trust in Shakespeare as actor and regisseur, we shall the more easily find the clue to a correct arrangement, the more easily find a correct interpretation of his central roles and a correct staging of his plays as a whole.

From research into the history of the Elizabethan theater we know that its stage sets were always and unmistakably "conventional." It was quite impossible for a regisseur of Elizabeth's day to create much of an illusion of the scene in which the action took place; and because this was quite impossible, playwrights were in no way hampered by extraneous considerations and would transfer the action from forest to town, from town to seashore or the deck of a ship, with absolute freedom, with epic freedom, I should say. Shakespeare's predecessors were even more given to such practice than he himself.

It is perhaps quite idle for us to try to ascertain what was the relationship of cause and effect in this respect; that is, did the backward stage technique influence the esthetic standards of playwrights in Shakespeare's day, and therefore they were not impelled to copy life slavishly; or did they make no effort to perfect their stage because they felt no need for such copying? One thing, at any rate, may be accepted without the slightest doubt: Shakespeare is as profound a realist as he is a bitter foe of naturalism. I use these terms of course in our

modern, current sense. In other words, it is our right and duty to absolutely trust Shakespeare's knowledge of the human heart and mind, his revelation of the innermost springs of human psychology and actions, but we shall be utterly confused and risk losing respect for the great dramatist if we expect from him precise calculations and precise logic in assigning minor details of environment and action. Scholars have written dozens and hundreds of useless pages in arguing how much time passes from the first appearance of the ghost in *Hamlet* to the "mouse trap" scene: essentially this is indeterminate and impossible to prove.

What is even more surprising, Shakespeare is careless and unwasy where modern writers would never permit themselves to do so. And conscientious playwrighttoday could fill out a rather complete questionnaire about the heroes of his piece. But Shakespeare would have failed in such a test. Even as regards the age of his *dramatis personae*, he is far from impeccable; but this does not prevent him from answering for every word, every gesture, every breath of the people he has created. To all appearances, Hamlet in the first four acts is a young prince, but from his conversation with the grave diggers we unexpectedly learn that he is at least thirty. We risk becoming utterly confused if we try to determine the age of Juliet's nurse or her mother. What conclusion should we draw from such considerations? First and foremost: Shakespeare's truth is always truth in the essential, the most important, and along with it there is a disregard for the precise fixing of minor inconsequential details.

From these considerations, it seems to me, one may deduce a basic principle for the stage designer in mounting a Shakespearean play.

It would be quite inept and altogether false to undertake the sets for a Shakespearean play with the same scrupulous and naturalistic attention to detail as would be natural, say, in staging certain plays dealing purely with manners and customs.

"Hamlet" at the Radlov Theater in Leningrad

It seems to me that the essence of Shakespeare's tragedies suggests the following conclusion as well: realistic sets, expressive and colorful in their artistic power and their creation of the appropriate atmosphere, will alternate according to the dramatic content of the scenes with more abstract, almost completely neutral sets. We encounter the same need for a free hand in our creations when we try to solve the problems of the time and country of the action of Shakespeare's tragedies. It is common knowledge that the bells of Christian churches could not have rung in pagan England of King Lear's reign; that the historical accuracy of the chronicle plays is quite limited; and we learn far

more about Elizabethan England from Shakespeare's plays than about the epochs they are supposed to portray. The obvious geographical lapses in his plays have been pointed out hundreds of times, and we have absolutely no ground to suppose that Shakespeare ever crossed the Channel. What is one to do about such plays as *Othello* or *Romeo and Juliet?* After all, where does the action take place, in England or in Italy? I think we are entitled to claim that both countries are portrayed here simultaneously, that is, we need the one and the other country to the *proper extent*. There are scenes and characters which Shakespeare has built up altogether on what he saw, heard and drew from his English environment. But there are scenes, characters and events which were born in his mind from tales of Italy, born as his conception of Italy, scenes in which Italian characteristics are more essential and important than English. Consequently, the artist who is creating sets and costumes for such plays has a wider, an unrestricted task—to express the spirit of the Italian and English Renaissance by a free, creative combination of elements taken from different countries over a comparatively long period.

It would be quite fruitlessly pedantic for a stage designer to attempt a restoration of some definite historical period at some definite geographical point for the action of the play we are to produce.

But Shakespeare is not only the producer of his own plays; he is also like an orchestral conductor of great genius. The alternation of tempestuous scenes with quiet and lyrical passages, the succession of tragedy and comedy, the contrast of joy and sorrow—he has an inimitable and marvelously perfect mastery of all these effects for the symphonic progression of the play. And since he is a brilliant conductor, that is a master of rhythm and tempo, we must leave the solution of these questions to him. Where he presents a monologue twenty lines in length (that is, about two hundred and ten syllables of iambic pentameter), one must not arbitrarily lengthen this bit of scene by drawing it out to thirty or thirty-five lines.

What would we say of a conductor who arbitrarily slowed a movement of a symphony by one third?

Shakespeare's language is not only great poetry. It is in itself marvelous theater; it is boundlessly rich and varied both as poetry and as lines to be spoken on the stage. Its utter, almost childish, tenderness; its grand metaphor erupted by volcanic passions; the brilliant coarseness that delighted Engels; the resourceful transitions from verse to prose, from blank verse to rhyme—this is what makes Shakespeare's poetry alike to a mighty sea, now storm-tossed and foaming, now still as glass.

We have already spoken of the fact that Shakespeare, a great realist, was in no way naturalistic. This is why his heroes, the people he shows us in rare moments of their lives, moments of passionate, stormy flights of emotion, cannot employ the ordinary, everyday, philistine speech. Passionately seething thought creates rich metaphors; metaphors born of passion require verse. So Shakespeare knows, loves, feels and values form; this is why he is always ready to stress that lofty passion expresses itself through verse; and he stresses it by suddenly substituting the language of verse by prose, in an abrupt and deliberate fashion so the audience cannot help noticing it. This is why he emphasizes the end of a scene, the end of a monologue, by introducing a rhymed couplet, the last lines summing up a passage.

and making the transition to a new thought. Besides, rhyme usually serves Shakespeare as a means of deliberate and conscious characterization of people and situations.

I hope that in these pages I have succeeded in summarizing briefly the experience gained from my work on Shakespearean plays.

I fully realize that I have failed to say a single word about what is most important. And that undoubtedly is the ability to discover the profound ideas which Shakespeare's great plays contain. How can one learn this art, learn to discover all the depth of his ideas? In the same way that we comprehend the significance of our daily life, with all that is in us, our mind and heart. Art is art just because the most important thing in it cannot be learned. Either it is in us and in such case we will fathom that which is most important in Shakespeare, or we are without this perception and then ought to change our profession.

But aside from our conscious and subconscious awareness of the most important and innermost motives that govern the actions of Shakespearean characters, there exists Shakespeare's profound philosophical thought. To deny or disregard this is to impoverish Shakespeare.

Of course, the best Shakespearean production, like every other good production, is one where the spectator continues and complements our creative work, becomes creative himself. But in order not to deprive him of the opportunity to do so, the ideological direction of the play must be true to the author's conception. This is the first and the most essential condition. We are helped not to stray and become confused as to Shakespeare's ideas and intentions by the conviction that Shakespeare never was an impartial observer of life. He is ever the fighter, championing with all the force of his art mankind's loftiest thoughts and emotions. He cannot regard people and their actions from a speculative, conciliatory and neutral standpoint. He is always animated by hate or love for the people born of his imagination. If we realize clearly and distinctly whom Shakespeare is for and whom he is against, whom he loves and whom he hates, we shall find it easy to get at the basic idea of his tragedies. Only set correctly the sails of your little boat and the wind of Shakespeare's poetry will catch you up and carry you out to the open sea.

Let me add some practical conclusions from my work on Shakespeare. My pupils, actors of the theater I direct, came in contact with Shakespeare almost at the beginning of their stage career. Thus he became, as it were, their constant friend, teacher and mentor. *Romeo and Juliet, Othello, Hamlet* were the occasions for our first three meetings with the great dramatist. It has turned out, moreover, that the nature of Shakespearean plays and the cultural standards of our audiences are such that these productions refuse to die and leave our stage. The sets and costumes grow threadbare long before the interest of our spectators in Shakespeare is exhausted. That is why, in my present work on *Romeo and Juliet*, I am repeating an experiment I once made with *Othello;* taking advantage of the necessity of renewing the sets and costumes, I am reviewing the whole production from beginning to end, seeking new and better ways to solve the scenic problems of the play and, together with the actors, I am searching for new, more profound, more lyrical and more sincere notes in the interpretation of the roles. We are deliberately changing the properties, I am deliberately

destroying most of the old *mises-en-scène* so that the same lines shall have a new ring, so that the actors who have developed and increased their mastery may have an opportunity to test their skill, to climb yet a little higher, to add another inch or two to their stature and so come still closer to the ideal of Shakespearean interpretation; that ideal which, doubtless, none of us will ever attain, for the treasures of Shakespeare offer ever new opportunities for perfection. The actor who has played Romeo, Desdemona or Emilio a hundred or two hundred times, finds a special pleasure and chance for further growth in an attempt to forget it all and approach these roles as if he had never acted them.

"*On revient toujours à son premier amour,*" says the French proverb. For us to return to our first love, Shakespeare, is always a great holiday.

SERGEI RADLOV

"Anthony and Cleopatra", illustration by F. Konstantinov

The Party Congress

The Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) was held last March. The Congress summed up the great achievements of the preceding five-year period, the victories of the Soviet Union in the sphere of industrialization and collectivization. During these years the Stalinist Second Five-Year Plan had been completed. There are no more exploiting classes in the U.S.S.R. The reasons which make for the exploitation of man by man have been uprooted completely. The Soviet Union has built the foundations of Socialism, the first phase of Communism. The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. reflects this great victory. A veritable cultural revolution has taken place in the country during these years. It embraced all the national republics of the Union and it brought about the rise of a new Soviet intelligentsia, which has sprung from the ranks of the working class and from the collectivized peasantry. These are the new people of our country, who have proved their worth in different branches of state administration, economy, science, technique, literature and art.

The historic report of the leader of peoples, J. Stalin, a report of exceptional importance, was discussed in detail by the Congress, as were the reports made by the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., V. M. Molotov, and by the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, A. A. Zhdanov. The Congress mapped out roads for further progress in the sphere of economy and culture, overcoming survivals of capitalism in the consciousness of man, progress in the Communist education of the Soviet masses. The most important and decisive factor as far as the latter two problems are concerned is the further development of Socialist culture, and the Congress devoted much time and attention to the problems of culture, science and art.

Below we print an article by the outstanding Soviet writer, Alexei Tolstoy. It is included in an almanach *The Writers Address the Congress*, specially issued on the occasion of the Eighteenth Congress of the Party. We also give notes from the diary of Vsevolod Vishnevsky, describing the first sessions of the Congress, impressions of Stalin's report and of the speech made by K. Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Defense. Vishnevsky is widely known as the author of the scenario *We From Kronstadt*, and of several plays and novels. His *We. the Russian People* appeared in *International Literature* (No. 10-11, 1937).

ALEXEI TOLSTOY

Communism—Our Tomorrow

In the Basic Law of the U.S.S.R., the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is defined as the vanguard of the working masses in their struggle to strengthen and develop the Socialist system, the leading nucleus of all working class organizations.

The economic development of our State is forging ahead at a pace altogether unprecedented in the history of mankind. Since the ratification of the Constitution, the vanguard of the working people, led by the great strategist of the Revolution, Stalin, has completed

the consolidation of the Socialist system. Today at the Eighteenth Congress of the Party it is posing concrete problems of further development: the transition from the Socialist to the Communist system, and the Third Stalinist Five-Year Plan which will complete the building of a classless society.

The basis for the concrete approach to these problems is our confidence in the defense power of our country. The breakers of the world ocean, tossed high by winds from evil sources, are dashing themselves against our shores. The capitalist world is choked with contradictions that are so terrible and so insoluble that one spark would be sufficient to cause an explosion.

Many of us, accustomed to certain conceptions, envision a European or a world war as a conflict of armed forces in Europe. This conception must now be revised. A world war has already embraced one third of humanity, and the fact that the capitals of the great European states are not yet enveloped in flames does not mean that the relations between the capitalist countries will be decided in Europe alone. The great powers are doing everything possible to keep the war off their own territories, and diplomats and politicians of all shades and descriptions are persuading the public that war may be avoided altogether.

Indeed, it may be assumed that events will grow increasingly acute in the East—in China and in India—and that the clash of two worlds will be the last act of desperation and agony on the part of the capitalist world. War is being waged for world markets along the main routes and most important bases of world markets—at a time when the imperialist powers themselves maintain a scrupulous politeness to one another. But the object of the world war which the moguls of big capital (to be designated henceforth as the Black International) have set themselves are far more extensive and far-reaching.

The Black International maintains that the toilers no longer satisfy the needs of contemporary forms of capitalist production. They are infected with Marxism-Leninism and Stalin's policies, their heads are full of all sorts of humanitarian nonsense, and they even imagine that the world is meant for happiness and freedom. It is high time, thinks the Black International, to put an end, once and for all, to all Socialist ravings that lead to revolution, to put an end first and foremost to the Soviet Union, that Promised Land toward which all the exploited peoples, all the weary and the oppressed, hopefully turn with outstretched arms. Enough! The working man is merely a particle of HP supplied with logic and productive reason. The fact that this particle of HP thinks, feels, wishes and so forth, means nothing to production. To be more explicit, for the ideal organization of production, the Black International must see to it that all the functions of the working man are reduced to the purely physiological; man must be a substitute for the horse or the ox which no longer meet the requirements of the modern system of production.

"It is not our fault that you were born into the world," says the Black International to the working man. "Work, rejoice in being alive; abandon all hope of leaving your stable. Work, you will rest in the grave."

Thus, approximately, are the fascists going about the "training" of the working people Their ini-

tial experiments in the system that aims to dehumanize the working man—compulsory labor, concentration camps, a fourteen-hour working day, starvation rations, excessive taxes—all this is mere child's play. These experiments are the first items in the far-reaching program of the Black International: war against the Soviet Union, redivision of the world, destruction of the insubordinate section of the proletariat and the transformation of the remainder into unthinking machines.

Will this black night of endless horror and despair which the Black International is preparing for the toilers descend upon the world? The reply to this may be found in the reports of the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).

Imperturbably, calmly and confidently (whatever the monsters that might be gnawing at our granite shores, breaking their teeth in the process!), the Congress under the leadership of Stalin discussed concrete measures toward the building of the highest conceivable form of universal freedom and happiness. *Communism is just as tangible to us as next year's harvest.*

The Black International dreams of re-shaping mankind (with the exception of a select master class) into labeled, docketed and stamped living mechanisms, shackled to the machine until they wear out.

Communism, guided by Stalin and the Bolshevik Party, will in the near future put into practice for every citizen of the Soviet Union the Communist principle:

From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.

VSEVOLOD VISHNEVSKY

From a Writer's Notebook

March 10

It was nearly four in the afternoon. Many of the delegates had already gathered around the Spasskaya gate leading to the Kremlin. Delegates from some of the republics and regions were still coming up. They could be seen walking in strong, solid groups across the square, pausing for a moment at the Lenin Mausoleum.

Here were the chosen of the Party, its "gold reserve." There were many among the delegates whose names are known to the entire country. The commanders who verified the passes at the entrance easily recognized their faces.

The snow was falling in thin small flakes. Delegates were already standing in a solid mass in front of the gate, each waiting for his turn to get in. The southerners were shivering a little from the cold. They spoke of the weather in the South, and of the spring sowing campaign that had already begun in their parts. There were delegates from the Army passing by leisurely; an old, hard-boiled cavalry commander standing, with

field bag dangling down his side; sailors from the Black Sea fleet coming up to join the crowd; aviators. And all of them—comrades who had come from factories or villages, military men, leading Party workers—passed through the gate into the Kremlin. Here their pace quickened. Each wanted to get a little earlier to the hall, to look around and settle down.

The Congress hall was filling rapidly. . . . Four long parallel sections of chairs, small desks in front of each. Two rows of windows. Plenty of light. Austere architecture and immaculate cleanliness. . . . There was a subdued buzzing in the hall. Old friends met one another, people whom fate and Party tasks had separated for many years. Mutual inquiries, exclamations, a hurried exchange of information. . . . Most of the delegates were men and women between thirty and forty years of age—healthy, young representatives of a healthy and young Soviet nation.

A burst of applause, cheers—ever louder, swelling, growing in volume: Stalin and the other leaders of the Party and the people had just entered the hall. Then Comrade Molotov opened the Congress. His introductory remarks were brief, simple and well-spoken.

The election of a presidium, secretariat, editorial committee and credentials committee was carried out with traditional precision.

Stalin was sitting at the left corner of the table on the dais, his eyes scanning the rows of people in the hall, their faces, their eyes.

It was a remarkable sight—the hands with the red delegates' cards rising as if in a single motion as the Congress voted for those whom it considered worthy of being elected to the presidium.

The chairman called upon Comrade Stalin. Everybody rose. Amid the din of enthusiastic applause and cheers the leader of the Party, the leader of the people, rose from his seat and slowly descended the few steps leading from the dais to the speaker's rostrum. From every section of the hall shouts of greeting and salutations in many languages could be heard rising above the din. Stalin stood on the rostrum, looked into the hall and waited. . . . The desk lamp on his right cast its light on his face. He glanced round at the hall, shifted his weight from one foot to the other, waited. . . . The cheering was growing, gaining force. The members of the Presidium of the Congress walked down from the dais to take their seats in the government boxes where they could better see and hear the speaker. Walking down they applauded with all the others. The cheering went on. For a second or two Stalin leaned upon the rostrum, inquiringly turning his glance from one group of delegates to another. . . . The cheering became even more enthusiastic. Stalin motioned for silence, but the din grew louder. . . . It was the people itself saluting the worthiest man that has come out of its ranks. . . . Finally the cheering subsided.

Stalin began to speak in absolute silence. He spoke in a quiet, unhurried, even voice—the voice so well known to the people. Step by step he unraveled before the Congress, before all the people, the broad canvas of world events. The delegates with great attention followed him step by step. One could hear the faint rustling of the sheets of paper as the delegates took notes. The ear-phones were held close to the ears. There was an atmosphere of extraordinary, rapt attention. Stalin's voice is the voice of history itself. With lightning speed one brings to mind the history of the Party

Delegates to the Eighteenth Communist Party Congress, members of the Soviet Writers' Union. Left to right: M. Sholokhov, A. Fadeyev, Hero of the Soviet Union G. Baidukov, A. Prokofyev, Hero of the Soviet Union M. Vodopyanov

Congresses. One recalls numerous speeches made by Stalin: his speech at the Sixth Congress of the Party, his speeches and actions during the period of armed struggle. One recalls how later Stalin spoke of industrialization, and how after this he mapped out the road that led to the great victory of Socialism in agriculture.

. . . The Congress is absorbing the report. Occasionally, as if keeping time to the conclusions he is driving home, Stalin makes a few firm, deliberate motions with his forefinger. This gesture stresses the essential and important formulas which will reverberate in international relations, and on which a great deal will depend. Stalin unfolds before the delegates the picture of the second imperialist war, already raging on two continents. He speaks bitingly and sarcastically of the people who are "looking for the Komintern" in the deserts of Mongolia or in the wilds of Morocco. The Congress responds with laughter which soon subsides as Stalin goes on to explain the causes of the strange character of the war. In these minutes the real objects of some of the "heroes of Munich" and their intricate treacherous designs are being revealed to the Congress, to the Soviet people and—clearly enough—to the whole world.

When the Soviet Air Force is mentioned the Congress seems to be checking up on itself. Here, among the delegates, are some of the world-famous Soviet flyers. It is into their hands that the people has entrusted its Air Force. The fascist liars and scribblers can change nothing either in the quality or in the quantity of our air forces.

Stalin speaks of Soviet Ukraine. . . . The Congress is listening with special attention. Everyone in the country knows how much the Ukraine has meant in our history. . . . In 1918 Stalin defended and saved her from the German pillagers and the Petlyura bands. In accordance with his plan, the Red fighters disarmed the German corps at the end of 1918. . . . In 1919 Stalin liberated the Ukraine after having defeated the second campaign of the Entente, after having routed Denikin's for-

ces. In 1920 Pilsudski's armies were routed by the Red forces under Stalin's leadership. . . . And no bogus Ukrainians from the Carpathians or their patrons can succeed in any of their attempts to injure the Soviet land or infringe upon the Soviet interests. The blood that was shed in those years was not shed in vain. Nobody can undo the feats that were then performed and the gigantic work that has been accomplished since. . . . And the whole Congress seems to hold its breath, everybody leaning forward, as Stalin issues political warnings to those who hanker after someone else's territory, and reminds them that the Soviet Union is ready to meet any blow with a double blow. At the same time it is clear to each delegate that we are firm in our policy of peace and business relations, that by exercising caution and not allowing ourselves to be drawn in by provocations we are guarding, we must guard, the peaceful labor of our country.

The delegates listen with even greater attention, taking down notes of the data, facts and figures which Stalin cites in his analysis of the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. With the characteristic gesture of his hand Stalin stresses the point that we are able to make further great strides in our progress. He unfolds the prospects of the new Five-Year Plans—a program of steady progress in industry, agriculture, and along the whole line of cultural development. The Congress follows Stalin into the future. Everyone in our country knows that each figure cited by Stalin has been weighed, checked and double-checked, and that once it has been pronounced from the platform of the Kremlin, once it has been formulated as a task to be fulfilled, fulfilled it shall be. The people will respond honoring its traditions established during the years of the Revolution. There was great animation in the hall when Stalin addressed his request to the collective farm peasantry to release annually one and a half million workers from its ranks for the needs of our industry. I saw many delegates discussing the proposition among themselves in a whisper, making hurried calculations of the possibilities, exchanging notes. A big problem was set before the Congress, before the whole country. . . . The delegates visualized this new army of workers streaming into new towns. They would have to be recruited, organized, seen off, transported, met in the new places, provided for. . . . The realistic and alert Bolshevik mind was already busy solving the problem. . . . It already saw how this army was going to stir up Siberia and the Far East; saw the lights of new factories, the rails of new railways to be built.

Stalin had already been speaking for over an hour. The attention flagged not for a moment. The listeners saw anew their own creations, their own work; they were filled with pride and amazement at the inexhaustible forces of the people. They bent forward, as if in ecstasy. . . . The Congress seemed an army ready to plunge into attack. . . . Everyone was making mental notes of what had to be done today, immediately, in his own sphere of activity, in his own profession, so as to enable the Soviet Union, within the next ten or fifteen years, to surpass every capitalist country and all of them put together in every way and in everything—from heavy industry to the most subtle accomplishments of culture and art. The delegates took note of Stalin's new five historic conditions: respect for people, knowledge of their capabilities, helping them advance, bold promotion

and, finally, proper allocation . . . . What a wealth of human kindness and thoughtfulness all this represents! Here is a new guarantee of concern for everyone—from great to small and from young to old; of concern for everyone's fate, career, living conditions and even tastes and individual requirements.

In introducing one of the sections of the last part of his speech Stalin said that he was going to touch upon some questions of theory. The Congress at once responded with applause. It was the Party, the people, expressing their gratitude to Stalin for his vast scientific and philosophical work, their gratitude for the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, which was produced by his labor and the labor of his close comrades. In his speech at the Congress Stalin added another chapter to the history of the Party—a chapter on the Socialist State.

Stalin's report abounded in passages revealing genius and breadth of vision. The section dealing with the principles of the Socialist State, the principles underlying our existence as a state, was one of the most profound. It stimulated thought; it brought back to mind the entire historical cycle of the Marxist science of the State, revealing it in a new light. . . . I saw the people in the hall exchanging glances, silently sharing with one another the thoughts stimulated by what they were listening to. There was something buoyant, fine and joyous in this exchange of glances. . . .

Stalin spoke of the intelligentsia, of the historical road it had traversed. His words to the effect that it was necessary to show concern and respect for the intelligentsia, to cooperate with it, sank into the minds of the delegates.

The report was drawing to its close. The concluding words of our leader—about the victorious working class, about the victorious collectivized peasantry and the Soviet intelligentsia—rang out with immense force. The delegates to a man rose to their feet. . . . It was the people, speaking through its vanguard, that then declared its readiness for any task or battle. It was the Party and the people expressing their gratitude to Stalin for his guidance.

March 12

It is the third day of the Congress. The Congress is discussing Stalin's report.

Comrade A. A. Andreyev is on the rostrum. His speech is vivid, significant. The delegates listen with close attention. He speaks of the vast organizational work which the Party has performed in the past years, particularly in the field of training cadres. He speaks of Stalin's paternal solicitude for people, this most treasured possession of our country.

The Party has fostered and trained remarkable forces and has armed them with its ideological weapon. Comrade Andreyev cites interesting data. Twenty-eight per cent of the regional committee secretaries are university graduates; nearly a third have graduated from high school, some of them having attended college at one time or another.

Andreyev devotes more than half of his speech to the successes of Socialist agriculture. He speaks of Party work in the countryside, of discipline and the organization of labor in the collective farms, of guidance in agricultural regions and collective farms.

The hall resounds with the thunder of applause as he winds up with the statement that we can look forward to our future boldly and cheerfully, for our leader is the indomitable Stalin.

Other speakers follow.

Yemelyan Yaroslavsky mounts the rostrum. He speaks of the problems of science and culture. He tells the Congress of Stalin's part in the scientific elaboration of problems of history, and of what his advice and suggestions mean to the world of science, including the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R.

Yaroslavsky's voice is even, calm. He goes on to deal with the questions of art, dwelling primarily on our cinematography.

The speaker recalls the prophetic words of the great Russian publicist, Vissarion Belinsky who, a hundred years ago, saw Russia in 1940 marching at the head of nations. Yaroslavsky's voice rises and rings with a new force as he says in conclusion: "I am in my sixty-second year. It is not the first time I speak from this honorable rostrum.... From this platform thundered the unforgettable voice of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the voice of Sergei Mironovich Kirov, of Sergo Orjonikidze, of Felix Dzerzhinsky, of Valerian Kuibyshev..." The delegates all rise to their feet. The words that follow cut into the living, palpitating noise.... This old Bolshevik speaks of the great joy of work and creative activity, of the feelings of happiness with which he is filled at the sight of the young generation, the new, strong forces already taking their place side by side with those of the older generation.

A representative of the Far East—Comrade Donskoy, delegate from the Khabarovsk Territory—takes the floor. The Congress listens with great attention to his detailed, concrete description of the present conditions in the Far East and of the needs and requirements of this territory which exceeds in size that of a dozen European countries.

The speaker pauses for a few seconds, surveys the hall and goes on to relate about the frequent encounters with the attempts of a restless and none-too-clever neighbor to infringe upon the interests of the Soviet Union. The speaker tells about the cravings of that neighbor to fish in Soviet waters and what this has led to. The neighbors had to quit fishing in the waters of Lake Hassan so precipitously that they left their hooks and lines behind. The speaker says that if the neighbor is anxious for a new lesson, they will find the U.S.S.R., and particularly the inhabitants of the Far East, ready to visit the pupils in their own house and to bring along all the necessary appliances for graphic instruction. The hall thunders with applause.

The Congress further listens to the requests of the representative of the Far East in regard to the program of economic development, the delegates tracing in their minds the necessary measures to be taken.

Comrade Lavrenti Beria mounts the platform. Leaning on the rostrum, his arms outstretched in firm gesture, he speaks of the conclusions that have to be drawn from Comrade Stalin's report. As far as the Soviet intelligence service is concerned, these conclusions are clear. The Soviet intelligence service will show its ability to smash and uproot all the enemies.

At 8.30 p.m. Comrade Stalin came in to take his seat on the dais among the members of the Presidium. There was a spontaneous ovation. Stalin stood slightly bent forward, glancing at a paper which he held in his hand. From time to time he looked up into the hall and acknowledged the cheering by applauding the people in his turn.

The representatives of the Gorky region, of Tataria, of Tajikistan followed one another on the rostrum. Stalin listened, occasionally

looking down at the papers before him. When Comrade N. Shvernik, who followed Comrade Shakhurin, the representative of the Gorky region, referred to the wages earned by Stakhanovite workers and mentioned the case of one worker who had earned 3,549 rubles, Comrade Stalin bent forward, listened with close attention and then began to applaud. The Congress joined in the applause.

. . . Stalin and all the delegates applaud as Comrade A. Badayev, at one time a deputy of the Russian working class in the old tsarist State Duma, gets up on the platform. Badayev relates how in St. Petersburg twenty-seven years ago, Stalin, working underground, wrote instructions for the working class deputies, and how he predicted in these instructions the coming of the Revolution. The eyes of the delegates turn from Badayev to Stalin. The speaker's story recalls to the several thousand delegates the long period of the illegal existence of the Bolshevik Party, with its heroism and terrific hardships.

Badayev then deals with a number of economic problems of the present, such as improvements of and supplies for new towns and workers' settlements, the organization of the production of foodstuffs in suburban areas, and so forth. Occasionally Stalin leans forward to jot down some notes.

The Congress is listening intently. Paulina Ossipenko can be seen sitting in the second row among the Moscow delegates. I. Papanin is sitting a little closer to the center. In the left section three friends are seen sitting together—Belyakov, V. Kokkinaki, G. Baidukov. . . .

March 13

All these last days we have had fine sunny weather. The slight frost is pleasant and refreshing. The delegates are exceptionally punctual in coming to the meetings. . . .

Comrade K. E. Voroshilov is expected to speak today.

The bell announces that a session of the Congress is soon to open. The recess is over. The delegates file into the hall. They are almost all of them trim, clean-shaven, broad-shouldered. The color effect of their dress is rather austere: it ranges from military khaki to light and dark grey, and then to blue and black. There is a subdued hum in the hall as the delegates take their seats. Papanin is seen laughing, wiping his forehead with a handkerchief, and trying to convince somebody that he is losing weight. M. Vodopyanov is walking to his seat with heavy and firm step. Delegates from the Army are filing in. . . .

1:40 p.m. Stalin and the other members of the Presidium have come over to the table on the dais. The delegates rise. The chairman calls upon Comrade Voroshilov. He walks to the rostrum with a quick and light step, carrying a folder in his hand. The delegates and guests rise to their feet, shouting a thunderous "Hurrah!" in military fashion—for in each of them the proud revolutionary-military spirit is alive. Voroshilov tries to speak, but the "Hurrah" is still thundering, rising. Voroshilov turns to the Presidium. There, too, all are on their feet, applauding, looking at him with friendly, appreciative eyes. The cheering rises to an ovation. . . . It is the Party and the people saluting the First Marshal.

There he stands on the platform in the Kremlin—the son of a railway watchman, a soldier who saw many years of service under Nicholas I. Before the Revolution the young Voroshilov was forced to work as a shepherd, then to

collect pyrites for the wage of ten kopecks a day. The roads to culture were closed to him. It was but with great difficulty that the persistent youth fought his way into a Zemstvo school. But education was grudged him there—he was permitted to study for two years only. Then a job in the Alchevsk Works, and from 1899 on he plunged into intensive, ardent revolutionary work, took part in strikes, was blacklisted.

The cheering is still going on. . . . It is the Party and the people saluting their own Voroshilov—for his strong will, his blunt manner, his courage.

The Marshal, a former Lugansk metal worker, stands there silent, waiting. The delegates are still cheering. The Congress is saluting the faithful comrade-in-arms of Lenin and Stalin. The Congress is saluting the fearless agitator who braved the gallows and carried the word of Bolshevism into the tsarist army, to Cossack and infantry units. The Congress is saluting the man who organized the union of metal workers of Russia, was chairman of the Lugansk Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and chief of the fighting groups of the Alchevsk and Gorlovka metal workers, railwaymen and miners; the hero of the first revolutionary battles in Russia, the militant fighter who helped escape from prisons comrades sentenced to death. . . . The Congress is saluting the man who was sent as a delegate to the Stockholm and London Congresses of the Party, who organized the delivery of arms into Russia, who was exiled many times, escaping in order to devote his life and energy to his Party; it is saluting the man of action who worked together with Stalin in Baku during the period of the Stolypin reaction.

Voroshilov asks for silence. A new burst of applause. Stalin is standing there, his eyes resting on Voroshilov, his friend with whom he has worked together for more than thirty years. He is applauding, and his gaze is earnest, radiant and affectionate.

The Party, the Congress and the people are expressing their respect and love for the Bolshevik Marshal; their appreciation for his revolutionary activity in St. Petersburg, for the years he spent in prison and exile in Archangel, Kholmogori, Mezen, Cherdynsk; for his part at the Sixth Party Congress, in the October Revolution; for the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission (Cheka) which he organized together with Felix Dzerzhinsky; for his battles against the Germans at the head of the First Lugansk Socialist Detachment; for being the "First Red Officer"; for the unforgettable march of the Fifth Ukrainian Army; for routing the Germans at Rodakovo on April 26, 1918; for routing Krasnov, Mamontov and other generals; for our First Cavalry Army; for routing Denikin, Pilsudski, Wrangel, Makhno; for his work with Frunze; for his irreconcilability to the enemies of the people; for creating and directing the greatest army in the world.

The ovation expressed the people's gratitude for all this. Finally the hall quiets down, and Voroshilov begins his speech—a speech which will arouse the enthusiasm of millions of people and will deal a blow to the foes.

. . . His hands wide apart, Voroshilov is gripping the two edges of the desk in front of him. The eyes of the delegates are riveted on him. Stalin, sitting at the left edge of the table on the dais, bends forward and listens, puffing his pipe.

Voroshilov cites figures relating to the armaments of bourgeois countries and impresses upon his listeners the logical conclusion to

be drawn from the facts: that our country must have a powerful and indomitable Red Army and Navy.

Voroshilov reports to the Congress on the state of the Red Army today, and the delegates greet with a storm of applause the information that during the past five years the military strength of our country has doubled, and that in certain respects it has multiplied three and four times. Here in the hall were sitting men who had themselves helped to build up this colossus; people who had themselves served in the Army or had given their sons to the Army; people who had themselves built munition plants. Here were delegates who had worked in a temperature of fifty degrees below zero in order to build fortified districts and airdromes in the Far East. Here were people who had triumphed over the swamps of Polessye, carrying out military assignments; people who had been standing guard over the borders of their country, who had extinguished many a fire and had captured a host of raiders, poisoners and spies. . . . Each word uttered by Voroshilov evokes among the delegates a silent but intent, throbbing and palpitating response. . . . In the figures cited by the speaker they recognize the results of their own labors and worries, their sleepless nights, and their joys of achievement. They recall the things that have brought to them from time to time a laconic expression of appreciation by Voroshilov, an order of merit pinned on by Kalinin, a token of approval from Stalin.

Voroshilov reports to the Congress in a few brief sentences that the network of district military commissariats throughout the country has increased by three and a half times. Everyone sees clearly what this means in terms of keeping a proper account of the manpower of a nation of one hundred and seventy million people, a nation with an old fighting spirit in its blood. Some recall that even tsarist Russia was able to put sixteen million men in the field during the first imperialist war. Let those who ought to know it try to figure out what our potentialities along these lines are today, the potentialities of a country which is thoroughly organized, possessing a wealth of machinery, a country in which the Revolution has brought to the fore an army of women ready to replace the men in case of war, to replace and to see them off without too many tears.

Voroshilov speaks with great enthusiasm of our infantry, of its firing strength, of our air force. . . Infantry is the backbone of national might. It is the "queen of the fields." And today the Soviet nation can note with approval that its infantry now has a powerful companion—the air force. There is no need for many words or figures. Everybody knows what the Soviet air force really amounts to. Many people in various parts of Europe, Asia, America and the Arctic have had the opportunity to gauge its strength.

Voroshilov then speaks of the array of new commanders pouring into the Army. There are sixty-three Army schools in the country, thirty-two aviation schools, fourteen military academies, six military departments in universities, scores of correspondence courses and hundreds of schools and courses attached to military units. Hundreds of thousands of future commanders receive their training in these schools. Their stamina, the traditional Red Army valor and staunchness have been tested at Lake Hassan, in many frontier clashes and on other occasions. The unyielding spirit of the battles of the Civil

War is alive in the people and in the army. The nation cherishes and fosters this spirit. And should the hour come and the short-sighted enemies try to attack the Soviet Union, this spirit will burst forth in flames of volcanic force that will spread their red glow over the skies of other countries.

Voroshilov continues his report to the Congress, to the Party and the people, rendering an account of the political work that is conducted in the Army. His voice rings with particular force when he speaks of the *political commissars*—those without whom we would have had no army, those who are responsible for our victories, who are the best representatives of the traditions of the Party.

As the delegates, and everyone in the hall who knows something about war and military affairs, think of the commissars and what they stand for, their thoughts turn to Voroshilov himself—the People's Commissar of Defense.

As one listens to Voroshilov's speech one pictures him in life, at work. One recalls Voroshilov's visits to maneuvers, to new construction jobs, airdromes, naval bases. He is always hearty, vigorous, impetuous. He knows by name thousands of people—from commanders down to men in the ranks. He knows minute details of their biographies. The meetings are always full of friendship and warmth. In no other army in the world are such meetings and such conversations at all possible.

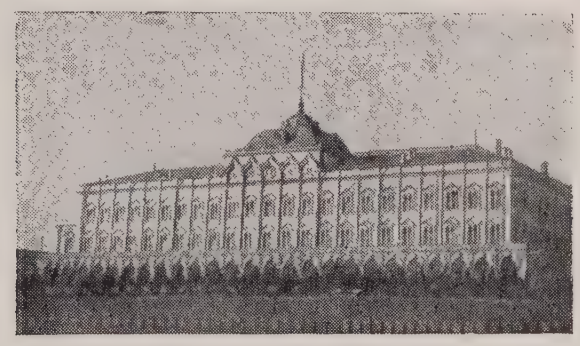
The People's Commissar is brisk. The years have added grey hairs at his temples, but the youthful and vigorous tempo of the country as a whole keeps people young, and the People's Commissar has not aged. His movements are precise, there is an air of military trimness about them. Wherever he comes he makes a thorough study of conditions. His searching glance takes in new batteries, buildings, shelters, dockyards. The People's Commissar makes a number of brief remarks. At once the listener seems to discover many new possibilities revealed by the remarks of the People's Commissar. Voroshilov is very exacting. He demands clarity, concreteness, precision. He absolutely cannot bear commonplaces, "embellishments" which have on more than one occasion served to hide the nefarious designs of traitors. Speaking bluntly, sometimes severely, reaching down to the very depths of human consciousness, he explains to the Red Army men the essence of modern warfare. The People's Commissar is indefatigable. He has been observed many a time finishing his work after midnight and getting up with the sun. He kept on the same way on the Baltic Sea during storms. He never lost sight of the work of the staff and the commanders, of the work of the signalmen and of the cooks. Everything was included in his field of vision. After a strenuous day he would attend a performance by Red Army amateur singers, reciters and dancers, and then sit up late into the night counting up the points that would entitle one or another of the performers to receive a prize. With the morning bugle he would be up again on deck or on the captain's bridge. The People's Commissar is amazingly versatile. He is never content with a limited military "inspection." He checks up on every aspect of work and life. He delves into the minutest details of the work of the local Party and Soviet organizations, factories, supply organs, municipal administration. The rear must always fully understand the Army and the requirements of war.

The Congress watches the stout-

hearted Marshal, the man of iron who is nearing his sixtieth year and is still so strong, resilient, young and fresh. Again and again people review in their minds the forty odd years of his revolutionary and military activities. And they begin to understand, to grasp more fully the substance of the Bolshevik army, the essence of a commissar's duty and work.

The ovation breaks out anew when Voroshilov, raising his hand and clenching it into a fist, reminds the people of the words of the oath which every commander, every Red Army man and every political worker in our armed forces has taken.

Stalin is scanning the hall, and in the faces and burning eyes he reads the pledge of the people: readiness to fight for the Party and for their country, to fight for their land and waters, to fight as no people has ever fought anywhere in the world.



The palace in the Kremlin where the Party Congress took place

Saltykov-Shchedrin—Great Russian Satirist

The Socialist Revolution has shed new light on the past and has created new criteria for an evaluation of its art. Exposing sham greatness, the Revolution affirms as genuine only that which survives its acid test. In the Russian literature of the nineteenth century the Revolution has recognized as its forerunners some of the most profound and truthful writers. Saltykov-Shchedrin belongs to this category.

Saltykov-Shchedrin is one of the greatest Russian writers; the sweep and depth of his works are matched by few representatives of world literature. His brilliant literary career was an affirmation of Goethe's words: "He who lived for his time lives for all time." An author and fighter, Saltykov was aflame with the burning problems of his historic day; its problems were his problems, its demands his own. He saw greatness in that which was small, perceived the future in the present, but his great contributions and prophetic pronouncements are presented in terms of the contemporary, even the topical.

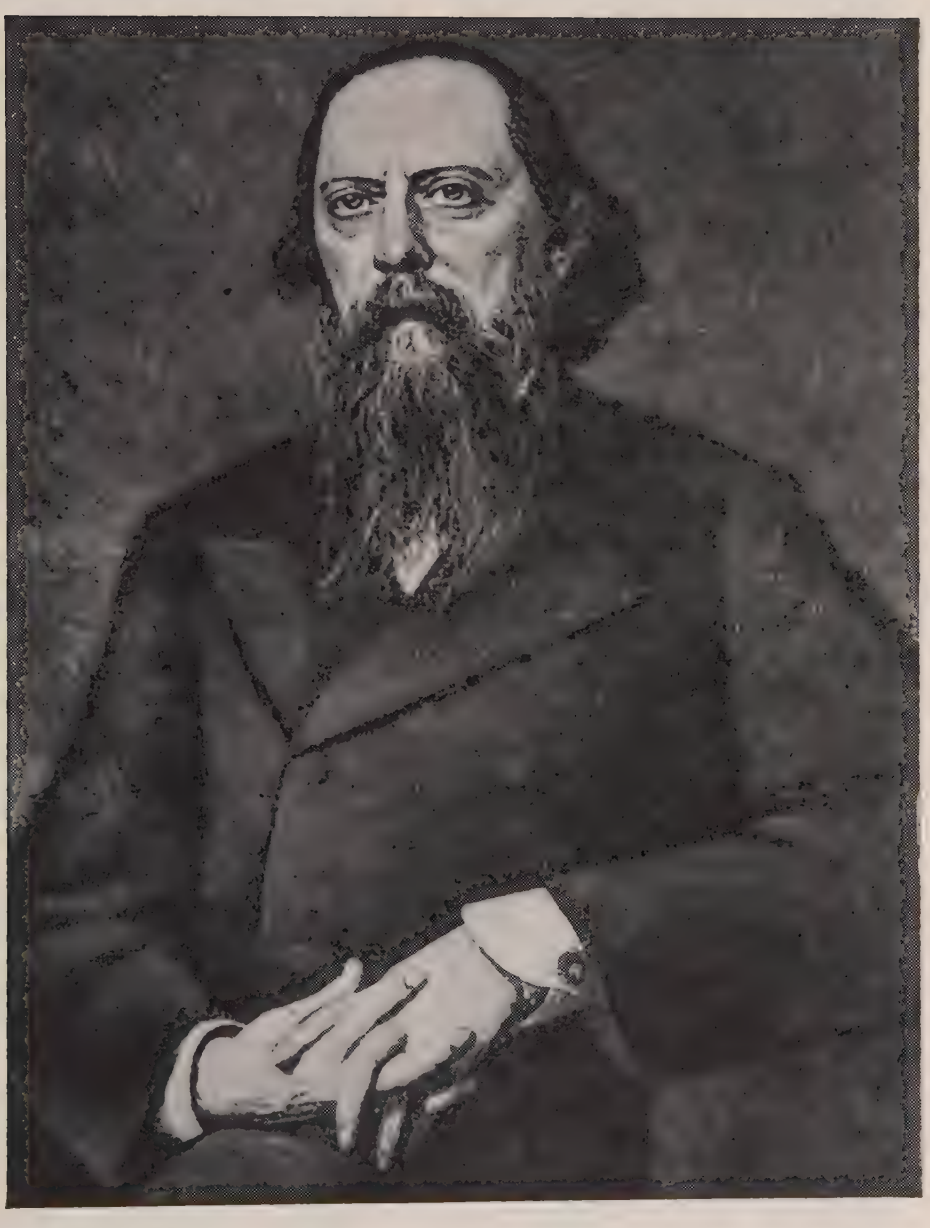
Saltykov's writings constitute a most faithful reflection of forty years of Russian history. And what years they were! Saltykov began his literary career in the epoch of serfdom, he continued it through the years of the fall and decline of serfdom, the years of growth of capitalism in Russia, and ended it on the eve of the awakening of class consciousness among the masses of the proletariat.

Before Saltykov's very eyes Russia passed over from one socio-economic formation to another. The highly imaginative, historically profound, penetrating portrayal of this process in his own inimitable style would alone suffice to make Saltykov's writings invaluable to the Western reader.

The latter will find here a complete picture of Russian society of that time, with its corruption, degeneration, the ugly intermixture of the old feudal with the new capitalist order, the agonies of death and birth. Far from keeping aloof from the swiftly moving scene, the artist himself—a sort of Dante's Virgil in this inferno—kept pace with events and at times even forestalled them.

An artist of this type could not but create a specific form to satisfy both his passionate urge to intervene in life and his desire to perceive it in its entirety.

He found the form he wanted in a series of sketches. It is interesting to note that Saltykov wrote several series of sketches simultaneously, switching over from one sphere to another. So imperative was his need to respond rapidly to the swift flow of life. His exceptional agility nevertheless did not preclude stability. The form of the sketch cycle synthesizes, so to speak, these two distinguishing features of Saltykov's art: swiftness of reaction to life and deep perception of it.



M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin (1826—1889)

These series of sketches complement and supplement each other, sometimes dealing with one and the same theme but introducing the changes wrought by life itself. In the different series one may come across the same types, sometimes under different names, types that evolve and develop along with life itself.

The characters of N. Gogol, A. Griboyedov, I. Turgenev and others are recreated by Saltykov at a new stage of development, they are born into a new life. Saltykov-Shchedrin frequently takes issue with the creators of these characters, and contrasts his own conception of them with the traditional conception. Here Saltykov the artist merges with Saltykov the critic, a synthesis made possible by the very genre of satire which he raised to such a high level. This synthesis shows how cultured was his perception of life and how far from bookishness was his conception of literature.

Let us examine some of these cycles:

Sketches of Provincial Life. This is the book which placed Saltykov in the front ranks of Russian men of letters, a satire on the governmental system of Nicholas I which had disintegrated prior to the Crimean War. A clear understanding that all the defects and abuses of the administration were the inevitable consequence of serfdom which retarded the country's development—this is what designates *Sketches of Provincial Life* as a revolutionary democratic piece of writing.

The book exposes the provincial administration, and is directed primarily against the nobility, as the dominating class by whom the peasantry was enslaved. The barb of *Sketches of Provincial Life* was particularly sharp-edged in the section which depicts the "superfluous people," the liberal intellectuals, disgruntled by Nicholas' regime under which they were like square pegs in round holes. Saltykov exposed the liberalism of these "superfluous people." Their noble "principles" meant to their serfs neither the improvement of living conditions, nor the defense of their human rights.

Passing over a number of intermediary stages in Saltykov-Shchedrin's literary career, we come to *Messieurs et Mesdames Pompadours* written more than ten years after *Sketches of Provincial Life.* He began to write them in the 'sixties and completed them only in 1874.

The old in new habitments, bureaucracy and "reforms," bureaucratic liberalism are all traced here in the altered forms that were assumed with the victory of the reactionary forces in Russia after 1862.

Messieurs and Mesdames Pompadours revealed for the first time the peculiar quality of Saltykov's satire at the height of its maturity: his ability to forestall events, to glimpse the future, an ability which comes of a profound understanding of the present, an understanding not only of a social phenomenon as such but also of whither it is leading. Some of the sketches in *Messieurs and Mesdames Pompadours,* which seemed rather too exaggerated to Saltykov's contemporaries, anticipated the exploits of the Black Hundreds during the Revolution of 1905. The satirist's characters thus appear to have been "plagiarized" by life itself.

The "pompadours" were the administrators of high rank. In *Gentlemen of Tashkent* the author deals with those who execute the bidding of the pompadour. At the end of the 'seventies, tsarism began zealously to implant "civilization" in the remote regions of the country, furnishing rich soil for the flourishing of the rule of fist and whip. But to Saltykov-Shchedrin it was important to show that the ruling classes be-

haved in their own country as in a colony, acting just as ruthlessly there as in the newly conquered Tashkent. "Wherever the fist talks there you will find Tashkent," said the satirist. And that was the underlying idea of this book of sketches.

History of a Town. Here the satirist's idea embraces a much wider field. This satire is based on the same theme as the former works: the ruling power and the people, but here it is treated in a different plane, telling the story of the tsarist Russia symbolized by the town of Glupov, or Stupid Town. Anatole France did much the same in his *Penguin Island* but he did not concentrate to such an extent on the theme that was basic for the revolutionary-democratic satirist that Saltykov-Shchedrin was. Russian literature has had its brilliant satirists but never has it known such bold, such annihilating satire. The supreme power of the Russian empire stands before us branded, disgraced, morally annihilated. It is difficult to say which quality dominates this satire: flaming hatred or scathing contempt. Of course, only a revolutionary-democratic satire, which is born of a genuine interest in the oppressed peasantry, could have risen to such heights of devastating exposure.

The barb of Saltykov's satire was pointed against serfdom, against the system based on the psychology, creed and ideology begotten by serfdom. To the writer this system was not destroyed by the abolition of serfdom on February 19, 1861. Saltykov's greatness as a revolutionary-democratic satirist is revealed in his realization how deeply rooted was serfdom in Russia long after it had been abolished officially.

If in *History of a Town* Saltykov showed how tenacious was the past dominated by serfdom, in *Well-intentioned Conversations* he spoke of the near future, of capitalist Russia coming into being. The predatory nature of the bourgeoisie was the theme of this book.

Its very title hints at the satirist's desire to show how the "well-intentioned" principles of private property, so solemnly proclaimed as the foundations of society, actually turned into their antipodes. The very slogan of the protection of private property was merely a screen for plunderous practices. It is the brigand who shouts the loudest about "sacred property," the libertine who preaches about the sanctity of marriage, the embezzler and bribetaker who lecture on the integrity of the state, etc.

The Golovlev Family is one of the most artistically perfect and popular of Saltykov-Shchedrin's writings.

In the person of Porfiri Golovlev—Judushka (Little Judas)—the writer created an exceptionally original character of a hypocrite to the core, a hypocrite even unto himself. Comedy in this book turns into gruesome tragedy. Judushka embodies the lying cant of a whole class, a whole system, which precipitated its own destruction by this very cant. Porfiri Golovlev is frequently likened to Tartuffe; Judushka is considered to be the Russian version of Molière's famous character. A more profound analysis, however, will undoubtedly reveal that while the superficial resemblance exists, there is nevertheless a great essential difference. Tartuffe, if one may put it that way, is the master of his hypocrisy, not its slave. But Porfiri is shackled to his vice, like a slave to his galley. His escape from it is as impossible as from an incurable disease. Poisoning everything around him, Judushka's hypocrisy stifles, suffocates Judushka himself. There can be no doubt that the bourgeoisie of today has its Judushkas and that Porfiry Golovlev is more typical of them than Tartuffe. During the Spanish tragedy recently we have heard more

than one Judushka holding forth with his customary empty eloquence on the humaneness of "non-intervention." The Judushkas and their ilk will not disappear until every trace of what the system of private property left in human relationships has disappeared. How significant that V. I. Lenin remembered Judushka when he wrote so scathingly of Trotsky's betrayal. The brand of Judushka is on all those depraved, lie-enmeshed double-dealers, on all the participants in any bloc of treachery and treason.

Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Fairy Tales* seem to summarize his literary career. The writer's ideas about the muzhik, the authorities, the officials and the liberals are embodied in characters that have become bywords today. The heroes of the tales were intended to be allegorical. They are, however, not only allegorical expressions of abstract thoughts but depict vivid individualities. The pointed satirical formulas from the satirist's tales have often been quoted in the works and speeches of Lenin and Stalin.

We failed to mention many other series of Saltykov's tales and sketches, such as *The Old Days of Poshekhonia, Monrepo Refuge* and others, not because they are less important, but because from considerations of space we are obliged to speak only of those works which we think serve best as an introduction to his writings for the Western reader.

The artistic heritage left to us by Saltykov consitutes something that is qualitatively new in relation to all Russian literature of the past. Saltykov is one of the greatest representatives of the new period of Russian literature that was directed against the nobility, that period when it commenced to satisfy the demands of the intellectuals composed of the various classes of society, intellectuals who had risen from the lower rungs of society and were closely associated with the people. These demands could be satisfied only by a realism that was more consistent than that which had preceded it. The new people brought with them new themes which widened the literary horizon, and the new themes, in turn, demanded new forms. Revolutionary-democratic realism responded to these demands. Its principal distinguishing features were the search for that force which was capable of leading society onto the road of social transformation clearly expressed principles and party affiliations were among the requisites for this new art; a revaluation of the old system of esthetics; broadening and complexity of motifs which conditioned action in works of art; a revision of genres.

This new democratic literature was best expressed in the works of Saltykov-Shchedrin and N. Nekrasov.

Sketches of Provincial Life, Saltykov's first work of importance, revealed a distinguishing feature of the new satire: it was a satire of situation and not of character, a judgment not over human nature ruined by social conditions, but over the conditions themselves.

As the satirist's world outlook broadens, the depth of his characters and their revolutionizing effect become greater. At the same time his portrayals become more directly bound up with the social-political struggle of the epoch.

What is most characteristic of Saltykov is an exceptional freedom of form, "removing" all the constricting borders of genre, never sacrificing content to form. Eschewing literary canons, Shchedrin creates new forms. He frequently starts off with a philosophic reflection or a publicistic analysis. Only the language pervaded with biting irony or annihilating sarcasm, and the satirical masks reveal the artistic nature of a piece which begins like a journa-

listic article. Later on the author's monologue is supplemented by monologues of his characters, by dialogues which finally end in an analysis, or frequently a resumé by the author.

The thinker and artist are inseparable in Saltykov-Shchedrin, and a deep awareness of social problems is characteristic of all his writings. In this respect he is a man of his epoch and of that social stratum whose ideologist he was.

His realism derived its depth and breadth from the clarity of his outlook, his perceptions. It centered not around the fate of individuals, but around the fate of society, social processes and conflicts which it is impossible to understand and explain without guiding principles. Saltykov-Shchedrin's basic principles were never sacrificed to externals. His was an idea that became an obsession, that was flesh of the flesh and bone of the bone of his art.

The idea of the peasant revolution was Saltykov's basic principle. His writings are permeated with a profound consciousness of the rottenness of the social foundations that moulded the life of every man of his time. His satire was least of all directed against individuals. Fighting not personal vices but the social evil that gave rise to them, his satire has nothing in common with psychologizing. The inner workings of the human mind, the peculiarities of character are not the prime factor for they do not explain, but require explanation themselves. Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire is social in the extreme, but precisely for this reason the psychology which it recreates is not imaginary but real and unschematic. There is less of the schematic in his work than in that of any of the other great satirists. Saltykov does not strive to emphasize any one aspect of the world he describes, he takes man "in all the fullness of his being" and invests the dullest character with complex psychological content.

Such realism could not but be replete with tragedy. This tragedy is the consequence of a profound understanding of the irreconcilability of social contradictions. Without confining himself to external phenomena, Saltykov-Shchedrin depicts the tragedy of life as "an evil dissolved in the air," an evil that has grown so much a part of things as to have become almost second nature, and thereby doubly dangerous. Tragedy, as Saltykov saw it, lies not in the "tragic lot" of the hero, but in the social system that deprived human life of its meaning.

The humor in the works of a satirist with such an approach to life is of a special quality. It is not sentimental humor, it is genuinely, profoundly human, full of the deepest compassion for man's suffering.

By the virtue of its scope Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire approaches the social novel and sometimes, as in *The Golovlev Family* or *Contemporary Idylls*, begets a social novel of a high order. With his characteristic severity toward himself, Saltykov-Shchedrin called his work "material for a social novel" which should take the place of the "family-psychological" novel. The social novel should discover new laws of a life that passes "not in a cosy domestic environment" but on streets, on squares, in struggle and strife.

The great satirist was a witness of an exceptionally complex dialectic change in life—the change of its content while still retaining its antiquated forms. In order to describe this life which had lost its former stability, and in which the most contradictory phenomena were intertwined, his realism had to abandon the "verisimilitude," the accepted, the transitory and limited "outward appearance of things," and adopt the "fantastic," the grotesque.

By means of the grotesque which his opponents considered caricature, a defamation of reality, the satirist expressed his evaluation of life from the standpoint of social ideals derived from the teachings of the utopian Socialists. Saltykov anticipated a new, liberated world. He envisioned man *released* from yoke, from everything that resembled compulsion, and hence his deep abhorrence of the ugliness of life he saw around him.

Powerless to develop his social ideal out of reality (only Marxism succeeded in doing that) he contrasted it with the life he saw around him, and of course could not but find reality merely a caricature of a world fit for human beings to live in.

There is no limit to the "stupidity and degradation to which life descends" when deprived of the guidance of reason, was his retort to opponents who reproached him with exaggeration. In order to penetrate the surface of the humdrum and habitual, it is necessary to approach the society of the landed aristocracy and bourgeoisie with the measuring-stick of the truly humane, to scrutinize it through the prism of the ideal which Saltykov-Shchedrin derived from utopian Socialism. Utopian Socialism had inherited from the eighteenth century an enlightened faith in the power of reason, the rational approach to life. Also Saltykov-Shchedrin's satire was enlightened. It appraised all phenomena from the standpoint of reason, of a need justified by reason, and repudiating senseless chance.

A satire which posed problems of social-political life with a specific sharpness, which deliberately aimed at fighting the bourgeois regime and its ideology—such a satire, under conditions prevailing in tsarist Russia, demanded a special "Aesopian" language. This was the form in which the revolutionary content was rendered less vulnerable to the censorship. But Saltykov-Shchedrin transformed bitter necessity into exalted, unique art. The Aesop style, worked out under the yoke of tsarist law, was a protective covering as transparant as it was elusive. With this armor against the censorship regulations, Shchedrin was able to reach his readers.

ALEXANDER LAVRETSKY

The Life and Work of Mirza Fet-ali Akhundov

Mirza Fet-ali Akhundov—Azerbaijan's great realistic writer, poet, materialistic philosopher and, in public affairs, outstanding democrat, was born in the Azerbaijan city of Nukha, which was then under Iranian rule, in the family of a merchant, Mirza Mamed Tagi. It was in this city, after the separation of his mother and father, that the future writer's youthful years were spent in the family of his great-uncle, the mullah Gaji Alexer. His intimacy with the old man left its mark on the young Fet-ali. Gaji Alexer was a rare exception among the generally ignorant Mohammedan clergy; he deservedly enjoyed the reputation of one of the best educated men in the Azerbaijan of his day. Not only was he versed in the Mohammedan religious writings, but he had made a profound study of Arabian and Persian classics. Gaji Alexer resolved to prepare his grand-nephew for the priesthhood; under his direction the youth studied the Arabic and Persian languages, Persian literature, and thoroughly mastered all the religious and clerical "science" of Islam.

Mirza Fet-ali was twenty when his great-uncle and teacher introduced him to Mirza Shafi Vazokh, one of the greatest poets of Azerbaijan, who undertook to teach the youth caligraphy. This poet became widely known in Europe through the famous "Songs of Mirza Shafi" by Friedrich Bodenstedt, a German

Mirza Fet-ali Akhundov

writer (1819-1892). These verses, written in the style of the Eastern lyric created by Goethe and Rueckert, met with great success (in 1917 their two hundred and sixty-fourth edition was issued!). They were, in fact a translation of the poems of Mirza Shafi, who had become friends with Bodenstedt during the latter's stay in the Caucasus from 1844 to 1847. Akhundov in his autobiography tells us of his studies with the poet:

"As directed by my second father," for so Akhundov called

Gaji Alexer, "I visited him daily and studied with him. . . Thus a friendly attachment sprang up between him and me. Once he asked me, 'Mirza Fet-ali, what is your aim in the pursuit of learning?'

"'I wish to take holy orders!' I answered.

"'And you, too, want to be that kind of hypocrite and charlatan?'

"I was amazed at these words. Mirza Shafi went on to say:

" 'Don't waste your life, Mirza Fet-ali. Choose another profession.'

"I asked why he felt such disgust for the clergy. . . .

"Mirza Shafi revealed what had been hidden from me up till that time. He opened my eyes. I became disgusted with the clergy and changed my decision."

Thus Mirza Shafi Vazokh was influential in helping the youthful Akhundov to free himself from the stifling environment of the clergy, and take the path of struggle against obscurantism and ignorance; the seeds of skepticism sowed by the learned poet bore a rich harvest of scientific atheism.

Moving in 1834 to Tiflis, where he was given the post of translator in the chancellory of the chief civil administrator for the Caucasus, Baron Rosen, Akhundov set to work on a thorough study of the Russian language. He soon mastered it sufficiently to be a fluent translator from the Oriental languages into Russian. He devoted all his free time to a study of the great Russian poets. It is profoundly significant that his first literary work was penned in connection with the tragic death of Pushkin, the great founder of Russian literature. A prose translation into Russian of his *On the Death of Pushkin* was made by an intimate friend of Akhundov's, the well-known Decembrist A. Bestuzhev (Marlinsky), who had been exiled to the Caucasus. This poem, which attracted attention to the young writer, was a work of captivating charm, profound and original; it was the first work by an Eastern writer dedicated to the memory of Pushkin.

In Tiflis, Akhundov added rapidly to his store of knowledge. Surrounded by such people as Bestuzhev, Y. P. Polonsky, Count V. A. Sollogub, the distinguished orientalist Adolph Berger and others, he discovered the world of advanced Russian culture and literature, and it became near and dear to him. He began to see the life around him with new eyes. With great pain and poignancy he felt the depth of darkness, ignorance and poverty in which his people, the natives of Azerbaijan, were stagnating. He decided to devote his entire life and strength to the struggle for the emancipation of his people from the shackles of religious and social slavery.

Akhundov's versatile gifts as dramatist, poet, philosopher and scholar played an outstanding role in the development of public thought, literature and art in Azerbaijan as well as in other countries of the Near East. He also exercised considerable influence in Russia and western Europe, for the majority of his works were translated at one time or another and appeared in several languages. He was well known, among other countries, in France, Germany and England. An English translation of his comedy, *The Vizier of the Serabian Khanate*, was published in 1882 simultaneously with the Iranian text, and a translation of another comedy, *Molla-Ibrahim Khalil, Alchemist and Possessor of the Philosopher's Stone*, appeared in 1886.

The originality of Akhundov's work and his revolutionary role in Azerbaijan literature are seen above all in his immortal comedies,

The warehouse where Akhundov's "Adventures of a Miser" had its premiere in tsarist Russia

which earned him the title of "Molière of Azerbaijan."

Founder of the realistic school, Akhundov completely and radically changed the course of development of Azerbaijan literature. He was the first writer of his country to take up burning social issues and make a forceful exposure of the social order in Azerbaijan with its feudal slavery, its ulcerous sores of despotism and cruelty. In his comedy, *The Vizier of the Serabian Khanate*, he levels withering criticism at the khan and his arbitrary manner of dealing out violence under the guise of justice. The comedy, *Molla-Ibrahim Khalil, Alchemist and Possessor of the Philosopher's Stone*, lashes out mercilessly at all those charlatans and swindlers, the mullahs and dervishes, who robbed ignorant and superstitious people. In almost all his comedies Mirza Fet-ali rises in defense of the downtrodden and enslaved women of the East. But he undoubtedly is at his best as an exponent of social satire in his last work of fiction, the brilliant novel *The Stars Deceived*. Here we find the fullest expression of the revolutionary and democratic sociopolitical ideas which Akhundov was to develop later on in his chief philosophical work, *The Correspondence of the Indian Prince Kemal-ud-Dovle with the Iranian Prince Jelal-ud-Dovle*.

Despite the obviously legendary and allegorical character of his *The Stars Deceived*, Akhundov is here completely the realist. He presents in the form of a historic legend a most bitter satire on the ugly world of the Iran of his day, under the absolute and arbitary rule of the Shah, supported by dull and greedy viziers who robbed the people, and by cowardly military commanders who swindled the soldiers out of their pay, and preferred to ruin the country rather than risk a battle with an enemy.

This work, remarkable for its masterful handling of plot and outstandingly clever parody, contains all the most important social and political conceptions of Akhundov, which mark him as an advanced representative of his age. In *The Stars Deceived* Akhundov strikes not only at various negative features of the life around him—fanaticism, stupidity, superstition, ignorance—but also at the despotic monarchy as a whole. Still, the hero of the tale, Yusuf Shah, that humanist who has resolved to put an end to despotism, remains a monarch, though he proclaims himself an "enlightened" one. The influence of the French materialists of the eighteenth century are undoubtedly responsible for this.

The ideas expressed in *The Stars Deceived* in the form of a satiric fantasy, a legend, found expression considerably later (1864-65) in the most important of Akhundov's philosophical works, *The Correspondence of the Indian Prince Kemal-ud-Dovle with the Iranian Prince Jelal-ud-Dovle.* The letters of the Indian prince, Kemal-ud-Dovle, who has arrived in Iran after a long stay in Europe and America, are addressed to his friend, who lives in Cairo. They present a frightful picture of the despotism of Iranian rulers, the venality of the clergy, the enslavement of the population, the universal poverty and ignorance, the baneful influence of religious rites and ancient customs. In these "letters," as in his other publicist and philosophical works, Akhundov speaks as a consistent atheist, very closely approaching a materialist conception of the world. He sees clearly that the dogmas of religion are incompatible and irreconcilable with the freedom of the people, with the struggle against oppression, darkness and ignorance. To Mirza Yusuf Khan, who believed it possible to reconcile the *shariat* (the Moslem religious code) with the principles of freedom, Mirza Fet-ali wrote:

"It seems to you that with the aid of the *shariat* . . . it is possible to destroy oppression! . . . Not in the least. . . . Justice can be established, and oppression destroyed only in the way I have pointed out, that is, the people must possess a critical intelligence and knowledge. After this the people themselves will make the laws, write the constitution and put it into effect. Then the people will become the masters of a new world and the East will resemble a paradise."

A number of articles on public affairs, philosophy and criticism which Mirza Fet-ali wrote in the 'sixties constitute a brilliant critique of the foundations of Islam and its religious teaching. He revealed his knowledge of not only Mohammedanism, but also of the works of Russian advocates of enlightenment, of the writings of John Stuart Mill, Buckle, Bauer, of those great French thinkers and materialists Diderot and Holbach, of Voltaire, Montesquieu, Spinoza and so on.

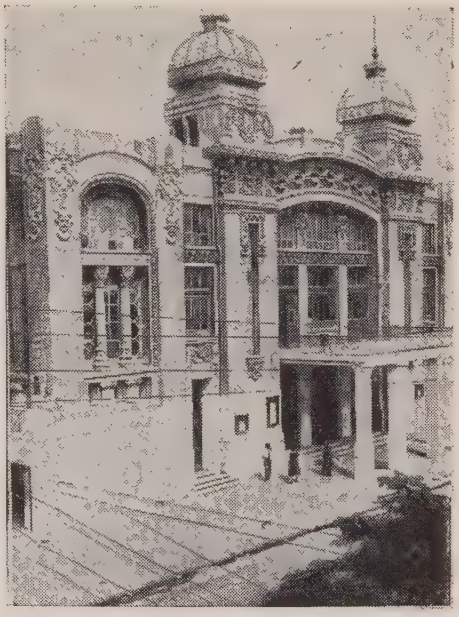
The revolutionary unrest in Russia in the 'seventies made a strong impression on Akhundov, and the news of the Paris Commune particularly had a direct and powerful influence. In the many letters which were his chief channel of public utterance at the time, he voiced the revolutionary demand for the overthrow of the monarchs who had trampled upon human rights and liberty.

His atheist and materialist philosophical works were not published during his lifetime. For fifteen years he tried in vain to get someone to print his *Correspondence.* Although not printed, this work like his others was widely circulated and read.

Akhundov's project for replacing Arabic characters by the Latin alphabet in the Turkic languages, and his fight for the adoption of the project occupied a special place in his life. He considered that the difficult and complicated Arabic alphabet was one of the chief, if not the chief, obstacle to the dissemination of literacy and culture in the countries of the Mohammedan East.

He urged this reform of the alphabet in articles and pamphlets; he sent his project to statesmen and scholars of Turkey and Iran; he made a personal trip to Stamboul to advocate his scheme before the Stamboul academy of sciences. But all his efforts came to nought in the face of obstacles that were insurmountable in his time. Reactionaries were up in arms against him, for they clearly understood that such a reform of the alphabet was not a technical question of the shape of letters, but something immeasurably more profound and radical. The reactionaries saw clearly that in such a reform lurked a very serious danger for Islam. The danger existed not only from a dogmatic point of view, inasmuch as the Arabic script was considered holy, but even more so in view of the fact that it would provide a tremendously effective means for enlightening the Mohammedan masses, sunk as they were in religious prejudices and ignorance.

"In a hundred years from now," Akhundov dreamed, "my alphabet will occupy a place of honor in Eastern literature; it will be employed in new works . . . Then my purpose will be achieved, and I can content myself in advance, although I shall not see that blissful hour."



Opera house named after Akhundov, in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan

But it did not take a hundred years. The Great October Socialist Revolution has realized the dream of reforming the Arabic alphabet, cherished by Mirza Fet-ali Akhundov, who died in 1878. At the same time it has realized his dream of awakening the peoples of the East to a new, cultured and happy life. The cultural progress of the Azerbaijan people, as of the other peoples of the Caucasus; the emancipation of the women in the Soviet East; the unbreakable friendship between the people of Azerbaijan and the Russian people—indeed, all the peoples of the U.S.S.R.—these noble ideals of which the great writer, thinker and champion of progress dreamed, are being realized in the Soviet Union by the great Leninist-Stalinist national policy.

ILYA ELVIN

Heinrich Mann's "Emile Zola"

"I am proud to know that never, under any circumstances, have I disavowed the respect and the gratitude I cherish for French literature," wrote Heinrich Mann in the preface to *Lilian and Paul* in 1926.

He had every right to say these words. A realist and democrat, Heinrich Mann from the very outset of his literary career proclaimed his admiration for the cultural traditions of France.

This does not mean that Heinrich Mann was a bad German, that he renounced his own country. By no means. French traditions were for him a weapon in the struggle against the "German poverty of intellect" that had put its stamp on the culture of his native land. To the saccharine ideals of liberal "humaneness," Heinrich Mann counterposed a humanism inseparably bound up with revolution; to the superficial and boring descriptions of the German naturalists, the traditions of French critical realism.

Heinrich Mann remained true to his Francophilism even during the imperialist war. In those days of rabid jingoism and dictatorship of the Prussian militarists, he wrote his book about Emile Zola, the French writer and democrat, the man who fought reaction posing as "patriotism."

It is no accident that *Zola*, written more than twenty years ago, has now appeared in a French translation. This book, a sincere, stirring assertion of the rights of artist-fighters, sounds amazingly in place today. The life and work of Zola was for Heinrich Mann merely material—abundant material, to be sure,—which he used to demonstrate what an artist of a *Sturm und Drang* period must be like if he wishes to preserve his loyalty to the best traditions of humanity.

Mann's book is by no means an objective portrayal of Zola. Heinrich Mann at that time was not only incapable, but unwilling as well to see the weak sides—both ideological and artistic—in Zola's writings. The problems, Zola and the decline of bourgeois realism, held no interest for him. With the passion of a true publicist, Heinrich Mann depicted those traits in Zola which established his kinship with the great traditions of the past, and simultaneously placed him "on the threshold of a new era."

To Heinrich Mann Zola's writings reflected above all the rise of the mass labor movement. "The awakening of the masses! That is the problem! Yes! The awakened masses must take their place in literature. And more! These masses bring with them ideals which will mould the future. They must shine in the radiance of an apotheosis. . . ."

Along with this theme of awakened masses, Zola depicted the theme of labor. This, too, he approached

from a new angle, for labor to Zola was not a curse, but the foundation of human culture.

Even the young Zola, gazing upon Paris from the window of his mansard, visioned the heights to which the theme of labor would rise in his writings.

"The mighty voice of Paris, soaring to the skies, is uttering the one word: Labor. Each and every one down there in the flood of humanity is the very embodiment of labor, that great force that unites them all. Gazing upon Paris from his window, Zola is overwhelmed with the feeling of fraternity. 'I am yours, I am one of you, and labor, though different from yours, will be my lot, just as labor is your lot. As yet you do not realize what joy it is to know that our efforts are common efforts, that each executes the common will, and that I merely give expression to your essence! And yet there is something peculiar and depressing about it.' . . . His gaze grows more pensive.

"He is overwhelmed with a presentiment of wondrous, as yet unwritten books, whose hero would be Paris, the epoch, mankind, whose greatest hero would be labor, the upward march to progress."

It was clear to Heinrich Mann that Zola understood the historical essence of his epoch, for in him was ever alive the sense of his indissoluble bond with life, with contemporary thought. "Love the truth, or you will never be great. Love all its forces—science, labor, democracy, toiling humanity, which aspires to progress freed from the palliatives and injustices of the past. Feel yourself a part of the whole, and strive to be at one with all. Only then will you be able to recreate their life. And, what is most important, never think of yourself as someone apart. Share as an equal among equals the great aspirations of your times. Love your epoch. He who, like the romantics, has no love for his epoch will soon find himself unwanted."

Heinrich Mann contrasted Zola not only with the romanticists but also with Flaubert.

Labor begets ideas, and labor begets struggle. Zola's predecessor, Flaubert, had not been aware of this. For Flaubert did not fight, he merely scorned; to him ideas were begotten not of labor, but of form. He did not write of toiling humanity, merely of human folly. . . . Attached too firmly to the exaggerated emotions of the romanticists, he nevertheless rose to reality, but not without grumbling and sacrifices. He would willingly have discarded reality, and he did so at the very first opportunity. Renouncing the decrepit and fruitless romanticism, he doggedly hung on to his skepticism and—most important—delved deeply into nothingness.

Zola who loved "his epoch" fervently, did not separate art from life. One and the same aspiration guided him when he exposed the Second Empire in his novels and when he intervened in the Dreyfuss case, championing not only justice but also the best traditions of the French people. Emile Zola, as seen by Heinrich Mann, is part and parcel of these traditions. "Like Rousseau, like Condorcet, he survived the intoxication with equality, reason and infinite perfection and found at last the path of bitter ecstasy whereon the fall of Danton and the rise of Robespierre can be perceived."

The best chapters of his book are devoted to Zola's political activity.

Zola the artist, democrat and humanist who combatted reaction, defending the honor of his people in the face of meanness, stupidity and chauvinism, is masterfully por-

trayed by Mann. This is no accident, for at the time the book was written, Emile Zola was an example, the source of civic courage for Heinrich Mann who had stood alone in the Germany of Wilhelm II.

Mann's grim invectives against the military cliques which devour law and justice, against demagogic lies that deceive the people, against the unworthy "men of the spirit" who sell their talent to the forces of reaction, are charged with a passion that rings timely and perhaps even autobiographical.

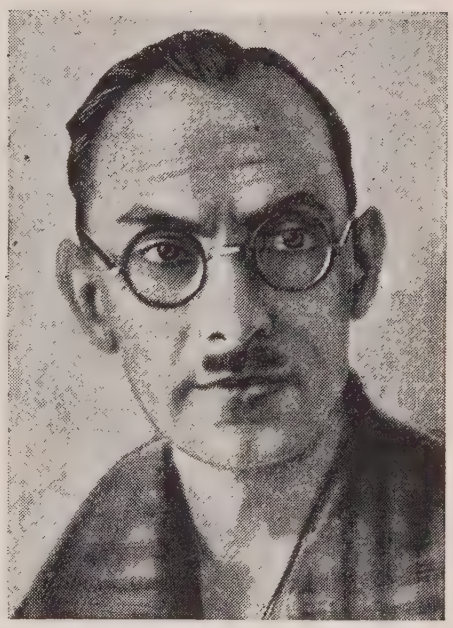
Heinrich Mann's book has its defects. It bears traces of conceptions and ideas the Heinrich Mann of today has outlived. This lessens the significance of the chapters "Poem of the Earth" and "Spirit" which sum up Zola's literary work.

And yet this fine book is by no means out of date. Indeed only today can it be really appreciated to the full. Emile Zola, as interpreted by Heinrich Mann more than twenty years ago, echoes that true portrait of Zola created by Henri Barbusse and acclaimed by all the advanced contemporary French writers.

Heinrich Mann's Zola is the teacher and forerunner of those writers of today who are fighters for the Popular Front.

EVGUENIA KNIPOVICH

Ludwig Renn



The great German people is deprived of its literature and today, just as in the days of Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Börne, all its worthy men of letters are in exile. Ludwig Renn, the fiftieth anniversary of whose birth is being marked by friends of German literature throughout the world, rightfully stands in the front ranks among them. Ludwig Renn is an example of an honest, courageous and fearless writer, one of those people of whom Engels wrote at one time that they are able "to defend their convictions with pen and sword."

Arnold Vieth von Golssenau, known to his readers under the nom-de-plume of Ludwig Renn, was born in Dresden on April 22, 1889. Coming from a family with strict noblemen's traditions and having had to undergo a Prussian military schooling, Ludwig Renn has traversed a complex path which led him to the ranks of the revolutionary proletariat. A participant of the first world imperialist war, Ludwig Renn emerged from it a bitter enemy of the social system which gives rise to such sanguinary horrors. He soon found his place in the vanguard of humanity, fighting for social and economic emancipation. It is more than eleven years now that Ludwig Renn bears with honor the name of a member of the German Communist Party. He has justified his calling as a Communist in battles with fascism when it had begun to raise its ugly head, in the jails of Weimar Germany and of the Third Reich, on the battlefields of Republican Spain defending its independence against the forces of international fascism.

"Ludwig Renn," writes of him his friend and comrade-in-exile Willi Bredel, "is an unusually modest man, who is touchingly shy and unpractical. Ludwig Renn possesses a tremendous power of influence; every one comes under the spell of the great uprightness and straightforwardness of this man to whom an assumed attitude, pre-conceived theatrical gestures and rhetorical methods are alien. Renn the artist also abhors an assumed pose, he writes simply, without resorting to literary

artifices. He constructs his phrase directly and simply, clearly and concisely, like a chronicle, and herein lies the power of his books which gained him world renown. In his *War* Ludwig Renn depicted the World War with a winning honesty, sobriety, without any embellishment. With the same sincerity and honesty he wrote his second book *On the Eve of Great Changes*, which can explain a great deal to those who still have not understood the underlying causes of the victory of fascism in Germany. Both books, the best written by Renn, will long remain in the history of literature."

In the tragic days of the retreat of the Catalonian people and their army betrayed by the ruling circles of France and England, Ludwig Renn, at the head of an international brigade, was compelled to retreat to France. There, people who have the audacity to call themselves descendants of the Jacobins threw him into a concentration camp, as the Nazis had. Only the efforts of his friends won freedom for the courageous writer and fighter.

"He fulfilled his duty to the end," Heinrich Mann wrote of him, "but may this not be the end either for him or his cause. We shall meet again, as he once said at a meeting in Paris, 'on the side of France.' In the future liberation war of the German people we place particular hope in Ludwig Renn in whom are worthily blended the writer and fighter."

Together with all the friends and admirers of Ludwig Renn, a master of the word and master of action, Soviet writers and Soviet readers heartily congratulate the worthy, renowned representative of the literature of the great German people, and wish him many years of creative activity in the interests of the forthcoming triumph of his people, in the interests of culture and democracy

Chukotka

Notes of a Teacher in the Arctic

It was 1928. The vessel *Astrakhan* entered remote Penkegney Bay, 180 kilometers south of Lawrence Bay.

Here workers of the newly-established Chukotka Cultural Base landed on the deserted shore, to proceed by land to the Cultural Base, which consisted of a hospital, a school and a veterinary station.

The vessel was unloaded with unusual haste; time was not to be lost, for ice followed in the wake of the vessel and might block the exit from the bay.

While the boat was being unloaded the hum of a motor suddenly sounded and a whaleboat appeared around the cape. The boat held a group of Eskimos, men, women, elderly people and children, thirty in all. Most of them wore fur clothing and boots. Above their fur overalls the women wore brightly colored cotton trimmings which not only protected the fur against dampness and splashing sea water, but also served as adornments. The quantity of trimmings and the variety of colors is the usual standard for judging an Eskimo woman's smartness of attire.

The whaleboat drew up alongside the *Astrakhan* and without waiting for an invitation the Eskimos began to scale the rope ladder. Soon they all crowded around the captain's cabin. We looked at them with no less curiosity than they at us. The captain greeted them cordially. Having sailed more than once in these waters, he was familiar with their ways.

A tattooed middle-aged Eskimo emerged from the crowd and extended his hand to the captain. This was Matlyu, the chairman of the District Executive Committee.

"We think boat no can go north. Much ice there."

Our wintering party listened carefully to the conversation. We were eager to learn whether Matlyu

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These excerpts from T. Semushkin's book *Chukotka* are published by us with permission of the Press and Publisher Literary Service of Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga to whom the author has granted exclusive translation and publication rights of his book in all foreign languages.

Photos by M. Tepliakov.

had been by any chance to the Cultural Base for we were particularly interested in provisions, since we had to turn over supplies brought by the *Astrakhan* to gold prospectors.

"We come here," Matlyu continued, "maybe Russian captain wishes Eskimos to help. Look, many strong people."

The captain thanked him.

Vessels are rare guests in this locality and their arrival is an outstanding event in the life of the Eskimos. The Eskimos have learned to orientate themselves in the course of vessels and watching from the shore, can usually guess unerringly the intentions of the captain.

"I very surprised ship go north. Pack ice there," the talkative Matlyu repeated. "Ship *Stavropol* carried goods for Eskimos on Wrangel Island, but also lots ice there. Ship returned, brought everything to Cultural Base, then go to Kolyma."

"Matlyu, couldn't you arrange to bring us to the Cultural Base?" we asked.

"No, now impossible. Soon big ice come also here."

So as not to disrupt our work for fully six months, we decided to proceed immediately to the Cultural Base. Matlyu volunteered to accompany us, but only to the nearest Chukchi settlement.

A little expedition was formed consisting mostly of teachers. A woman, a recent graduate of the Moscow Teachers' Institute, also joined the group. Also Ponomaryev, the elderly chairman of the Chukotka District Executive Committee, braved the difficulties of the trip. We took along a tent and as much provisions as we could carry.

After the Eskimos had had tea with the captain aboard the ship, we embarked on the whaleboat. A young Eskimo was tuning up the engine, his motions slow and deliberate. He handled his engine with loving care.

The boat started off on the mirror-like surface of the bay. Standing on the captain's bridge, the mate shouted to us through a megaphone:

"Goodbye, Robinson Crusoes, see you next year!"

One of our teachers found a whistle in his pocket. He gave the "salute" for departure. In reply to his mournful whistle the *Astrakhan* blew its foghorn and the echo resounded in the Chukotka mountains.

The *Astrakhan* disappeared around the cape. All contact with the Big Land was severed.

The Eskimo mechanic listened carefully to the whirr of the engine, which seemed to obey him like a faithful dog.

"Matlyu, where did you get a whaleboat, and with an engine into the bargain? We thought Eskimos sail about on flat-bottomed boats lined with walrus," one of us asked him.

"Engine not have long. We have plain boats also. Whaleboat not everybody have," Matlyu replied, standing at the helm.

He turned the helm over to another Eskimo and joined our group. Matlyu, in his soft fur boots, walked right over people, so crowded was the boat.

"Walruses come here summer when ice moves north and much clear water here," Matlyu explained. "No go far to sea on walrus boats. People go far and when wind blows no come home. Summer very short. No can kill many walrus on small boats. Need whaleboats very much. Thanks Soviet Government."

He told us the story of the First Congress in 1927 of all the forty-seven Soviets of the Chukotka peninsula. All the delegates were illiterate. The group from Cape Shelagskoi traveled the farthest, covering 1,200 kilometers on dog sledges. They traveled for fifty days and came in time for the opening of the Congress. All the delegates had been informed of the congress almost a year in advance.

I was in Chukotka at the time and well remember the tremendous work it took to organize this congress. Immense distances had to be covered in order to elect delegates and give them all the necessary instructions.

The Chukchi had no calender or anything approaching one in our sense of the word. It was necessary to devise a means for noting the day when all would have to assemble at Wellen for the congress. To begin with, the Chukchi learned what a month was and that one month holds thirty and another thirty-one days. There could be no mention of February, for fear of confusion.

To keep track of time the delegates made notches on sticks. When

a stick had thirty notches they would take the next one, and by the time there were nine sticks and twenty notches on the tenth, a delegate knew that tomorrow he had to start out for the "talk feast," as the Chukchi referred to the Congress of Soviets. That evening he prepared the traces for the dogs and some rations of walrus meat, and in the morning set out for Wellen, hundreds of kilometers away. Nothing could stop them, neither distances nor blizzards nor the frequent difficulties of obtaining food and supplies in some localities. For the first time in history these people were traveling on so important a mission, to discuss and build their own lives. All the delegates to a man came to the Congress.

"Walrus hunting was discussed then. Congress decided whaleboats needed," Matlyu concluded his narrative about the First Congress of Soviets on Chukotka.

From Matlyu we learned that an entire network of fur trading

posts of the Kamchatka Development Corporation (AKO) was organized along the coast, in Chaun Bay, on Cape Severny (now Cape Schmidt), in Providence Bay, on Cape Heart-Stone, in Transfiguration Bay, Holy Cross Bay. A trading point was also being built in Lawrence Bay, near the Cultural Base.

The fur trading posts are general stores operated by the State. Goods are brought by boat once a year, but one can find there anything from Caucasian canned fruit to outboard motors.

We took leave of the Eskimos and, taking our things, started out afoot along the shore.

We had covered about a hundred yards when we suddenly heard shouts.

A young Eskimo was running in our direction, waving a pair of fur boots.

He was out of breath when he overtook us. Handing the fur boots to the only girl in our group, he said, pointing to her European shoes:

"Bad to go on foot!"

Indeed it was very difficult to walk in shoes on the pebbles along the shore and the Eskimo women had decided to help the teacher. One of them had removed her fur boots and sent them to us.

The teacher was touched by this attention. She took off her shoes and gave them to the Eskimo.

"Give her these," she said.

We approached a settlement.

Its three huge tents seemed lost in the vast expanse. On one side was the sea already covered with ice and on the other lay the grey tundra.

"An entirely different world," said the girl teacher. "The very outskirts of the world."

"The *tangi*,[1] the *tangi* have come!" Shouts were heard from the settlement, as a pack of dogs gave us a rather unwelcome reception.

All the inhabitants ran out from their tents. No one spoke Russian and I was the only person who could carry on a conversation with them.

Twilight descended. A light north wind was blowing and it grew chilly. We set up our tent and lighted the kerosene stove. Squatting, we drank hot tea to get warm.

I suggested that we go into the tents of the Chukchi, but the comrades were unwilling; they were scared of their filth, stuffiness and the stench of seal fat.

Having previously wintered in Chukotka, I had become accustomed to the Chukchi mode of life, and now tried to influence the group. As an argument I stated that even Amundsen himself stayed in Chukchi tents. All the Chukchi knew him and respect him highly. He visited them during his attempted drift to the North Pole on the *Maud*. Its keel was egg-shaped. Under the pressure of ice it was raised to the surface. When the navigation season would start they would dynamite the ice, and the schooner would again land on water. This continued for three years, but Amundsen did not reach the Pole and finally abandoned the idea of making his way to the top of the world on a ship. At times the *Maud* would freeze in the ice not far from the shore and then Amundsen would travel on dog sledges to Chukchi settlements.

"The Arctic explorer even carried a bathhouse along with him," I told my companions. "The bathhouse consisted of poles and can-

[1] Palefaces.

vas, and was easily assembled. Near one of the walls there was a bench with a pot of water, and under the pot a kerosene stove. When the water boiled the improvised bathhouse was filled with steam. Amundsen would set up the 'bathhouse' in the 'hallway' of a native tent and would run inside immediately after having taken his bath."

"Was it worth the trouble if he had to run into a filthy tent right after his bath?" one of the teachers asked.

"Some day you will learn that the tents are really not so filthy as all that."

Finally, seeing that all my arguments produced no effect, I walked to the tent myself. Two people followed me, but the moment they smelled the seal fat they recoiled and turned back.

The Chukchi were overjoyed that I did not disdain to visit their tent, and the women brought in a new reindeer skin and spread it over the seat of honor.

A Chukchi tent, or *yaranga*, consists of a number of poles covered with canvas, walrus or reindeer skins, depending on the season. Canvas and reindeer skins, the more expensive coverings, are used during the winter. Only poor households have a roof of walrus skin all year round.

Inside, the tent is divided into a passageway, which is unheated, and a "living room" separated from the passageway by a fur curtain. Seal fat is constantly kept burning in pots. The mistress of the household regulates the fire so there is hardly any soot. The burning fat keeps the tent warm and sufficiently lighted.

The family in the *yaranga* which I entered consisted of five people, but inhabitants of other *yarangas* soon gathered to hear the latest news, so the tent became overcrowded.

Stretching myself on the reindeer skin near the lighted pots I talked to them about the work

we were planning to carry on at the Cultural Base.

The Chukchi sometimes did not understand me and asked each other what the *tang* was saying.

During a pause my host said: "Why don't the other *tangi* come to us? It's cold out there! We feel sorry for the girl. She is very young and is not used to the cold. Her face begs for warmth."

"I think they will all come," I answered.

"Why didn't they come at once? We have three *yarangas* and could find room for all of them."

"They are not used to living quarters like yours. They are used to entering a house through a door, and here they have to crawl in on all fours. But in addition the *tangi* do not like the pots with burning seal fat. Their hearts begin to beat fast on account of it," I told them, and began a conversation on hygiene and cleanliness. At the same time I realized how unconvincing my words must have sounded. Indeed, it was hot in the *yaranga* and the people sat about almost completely nude, though outdoors one had to wear a fur coat, fur trousers and fur shoes.

Sometime ago a doctor traveled through the Chukchi settlements. He thundered at them about the lighted pots with seal fat, about the lack of sanitation, and about their ignorance. He suggested that the seal fat pots be thrown out, but the Chukchi did not understand him. They decided that "he has the head of a stupid baby." A snow blizzard came down and soon all the fine-sounding arguments of the doctor were thrown overboard by grim Nature, as the doctor himself had to admit.

I came over to our tent.

My companions were dancing "the savage dance" in the stillness of the night. They skipped and jumped, clapping their hands. From a distance these jumping silhouettes resembled *shamans* [1] performing their rituals.

"Oh! How cold it is," a teacher said, jumping up and down on one foot.

"You don't say!" I remarked with a smile. "It doesn't bother me, I feel pretty good!"

"What the devil are you laughing about?" another said, his teeth chattering.

In a corner near the kerosene stove sat the girl teacher, her head buried in her coat. She was drowsing, though frozen stiff.

"Stop the dancing, comrades! You'll dance yourself into a bad case of pneumonia. We are 140 kilometers from any doctor or medical supplies. Of two evils you must choose the lesser."

"How is it in the *yaranga?*" some asked, weakening.

"Wonderful! Just like at a halloween feast."

"Now, comrades, listen to me," our chairman spoke up. "I order the tent liquidated. Be off! All of you, to the *yarangi*!"

Soon the Chukchi tents were crowded with *tangi*.

"It isn't so bad here," the girl admitted, sitting down at a table where tea was ready.

"Of course it isn't so bad, once you get used to all the smells," added a teacher.

A feeble sun broke through the dense clouds in the morning. We started off in a splendid mood. Everything went smoothly after that. The moment we would enter a settlement all members of our group would crawl into the *yarangi* and make themselves comfortable on reindeer skins.

In this manner we traveled for six days, on foot, on boats or on sledges, covering all in all 150 kil-

[1] Medicine men.

ometers. The last Chukchi settlement was thirty kilometers from the Cultural Base. The natives told us there were many *tangi* at the base and that a number of white *yarangi*, meaning houses, were already built.

We decided to cover the last thirty kilometers without a stop. Distributing the packs, we discovered the cunning of the chairman Ponomaryev. It turned out that his flask, with which he never parted even in his sleep, contained real Jamaica rum! He had kept it a secret, saving the rum for some emergency. Naturally, we immediately relieved him of the excessive burden. The rum felt good in the bitter cold. Even the girl actually participated in the bout, though she swore she had never tasted alcohol before.

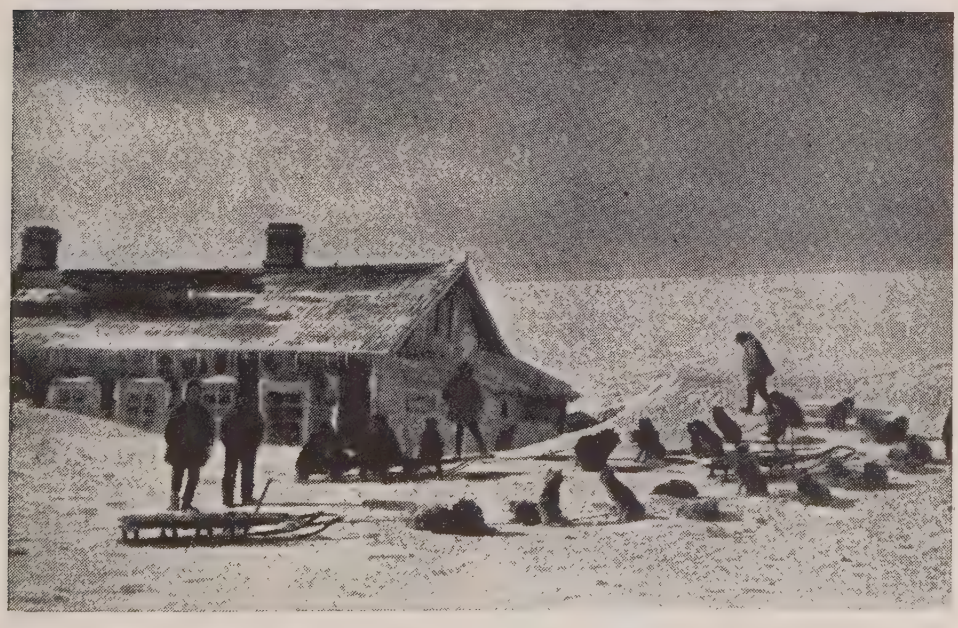
Lawrence Bay cuts deeply into the mainland. On the left side, ten kilometers from the entrance to the bay, eleven houses of European style were lined in a row at the foot of a hill. This was the Chukotka Cultural Base.

People here wore modern clothes, and women walked on shoes with heels. Here and there one encountered a Chukchi workman in regular overalls.

A stove maker on the roof of the last house was putting up a chimney. The baker, who was Chinese, carried a tray of pastry, while another Chinese, a laundryman, wheeled a little wagon filled with laundry. The wagon moved creaking on the narrow gauge line which extends down to the sea.

This is the new Soviet Chukotka. The newcomers did not expect to find any traces of life's comforts. But this settlement had its own bathhouse, laundry, dining room and a bakery. A radio station was under construction.

Living conditions were excellent. Each apartment consisted of three furnished rooms, small kitchen and bath. The interior left nothing to be desired: the walls were covered



The Cultural Base

with thick beaver boards freshly painted. The only "shortcoming," in the opinion of the "old timers," who had arrived three months ahead of us, was the absence of floor polish to keep the floors shiny.

After dinner we took a walk to the school, a spacious bright building which was already completed, as were the other houses. It had five class rooms, a room for teachers, a kitchen, a cloak room and a combination of a gym and an auditorium.

No Chukchi had the slightest conception of the boarding school we were launching in this Arctic land. The least blunder in organizing the school could harm the entire work of the Cultural Base.

In the evening we walked over to the sea. It greeted us with a roar, and the wind lashed at our faces. The ice floes were engaged in a relentless struggle and water splashed high into the air. Pebbles were washed onto the shore, only to be drawn back into the sea by other waves.

Winter was approaching.

The school building had eight stoves, and someone had to attend to them. Never having had any stoves, the Chukchi did not know how to handle them.

So for the meantime a doctor, a teacher and a veterinary were tending the stoves in their respective institutions.

One day a sledge drew up near the school building. Two Chukchi entered and began to examine with great curiosity the *yaranga* of the "palefaces." One of the natives was a tall elderly man and the other a lad of about twenty with a good-natured smile. He hung on to the elderly man and followed him about like a young buck follows a reindeer.

The visitors were Chukchi from the Loren camp. Rumors had reached them that people were being hired for work at the Cultural Base and that the workers received money for which one could buy goods just as if the bills were fox skins. Formerly money was unknown to them, and all trade was conducted on the basis of barter.

The elderly Chukcha had brought his son to find a job for him.

"Where is the school chief?" he asked.

He was led to the teachers' room. The Chukcha sat down on a chair and began to fill his pipe in silence. His son stood in the middle of the room, staring about the walls and the ceiling. After lighting the pipe the father caught his son's eye and told him something with a slight silent movement of the lips.

The son immediately sat down on a chair.

"He is deaf," the father explained, pointing to his ears. "No speak. Good head. Strong hands. Wants to work."

"How will he work for us? How will he talk?"

The Chukcha took two puffs on his pipe without removing it from his mouth.

"No need talk to him. Show what work he has to do, show once, only once."

We were not very willing to take someone with such a handicap, but we decided that there would not have been much occasion to talk to him, anyway, even if he were not deaf, for our teachers were almost deaf and dumb themselves, not knowing the Chukchi language. We decided to hire the boy.

"His name is Lyatuge," his father said. "If you move your lips slowly, Lya-tu-ge, he will understand you."

The father showed us how to speak only moving our lips. Noticing his father's explanations, Lya-

tuge smiled pleasantly and nodded in assent.

The father soon left and Lyatuge remained in the school's service.

It turned out that Lyatuge had one more defect; he had never before seen a stove. The stove, and particularly the iron door, interested him greatly, but he had no idea what to do with them. Lyatuge would go over to the stove and feel the door. He would open and close it, shut it tight, and, stepping back, examine it with satisfaction.

Late at night, remaining alone in the school, he would walk from one stove to the other, open the door of each stove, carefully scrutinize the fire, and smile to himself. Finally, seating himself in front of a stove, he would put his foot inside, moving it from one end to the other, evidently exploring this treasure house of warmth. Then Lyatuge would pull out his foot and walk off, leaving a trail of ashes in his wake.

For a whole week one of our men gave him detailed instructions on tending the furnace, showing with mimicry what was to be done. Lyatuge would smile and nod as if saying that he understood everything.

Then one day Lyatuge began to mutter and with gestures asked that he be permitted to fire a stove himself. He swiftly pulled out his knife and began to whittle splinters. The shavings did not fall, but gathered at the base of the splinter, forming a crown of shavings. This is how the Chukchi start a bonfire in the tundra. After preparing the splinters Lyatuge showed them to his teacher.

"That's very good," the teacher said. "I can see where you will soon beat your teacher."

Lyatuge began to work by himself.

The very same day he treated himself to a dose of carbon monoxide, for he did not very well understand the importance of shutting the stove at the proper time. He felt something was wrong and he ran back and forth all evening, shutting the stoves still tighter. But matters were going from bad to worse. On the verge of collapse, he finally ran to his instructor on stove matters. Judging by the frightened look on Lyatuge's face, the teacher decided the school was on fire, and ran to the building.

Soon Lyatuge collapsed and was taken to the hospital. He recovered the next day and after his one unsuccessful debut became an excellent stove tender.

His next duty consisted in washing the floors. Lyatuge was no adept in this, either, and, what is more, he never even suspected that it could be done. A walrus skin serves as a floor in the *yaranga* and is never washed, for water would spoil the skin. The dirt, however, is regularly swept out of the *yaranga*.

When he was shown how floors are washed, Lyatuge laughed heartily. But as long as this was a part of his duties he diligently learned to do it.

Several months passed, and Lyatuge mastered the work demanded of him in "the *yaranga* of the palefaces."

One evening I heard a light tapping on my door.

"Come in," I said.

No one entered, however. I went on with my work, paying no attention to the incident. The knocking sounded again. I rose, opened the door and saw Lyatuge, standing with a piece of paper in his hand, his face beaming. He had observed that the *tangi* knock on the door before entering someone's else's room, and he had done the same but, being deaf, had not heard my permission to enter. I motion-

ed him to come in and take a seat. Lyatuge handed me the piece of paper.

"Comrade, give me one pack cigarettes, nothing smoke," was written on the paper.

I thought at first that one of the pupils had written it for him, but then I was struck by the idea that he had possibly himself done it. The pupils weren't able to write so well yet. I took a sheet of paper and wrote the following Chukchi words in Russian characters: "Did you write it?"

Eyes shining, Lyatuge moved his lips, saying "*Gim*" (I), and then he wrote the word on a piece of paper.

I took out three packs of cigarettes and gave them to him. Not one of his people had as yet appreciated the value of education as this deaf and dumb boy.

It turned out that Lyatuge had made good use of his stay in school and had spent every free moment in the class room. He would sit quietly in the corner, the teachers not suspecting that he was avidly absorbing whatever knowledge he could get.

In the beginning the teachers themselves had to resort quite frequently to sign language. Instruction was conducted primarily by visual method, which proved comprehensible even to the deaf and dumb Lyatuge. As I learned subsequently, he was helped in his studies by two of his friends at the school, Tagrai and Rintytegin.

Lyatuge used to come to see me often. Once I showed him how the deaf and dumb converse on the Big Land. I had never studied the signs of the deaf and dumb, and only by chance had seen how they converse. I took the short word "nose," and after spelling out the separate letters with my fingers, pointed to my nose. Lyatuge was so overjoyed, he jumped from his chair and repeated the exercise with his fingers.

He laughed as he endlessly repeated this word. Next I took the word "ear" and spelled it out. Lyatuge watched me with bated breath, his eyes shining.

These two words were all I could show him, but that was enough. They stimulated Lyatuge to invent other letters and letter combinations. He actually created his own alphabet and mastered it fully. It was too bad, however, that no one was patient enough to learn it, although Lyatuge was eager to teach anyone who manifested the slightest interest. A year later, during his vacation, he taught his father to understand him and even to talk to him. In later years, when special schools for adult illiterates were established, Lyatuge's father learned to read very rapidly. The sign alphabet proved very useful.

As time went on we began to give short written instructions to Lyatuge and he took special pride in fulfilling them.

He came to love his work deeply, for it opened an entirely new world to him.

Once Lyatuge fell ill and a Chukcha boy brought a note from him: "No wash floor, head aches."

We set out to visit him at once. He was lying in bed, a wet reindeer skin on his head. He was evidently very sick, but a smile never left his face.

The doctor gave orders that Lyatuge be taken to the hospital at once, and he was laid up there for four days. When he received his wages at the end of the month, he was very much surprised at being paid for the four days.

It was as yet very difficult to explain to him the Soviet system of social insurance, and Lyatuge took it as a sign of our friendly attitude to him.

A yaranga

The greatest difficulty in enrolling pupils for the boarding school was met with among the parents. Managing the children from the moment they arrived at school seemed easy by comparison. Everything depended on the parents. How would they react to our unusual proposition?

They were familiar with the school in Wellen. But there the parents parted with their children for only several hours a day. The problem was much more complex with a boarding school, so unlike the familiar *yarangi*, where the children had to be entrusted to strangers, the *tangi*.

The Chukchi love their children deeply. They grow terribly lonesome if they do not see them, even if it is only for several days. I have never heard of Chukchi parents beating their children, whom they regard as equals and speak to as if they were adults. A child to the Chukchi is primarily a true friend rather than a daughter or a son.

Would they entrust their children to us?

These were the doubts which assailed the teachers.

We decided to tour the settlements to enroll pupils for our school.

Yandagai was the first settlement we visited. It consisted of thirty *yarangi*, all situated at the foot of a mountain. In the center stood the tent of the chairman of the settlement Soviet and we headed for it.

A stocky, solid man of fifty came out from the *yaranga*. He was dressed in a short fur-lined coat, short fur boots of reindeer skin, and leather trousers.

The top of his bare head was closely clipped. His disheveled hair, hanging down at the sides, was held by a ribbon of seal skin. A blue bead was suspended on the ribbon.

A knife in a wooden sheath was attached to the leather belt.

"The school chief has come!" he exclaimed, and extended his hand genially.

To shake hands with the *tangi* was a right enjoyed only by him. At that time the Chukchi still were under the impression that every *tang* was a chieftain. This belief had been drummed into them by traders, smugglers and adventurers who had come to these parts in the past for easy pickings.

Ulkhvurgyn, as the chairman of the Soviet was called, had been elected chief of the settlement and had the right to shake hands with us by virtue of his office.

"Come to my *yaranga* to drink tea," he proposed.

A large tea kettle was on the fire. We sat on walrus skins, our feet crossed. Ulkhvurgyn's daughter-in-law served the tea.

Her attire consisted of a loin cloth around her hips. The other women were similarly clad. The men wore fur trousers.

Here in Ulkhvurgyn's *yaranga* the environment was somewhat different from that of the other tents. It was noticeably cleaner, and the hostess did not wash the dishes by licking them with her tongue; she used a comparatively clean rag. Ulkhvurgyn had come in contact with the *tangi* and adopted some of their ways.

A portrait of Lenin and some very complex diagram were pinned to the reindeer skin wall by sealbone "tacks." An alarm clock was ticking in a corner. No one ever consulted the alarm clock; its sole function was to add *bon ton*, and when a visitor was expected Ulkhvurgyn would pick up the clock by the "ear" and wind it. It was therefore not surprising that the time indicated on the clock had no relation whatsoever to the actual hour of the day.

Neither the clock nor the diagram could be of any use to Ulkhvurgyn. He had merely seen all these things at the Cultural Base, on boats, and was imitating the *tangi* as best he could. Ulkhvurgyn received a real sound explanation in his native tongue of what these objects were somewhat later, from the children who attended our school.

As long as the conversation touched general subjects, everyone in the tent was somewhat indifferent; they all sat quietly without interrupting the conversation. But the moment we introduced the subject of the boarding school all grew alert.

An elderly man, Tnayrgyn, sat next to me. He listened carefully as though fearing to miss a single word. When I finished he said:

"We cannot travel with the children to school. We have to hunt, go after seal, put out traps for foxes. We have to eat meat and where will we take it? Who will give us food?"

The old man could not for a moment see the little children live without their parents, away from the settlement, away from their *yarangi*.

He understood our proposal to mean that the parents would have to bring their children to school every day. I explained to him that the children would stay with us and that we, the teachers, would take care of them. The parents, on the other hand, would be able to visit us from time to time and see how the children were getting along and what we were doing.

The old man sat on the floor, sucking on his big wooden pipe, deeply engrossed in thought. All were silent and it became clear to us that the entire venture was in his hands.

Even the chairman of the Soviet,

Ulkhvurgyn, waited patiently for the old man's word.

The old man hesitated. He said that to "speak from a paper" as the Russians do is indeed a very amusing thing. But what for? Hasn't a man a tongue to speak? Or have the Oravetlan (Chukchi) forgotten their native tongue? Is their language so bad that people should be ashamed of its sound? True, the old man said, this amusement could bring no harm. Let children indulge in it, if they liked it. But why was it necessary to take the children away to the *yaranga* of the *tangi* in order to amuse them?

"Well," I replied, "Lenin, who looks at us from the wall, said that all people will live well only when they build their own life, when they become educated."

The old man coughed, removed his pipe and stuck it into the mouth of an old woman sitting next to him. Looking at me earnestly he said:

"You are saying things I can't understand. Doesn't he know" (pointing to Lenin's picture) "that we are making our own life as it is? Do the *tangi* kill walruses for us? Or do they tend the herds of reindeer? Or do they chase after the foxes? No! We do all these things ourselves. Our hunters have much sense. I think the *tangi* understand life less than we do, because they would be lost in the tundra, they could not live here. *Tangi* always sit in trade *yaranga* and take skins from us. *Tangi* are strange people. They don't understand our ways. *Tangi* take our fur without sense. Sometimes for best fox we get less tobacco than for poor skin. What can we do? Tea, tobacco, bullets, rifles, sugar lie not on our shores, but on shores of seas where *tangi* live. Only recently one of our men has become a dweller of a trade *yaranga*; he changes our skins for goods with understanding."

The old man kept on elaborating his point for a long time. He spoke slowly, with an exceptional calm. He frequently paused, asking:

"You understand?"

"Yes, old man, you speak clearly," I reiterated each time.

The old man spoke willingly and was evidently pleased with himself.

All the others, including the chairman of the Soviet, Ulkhvurgyn, frequently made approving remarks.

After each word of approval the old man puffed, and drew on his pipe with great dignity.

"Never have I spoken to a *tangi* as well as I do to you. You listen well," he remarked.

I was aware of the attention old people demand, and indeed listened very carefully to him. It was clear to us that we could win his good will by our attention.

"Old man, you said that in the trade *yaranga* a new man is expertly exchanging your furs," I began. "This man comes from your people. All this was arranged by Lenin. He said that when trade here would be done not only by *tangi*, but by yourselves as well, by all of us together, your life would become better."

I purposely paused here and the old man took the cue.

"He has right thoughts in his head," said the old man, looking at the portrait. "Will he come to our land?" he asked.

"No, he died. But we all remember what he said and what he taught the people. Now, we, all of us, are building a new life, according to Lenin's word. In order to learn how to trade it is necessary to learn how to 'speak from the paper.' This, my good old man, is no amusement. One cannot do without it. A man cannot

remember everything. The Chukchi bring blue foxes, white foxes, bear, reindeer skins, ermine. Many wish to buy things on credit. You give a hunter goods and then forget, but the paper helps to remember."

The Chukchi like to trade and they would like to see their own Chukcha as "boss of the cooperative store." Evidently a thought passed through his mind: "Perhaps my son will also be in a big trade *yaranga* filled with goods."

"Good," said the old man. "Let the children live at your school. We will see how they get along. If everything goes well, let them learn how to 'speak from paper'! May nothing bad happen to them. And if anything does, we take them away from you. What do you think, Ulkhvurgyn?"

"I have the same thoughts as you," the chairman of the Soviet replied.

The Soviet system was as yet very young on the Chukotka peninsula. The authority of the elders was still very great and could not be ignored.

"And what will they eat there? Where will they sleep?" a woman suddenly asked in a hushed voice, but the question was addressed to the old man and not to me.

The old man repeated her words to me.

"So the women are also thinking about the school," I said to myself and replied:

"They will eat walrus, seal and reindeer meat, drink tea with sugar and bread, eat soup. They will study in one *yaranga* and sleep in others."

"Where will you take meat for all of them? Much meat needed."

"We will buy meat from the hunters. You will help us, since your children will eat it. You yourselves wouldn't want your children to go hungry in our place."

"Good," several voices were heard at once.

We spent several days in the place, talking to the population. It was of the utmost importance that the enrollment should not fail in the very first settlement.

Things were going very well.

We were making ready to leave for the next settlement when suddenly we learned to our consternation that there was a rumor all along the coast to the effect that the Russians had put up many buildings, and were soon to swoop down on the Chukchi settlements and take the children away. The children were to be kept in wooden *yarangas*, to become used to the ways of the *tangi*, and were then to be taken to the 'Big Land' in a boat, never to return to Chukotka land.

Many fathers stayed away from hunting, fearing that in their absence the Russians would come for their children. It was clear that these disrupting rumors were the work of the *shamans*. We had to fight them if we wished to succeed.

This struggle was complicated and difficult. It would do no good to say: "The *shamans* are lying, don't listen to them." Such general statements condemning the *shamans* would accomplish nothing. Something else was needed to combat them.

We postponed our departure and a general meeting was called for the evening. The entire population turned up.

"What's happened? What will the conversation be about?" everyone wondered.

When all were assembled I said:

"Today we learned of some bad rumors. You all know about them now. If news comes to the settlement it goes to all the *yarangas*. Correct?"

Several Chukchi spoke up confirming my words.

"I don't know and I don't care to know who invented this rumor. It pains the ear to listen to it. Why? Because it is wrong news, it is false news. Did we come with rifles to take away your children? Not at all. We came to speak to you in a good way, in a quiet and modest way. Here, ask the old man: did we speak badly to him? Tell them, old man, how did we speak to you, good or bad?"

"Yes, our conversation was hearty, a good conversation," the old man confirmed, and all the excited faces turned at once in his direction.

"We do not intend to do anything by force," I continued. "We do not wish to do any harm to your people. See for yourselves. We wish to arrange things with your approval. Long before the first boat will come, your children will return home for the whole summer. Now use your judgment and see whether it can be true that we intend to carry off your children 'on boats' to a distant land."

The Chukchi were silent. Finally Ulkhvurgyn spoke up:

"I traveled whole summer on Russian boat. When boat returned from Wrangel Island it had little coal, but the captain brought me home just the same. I lived long among the Russians. They regard the Chukchi people like brothers. They had little food left, but when they put me ashore I was given enough to eat. They shared with me like good hunters. I think empty news came to our settlement. It is a shame even for a woman to make up such news," Ulkhvurgyn ended.

"Let the children go. To go back on a word is not worthy of good hunter," said the old man Tnayrgyn and the crowd began to disperse.

"You stay here for a day or two," Ulkhvurgyn told us. "I will go to the other settlements and tell them the latest Yangadai news."

News that the Yangadai Chukchi had decided to place their children in the boarding school traveled with lightning speed. This was the first time such news circulated on the shores of the icy seas and it made our work easier in the other settlements. After a month's travel we enrolled thirty-five boys and girls.

TIKHON SEMUSHKIN

(To be continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

American Success Story

The favorite American story has always been that of the poor boy who worked hard and became rich or famous (but preferably rich). It is the Horatio Alger story, the success story, the golden legend of American individualism, now fading into the past. The League of American Writers has its own story to tell, but this is a story of a different type, one that I hope will contribute to the new legend of American collectivism.

The League was born at the First American Writers' Congress, in April 1935. The Congress had been large and vigorous beyond our hopes, but the League which it fathered was at first a puny child, and nobody knew whether it would survive its infancy. By the end of that year it had both feet in the grave and was hanging on to life by its fingertips. There were only about a hundred dues-paying members, most of whom were closely identified with the radical movement; we hadn't yet been able to make an impression on the great body of well intentioned middle-class writers who are essential to anti-fascist work on a broad scale. We had been forced to give up our office and discharge our paid secretary for lack of funds. Our one activity was a lecture series, rather poorly attended. The League existed in a state of suspended animation, like a bear in midwinter; but the bear can live off its own fat, and the League had none.

The one League group that held regular meetings was the sub-committee on publicity of the lecture committee. Isidor Schneider, Marjorie Fischer and one or two others used to meet in my study every Saturday afternoon to plan and publicize the lecture that would be given a week from the following Monday. The funds of the League, entirely derived from these lectures, were kept in a little tin box. At first it was nearly empty; then, as the lectures caught on, drawing a bigger audience each week, the box began to overflow with coins and greenbacks. It will seem strange to you in the Soviet Union that money should be so all-important; you can't imagine that any culturally valuable organization should be allowed to die for lack of it; but many of them die in America for exactly that reason. It was the money in the little tin box that carried our child through its first year. The following autumn we rented an office and hired a full-time secretary and thought that the worst of our troubles were over.

They weren't. During the second year we lost some members as a result of political dissension and others because they thought we weren't working hard enough. Our second lecture series was a failure. It was given in the auditorium of a big old-fashioned hotel, which we left in the middle of the season when we found that the management was refusing admittance to Negroes. The new hall we rented was inconvenient and poorly lighted, and it was empty too—at least our speakers couldn't fill it. That led to another financial crisis in the League. But meanwhile our activities were expanding and we were finding new members, who brought us new resources, intellectual and financial. Soon we were all busy preparing for another national congress.

The Second American Writers' Congress, in June 1937, was larger than the first and the delegates were much more representative of American literature as a whole. The open meeting drew a huge crowd. The topic discussed by most of the speakers —including Ernest Hemingway, who was making his first appearance on a public platform—was aid for the Spanish Republic. At the closed sessions, I felt that many of the speeches were too carefully prepared. Americans are proud of their talent for planning, and in this case they had carried it too far, leaving not enough time for informal discussion from the floor. There was time, however, for the inevitable scene provoked by the Trotskyites. It was less serious in New York than in cities closer to the heart of the conflict, and it was not without its completely ludicrous aspects. Afterwards the Trotskyites attacked the Congress for not being sufficiently revolutionary. Their attacks were published in bourgeois magazines, including those financed by J. P. Morgan and Company. They objected to a united front with the New Dealers, while making their own united front with J. P. Morgan.

This noisy interlude had little or no effect on the growth of the League. With more members, including many of the most famous American writers; with more money in the treasury and with an efficient new secretary, Franklin Folsom, we were ready to launch into work on a wider scale. Our central purpose, of course, was and is to fight against fascism on the literary front. But the specific nature of our activities has been determined by the political situation in the United States.

Here the civil war between the Left and the Right, between workers and capitalists, is less clearly defined than in Western Europe. The people are soundly democratic in their instincts. A recent poll showed that 51 per cent of the voters favored the Spanish Loyalists and only 16 per cent favored Franco—but note that 33 per cent still described themselves as "neutral or undecided." Another poll showed that 56 per cent of the voters felt less friendly toward the German government than toward any other in the world. Next in order of unpopularity came Japan and Italy—but note that some voters also classed Russia among the nations to which they were unfriendly, largely as a result of the ferocious anti-Russian campaign now being waged by a section of the Catholic hierarchy. The public is misinformed. Roosevelt as a popular leader is more astute and determined than Léon Blum in France, but his supporters are badly organized. The two great political parties are office-holding corporations not corresponding to any real economic groupings; there are tory Democrats and liberal Republicans. The fascists here are getting bolder, but haven't found a leader; Father Coughlin is a dangerous windbag and Wall Street hesitates to support him, though he seems to be friendly with Henry Ford. The favorite stratagem of the American pro-fascists is to praise old-fashioned Americanism and attack both fascism and Communism, while secretly accepting help from the Nazis. Meanwhile the liberals are split by their attitude toward war; all of them want to avoid it, but some of them labor under the delusion that war can be avoided by isolating ourselves, by building a wall around the United States and making it a closed garden of democracy, aloof and pure in a world of national and class rivalries. They are honest men, but they add to the confusion of thought that reigns everywhere, from the two houses of Congress down to the farmers chewing tobacco in a crossroads grocery store.

In this situation, we feel that the chief duty of the League is to provide a center for definite anti-fascist activities among writers. We think that their ideas can best be clarified by actual experience, by *prax'is*. Meanwhile we want to bring them closer to the labor unions. We want to defend their work against censorship and slander. We want to create a wider audience for good writing; this too is an anti-fascist activity. We want to discuss our common problems as writers and citizens and thus help to educate our members, but without moving so fast

that those who are politically conscious get out of touch with those who are merely willing and sympathetic; the League must be held together.

I can't say that we have succeeded in all these aims; we are only moving toward them step by step. But they are so plainly necessary that the League has continued to grow in size and influence. It now has more than seven hundred members, with chapters in New York, Connecticut, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco and Hollywood. It includes not only the American writers who are most active politically but also those who are ablest in a strictly literary sense. For instance, the O. Henry Committee recently awarded three prizes for the best short stories of 1938; all three of them went to League members. Another prize, for the book of the last three years "most likely to become a classic," went to Van Wyck Brooks, a vice-president of the League; and these are two examples among many.

Recent meetings of the executive council—the presidium, you would call it—have been quite different from the meetings three years ago in my little whitewashed study. The subjects on the agenda are vastly more important, and they are approached with a greater feeling of responsibility. Here are a few of the activities discussed at meetings this winter:

A sale of manuscripts contributed by members of the League, with the proceeds to be divided between the German refugees and the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Last year our manuscript sale yielded more than $4,000 for Spanish relief.

A pamphlet in which American writers and statesmen take a stand against anti-semitism, which is now spreading dangerously as a result of propaganda by the Nazis and Father Coughlin.

Plans for establishing and supporting a home for exiled German writers in a French villa which has been placed at our disposal. By the time this letter is published, the home will be in operation.

An open meeting with critics to discuss the unfair reviews or the total silence that radical books have been receiving in the bourgeois press.

Specific proposals for cooperating with labor unions and contributing to their newspapers and magazines.

Active support of the Federal Writers' Project, a government organization that has been giving work to about 2,000 unemployed writers. These have been compiling a guidebook of the nation, state by state, a most valuable undertaking. But the new Congress, dominated by Babbitts and reactionaries, threatens to drop it completely.

An investigation of the Dies Committee, a group of Red-baiting congressmen who have been collecting false and even preposterous testimony against liberal organizations. We plan to show the close connection between the Dies Committee and the American fascists.

Finally, we are preparing for a third American Writers' Congress to be held in New York early in June; it promises to be even larger and more inclusive than the two that preceded it. We hope that some Soviet writers can be present, and we hope to see other Soviet writers at the International Congress in Mexico that same month, to which we are planning to send a large delegation.

I have spoken throughout this list in terms of plans and projects, but the truth is that all these activities are already under way; and so are a dozen others. For example, regional congresses, like the large one recently held in Connecticut. For example, a writers' school conducted by the New York chapter, with half a dozen well attended classes. For example, a printed bulletin distributed to our members, a sort of League magazine. For example—but it is enough to say that the League after fumbling and stumbling has now reached the stage of practical work. It began as a sickly child, but it promises to be a busy and healthy man. To writers in the Soviet Union, whose organization we regard as an older brother, we send our warmest fraternal greetings.

New York *MALCOLM COWLEY*

Soviet Critics on German Anti-Fascist Literature

Contemporary German literature lives only in the works of the emigré writers, who are active fighters in the struggle against fascism. All that has been written by the official "eulogists" of Hitler within Germany during the six years of fascist dictatorship cannot be considered as literature.

The great traditions of German literature are carried on by the writers and poets who have taken with them into exile their deep faith in the enslaved German people and fidelity to its cultural and revolutionary past. What is perhaps one of the most powerful and deepest expressions of this love for their native land, oppressed and defiled by fascism, is to be found in *The Seeker of Happiness and the Seven Burdens*, a new volume of verse by Johann Becher, one of the most gifted German poets whose creative work reveals a constant growth.

"Becher sings not only of the German people of today," writes Evguenia Knipovich in the magazine *Oktyabr (October)*. "The revolutionary and cultural traditions of the German people, the leaders and soldiers of the peasant wars, the thinkers and artists of the past are set up in his poetry as a contrast to fascism. . . . Becher hates fascism because it has defiled the very nature of his native land. Bringing to mind fond memories of cities, villages, forests and the smell of his country's fields, the exiled poet forgets not for a moment that in these forests was shed the blood of the people shot down 'while attempting to escape'; that fields cultivated by German peasants lie next to the barbed wire fences of concentration camps, where the finest sons of Germany are languishing; that the scent of blossoming meadows is smothered in the stench of the slavery which fascist dictatorship has brought in its wake."

"Hatred of barbarity, of the shameful oppression in present-day Germany," writes Georg Lukacs, referring to Becher in the Russian edition of *International Literature*, "has never yet been voiced with such force by German anti-fascist poets as by Becher. And this is precisely because this hate grows organically out of the contrast between fascist tyranny on the one hand and the grandeur of Germany's past and the splendor of its nature on the other. . . .

"Fascist slavery is contrasted with the beauty and riches of Germany and the happy, prosperous life that awaits the German working people as reward for their war of liberation from the fascist yoke. Thus Becher paints a deep colorful background for the present struggle of the German people, and outlines brilliant prospects for the future."

"All that Becher has seen and experienced in foreign countries," writes his Russian translator M. Zhivov, in a preface to a volume of Becher's verse in Russian, "has strengthened his love for the land of Socialism, for the fatherland of the working people throughout the world. . . . In his latest book Becher sings the land of Socialism, that unshakable force towering over the world of robbery and violence, the world of exploitation and war."

The theme of struggle against barbarity and oppression, for the cause of freedom and mankind, the theme of *militant* humanism dominates contemporary German anti-fascist literature.

This is the main theme of recent historical novels, and notably Heinrich Mann's *Youth and the Manhood of King Henry IV* which is known to the Soviet reader of the Russian edition of *International Literature*.

What Soviet critics emphazise in their analysis of these two novels is the exceptional craftsmanship of Heinrich Mann. A revolutionary democrat, he is the first German anti-fascist writer to create a hero, a leader, who single-handed fights reaction, stagnation and obscurantism. The tremendous force of the novel lies in the fact that Henry IV as depicted by Mann is a real, living person who is near and dear to the fighters of our own times, his remote descendents. We see

him in many moods, we get to know his traits, his unquenchable love of life and will to conquer, his persistence and determination, and his respect for daily labor out of which great deeds grow.

"The determination to fight and conquer," declares E. Knipovich in her thorough study of Heinrich Mann's novels in a recent issue of the Russian edition of *International Literature*, "remained with Henry IV to the very end. Even in his declining years, surrounded by murderers in his own home and realizing that he was alone in his fight against both the old and new enemies of mankind and reason, Henry did not lay down his arms."

"Heinrich Mann's historical novels," Knipovich concludes, "are timely in the truest and finest sense of the word. Wisely and rationally he links present day humanism with the great humanist traditions of the past. These books could have been written only by a tribune of the German People's Front, only by a person who himself knew how heroes are born and how great historic deeds arise out of routine work."

Gustav Regler, another German anti-fascist writer and a member of the younger set, has written a novel on one of the heroic figures in German history, Joss Fritz, leader of the peasant movement of the sixteenth century. A fiery revolutionary, Joss Fritz grew and matured together with the movement he was leading.

An interesting comparison may be drawn between the heroes of Heinrich Mann and Gustav Regler. Whereas the tremendous personality of Mann's Henry IV throws the masses into the shade, and this, we daresay, is a serious defect of the novel, the people in Regler's *Seed Time* are not only the background for the personality of Joss Fritz, but are also a vital historical factor themselves.

In *Seed Time* Regler tells of the *Bundschuh*,[1] the conspiratorial peasant union that paved the way for the Peasant War of 1525. The novel ends as Joss Fritz, after the second defeat of the *Bundschuh*, goes into hiding with the union's banner hidden under his shirt. The symbolism of this conclusion is emphasized by Regler himself in the concluding lines of the book, in which he bids farewell to his hero:

"Your cause will not die, Joss Fritz, and no matter what happens, the imprints of the Shoe will remain forever on all the roads of our country over which it has passed. These roads will never be deserted, Joss Fritz. Do you have a premonition of this now you are rising to meet the awakening day?"

[1] League of the Shoe.

Alfred Döblin, who for years had been an outstanding figure in the German expressionist school, also turns to the past. His novel *The Green Tiger* is based on the well-known theocratic communal republic of South American Indians founded in 1610 by Jesuit Fathers and destroyed a century and a half later by the Spanish monarchy. (Paul Lafargue called it "a social experiment and at that one of the most interesting and unusual of any carried out.")

Here is what Julius Hay, prominent German-Hungarian anti-fascist writer, says of this novel in the Russian edition of *International Literature:*

"The novels of which *The Green Tiger* is the second and last, unfold before us a horrible truth: peoples may die out. Whole nations may be murdered; they may be led to suicide.

"But there is yet another truth that may be gleaned from these novels, namely, that a dying people may be saved. How? *The Green Tiger* shows us how it is *impossible* to save them. But seeing very concretely and very clearly *why* this is impossible, we come to understand that there is yet another way which can make it possible to save them from extinction. And so, peoples may die out. But we knew this before. There are many such instances in history. What Döblin does, however, is to make us *live through* the process of the dying away of the Indian peoples so acutely and so directly that we feel like touching ourselves and asking: 'Are we still alive? . . .' Even among the scenes of massacre, burnings at the stake, plague, starvation, waves of suicide and of other forms of individual and mass death that we stumble across literally on every page of these books, we see and sense the overwhelming tenacity of life. . . .

"Does fascism represent a lesser threat to the life of the white man than the invasion of the whites meant for the colored tribes? Although the author does not raise this question the reader cannot but ask it of himself at every step. Is our danger greater or less? We do not know. But we are clinging to life with more firmness than the Indians clung to theirs. We have more experience and knowledge. We, peoples of the twentieth century, are not dying!"

In Döblin's latest work Julius Hay sees a turn from expressionism and mysticism to realism, "Döblin's progress along the path of realism and humanism," the critic declares, "and his sincere resolution to follow his slo-

gan of 'humanizing' literature, draw him ever closer to the German people."

Arnold Zweig's latest novel, *Making of a King* and, indeed, his entire monumental cycle entitled *The War of White People*, is chronologically more timely than any novel mentioned so far. The book, the fourth in the cycle, deals with the collapse of the German empire after the first imperialist World War. The novel unreels the events of the year 1918: the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, the German occupation of the Ukraine and the Baltic states, and so on.

"The great merit of the *Making of a King*," declares the magazine *Oktyabr*, "is that this novel strips German imperialism of its claims to be characterized as an abstract 'evil power.' The picture of German concentration camps in Lithuania; of the terrifying efficiency of the German General Staff, which reaches out its tentacles into every sphere of activity in the occupied country; of the insults to the Jewish population; of commanders, prototypes of the future fascists, Colonel Mutsius, the head of the espionage department, and Siwindt, chief of police—all this builds up a genuine and unforgettable portrayal of German imperialism.

"The subject of the novel, namely, Germany's attempt to establish a buffer state against the Soviet Union on the occupied territory of Lithuania, is likewise very interesting. With merciless clarity and biting irony Zweig paints the partitioning of the live bear's skin, the struggle among the various groups—courtiers, landlords, bankers and the military—each of which wants to put its own puppet on the throne, to exploit the conquered country to its own advantage."

What the magazine considers to be the novel's chief merit, however, is the fact that, in addition to elaborating problems of abstract ethics and morals, to portraying the struggle of the ruling cliques, and the bourgeois-liberal attempt to smooth the existing contradictions, Zweig also shows the "subterranean waters"—as he calls the last chapters of his book—that is, waves of fatigue that were gripping the nation, and indignation and wrath. This was wearing away the foundations of the German empire from within. In the novel the young officer Winfred becomes the central figure reflecting the tendencies inimical to German imperialism. At first he was not a conscious enemy of German imperialism. But the chain of events, such as his life in the frightful Malyata concentration camp, into which he was thrown as a result of the conspiracy of Ober-Ost (the high command of the eastern front), transformed the unwitting opponent of German imperialism into a *conscious* fighter who openly links his fate with that of the masses of soldiers, who feel nothing but disgust for the war that has already been going on for four long years.

"Arnold Zweig's *opus* is not yet completed," writes E. Knipovich. "Yet its general lines and direction are already apparent. And this mighty edifice will not have merely an historical significance. Have the 'cannibals' of German imperialism and the military adventurists, engulfing countries and enslaving peoples, receded into the past? Is not the 'totalitarian policy,' which subordinates Germany's economic, political and social life to the interests of military aggression, a contemporary phenomenon? . . .

"Arnold Zweig understands that all the forces of the past are omens of those taking part in the struggle today, and he portrays them from this angle. This is why his cycle is directed not only against imperialist Germany *of the past*. On the basis of this past Arnold Zweig has created a brilliant anti-fascist novel, which unmasks the military aggressors today and explodes their current nationalistic demagogy and their legends about the World War which have been created to help pave the way for another war of plunder now.

"The novel contains no political declarations. Yet it is natural that the artist who could *so* see the face of German imperialism, could *so* understand that the revolutionary cause attracts all that are alive and thinking among the German intellectuals, that this artist called himself, and with full right, a 'militant comrade-in-arms of the Soviet Union.'"

The Kumiaks, a novel by Hans Marchwitza, another well-known German anti-fascist writer, a former miner and a combatant in the International Brigade in Spain, has recently been translated into the Russian. The book, written in 1934, stands on the border-line between the historical and modern novel.

Hans Marchwitza handles a theme which he knows thoroughly: the life of miners. The action of *The Kumiaks* is laid in the Ruhr region at the time of the French occupation in 1923. Peter Kumiak, the main character, is an ignorant and downtrodden farm laborer who after twenty years of miserable toil on the estate of a Prussian junker decides to try his luck in the mines of the Ruhr, in the hope of finding a more bearable life. Throughout the novel we witness the gradual growth of class consciousness in Kumiak.

Analyzing the novel, B. Etingin, in

Literaturnoye Obozrenie (Literary Review) states that "Marchwitza has made a mistake in setting Peter Kumiak up as the hero of his novel, for Kumiak is not typical of German miners. The writer should have given more attention to the progressive workers of the Ruhr, to those who afterwards fought against the German bourgeoisie."

Marchwitza seems to hint that people like Kumiak have not disappeared in present-day fascist Germany, where miners, as well as other toilers, live under conditions much worse than those he describes. Marchwitza, a genuine anti-fascist fighter, now stands in the front ranks in the struggle against fascism. In his recent broadcast to the German miners over the underground radio, "Station of Liberty," Marchwitza spoke to them of the lessons of past struggles and urged them to unity and solidarity.

Anna Segher's *Liberation* is another anti-fascist novel on the life of miners. It, too, deals with the problem of revolutionizing the backward elements among the proletariat, although it employs different artistic methods.

Briefly, the contents of the novel are as follows: As a result of a catastrophe, a group of miners are buried alive. Only after eight frightful days are they rescued. However, life on earth after their "liberation" seems even more horrible. It is later, when Bench, the central character, becomes vitally interested in politics, after he joins the ranks of the revolutionaries, that the hour of his liberation arrives. Anna Seghers paints this long and thorny path with all the force of her powerful, grim realism.

"In *Liberation* Anna Seghers is sparing of words and declarations," states the publisher's preface to the Russian translation. "She is laconic, hard and manly. Yet this stern novel contains much lyricism, warmth and a deep faith in the suffering proletariat yearning for the majestic ideals of the revolution."

Property, a drama of peasant life by Julius Hay, was recently published in the Soviet Union. A. Deutsch, writing in the Russian edition of *International Literature*, stated that the dramatist "has raised to philosophical heights the theme of capitalist property which cripples the mind and spirit of people. Reflecting on Mary's crime (Mary poisoned her husband and her tubercular daughter Sophie), one inevitably recalls the famous words of Marx on the role of crime in bourgeois civilization. . . . It seems to Mary that the world cannot renounce its lust for property, that the path the world follows will be the same, regardless of whether it is good or bad. She rises against all those who want to accuse her of having committed a crime. Her mind becomes completely warped; she affirms that there is no other way to acquire land than through inheritance, blood and crime.

" 'This is not true, there is another way!' Julius Hay, the author, seems to be saying in parentheses. But that leads to revolutionary struggle, to the liberation of the poverty-stricken peasantry, and is beyond Mary's reach."

At the same time the critic notes a certain unconvincingness, schematicism, in the portrayal of the revolutionaries and a quite apparent touch of mysticism and decadence.

Oskar Maria Graf, another prominent anti-fascist writer in exile, likewise paints a realistic and grim picture of the capitalist countryside, in particular his native Bavarian village. Soviet critics consider his latest book, *Anton Sittinger*, one of the most significant in contemporary German anti-fascist letters. In this novel Oscar Maria Graf paints a picture of the enemy of the revolution, correctly assuming that an enemy cannot be defeated if he is unknown. As a Soviet critic put it, "Graf depicts the environment favorable for the growth of the microbe of fascism. He engages in what we might call literary bacteriology."

Anton Sittinger represents a large canvas covering a period of twenty years, from the beginning of the World War to the seizure of power by the fascists in Germany. The main character is bureaucratic officialdom. Analyzing the novel, a Soviet critic, M. Zhivov, recently wrote:

"Anton Sittinger has all the vices of a bourgeois proprietor. In addition to the avarice and cupidity of a bourgeois and a bureaucrat, the author has bestowed on Sittinger all the characteristics of a philistine: cowardice, adaptibility, officiousness, petty passions, shallowness and disbelief. The author profoundly emphasized Sittinger's vices by having him secretly study philosophy and in it find peace of mind. Oscar Maria Graf thus wished to stress that the intelligentsia must probe its soul and see whether or not there is something in it similar to Sittinger's character."

Graf's novel, however, according to the critics, is not free of grave faults. "The author is so carried away in his masterly flaying of this philistine existence," writes T. Khmelnitsky in *Literaturni Sovremennik (Literary Contemporary)*, "that he forgets the immediate political aims of the anti-fascist movement: to fight for the 'man in the

street,' develop his social consciousness, carry on extensive agitational work with him, to win him, not to give the fascists an opportunity to gain a footing among white-collar workers, merchants and officials. . . . Graf denies the slightest possibility of any influence on the inert consciousness of the cowardly philistine. He flatly cuts off the path to the Left for him."

The first part of Lion Feuchtwanger's latest novel *Exile*, recently published in Russian, has called forth a great interest among Soviet readers. Although the further development of the novel is as yet not clear, Soviet critics are justified in seeing in *Exile* signs of great progress in Feuchtwanger's *Weltanschauung*.

"'The distressed guests,' the German emigrants—intellectuals and liberals," we read in the magazine *Oktyabr*, "are being forced to go through a severe school, to endure want, hard toil, hunger, and humiliation. These experiences will cleanse them of prejudices, of the illusions of being the select, a group apart from the people; the old social, political and moral habits and prejudices of these intellectuals have been uprooted and scattered to the winds, but the men will emerge out of the havoc as consistent and hardened fighters against fascism. The conversion of dreamy liberals into revolutionary democrats—that is, as much as we are able to judge from the first part, the theme of the novel."

"In *Exile*," remarks A. Deutsch in *Izvestia*, "one clearly feels Feuchtwanger's belief in the force of revolutionary struggle."

The sixth volume of the collected works of Thomas Mann, one of the greatest contemporary German writers, appeared last year in a Russian translation. Although the works contained in this volume were written some time ago (the play *Fiorentsa*, the idyll *Song About a Child* and a number of critical articles), Soviet critics note their timeliness in the light of the present-day anti-fascist struggle for the lofty ideals of humanism.

V. Alexandrov writes in his review *(Literaturnoye Obozrenie)* of the book:

"Already in these early works we clearly perceive the basic factors in Mann's conceptions; bourgeois vulgarity, aggressiveness, self-satisfaction and egoism are unbearable to him. . . . No matter how decadent the moods he comes in contact with, Thomas Mann maintains throughout a particular serenity, a calm clear-headedness, a serious, manly gentleness; he is 'an unflinching humanist,' to use the expression with which he characterized Goethe. Once he has exposed the contradictions in bourgeois civilization, he does not wish to gloss over them. Having intensely lived through the crisis in bourgeois ideology, he seeks a way out, a path to a healthier, really humane civilization.

"With what great indignation does he speak of the 'hyena-like prophecy' of Spengler, that 'defeatist of mankind'!

"True . . . it would be incorrect and harmful to deny the fairly strong influence of bourgeois decadency evident in Mann's works. But the essence of his writing is not determined by these influences and we are deeply convinced that the author of the *Buddenbrooks*, *Tonio Kröger* and *Royal Highness could not but become* an anti-fascist. Thomas Mann was led to the struggle against fascism by his attitude toward man, toward life, toward culture, by his basic principles and the entire inevitable logic of his creative growth."

In connection with the publication of the sixth volume of Thomas Mann's works, N. William-Wilmont has given an interesting analysis of this prominent writer as a thinker. (Russian edition of *International Literature.*) Against the background of the entire cultural scene of the period, William-Wilmont recreates Thomas Mann's philosophical development, beginning with the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, when "Mann did not confine himself to recording the 'social pathology' of his time, and to a certain degree recognized it as being not only inevitable but even . . . desirable."

The critic stresses Mann's eventual gravitation toward the realistic basis of German literature of the Lessing, Goethe and Schiller period; his dislike for the ideas of Stephan George and his "circle," which were reactionary in essence although "revolutionary" in form; and, finally, Mann's transition from a "spiritually aristocratic solitude" to active resistance to facism.

"Time forced Thomas Mann to abandon his position," further stated William-Wilmont. "War, revolution, the growth of fascism, and later its coming to power in Germany, did not allow Mann to remain a mere observer. He also realized that *to defend* the great progressive traditions of the past one must *fight* for them. It is this struggle and its logical development that finally placed him in the ranks of the irreconcilable fighters against fascist barbarity."

NEWS AND VIEWS

U.S.S.R.

SHEVCHENKO HONORED

Two hundred thousand people assembled for the unveiling in Kiev of a new statue to Taras Shevchenko, poet, father of Ukrainian literature, and revolutionary democrat. The great throng was like a living symbol of the triumph of the cause for which the poet fought, enduring exile and persecution—the cause of the people's liberation. Significant, too, was the presence at the meeting of delegates from all the Republics of the U.S.S.R., for Shevchenko sought the emancipation not only of his own people, the Ukrainians, but of all those oppressed in tsarist Russia. He was the friend and comrade-in-arms of all the foremost Russian democrats of his time, Chernyshevsky, Dobrolyubov and others.

"The words of Taras Shevchenko's call to a struggle against the age-old oppressors—the tsars, the landowning gentry and the capitalists—these words were near and dear to the Ukrainian poor and to the poor of the Russian, Kalmyk, Kirghiz, Georgian and all other peoples," said N. S. Khrushchev, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, in his speech at the unveiling.

"This is why the birthday of the great poet and revolutionary is celebrated throughout the great Union, in every fraternal republic, by every people."

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. marked the anniversary by a decision to name the Kiev Theater of Opera and Ballet and the Kiev State University after the poet, and to establish two Shevchenko Scholarships at the Leningrad Academy of Arts, the institution where the versatile Shevchenko developed another of his talents, that for drawing and painting.

The meeting held in the evening at the Kiev opera in honor of Shevchenko was but one of many in progress at the same time all over the U.S.S.R. The principal speech at Kiev was made by the young Ukrainian playwright, A. Y. Korneichuk. Greetings from the Byelorussian people were voiced by Yanka Kupala; from the Georgian people, by Sandro Euli; from the Armenian people, by Abov; from Azerbaijan, by Professor Rafili; from the Union of Soviet Artists, by S. Gerasimov.

Meetings and literary evenings in honor of Shevchenko were held all over the Soviet Union. In Leningrad, poets, writers and artists gathered at the Academy of Arts. In Moscow, a few days later, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of Alexei Tolstoy. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh S.S.R. marked the anniversary by giving the name of Shevchenko to the former Alexandrovsky Fort the town where the poet spent his ten-year exile, and to a number of institutions, districts and a street in Alma-Ata, the Republic's capital.

New editions of Shevchenko's works; translations into Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Kazakh and many other languages of the Soviet peoples; exhibitions devoted to his life and work; literary evenings and conferences—all these testify to the wide current interest in the father of Ukrainian literature.

In Moscow a unique readers' conference devoted to Shevchenko was held by workers and employees of four factories, the Tryokhgornaya Textile Mills, the Stalin Auto Plant, the Dynamo Plant and the Sickle and Hammer Iron and Steel Works. An engineer, a woman bookkeeper and a steel smelter were among those who read their papers on the life and work of the poet.

Among Shevchenko translations issued are complete or selected works in Russian, Georgian, Abkhazian, Armenian, Kazakh and Buryat-Mongolian. Spanish children refugees in a children's colony near Kharkov translated into Spanish a number of poems by the Ukrainian poet.

Doubtless the most complete of many exhibitions devoted to Shevchenko is that arranged in Kiev by the Ukrainian Academy of Science. It gives a complete summary of original documents from the tsarist archives.

ANNIVERSARY OF NIKOLAI ASEYEV

Friend and follower of Vladimir Mayakovsky, the poet Nikolai Aseyev was

widely honored on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his literary career. The press published articles about his life and work, meetings were held under the auspices of the Writers' Club, and greetings were sent to him by the presidium and the poets' section of the Union of Soviet Writers, by a group of Georgian poets and many others prominent in the literary world.

Aseyev is at present writing a long narrative poem, *Mayakovsky Emerges*, a part of which was published in the previous issue of *International Literature*.

Appreciations of Aseyev emphasized his mastery of the language, high standards and constant striving to link his work with the realities of the life around him. His own words best illustrate his point of view:

"Choice of themes is dictated by those ideological ties, those convictions with which the poet is inculcated, with which he develops and grows strong. This can be proved by a great many works of various poets. Their horizon is always limited by their environment, even when they write of the distant past. This does not mean, of course, that a modern poet must write only of the construction of power stations, or May First. But the most archaic theme must absolutely be treated from the point of view of a person who knows about the building of power stations and the celebrations of May First."

SHOLOM ALEICHEM ANNIVERSARY

The eightieth anniversary of the birth of Sholom Aleichem, the great Jewish humorist, was celebrated throughout the Soviet Union. Over ninety local jubilee committees were functioning in Ukrainian and Byelorussian villages where numerous meetings and literaty evenings took place.

The house in Pereyaslavl where the writer was born has been converted into a museum. Statues are to be erected in Kiev and Berdichev.

A complete edition of Sholom Aleichem's works in Jewish, containing thirty-six volumes, is being prepared for publication, as well as a ten-volume edition of selected works in a Russian translation. Selected works are being translated into the Byelorussian, Armenian and Azerbaijan languages. In addition, a number of biographical and critical works dealing with the Jewish writer are in preparation or have already been published. Composers are setting some of the writer's verse to music, and artists and sculptors are working on portraits of him.

NEW PRODUCTIONS IN MOSCOW THEATERS

A noteworthy revival by the Moscow Art Theater of a play it first produced twenty-five years ago was *Death of Pazukhin*, by the great Russian satirist of the past century, Saltykov-Shchedrin. Though the piece contains no direct criticism of the tsarist government, it so devastatingly portrays the moral corruption of bourgeois society under autocracy that the censor unhesitatingly banned it, with the result that it was first staged almost twenty years after it had been written.

The new production by the Art Theater uses sets similar to those employed in 1914, and at least one famous actor, Ivan Moskvin, appears in the same role as he did then. Critics highly praise his interpretation of Prokofi Pazukhin, the son who dances with joy at having inherited money while his father lies dead in the next room. A line of Prokofi's gives a good idea of Saltykov-Shchedrin's opinion of bourgeois moral standards: "Yes! If I only had some capital . . . but without capital, what man am I?'

Another well-known member of the troupe, M. M. Tarkhanov, is applauded for his subtle and restrained portrayal of the hypocrite Semyon Furnachev, who robs with a pious phrase on his lips.

D. Zaslavsky in *Pravda* explains why the satirical comedy elicits so ready a response from the Soviet spectator: "The vileness of a society built on profiteering and robbery is exposed with extraordinary dramatic power, and that through characters who, indisputably, are artistically real and convincing."

Balzac's famous novel of the miser Grandet and his unfortunate daughter Eugénie, adapted by S. Dabi, and staged by the Maly Theater, has attracted considerable attention. According to critics, the Maly's *Eugénie Grandet* gives a good portrayal of the stuffy atmosphere of a provincial French town of the time, and shows with stark realism the corrupting, debasing influence of money on the Grandet family.

Reviewers, however, agree in finding fault with S. Mezhinsky's interpretation of Grandet *père*. His acting is too standardized, relies too much on tricks, they say, to give a true portrayal of the grim and miserly cooper. In short, he does not rise to the heights of the Balzac character, who so vividly reveals the cruelty and narrow-mindedness of capitalist society.

A scene from "Eugénie Grandet" after Balzac at the Moscow Maly Theater (Act III)

Fairy Tale at the Moscow State Children's Theater is a fairy tale without fairies or magicians, a fairy tale of Soviet reality. It begins at a post-commencement party for young geology students, where one of their number volunteers to tell a "fairy tale without fairies." The rest of the play represents this unusual tale, which deals with gold-seekers, geologists, collective farmers, hunters, a Young Pioneer and others—all the characters and episodes have been taken from Soviet life, yet they move with the speed and action of a fairy story. The incidental music and songs add much to the charm of the production.

NEW FILMS FOR THE SOVIET SCREEN

The defeat last year by Soviet troops of the Japanese at Lake Hassan (Changfukeng) is shown in a documentary film *Glory to the Heroes of Hassan*. The shots include the massing of Red Army units after the provocative attack of the Japanese on the Soviet frontier; a Red Army man on guard among bushes, the Zaozernaya and Bezymyannaya eminences visible in the distance; Corps Commander Stern talking by direct wire to Moscow; the take-off of bombers and pursuit planes, and the bombing of the enemy positions and many another incident of the battle.

The audience sees in action such Heroes of the Soviet Union as Lieutenant Levchenko and machine-gunner Galyanov. Then come scenes after fighting was over, when the Red Army men gathered the trophies—rifles, machine guns, cannon, officers' swords, ammunition, helmets.

The Red Army men are then shown at a concert given for them after the repulse of the enemy; they are shown receiving gifts sent by the women of the Far East; they are accepted into the Communist Party; they are in the Kremlin, to receive Orders and medals from M. I. Kalinin, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The film closes with a parade of Red Army units on the Red Square in Moscow.

Filming of two important new pictures has begun at the Moscow Film Studios. One is *Minin and Pozharsky*, dealing with the repulse of Polish invaders three hundred years ago, and the other is *Soil Upturned*, adapted from Mikhail Sholokhov's novel of collectivization in a Cossack village of North Caucasus.

V. Shklovsky wrote the scenario for the historical piece, which is directed by V. Pudovkin and M. Doller. Among

spectacular episodes to be filmed are the great Moscow fire started by the invading Poles, and the battle of the Russian people's army against the invaders outside the city.

For the filming of the Sholokhov tale, a whole Cossack village has been built on the lot which last summer was the scene of the battle on the ice in the Eisenstein film *Alexander Nevsky*. The director is Y. Raizman.

THE DEATH OF A FAMOUS CLOWN

The Soviet press marks the death of a famous clown Vitali Lazarenko.

Few months before his death a distinguished audience gathered at the Moscow Circus for a gala performance at which "the people's clown," as Lazarenko is known, was honored in connection with his forty-year carrier in the sawdust ring. By a special decree of the Government he was awarded the title of Honored Artist of the R.S.F.S.R.

Even prior to the World War, Lazarenko was widely known as a clown beneath whose jokes lurked sharp political satire, and he was exiled by the tsarist gendarmes for his daring.

Sample of his humor which earned him the ill-will of the tsarist autocracy:

"Do you know the difference between a watch and a gendarme?"

And the answer ran: "The difference is that the gendarme stands on watch while a pogrom is going on, but when the pogrom is over, the watch lies in the gendarme's pocket."

NEW LIGHT ON MAXIM GORKY

Dmitri Semyonovsky's new book, *Maxim Gorky—Letters and Encounters*, is a moving collection of documents relating to a considerable part of the great writer's life (from 1913 till Gorky's death in June 1936).

Gorky's remarks and literary evaluations contained in the book complement and amplify our knowledge of Gorky's tastes and views.

His insistence on a full, all-round development of a writer as man and artist is manifested in the following lines about Pushkin:

"See how broad is the diapason of his interest in life, how much he grasped on the earth; he has as much feeling for the Russian fairy tale as for the *Miserly Knight*, for *Boris Godunov* as for the priest's servant Balda—that's how life must be taken!"

Or take his advice to one of the many young writers with whom he worked so patiently:

"Do not forget that it is one thing to learn, and another to imitate. I am of the opinion that you are a sufficiently original person; I see that you have quite a store of experiences of your own, which requires your own and not another's shading, and so I repeat: learn, but do not knuckle under."

In this book we see once again how Gorky dreamed of a great Socialist art, and how he worked for the realization of his dreams. "We should be doing a great service," he wrote, "if we learned to portray our heroes as well as they deserve."

GERMANY

NEW BOOKS BY GERMAN ANTI-FASCIST WRITERS

After many misadventures, *Meeting by the Ebro*, by Willi Bredel, German anti-fascist writer, has at last been published in Paris. It was to have been issued in Czechoslovakia in a city in the Sudeten province, but just at the time when the printing was drawing to a close, the town was occupied by German fascist troops. The type and galley proofs were destroyed and it was only by chance that a copy was preserved.

Bredel wrote the first chapter of *Meeting by the Ebro* on the Aragon front during a short lull in the fighting. The last chapter was written to the accompaniment of unceasing bombardments by fascist planes.

The sub-title of Bredel's book, *Notes of a Military Commissar*, indicates its reportorial character. Many episodes are described with the novelist's truly masterful realism. The book radiates optimism, as indicated by the title of its last chapter, *Hail to Life!*

Another book published in Paris in the German language is *Dachau, the Fascist Bastille—A Book About the Fate and the Heroism of German Fighters for Freedom.* This book on the Dachau concentration camp has the following sections: *Fascist Educators at Work, All Quiet at Dachau, Camp Ruled by Murderers, June 30 at Dachau.*

Most of the material has been turned in by eye-witness testimony of former prisoners who have managed to escape the clutches of the fascist jailers, and has never been published before. The introduction is by the famous Danish author, Martin Andersen Nexö.

CHINA

"CHINA'S WAR FOR THE FATHERLAND"

Recently published, *China's War for the Fatherland* is recommended for schools by the National Government of China as "very valuable material for study of the national struggle of the Chinese people for liberation." The book was compiled by Yang Wei-lou, teacher of the Shanghai secondary school for girls.

On the basis of statements by those who have taken part in the struggle against the Japanese army, of proclamations, leaflets and speeches by leaders of patriotic organizations, the author has sketched the history of the first stage of the people's war in defense of their country.

"I have painstakingly collected all kinds of material on the heroic struggle and suffering of the Chinese people, and the bestial cruelty of Japanese imperialism," Yang Wei-lou told a correspondent of the newspaper *Wen Wei Pao*. "I considered it my sacred duty to arrange this material in order to acquaint the schoolchildren of China with it. A future historian will write the history of the epic struggle of the Chinese people. But we, today, must make use of every fact in order to inculcate love for the country and hatred of the enemy in the younger generation."

The book is published in an edition of 100,000 copies which is exceptionally large by Chinese publishing standards.

SYMPHONY OF STRUGGLE

The talented Chinese composer Liu Chi, living in Yanwan, chief city of the special district of China and center of the Eighth Peoples Revolutionary Army, is working on a *Symphony of Struggle*, devoted to the heroic and self-sacrificing fight of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism. The symphony is to be in four movements. The first is to develop the theme of rallying China's national forces for a prolonged stubborn struggle against the enemy. The second movement is devoted to the savage bombardment by the Japanese of defenseless Chinese cities and villages from the air. The third movement depicts the heroism of the defenders, and the last movement sings the triumph of the Chinese people in their struggle for liberty and independence.

The composer has already finished the first movement and is now working on the second. According to Chinese press reports, Liu Chi has repeatedly visited the front, has traveled to a number of large and small towns destroyed by Japanese bombardments, and himself has participated in battles against the imperialist invader.

URUGUAY

URUGUAY JOURNALISTS SCORE FASCISM

A sharply-worded resolution criticizing the fascist dictatorship was adopted at the recent congress of Uruguayan journalists.

"We hate Italo-German-Japanese fascism which is a weapon of economic, cultural and social oppression," the resolution reads in part. "We stand for democracy, because democracy alone can secure the economic, cultural and political rights of the people."

Severely condemning the barbaric persecution of Jews in Germany and Italy, the resolution expresses the complete solidarity of the Uruguay journalists with the victims of the fascist race policy, which contradicts "the most elementary rights of humanism and human dignity."

CHILE

CONTEST FOR BEST NOVEL

Eighty writers entered the best novel contest under the auspices of the Chile Writers' and Artists' Union and the Zigzag Publishing House. The union was represented on the contest jury by Alberto Romero and Januario Espinosa, and the publishing house by Marta Brunet.

Ruben Asskir took first prize with his *Gentes en Isla (People on the Island)*.

Many novels received honorable mention from the jury, including *Hungry Dogs* by Siro Alegrai, *Seven Thousand Words* by Jacobo Pasare and *Shipwreck* by Juan Marin.

VENEZUELA

CULTURAL ACTIVITY

The Venezuelan ministry of national education has launched a national cultural review, *Revista Nacional de Cultura*, devoted to the literature, science, art and folklore of Venezuela. The magazine will publish monographs on various regions of the republic, and anthologies of works by Venezuelan writers and philosophers of the past and present. The publication is headed by Mariano Picon Salas whose *Portrait of Alberto Adriani* has been translated into a number of European languages.

Much public interest has been attracted by a series of literary discussions and lectures under the auspices of the Venezuela Writers' Association, at which papers are read by prominent authors, critics and scholars. Particularly popular were two recent lectures, one by Professor Cristobal Benites on "The Writer, the Poet and Their Social Function" and the other by an emigré from fascist Germany, Professor Leo Ulrich of Frankfurt University on "Dante's *Divine Comedy*—Reality and Utopia.".

MEXICO

MEXICAN FILM OF CIRCUS LIFE

Tragic Circus, after a scenario by the Mexican journalist Joaquin Pinna, is the first production of the Mexican Cinema. It shows the real life of circus actors, with their thoughts, feelings and sufferings, the plot centering around the grief and poverty of the cheerful and good-natured clown, Tony, and his wife. A profound human tragedy unfolds against the background of the circus with its superficial aspect of merriment. Simultaneously there is much real gaiety and color in the picture, furnished by two remarkable child actors, Lily Callacheo and Marujita Sanches. The *Future* calls *Tragic Circus* one of the best Mexican films and says that the author has overcome all temptations of achieving cheap exotic effects.

ARGENTINE

THEATER AND BOOKS

Leonidas Barletto, well-known writer and director of the People's Theater in the Argentine, writes to us:

"In the seven years since its founding the People's Theater of the Argentine has accomplished a number of tasks. It has created a friendly and well cemented troupe, presented to Argentine audiences some of the best plays of the international repertoire, and attracted the attention of young Argentine writers to the theater. The theater has succeeded in overcoming the apathy of the Argentine spectator.

"The company of the People's Theater is one of the best and most disciplined theatrical troupes in the country. It consists of twenty-five young actors and actresses, ten of whom have worked with the theater from the first day.

"The theater has no star system. All take turns in playing leading roles, and none of them answer curtain calls. The theater has its own rules and regulations. A general meeting of the actors has the right to expell anyone who has violated these rules. The entire troupe is on the alert to see that there is no favoritism.

"There are fifteen technical workers in the People's Theater. A general meeting of the troupe every six months confirms Leonidas Barletto as director of the theater.

"The classical repertoire of the theater includes Gogol's *Marriage* and *Inspector-General;* Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream;* Lope de Vega's *Fuente Ovejuna* and *Harvest;* Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex;* interludes by Cervantes and Lope de Rueda, and two classical Argentine plays, *Juan Moreira* by Guterres and *The Marriage of Pancho and Chivico* by Coliao. The majority of plays produced, however, are the work of contemporary Argentine writers, especially the young writers who have responded to the theater's appeal for the creation of a new repertoire.

"One cannot over-emphasize," Barletto writes, "the tremendous significance of this theater—the only one in Latin America which exists not for profit, but for disinterested cultural and educational work among the masses of the Argentine people."

Los Destinos Kumildes, a book by Leonidas Barletto published in Buenos Aires, is one of the best of recent works issued in the Argentine. The author describes brilliantly and with profound sympathy the life of the "lowly." The central characters of the book are a shoemaker, an organ grinder, a balloon seller, a vendor of coal, a sidewalk photographer.

Cover design of "Argentinian Songs and Dances" by Carlos Vega.

Documentary fidelity, simplicity, profound lyricism and a rich vivid language—such are the chief merits of the book.

Carlos Obligado, Argentine poet, has published a second collection of verse entitled *Poem of a Castle*, containing a number of lyric, intimate poems. Most of them deal with his ancestral home and its surroundings on the banks of the Parana, with his forebears and his friends. The magazine *Norte* comments: "The lightness, smoothness and rhythm of his lines, their melody, the profoundly lyrical quality of most of the poems make this collection a valuable contribution to the poetry of the Argentine."

Obligado's first volume, *Poetry*, appeared in 1920. Since then he has published a number of scholarly and critical works devoted principally to poetry. He has acquainted Argentine readers with foreign writers, particularly Edgar Allan Poe, a number of whose works he translated. Obligado is president of the Argentine Writers' Society.

The Argentine press remarks on the great success of Armande Kasell's *Flying Detachment*, which contains five of his stories. The title story deals with village life. "This is a splendid story," writes the magazine *Norte*. "The author describes the life of the Argentine countryside with true realism. The story is human, truthful. You read it with absorbing interest." The other stories in the volume likewise bear witness to Kasell's maturity as writer.

THIRD REICH

GERMAN INTELLECTUALS FIGHT FASCISM

Along with those who take an active part in the struggle against fascism, and who are forced to work underground, there are millions of people in Germany who are passively resisting the Hitler regime. A large part of these "passive opponents" of fascism are writers, artists, actors, teachers, engineers and doctors. They refuse to take part in fascist parades and demonstrations and evade carrying out the measures of the fascist authorities.

The "passive resistance" movement has taken on such proportions that even the fascist press cannot overlook it. Nazi newspapers and magazines badger the intelligentsia mercilessly, bestowing such epithets on them as "book-worms" and "spiritual ragpickers." *Bewegung*, one of the fascist journals, admits that "certain strata of the people want to belong only to themselves," that they "want only to read and think." But what could be more dangerous for the Nazi regime?

A prominent fascist official, one Wagner, issued a warning in the press against what he considered "a dangerous phenomenon," namely, the fact that "many artists lock themselves up in their own little world." He points out that out of 1,150 paintings displayed at various exhibitions in Germany, only twelve deserved praise for "timeliness of theme." All the rest were "far from the contemporary scene and show a return to the idyll or to romanticism." The fascist press is indignant because German artists do not wish to "immortalize" the enslavement of Austria or paint pictures about enforced labor service, the new strategic automobile highways and generally "do not wish to subordinate their art to the spirit of fascism."

It is characteristic, moreover, that many artists now listed among "passive opponents" of fascism were until quite recently under the influence of fascist demagogy. Under the pressure of Nazi reality they have succeeded in freeing themselves from this influence, and are gradually taking the road of struggle against fascism.

THE TRAGEDY OF GERMAN SCIENCE

More than two thousand scientists and professors in German universities have been forced to emigrate from the country since the seizure of power by the fascists. Six of the ten German professors who have won the Nobel prize in physics have been deprived of their chairs. All five Nobel prize winners in medicine are in emigration.

German universities are now laying chief emphasis on military sciences, on "molding the will and character of Germany's future soldiers," as the rector of Frankfurt University put it. Many disciplines have been dropped altogether; for example, the teaching of international law has been abolished. No wonder that the German universities have little attraction for the youth; the total enrollment has fallen from 116,000 in 1932 to 67,000 in 1938. The enrollment in higher technical schools has been cut by 47 per cent, in higher pedagogical schools by 77 per cent and in the departments of mathematics and physics by 64 per cent. Noticeable, too, is the complete lack of interest in scientific books. The fascist journal, *Die Bank*, has had to admit that "there is no longer a demand for scientific literature in modern Germany. The works of even the greatest scientists remain unsold for several years, though an edition is comprised of only two or three hundred copies."

PURGING MUSEUMS OF NON-ARYANISM

A campaign is in progress in all the museums of Germany to purge them of so-called "degenerate" art. First to be sacrificed was a portrait of Pauline Runge by her husband, Philipp Otto Runge (1777-1810), famous German artist of the end of the eighteenth century. The picture had hung in the Berlin National Gallery for one hundred and forty years. Doubt was aroused in the minds of the fascist "art experts" by the fact that the woman in the portrait "has an expression clearly non-Aryan." They were impelled by this to look up the family tree of Pauline Runge, whose maiden name was Bassange.

The search led to a little village near Liège where many Jews lived during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and whence, possibly, came the forbears of this old family. Until the day Pauline Runge's "purity of blood" shall be proved, the fascist obscurantists have removed from the Berlin gallery one of its famous masterpieces.

Fascist "connoisseurs" had to resort to more subtle dodges in dealing with Michaelangelo's famous statue of Moses. At one time they termed the great sculptor "an artist of the Jewish ghetto," but now for fear of giving offence to the other partner of the notorious Rome-Berlin axis the fascist "expert" Hansen has been forced to revise his "point of view." He declares that *Moses* in no way resembles the Moses of the Old Testament, as people have been led to believe for generations. "On the contrary," says this wily expert, "Michaelangelo's statue does not represent Moses at all, but an ancient German divinity."

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

KORNEI CHUKOVSKY — Soviet poet and critic, famous for his tales and poems for children as well as for his translations of American and English writers and poets. Author of the first Russian study of Walt Whitman.

SERGEI RADLOV — Eminent Soviet producer, best known for his staging of Shakesperean plays.

ALEXANDER LAVRETSKY — Noted Soviet critic, author of books on the life and work of Turgenev, Shchedrin and others.

ILYA ELVIN — Soviet journalist.

EVGUENIA KNIPOVICH — Soviet critic and publicist of the younger generation. Author of *Heine — Political Lyricist.*

TIKHON SEMUSHKIN — was for seven years teaching in the Arctic Region, and studying the life and customs of the Chukchi people.

MALCOLM COWLEY — Well-known American critic and publicist.

To our readers

The editors of *International Literature* would like to know what the readers think of the magazine.

In this period, more than ever before, with menacing attacks upon world culture, *International Literature* feels the gravity and significance of its role as an organ devoted to the cultural interests of the advanced and progressive people throughout the world. It wishes to fill this role as effectively as possible. For that reason it calls upon its readers for this cooperation.

There may be some features you prefer to others. We would like to know what they are. You will help the work of the magazine if you tell us.

If the magazine has disappointed you in any way please let us know.

Please tell us what type of stories you have liked, whether you object to serialization of material, what type of articles you have valued, what aspects of international and Soviet cultural life you would like to have chronicled in the magazine; and how you would like to have the chronicle material presented.

Do you find the present form of the magazine attractive and readable? Recently, at the request of some of our readers, we introduced illustrated covers and a two-column page. Are there other changes of format readers would like to see introduced? Are you satisfied with the quality of the translations?

Address letters to editor of *International Literature*, Box 527, Moscow. U.S.S.R.

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV