Workers of all countries, unite!

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CONTENTS

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VYACHESLAV MOLOTOV

ON RATIFICATION OF SOVIET-GERMAN NON-AGGRESSION PACT

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS OF THE U.S.S.R. AND PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT THE SPECIAL FOURTH SESSION OF THE SUPREME SOVIET OF THE U.S.S.R.

August 31, 1939

Comrades! Since the third session of the Supreme Soviet the international situation has shown no change for the better. On the contrary, it has become even more tense.

The steps taken by various governments to put an end to this state of tension have obviously proved inadequate. They have produced no results. This is true of Europe. No change for the better has taken place in Eastern Asia either. Japanese troops continue to occupy the principal cities and a considerable part of the territory of China, nor is Japan refraining from hostile acts against the U.S.S.R. Here, too, the situation has become more acute.

In view of this state of affairs the conclusion of a pact of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany which averts the danger of a war between Germany and the Soviet Union is of immense positive value. In order more fully to define the significance of this pact I must first dwell on the negotiations which took place in recent months in Moscow with representatives of Great Britain and France.

As you know, the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations for the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance against aggression in Europe began as far back as April. True, the initial proposals of the British government were, as you know, quite unacceptable. They ignored the prime requisites for such negotiations—they ignored the principle of reciprocity and of equality of obligations. Nevertheless, the Soviet government did not reject the negotiations and in its turn put forward its own proposals. We were mindful of the fact that it was difficult for the governments of Great Britain and France to make an abrupt change in their policy from the unfriendly attitude towards the Soviet Union which had existed quite recently to serious negotiations with the U.S.S.R. based on the conditions of equality of obligations. However, the subsequent negotiations did not bear fruit.

The Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations went on for four months. They helped to elucidate a number of questions. At the same time they made it clear to the representatives of Great Britain and France that the Soviet Union had to be seriously reckoned with in international affairs. But these negotiations encountered insuperable obstacles. The trouble, of course, was not one of "formulations" or of particular clauses in the draft pact. No, more important issues were involved.

The conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance against aggression would only have been of value if Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union had arrived at an agreement providing for definite military measures against the attack of an aggressor. Accordingly, for a certain period, not only political negotiations, but also military negotiations with representatives of the British and French armies were conducted in Moscow. However, nothing came of the military negotiations. The difficulty they encountered was that Poland, who was to be jointly guaranteed by Great Britain, France and the U.S.S.R., rejected military assistance on the part of the Soviet Union. Attempts to overcome the objections of Poland met with no success. More, the negotiations showed that Great Britain was not anxious to overcome these objections of Poland but, on the contrary, encouraged them. It is clear that, such being the attitude of the Polish government and its principal ally towards military assistance on the part of the Soviet Union in the event of aggression, the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations could not be fruitful. After this, it became clear to us that the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations were doomed to failure.

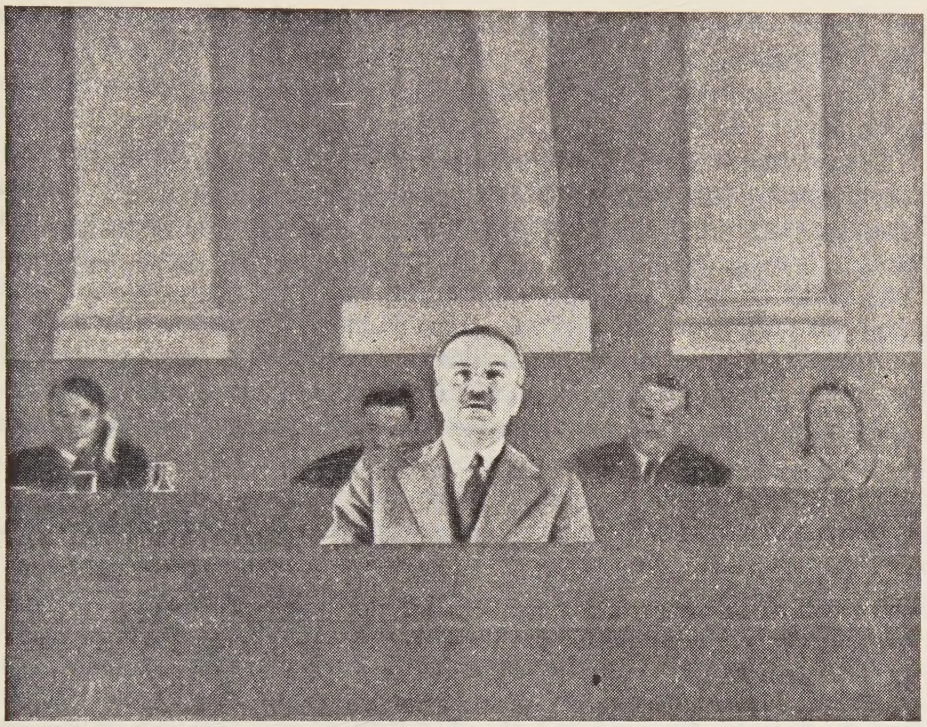
What have the negotiations with Great Britain and France shown?

The Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations have shown that the position of Great Britain and France is marked by glaring contradictions throughout.

Judge for yourselves.

On the one hand, Great Britain and France demanded that the U. S. S. R. should give military assistance to Poland in case of aggression. The U.S.S.R., as you know, was willing to meet this demand provided she herself received like assistance from Great Britain and France. On the other hand, Great Britain and France brought Poland on to the scene, who resolutely declined military assistance on the part of the U. S. S. R. Just try to reach an agreement regarding mutual assistance under such circumstances, when assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. is declared beforehand to be superfluous and obtrusive.

Further: on the one hand, Great Britain and France offered to guarantee the Soviet Union military assistance against aggression in return for like assistance on the part of the U.S.S.R. On the other hand, they hedged round their assistance with such provisos regarding indirect aggression as were calculated to convert this assistance into a fiction and to provide them with a formal legal excuse for evading the rendering of assistance and for



leaving the U.S.S.R. isolated in face of an aggressor. Just try to distinguish between such a "pact of mutual assistance" and a pact of more or less camouflaged chicanery. *(Lively animation in the hall.)*

Further: on the one hand, Great Britain and France stressed the importance and gravity of the negotiations for a pact of mutual assistance and demanded that the U.S.S.R. should treat the matter seriously and settle all questions relating to the pact without delay. On the other hand, they themselves displayed extreme dilatoriness and treated the negotiations very lightly, entrusting them to individuals of secondary importance who were not invested with adequate powers. It is enough to mention that the British and French military missions came to Moscow without any definite powers and without the right to conclude any kind of military convention. (*Animation in the hall.*) More, the British military mission arrived in Moscow without any mandate at all (*general laughter*), and it was only on the demand of our military mission that, on the very eve of the breakdown of the negotiations, they presented written credentials. But even these credentials were of the vaguest kind, that is, credentials that were not up to par. Just try to distinguish between this light-minded attitude towards the negotiations on the part of Great Britain and France and a frivolous make-believe at negotiations designed to discredit the whole business.

Such were the intrinsic contradictions in the attitude of Great Britain

and France towards the negotiations with the U.S.S.R. which led to their breakdown.

What is the root of these contradictions in the position of Great Britain and France?

In a few words, it can be put as follows. On the one hand, the British and French governments fear aggression, and for that reason would like to have a pact of mutual assistance with the Soviet Union, inasmuch as it would strengthen them—Great Britain and France. But, on the other hand, the British and French governments are afraid that the conclusion of a real pact of mutual assistance with the U.S.S.R. may strengthen our country, the Soviet Union, which, it appears, does not answer their purpose. It must be admitted that these fears of theirs outweighed other considerations. It is only in this light that we can understand the position of Poland, who is acting on the instructions of Great Britain and France.

I shall now pass to the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression.

The decision to conclude a pact of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany was adopted after the military negotiations with France and Great Britain had reached an impasse owing to the insurmountable differences I have mentioned. As the negotiations had shown that the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance was not to be expected, we could not but explore other possibilities of ensuring peace and averting the danger of a war between Germany and the U.S.S.R. If the British and French governments refused to reckon with this, that is their lookout. It is our duty to think of the interests of the Soviet people, the interests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. (*Prolonged applause*). All the more since we are firmly convinced that the interests of the U.S.S.R. coincide with the fundamental interests of the peoples of other countries. (*Applause.*)

But that is only one side of the matter.

Something else had to happen besides this before a Soviet-German pact of non-aggression could come into existence. It was necessary that the foreign policy of Germany should take a turn towards good-neighborly relations with the Soviet Union. Only when this second condition was fulfilled, only when it became clear that the German government desired to change its foreign policy and secure an improvement of relations with the U.S.S.R. was the basis found for the conclusion of a Soviet-German pact of non-aggression.

Everybody knows that during the last six years, ever since the National-Socialists came into power, political relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R. have been strained. Everybody also knows that despite differences of outlook and political systems, the Soviet government has endeavored to maintain normal business and political relations with Germany. There is no need just now to go back to individual incidents in these relations during recent years, which, comrades deputies, are well known to you as it is. I must however recall the explanation of our foreign

policy which was given several months ago at the Eighteenth Party Congress.

Speaking of our tasks in the realm of foreign policy, Comrade Stalin defined our attitude towards other countries as follows:

> "1. To continue the policy of peace and of strengthening business relations with all countries;
>
> "2. To be cautious and not allow our country to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them." (*Animation in the hall.*)

As you see, Comrade Stalin declared in these conclusions that the Soviet Union stands for the stengthening of business relations with *all* countries. But at the same time, Comrade Stalin warned us against warmongers who are anxious in their own interests to involve our country in conflicts with other countries.

Exposing the hullabaloo raised in the British, French and American press about Germany's "plans" for the seizure of the Soviet Ukraine, Comrade Stalin said:

> "It looks as if the object of this suspicious hullabaloo was to incense the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds."

As you see, Comrade Stalin hit the nail on the head when he exposed the machinations of the West European politicians who were trying to set Germany and the Soviet Union at loggerheads.

It must be confessed that there were short-sighted people in our country too who, tending to over-simplify anti-fascist propaganda, forgot about this provocative work of our enemies. Mindful of this, Comrade Stalin even then suggested the possibility of other, unhostile, good-neighborly relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R.

It can now be seen that on the whole Germany correctly understood these statements of Comrade Stalin and drew practical deductions from them.

The conclusion of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression shows that Comrade Stalin's historical prevision has been brilliantly confirmed. *(Stormy ovation in honor of Comrade Stalin.)*

In the spring of this year the German government made a proposal to resume the commercial and credit negotiations. The negotiations were resumed soon after. By making mutual concessions, we succeeded in reaching an agreement. As you know, this agreement was signed on August 19.

This is not the first commercial and credit agreement concluded with Germany under her present government. But this agreement differs favorably not only from the agreement of 1935, but from all previous agreements, not to mention the fact that we had no economic agreement equally advantageous with Great Britain, France or any other country. The agreement is

advantageous to us because of its credit conditions (a seven-year credit) and it enables us to order a considerable additional quantity of such equipment as we need. By this agreement the U.S.S.R. undertakes to sell to Germany a definite quantity of our surplus raw materials for the needs of her industry, which fully answers the interests of the U.S.S.R. Why should we reject such an advantageous economic agreement? Surely not for the sake of those who are generally averse to the Soviet Union having advantageous economic agreements with other countries? And it is clear that the commercial and credit agreement with Germany fully accords with the economic interests and with the defensive needs of the Soviet Union. This agreement fully accords with decisions of the Eighteenth Congress of our Party approving Comrade Stalin's statement as to the desirability of "strengthening business relations with all countries."

When the German government expressed the desire to improve political relations as well, the Soviet government had no grounds for refusing. This gave rise to the question of concluding a pact of non-aggression.

Voices are now being heard evidencing a lack of understanding of the most simple reasons for the beginning of improvement in the political relations between the Soviet Union and Germany.

For example, people ask with an air of innocence how the Soviet Union could consent to improve political relations with a state of the fascist type? Is that possible? they ask. But they forget that it is not a question of our attitude towards the internal regime of another country, but the foreign relations between two states. They forget that we adhere to the position of not interfering in the internal affairs of other countries and, correspondingly, of not tolerating interference in our own internal affairs. Furthermore, they forget an important principle of our foreign policy, which was formulated by Comrade Stalin at the Eighteenth Party Congress as follows:

> "We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries. That is our position; and we shall adhere to this position as long as these countries maintain like relations with the Soviet Union, and as long as they make no attempt to trespass on the interests of our country."

The meaning of these words is quite clear: the Soviet Union strives to maintain friendly relations with *all* non-Soviet countries, *provided* these countries maintain a like attitude towards the Soviet Union.

In our foreign policy towards non-Soviet countries we have always been guided by Lenin's well-known principle regarding the peaceful co-existence of the Soviet state and capitalist countries. A large number of examples might be cited to show how this principle has been carried out in practice. But I will confine myself to only a few. We have had, for instance, a pact of non-aggression and neutrality with fascist Italy ever since 1933. It has never occurred to anybody as yet to object to this pact. And that is natural. Inasmuch as this pact answers to the interests of the U. S. S. R. it accords with our prin-

ciple regarding the peaceful co-existence of the U.S.S.R. and capitalist countries. We have pacts of non-aggression with Poland and certain other countries whose semi-fascist system is known to all. These treaties have not given rise to misgivings either. Perhaps it would not be superfluous to mention that we do not even have treaties of this kind with certain other, non-fascist, bourgeois-democratic countries, with Great Britain herself, for instance. But that is not our fault.

Since 1926 the political basis of relations with Germany has been the Treaty of Neutrality, which was prolonged, already by the present German government, in 1933. This Treaty of Neutrality remains in force to this day.

The Soviet government had even before considered it desirable to take a further step towards improving political relations with Germany, but circumstances were such that this has become possible only now. It is true that it is not a pact of mutual assistance that is in question, as in the case of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations, but only a pact of non-aggression. Nevertheless, conditions being what they are, it is difficult to overestimate the international importance of the Soviet-German agreement.

That is why we favored the visit to Moscow of Herr von Ribbentrop, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs.

August 23, 1939, the day the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression was signed, is to be regarded as a date of great historical importance. The treaty of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany marks a turning point in the history of Europe and not of Europe alone.

Only yesterday the German fascists were pursuing a foreign policy hostile to the U.S.S.R. Yes, only yesterday, we were enemies in the sphere of foreign relations. Today, however, the situation has changed and we are enemies no longer. The art of politics in the sphere of foreign relations does not consist in making more enemies for one's country. On the contrary, it consists in reducing their number and in turning the enemies of yesterday into good neighbors who maintain peaceful relations with each other. *(Applause.)*

History has shown that enmity and war between our country and Germany have been to the detriment of our countries, not to their benefit. Russia and Germany were the countries that suffered most in the war of 1914-18. *("Hear, hear!")* Therefore the interests of the peoples of the Soviet Union and Germany do not lie in mutual enmity. On the contrary, the peoples of the Soviet Union and Germany need to live in peace with each other. The Soviet-German pact of non-aggression puts an end to enmity between Germany and the U.S.S.R., and that is in the interests of both countries. Difference of outlook and political system must not and cannot be an obstacle to the establishment of good political relations between the two states, just as it is no impediment to good political relations between the U.S.S.R. and other non-Soviet, capitalist countries. Only enemies of Germany and the U.S.S.R. can strive to create and foment

enmity between the peoples of these countries. We have always stood for amity between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany, for the growth and development of friendship between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the German people. *(Loud and prolonged applause.)*

The importance of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression lies mainly in the fact that the two largest states in Europe have agreed to put an end to the enmity between them, to eliminate the menace of war and to live in peace with each other. The field of possible military conflicts in Europe is thus narrowed. Even if military conflicts in Europe should prove unavoidable, the scale of hostilities will now be restricted. Only those who would instigate a general war in Europe, only those who under a mask of peace wish to ignite a general European conflagration, can be displeased with this state of affairs.

The Soviet-German pact has been the object of numerous attacks in the British, French and American press. Conspicuous in these efforts are certain "socialist" newspapers, anxious to serve their "own" national capitalism, to serve those of their masters who pay them well. *(Laughter in the hall.)* It is clear that real truth cannot be expected from gentry of this caliber.

Attempts are being made to spread the fiction that the conclusion of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression was responsible for the failure of the negotiations with Great Britain and France for a pact of mutual assistance. This lie has already been nailed in the interview given by Comrade Voroshilov. In reality, as you know, the very reverse is the case. One of the reasons the Soviet Union signed the non-aggression pact with Germany is that the negotiations with France and England had encountered insurmountable differences and ended in failure through the fault of the British and French ruling circles.

Further, they go so far as to reproach us because the pact, you see, contains no clause providing for its denunciation in case one of the parties is drawn into war under conditions which might provide somebody with the color of an excuse to designate it as the aggressor. But for some reason or other they forget that no such clause or proviso is contained either in the Polish-German non-aggression pact, signed in 1934 and annulled by Germany in 1939 against the wishes of Poland, or in the Anglo-German declaration of non-aggression signed only a few months ago. The question arises, why cannot the U.S.S.R. do what both Poland and England did long ago?

Finally, there are those who like to read into the pact more than it contains. *(Laughter.)* For this purpose all kinds of conjectures and hints are circulated in order to arouse distrust of the pact in certain countries. But all this merely goes to show the hopeless impotence of the enemies of the pact, who are exposing themselves more and more as enemies both of the Soviet Union and of Germany, striving to provoke a war between the two countries.

In all this we find fresh corroboration of Comrade Stalin's warning that we must keep a vigilant eye on the warmongers who are accustomed to have other people pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. We must be on our guard against those who see advantage to themselves in bad relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany, in enmity between them, against those who do not want peace and good-neighborly relations between Germany and the Soviet Union.

We can understand it when this policy is pursued by inveterate imperialists. But we cannot ignore the fact that some leaders of the socialist parties of Great Britain and France have recently distinguished themselves by their extraordinary zeal in this respect. These gentlemen have got so busy, they are just jumping out of their skins. *(Laughter.)* These people positively demand that the U.S.S.R. allow herself to be drawn into a war against Germany on the side of Great Britain. Have these presumptuous warmongers taken leave of their senses? (*Laughter.*) Is it really so hard for these gentlemen to understand the meaning of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact, under which the U.S.S.R. is not obliged to involve herself in war either on the side of Great Britain against Germany, or on the side of Germany against Great Britain? Is it so hard to understand that the U.S.S.R. is pursuing and will continue to pursue her own independent policy, a policy based on the interests of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., and only on those interests? *(Prolonged applause.)* If these gentlemen have such an uncontrollable desire to fight, let them do their own fighting without the Soviet Union. *(Laughter and applause.)* We shall then see what sort of fighters they are. *(Laughter and applause.)*

In our eyes, in the eyes of the entire Soviet people, they are just as much enemies of peace as all the other instigators of war in Europe. It is only those who want a new grand slaughter, a new holocaust of the nations, who would like to set the Soviet Union at loggerheads with Germany; it is only they who would like to destroy the incipient restoration of good relations between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany.

The Soviet Union signed the pact with Germany in the full assurance that peace between the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and Germany is in the interest of all peoples, in the interest of universal peace. Every sincere supporter of peace will realize the truth of this.

This pact accords with the vital interests of the working people of the Soviet Union and can in no wise serve to weaken our vigilance in the defence of these interests. This pact is backed by a firm confidence in the reality of our forces, in their complete preparedness in case of any aggression against the U.S.S.R. *(Loud applause.)*

This pact (like the unsuccessful negotiations between Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union) shows that no important questions of international relations, and still less questions affecting Eastern Europe, can be settled without the active participation of the Soviet Union, and that

all attempts to ignore the Soviet Union and decide such questions behind her back are doomed to failure. *(Applause.)*

The Soviet-German non-aggression pact marks a turn in the development of Europe, a turn towards an improvement in the relations between the two largest states in Europe. This pact not only means for us the elimination of the menace of war with Germany, narrows the field of possible military conflicts in Europe and thus serves the cause of universal peace; it should open new possibilities for the growth of our forces, for the consolidation of our position, for the further growth of the influence of the Soviet Union on international development.

There is no need to dwell here on the separate clauses of the pact. The Council of People's Commissars has reason to hope that the pact will meet with your approval as a political document of cardinal importance to the U.S.S.R. *(Applause.)*

• The Council of People's Commissars submits the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression to the Supreme Soviet for consideration and moves that it be ratified. *(Loud and prolonged applause. All rise.)*

VYACHESLAV MOLOTOV

Speech Over the Radio

September 17, 1939

Comrades! Men and women citizens of our great country!

The events arising out of the Polish-German war have revealed the internal insolvency and obvious incompetence of the Polish state. The Polish ruling circles have become bankrupt. All this has taken place in the briefest space of time.

A mere fortnight has passed and Poland has already lost all her industrial centers and the major part of her large cities and cultural centers. Warsaw, as the capital of the Polish state, no longer exists. No one knows the whereabouts of the Polish government. The population of Poland has been abandoned by its ill-starred leaders to its fate. The Polish state and its government have virtually ceased to exist. In view of this state of affairs, the treaties concluded between the Soviet Union and Poland have ceased to operate.

A situation has arisen in Poland which demands of the Soviet Government especial concern for the security of its state. Poland has become convenient ground for any contingency and unexpected happenings which may create a menace to the U.S.S.R. Until the last moment the Soviet Government remained neutral. But in view of the circumstances mentioned, it can no longer maintain a neutral attitude toward the situation that has arisen.

Nor can it be demanded of the Soviet Government that it remain indifferent to the fate of the kindred Ukrainians and Byelorussians living in Poland, who even earlier were nations without any rights and who have now been entirely abandoned to their fate. The Soviet Government deems it its sacred duty to extend a helping hand to its brother Ukrainians and brother Byelorussians inhabiting Poland.

In view of all this, the Government of the U.S.S.R. has this morning handed a note to the Polish ambassador in Moscow stating that the Soviet Government has instructed the High Command of the Red Army to order troops to cross the frontier and to take under their protection the lives and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

The Soviet Government also stated in this note that at the same time it intends to take every measure to deliver the Polish people from the disastrous war into which they have been plunged by their unwise leaders and to give them the opportunity to live a life of peace.

In the early part of September, when a partial call-up of Red Army reservists was undertaken in the Ukraine, Byelorussia and in four other military areas, the situation in Poland was not clear and this call-up was undertaken as a precautionary measure. Nobody could have expected that the Polish state would have betrayed such impotence and such swift collapse as has now already taken place all over Poland. But inasmuch as this collapse is a fact and the Polish statesmen have become utterly bankrupt and are incapable of changing the situation in Poland, our Red Army, having received large reinforcements as a result of the recent call-up of reservists, must perform with credit the honorable duty laid upon it.

The Government expresses the firm conviction that our Workers' and Peasants' Red Army will this time too display its combative might, consciousness and discipline and that it will perform its great emancipatory task with new feats of heroism and glory.

Simultaneously, the Soviet Government handed copies of its note addressed to the Polish ambassador to all governments with which the U.S.S.R. has diplomatic relations, at the same time declaring that the Soviet Union will pursue a policy of neutrality toward all these countries.

This determines our recent steps in foreign policy.

The Government also addresses itself to the citizens of the Soviet Union with the following explication. In connection with the call-up of reservists, some of our citizens have shown a tendency to hoard food and other commodities for fear that a ration system of supply will be introduced. The Government deems it necessary to declare that it has no intention of introducing a ration system for food and manufactured goods, even if the measures of state necessitated by foreign events should continue for some time. I am afraid that from these excessive purchases of food and goods only those will suffer who go in for this and hoard unnecessary supplies, thus subjecting them to the risk of spoiling. Our country is provided with all it requires and can get along without a ration system.

Our task now, the task of every worker and peasant, of every employee and intellectual is to work honesly and selflessly at his post and thereby assist the Red Army.

As to the fighters in our glorious Red Army, I have no doubt that they will perform their duty to their country with credit and glory.

The peoples of the Soviet Union, all men and women citizens of our country, fighters in the Red Army and Navy are all united as never before around the Soviet Government, around our Bolshevik Party, around their great leader, the wise Comrade Stalin, for the achievement of new and unparalleled successes of labor in industry and on the collective farms, and of new glorious victories of the Red Army at the battle fronts.

TRUTH WILL TRIUMPH

These lines are written a month after the conclusion of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact. Comrade Molotov in his statement at the Special Fourth Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. — published above — set forth clearly and without ambiguity the reason which led to the conclusion of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact and explained its significance.

"August 23, 1939, the day the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression was signed," he said, "is to be regarded as a date of great historical importance. The treaty of non-aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Germany marks a turning point in the history of Europe and not of Europe alone."

When in the assembly hall of the Supreme Soviet the ovation with which the deputies greeted Comrade Molotov's statement had died down, the floor was taken by Deputy Alexander Shcherbakov, formerly Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, recently elected by the Moscow Bolsheviks to the post of Secretary of the Moscow Regional and City Committees of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).

Speaking in support of his motion to approve the foreign policy of the Government of the U.S.S.R. and to ratify the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Germany, Comrade Shcherbakov reminded the deputies of the circumstances which preceded the signing of the pact.

"The facts concerning the course of the negotiations," said Shcherbakov, "cited at the present Session by Comrade Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, show that the position taken in the negotiations by the representatives of France and particularly by the representatives of England was not sincere. No real, genuine desire to create a front of mutual assistance was shown on their part. The Soviet Government entered these negotiations honestly and sincerely and, for its part, made every effort to ensure the successful progress of the negotiations. For many months it showed great patience, and it is not the fault of the Soviet Government that these negotiations came to nothing."

By its unanimous adoption of Shcherbakov's motion, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. expressed the opinion not only of the deputies, but of all their constituents as well.

The Soviet people, and Soviet intellectuals and writers as one of the vanguard groups of the people, feel themselves inseparably linked with the Government of the U.S.S.R. whose policy embodied the will and the interests of all the 170 million people of the great Soviet nation. Nor, indeed, could it be otherwise

in a state which is guided by the principles of Leninism, in a state where power is held by a government established as a result of the victory of the greatest of peoples' revolutions.

It has become a tradition in our country to discuss the most important decisions of the Government and the highest organ of power, the Supreme Soviet. Members of the Soviet parliament make systematic reports to their constituents both on their own work and on the laws adopted by the Soviet Government in the interests of the country. The activities of the Supreme Soviet are discussed at mass assemblies of the people, at meetings of workers, peasants and intellectuals, and thus millions upon millions who formally occupy no government posts are actually taking part in running the country. Approved by the masses, a law for that very reason is raised to a higher plane, as it were, and finds unwavering support among the people, who become its most active enforcers. Such are the great principles, such is the strength of Soviet democracy. These principles and this strength have been repeatedly demonstrated in the past month with unprecedented unanimity and vigor.

In the early days of September at thronged meetings held throughout the U.S.S.R. where voters discussed the decisions of the Special Fourth Session of the Supreme Soviet, the Soviet people unanimously endorsed the decisions passed by their parliament. Scientists and workers, collective farmers and Red Army men, sailors of the Red Navy and the crew of the ice-breaker *Sedov* adrift in the Arctic ice —all showed solidarity in their approval of the historic decisions of the Session.

During the first two weeks of September momentous events took place in international life. In two weeks of warfare between Germany and Poland, the rag-tag Polish state has completely collapsed. Under those circumstances the Soviet Government could not remain an indifferent spectator of the events that were taking place in such immediate proximity to our country.

In his speech to the Soviet people, delivered over the radio on September 17, Comrade Molotov explained the position of the Soviet Government, the meaning and causes of its decision "to extend a helping hand to its brother Ukrainians and brother Byelorussians inhabiting Poland."

After the signing of the Soviet-German pact of non-aggression a number of slanderous articles concerning this act of the Soviet Union appeared in bourgeois publications in England, France, America, and in some other countries, particularly in the press of Socialist parties of the Second International. The campaign of slander in the columns of these papers attained even greater proportions after September 17. The rage of the reactionary journalists and venal pen-bandits is understandable and easy to explain. It only proves that by signing the non-aggression pact with Germany the Soviet Union destroyed the most cherished plots, long stealthily hatched against the only Socialist state in the world.

Unprejudiced organs of the press, writers and journalists have for a long time continually called attention to the attempts of British conservatives to maneuver the U.S.S.R. into war. We may mention in this connection Robert Briffault's well-known book, *The Decline*

and Fall of the British Empire. The Swiss Socialist newspaper *Travail* also pointed out that while the Chamberlain government was in power in Britain, no pact of mutual assistance would be signed between Britain and the U.S.S.R. The organic and insuperable hostility of conservative England to the Land of Socialism was stressed by Theodore Dreiser in his letter to the editors of our magazine.

Since the principles of the international policy of the Soviet Union are sufficiently well known to broad circles of the working people and the intelligentsia outside the U.S.S.R., we might calmly ignore the slander and insinuations. And if we find it necessary once more to dwell upon the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R. it is only because the fabrications and calumnies of the enemies of the Soviet people need to be additionaly exposed to circles—above all certain groups of the intelligentsia—who do not sufficiently understand the principles of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and non-Soviet countries.

The campaign of slander unloosed against the Soviet Government in connection with the latest events contains nothing new in principle.

Even such a step as the adoption by the U.S.S.R. of the new Socialist Constitution was seized upon by many bourgeois critics as an occasion for leveling many absurd and baseless accusations at the Soviet Union. They even went so far as to interpret this Constitution to mean "the liquidation of the Bolshevik regime." Mentioning such "criticism" by certain organs of the Polish, and partly the American bourgeois press, Comrade Stalin cited their conclusion: "The Bolsheviks have swung to the right, it's a fact" and wittily ridiculed it. He pointed out that these critics were not greatly superior in understanding to Pelageya, the serf girl in Gogol's *Dead Souls*, who could not tell the right side of the road from the left.

This strange and suspicious "concern" of bitter enemies of Socialism over the dangers allegedly threatening the principles of the Soviet power, makes itself apparent not only now. It did, for example, in quite different historical circumstances in the first years after the October Revolution, when the young Soviet Republic, which had not yet grown strong, was just beginning to grapple with the problems of economic construction and the creation of a regular Red Army.

At the time Lenin, answering insinuations by enemies of the Soviet policy in connection with the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk peace, wrote in the summer of 1918 that "it is fatuous—to regard this as a complete departure from our ideals and as an adherence to German imperialism."[1]

And at the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets in that same year of 1918, Lenin already had every reason to state: "The whole course of events has proved that we were right in concluding the Brest-Litovsk peace."[2]

In all these years Soviet foreign policy has invariably followed lines laid down by Lenin and it remains the Leninist policy to this very day. And whoever asserts the contrary is deliberately twisting facts. As Comrade Molotov emphasized in his statement: "In our foreign policy towards non-Soviet countries we have always been guided by Lenin's well-known principle regarding the peaceful co-existence of the Soviet state and capitalist countries."

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[1] Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian Edition. Vol. XXIII, pp. 147—148.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 118.

In his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in January 1934, Comrade Stalin, speaking of the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the capitalist states, stressed two factors. He pointed out that "... fascism, for example in Italy, did not prevent the U.S.S.R. from establishing the best of relations with that country." And further, refuting fabrications to the effect that the U.S.S.R. had taken a new orientation in its foreign policy, Comrade Stalin stated clearly: "We never had any orientation towards Germany, nor have we any orientation towards Poland and France. Our orientation in the past and our orientation in the present time is towards the U.S.S.R. and towards the U.S.S.R. alone."

Attentively watching the zigzags in the policy of the governments of Western Europe, Comrade Stalin many years ago gave a prophetic warning of events which we are witnessing today. In one of his reports devoted to the international situation, Comrade Stalin in 1924 pointed out that the decisions of the London conference of the Entente were laying "a mine under Europe."[1]

The Bolshevik Party, true to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, has repeatedly warned of the possibility of a second imperialist war, the outbreak of which was hastened by the policy of the Entente. Just as in the first imperialist war, legends are now being invented in the columns of bourgeois newspapers regarding the lofty aims which the ruling classes of France and England allegedly pursue. Just as in 1914, certain French writers have voluntarily hitched themselves to the chariot of imperialism. Jean Giraudoux has assumed direction of the militarist and chauvinist information bureau of the French government. Pierre Dominique has written in *Le Nouvelle Littéraire* a frenzied article full of malicious attacks on the U.S.S.R. in which he proclaims that France, as he alleges, is fulfilling the "great task of saving the world." Unfortunately, there are a few others among the writers who have succumbed to the chauvinist fumes, others who but recently, in their views and convictions, were neither chauvinists nor abettors of imperialism.

What is the reason for the mistaken political stand taken by these writers at present? It seems to me that the point here is that these writers have forgotten about the *elementary facts* concerning the war, of which Lenin spoke time and again. In his lecture *War and Revolution*, delivered on May 27, 1917, Lenin called the attention of his audience to what is most essential in the question of war. "The main thing," he said, "which people usually forget... is the fundamental question as to the class character of the war, as to why the war broke out, which classes are waging it, what are the historical and historico-economical conditions that have caused it.[1]"

Also in the present case, the trouble with many intellectuals and writers of Western Europe and America is that they are unable to comprehend the true character of the war which is in progress in Europe.

Dealing with the character of the war, Earl Browder, in an interview recently published by the New York *Daily Worker*, correctly pointed out that the war is being

[1] J. Stalin. *On the International Situation.* Russian Edition. State Publishing House, p. 18.

[1] Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition Vol. XXX, p. 332.

"The man with the gun—formerly terrifying in the consciousness of the toiling masses, is terrible no longer, for he now represents the Red Army and is their defender". LENIN.

Poster by A. Kokorekin.

waged not to destroy fascism but to extend imperialist domination over the world.

The *Daily Worker* was also correct in emphasizing Comrade Molotov's statement that "we are firmly convinced that the interests of the U.S.S.R. coincide with the fundamental interests of the peoples of other countries." The U.S.S.R. is the citadel of Socialism, the fatherland of the working people of the whole world, the beacon on which is fixed the gaze of all progressive humanity. Soviet patriotism is patriotism of a special kind; it is a patriotism imbued with the spirit of internationalism. This internationalism was strikingly shown in the aid which the Soviet people recently gave to the friendly Mongolian People's Republic in its struggle against aggression. This internationalism, moreover, is reflected at present in the enthusiasm with which the people of the U.S.S.R. and their Red Army are carrying out their liberating mission in the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, and fulfilling the task of leading the Polish people out of a disastrous war.

In his statement at the Session of the Supreme Soviet, Comrade Molotov called the deputies' attention to the fact that there were insuperable inner contradictions in the position of England and France in their negotiations with the U.S.S.R. and revealed the character of these contradictions. No one has been able to refute his conclusions, for the facts supporting them are irrefutable. But if it is impossible to refute facts, they are hushed up, and attempts are made to poison the masses with the fumes of militarist, chauvinist propaganda. This, indeed, has become the chief job of a considerable part of the press in the West. All the more reason therefore why we should mention the honest and truthful stand taken by those papers which day after day are telling their readers the truth and are exposing the policy of the reactionary governments of the democratic countries, which in recent years have continually striven to eliminate the U.S.S.R. from European affairs and in fact have tried to incite Germany against the U.S.S.R. This policy has been exposed and defeated as a result of the historic foresight of Comrade Stalin. As far back as 1927 Comrade Stalin warned in his article, *Notes on Contemporary Themes* (*Pravda*, July 28, 1927):

"The British bourgeoisie does not like to wage war with its own hands. It has always preferred to wage war with somebody else's hands. And at times it actually succeeded in finding fools who were willing to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for it. This was the case at the time of the Great French Revolution, when the British bourgeoisie succeeded in forming an alliance of European states against revolutionary France. This was the case after the October Revolution in the U.S.S.R., when the British bourgeoisie, having attacked the U.S.S.R., tried to form an alliance of fourteen states, and when, in spite of this, it has been ejected beyond the borders of the U.S.S.R."

After their defeat twenty years ago, the British bourgeoisie did not drop their aggressive designs against the Land of Socialism. Exposing these designs Comrade Stalin, as Comrade Molotov emphasized in his statement, issued

a warning at the Eighteenth Party Congress last spring that there was an attempt "to provoke a conflict with Germany without any visible grounds." The U.S.S.R. did not yield to this provocation and the designs of its authors were defeated.

It is interesting to note the estimate given of the true nature of British policy by progressive circles in English public life itself. Very indicative in this respect is the above-mentioned book by the well-known English writer, Robert Briffault, *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*.

"England has justified the trust placed upon her as a leader in post-war politics", Briffault writes, "and has played her historical role as the promoter of reaction."[1] What was England's basic plan? Briffault answers: "Its present endeavor is to... renew... a Four-Power Pact, securing... non-aggression 'in the West' and 'a free hand in the East.'"[2]

Briffault further cites the following characteristically cynical observation of the London *Daily Mail*, which thus defines the guiding principle of British policy: "by noting what the Soviet would have this country do and taking the opposite course".[3]

It didn't work! The plan to embroil the U.S.S.R. in war has failed.

The peoples of the U.S.S.R., as Comrade Molotov pointed out, stood aside from the war now in progress, but they could not remain indifferent to the fate of their brothers in the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. The peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia suffered even more under the yoke of the Polish landed gentry than under the tsarist autocracy which made of the Russian empire a genuine prison of peoples.

"I still bear the unhealed scars of policemen's whips," Anna Manbrychek told an *Izvestia* correspondent at Novogrudok, Western Byelorussia. "My neighbor, Yadviga Novozhilkova, lies at death's door even now. Three days ago she went to the landlord's woods for a bundle of brush with which to heat water and bathe her child. She was caught by a forester and taken to the *pan*. He commanded that she be flogged and then drove her beyond the village boundaries and loosed the dogs on her. When we managed to get her home, she was barely alive and all bitten by the dogs."

Perhaps someone doubts the truth of this report? Perhaps someone will say that even if this is true, it is an exceptional case, the only one of its kind. But here before me is the testimony of a Polish writer, Wanda Wasilewska, who has become the chronicler, as it were, of the bitter suffering of the Polish peasantry.

In the case of which I spoke above, a Byelorussian peasant woman was the victim of the landlord's brutality. Wanda Wasilewska's novel *Earth in Bondage* written in 1938, contains a similar story about a Polish peasant. This case is so very characteristic that the editors of *International Literature* have decided to publish it elsewhere in this issue. Perhaps even this is not enough? If so, testimony can be cited from a great many British and American publications, whose correspondents have described the really medieval horrors inflicted by the Polish gentry on

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[1] "*The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*", by Robert Briffault, published by Simon and Schuster, New York, 1938, p. 211.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 223. [3] *Ibid*, p. 175.

Alexei Tolstoi (right) and Academician A. A. Bogomoletz, members of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in Kremlin.

the defenseless population of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

The London *New Statesman and Nation* (Oct. 8, 1938) thus pictures the situation in an Ukrainian village under the domination of the Polish nobility:

"Here the peasant has real cause for complaint. Less then 25 per cent of them have enough land to be self supporting . . . The Ukrainians are . . . banned from the civil service . . .; their children are unable to get employment. Only if they change their religion are jobs open to them . . . Is it not possible to draw from such examples the conclusion that the problem is not so much one of nationality as deprivation of human rights? The Polish peasant has complained against the Polish Government and many of them correspond to those of the minorities."

This policy has been pursued for twenty years, although at one time the Polish government signed a special treaty guaranteeing the rights of national minorities. What these "rights" were like is evident from the following facts, published by the bourgeois press abroad.

The New York *Nation* of Nov. 5, 1930, in an article entitled *The Polish Terror in Galicia* wrote thus of the Western Ukraine, which it called a "*stolen province.*"

". . . the long-smoldering resentment of the Ukrainians . . . against Poland's theft of their independence break into rebellion against Polish domination."

Describing the reprisals of the Polish government against the Ukrainian peasants who had risen in defense of their rights, the author of the article cites the following testimony from the Berlin correspondent of the *New York Herald, Tribune:*

"In the Ukrainian villages of the district priests and peasants are being flogged with the *'knout'* (a lash consisting of a tapering

bundle of leather thongs twisted with wire and hardened so as to mangle the body) and women shamefully mishandled, the thatched cottages of the peasants unroofed, schools closed, cooperative stores looted, libraries demolished, and ruinous requisitions for food-stuffs levied on the villages by the Polish cavalry and police sent into the countryside on a so-called 'mission of 'pacification'".

What pacification' was like is told by *International Affairs* for May 1932 in an article called *Ukrainians in Poland*.

"The form which this terrorism, or 'pacification', as the Poles officially call it, took was a series of attacks, generally at night, on villages in some cases by cavalry, in others by police squads. The village selected was surrounded and the machine guns were set up. Then, so it is alleged, the villagers were forced to wreck their reading-room, library and cooperative stores, whilst their leaders were rounded up, driven into some barn, stripped, held down and beaten with the thick sticks used for threshing. One charge, which so far as I know has never been denied, stands out—the refusal of medical treatment to the wounds, often gangrened, of the victims."

Small wonder therefore that even the London *New Statesman and Nation* in an article *Oppression in Poland*, published on Aug. 29, 1931, prophesied that the day would come when "in the Eastern regions of Poland the White Russian (Byelorussian) and Ukrainian peasants break out into open insurre tion."

The writer foresaw the possibility of a situation in which the Soviet Government would consider itself obliged to give fraternal support to the peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia. And he concludes his article thus: "...who, if such a situation were to arise, could honestly deny that the Russian Government would be quite right?"

The Soviet Government has never forgotten that the peoples of the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet Byelorussia are linked by the closest of ties with their blood brothers beyond the borders of the U.S.S.R.

In a speech delivered in October 1920, Lenin pointed out that the Soviet Government had accepted a worse frontier with Poland simply to avoid subjecting our peoples to another winter campaign. (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, vol. XXV, p. 426).

Naturally all the Soviet people have greeted with enthusiasm the government's decision to render help to the brotherly peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

There was not a remote village in the Soviet Union, no factory, collective farm or group of intellectuals but was aroused to extraordinary enthusiasm when the speech of Comrade Molotov was broadcast over the radio. All were proud in the knowledge that a great liberating mission had fallen to our people and their Red Army.

One might cite eloquent passages from the resolutions adopted at workers' mass meetings; one might cite the striking things spoken at meetings of distinguished writers, actors and artists, whose names are familiar to cultured people everywhere. Below the reader will find some of the statements by the greatest writers of our country, voicing their support, in passionate unison with all the people, for the historic decision of the Soviet Government.

The delight and enthusiasm of the population of the Western

Meeting of the Moscow writers, discussing Molotov's speech.

Ukraine and Western Byelorussia are quire understandable. The Red Army, indeed, not only brought them liberation from the terror of the Polish nobility, not only brought them national emancipation, but at the same time rescued them from the horrors of war and gave them opportunity to build up a new kind of life. The peasants of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia have received the land of the landlords and for the first time in history have begun to work for themselves on their own land. The workers of industrial enterprises have received an eight-hour day instead of a twelve- or fourteen-hour day. Workers, peasants and intellectuals, entering the new municipal and village government bodies, have themselves begun to lay the foundations for a new, free life.

To the entire younger generation the arrival of the Red Army signifies opportunity for a free education; and to scores of thousands of people, the end of that most terrible scourge of capitalist society—unemployment.

For the millions of the Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Jewish men and women among the population, the arrival of the Red Army signifies freedom for national and cultural progress. None but those who have experienced national oppression can fully appreciate the rejoicing of people who for the first time in their lives are now at liberty to read, write and converse in their mother tongue.

For twenty years the Polish nobility calumnied the U.S.S.R. and inculcated in the national minorities absurd conceptions about the conditions of life in the U.S.S.R. It is understandable that certain backward strata were astonished that the Red Army units which entered cities and villages were careful and attentive in their attitude to the private property of the population, while churches and syna-

gogues continued religious services unhindered. For twenty years the people had lived, as it were, in a poisonous fog. It took a few days for that fog to disperse.

At present many of the most distinguished people in Soviet cultural life are visiting our Byelorussian and Ukrainian brothers, who have so long been separated from us. Writers and poets, actors and musicians, the Soviet intelligentsia as a whole consider it their honorable duty to acquaint the people of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia with the achievements of Soviet culture.

A few more months will pass and memories of the nightmare of life under the terrorist rule of the Polish gentry will recede into the past. It will not take long for the differences in the material and cultural development of the united peoples of Byelorussia and the Ukraine, who but recently were artificially separated by the frontier, to disappear.

For the poverty-stricken peasants of Western Byelorussia, the dry statistics of the State Bank of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic sound like a fairy tale, for collective farmers have more than fifteen million rubles on deposit there in current accounts. Western Ukrainians feel as if they were gazing upon a miracle when they learn the results of industrial development in the Soviet Ukraine, whose plants produce more than twice as much pig iron as did all the industry of tsarist Russia in the old days.

The collapse of the rag-tag Polish state is the natural and logical result of the policy of national oppression which was the chief means used by the Polish *pans* to maintain their power. This policy has been wiped out forever, thanks to the aid given by the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which, as a result of the victory of Socialism, has now become a fully formed multi-national Socialist state, that has stood all tests, and the stability of which might well be envied by any national state in any part of the world.

Calmly and confidently the peoples of the Soviet Union face the morrow. This calm and confidence of the Soviet people are strikingly reflected in the entire character of the Land of Soviets, in the fact that the current workday life of our great country has continued and continues to flow along normally during all these days.

After hearing the radio speech of the head of the Soviet Government, the people took up their usual tasks and responded with deeds to Comrade Molotov's appeal "to work honestly and selflessly at his post and thereby assist the Red Army." In these days we have witnessed new victories of the Stakhanov movement, a great wave of labor enthusiasm, inspired by the Soviet patriotism of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

We well remember the words of our great teacher, uttered as far back as 1918: "We have every ground to look firmly and with absolute confidence towards the future, which will bring us new allies, new victories of the Socialist revolution in a number of the more advanced countries." [1]

In the light of the most recent world events, the might and strength of the Socialist state, the moral and political unity of the Soviet people have been demonstrated with unusual clarity. Soviet prestige, therefore, has risen still higher. Recent events have shown once again why all the forces of advance and progress throughout the world asso-

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[1] Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian Edition, vol. XXIII, p. 109.

ciate the name of the Soviet Union, the name of the great Stalin with their conception of a country which brings peace to all mankind. This is a country that has set an example of how to fight for peace, how to found its state and public life on principles of a free community of peoples, to whom social and national oppression are unknown.

All honest people in the whole world will come to this correct conclusion.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

Poster by V. Karitzky.

That They May Live in Peace, Prosperity and Happiness

The wise Soviet Government has kept our country out of the strife of the imperialists among themselves.

We are neutral. But this is not the neutrality of the bourgeois countries which stuff their pockets through speculative trade with the peoples whose blood is being shed.

We are neutral in the Soviet way. We are opposed to wars of conquest. Divisions march into its horrible maw, while from the other end gold pours into the pockets of the kings of finance.

We are neutral because our boundless land of the working people lives in the tasks of shock work, of Stakhanovite construction to build up the Communist society. Our tasks are the happiness of man, of our people, of our land, the happiness of all men and our personal happiness. That is what we are building—happiness. We, Russians, together with the great brotherly peoples of the Soviet republics, have undertaken to build human happiness. And once we have undertaken this job, we must see it through and we shall see it through.

It happens that these lines are being written at a time when in Poland, which but yesterday was a country with great-power ambitions, every last scrap of the land today is enwrapped in madness and horror. A lurid glow lights the whole sky above Poland. Peaceful inhabitants of towns and villages scurry between fires, are assailed by bombs and machine guns from the skies and the earth. The remnants of the battered Polish armies hide by day in forests, swamps and folds of the earth, and by night flee to the east and the southeast, sweeping away everything in their path. The Polish Government was first to run away, the devil knows where—to its eternal shame—abandoning the country, the people, the army to their fate.

We might have said to the Polish people, "We have been warning you for a long time that your system of state would lead the country and the people to destruction."

But we shall not reproach the Polish people for having so long tolerated the government and the system that brought the whole Polish state to destruction.

We are magnanimous. This magnanimity is the lofty humanism of the working people. We do not wish to and cannot remain neutral, indifferent to the fate of brotherly peoples, the fate of the working people.

We understand what it means to be abandoned to one's fate. It means that any Polish major, retreating with his disorganized troops, vents his impotent, officer-caste fury on Ukrainian and Byleorussian villages. His formula is brief: "Leave nothing for anyone." So the miserable, straw-thatched Ukrainian and Byelorussian villages go up in flames, cattle are slaughtered and the cries of the peasantry are answered with bayonets and bullets. Women, children and old people flee into the impenetrable night. Whither? Where

can they seek salvation from the catastrophe?

Salvation is coming from the U.S.S.R. Grim, stern, unwavering and magnanimous—the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is advancing.

The Byelorussians and the Ukrainians see how, for the sake of their happiness, for their liberty, for their hard-earned possessions, the unwavering fighters of the Red Army go fearlessly into battle. For the first time in many years of misfortune and humiliation, our brothers beyond the border — Byelorussians and Ukrainians—see concern for their fate; for the first time they are learning that only one thing is wanted from them—who but yesterday were slaves—that they should live in peace, prosperity and happiness.

It is for this aim, for human happiness, that our country has been built; and the Red Army stands guard over it.

It is for this aim that the Red Army marched today, darkening the sky with its steel wings, shaking the earth with its armored cars and the heavy tread of countless regiments.

ALEXEI TOLSTOI

The Voice of the Heart

Brothers of Western Byelorussia! I wish you hear my voice and these words of mine uttered from the depth of my soul.

For twenty years we have been building our life, our culture, our art, our schools and science. For twenty years we have known no national oppression, no bondage to nobles, no insults of the arbitrary violence of man to man. We are building up our life by the toil of our own hands, and we look with joy and confidence to the morrow. We are not afraid of hunger, lack of bread, unemployment. We are not worried about the fate of our children—the broad roads to life lie wide open before them.

Four years ago I travelled through Western Byelorussia. From the car window I saw the places where, long ago, my feet had strayed thousands of times. A feeling of sorrow gripped my heart when I looked at the narrow strips of land, the miserable huts, the sad figures of my brothers, crushed by misfortune. Sorrowful and long-forgotten experiences rose again to my mind. At that time I wrote a dedication to you, *On a Journey*, which perhaps has not reached your ears.

«Па сходзе многіх дзен
Я зноў зірнуў у вочы родным долам —
Зняменне, ціш і сон,
Убожства і прыгон,
За крыжам крыж, астрогі ды каст целы...
Дзе-ж посулы паноў
Іх лёкаяў аб роўнасці, аб волі?
У дзвёнканні званоў,
У звоке кайданоў,
У свісце бізуноў.
У голадзе, асадніцтве, падполлі...»[1]

[1] *After the passage of many days,*
I am once more face to face with my native valleys —
Stagnation, quiet and sleep,
Poverty and landlordism,
Cross upon cross, prisons and churches. . .
Where are the promised equality and freedom
Pledged by the p a n s and their lackeys?
In the clang of church bells,
In the clank of fetters,
In the swish of whips,
In hunger, exile and oppression.
(Translated from Byelorussian).

The government of the Polish gentry led its state and its people into an abyss of insufferable misery and then fled shamefully. Could we stand quietly aside and watch your sufferings? Our hearts said, "Enough!" And the peoples of the Soviet Union personified by their Red Army have come to your aid and extended their hands to you in brotherly support. Grasp these hands with confidence — they bring you peace, liberty and the high dignity of man.

And the poison of the Polish *pans* will be dispelled like a noxious fog in a pure east wind.

YAKUB KOLAS

People's Poet of the Byelorussian S.S.R., Holder of an Order of Merit.

Minsk

The Surest Protection in the World

From Moscow the radio has brought Comrade Molotov's speech. To the history of mankind's emancipation has been added still another glorious page, bright with noble-mindedness and justice.

The Soviet Government has extended a helping hand to our brothers, the Ukrainians and Byelorussians living in Poland. Incompetent and shamefully bankrupt, the rulers of the Polish state with their unprincipled, tyrannical and perfidious policy plunged the Polish people and eight million Ukrainians and three million Byelorussians into a disastrous war. We, the peoples of the U.S.S.R., led by the Party of Lenin-Stalin, led by the world-wide torch of truth, loftiness of purpose, justice and human happiness, led by the great Stalin, are sending our glorious sons, our titans, our Red Army to take under their protection—the surest in the world—the lives and property of the population of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

Our troops have crossed the border. They bring happiness and freedom to the land which for centuries has been harrassed by the predatory Polish *pans*; they bring joy, that highest joy on earth with which the people of the Soviet are filled, to the people who were doomed to ruin, slow starvation and a lapse into savagery under the rule of the Polish gentry.

Words cannot express the humanity and justice that glow from the words of Stalin's great comrade-in-arms, Vyacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., with which he called upon our heroic Red Army to carry out with glory its great task of liberation.

As a Soviet person, as a Soviet Ukrainian, my heart is filled with that brave joy which knows no barriers nor strongholds, joy for the happiness of man, for the Party, for Stalin. With this battle cry the men of the Red Army have crossed the borders, heralding life and happiness for the oppressed, humiliated peoples of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, who were doomed to destruction.

I, an Ukrainian Soviet writer, repeat that battle cry here, in Soviet Armenia, in Red Yerevan—where sons and daughters of the Soviet peoples, poets and writers of the Land of Soviets have assembled, at one with the whole Soviet people in their feeling of courageous joy and triumphant enthusiasm—I repeat that battle cry: For the happiness of men, for the Party of Bolsheviks, for Stalin! How many bitter,

gloomy, black pictures I might sketch for you in telling of the horror and suffering of Ukrainians and Byelorussians and Jews under the bloody heel of the Polish *pans*; of the burning of villages, the destruction of schools and universities, the mass shootings and tortures at even the least expression of national feeling! I might tell you of the insults and humiliations of centuries. But you know all this! The great Russian people knew and saw how the Polish *pans* tortured their brothers, the Western Ukrainians and Byelorussians. And now, when our brothers are abandoned to their fate by the bankrupt Polish government, the Russian people at the head of the Soviet peoples are bringing life, liberty and happiness to their blood brothers. The Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Kazakh Red Army men are the heralds of happiness, the defenders of life for Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia.

Long live our glorious Red Army!

Long live our Western Ukrainian and Western Byelorussian brothers!

May the great sun of happiness shine upon them!

Хай живе великий вчитель людства, творець вселюдського щастя и волі — наш рідний Сталін![1]

MIKOLA BAZHAN

Yerevan

[1] Long live the great teacher of mankind, the builder of universal happiness and freedom for humanity — our beloved Stalin! *(Translated from Ukrainian).*

Wanda Wasilewska

Earth in Bondage

(AN EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL)

Over the green meadow in the direction of the ponds strode Stefan Zelinski on his way from the manor village of Mankow. He whistled gaily as he went. Framed by the green of the meadows, the ponds lay smooth and mirror-like, one larger, one smaller, connected by a narrow channel. Stefan undressed quickly and entered the cold, still water. A shiver ran over him from head to foot.

"Br-r-r!"

Footsteps rustled and the young man looked round. The forester, Waler, was coming with his police dog, which ran sniffing along with its muzzle to the ground. Stefan calmly touched the water with his hands, hesitating to plunge in: it was like an icy hoop squeezing him below the heart.

"Hey, what are you going to do, swim here?"

"And what if I am? Am I in your way? There's no rule against it, is there?"

"Yes and no. If I say you can't, then you can't."

"Then put up a signboard, so everybody will know."

"Don't you try to teach me my business."

"And you—don't jump on me for nothing."

"Get out of the water! You hear?"

"I hear you. I'm not deaf, Mr. Waler."

"Get out this minute!"

"I'll have a swim and then come out."

The forester leaped at the young man and his knout whistled through the air. The blow raised a red welt on the smooth white shoulder of the swimmer. A rush of blood darkened his face.

"Grudge me the water, do you, bully? Come on in and drink it all!"

Waler turned purple with rage. He hastily grabbed up in his arms the clothing lying on the bank.

"Don't touch my clothes."

"Shut your trap, you hear?"

"And don't you bully me! When the people caught you by the Bug River, you begged for mercy on your knees, but you're mighty brave now, aren't you?"

Down the path ran a big, tawny dog of wolfish strain. It halted and waited for its master. Another forester, Sowiak, was running to help his fellow.

"Sock him in the mug, Aloys, sock him. Teach the bully a lesson."

"Bully yourself!"

Zelinski, naked and blue from cold, dashed at them from the water. The dogs growled low.

"Give me my clothes!"

"Well, we'll see about that."

The young man clenched his fists. At once a hail of blows rained over his head, his naked shoulders and breast.

"That'll teach you, my bully! You better listen when a forester speaks to you. Grab him, Rex!"

The police dog lunged and with one mighty leap was upon the young man; sharp white fangs seized his calf.

"Ou-uch!"

"Oho! you see? Grab him, Soika!"

The young man cast a hunted look around. Not far from the water stood a low, twisted acacia. Stefan tore his leg from the fangs of the dog and with great leaps dashed at top speed toward the tree.

"Rex! Soika, get him!"

He heard the dogs panting behind him, felt the hot breath from their muzzles. With a sudden leap he flung himself into the air and caught hold of a branch. He felt the sharp thorns scratching his body, the scrape of the rough bark, while the green, prickly branches lashed his face. He drew up his bare legs beneath him as the dogs leaped high into the air and slid back along the trunk.

"Rex, Soika, bite him!"

"Don't split your throat for nothing, Mr. Waler. Dogs haven't learned yet how to climb trees."

A stone whistled through the air and hit the young fellow hard in the chest.

"O-o-ow!"

"You see? We'll get to you up there just the same, don't think we won't."

His eyes wide with fright, the lad stared at the foresters. They raged like madmen. From the forester's house nearby, Sowiak's two children ran out.

"Guenya, Yusef, gather up stones! Bring them here! Come here, Grabarczuk, and see what kind of a bird is roosting up in the tree."

Grabarczuk, the overseer, looked up and laughed.

"Playing Adam in paradise? Give it to him in the guts, the bully, in the guts! Teach him something."

Again stones whistled and the leaves of the acacia fluttered to the ground.

"Mercy, men! What are you doing?"

"Oh! so that's the way now? You used different lingo before. Yusef, Guenya, hurry up with those stones. Over there under the brush you'll find more."

"Mer-cy!"

"Holler away, why don't you! Somebody will hear you if you keep it up."

Barking furiously the dogs leaped at the twisted trunk. Sowiak came nearer.

"Get down!"

With bloodshot eyes the young fellow looked down at the raging beasts.

"The dogs . . ."

"Afraid of the dogs? Get down, you hear? Or else . . ."

The cleverly thrown stone hit the mark. A piercing groan broke from Zelinski's breast.

"Get down!"

And again a stone. The little Yusef came running back from the bank with a whole pile of them. A dark film dimmed Stefan's eyes; his mouth filled with blood, and his entrails were torn by a wild, unbearable pain. The dogs leaped higher and higher. In despair the lad felt that his fingers were growing weaker, that the harsh bark of the acacia was slipping from his fingers, that everything was swaying back and forth in front of him as if the tree were flung about in a raging tempest, its top bending to the very ground. He tried to say something, but from his bloody lips came only disconnected muttering, inhuman gurgling sounds. His numbed fingers relaxed and the

branches of the acacia flew rustling upwards. The lad fell between the dogs like a bag of stones.

"Stand up! Back, Rex. Back, Soika."

"Why, he's not moving."

"He'll move pretty quick. Stir him up with the knout, Waler, let him have it."

The forester stepped forward, but his uplifted lash hung in the air; two wide-open, glassy, unseeing eyes of a corpse stared at him from the blood-smeared face.

"Listen, Grabarczuk . . ."

The dogs sat back on their haunches, the fur ruffling on their spines. Waler wiped with his palm the sudden sweat from his brow.

"Has he croaked?"

"Sure not. You couldn't kill a bully like that so easy if you wanted to. He'll come to."

Grabarczuk took the lad's motionless hand, but there was no sign of a pulse. He lifted the eyelid.

"Looks like he's dead . . . He's turned cold . . ." he confirmed in a voice that sounded strangely unlike his own.

"It's all your fault, Grabarczuk . . . You egged us on. 'In the guts, the bully, give it to him in the guts' " faltered Waler, stuttering and whining.

"I did? And who pitched into him before I ever came? Who told the boys to gather stones? Maybe it was me? You're caught in the act, Waler."

"Sowiak, too, Sowiak . . ."

"Don't try to get out of it, Grabarczuk," said Sowiak resolutely. "There were three of us in this business."

"I'm not trying to get out of it. Three, you say, then let it be three. One bully the less in this world—no harm done. Did anyone see it? No!"

Involuntarily they looked around. Golden sunlight shone on the solitary meadows, a thin trail of smoke twisted up from the chimney of the forester's house, the village loomed dark and far away by the road. Not a soul anywhere.

"What are we going to do now?"

"Throw him into the water."

"Someone will find him."

"Let them find him. Nobody saw anything. He drowned—and that's all there is to it."

"He's all covered with blood . . ."

"The water will wash it off. Come on, Sowiak, grab his feet."

Unwillingly, with repugnance, the forester grasped the skinny ankles. The dead lad's hands dragged on the ground from either side.

"One, two—let him go!"

The body swung out and splashed heavily into the water. Circles spread ever wider and more distinct, and ripples splashed against the bank.

"That's that. You, Sowiak, shut the mouths of your kids so they won't go blabbing. Then into the woods with you and don't come back till evening. Nobody saw, nobody heard—and there's an end of it in the water."

Guenya and Yusef, huddled together, trembled as in a chill and looked in fright toward the place in the water where the body had fallen.

"Did you hear what the *pan* overseer said? Don't you dare squeak! Not to your mother nor anybody else, or I'll beat the daylights out of you. I swear to God I will! Get home now, and remember, you weren't here at all. Understand, Yusef?"

"I un-der-stand . . ."

"That's the way. Tell mother I'll be back in the evening."

The children ran to their house, and the forester went toward the woods. Waler set out for the Dark Ravines; Sowiak and Grabarczuk, for Wilcznikow.

BORIS GORBATOV

Vovnich
The Wireless Operator

1

If you ever happen to be at Cape Tranquillity, ask the chief to show you the "annals" of the wintering party. It is a thick exercise book in a black cover. On the first page you will see our names. We are the people who founded the station, we were the first shift, the first to winter there.

You will see by the book that there were six of us: Fyodor Chernykh, the geophysicist, Communist Party organizer and chief of winter camp; Valeri Petrovsky, the meteorologist; Abram Isaich Stark, the doctor; Yakov Stavraki, the wireless operator; Alexei Bogucharov, the mechanic; and Kapiton Pavlovich Makarov, the cook. I may say without bragging that on the whole of the Northern Sea Route, from Wellen to the Jugor Strait, there was not a pleasanter, friendlier, more harmonious winter camp than ours. We were called the "monastery at Cape Tranquillity" but ours was the only monastery in the world where squabbles and envy and filth had no place.

How did the friendship spring up and what was it based on? Not similarity of character, by any means, because no six people in the world, perhaps, ever resembled each other as little as we did. Our professions, ages, life stories, tastes and habits differed widely; but not all of us were new to the life at the Pole. We had learned the law of the winter camps which says: "The greatest danger is not the Arctic blizzards, but the Arctic squabbles." So we made up our minds that though there might be blizzards, there were to be no squabbles.

I have a snapshot somewhere (it must be in my traveling bag, I'll show it to you afterwards) of six men arm-in-arm on the shore of a black, autumnal sea. In the middle, towering above the rest, you'll see a blond, narrow-chested, long-armed fellow in a shaggy sweater. He is bare-headed. He has a curly brown beard and shy blue eyes. That's Fyodor Chernykh, our Party organizer and chief. He has his arm around a little chap, who clings close to him as if leaning against a rock —that's our very dear and very learned Dr. Stark. He has a coat on, but you can see the collar and tie and snake tiepin he always wears, no matter what comes or goes. Beside the neat figure of the doctor observe a shaggy, outlandish person with fluffy red whiskers. Clothed

from head to foot in a species of piebald fur—trousers, boots and all—his fur shirt turned out at the throat with white bare skin (which gives him a touch of Pierrot at a fancy-dress ball)—such is Valeri Petrovsky, the trapper and bear hunter of the party. It is far too warm for furs, but he scorns ordinary clothes. At his belt hangs a hunting knife in a sheath of walrus tusk, and a horn of the same ivory, ringed round with brass, for tobacco. To the left of Chernykh you see Yashka Stavraki, the wireless operator, whom we nicknamed "Yashka Never-Say-Die." Alleged to be a Greek, it was at least certain that he hailed from Odessa. His uniform jacket is thrown carelessly around his shoulders, his left eye winks at somebody, whoever that may be. He has his arm round the rather bulky waist of the cook, Kapiton Pavlovich Makarov, whom we call alternatively Captain Pavlovich and Admiral Makarov. "Admiral of the kitchen"—he is quite attached to the nickname. And the sixth man? Who is he? The sixth man is myself, Alexei Bogucharov, mechanic—as you see me here.

So, our arms around each other's shoulders, we marched along the sea shore, as if announcing to the whole world: "Clear the way for the men from Tranquillity Bay!" And so we lived, holding on tightly to each other, keeping in step, one strong, well-knit body, known as an Arctic wintering party. The heart of this body was Fyodor Chernykh, and that, my friends, was an honest, manly heart; the brain of the party was Dr. Stark; the eyes, keen and hungry, a hunter's eyes—Valeri Petrovsky; Yashka—the ears that missed nothing and never rested; I was simply the hands, while the cook, Kapiton Pavlovich, was the tongue, and a real tongue it was, to be sure, sharp and witty.

It was fine—the way we lived at Cape Tranquillity, friends. We had spent a year there, and then, without talking about it or coming to any special agreement to do so, as if it were something self-understood, we stayed on for the second winter and were already considering a third, when, on the nineteenth of November, a thing happened that brought about a definite change in our lives and, perhaps, in the destiny of each of us.

At noon that day I dropped in on Yashka Never-Say-Die for a smoke and a chat, or rather, just to say nothing in somebody's company; it's all the same. When you've lived a long time at small Arctic stations you learn to talk without breaking the silence.

A lonely person is either a terrible chatterer or a strong, silent type. The chatterer does not need a living audience; inanimate objects are good listeners. Our cook, for instance, talks all day to his pots and pans. And there is nothing wrong with it either; no one could listen to the tale of your everyday woes with more patience than the brass coffeepot in which you make your inevitable coffee three times a day.

As for me, I like to listen and say nothing. I love the sound of human speech, the humming of the wind in the wires, the crunching of the crisp snow underfoot, the crack of shifting ice. Things are grand talkers, too, if you care to listen to them. But they can be intolerably talkative on some occasions. There's an old motor in my power station that jabbers all day long. In its even, unhurried talk you may hear anything you wish; it seems to answer the thoughts that have only just entered your head. It sings to any libretto you may compose.

In the end it becomes an intolerable bore. I have been listening to its babbling for so long that I know beforehand exactly what it is going to say. "Stuff and nonsense! Stuff and nonsense!"—it puffs. Then I get

up, wipe my hands on some tow and go to see somebody. Usually—to the wireless cabin.

Yashka is alone, sitting hunched up over the table; he turns at the sound of the door closing. I nod to him without speaking. He goes on with his work while I stride up and down the room. The clock ticks.

At rare intervals the wireless operator utters an indignant exclamation. "Devil take it!" His pencil-point snaps. I halt for a moment and look at him inquiringly. But Yashka is hard at it again, using his key the way a woodpecker uses his beak. Then I say "M-yes," and resume my pacing up and down the room. This is the kind of conversation we carry on. Then I go up to the table and look over his shoulder at the radiograms he is receiving. It is very amusing. The words appear on the paper like the bits of picture-transfers we play with in childhood. Some are unfinished, some are missing, but one can guess the sense of the whole, as one guessed in the transfers the bird by its beak, the Chinese by his queue and the pails hanging from the yoke across his shoulders.

It happens seldom, very seldom, still it does sometimes happen, that the message I am reading over his shoulder has something directly to do with me and "Alexei Bogucharov, Cape Tranquillity. . ." comes out bit by bit. Yashka starts to grin; my eyes are glued to the magic paper. How painfully slowly the words grow. It is as if someone a very long way off (evidently my mother, for no one else ever writes to me) is stammering, trying to speak to me. I want to hurry her. Be quick, now, Mother, what's coming at the end? "Love," "kisses," or "I'm on my deathbed"—?

That memorable day, the nineteenth of November, I was glancing over the operator's shoulder as usual, reading the life told in such sparing terms by the telegraph. Suddenly a word on the as yet clean paper made me start. It grew hot and alarming in the wireless room all at once. Yashka passed his hand through his hair and huddled down over the paper.

2

Have you ever experienced that inexplicably oppressive feeling, that sense of disaster as yet unknown, that comes over you involuntarily before you have finished reading the ominous letters "SOS" at the heading of a wireless message? They make you want to jump up and run screaming for help. You are still in the dark about it, but you feel the hot breath of disaster on your cheek. You do not know the people who are in trouble; but they seem very close to you already. "SOS!" It rings out like the alarm-bell of a village in the night, like the cry of "To arms!" in a drowsy barrack, like the shot of a startled sentinel.

I stared eagerly at the paper. What had happened? Where? The three letters appeared for the second time; then "To all, all, all!" Then "SOS!" "SOS!" again, as if the unknown operator were trying to enforce the attention of all who heard him.

"It's at Kolyuchy Bay," Yashka whispered. "What's gone wrong with them there, I wonder?" At last the text of the message began to appear: "Transmit Headquarters Northern Sea Route Moscow stop Fire Kolyuchy Bay reason unknown stop House and adjoining storerooms burning stop Strong wind hinders extinguishing stop Measures taken efforts useless stop Now flames at door wireless room smoke stop Can you hear me stop Transmit Moscow awaiting instructions stop Ready carry on here if necessary without dwellings stop All well good spirits stop."

The point of Yashka's pencil broke. He snatched up another.

. . . And now? What was going on there, this very moment?

But not a sound reached us from Kolyuchy Bay. Yashka called it again and again, changed the waves, but all in vain. The Bay preserved an ominous silence. Was the operator suffocated with smoke, or had he left his post to rush to the aid of his comrades? Or, perhaps, the flaming roof beams had fallen on the apparatus and forced it to hold its peace? It was impossible to guess. Yashka flung the ear-phones on the table in despair.

I put my ear to the loud-speaker—why?—I do not know. It was quiet over the air, as quiet as in the grave. That meant "station out of order." We had heard its death-rattle; it was almost as dreadful as the death of a human being.

"Voinich. . . . Vognich. . . . Vovnich. . . ." Yashka was muttering.

"What's that?" I asked in alarm.

"I'm trying to remember the name of the operator at Kolyuchy."

"Did you know him?"

We talked in whispers, as if we were at a sickbed.

"No. A newcomer."

"Wonder if he's still alive."

It was an anxious night we spent in the common-room at Cape Tranquillity. We paced the room in silence, thinking of comrades away at Kolyuchy Bay. What were they doing now? Wandering forlorn and dejected, very likely, among the ashes, keeping warm by the dying embers, gazing at what had been a home, a store-house, a wireless-room, now become but a few smoking faggots; gathering the pitiful remains of the provisions, counting the precious tins of food. Had they been able to save at least the tents and the sleeping sacks? How would they go on living now? I know of no disaster more terrible than a fire in a winter camp.

The SOS message crawled on its long slow journey *via* the chain of Arctic stations to Moscow. Our message accompanied it. We wrote that the party at Cape Tranquillity was longing to help our unfortunate neighbors. (Kolyuchy Bay was only some two hundred kilometers away from us along the coast.) While we were waiting for a reply and instructions, Yashka never left the wireless room; the cook was packing boxes of provisions. I, for my part, was getting the tractor ready for the road in case it should be wanted. Valeri Petrovsky, the "Cape commandant" and head fireman of our fire brigade (for everyone of us was not only a geophysicist, mechanic, or wireless operator, as the case might be, but an axe, a pump, and even a bucket if necessary), was scowling over our equipment and grumbling at what he called our careless, easy-going ways. All of us were waiting patiently for the signal from Moscow. At times like these it is borne in upon one that this is an Arctic station on the very edge of the world.

At long last, our instructions arrived. They puzzled us a little. We were to assist Kolyuchy Bay with supplies and bring Vovnich, the wireless operator, back to live with us. The rest of the people there were to make their way to the nearest fur-trading station and make preparations for the geological work to be done in the spring.

Yes, the telegram puzzled us. Why was Vovnich to be brought here? And why only Vovnich? Why precisely Vovnich? Yashka was even a little offended.

"It seemed to me that I didn't get on so badly alone," he said, thrusting out his lip. "Why must it be the wireless operator?"

But there was no time for either nursing hurt feelings or guessing riddles. I had to start out at once. Three hours later I was on my way.

3

I shall not dwell on my journey to Kolyuchy Bay. It has nothing to do with the story and you wouldn't find it interesting. But, as a mechanic, I must just say that there is no machine on the face of the earth more honest than the "Stalinets" tractor. And when I've said that, I've said everything. As for myself, when I did eventually get to Kolyuchy Bay, I wanted—like Peary when he reached the Pole—only one thing: to get a good night's sleep.

But the people there gave me such a warm welcome that I completely forgot my weariness.

They had managed to settle down on the ruins as if they intended to stay. They had built themselves "tin-tin-yarangi" of snow bricks, ice houses, a kitchen and a storeroom for provisions: a regular snow town, in fact. They looked quite bright, too. There were seven of them and one, I noticed, was a woman. She looked very fat and old in her bulky clothes, but her face was young, and her nose very, very blue with the frost. I remember that it occurred to me at the time that there must have been plenty of trouble over that keen-eyed damsel in the winter camp. No, no, don't take me up the wrong way. I am not an enemy of women at all. I know there are women who are far more efficient and gifted than any man. And of course, I am delighted to do honor to them. But, honestly, I do think a woman is out of place in a winter camp, particularly in a small one. They have no right to be there. I've heard so many stories and gone through so much that, just take my word for it, I know all about it!

After the first transports of delight were over, their chief looked sadly into my eyes and asked:

"I suppose you're going to take us away?"

Without saying anything, I handed him the radiogram from Moscow. He skimmed it and then shouted:

"Hurrah! Comrades, we're allowed to go on with our work!"

Brave devils, they were actually delighted that they weren't going to be taken away. He read the message aloud in a tense silence, broken only by the whistling of the gusts of wind. I glanced at the faces about me, trying to guess who was Vovnich. I took a fancy to the frank, bold face of a young fellow, who, in spite of the frost, wore no fur cloak. He had on a fur shirt and a foppish-looking knitted cap, the kind skiers wear in the capital. I decided that this was Vovnich and felt very pleased. He looked just the kind of fellow to make a good pal! I winked at him cheerfully and he responded with a smile.

"Well, that's all," said the chief, when he had finished reading the message from Moscow. "Off we go to our new quarters!"

"I'm not going to Cape Tranquillity," said the fat woman in the cloak. What? I couldn't understand at first what had happened. Could this be Vovnich? I admit I nearly screamed with horror at the thought. Were we to have a woman in our monastery? . . .

Well, of course, I didn't say anything. I did not even show the slightest emotion. But something like a feeling of alarm made my heart contract. Ah, how dear and cosy the quiet evenings that were never to return seemed to me now, the evenings we had spent, the six of us, round the stove in the warm common-room, smoking our pipes and talking and laughing, while the storm had howled outside. Or we would sing songs—the Ural songs Chernykh taught us, the Volga songs Valeri used to sing, the songs of the underworld that Yashka knew, or the sea-chanties sung in a cracked, mournful wail by our good old Captain. Would we go on singing now,

boys? Would we ever enjoy them again, those friendly, harmonious evenings that made it a lark to winter in the Arctic, and robbed even the prospect of death of its terrors? But I did not betray my thoughts. No, comrades, I did not.

"I'm not going to Cape Tranquillity," Vovnich said again. "We've worked together here, we've gone through the fire together, and we'll carry on together in future, too."

The chief gave her a rueful glance.

"There's nothing to be done about it, Oxana," he said, and he even—or so it seemed to me—sighed as he said it. "You've got to go. We have no wireless room any more. There's nothing for you to do here with us—victims of the fire. . . ."

They went on arguing for a long time yet, but I did not listen to them. At all events, when I returned a week later, after having taken the people to their new quarters, Vovnich was ready for the trip.

"Get in," I growled, not very politely, it must be admitted.

Then the old cook came up to us, looked at the girl, and said to me shaking his head sorrowfully:

"Ah, mechanic, you're taking our little sunshine away from us!"

I just glanced out of the corner of my eye at the aforesaid "little sunshine," who was blue with frost, and made no reply.

4

"A hunter driving through the tundra
A fine strong hunter,
Driving swift reindeer."

I cannot remember now if the Nenets people taught me this song or I made it up myself, but anyhow I always sing it when I am traveling. As you drive through the tundra, you sing a song as endless as the journey; you drink in the strong, invigorating, frosty air and feel that you are young and hardy, and that all the roads of life belong to you, and that all your dreams will come true. And you dream.

It is said that, confronted with the majesty of nature, man feels insignificant and pitiful, a mere grain of sand. I don't know—I have never felt like that. When the snow creaks under the runners of my sleigh, or when the song of my engine is faithfully repeated by the echo in the mountains, or when my footprints leave a long track in the snow, then I, Alexei Bogucharov—the man you see here before you—feel myself master of the world, the earth and the sky, and a sense of pride that I am a man and a mechanic fills my soul to overflowing. And then I want to sing.

This requires complete silence all around, the solemn, majestic silence of the tundra in which a multitude of secret sounds can be heard. Every living thing is in hiding, in the torpor of winter-time: the bear in its lair, the mouse in its hole, the seal under the ice, while you alone, the man in the machine, are driving masterfully through the tundra, crushing the snow and singing. . . .

"The bold, strong hunter,
Driving swift reindeer."

Out of sheer force of habit I started singing my song now. But I somehow couldn't get on with it.

The girl Vovnich was sitting beside me. The wireless operator. The treasure that I had to convey to our monastery at Cape Tranquillity. But it was not of her that I was thinking. It was of another girl—the girl I had never met.

In the soul of every man, even of the most inveterate bachelor—there lives a girl. Mine was a very ordinary kind of girl—there are probably thousands like her. It is strange that I have never met her. I knew she had grey eyes that could look blue to me, and strong, sunburnt hands that could work, and a

funny little, childish turned-up nose, and rosy cheeks; her hair was a light chestnut, cut short like a boy's; her brow lofty and steep; her smile frank and serene. . . . I knew her manner, her habits, the things she liked (they were probably the same things I liked myself) and the things she did not like. I even smelt the fragrance of her skin. Why, why did this fragrance remind me of Ukrainian cherry-trees in bloom? How was she dressed? I imagined—I don't know why—that she would wear leather gauntlets, a sort of uniform jacket—white, with anchors on the sleeve, or, sometimes, a short skirt and a thin silk blouse or one embroidered in the Ukrainian style. . . . I haven't been to the mainland for so long that I don't know what people are wearing now. . . . In short, I had a perfectly clear idea of her in bits—this girl of mine—but never once had I seen the whole living person, because no girl like her had crossed my path. Would she ever turn up?

It was of her I was thinking now. "How jolly it would be," I thought, "to be wandering together down a long, long road like this, somewhere in the tundra, and not know whether you reach your destination or not, and believe you would, and share the last hard, frost-covered crust of bread. . . ."

Suddenly I felt Vovnich's hand on my shoulder. I woke up.

"What's up?" I cried (with some annoyance, I admit).

Without speaking, she held out a piece of bread and meat. I glanced at her in surprise and took it mechanically. The meat, I remember, was frozen, the snow in it crunched under the teeth.

"Thanks," I growled, and then remembered that this wasn't the way to thank anyone. "Thank you very much," I added, trying to soften my rough, husky voice a little.

But she turned away in complete indifference and huddled down in her fur cloak.

"I ought to say something to her," I thought, "I ought to try and get up a conversation with her. After all, we can't just drive along, not speaking. She may feel hurt. Shall I say something about the tundra to her? The sky . . ." But I suddenly found I had no words for it. Devil take it, I couldn't think of a single word!

"Well, never mind," I comforted myself. "She'll start the conversation herself. They're fond of chattering." But the girl never opened her mouth. She did not speak even when my car (. . . "driving swift reindeer") went full tilt into an iceberg or got stuck in a snowdrift. Without uttering a single word, she got out of the car and set to work just as I did. And I must say that girl knew how to handle a shovel!

Why did that get my back up? I don't know, I can't think of any explanation. You see, when I saw her without her cloak and cap, and discovered that she was well-built and had slim legs and quick movements . . . I could not help noticing that she was very, very like my girl. Excuse a mechanic using a technical expression, but she seemed to have been assembled from all the spare parts that I had thought out myself in my solitary travels.

But when I got a better look at her, I saw that it was not my girl. No, not that one. Taken bit by bit, separately, she was mine, but as a whole she was not. And not in the least like mine. Now can you understand me? The more the traits I recognized appeared in her, the more it annoyed me. Because it was, after all, not her; it was a fraud, comrades. . . . True, the general construction bore a certain resemblance, but nothing more . . . the soul was missing, the soul of my girl.

I realize that I am telling you all this in a very muddled way. But if

you have ever loved and dreamed and made your dream the dearest thing of all and carried it with you through life wherever you went, and then suddenly one day you come face to face with it and find to your disappointment that this is not what you meant, but something quite different, and you don't want to have anything to do with it nor it with you, then—in a word, if you have ever loved and dreamed, you will understand me.

I did not notice when the blizzard began. It was blowing from the west, from a pretty rotten corner; the wet snow came down in clots, the road danced before my eyes. I stepped on the gas, but all I could wring out of the machine on a road like that was seven kilometers an hour. And we were still a good thirty from "Pavlov's Hut." "Devil take it!" I thought. "What am I going to do with this girl anyway?"

"When there's a blizzard blowing in the tundra," Vovnich remarked unexpectedly, "people usually pull up and wait for it to blow over."

I turned on her angrily.

"Are you always as bright as this?" I snapped.

"Yes, always," she replied, smiling. "And what about you?"

I caught a glimpse of her face, framed by the frozen, snowy hood of her fur cloak. The face was rosy and seemed to glow out of a frosty halo. But this only annoyed me the more. I stepped on the gas, there was a loud report, the machine shuddered to a standstill—we had struck a huge block of ice.

"Nerves jittery, mechanic?" Vovnich jeered at once.

"To hell with it!" I roared. Then I shut up. It struck me that after all it was my fault, and that, like a fool, I was worrying more about her than she herself was.

"Well, perhaps," I said, trying to sound calm about it, "since people usually pull up and wait for blizzards to blow over in the tundra we'd better do the same."

She laughed and got out. I went to look at the motor. Five minutes later I glanced round, for I heard the ring of a shovel. Oxana Vovnich had flung off her cloak, and was busy digging a snow-pit for the night. She had picked the right spot, on the lee-side of the slope. She worked quickly and well, there was nothing hasty or hysterical about her movements. The blizzard beat relentlessly in her face, but she only blinked away the snow from her eyelashes. And you know, though it's usually unpleasant when people blink, in this case, it made her look rather sweet. And what did I do? Well, comrades—I just picked up a shovel and set to work beside her.

When the pit was finished and fitted up for the night, I growled out:

"Good night. I'll cover you with the felt."

"And what about you?"

"Oh, I'm going to sleep in the machine."

"Stop acting the fool, mechanic," she said indignantly. "The machine won't shelter you from the snow. Get in here. The pit's a big one, there's room for both of us."

So we lay down side by side in the snow-pit, while the storm raged above us. The girl was fidgety. I lay flat on my back, as still as if frozen. She was uncomfortable, but I was afraid to help her. One gets stupid, you know. At last, she moved closer to me, laid her head on my shoulder, murmured something and fell asleep.

And through the howling of the storm I heard her quiet, drowsy breathing. She had a way of gasping and making little sucking sounds and sighing in her sleep, just like a child. What was she dreaming of? Of her mother far away, and a cherry-orchard and still evenings by the river? An unusual, perhaps paternal feeling of tenderness came over

me. Sleep, little girl, sleep. And may you dream of cherry-blossom white as snow. Sleep. . . .

But I could not get to sleep for a long time. My thoughts were confused and feverish. I remembered my youth . . . and the road . . . and girls I had passed on it and girls who had passed me . . . and the snowy track and the creak of the sleigh-runners, and the smoke of campfires. . . . There had been everything in my life, everything. Except things like this—a little girl cuddling up trustfully, her head on my shoulder.

The wet snow blew in on my face and, melting, trickled down my cheeks. I would have to move if I wiped it away. Dismayed, completely at a loss, I lay there afraid to move. I listened to the girl's sweet, quiet breathing, whispered—"Sleep, sleep!" and feared that she might wake. I did not understand myself at the moment. Now I felt I would like the blizzard to be over as soon as possible, so that I could resume my journey with her, and then again I hoped it might go on for ever and ever. . . .

But I knew one thing for certain; never, never would I allow anyone to offend the funny little creature who was sighing and sniffling in her sleep on my shoulder. And as to whether she resembled that other girl or not—it didn't matter anyway!

5

The whole population of Cape Tranquillity turned out to welcome us. Valeri brought the flag along. I led the new member of the wintering party solemnly into the house. She took off her big cloak, the boys gave her one look and—cleared out of the common-room. Every one of them! As if I had brought the plague and not a girl.

I felt awkward before Oxana; what savages she would think them! I croaked out something about:

"They've never seen a woman for two years. Got a bit wild," and felt terribly embarrassed. As for her—she didn't turn a hair. She just went over to the stove and started to dry her things.

At last the savages ventured out of their lairs. They had, I saw now, wasted no time. Each of them had managed to give his jaws a scrape with a dull razor and sew a clean collar inside the neck of his tunic. The doctor had changed his tie. Valeri had combed out the whiskers that were the colour of the ancient coffee-pot. The cook appeared with a shining tray in his outstretched hands, and I don't know which was the most dazzling—the tray, or the cap, or the fat, shaven face of the captain of the kitchen.

And I stood there just as I was, bearded and dirty. There were spots of oil on my sweater, and I smelt of blubber, and mazout and goodness knows what else. And for the first time in eighteen months vexation stirred in my heart against the boys.

Late that evening, when our guest was asleep, we gathered in the kitchen and sat smoking our pipes.

"So that's Vovnich for you! . . ." said the doctor. "What are we to do now, friends?"

Chernykh shrugged his shoulders. The cook said:

"Well, now, brother-seamen, can you feel the decks giving under our feet? Trust me, an old sailor. That girl's the signal that trouble's coming. SOS! Having a woman in a wintering party is as bad as having a woman on board ship."

"Uhuh!" Yashka grunted. "Now there'll be all manner of courting and gallantry going on. 'Oh dear, no, you can't come in just now.' 'Oh, I'm not dressed yet!' 'Hand me this, will you?' and 'Would you mind bringing me that?' "

I thought of the girl shoveling away at the snow, and laughed.

"No there won't be anything like

that, I can assure you!" I said, and then I told them about our journey.

They listened attentively and I noticed how their faces flushed.

"Yes," said Chernykh, with a sigh. "There are some nice girls in the world."

Then the talk took a dangerous turn; the most dangerous of any in a winter camp; it turned on the subject of our girls; the girls we loved and the girls who loved us.

There was a girl in the life of every one of us. One had met his in the laboratory, another—in the wireless room, a third—on a geological expedition, a fourth—out at sea, a fifth—in the sky, at a crossing of the aerial routes.

We spoke of them warmly, and with reserve, as men should. We spoke of them with secret longing and unexpended tenderness, as only the men of a wintering party can. She floated before the eyes of each in the blue smoke-wreaths from our pipes—this girl, beautiful, unrivaled, simple and courageous, with a frank, open face and a warm, tender mouth. We had quite forgotten Vovnich. Not another word was said about her. Then why was it that I fancied I recognized Oxana Vovnich in all their stories? I don't know.

Whenever there came a pause in the conversation, a pause as frail as ice in springtime—I found myself listening for the quiet, childlike breathing of the new girl. But it did not carry here. There was nothing but the wind outside the windows and the creaking of the weathervane.

6

Let's have a smoke, boys. Try my tobacco, I've smoked enough of yours. It's a good tobacco, isn't it? I'll have something to tell you about that presently. You're sure you're not tired yet of listening to my story? Tell me when you are. I don't often get talking, you know. I hold my tongue all day long, just going about my business and listening, but then when I do get started on a story, I can't stop.

. . . Yes, well, where were we?—What came next? You have guessed, you think, what the ending was: we all fell in love with the girl, fought over her, made peace, and so on and so forth.

No, you're wrong. It wasn't just like that.

We did not fall in love with Oxana Vovnich. We did worse. We did the most stupid thing you could think of. We treated her with a gentleness and respect that was really adoration. We imagined this ordinary, simple Soviet girl the queen of our winter camp, and ourselves her faithful knights and subjects.

My story of our journey, told by the dying fire in the kitchen stove the night we held our memorable conversation, was to blame for everything. It was that which gave rise to the false romantic notion of an unearthly young girl.

But I had better tell you everything in the order it happened.

We gave Oxana Vovnich the best room in the place. In our spare time we cleaned it, and scrubbed it and fixed it up and then, with great ceremony, invited our guest to take possession of it. After that, we paid a formal visit to wish her joy and happiness in her new home. The cook presented her with a cake, Chernykh with a small library; Valeri dragged in a reindeer-hide which he flung down with a gloomy look on the floor.

"Killed it in the autumn. Only one shot, through the eye," he muttered, and stumbled out, clinging to the door.

The doctor arrived with something wrapped up in a newspaper.

"I wanted to bring you some flowers, my dear Oxana Nesterov-

na," he began, pressing the package to his heart. "I did so want to present you with some flowers. And—how annoying!—all the florists were closed for stocktaking. So I brought this instead," and he unwrapped his offering.

It was moss; a neatly-cut square, with bits of black soil still clinging to it. It brought the smell of the spring tundra into the room. Where had he got it? What mountains of snow he must have had to dig up to reach the soil! He was well rewarded for his pains by the grateful smile our "queen" gave him.

And I? What could I give her? I was only handy-man here, so to speak. While the others drifted in with their presents, I mended all the household utensils, made a rocking chair, a dressing-table, a shelf for the books Fyodor had brought, and a box for the moss the doctor had given her.

Yashka Never-Say-Die was the only one who brought her no gift. He came in, his hands in his pockets, stood with his feet planted wide apart, and inquired in a casual tone:

"Well, have you got fixed up at last, Oxana?"

He used to "thou" her from the first day. I should just think so, too—they were both wireless-operators.

But we never did that. And that was the whole point.

Yes, that girl certainly turned things upside down in the camp. We suddenly noticed that our rooms were dirty and uncomfortable, that we were living like pigs, smoking an intolerable amount, shaving far too seldom. And then our language! Well, we'll let that pass.

The queer thing about it was—we noticed all this ourselves. Oxana Vovnich never once looked disgusted or turned up her nose at anything. It was all the same to her which hut she lived in and who were her neighbors. Her gaze slid coolly and indifferently over all our long, solemn faces and only on one did it rest with fear and respect; that was the face of Yashka Never-Say-Die, her superior. She was afraid, poor thing, that she might turn out to be of little use as an operator—she, the woman who had carried on in a wireless-cabin enveloped in flames!

Worried over the test she would have to go through with Yashka, she probably did not notice the mess we were in. She saw neither the doctor's clean-shaven cheeks, nor the gleaming coffee pot of the cook. She never guessed the reason for the festive spirit of the camp. How did it escape her notice? We all went about as if it were our birthday.

This respectful adoration of the "little sunshine of the camp" took a different form with each of us and, since we were all very different people, we showed it each in his own particular way. Fyodor Chernykh showed his feelings by not displaying them at all. Yes, as a matter of fact, if he had really been indifferent to this girl, he would have behaved in quite another fashion; he would have been at his ease with her. But he was as alert as if he were going on parade. He was afraid! Afraid of giving himself away, of offending her by a glance, a movement, a word; and, of course, he hurt her by his stiffness and formality, frightened her with his assumed sternness. Perhaps he was afraid of himself?

Valeri Petrovsky expressed his adoration in a noisy, affected way. He tried to dazzle her with his exploits and daring. He drove the dogs nearly to death if Oxana was in the sleigh with him. He made the craziest jumps from the hills and broke all our skis. Every wild beast that he killed, he dragged to Oxana's feet, leaving a trail of blood on the floor she had to wash afterwards. He cast frightful looks at her and every now and then clutched his knife.

And how did the doctor behave? He "courted" Oxana Nesterovna just as he would have done at home on the mainland. In the evening he sat down beside her, and, fidgeting alternately with his tie and his glasses, talked to her about Moscow, the theaters, books, and medicine. His manner to her was invariably the same, courteous and considerate. He called her by her full name and when the conversation was over, and he rose to take his leave, he would say: "We've really spent a most delightful evening, haven't we?" After this, he should by right have bowed with his hat pressed to his breast, promised to ring up, and gone out into the night in search of a stray taxi or tram. But our circumstances cramped his style, unfortunately, and all he had to do was to turn in next door.

What about the cook? Poor old admiral—his day was done. Once he said to me mournfully: "It's sad to think in my old age, lad, that in the course of my whole life—and a dog's life it was—I've never known a woman to kiss me free of charge, so to speak." He had got used to buying love with stockings and shawls. Now he no longer thought of it. He served our "queen" faithfully and disinterestedly, more disinterestedly, perhaps, than any of us. And a smile from our "little sunshine" was his reward.

Yashka alone held himself aloof from the general atmosphere of adoration we created around our guest. Yashka, as we already knew, was a "tough guy"—in the most splendid sense of the word. Consequently, his attitude to women was "tough." He spoke with assumed roughness to Oxana, by way of emphasizing his supreme contempt for women in general and for her in particular, and teased her. But why was he so fond of hanging about her in the common-room?

That was the way they all were. . . . Eh? You want to know what about the sixth man? Had I forgotten I was the sixth? Oh, well, I'll tell you about the sixth.

I liked her to come into my workshop, and finger my tools and fiddle about near the motor. She wanted to know everything. "What's that for?" she would ask, pointing at it. I would tell her. If she didn't ask, I would just admire her in silence. I no longer found that she did not resemble that other girl of mine.

My old motor, however, rattled on without stopping these days. It told her times without number that she was a brave, a marvelous woman with lovely, clear eyes, and that no one could help loving her. And after she had gone out, it started into me.

"You—mug! You great silly lout!" it puffed indignantly. "What did you sit there for as lively as a log? Why didn't you tell her?"

It scolded me for a long time, using my own words. Then, in a while, it seemed to feel sorry for me, and said in a gruff, half-contemptuous, half-consoling tone: "You're all alone in the world, Alexei Bogucharov, all alone, poor chap, aye, aye!"

That's a long time ago now but it still scolds and comforts me.

7

And all of a sudden we offended our girl.

Does that sound like sense to you? We had never even dreamed of it! And still we offended her. Mortally. In the following quite unexpected way.

It was an ancient and honored custom at Cape Tranquillity that each of us in turn should choose the dinner-menu. There were six of us, so each had his day in the Soviet six-day week. That day he might order his favorite dishes. That day he was the host and the others his guests. He

had to press us to eat and we had to praise everything and thank him. The sixth day—the free day—was the cook's turn. What surprises he used to prepare for us! We had, by the way, long since guessed the secret of his epicurean delicacies; they differed only in name from the everyday dishes. When all was said and done, his *risottos*, *marechals* and *poulets* were just the same old canned stuff. But we pretended not to notice, and ate them with great relish and praised them to the skies.

"It's as good as at the Hotel Metropole," we would say, to flatter him. He was always very touched by this.

When Oxana Vovnich first appeared at the camp, all the days seemed to be rolled into one; the cook thought of no one but her. Then things settled down a bit, we took our turns again, and Lucullus accorded one day to her as her right.

"What in the world shall I order?" she said in bewilderment, when the cook solemnly appeared.

"Whatever you like best."

"Well, then, kidney soup—could I have that?"

"You can have anything you like," the cook answered proudly.

"And then tongue."

"With green peas?"

"Yes . . . and . . . and ice-cream. Can you manage that?"

Yes, that was a famous feast! We were most enthusiastic about Oxana's selection. We finished off all the kidney soup (canned) and the tongue (canned) and the green peas (canned) and the Arctic ice-cream (condensed milk and snow) and asked for more.

Next day was the doctor's turn. He and the cook had their heads together all morning in the kitchen. And that day we had for dinner—what do you think?—kidney soup, tongue, green peas, and ice-cream.

"This is what you like," said the doctor, passing the dishes to Oxana. Valeri gave me a nudge and whispered enviously:

"Smart chap—that doctor, isn't he? Never mind, it's *my* day tomorrow!"

I may as well tell you without further delay that next day we had kidney soup, tongue and green peas and ice-cream for dinner.

And when it came to my turn to choose a menu I . . . well, I thought it over a long time (all night, I believe), but when I got to the kitchen I handed the cook the very same menu: kidney soup, tongue and ice-cream.

Fortunately, the next day was a free day, and consequently, cook's day, otherwise I don't know how long we would have had to tax our rival powers of invention.

The admiral sailed into the room with a steaming dish in his hands and, according to our custom, we applauded him. He made us a ceremonious bow.

"Aha!" cried the doctor, "and what have you got for us today, Admiral Makarov?"

The cook set the dish on the table, ladled out the soup solemnly and handed the plate to Oxana.

"Here you are, miss. It's your favorite dish," he whispered, with a doting glance at her.

"Kidney soup?" she murmured, taken aback.

We could not help it—we burst out laughing. It was a roar that set the glass in the windows rattling.

"Kidney soup!" we bellowed.

"Tongue!"

"Green peas!"

But how did she take it? Red patches spread slowly over her face. Her eyes darkened. She pushed the plate angrily away and got up from the table.

Silence fell.

She gave us all a scornful look and seemed dbout to say something spiteful ana insulting; then she thought better of it, and with a toss

of her head, went to her own room.

We remained sitting at the table, ashamed and embarrassed. She did not come into the common-room any more that day, and none of us dared risk knocking at her door.

She made her appearance at tea-time, though she did not sit down at the table with us. She just stood there, pale and wrought up. Her eyes, that seemed to have the power of changing their color, looked positively steely now; there was no sparkle in them.

"Listen to me, Chief!" she said in a tense, ringing voice. "Why have you never put me on house-duty?"

This unexpected question caught Fyodor unawares. He muttered something in reply, but she did not listen to him. She knew everything, she understood everything.

"It's all lies!" she cried, and there were tears in her voice now, tears of resentment. "What right have you to treat me as a young lady, as an idle good-for-nothing? Where did you get this idea? It's not my first day in a winter camp and I'm not a young lady, either! Do you hear me? I've washed floors in the winter camp. Yes, and washed the boys' shirts, too . . . and I worked as well as any of them when that fire broke out."

She was rather grand in her indignation and we—we were just contemptible with our "chivalry."

To put the finishing touch on it the cook came at that very moment with the coffee-pot. He did not know, of course, what was up, and, as he was still depressed over the row at dinner-time, he said to her in a coaxing tone:

"The coffee's just ready, miss. Won't you have some?"

"No. I don't want your coffee," she cried. "I'm not in the habit of living on other people's labor. I'm going to saw up the snow tomorrow, and fetch the wood to the kitchen and then, if you like, I'll have some coffee."

And with that she turned on her heel and went out, slamming the door after her. She did not come in at supper-time. So that was what we had driven our "queen" to—a hunger strike—with our idiotic adoration.

Next morning she carried out her threat by appearing at breakfast with a tarpaulin overall over her ordinary clothes. She did not say good morning to any of us. She came up to me and said:

"You're not busy just now, are you, Old Shoulder?"

She called me that in memory of our journey together.

"Oh, no," I said hastily.

"Then let's go."

And off we went to work. We chopped wood for the kitchen, brought in coals, sawed up the snow.

"The team of bay horses," Oxana said, laughing, as harnessed together we dragged the heavy sledge piled with snow up from the gully. I looked at the face that was all aglow with frost and exertion, and at the lock of hair fluffy with snow that had escaped from under the fur cap and thought: "Oh, to go through life like this, in team with you!"

As if she guessed my thought, Oxana paused suddenly and looked at me attentively. Her face clouded and saddened; so did mine, I expect.

We stood by the sleighs in silence, each thinking of the same thing, but in a different way.

She touched my shoulder.

"You mustn't. My dear, good Old Shoulder!" she whispered, ready to cry out of either sheer desperation or sympathy with a love she did not need.

"You mustn't. . . . Please don't. . . . Why should you? . . . Now, why should you all? You too . . ."

"Forgive me," I muttered, "forgive me, please."

She gave me a quick glance and then burst out laughing. I suppose it was really funny—my asking her to forgive me. What for? For loving her?

I did not even feel offended at her laughing. After all, I myself now knew that I "mustn't." But knowing didn't help.

We turned again to dragging the sledge up the hill. The wind grew wilder and whipped the sharp snow in our faces; we stumbled and slipped on the icy slopes, and the sledge was heavy to drag and the rope cut into our shoulders; and I knew now that I would have to drag my sledge alone for the rest of my life.

Thus came to an end Oxana's hunger-strike. She managed to wash the floor of the common-room before dinner; I brought the water and heated the stove.

"Next time," she informed me, "we'll have a go at the rooms. Your place is awfully dirty. Well, never mind, I'll look after you."

Now she took her seat proudly at our table. The soup was set before her. She flourished the ladle like an ataman's saber. She had ceased to be a queen and become a cheerful, bustling hostess. It suited her much better.

We sat around her, a big, friendly, greedy family, passing up our empty bowls.

Yes, whatever you say, that girl could be the sunshine of any winter camp. It all comes back to me: the long, dense Arctic night outside the windows, the little snowed-up house, the dog yelping in the passage, and the warm drowsiness of the room, where we sit around the stove. The logs crackle and give off a fragrance, and a heat like quivering glass. We are sitting by the stove, smoking and talking. Oxana is sewing. Yashka is fiddling with the loud speaker, he wants to get the Philippines, nothing nearer will do. At last someone drags him away from it and gets Moscow. The doctor sighs and says: "Moscow . . . yes, Moscow!" and starts off on one of his stories. We sit and listen, and smoke. Or we sing. Now we've got the voice that was lacking in our choir—a sweet soprano.

Then Oxana jumps up, throws her sewing aside and cries:

"That's enough! Take your partners for the dance, gentlemen!"

In that case my place is by the gramophone. And our only partner dances with each in turn. The doctor is dancing with her now. His face wears a fixed smile, his steps are noiseless, his movements are smooth and stealthy. When the dance is over, he kisses his partner's hand and leads her back to her place.

Fyodor behaves in quite a different way. He invites Oxana very timidly, as if he were afraid she might refuse. Then he puts two fingers round her waist and leads her out, scarcely daring to touch her.

The cook dances best of all. He dances with all the enthusiasm of an old man and the expertness of a sailor. His eyes shine and grow moist. I remember once after a dance he hurried away into the kitchen and did not come out for a long time. His youth was gone for ever.

I do not care for Yashka's style of dancing. It is more of a fancy-dress show than a dance; he wraps a plaid scarf round his neck; turns up the collar of his jacket, puts his cap on back to front, and pretends to be an Apache. He danced the "chechotka" pretty well, though.

Then Oxana suddenly catches sight of my doleful face in the corner, where I am turning the handle of the gramophone, and calls out:

"No more foxtrots for me!" She strikes a pose, flourishing her handkerchief. She knows I can't do foxtrots. Then the doctor sits down at the rickety piano, while I, embarrassed and protesting, venture out into the middle of the room. The

"hopak" strikes up. And the Arctic night and the blizzard vanish. . . . The gentle summer breeze sighs in the silvery poplars. . . . And a lass . . . a Ukrainian lass decked out in ribbons and necklaces, glides before me, beckoning, calling, teasing me with her fluttering handkerchief . . . Oxana!

Oxana—a pretty name, isn't it?

Sometimes when we're out skiing or hunting and I lose her in the fog, I climb up a rock and call: "Oxana-a-a!"

And then it seems as if the chill fog over the deadly still bay is the billowing steppe. There's grey feather-grass waving, and hairy plantain nodding like white Cossack caps. And along a narrow track through the golden grain comes a girl in an embroidered blouse—a girl who is not for me—and her lips are like cherries and her braids of hair like the rich, ripe tangled ears of wheat, and her name is sweet and tender—Oxana.

Honestly, we might have had a marvelous winter right up to the end if not for Yashka.

8

Yes, Yashka Never-Say-Die.

What kind of a fellow was he? Perhaps it's time I told you.

His favorite expression was "Aw, spit on it!" The chaps who had served in the Air Force with him told me that once a 'plane Yashka was in as wireless operator got into a frightfull mess. The pilot turned all pale and shouted: "Yashka, we're done for!" And Yashka just said "Aw, spit on it!" and actually spat calmly on the wing.

He had gone through life like that, spitting and whistling, carefree and unconcerned, as capable of a brave action as of a blackguardly one. He mocked at everything in life: at love, friendship, honor and promises. He knew that his tales were not believed, that no value was set on his promises, but he also knew that in spite of everything people were fond of him, and glad to be friends with him, because in friendship, in work and in play, he was absolutely disinterested and as carefree as a child. It's fun to be with a fellow like that in a friendly winter camp. It's no fun to be with him when there's anything serious afoot.

So that was the kind Yashka Never-Say-Die was.

And suddenly a change came over him. Or, to be exact, over his attitude to Oxana. It veered all at once, in a single day, and so sharply that it was impossible not to notice. There was not a trace of his former "toughness." He became respectfully tender to her. Yashka, of all people!

He moved about the commonroom with a gentle smile on his face, like a man who has just discovered some wonderful thing that has illumined his whole life. He cast warm, lingering glances at Oxana.

What could it mean? . . . Only one thing: Yashka had fallen in love. Yashka was happy.

I was not the only one who noticed the change in him. They all saw it. And, involuntarily, each asked himself: "And what about her? How does she take it?"

Now you know yourself—there are no secrets in a winter camp.

We noticed, too, that she bloomed in Yashka's presence. There seemed to be confidences between them. They were obviously disinclined for our noisy company in the evenings. They took to staying in the wireless room for a long time. Or they would sit by themselves in Oxana's room. And sometimes their laughter —such happy, youthful, ringing laughter it was—would reach us from there. . . .

Oh, very well. That doesn't necessarily mean anything. They were both wireless operators, friends and

all the rest of it. Yes, but then something happened that did away with every shred of doubt.

What I am going to tell you now may seem a mere trifle to you. You may even laugh at me for it. But there are very few big events in a winter camp, or rather, everything is an event there. If the cook makes up a new dish it's an event. And I'll tell you this, friends: only when you take a hearty fullblooded interest in every scrap of news, in every little thing that's going on—only then can you live in the Far North without finding it dull and lonesome.

We made a great occasion even out of the weekly distribution of tobacco. We made it a regular ceremonial affair. The gramophone played a march. The cook brought in the case of tobacco. We all lined up in a row and waited for Fyodor to appear.

"How do you do, smokers all!" he shouted.

"How's yourself, daddy-commander!" we would roar in reply.

"Any complaints?"

"We're badly wanting a smoke."

"Well, well, well! We must see if we can't settle that little trouble for you," the chief would say, starting to distribute our tobacco rations.

When Oxana became a member of our party on an equal footing, she received her share of tobacco like the rest. But she did not smoke. She divided hers into six equal heaps and gave it to us.

But there remained a packet of excellent pipe-tobacco that could not be torn into six parts. We waited breathlessly to see who would get that.

On the first occasion she gave the precious packet to me. This didn't surprise anyone; after all, it was I who had brought her away from the scene of the fire.

But now? . . . To whom would she give the prize packet and her attention now? This was a question that seriously worried many of us.

She could, of course, have given the prize to the cook. That would, perhaps, have been the wisest solution. We were practically sure she would do it, and got ready to help the old chap to celebrate.

Instead, she gave it to Yashka. Yes, she simply held it out to him, and said with a smile:

"That's for you, Yashka . . ."

He brightened up and even blushed.

You may say it's a trifle . . . it's nothing. Perhaps you're right. But that packet of tobacco told us the whole story.

Yes, and after that Yashka behaved as if they were "officially engaged." It was "my Oxana" and "Oxana and I." And he never left her for a moment. It looked as though he thought he had to protect her from us.

"Oh, well," said Fyodor Chernykh, when we retired to our club in the kitchen. "She can love anyone she likes. Even Yashka . . ." he blurted the last words out without thinking, and was probably sorry as soon as he had said them.

Yes, she could love anyone she liked. Even Yashka. What objection could you find to it? Only one: "Why not me?"

But that was her business. And remembering the journey, I said to myself: "You must never, either in word or look, insult Oxana with your love. And you must go up to her and Yashka of your own accord and congratulate them with all your heart."

Taking a look at the faces of my comrades, I gathered that they were thinking the same thing.

9

We waited impatiently, but in silence. We demanded nothing ,we only waited.

Although we had come to no agree-

ment about it, I believe we were all awaiting the same thing: Oxana and Yashka would tell us themselves. How they would do it, I had no idea, but that they would do it, I was perfectly sure. It would very likely take place at teatime. As they got up from the table they would say: "We love each other. Congratulate us, boys."

Why did we need this ceremony? I cannot explain why, though at the time I was firmly convinced it was indispensable. You see, any human relationship, and especially relationships in a wintering party, need to be made perfectly plain and clear, so that there can be no misinterpretation of them. Plain, straightforward relationships are the best.

But we waited too long. We began to lose patience. Why did they not tell us? They seemed to be hiding their affairs from us. As if there was something bad, something unclean about it. Then it was that evil thoughts of Oxana first entered my head.

Now we were paying for the idea we had created of this girl. The girl of our imagination would never have played hide-and-seek in this cowardly way; she would have loved and hated frankly, with an open countenance. She had a proud head and brave, honest eyes. She was not afraid of anyone or anything. She could be neither judged nor pitied nor forgiven.

But Oxana was not this girl, and Valeri was the first to tell me so. He was sitting in my room, on Yashka's vacant cot; we were listening to the voices that carried from Oxana's room. They were happy, ringing voices—Oxana's and Yashka's. Then they suddenly ceased and we could not help thinking that the two must be either whispering or kissing.

Suddenly Valeri burst out laughing. It was a prolonged, hysterical, hoarse laughter.

"Just think of us! Chivalrous idiots!"

He ceased laughing as unexpectedly as he had begun and strode over to where I was sitting. There was a hard, feverish glitter in his eyes and it occurred to me for the first time that it might be as well to inform the doctor of Valeri's state of health.

"I'll never forgive you for this!" he said hoarsely, clutching my arm. "It was you who invented it all. And I believed you. I'm just a boy. I don't know life. But you do. Why did you do this?"

I merely shrugged my shoulders. What could I say to him?

He went on whispering, staring into my eyes and holding my hand in his hot, sweaty grip.

"We all believed you. All except Yashka. He was the only one who guessed the truth about her. He didn't do any of this chivalrous stuff. Remember the boorish way he used to talk to her? And now look . . ." He clutched his head and ground his teeth. "Think—how they must be laughing at us now!"

A burst of happy laughter reached us from the other room.

Valeri thumped on the wall. There was silence for a few moments, then the laughter broke out again.

"They've no right to laugh at us!" Valeri muttered. "We're better, cleaner than they are, even though we're sillier. Why are they hiding from us? Why don't they speak? If theirs is an honest, real love, why do they hide?"

Well, while we're sitting here like this, smoking, and I'm telling you about it and you're listening, it probably seems to you—as it does to me—quite incomprehensible and rather queer that, above all things, Oxana's silence should have bothered us so much. Supposing she did

hold her tongue about things. Well, why shouldn't she? She just didn't want to advertise her relations with Yashka—and what was wrong with that? Yet at that time it seemed to us, and to me in particular, a downright crime.

The gong sounded for tea.

Valeri got up then and said, with a stubborn shake of his curly head:

"I'll ask her myself."

I had no time to dissuade him or to hold him back. He flung open the door noisily and went into the common-room.

They were all there. Oxana was busy with the coffee pot. It was just that quiet hour of the evening that we had always loved so well.

"Oxana!" Valeri shouted, almost before he crossed the threshold. "Are you Yashka's wife?"

It gave them all a start. There was dead silence. Oxana raised her head. I saw astonishment in her eyes. Astonishment and—nothing more. I remember that perfectly well now.

"Why don't you say something?" Valeri went on impatiently. "You cowardly . . ." he choked on the word that almost burst from him.

"Valeri!" I shouted in horror.

I saw . . . no, I heard the coffee-pot rattle in Oxana's hand. I forced myself to look at her, and saw her face flame . . . it seemed as if she would go on fire the next minute. But she did not lower her head. No, she did not lower her head. And now I noticed for the first time that her chin was not round like a child's but sharp and obstinate.

She treated us to a long, proud, crushing stare, all of us, one after the other. I shall never forget that look. Intolerably scornful, rather sad and disgusted, it made us all lower our gaze. She did not look at Yashka. Then, turning sharply away, she went into her own room.

We sat there at the table, ashamed and beaten. We shrank into ourselves. The queer thing was that Yashka seemed more embarrassed than any of us. I remember this puzzled me at the time. Knowing the kind of chap he was, I had been perfectly certain that he would start to fight Valeri straight away. But he only hunched his shoulders and went out. And he had a guilty back, I remember, because, without meaning to, I watched him go. We were left alone. Valeri slumped down on the couch, and sat, his face buried in his hands. I remained standing by the door; the rest—by the table.

The silence lasted a long time, a long, long time. It seemed as if we were listening to what was going on in Oxana's room. What was she doing now? Crying? I could not imagine her with tears on her cheeks. What was she doing then? Not the faintest sound came from her room.

At last Fyodor Chernykh broke the unbearable silence.

"I hope," he said very softly, without looking at anyone, "that this sort of thing will never happen again. Nor anything like it. I trust you, comrades."

But I gathered from his voice that he trusted us no more. And, looking into my own heart, I found that in this cursed business I trusted him no more.

Yes, we had lost our faith in each other—that was the trouble. Worse still—we had begun to be suspicious of each other.

I do not know who lit the first spark of distrust that started the fire, but I think we all had a hand in it. If you play with fire you may expect to be burnt.

It crept in of itself, that thought: Oxana is not out of reach! And once you let this thought into your head, another still more abominable took root: Oxana is not within reach of Yashka alone. Why had she held her tongue about Yashka and her-

self? There was something between them—that was a fact. Then why hide it? Evidently because it was not the real thing . . . not a permanent relationship, but only a casual one. How easy it was to believe that the affair with Yashka was casual. This explained everything. But in that case, Valeri had been right when he said that we were idiots to go on with all that chivalrous stuff and that Yashka had kept both feet on the ground and got further for that very reason.

So, one after the other, the veils were torn from the girl of our camp and she appeared to us, accessible and unbearably desirable, in all the fascination of her sex. Till then no one had thought of this. Never—I give you my word! At least, I can speak for myself, and I had certainly loved her best, that's the honest truth.

Now, as I tossed and turned on my lonely cot listening involuntarily to the voices behind the wall, it was impossible not to think of things that should not have been thought of. Oh what damnable nights those were! Every creak was a torture to me. Every rustle seemed a lovers' whisper, every sound a lovers' kiss. Who was with her at the moment? Yashka, the Doctor, or Valeri? I drove the vile thoughts away, I fought them as well as I could. I took them by the throat. I squashed them, squashed them as one squashes loathsome insects, but they came crawling, crawling and there was no place to hide from them.

We avoided mentioning Oxana's name. But in the eyes of each I read the question: "And you? What's between you and Oxana?" And the same question was probably frozen in mine.

Involuntarily, but jealously and even spitefully, we began to watch each other. Anyone who went into Oxana's wireless room when she was on duty was suspected. Whoever worked alongside her when there was trouble or extra work was under suspicion. The first to whom she'd pass the plate of soup at dinnertime was suspected. In her eyes, her movements, her glances, we sought an answer to the vile question: "Who else? Who besides Yashka?" It is ghastly to think of, but—as long as I've started—I might as well tell you the whole story.

And what did she do? She behaved beautifully. I admitted that even at the time. She was the same to everybody, polite, never by the slightest hint reminding us of that horrible evening. But there were no more friendly talks, no more jokes. And our peaceful evenings round the stove, and our dancing and singing, had come to an end.

Yes, nobody at Cape Tranquillity felt like singing, those days.

Yashka was the only one with whom she was as tender and gay as ever. But in her tenderness there was something unnatural: I noticed that at once. She seemed to be demonstrating it on purpose, as if to spite us, as if saying: there, you see, I don't care a scrap for your gossip or for you. In the warmth of her smile, Yashka's guilty back straightened. He became as carefree and light-hearted and as much given to spitting as of yore. But he avoided us.

Yes, we all avoided each other nowadays. We got into the habit of retiring into corners. Each one buried himself in his own affairs, as if each had a naked, torn body and the slightest touch, the mere presence of another person caused the most intolerable agony.

We treated one another now with a treacherous politeness. The old confidence was gone. It seemed as though we were afraid of hurting each other and the more fearful we were the more pain we caused. Politeness is all right, perhaps, for diplomats, but not for friends. . . . As far as

I'm concerned, I prefer people to be rough and straightforward. And there was no straightforwardness among us.

Why didn't we talk things over simply, among ourselves? I don't know . . . I don't know. . . . Perhaps because friendship no longer existed at Cape Tranquillity. Yes, in those days things couldn't have been worse in any winter camp all along the Northern Sea Route, from Wellen to Jugor Strait.

10

Was the girl to blame for it? It seemed to me then that she was. "It's she who has spoiled our friendship," I thought. "She had only to come and twitch that fine eyebrow of hers and all our comradeship vanished like smoke."

But you, my friends, don't you hurry to draw your conclusions; wait and hear my tale to the end. I blame myself more than anyone. After all, I might have talked things over with her. I fancied she trusted me. Yet I avoided her. Sometimes I caught her eyes on me and read bitter reproach in them. Did she recall the journey and the night spent on my shoulder? Did she know of the vow I had sworn to take care of her? I don't know. But there was bitter, piercing reproach in her eyes when she looked at me. And I could not bear it. I ran away. I hid. So that's the way things were in Cape Tranquillity during the Arctic night of 1935. Dreary . . . yes, dreary . . .

The man who said: "The trouble is not with the Arctic blizzards, but with the Arctic squabbles" knew a thing or two. What's a blizzard, anyhow? Every now and again Fyodor Chernykh would go off on long expeditions even in snowstorms. Was he running away from us or from himself? I cannot tell.

Something much more terrifying than a snowstorm was coming: a conflict was coming. We could hear its footsteps. We sensed its rumble in Valeri's querulous voice, in the nervous twitching of the doctor's cheek, and the irritated clattering of the coffee-pots and pans in the kitchen. Squabbles arose out of mere trifles. Our model of courtesy, the doctor, declared that it was physically impossible for him to stand Valeri's "singing" any longer. The point was that Valeri claimed the title of the Shaliapin of Cape Tranquillity. He had, certainly, a powerful voice . . . and not a trace of an ear for music. I've never heard anybody sing more out of tune than he did.

He had sung in the old days as well. He had always sung. But we tolerated it, as, at Cape Tranquillity, we tolerated all the imperfections and the little weaknesses of each of its inhabitants. Our friendship — as I now understand—had held together solely on the basis of this tolerance and general amnesty. Live and let live—that was the foundation upon which we had built our comradeship. And it had proved unstable! That was why it had split so soon. What had it been? The casual friendship of neighbors in a communal flat, at best, but not the firm friendship of settlers in the Arctic.

Yes, and now I found that I, too, could no longer stand Valeri's singing. He had got into the habit of singing at any hour of the day and night in the common-room. And he always sang the same things: the *Funeral March*, the *Clanking of the Fetters* and the *Song of the Volga Boatmen*. Just those three tunes.

Once the doctor remarked in a tone of intense irritation:

"Even celluloid gramophone records wear out with constant use and grow hoarse."

"I'm not singing for glory," Valeri growled, and started the *Clanking of the Fetters*.

"A fellow with a voice like that," said the doctor, losing his temper, "ought to go in for a diver's job and keep out of winter camps."

"There's no need for you to listen."

"But where can I go so as not to hear that hoarse bass of yours?" Where indeed could he go? We were tied to each other and to a narrow strip of snow-covered land jutting out into the sea. Now, for the first time in many years, the winter camp seemed cramping to me.

I don't know how this vocal quarrel would have ended if it had not been for Fyodor Chernykh, our chief. He took first the doctor and then Valeri into his room and had a long talk with each. He often had to do that sort of thing nowadays.

Valeri did not sing any more. But he did not talk either. In his spare time (and a meteorologist always has plenty of that) he stalked about the common-room with a pipe in his mouth, never speaking. He didn't answer when he was spoken to. He didn't answer when he was asked about anything. He just stalked up and down without saying a word. Symptoms of a familiar form of "Polar psychosis" were appearing. The doctor, the chief, and even Oxana started fussing around Valeri.

I have never known a case of "Polar psychosis" to be cured by bromide. It can only be cured by friendship. And, as I have told you, there was no more of that at Cape Tranquillity.

Valeri drove the doctor, the chief and all of us away and even shouted at Oxana:

"What the devil are you hanging round me for? Don't let me ever set eyes on you again. And have the goodness to wear pants like everybody else in a winter camp, and not a skirt. Not a skirt, mind you! Not a skirt! I can't stand skirts, devil take you!"

Then one night a shot rang out in the common-room.

I jumped up just as I was and saw Valeri, with a revolver in his hand. He was pale and did not look like himself, somehow. The thought crossed my mind, I remember, that he had shot himself. But no, he shook his revolver threateningly in the direction of Oxana's room, and croaked:

"There's someone in there . . . with . . . her . . ."

I glanced around. The doors of our three rooms were open and the six of us were standing in them. The fourth was Oxana's.

She came out sleepy and startled.

"What's happened?"

"Nothing," Fyodor replied harshly. "Valeri has bad dreams! Off to bed with you! Quick now!"

Oxana gave us all a mistrustful look and went out, slamming the door after her. Had she guessed anything?

We were left alone.

"I must ask you all," said the chief in the same harsh tone that I did not recognize as his, "to dress yourselves immediately and come out."

There we stood in the snow, outside our house. It was a fine moonlit night, which made things worse. We felt ashamed, standing there in the clear, pure light of the moon. We were ashamed to look at each other.

We fixed our eyes on the snow—it was blue and all in ripples—and we never uttered a word.

"Well?" said the chief, "so we've come to this?"

There was no reply.

"Why don't you say something... men? Are we men, though, or just a pack of mad dogs? Why don't you speak, Valeri?"

"I'm ashamed."

I fancied Yashka was about to say something. He made a motion as if to speak, and stopped in con-

fusion. Then he cleared his throat loudly, pulled down the ear-flaps of his cap, and moved away.

We all started to talk at once. What the hell! This had gone much to far! We might be fond of the girl or not, we might respect her or not, but we were not going to let anyone bother her. It was her own private affair and she had a perfect right to love anyone she chose.

Only two of us said nothing at this conference: Valeri and Yashka. Valeri was silent because he was badly frightened and upset by all that had happened because of him. Yashka . . . well, goodness only knows why he said nothing.

We separated, after having come to the conclusion that it was time to put an end to all this. And we did put an end to it. There were no more shootings or squabbles, or talk about the damned subject. The winter camp quietened down. And each of us buried himself in his own job. Never had we worked so much or with such angry recklessness as now; it seemed as if we knew that only in work could we find peace.

And never before had we awaited the arrival of Turovsky with so much impatience.

11

Turovsky was always awaited with impatience. You have to winter in the western district of the Arctic to understand what Turovsky meant to us.

He meant springtime to us, for he came before the first bird. He meant summer to us, for he steered into the bay before the first vessel appeared. He meant the mainland to us—he brought the smell of it with him on the wings of his 'plane —and our families and homes. He was last to leave us; when he flew away for the last time he had to break the new ice in the bay, and he carried away with him our letters home, our requests, and our hopes. If there was anyone very ill in a winter camp, he lived on hopes of Turovsky, Turovsky was sure to come and save him, bring him a doctor or take him to the hospital. If a geological expedition out in the tundra got into trouble, its members knew that Turovsky would be sent to the rescue.

That was what Vasya Turovsky, the pilot of our air-line, meant to us. But never had we waited for Turovsky with so much impatience as this year. It had somehow got around that he would take away Oxana.

Whether Chernykh had sent a coded message to Moscow, or whether we had simply decided so ourselves, I don't know. But everyone was sure that it was decided, although nothing was said about it. Did Oxana know? I imagine she, too, knew it.

That was why we were looking forward with so much impatience to the arrival of Turovsky. Oh, if he would only come soon! The sooner the parting came—the better for us and for Oxana.

We expected him in March as usual, but that year he made a long flight of it and came by a very complicated route, trying a new line. We hung up a big map in the common-room and marked the shortest way with little flags. Little by little, the flags crept nearer Cape Tranquillity. It brightened us up a bit.

News of Turovsky's movements were brought us by the wireless operator on duty, Yashka or Oxana. They used to move the flags along the route. Oxana would stand before the map for a long time. It was plain that she, too, was anxious to get away from us. There was something vile and shameful in that general desire to get rid of each

other. It's hateful to think of it even now!

We were expecting Turovsky from day to day.

Once, just as we had sat down to dinner, Yashka rushed in pale and breathless with a sheet of paper in his hand.

"Turovsky's lost!" he gasped and then, seeing Oxana, he stopped.

She gave a little scream and dropped the soup-ladle. We looked at her in astonishment—she was as pale as death. We had never known her nerves to give away like this. Was it because she was so anxious to get away?

"Well, what about it?" she cried angrily. "Turovsky is my fiancé. What is there to be so surprised about?"

The general stupefaction—I can find no other word for it—lasted for a full minute.

Then we all got up from our places and went over to where Yashka was standing with the paper in his hand. When he saw us approaching, he retreated a few paces. And we came on, saying nothing, breathing heavily. I can't imagine what we looked like, at that moment, but Yashka's face wore an expression of utter horror.

We drove him into the kitchen and surrounded him, as it were, like an iron ring. He had no chance to get away.

The silence lasted about a minute. Then Fyodor asked:

"Did you know?"

Yashka turned this way and that, looking for a chance to escape.

"Did you know?" we bawled at him.

"Yes, of course I knew. I found it out here. Once a message came for her when I was on duty. From Turovsky. I asked her about him and she told me. And, you see, I used to work with Turovsky—as his wireless man. We're pals. . . . Well, and I did it for the best. I thought, it wouldn't take much to offend the girl. After all, I know you. But if I made you believe that she was my girl, you would 'keep off the grass.' . . . So that's that."

We listened to him without interrupting once.

"So you know us, do you?" was all Fyodor said, shaking his head sadly.

There was nothing more for us to say.

Should we blame Yashka? Beat him up? What about ourselves? Were we any better? We, too, had thought that we knew ourselves. We had thought ourselves worse than we really were. And we had thrown mud at ourselves and at a comrade's fiancée—a fine girl who was in no way to blame.

Yes, what about the girl? We had quite forgotten her. We had left her alone to bear the shock of the terrible news.

We rushed back into the common-room. Oxana was not there. She would be in the wireless room, of course, someone guessed.

Yes, naturally she was. Where else could she be at a time like this? She was sitting there, trying to get in touch with Turovsky. Her face was calm, but rather grey. The chin looked sharper and there was a furrow between her brows. She had probably looked like that, I thought, when she remained alone in the blazing wireless-cabin that time.

But there was something different, something new and unfamiliar about her now. I guessed, rather than understood, what it was. The girl Oxana was gone, and in her place sat an anxious woman calling for her lover who was lost in the blizzard.

Turovsky turned up two days later and took Oxana away with him. The next time he came he brought us a letter from her and a present: six packets of tobacco.

12

That's all. We spent another winter at Cape Tranquillity, and we were a nice, friendly party again, and then we broke up. Yashka is Turovsky's wireless operator again; I don't know whether he has changed any or not. Arctic fliers still call him Yashka Never-Say-Die. Oxana has a baby. Turovsky showed me a photograph of it. The doctor went to live on the mainland and got married. Not long ago I heard that he had startled the scientific world with some unusual operation. Valeri married, too, and immediately left for Chukotka with his wife. And somewhere in Chukotka Fyodor Chernykh is roaming, too, as the chief of a big expedition. I am the only one of the party left at Cape Tranquillity. You get used to a place, you know. I have never married. I am waiting. The tundra roads are broad and long; perhaps, some day, I shall meet my girl there. Only now I cannot imagine what she will be like. You can't always guess right. Life is too complicated for that.

Well, let's stop smoking, boys, and get to bed. Good tobacco, isn't it? That's the one. I get it from Turovsky twice a year. But I seldom smoke it. I try to spare it. There's just a bit left at the bottom now. Three pipefuls, anyway. Yes, but spring will soon be here. I reckon Oxana won't forget this time, either.

And now let's be off to bed, boys. It's high time. The blizzard will be over soon and tomorrow we'll have to start. Now let's get into our sleeping-sacks and have a good night's sleep. And may everyone dream of whatever he loves best. I know what my dream will be: night and the long road, and a girl sleeping, her head on my shoulder.

Mast of a radio aeral set up on an ice floe near Northern Cape in the Arctic

HAROLD HESLOP

Conditions under which progressive writers live and work in capitalist countries are difficult and discouraging. Even in the democratic countries of Europe, cases quite often occur when an author of established reputation is not able to earn a living for his family by literary work. Recently, for instance, a distinguished English writer was forced to quit his native country and try to establish himself overseas, seeking a way to earn a living in another land. It goes without saying that the lot of writers who have not yet won widespread recognition is even worse. For Left writers it is not so easy to find publishers for their new books, especially when these deal with the life and struggle of the proletariat. There have been a number of cases when such books appeared in the U.S.S.R. in Russian translation before they were published in the writer's own country. A characteristic example is the life and work of the English writer Harold Heslop; excerpts from his latest novel, not yet published in English, will be found below.

In his letter to the editors of *International Literature*, Heslop writes:

"I am one of those unfortunate individuals possessed of the writing urge who has to go outside the sphere of literature to earn his daily bread and butter. Consequently my activities are restricted to between the hours of seven and ten in the evening."

Nevertheless, under such difficult conditions, Heslop has written quite a few books, mainly describing the life of that section of the proletariat with which he is best aquainted, the workers of the coal mines. His book, *Goaf*, was first issued in 1925 by the Priboi Publishing House in Leningrad; it was not published in London till nine years later. Among works Heslop has published in the past fifteen years are *The Gate of a Strange Field*, which appeared in 1929 in London, New York and Moscow; and *Journey Beyond* published in 1930 in London and Moscow. Three years later his *Crime of Peter Ropner* was published in London, and in 1935 his *Last Cage Down* appeared, once more in London.

Heslop's letter goes on to say:

"Since 1935 I have been engaged on two novels, neither of which is complete. One deals with the struggles of the miners in 1832 and the other—a very large book—deals with a family across a century of coal production in the North . . . Late in 1936 I began research into the history of a most interesting North of England personality named James Mather. I have now finished this biography but so far have not found a publisher for it. I am afraid that the subject, James Mather, is too remote in time to be resuscitated by any capitalist publisher. Yet I have no doubt that as a piece of research it is admirably suited to the needs of the workers today. Mather was a pioneer in mine ventilation. His writings describe ventilatory conditions in the British mines that are truly horrifying. It is a pity that Mather cannot be resuscitated for study by the

movement, as I think he lived a glorious life. A most magnificent man. I was rather interested to find him in company with tsar Alexander I on his visit to England about 1820. Did you know that the tsar wished to descend a coal-mine and when shown one turned coward?...

"I am plodding on with my novel. Here, briefly, is the outline of the story:

"The Akers family is driven from their peasant holding during the final enclosures of the common fields and holdings about 1830. They emigrate on the intitiative of the eldest son, John, to the developing coal-fields in the county of Durham. The entire family become miners, John being the most skillful. He it is who sees the possibility of climbing in this new world and making a fortune, but marriage and the sad fecundity of his wife fasten the chains of poverty securely upon him, and it is not he but his brother who begins to climb . . ."

On the basis of historical documents, the writer describes a tragic mine disaster in Harley, Northumberland, in 1862, when one hundred and ninety-nine men and boys, imprisoned by a cave-in, were suffocated by gas before they could be dug out, and five more men lost their lives in the mine. This was the worst catastrophe in the history of coal mining in En land. It profoundly changed the mood of the Durham miners and gave birth to progressive trends.

"Returning to his home after the accident John and his family now find themselves in the whirl of new endeavor. The accident has stirred up much feeling, and with the addition of a rather pitilessly conducted strike or lock-out, the next and natural step is the building of the Durham Miners Union. Now the religious convictions come into play in antagonism to the new organizatory activities of the miners."

Heslop takes his epic story down to the imperialist World War. Here the story centers around John's children, one of whom emigrates to America, another breaks away from family ties and the religious prejudices of his parents, and the third, George, raises a family and sees his children grow up about him. His great love is for his youngest son, John.

"He wins a scholarship and goes to the secondary school. He becomes a pupil teacher and goes to training college. He emerges and takes up an appointment and for some two or three years is happy when the war comes. As he had to join the territorials at College he is swept up into the war. He exists on the western front until the big German break-through in 1918 when he is killed. And so the old man is left with his wife contemplating the stark tragedy of their days. He is little changed, but a new philosophy has driven out the old . . ."

In publishing a number of episodes from this novel, the editors express their hope that it will be published in full in English in a very short time.

When John Akers awoke from his afternoon's sleep George, his eldest son, was eating the food which Jenny had laid before him. His two other sons had not yet arrived from the mine.

John stretched himself in the bed and lay still with his hands folded behind his head. A lone fly crawled about the yellowy-brown beams of the ceiling. John seemed content to lie still and watch it, for he was bathed in a luxury and peace he had not known for days. There was no place like his own home, he told himself as he lay filled with that luxury a man of toil can appreciate. As he lay he could hear the interminable roar of the water as it fell down the shaft upon him and his companions, and he could feel the dull ache which its frenzied and ice-cold lashings

caused as he had labored amongst the debris in that shaft. In his anxiety to banish the awful reminiscences from his mind he turned his head to regard his eldest son.

It struck him that George was fast growing into a young man, for at that precise moment he rose from his seat at the table and went over to the fireplace to take more potatoes from the black, unlidded pan standing on the fender. He watched him bend down, take up the wooden spoon and replenish his plate.

"Got a drop o' gravy, mother?"

Jenny, her mouth filled with pins, put down her patching and attended to her son's wants and returned to her chair.

It was obvious that George was going to be almost as big a man as his father. Getting close to six feet in height, he was filling out with those muscles which the mine develops. Loose muscled and big boned, he had come out of the same mold as his father and grandfather. The Akers' breed, John reflected, was running true in his own family, for he had also noticed that John and James were getting tall. George's shirt, open at the neck, revealed a broad, hairy chest. The sleeves were rolled up to the elbows and the filth of the mine stood thick upon his powerful forearms. His face was black with coal-grime, but out of that blackness shone two humorous eyes, while a pair of brilliantly red lips outlined a shapely, determined mouth. His nose was large, like all the Akers'. For the rest, he was clad in short trousers and thick blue stockings. A sheet of leather attached to his belt covered his posterior and acted as protector against the jagged roof of the mine. The stockings were wet, for as he walked he left the imprints of his feet on the bare stone floor of the kitchen.

"Like our Simon," John muttered.

"What's that you say, father?" Jenny asked through tightly closed lips, the pins still sticking out of her mouth.

"Just talking to myself," said John. "They tell me ye were at Auckland last Saturday, Geordie. Is that so?"

George went on eating. "I was with Butch," he answered.

"Good meeting?" he enquired, getting out of bed, and, clad as he was, in shirt and underpants, went to the table and sat down. "Let's have some't to eat, mother," he said.

"There was a lot o' folks there," said George.

"Yarping about nowt, I suppose?"

"Not exactly. They talked a lot about Hartley, then they got on about Sunnybank."

"What's troubling them at Sunnybank?"

"Injustice. Rocking tubs and all that. Fines and things."

"Then what will they do?"

"They think if they start a union they can give Tommy Love what fettle."

"More like Tommy Love'll give us what fettle if we start any nonsense at Sunnybank," said John. "Hear what Bill Henderson was yattering about?"

"I did, but I wasn't struck."

"You weren't struck. Butch wasn't, ye mean?"

"I argued with Butch all the way home. Butch thinks we ought to buy the pits up."

John, quite surprised, held his half-raised pint pot and stared at his son. "And what do ye think about the idea?" he demanded.

"I think it's a lot o' daftness. . ."

"The union, you mean?"

"No, not the union. I believe we ought to have a union. But how will we work the coal if we buy the pits?"

"What did Butch think?"

"He talked about floating a company . . . and a lot about coop ation. . . ."

"If you want to get out with Butch, George, you'd better get started to bath," suggested Jenny without looking up.

"I will, mother."

John continued at the table and watched the lovely form of his eldest son emerge from the bath. It seemed to him as though he was suddenly raised upon a high pinnacle and he was seeing his own form arising from the uncarpeted floor of his home. He felt at once proud and sad as he watched the transformation; proud because he was the father of the youth, and sad because in the youth's growth was mirrored his own decay. Such was the law of life—the giving in love, the development in beauty, and the departure in death.

His eyes traveled from the magnificent flesh of the youth to the doddering old man crouching close in beside the fire as if in search of a warmth that was not contained in the blaze. It amazed and astonished him. His son and his father. How the old man had decayed! The head was a bald and shrunken dome, white as chalk; the cheeks were sunken and the once proud beard gone scraggy and dirty grey. The withered skin was stretched over the head as tightly as the cover over a drum, pulling the neck into a series of long streaks of gristle with long cadaverous hollows between them, down the center of which moved interminably a huge adam's apple. From the toothless jaws drooled a pipe. At most times a blue-veined, brown-speckled hand, trembling like a leaf ready to fall, held the filthy clay pipe between the palsied jaws; and when the hand was removed chin and nose came together almost in an endeavor to hold the pipe which swayed from side to side in the nerveless mouth. When he pulled on the pipe the cheeks would fall in, and then he would emit a timid cloud of smoke through the bowl of the pipe. It seemed to be ages before the lips could be persuaded by that dying brain to take a fresh draw.

John Akers shuddered, for in that senile old man he saw a vision of his own decrepit doom. The old man, bent like a question mark over the fire, poised the eternal question of all men. There was no mind left in the old man, yet he sat there obstinately refusing to die, a great palsied blotch on the household. Jenny had to do everything for him, wipe his nose and the slavver that drooled from his lips, take him unhurriedly across the road to the communal privy, remain with him, attend to him and bring him back to the kitchen ingle, put him to bed, change him when he fouled his linen, dress him and feed him. Simon Akers was a man gone old and helpless, an awful parody of his childhood.

He looked at Jenny, his wife, and he saw in her a woman who performed the tasks of life with cheerful pride. The old man was an obstacle which death would remove. When he died she would be free to collect the time spent in doing the things the old man could not do himself, and restore them to her own existence, to the doing of other tasks, but never would she contribute them to her own rest. He liked Jenny. He could not say that he loved her, for all that daftness had gone years ago. She remained with him and embodied his own experience. She was that part of him—perhaps the greater part of him—which parried the major thrusts of the storms which sprang out from their blear hiding places to hurl themselves upon their fretful little homes. Jenny . . . and strangely enough his heart palpitated ever so slightly as he contemplated her in such moments. . . .

George rose from the bath and went upstairs just as his brothers came in from the pit. The kitchen was transformed. It seethed with life now, for John and James were

not the quietly disposed men their father and brother were. They both joked with Jenny and made sly remarks to grandfather which made her laugh.

"Fine day, grandda," shouted James.

"Eh?"

"I said it was a stormy day."

"It's very cold, son," said the old man. "I'm shivering."

"If ye fell in the fire ye wouldn't burn," exclaimed John.

"Let your grandda alone," cried Jenny. "Teasing the poor old soul."

"Aye, get on with your dinners," said John.

"What's that ye say?" squeaked the old man.

"He was saying how fine ye looked," said James.

George came downstairs fully dressed.

"Where are you going?" John enquired.

"I'm meeting Butch," George explained.

"Preaching again!" sneered John.

"No . . . a concert at Sunnybank."

"Sunnybank isn't a fit place for ye these days, George," said Jenny. "There's so much trouble there, isn't there, father?"

George laughed slightly. "We'll soon put that right when we get the union started," he assured her.

"So you think we'll be having a union, do you?" cried John.

It was young John who answered him. "Of course, we will," he said. "What's to stop us? We'll have a branch at Roughing. Maybe they'll make me chairman."

"I'm joining," said James.

John Akers towered to his feet. "And what good'll a union do?" he shouted. "Just a lot o' bla'-bla', that's all it'll be. At Hartley, when we were getting the muck out o' the shaft, what were the shouters doing? Just giving poor Charles Carr a dog's life, and threatening to blow poor Bill Coulson's brain out." He glared at his sons. "Aye, that's what they were doing," he went on heatedly. "One daft taird[1] wanted to throw himself down the pit as a sacrifice. Acting like a lot o' loonies." The two boys went on eating while he spoke, and George stood by the door ready to go out as soon as the tirade was finished. "A union!" he snorted. "They can have their unions, but none o' ye will ever join it. Do you hear? None o' ye."

George did not reply, but left the house quietly. The other two went on eating.

Jenny spoke to grandfather. "Will you have some tatie?" she asked.

"What's our John yelling about?" cried the old man. "All the folks in Streem'll be at the door in a minute to see what's afoot."

"Have some tatie," she insisted. She turned almost furiously upon her husband. "Is there any call to be shouting at everybody?" she demanded.

"There'll be no union in this house!" he shouted, still quivering with passion.

"All right, then! All right," she soothed. "There'll be no union in this house. Now, does that satisfy you?" And then she added: "If it comes, it comes, and that's all there is to it."

"It's not coming here, I'm telling you. I've seen enough of union men to last me my lifetime. I had my belly full at Hartley."

Jenny glared at him. "Why should you bother?" she demanded. "If all the men in the place want to unite ye needn't bother to join."

"And who would they unite against?" he cried.

"Who? Why Widdas Lott and your Simpson, of course!"

"Our Simpson?"

"And your James," she went on inexorably.

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[1] Toad.

"Then . . . if I'd been a boss . . ."

"They'd have had to unite against you," she said. "Now, will ye finish your tea?"

It was then that John reasserted himself. He found that he had been told some unpalatable things by his wife, and he did not like them. "Will you hold your tongue, woman?" he shouted.

Jenny did not reply. She gathered the bath tin into her strong arms and carried it into the street where she sent the contents scudding over the road. It foamed white and ran back into the gutter, much to the joy of a few children who ran to construct a dam and amuse themselves with the water until it became a filthy puddle.

She returned to the kitchen and made the bath ready again for John and James.

"Get washed one of ye," she ordered.

She took potatoes from the pan and beat them up on a plate. She added gravy and made a soppy mess which she fed to the old man, wiping his lips after every mouthful.

In all his wild extravagance in the creation of the ugly, man has been unable to produce another Sunnybank, even in Durham, for there is no place so completely surrounded by colliery villages and at the same time so isolated from those villages. It is as if it were walled and moated beyond the imagination of a medieval builder. Everything about the village is of a disorder that trembles almost to the verge of obscenity, and where obscenity appears it is so disorderly as to appear casual.

Sunnybank stands upon a huge scavenging tip which looks out upon the Wear valley with the filthy stare of a million rusting tins. The Wear flows on serenely to Durham. At this point there is no approach to the north bank of the river except down the sides of the scavenging tip. There is one way of getting to or from the village and that is by the private road which joins the Higrole road, to travel upon which toll is called upon all vehicles.

It is a dreadful place, an aggregate of hovels which are cluttered about a bleak pit-shaft into which men have gone for ages and from which have come the glittering results of their labor, coal glinting in the sunlight until the very deadness of the place has wiped the smile from every facet. Fittingly enough, Sunnybank in that year, 1862, was ruled by Thomas Love. But Thomas Love dwelt in Durham City in a great mansion, which he named Mount Beulah.

As George Akers and Butch Rowlands approached the village that bleak January night, Butch said:

"Sunnybank always depresses me, George. I sometimes wonder how the trout get by this rubbish tip. It's awful!"

Butch felt a tumult of anger welling up within him as he passed along those awful streets to the little chapel at the far end of the village. In the vestry he met many old friends and his spirits returned. He talked animatedly until it was time for the concert to commence.

George sensed a new atmosphere as he sat quietly thinking over the various songs and ballads which he was to sing that night. The poverty, which was a constant factor in his own life but which seemed to be shut out of the vestry at the chapel in Quarry Brewery, oozed through the thin walls of this place like a horrible smell. At Higrole the members did not speak about the mine in the chapel, but here he caught snatches of conversation which told of injustice so cruel and deliberate as to nauseate his sensitive mind. Men not only spoke of their bruises gained by rocking the tubs, but displayed them. Caustic, flaming bruises they were. They explained how after

every artifice known to them to get the last ounce of coal into a tub, when it got to bank it was confiscated for being under weight. And they smiled wryly as they spoke. Very wryly!

He was glad when the company assembled rose to go into the body of the chapel, the quoir into the singing pew and he and Butch into the pulpit.

Within the gloom of the chapel, illuminated sparsely by tallow candles, George caught sight of men and women and children who did not appear to be the same clay as those of Higrole. Here poverty and wretchedness were vividly embroidered upon the yellow walls as well as the faces of the people. He felt strangely awed when they lifted their timid voices in song. He felt like a stranger listening to the wailing of people against whom a pogrom was in progress.

He sang his own songs and he felt glad when Butch and he were free to return home.

"You'll both come and have a bite?" suggested Joe Thornley as they left the chapel.

"We'd better be getting home;" replied Butch with a shake of his head.

"The wife's gone ahead to get it ready," he said.

"Just a cup o' tea, then," said Butch.

George would have gone home alone, but Joe pressed him so earnestly and with such beseeching pathos that he assured himself that it would be a shame to refuse.

When they arrived at Joe's house Mrs. Thornley, who had not removed her hat, was busy bringing the fire to a blaze.

"Come in," she said, giving them a warm smile as they entered. "Really, I don't know what we'd do without coal. It's so cold." She took off her hat with her long, blue-veined hands and sighed. "Make yourselves comfortable," she said. "I'll not be long."

The fire began to blaze behind the steel blazer. She lit a candle and put it on the table where it spilled a warm light over the kitchen.

George smelt again that strong odor of want.

"Only a cup o' tea, missus," said Butch. "We aren't hungry."

She put the kettle on and donned a white apron and set about the task of providing a meal. As she walked about she felt that she was still in the chapel listening to George. She kept glancing at him out of the corner of her eye. When he caught her glance she said:

"You sing nicely. How old are you?"

"Nearly eighteen," he answered.

"That's what I thought. My son would have been just your age." Her voice came softly, like a sad sigh, as she spread dripping upon pieces of white bread. "He died when he was ten. Paralyzed. Funny a bairn so young getting paralyzed, eh?"

Joe took the blazer down from before the fire and her thin voice drifted into silence. George sat uneasily before the fire. Gradually the men's voices took shape and forced themselves into his unwilling consciousness.

"And he calls himself a righteous man!" Butch cried out angrily.

"He is a wicked man to steal our earnings in such a fashion," Joe stated categorically. "It's an abomination. But there you are, Thomas Love is an abomination."

"He is that," supplemented Mrs. Thornley.

"Coal is hard enough to hew without having them stolen! Thomas Love might just as well change our tokens at the coal face."

"Hush, Joe!" she warned.

"It's worse than that," he went on, carried away by his indignation. "It's like stealing a baby's milk!"

Mrs. Thornley merely shook her

head. Years of life with Joe had taught her that to contradict him merely emphasized his opposition.

"Something must be done," said Butch.

"There's only one way, brother," said Thornley earnestly. "We must have a union. All the men in Durham must unite and put an end to this injustice."

"Aye."

"Our strength lies in a union. Unity, see? I don't mean for defiance, brother Rowlands, but for our own defense. Unity is our only salvation."

"What about god?" put in George.

Joe turned his gleaming brown eyes upon George. "God," he said slowly, "god has deserted this Sodom and Gomorrah, my son. Sunnybank is forgotten. Why? Men and women drink. And because they have failed god he has left them to get out of this mess themselves. We've got to find our way back to god, George, and the only way is by a union. It's the only thing we've got left. In a union the sinful and the righteous can unite, and when we've won the sinful can see that it is best to be righteous."

And so in this mad, illogical way they talked.

After eating the two men went out into the night and walked back to Higrole.

"What could we do," Butch breathed into the night as they neared the old Hall, "what could we do if only we had them millions Bill Henderson spoke about?"

"What could we do?" George asked.

"Everything," he said. "Your father doesn't agree, does he?"

"He doesn't," replied George.

"Been talking to him about it?"

"He started on about it at tea when I got in from the pit."

"I see," said Butch.

They descended the hill by the high wall. As they came up the other side towards the dark village Butch spoke again.

"John Akers," he said, "is an obstinate man. I've kenned him a lot o' years now, and I'll always maintain that he's as obstinate as a field full o'donkeys. A good pitman, though, one o' the best."

George could almost feel Butch wagging his head over the obstinacy of his father, but just then an owl hooted and immediately he was back again in his childhood and he was standing beside a water tub holding his pony's head, alone, dreadfully alone, and whimpering with fear.

And suddenly he broke into a loud laugh.

Bill Tempest came to Roughing Gap that summer, at least he came for part of his time. He actually came to work on the back shift.

He had conceived the idea of working the foreshift at Newfield and the back shift at Roughing Gap. It was a matter of arrangement between Bill Tempest on the one hand and the managers of the pits on the other.

There has never been a coal hewer in the world like Bill Tempest. His history has passed into the folk-lore of Northumberland and Durham.

When he came to Roughing Gap he was at the height of his powers as a coal hewer. He could kirve a jud twice across a five-yard place and take down the coal and fill it away in an ordinary shift. It happened that his tremendous exertions made such a call upon his strength that when he had reached this point in his career he could not earn sufficient in one week to enable him to buy food enough to maintain himself. To get over this difficulty he decided to hew in two pits in the same day.

Widdas Lott was happy to have a man like Tempest working at his colliery. He gave him a good place, which happened to be the one in

which George Akers was putting at the time. Bill, he reflected, would show the lads how to hew, and also by Bill's superhuman energy he would so increase the production of that place that it would be an easy matter to arrange a reduction in the price per ton.

He made a special journey to the flat to speak to George.

"Bill Tempest's starting here in the morn," he told the youth.

"Is he?"

"Yes, and see that you get his work out."

"We'll do our best," said George.

When Bill Tempest came to Higrole most people experienced a shock. He was no taller than the average miner. He wore a mustache and kept the rest of his face shaven. He had a full mop of black hair which had never known a comb or brush. His eyes were dark, glinting out of a strong face. There was no humor in the mouth. His shoulders were powerful, ox-like. If there was one man he astonished in Higrole it was George Akers.

He came into the flat with a dozen picks trailing behind him. The interchangeable pick had still to be invented. He paused beside George to enquire the way. He tossed the picks into an empty tub and went to his place. George followed him with another tub, and squatted as the man undressed. Tempest went up on to the caunch and glanced about the place. Satisfied, he got his picks out of the tub, selected one, and stretched himself along the floor.

"You the putter?" he enquired.

"Yes."

"What's your name?"

"George Akers."

"Kin to that Simon Akers that was lost in Hartley?"

"He was my uncle," said George.

Tempest smiled at him. "Ye'll be telling me Jack Akers is your father next?" he challenged mockingly.

"He is," said George.

"Honest?"

"Yes, he's my father all right."

"Then, if you're as good a putter as your father is a pitman we'll make some money here," said Tempest, and without more ado he commenced to hew.

George Akers sat fascinated. He had never seen a man hew coal like Bill Tempest; nor had he ever seen a man use a pick like him. A miner's pick weighs about two and a half pounds; Tempest's picks weighed four pounds, and even then they seemed to be but small pieces of iron in his powerful hands. He pulled up his right knee to make a cushion for his shoulder and lying thus he cut into the coal before him with those precise movements that are more characteristic of a machine than a man. Pick, hands and muscles blended together in one steadfast purpose, to cut a deep incision beneath the coal. The kirved coal rose into a small hillock over his legs. Periodically he kicked it away so as to facilitate his hewing, and when the time came for him to send it away he tossed it into the tub with deep, swift movements.

George fairly ran with the tub to the flat and back again with an empty one. He had never seen anything like this before. He wanted to see Tempest take down the riven coal. When the time came, George Akers beheld a spectacle he was never likely to forget. It almost seemed as if the coal was afraid of that flashing pick. It leaped from his shoulder deep into the shining coal. The man never grunted; he hewed. He slew the heat of centuries with terrific blows. He ate up space within the earth. His body, built for the work which is the prerogative of gigantic men, tore the glittering gems of the earth from her own tenacious grasp and hurled them into the tubs with movements that flowed from his muscles and which were the very art

creations of majestic strength and craft.

George found it a task after his own heart to keep this man-machine supplied with tubs. It was incredible that this man should be working about fifteen hours every day at such a pressure. And it was George who tired first.

"Keep Bill Tempest going?" John enquired when George got home that night.

"I did, but I had a struggle."

"What's he like as a hewer?"

"He's the best I've ever seen in my life."

"Oh, he is, is he? Is he better than me?"

"He's the best in the world," said George truthfully.

"He'll not last long, lad," John assured him, not a little put out by George's categorical statement. "You'll see, he'll not last long. All them big hewers fail to stay the distance, and I've seen a few in my time, so I know."

George did not speak and his father went on:

"When I came over the Stang, George, I started alongside a couple o' hewers, Tommy Boddy and Bill Jakes, and they had but three arms and three legs between them. And believe me they could hew coal. They taught me all I ever learned about hewing. Them two men were as good as any three ordinary men. But where are they now?"

"Dead, I suppose," said George.

"Aye. Dead and gone this many a year. I mind one time the deputy mistook Bill Jake's wooden leg for a prop and sawed it the right length. Laugh! I nearly had a fit. But I had to help get him home, poor man."

In the corner grandfather cackled to himself.

"It was funny," he averred.

"What was funny?" John asked in surprise.

"Time I wouldn't pay parson his tithe," replied the old man. "He cussed like a dragoon."

John Akers sighed. "That all comes o' growing ancient," he said. "Always in the past. See?"

George bathed and made himself ready for the evening, paying strict attention to his toilet.

"Not walking a lass out, are ye?" queried John with a smile.

"No. There's plenty of poverty without me adding to it."

"It's only natural. . . ."

"Maybe, but I'm not hurrying."

"Everyman makes a dive for the parson with a woman some time," said John. "Ye'll not be out o' the fashion all your life, my lad."

And with that he went outside to enjoy the evening at the corner.

He liked to squat up against the gable and spit and smoke, and watch the youths play fives, or if the quoits were about, to challenge some cronie to a game. He could throw a good quoit. Playing quoits reminded him of the old days before he came to the New Land.

The summer had come and life in the villages of Durham was proceeding as is usual in the hot weather. Summer adds to the rigor of life in the coal-fields where the houses are usually built against the monstrous pit-heaps, for then the coal dust is dry and feathery and is blown over the face of the earth by every breeze. It settles in a veneer upon all things, wearing the heart of the housewife as she toils at the tasks set her by mining society.

Higrole lay sweating and exhausted upon the ravished face of Durham. Over the fields was piled the excrement of the mine. The blue shale enclosing the Harvey seam had been found suitable for the production of fireclay bricks and high-class sanitary ware, and so those fields which had once produced the food of man now lay groaning beneath an ever increasing mound of rotting

blue shale rock. There in the winds and rains it decomposed. It is curious how the harsh and unforgiving strata when mined should act with such rapidity when in the open air.

Alongside this ever-increasing shale tip were spread-eagled the brick kilns of the new industry. Here men bore a new art, at rolling mills, brick-making tables, sanitary slabs, and kiln, upon the foundations so truly laid by John Akers, Bill Jackson and James Murgrove.

Nearby the brick kilns were erected the coking plant. The coke-ovens were like gigantic bee skips. Filled with coal dust and waste from the screening plant they were lit and left burning for three days. All the by-products by virtue of this process of coke-making went into the air in belching clouds of smoke and in flames that leaped upwards like the coroni of so many suns. Only the coke was left and huge blocks of red salt, which was discarded as useless.

Night and day line after line of coke ovens went on burning and belching smoke, flame and fume, spreading it evilly over the village. Children would go there to play, for near the ovens night was turned into day and day into something dreadful and eerie.

The children loved to see a coke oven blown out. A man broke down the doorway of perforated bricks, and then you could look into the white heart of the awful fire. Then the hose, attached to the pressure tap, was played into the evilly glowing cinder. How the steam rose, hot and merciless and shrieking like so many devils let loose, and soon a thick white fog seemed to envelope the earth and space seemed to depart and you could hear the jet of water leaping upon the snapping, snarling monster in the kiln and men shouting to each other so casually. When the steam died down there was left a solid mass of silvery coke riven by long fissures, gaping black. The uninitiated could not approach those ovens, but the oven-fellers leaped at the mass as if they had suddenly gone mad. With long rakes that ran on steel pulleys suspended above the doorway, they broke the screaming mass of coke into huge chunks and pulled them out on to the platform. Then with gripes a yard square they hurled those lumps into huge wooden barrows, and while the mate ran to the truck with the barrow the oven-feller would go on evacuating the kiln.

Today, coke is not manufactured in this manner. Consequently coke has lost its silvery sheen; it is dull and lifeless.

John Akers had changed Higrole, but he did not waste time in contemplating his handiwork, for, like the craftsmen of old, he had created his masterpiece. The only difference between the craftsmen who had built Durham Cathedral and the craftsmen who had built Roughing Gap colliery was that where they had lifted beauty to the heavens the other had sunk ugliness into the earth. In the eyes of John Akers the ugliness passed for beauty, a beauty which always culled from him a sigh of deep contentment.

Not so the vicar of Higrole.

Henry Rylands stood amazed, transfixed, horrified. His vicarage was not the same. The old world peace had gone and a newer dust prevailed in his study, touching everything which he loved and treasured. It was of little use complaining to the bishop, for the bishop had listened to the dean, and the dean had grown old in Durham.

"Why complain, my dear Rylands?" he cried. "What are your books after all? Durham will devour them just as she has devoured the manuscripts of Byrd and William Shield. Time, you see, changes all things. Even Durham must

perish! So why weep because your parish is invaded by these men."

And so both these old and hoary men sighed over the fate of the Country Palatine and the days, not when the Prince-Bishops had girded on their armor and gone a-destroying with the king, but of the days of golden prebends and enormous salaries. It was sad to think that all this had fallen before a cloud of coal-dust; sadder still that it should appear so inevitable. Inevitability breeds cynicism even in the heart that is torn with grief.

It was this summer evening as John Akers squatted at the corner watching the fives players, that the two old men paused in their earnest discussions to regard again The Change. They had cultivated the habit of calling it "The Change."

"They are a queer breed of men," complained Rylands.

A twinkle flickered in the eyes of the bishop. "And what is the latest enormity committed in your parish?" he cried gayly enough.

"It's their stubbornness, their obstinacy, that gets my goat," Rylands went on to explain. He waited until the bishop had settled his hands upon his navel and then he proceeded. "Now, there is a youth in Higrole who has a voice that is quite phenomenal, and yet . . ."

The bishop nodded. "Go on," he said.

"I made a special visit to the boy's home," proceeded Rylands, "just to offer to bring the case of the youth to the notice of the choirmaster at Durham. I suggested that he might be taken from the mine, put in the choir at Durham and have his voice thoroughly trained."

"Quite right, my dear Rylands," said the bishop.

"I spoke to the choirmaster and he made a special effort to hear the youth. He told me about it afterwards and he had a good laugh. Of course he was impressed by the youth's singing, but he seemed to have enjoyed the discourse of the boy's . . . er . . . mentor . . . a miner, called Butch Rowlands. Evangelist, he calls himself. . . ."

"You have spoken to the boy?" the bishop murmured.

"Not to the boy . . . he is about eighteen, I might say . . . but to his parents. Have you ever been in a miner's kitchen, sir?"

"I have." And the bishop smiled. "The brass, my dear Rylands! Oh, the brass! Brass everywhere!"

"I think the glitter is almost obscene," said Rylands with a shudder.

"And the egg cups along the pantry windows!" Again the bishop rumbled in his bowels.

"Well, if I may proceed. . . ."

"Proceed by all means, Rylands. I was merely indulging in involuntary reminiscence. Pardon me, please."

"I put my proposal to the father and I thought he might have apoplexy. The idea of suggesting that his son should have his voice trained in the cathedral when he was baptized in the Methodist faith was just too much for John Akers. I could not convince him. . . ."

Bishop Baring leaned forward. "Did you say John Akers?" he asked excitedly.

"Why, yes, of course. John Akers . . ."

"A huge, big-boned man, with greying hair?" Baring's eyes were glittering. "A splendid man. . . ."

"But I did not know that you knew him, sir?" Rylands cried.

"Bushy beard and piercing eyes, and tufty eyebrows?" the bishop went on.

"Yes, yes . . . that is John Akers. . . . You describe him exactly, sir!"

"Can you tell me if he went to Hartley . . . to the accident. . . ."

"He did. He went there to help

to recover his brother, Simon, who was lost in that awful catastrophe."

"God bless my soul! And he is your parishioner and I did not know it!"

Rylands laughed rather strainedly. "And he is the father of my prodigy," he said.

The Lord Bishop of Durham fixed his kindly gaze upon the vicar. "Then you are proud in the possession of such a man," he said slowly. "John Akers is a man amongst men."

"But I fail to understand. . . . I am at a loss. . . ."

"You forget, Rylands, that I was at Hartley," said the bishop. "I watched that dreadful tragedy work itself out from the moment hope began to wane from the hearts of my people. I went there ostensibly to endeavor to comfort the widowed and the fatherless, but I stayed to see that man assume tremendous proportions."

"And still I don't understand," said Rylands.

"Yes, tremendous proportions," he called out. "If it had not been for John Akers they might have failed to get those bodies out of that pit. He it was who held the breach when Coulson was away. He it was who suggested the way to remove the obnoxious gases from the shaft. He it was who penetrated into that foul atmosphere to confirm our most dreadful fears. For sheer bravery and for ingenious suggestion John Akers, in my opinion, stands supreme amongst the men in this diocese and," here he lowered his voice, "I think my diocese contains many brave men, don't you?"

Rylands nodded.

"How much did he receive for his work?" Baring asked.

"Five pounds," said Rylands. "Raine the grocer told me. He cashed the cheque. His story was frightfully funny. . . ."

Baring held up his hand pontifically. "There is nothing humorous in cashing a cheque," he said.

After a silence, during which Rylands absorbed the reproof, he said:

"Akers was satisfied. It was the greatest sum he had ever earned. If the miners were paid more they would only drink the more. . . ."

"Stop!" cried out the bishop. "Stop! For heavens' sake, stop!" And when he saw the look of startled humility in the eyes of the vicar he muttered: "I am sorry, my dear Rylands."

"I understand," said Rylands. "Stress of emotion, I suppose."

The bishop spoke with determination. "You must bring John Akers here," he said.

"Here?"

"Yes, here, for I would like him to sup with me. Now, let me see, do you think you could persuade him to come here to dinner, now, let me see. . . ."

They agreed upon a date and later Rylands made his way home.

The next day he called upon the Akers' once more.

"Why, come in, vicar," cried Jenny, holding the door ajar for him to enter.

John rose from his chair and his huge hand closed over the frail, white one of the parson.

"Take a chair!" he cried. "Take a chair and welcome! And if ye smoke, light up. But I warn ye, if ye've come about our George, ye've come to the wrong place. He isn't going to sing in any o' your fancy churches. Not him."

Rylands seated himself on the offered chair. "As a matter of fact," he said, "I wasn't going to mention George. Now that you have, might I enquire if he still sings as well as ever?"

"He sings like an angel," said Jenny. "He sang at chapel last night, and it was grand."

"He sings fairly well," said John, "but no better nor me when I was

a youngster. Only I had a man's voice. I sang bass."

"So you informed me before," murmured Rylands.

"Did I, now. I don't remember. But now that you mention it, maybe I did. Did I tell ye I would rattle the cups and saucers when I got going?"

"I believe you did."

"I like our George's kind of singing best," interposed Jenny. "It's more gentle and soothing, see?"

"Pah!" exclaimed John. "Women's voices in men's throats!"

Henry Rylands was not desirous of carrying on a discussion with John Akers in a field which he had not made his own and one in which John, himself, had scarcely trodden. "I was at Auckland last night," he said.

"Meeting or something?" John enquired. "I didn't hear of owt."

"No, I was dining with the bishop."

"Dining! Does he have his dinner at night?"

"Of course. And do you know, we began to talk about you?"

"About me? But what could ye have to talk about me? What have I done? Besides, the bishop doesn't know me."

"You forget that Bishop Baring was at Hartley during the time of the disaster."

John thought for a moment or two. "So he was," he said. "He called on our Simey's widow when I was having a rest. I was asleep, but she telled me about it when I got up."

"That would be when he read her a letter from the queen."

"And what would the queen want to write to Bessie Akers for?" demanded Jenny. "She's no better than me."

"It wasn't exactly to her, but to all the unfortunate women," Rylands explained.

"Oh! That letter!" exclaimed Jenny.

"And what had the bishop to say about me?" John asked.

"Well, Mr. Akers, as a matter of fact, he asked me to call and invite you to dine with him next Wednesday evening, that is if you can manage."

It was Jenny who found her voice first. "You mean . . . you mean . . . he wants our Jack to go . . . to go to the castle?" she breathed.

"Precisely, Mrs. Akers," replied the vicar.

John Akers found his voice at last. "Does he want to talk to me about my lad?" he demanded. "If he does he isn't going . . ."

The vicar held up his hand. "I do not think he will mention your boy," he said.

"Then what does he want with me?"

"I should think he wishes to talk to you about Hartley," said the vicar.

"Hartley!" echoed John. "And what could I tell him about Hartley? He was there, wasn't he?"

"But you forget that the bishop *is* not a miner," expostulated Rylands.

"Then how will he understand if I do tell him?"

"Indeed, I do not know," he admitted, turning to Jenny, who forthwith came to his aid with her chatter.

"They must be nice people at Hartley," she said. "They treated our Jack fine, I will say that. Gave him five pounds . . . five pounds mind ye . . . a mint o' money. When that cheque was changed at Raine's shop I didn't know what to do with all that brass."

Rylands turned to John. "You were satisfied with what they paid you?" he asked.

"Satisfied! More than satisfied! But it didn't help poor Simey's death much, did it?"

The vicar stood up. "Well, what

is it to be?" he asked. "Shall I tell the bishop that you will come?"

"He hasn't been here long, has he?" countered John.

"He was enthroned last year," replied Rylands. "He is a very good man, I assure you."

"He must be," John agreed. "Aye, tell him I'll come. When was it you said?"

"Next Wednesday evening."

"That suits me."

"But, Jack . . . your clothes, man. . . ."

"The bishop didn't invite my wardrobe," said John. "If it was a wardrobe he wanted to see he needn't 'a' gone ayont his bedroom. Ye tell him, Mr. Rylands, that I'll come, will ye?"

"I'll be only too happy, John," replied the vicar. "I will write today." He shook hands with both of them and said: "Good day to you both."

Jenny showed him out and he walked away ruminating on the simplicity of some people. He knew one woman who was not quite so naive as Jenny Akers, and that she would be waiting for him to return with some degree of impatience, for she never liked to miss her afternoon drive.

That week Ralph Whitefield and his wife, Ann Whitefield, came down from the upper valley of the Wear to take possession of a little house in Quarry Brewery. Later in the year Ralph Whitefield was to hew in the place which Bill Tempest vacated when he decided to migrate to Shields and work at Harton Colliery. At the moment of their arrival there appeared to be something mysterious about the soft-spoken dalesman, at least Higrole people thought there was mystery attached to him, for if there was not, why had he left the dales?

Ralph was a member of the Whitefield clan who farmed the sparse land at the feet of the Pennines just where the Wear itself tumbles out of the limestone. About this time the land was not sufficient to maintain the gaunt brood of the Whitefields and some of them had gone to quarry limestone which was sent down the valley to the iron-works at Whitton Park. Ralph had been one of them.

They might have remained quarrymen had not the Durham authorities decided to cut the great reservoirs at Waskerley, and had not Job Whitefield gone there to work, taking with him his nephew, Ralph.

To this reservoir came all the navvies of Cumberland and Westmoreland and all the toughs of the kingdom, and here they worked and lived and grew more primitive. When Dave Riseborough, the champion wrestler of Cumberland, started work on the job, it was to be expected that he would not be long in issuing the challenge to wrestle any man in the camp.

It was Ralph who suggested to Job that he should take up the challenge.

"I dain't like tee," said Job.

"I'll make the match," said Ralph.

And so it was.

The day came for the match and out on to the fell that seemed to roll like a huge purple carpet from the foothills to the mist that folded itself about Northumberland and Durham, the combatants, their backers and the watchers went. It was a gala day for the wild people who were building the reservoir.

No catch-as-catch-can wrestling this, but straight holds about the waists and a contraction of the muscles of the abdomen, chest and arms. No folding of the legs about those of the opponent. Just a sheer grip and a heaving toss. The man with the mightiest muscles to win

who puts his opponent cleanly upon the sward.

In separate tents Dave Riseborough and Job Whitefield stripped and got into their tights. Ralph helped his uncle to get ready for the match. As Job revealed his enormous body Ralph drew a breath. Job stood two inches over six feet. His body was fashioned like a thing of steel. The muscles running up his legs and thighs were hard as iron, those that traveled transversely on his body bulged and quivered like live things. His arms were of solid tempered steel. His shoulders, broad as those of an ox, sloped and gleamed in still whiteness.

"Thou'lt do," said Ralph as Job belted his fancy tights about his loins.

"Hope so," grunted Job.

They made their way to the ring and found Dave ready to give battle. He, too, was a giant, built of steel, but not so tempered as this great peasant. He met Job's unflinching gaze and did not wilt, and the preliminaries were begun.

The referee exhorted the crowd to give "fair field and no favor" and left the ring. Then both men advanced upon each other.

The crowd, tensed and hushed, watched both men take hold. Slowly, almost lovingly, they folded themselves together, arms about each other and the head of one over the left shoulder of the other. When the embrace was completed and bending away from each other they began to move slowly and warily in a circle, each settling his locked fists in the small of the back of the other, each waiting for the other to make that initial spring to gain the throw.

As they moved excitement strained within the bosoms of the watchers. Some began to gasp as they watched the two antagonists get to grips. No one spoke; no one uttered a cry of encouragement; no one seemed to breathe. Down came a silence so still and so perfect as the two men paused that the scene became poignant as when an explorer finds a carven image on a site long deserted by the civilization that created it.

The arms flexed. The grip of hand on hand boring into the opposite spine tensed those terrible muscles until it seemed that they might burst their dermal shrouds. As yet neither man was anxious to be disturbed to the advantage of the other, and so each bore the terrible pain, for once the position was abandoned without premeditated vantage the force of the other would overcome the one in the weaker position.

Hearts pumped wildly and breaths were clutched in the gaunt fingers of excitement. Suspense almost suffocated the watchers. At last men began to grow afraid. The purple stillness seemed to embody a shrill note proclaiming disaster.

"Ah!"

It was Dave who moved. He tried to leap into an upright position, but Job, appreciating the spring precisely, sprang also and countered the move.

Standing now on the balls of their feet, their locked fists bit deeper into the now unprotected spines. Their arms, tensed to breaking point, one against the ribs of the other, and the other forcing the outer arm away, were ready for the final fling. Now was the moment. But it seemed long delayed and they stood on the soft and spongy turf, poised in a tremendous grip, waiting for the false movement which did not seem to come.

Job knew his own strength and he instinctively knew that it was greater than that of Dave, but he was patently surprised to find that to every application of force Dave countered with another from his

own muscles. And he began to grow anxious.

The crowd stood still and breathless, watching the two men and waiting with fear for the one to capitulate. There was an inflexible will in both men, born in the one from a sense of victory and in the other from a loathing of defeat. The strain gradually became unbearable, increasing as the stertorous breathing of the combatants rose in the air. Job, fully aware that victory was his, waited for Dave's capitulation.

"Throw, for god's sake!" shouted a watcher.

Both men applied another ounce of devastating force. The crowd began to thresh in its own anxiety. Never had they seen a throw so long delayed. The suspense began to grow unbearable.

Job began to wish that he had never entered the ring. The stubbornness of his opponent began to anger him. Why did the man not accept defeat? It must end. Yes, he must end it. He must. . . .

He felt himself grow mighty with a new strength. He did not feel his own breath escaping from his lungs in loud, terrifying pants. He seemed to soar up on a greater, a more palpable resolution.

"Leggo!" he growled. "Leggo, or I'll break thy back!"

Dave did not hear, nor did he smile. Once more he bit his fists into Job's loins and then, with a cry of pain; Job liberated all that pent-up strength, all that enormous resolution to victory, and like a boa-constrictor, his arms crushed into the lovely body of his foe. A horrible, dreadful ball of red-hot steel bored into Dave's back. He became aware of a vast, intolerable pain seering through him and he emitted a scream which froze the blood of the watchers. The scream died away like escaping steam slowly shut off, and then that strength which had been poised in all its loveliness evaporated from his body like a mist before the rising sun. And Job Whitefield gently laid him down upon the turf.

As he stood unloosening his grip a dazed crowd watched the awful sight of a man dying.

"He's dying!" a man screamed. "Look! He's dying!"

Job Whitefield looked at his fallen antagonist with eyes grown stupid and saw the light die out of those once proud and vicious eyes. He had done a dreadful deed. He had killed a man. By the sheer force of his own body he had executed another, and there he was dead at his feet.

No one stirred.

A great shudder oozed through his frame and he collapsed, gibbering like a dressed-up ape, on the shoulder of his nephew.

They all returned to camp and that night Job was arrested.

Three days later a coroner sitting with a jury of nine men found that David Riseborough had died an accidental death, and the police had to release the fear-stricken man.

Job did not go back to Wearhead, but went to the camp and sought Ralph. In the cabin he behaved as one demented.

"I killed him! I killed him! Rafe! Rafe!" he moaned.

Ralph did his utmost to comfort the distressed man, and all the time Job demanded the reason why Dave did not let him throw him.

All that night he stormed and all the next day so that Ralph could not go to work. He had to stand by the demented peasant to help him, to soothe him, to do that which is beyond the power of any man, to stay him from becoming mad.

"I am accursed!" he screamed. "I am accursed!"

Once he clutched Ralph by the

throat and held him until he almost lost consciousness. "Rafe!" he shouted. "Rafe! If ever ye have a son by Ann and ye name him 'Job' he will be accursed . . . accursed with my strength. Hear me? Dost hear me?"

Ralph, almost asphyxiated, managed to indicate that he heard.

The next day the peasant became calm and he went to the reservoir with Ralph. He seized his opportunity. A tin of dynamite was standing untended and he extracted two cartridges and hid them in his shirt. No one saw him and that night, when Ralph had gone out of the cabin for a few minutes, Job ate those two cartridges of dynamite. And because no other man has committed suicide in such a manner, no other man has died so completely exquisitely painful a death as Job Whitefield, a death so replete with awful pain.

It was Job's brother, Nicholas, the father of Ralph, who came to Waskerley. He sought out the erring wrestling match promoter.

"Back home!" he roared. "Back home tha goes, and take Ann and go forth from the dale and return no more."

Ralph knew that it was hopeless to fight to remain in the beautiful fell country, and he went back to his wife who was waiting for him with her two children, and together they descended the valley. Higrole welcomed them, but she was too dirty to smile a really hearty welcome upon them.

Jenny was not the person to keep so important a secret to herself and soon Higrole was buzzing with the news that John had been invited to dine with the bishop.

The day after he learned the news Widdas Lott made a special journey to see John. He came puffing and panting into the place, and in his excitement knocked his head rather heavily against the roof. As he scrambled past the tub he offered a few profane remarks to that innocent piece of Norwegian fir.

"Always curse the timber when you bump it?" John asked gently.

"If you bumped your head as oft as me you would, too," said Lott.

"Seems like a waste o' time to me," remarked John.

"Was it my fault?" demanded the now irate manager.

"No," replied John. "I suppose it just reached down and fetched ye a wallop on your head!"

Lott scrambled on the caunch, raised his lamp so that it shone on John's face, and glared at him. "When you're as old as me," he began somewhat petulantly, "when you're as old as me, Jack Akers, you'll find it isn't so easy to keep your head down as i' was."

"I dare say," said John, accepting the rebuke.

"When is it you are dining wi' the bishop?" was Lott's next question.

"Wednesday next," replied John. "But what with all the fuss I wish I hadn't agreed to go."

"I wouldn't say that," said Lott. "After all, it isn't every man that gets invited to the castle."

"I know that, but why should folks talk so?"

Lott smiled. "That doesn't worry you, I know," he said. "But I have heard tell he's a rare nice chap. I reckon he's the first bishop o' Durham that's ever invited a dissenter to his table, eh?"

"Maybe he's more interested in Hartley than he is in me," said John.

"That's true," said Lott.

After a while Widdas Lott broached the subject which had caused him to make the journey through the mine to this place.

"How are ye off for clothes, Jack?" he enquired.

John kicked a piece of coal to one side. "Oh!" he cried. "I just thought o' going the same as I go to chapel of a Sunday. But everybody in Higrole seems to have gotten the notion that I ought to wear something they've got and I haven't."

"I daresay, but, see, I've a very nice neck-tie an' a di'mond pin I could let ye have for the occasion. What say?"

"I'd be pleased to have them," John replied, knowing that to refuse would insult the old man, and he could see no reason why he should upset the old fellow. "But what'll I do for a collar?" he asked. "I couldn't wear them without a collar, and I haven't worn one o' them things in all my life."

"Maybe my collars'll fit," said Lott. "Let's see thi neck."

Rummaging about in his pocket he produced a piece of chalk and a length of string to which was attached an inch and a half nut. Actually he used this as a plumb line when he wished to see how straight a place was running into the coal. It was chalked, the better to see it in the pit. He passed the string around John's neck and after making his measurement took it off. "Man! Ye've a fair sized neck," he said. "That long, see? Now let's try mine."

Still holding the piece of string at the point where the free end had made contact with the other point of the string, he passed it about his own neck. "Your neck's a shade bigger nor mine," he announced gravely, "but I wear my collars fairly big, so I'm sure one o' them'll fit. Send one o' the lads round for them when ye need them, will ye?"

"I will," said John.

They slipped into a silence during which the putter came and took the full tub away and left an empty one. John mechanically put a token on the inside of the tub and resumed his seat and waited for the old man to speak.

"Ye ken, Jack," he began quite suddenly, "it's my belief that all this turmoil we've had lately has been due to that comet thing we had last year. When I saw that great monster boiling up in the sky, getting more and more like a peacock's tail, I expected bad business. . . ."

"But that's wives' crack!" cried John.

"No, it isn't, John," the old man insisted. "A peacock's feather always was unlucky and always will be. Didn't the queen lose her man? And then, didn't we have the disaster? If the thing didn't come with ill-luck it didn't come with good."

"Maybe it just happened," said John.

"Just happened! Everything has a reason, man! I tell ye, it came because it had a reason. Bad luck was its reason, ye mark my words."

When he saw that his proposed discussion on the comet of 1861 had failed, Widdas Lott prepared to go.

"Oh, by the way," said John. "When ye see our Simpson tell him the old man's about done for, will ye?"

"There, see," he called out triumphantly. "That comet! I tell ye. It brings bad luck all our days."

"Ye might tell Simpson to call and see his father," John said as the old man walked away.

"I'll tell him."

That Wednesday, arrayed in all the masculine finery of the village of Higrole, John Akers walked with the vicar across the field path to Auckland. And as he walked he taught Henry Rylands much that he did not know about the land.

Never did a finer man enter the castle than John. He had upon his head the high silk hat which Joe Irwin, the undertaker, always wore at funerals. The long, black frock coat belonged to Robert Metcalf, a recent purchase. Widdas Lott's collar had proved to be of no earthly value, and John Raine had been obliged to take his correct neck measurement and supply him with a collar that did fit, but the cravat and the tie pin were the old manager's. Bill Thompson's fancy waistcoat cuddled him like a strong and passionate girl. As no one had possessed a pair of trousers that would fit him, he had been forced to wear his own. If they were the shabbiest, they were at least the most comfortable part of his apparel. John Raine had supplied the boots, and as these obliterated his worsted socks it did not greatly matter. As for gloves, that was where John had asserted himself. He did not wear gloves.

The high silk hat was perched perilously upon John's head, and when he got out into the fields he took it off and carried it, replacing it when they neared Auckland. A woman could not have balanced a pitcher on her head with the care John bestowed upon that hat.

They walked through the market-place and awaited the pleasure of the gate keeper. He opened the small gate near the lodge and they passed through and walked towards the ivy-clad, turreted castle. And then John Akers was ushered into a world so magnificent and so unreal that he was unable to supply Jenny with a full and coherent account of what happened after that. To her it was life's greatest disappointment that he never told her *everything*.

From footman to footman they were passed and eventually the bishop greeted them in his study.

"I am glad to meet you, Mister Akers," he said in his warm, soft voice.

John took the frail, white hand and gazed into the man's face. "And I'm proud to meet you, too," he said.

John had never been in a library before. His idea of "a lot of books" was the pile of hymn books in the vestry of the chapel which the choir used. This was a revelation. He gazed at the volumes as they stood in countless rows, each with their gilt lettering glittering down their spines, in awe and wonder. He was so fascinated that he did not hear the bishop speak. The chair which Rylands pushed up to him and into which he sat enfolded him in a soft comfort that was reminiscent of a long "lie" in bed on a Sunday morning.

"As I was saying, Mister Akers . . ."

He came to with a start. "I didn't catch what you were saying," he said, without offering an apology for his inattention.

"I was saying that I am pleased to meet a man who played such a noble part in the terrible calamity at Hartley," the bishop went on. "I have often wondered why you and William Coulson were not made the recipients of some honor from the hands of our noble and most generous queen." He saw John's eyes light up with pleasure, and he hastened to add: "But, you must understand, our gracious sovereign is at this moment sorely bereaved. I am sure that in ordinary circumstances she would not have hesitated to. . . ."

"Widdered, isn't she?" John put in sympathetically. "She did lose her man, eh?" He pondered. "Some time back, wasn't it?"

Bishop Baring repressed a smile. "The late prince consort," he said, "can never be replaced in the af-

fection of the queen and, I think, her subjects."

"He wasn't a great age, was he?"

"No, not a great age. But of this I am certain: it will appreciably shorten her life."

"Aye!" said John feelingly. "It's a blow for a woman to lose her man. The breadwinner, ye ken? Now, the women I've seen widdered in my time, why . . . it's nobody's business. And how they bring up their families I never have come to find out. But they get up somehow." His eyes brightened. "But how could she have come to know about me and Bill Coulson?" he asked eagerly.

"Despite her bereavement, she took a great interest in the noble work performed at Hartley," the bishop hastened to assure him.

John turned to Rylands with a triumphant smile. "There, see?" he said. "Ye never know who's watching you, do you? That's what I always tell my lads. Ye get on with your work, ye never know what'll come of it. Somebody might notice."

Just then a gong sent a mellow note ringing through the room and as the three men rose, the bishop said:

"Coulson was unable to come tonight."

The rest of the evening passed as in a dream before John Akers. He was piloted through an oaken door into another room where sat three ladies, one about the bishop's age and two much younger, and a man dressed in clerical clothes, who rose to greet the three arrivals.

John mumbled something in reply to the formal introductions. He did not bend over the daintily outstretched hands of the women, but grasped them and wrung them heartily. He gazed with surprised interest at their visible and highly corsetted breasts. He had never been in such close contact with such nakedness in all his adult life, and yet, although he did not admit it to Jenny, he did not find it displeasing. On the contrary.

"So you are John Akers," exclaimed the old lady. "How often have I heard your praises sung!"

"Me . . . ma'am! But there's nowt wonderful about me!"

She tossed a gay laugh into his face. "Ah!" she cried. "That is not for you to say, now is it?"

A flunkey spoke from a doorway and they passed in to dinner.

John never forgot that dinner. He never thought that a meal could be carried out with such decorum, with such utter rules of nicety, with so flagrant a disregard of time, be so interminable and so deadly dull.

"We had soup," he told Jenny that night. "Ay, we had soup, and what's tha think? We had it in a plate.'"

"But ye have soup in a basin," she exclaimed in horror.

"We had this soup in a plate," he insisted.

"Maybe it was a special kind o' soup," she conceded.

"Didn't taste special to me," he averred.

"What else had ye?"

"Fish, but ye could've put it all in my hollow tooth! The weeniest bit, an' then we had some mutton and a few vegetables. Nowt much, lass, but the dishes they used was nobody's business, if ye ask me. There was a man ahint me all the time, all dressed up. 'Any more, sir?' he says. 'If ye've got any to spare,' I says. I was real glad there was bread on the table to help fill up with."

"What else did ye have, Jack? Go on, tell us."

"A lot o' clart. Sweet, they called it. I'd a' liked one o' thy rice puddings, but they didn't feed us with a man's meat." He sighed deeply. "No wonder they cannot

preach the way they eat," he soliloquized.

It was after dinner that John Akers smoked his first cigar, and he thoroughly enjoyed the experience. He determined that he would enjoy such a privilege as often as he could, for when he compared it with the thin twist he had smoked for years he knew that he had been denied one of the good things of the earth.

The wine he drank lifted him beyond the level of his own existence, and by the time the men were ready to rejoin the ladies he needed very little cajoling into telling them the story of the disaster and the rescue. The company listened, enthralled by his story, and marveling at his aptitude in story-telling. The almost naked ladies shuddered as he described the falling water.

"Didn't it hurt?" one asked in a voice the very beauty of which stilled his tongue.

"I don't understand," he said with some surprise.

"That horrible, cold water. Did it not hurt you falling from such a height?"

John did not smile. "There's many a heavier thing than a drop o' water hits a man when he's working in a shaft, ma'am," he assured her. "Water, ye see, isn't as solid as some things I could name."

Once more he gathered up the threads of his story and again the disaster flooded in upon their imaginations. They were glad when the recital ended.

Into the silence which followed came the voice of the bishop.

"So you see, my dears," he said, "how justified I was in going on that pilgrimage. I did what I could to help," he went on, turning to John. "I think I did my best."

"Ye did that, sir," said John heartily.

And when his visitors had gone and the ladies had retired the bishop went into his study. He had his sermon to prepare, for he was preaching in St Paul's Cathedral the following Sunday week. The ladies were growing excited about the visit already. There were friends to meet and clothes to buy. He knew that he must be a success.

But the bishop's thoughts strayed. The noble fellow who had entertained them with his story of an endurance so heroically sustained as to remain a treasure of men so long as life lasted upon earth had disturbed him profoundly. He found himself listening to the echo of that voice as it had replied to his question about the adequacy of the wages he had received.

"What! Five pounds, sir! Why, five pounds is a grand wage, more than we ever earn in the pit!"

He knew that he would never forget that statement. It was so utterly thankful, so redolent of gratitude. His mind wandered. Now, just where was that quotation? Was it in Burke? Yes, it was Burke.

He went to the bookshelves and selected a lovely volume of that magniloquent orator's works, opened it and searched diligently for the quotation. Why had he forgotten to mark the page? It was so clinching in a peroration.

Ah!

He traced the page with his finger and then slowly he began to read aloud:

"We ought manfully to resist the very first idea . . . that it is within the competence of Government . . . to supply to the poor those necessaries which it has pleased Divine Providence for a while to withhold from them."

He closed the book and smiled, and there was unutterable gentleness in his face, for gentleness and

bitterness never find a common lodging in a smile.

The excitement following upon John Akers' dinner with the bishop lived its brief hour and departed into the storehouse of the people's memory. John returned the borrowed articles and expressed his thanks to all the donors in his own dour manner.

"It's a great hat, that," said Joe Irwin, running the sleeve of his coat affectionately over the crown. "It's seen a lot o' things, Jack, that hat has." He held it at arm's length. "If that hat could talk," he went on, "it could tell a bonny tale, believe me . . ."

"I wouldn't dispute that, Joe," said John, "for if that hat could laugh it would split its sides at the way I had to balance it on my head. Folks thought I'd gone looney! And what with them shoes John Raine lent me . . ."

"What happened?"

"They just about had me crippled, that's all. Took all th' enjoyment out o' my night wi' the bishop, they did."

Joe's face took on its most funereal expression. "Pride's very painful, John," he said.

"Thou and John Raine ought to know," John acquiesced readily.

After that the days wore on over the coal-field and there came tidings of the union being built up rather laboriously, but successfully. The work of Tommy Ramsay was bearing fruit, and men were stepping forward to reap where he had sown. William Crawford left his secretaryship of a new cooperative store across the Tyne to take charge and head a line of men reaching down to this day whose demagogy is rooted deeply in political innocence.

The focus of the organization was Sunnybank, and as the year 1862 melted into 1863 preparations went on for a struggle that was to become heroic by reason of its utter vulgarity and ruthlessness.

The most famous strike in the history of Durham commenced in the October of that year.

October is generally bitter in Durham. It is a time when the rain falls and when the winds leap out of the north-east and beat against the fretful abodes of the miners with extra keenness.

Thomas Love acted with promptitude. He caused all the miners in his employ to note that if they persisted in their membership of the union they could expect drastic action. What that action would be all at Sunnybank knew. It would be eviction.

But Love had a first card to play. He caused twelve men whom he had marked as the leaders of the revolt to be arrested, and in order to make the lesson more salutary he had them arrested at night. The Durham leaders were prepared for that, and early the next morning, when the men appeared before the magistrates, Love was surprised to find a solicitor rise in their defense. An acquittal was obtained.

"I'm not beaten yet," he shouted as the men left the court.

When he got home he sent for his bailiff.

"Yes, sir?" said that creature.

"I'll show them," Thomas Love stormed, "I'll show them! I'll let this county know that Thomas Love is a fighter! When they deal with Thomas Love they are dealing with a man."

"It's bad this strike," observed the bailiff.

"Hold your tongue!" Love screamed. "I'll do all the speaking here. Make me look a clown before the court, would they? Well, I'll make them look elsewhere for their homes, see?"

"Yes, sir."

"I'll teach them!" He suddenly became quieter. "You will get ready to carry out an eviction order," he said.

"An eviction, sir?"

He was still calm. "You are not deaf by any chance?" he sneered. "Yes, I said an eviction. Every man, woman and child, old and young, able and unable, in my property in all the pits that are on strike against me will be . . . must be . . . evicted. You hear me?"

"Every one, sir?"

"Every one."

"When would you like me to begin, sir?"

"You must be ready with your men and the police to carry out the eviction . . . or start it . . . by the twenty-seventh . . ."

"Of this month?"

"Yes, of this month, October. The worse the month the better the lesson, or the bitterer the lesson. Have it your own way. You will start at Sunnybank."

"Where will I get the men, sir?"

"What do I care where you get the men?" he cried. "Are there not plenty of lodging houses in Gateshead and Newcastle? Hire the men, can't you?"

"Yes, sir," said the bailiff.

The striking miners were given notice to quit their dwellings on October 27 and the day following that the evictions were begun.

October 28, 1863, is a day which remains as black as pitch upon the noble history of Durham county, a county which breathes the very story of England's development, a tale that is wistful of love and mindful of heroism as any upon the face of the earth, where men performed cruel deeds upon women and children because they felt that they must.

It was a raw, foggy, bitterly cold day when the police and the off-scourings of the common lodging houses of the Tyne towns marched into the wretched village at seven and began the eviction of the miserable wretches who dwelt there. Furniture and human beings were unceremoniously bundled through the doorways on to the unpaved streets. Soon bloody battle was enjoined and open warfare raged up and down those dreadful streets. The news spread and the miners from round about gathered to help in the battle. Reinforcements arrived and the work went on. By nightfall thirty-seven houses had been cleared.

The police saw to it that help was not forthcoming to the evicted from those yet to be turned out, but in their compassion they allowed the poor people to cart their furniture into the water-logged field nearby and raise an unroofed stockade. And there, under the pitiless October sky that lay across the dome of heaven black with a curtain of fog, the evicted people stayed.

All the next day the cruel work went on, and when Sunnybank was denuded of its inhabitants, a fresh start was made at another colliery up the hill, at Okenshaw.

After four days the authorities stopped the vengeance of Thomas Love. While agreeing that those evicted must remain outside their homes they forbade any further despoiling of the miners' domiciles.

The strike lengthened after that, and finally petered out, and the evicted wandered aimlessly about the country seeking work and finally disappearing into other shafts.

But the crime of Thomas Love accomplished two things. It made secure the foundations of the Durham Miners' Association, and it execrated over the country the form of religion which he practised.

While Thomas Love saw that

none of those whom he had turned out of his property would ever return to work in his mines, he did not foresee that soon the Durham Miners' Association, in company with other organizations, would force the government to concede to the miners the right to appoint a person to check the weighing of the coal at the pit head.

And the next time William Crawford, Nicholas Wilkinson and Tommy Ramsay called a mass meeting at Bishop Auckland John Akers walked in the procession with his sons, and it was a comely sight, for John Akers and his sons made a picture which men treasured in their memories.

As they returned home over the fields John glanced shyly at George, and said:

"It's been a grand meeting, George. No daftness, tha kens. Now, I think, lad, a strong union guided by good men and true might do us all a power o' good and raise us up."

George merely smiled. The opposition had gone. His father was one of the men.

He hurried home, took his rod and went down to the river. He could reflect more deeply by the side of the river when the night was dark. He had not yet found a woman to whom he could take his soul, and so he spoke his inner thoughts to the river as it tinkled over the stones. He reflected that his father had been profoundly touched by the cruelty of the people who had evicted his comrades whose very poverty had forced them to revolt against an outrageously tyrannical man who was just then writing angry replies to the letters of angry people in the newspapers.

He baited his hook at the mill dam and flicked it into the water then laying the rod on the sward he sank on to his unkers and lit his pipe, shielding his match behind his coat. When it was going to his liking he raised his young face to the sky and smiled.

"And raise us up," he whispered.

THE 35th ANNIVERSARY OF CHEKHOV'S DEATH

ANTON CHEKHOV

At the furthest end of the village of Mironositskoye some belated sportsmen lodged for the night in the elder Prokofy's barn. There were two of them, the veterinary surgeon Ivan Ivanovich and the schoolmaster Burkin. Ivan Ivanovich had a rather strange double-barrelled surname—Chimsha-Himalaisky—which did not suit him at all, and he was called simply Ivan Ivanovich all over the province. He lived at a stud-farm near the town, and had come out shooting now to get a breath of fresh air. Burkin, the high-school teacher, stayed every summer at Count P——'s, and had been thoroughly at home in this district for years.

They did not sleep. Ivan Ivanovich, a tall, lean old fellow with long mustaches, was sitting outside the door, smoking a pipe in the moonlight. Burkin was lying within on the hay, and could not be seen in the darkness.

They were telling each other all sorts of stories. Among other things, they spoke of the fact that the elder's wife, Mavra, a healthy and by no means stupid woman, had never been beyond her native village, had never seen a town or a railway in her life, and had spent the last ten years sitting behind the stove, and only at night going out into the street.

"What is there wonderful in that!" said Burkin. "There are plenty of people in the world, solitary by temperament, who try to retreat into their shell like a hermit crab or a snail. Perhaps it is an instance of atavism, a return to the period when the ancestor of man was not yet a social animal and lived alone in his den, or perhaps it is only one of the diversities of human character—who knows? I am not a natural science man, and it is not my business to settle such questions; I only mean to say that people like Mavra are not uncommon. There is no need to look far; two months ago a man called Byelikov, a colleague of mine, the Greek master, died in our town. You have heard of him, no doubt. He was remarkable for always wearing goloshes and a warm wadded coat, and carrying an umbrella even in the finest weather. And his umbrella was in a case, and his watch was in a case made of grey chamois leather, and when he took out his penknife to sharpen his pencil, his penknife, too, was in a little case; and his face seemed to be in a case, too, because he always hid it, in his turned-up collar. He wore dark spectacles and

flannel vests, stuffed up his ears with cotton wool, and when he got into a cab always told the driver to put up the hood. In short, the man displayed a constant and insurmountable impulse to wrap himself up in a covering, to make himself, so to speak, a case which would isolate him and protect him from external influences. Reality irritated him, frightened him, kept him in continual agitation, and, perhaps to justify his timidity, his aversion for the actual, he always praised the past and what had never existed; and even the classical languages which he taught were in reality for him goloshes and umbrella in which he sheltered himself from real life.

" 'Oh, how sonorous, how beautiful is the Greek language!' he would say, with a sugary expression; and as though to prove his words he would screw up his eyes and, raising his finger, would pronounce 'Anthropos!'

"And Byelikov tried to hide his thoughts also in a case. The only things that were clear to his mind were government circulars and newspaper articles in which something was forbidden. When some proclamation prohibited the boys from going out into the streets after nine o'clock in the evening, or some article declared carnal love unlawful, it was to his mind clear and definite: it was forbidden, and that was enough. For him there was always a doubtful element, something vague and not fully expressed, in any sanction or permission. When a dramatic club or a reading room or a tea-shop was licensed in the town, he would shake his head and say softly:

" 'It is all right, of course; it is all very nice, but I hope it won't lead to anything!'

"Every sort of breach of order, deviation or departure from rule, depressed him, though one would have thought it was no business of his. If one of his colleagues was late for church or if rumors reached him of some prank of the high-school boys, or if one of the mistresses was seen late in the evening in the company of an officer, he was much disturbed and said he hoped that nothing would come of it. At the teachers' meetings he simply oppressed us with his caution, his circumspection, and his characteristic reflection on the ill-behavior of the young people in both male and female high-schools, the uproar in the classes. . . .

"Oh, he hoped it would not reach the ear of the authorities; oh, he hoped nothing would come of it; and he thought it would be a very good thing if Petrov were expelled from the second class and Yegorov from the fourth. And, do you know, by his sighs, his despondency, his black spectacles on his pale little face, a little face like a pole-cat's, you know, he crushed us all and we gave way, reduced Petrov's and Yegorov's marks for conduct, kept them in, and in the end expelled them both. He had a strange habit of visiting our lodgings. He would come to a teacher's, would sit down, and remain silent, as though he were carefully inspecting something. He would sit like this in silence for an hour or two and then go away. This he called 'maintaining good relations with his colleagues'; and it was obvious that coming to see us and sitting there were tiresome to him, and that he came to see us simply because he considered it his duty as our colleague. We teachers were afraid of him. And even the headmaster was afraid of him. Would you believe it, our teachers were all intellectual, right-minded people, brought up on Turgenev and Shchedrin, yet this little chap, who always went about with goloshes and an umbrella, had the whole high-school under his thumb for fifteen long years! High-school, indeed—he

had the whole town under his thumb! Our ladies did not get up private theatricals on Saturdays for fear he should hear of it, and the clergy dared not eat meat or play cards in his presence. Under the influence of people like Byelikov we have got into the way of being afraid of everything in our town for the last ten or fifteen years. They are afraid to speak aloud, afraid to send letters, afraid to make acquaintance, afraid to read books, afraid to help the poor, to teach people to read and write. . . ."

Ivan Ivanovich cleared his throat, meaning to say something, but first lighted his pipe, gazed at the moon, and then said, with pauses:

"Yes, intellectual, right-minded people read Shchedrin and Turgenev, Buckle and all the rest of them, yet they knocked under and put up with it . . . that's just how it is."

"Byelikov lived in the same house as I did," Burkin went on, "on the same story, his door facing mine; we often saw each other, and I knew how he lived when he was at home. And at home it was the same story: dressing-gown, nightcap, blinds, bolts, a perfect succession of prohibitions and restrictions of all sorts, and—'Oh, I hope nothing will come of it!' Lenten fare was bad for him, yet he could not eat meat, as people might perhaps say Byelikov did not keep the fasts, and he ate fresh-water fish with butter—not a Lenten dish, yet one could not say that it was meat. He did not keep a female servant for fear people might think evil of him, but had as cook an old man of sixty, Afanasy, half-witted and given to tippling, who had once been an officer's servant and could cook after a fashion. This Afanasy was usually standing at the door with his arms folded; with a deep sigh, he would mutter always the same thing:

" 'There are plenty of *them* about nowadays!'

"Byelikov had a little bedroom like a box; his bed had curtains. When he went to bed he covered his head over; it was hot and stuffy; the wind battered on the closed doors; there was a droning noise in the stove and a sound of sighs from the kitchen—ominous sighs. . . And he felt frightened under the bedclothes. He was afraid that something might happen, that Afanasy might murder him, that thieves might break in, and so he had troubled dreams all night, and in the morning, when we went together to the high-school, he was depressed and pale, and it was evident that the high-school full of people excited dread and aversion in his whole being, and that to walk beside me was irksome to a man of his solitary temperament.

" 'They make a great noise in our classes,' he used to say, as though trying to find an explanation of his depression. 'It's beyond everything.'

"And the Greek master, this man in a case—would you believe it?—almost got married."

Ivan Ivanovich glanced quickly into the barn, and said:

"You are joking!"

"Yes, strange as it seems, he almost got married. A new teacher of history and geography, Mikhail Savvich Kovalenko, a Ukrainian, was appointed. He came, not alone, but with his sister Varinka. He was a tall, dark young man with huge hands, and one could see from his face he had a bass voice, and, in fact, he had a voice that seemed to come out of a barrel—'boom, boom, boom!' And she was not so young, about thirty, but she, too, was tall, well-made, with black eyebrows and red cheeks—in fact, she was a regular sugar-plum, and so sprightly, so noisy, she was always singing Ukrainian songs and laughing. For the least thing she would go off into a ringing laugh—'Ha-ha-ha!' We made our

first thorough acquaintance with the Kovalenkos at the headmaster's name-day party. Among the glum and intensely bored teachers who came even to the name-day party as a duty we suddenly saw a new Aphrodite risen from the waves; she walked with her arms akimbo, laughed, sang, danced. . . . She sang with feeling *The Winds Do Blow*, then another song, and another, and she fascinated us all—all, even Byelikov. He sat down by her and said with a honeyed smile:

"'The Ukrainian reminds one of the ancient Greek in its softness and agreeable resonance.'

"That flattered her, and she began telling him with feeling and earnestness that they had a farm in the Gadyachsky district, and that her mamma lived at the farm, and that they had such pears, such melons, such *kabaks!* The Ukrainians call pumpkins *kabaks* (*i.e.* pothouses), while their pothouses they call *shinki*, and they make beetroot soup with tomatoes and aubergines in it, 'which was so nice—awfully nice!'

"We listened and listened, and suddenly the same idea dawned upon us all:

"'It would be a good thing to make a match of it,' the headmaster's wife said to me softly.

"We all for some reason recalled the fact that our friend Byelikov was not married, and it now seemed to us strange that we had hitherto failed to observe, and had in fact completely lost sight of, a detail so important in his life. What was his attitude to a woman? How had he settled this vital question for himself? This had not interested us in the least till then; perhaps we had not even admitted the idea that a man who went out in all weathers in goloshes and slept under curtains could be in love.

"'He is a good deal over forty and she is thirty,' the headmaster's wife went on, developing her idea. 'I believe she would marry him.'

"All sorts of things are done in the provinces through boredom, all sorts of unnecessary and nonsensical things! And that is because what is necessary is not done at all. What need was there, for instance, for us to make a match for this Byelikov, whom one could not even imagine married? The headmaster's wife, the inspector's wife, and all our high-school ladies, grew livelier and even better-looking, as though they had suddenly found a new object in life. The headmaster's wife would take a box at the theater, and we beheld sitting in her box Varinka, with such a fan, beaming and happy, and beside her Byelikov, a little bent figure, looking as though he had been extracted from his house by pincers. I would give an evening party, and the ladies would insist on my inviting Byelikov and Varinka. In short the machine was set in motion. It appeared that Varinka was not averse to matrimony. She had not a very cheerful life with her brother; they could do nothing but quarrel and scold one another from morning till night. Here is a scene, for instance. Kovalenko would be coming along the street, a tall, sturdy young ruffian, in an embroidered shirt, his love-locks falling on his forehead under his cap, in one hand a bundle of books, in the other a thick knotted stick, followed by his sister, also with books in her hand.

"'But you haven't read it, Mikhalik!' she would be arguing loudly. 'I tell you, I swear you have not read it at all!'

"'And I tell you I have read it,' cries Kovalenko, thumping his stick on the pavement.

"'Oh, my goodness, Mikhalik, why are you so cross? We are arguing about principles.'

"'I tell you that I have read it!'

Kovalenko would shout, more loudly than ever.

"And at home, if there was an outsider present, there was sure to be a skirmish. Such a life must have been wearisome, and of course she must have longed for a home of her own. Besides, there was her age to be considered; there was no time left to pick and choose; it was a case of marrying anybody, even a Greek master. And, indeed, most of our young ladies don't mind whom they marry so long as they do get married. However that may be, Varinka began to show an unmistakeable partiality for Byelikov.

"And Byelikov? He used to visit Kovalenko just as he did us. He would arrive, sit down, and remain silent. He would sit quiet, and Varinka would sing to him *The Winds Do Blow*, or would look pensively at him with her dark eyes, or would suddenly go off into a peal—'Ha-ha-ha!'

"Suggestion plays a great part in love affairs, and still more in getting married. Everybody—both his colleagues and the ladies—began assuring Byelikov that he ought to get married, that there was nothing left for him in life but to get married; we all congratulated him, with solemn countenances delivered ourselves of various platitudes, such as 'Marriage is a serious step.' Besides, Varinka was good-looking and interesting; she was the daughter of a civil counsellor, and had a farm; and what was more, she was the first woman who had been warm and friendly in her manner towards him. His head was turned, and he decided that he really ought to get married."

"Well, at that point you ought to have taken away his goloshes and umbrella," said Ivan Ivanovich.

"Only fancy! That turned out to be impossible. He put Varinka's portrait on his table, kept coming to see me and talking about Varinka, and home life, saying marriage was a serious step. He was frequently at Kovalenko's but he did not alter his manner of life in the least; on the contrary, indeed, his determination to get married seemed to have a depressing effect on him. He grew thinner and paler, and seemed to retreat further and further into his case.

"'I like Varvara Savvishna,' he used to say to me, with a faint and wry smile, 'and I know that every one ought to get married, but . . . you know all this has happened so suddenly. . . . One must think a little.'

"'What is there to think over?' I used to say to him. 'Get married—that is all.'

"'No; marriage is a serious step. One must weigh the duties before one, the responsibilities . . . that nothing may go wrong afterwards. It worries me so much that I don't sleep at night. And I must confess I am afraid: her brother and she have a strange way of thinking; they look at things strangely, you know, and her disposition is very impetuous. One may get married, and then, there is no knowing, one may find oneself in an unpleasant position.'

"And he did not make an offer; he kept putting it off, to the great vexation of the headmaster's wife and all our ladies; he went on weighing his future duties and responsibilities, and meanwhile he went for a walk with Varinka almost every day—possibly he thought this was necessary in his position—and came to see me to talk about family life. And in all probability in the end he would have proposed to her, and would have made one of those stupid, unnecessary marriages such as are made by thousands among us from being bored and having nothing to do, if it had not been for a *kolossalische Skandal*. I must mention that Varinka's brother, Kovalenko, detested Byelikov from the first day

of their acquaintance, and could not endure him.

"'I don't understand,' he used to say to us, shrugging his shoulders —'I don't understand how you can put up with that sneak, that nasty phiz. Ugh! How can you live here! The atmosphere is stifling and unclean! Do you call yourselves schoolmasters, teachers? You are paltry government clerks. You keep, not a temple of science, but a department for red tape and loyal behavior, and it smells as sour as a police-station. No, my friends; I will stay with you for a while, and then I will go to my farm and there catch crabs and teach the Ukrainian children. I shall go, and you can stay here with your Judas—damn his soul!'

"Or he would laugh till he cried, first in a loud bass, then in a shrill, thin laugh and ask me, waving his hands: 'What does he sit here for? What does he want? He sits and stares.'

"He even gave Byelikov a nickname, 'The Spider.' And it will readily be understood that we avoided talking to him of his sister's being about to marry 'The Spider.'

"And on one occasion, when the headmaster's wife hinted to him what a good thing it would be to secure his sister's future with such a reliable, universally respected man as Byelikov, he frowned and muttered:

"'It's not my business; let her marry a reptile if she likes. I don't like meddling in other people's affairs.'

"Now hear what happened next. Some mischievous person draw a caricature of Byelikov walking along in his goloshes with his trousers tucked up, under his umbrella, with Varinka on his arm; below, the inscription 'Anthropos in love.' The expression was caught to a marvel, you know. The artist must have worked for more than one night, for the teachers of both the boys' and the girls' high-schools, the teachers of the seminary, the government officials, all received a copy. Byelikov received one, too. The caricature made a very painful impression on him.

"We went out together; it was the first of May, a Sunday, and all of us, the boys and the teachers, had agreed to meet at the high-school and then to go for a walk together to a wood beyond the town. We set off, and he was green in the face and gloomier than a storm cloud.

"'What wicked, ill-natured people there are!' he said, and his lips quivered.

"I felt sorry for him. We were walking along, and all of a sudden—would you believe it?—Kovalenko came bowling along on a bicycle, and after him, also on a bicycle, Varinka, flushed and exhausted, but good-humored and gay.

"'We are going on ahead,' she called. 'What lovely weather! Awfully lovely!'

"And they both disappeared from our sight. Byelikov turned white instead of green, and seemed petrified. He stopped short and stared at me. . . .

"'What is the meaning of it? Tell me, please!' he asked. 'Can my eyes have deceived me? Is it the proper thing for high-school masters and ladies to ride bicycles?'

"'What is there improper about it?' I said. 'Let them ride and enjoy themselves.'

"'But how can that be?' he cried, amazed at my calm. 'What are you saying?'

"And he was so shocked that he was unwilling to go on, and returned home.

"Next day he was continually twitching and nervously rubbing his hands, and it was evident from his face that he was unwell. And he left before his work was over, for the first time in his life. And he ate no dinner. Towards evening he wrapped himself up warmly, though

it was quite warm weather, and sallied out to the Kovalenkos'. Varinka was out; he found her brother, however.

"'Pray sit down,' said Kovalenko coldly, with a frown. His face looked sleepy; he had just had a nap after dinner, and was in a very bad humor.

"Byelikov sat in silence for ten minutes, and then began:

"'I have come to see you to relieve my mind. I am very, very much troubled. Some scurrilous fellow has drawn an absurd caricature of me and another person, in whom we are both deeply interested. I regard it as a duty to assure you that I have had no hand in it. . . . I have given no sort of ground for such ridicule—on the contrary, I have always behaved in every way like a gentleman.'

"Kovalenko sat sulky and silent. Byelikov waited a little, and went on slowly in a mournful voice:

"'And I have something else to say to you. I have been in the service for years, while you have only lately entered it, and I consider it my duty as an older colleague to give you a warning. You ride a bicycle, and that pastime is utterly unsuitable for an educator of youth.'

"'Why so?' asked Kovalenko in his bass.

"'Surely that needs no explanation, Mikhail Savvich—surely you can understand that? If the teacher rides a bicycle, what can you expect the pupils to do? You will have them walking on their heads next! And so long as there is no formal permission to do so, it is out of the question. I was horrified yesterday! When I saw your sister everything seemed dancing before my eyes. A lady or a young girl on a bicycle—it's awful!'

"'What is it you want, exactly?'

"'All I want is to warn you, Mikhail Savvich. You are a young man, you have a future before you, you must be very, very careful in your behavior, and you are so careless—oh, so careless! You go about in an embroidered shirt, are constantly seen in the street carrying books, and now the bicycle, too. The headmaster will learn that you and your sister ride the bicycle, and then it will reach the higher authorities. . . . Will that be a good thing?'

"'It's no business of anybody else if my sister and I do bicycle!' said Kovalenko, and he turned crimson. 'And damnation take anyone who meddles in my private affairs!'

"Byelikov turned pale and got up.

"'If you speak to me in that tone I cannot continue,' he said. 'And I beg you never to express yourself like that about our superiors in my presence; you ought to be respectful to the authorities.'

"'Why, have I said any harm of the authorities?' asked Kovalenko, looking at him wrathfully. 'Please leave me alone. I am an honest man, and do not care to talk to a gentleman like you. I don't like sneaks!'

"Byelikov flew into a nervous flutter, and began hurriedly putting on his coat, with an expression of horror on his face. It was the first time in his life he had been spoken to so rudely.

"'You can say what you please,' he said, as he went out from the entry to the landing on the staircase. 'I ought only to warn you: Possibly some one may have overheard us, and that our conversation may not be misunderstood, and harm come of it, I shall be compelled to inform our headmaster of it . . . in its main features. I am bound to do so.'

"'Inform him? You can go and make your report!'

"Kovalenko seized him from behind the collar and gave him a push, and Byelikov rolled down the stairs, thudding with his goloshes. The staircase was high and steep, but he rolled to the bottom unhurt, got up, and touched his nose to see

whether his spectacles were all right. But just as he was falling down the stairs Varinka came in, and with her two ladies; they stood below staring, and to Byelikov this was more terrible than anything. I believe he would rather have broken his neck or both legs than been an object of ridicule. Why, now the whole town would hear of it; it would come to the headmaster's ears, and would reach the higher authorities—oh, it must lead to something! There would be another caricature, and it would all end in his being asked to resign his post. . . .

"When he got up, Varinka recognized him, and, looking at his ridiculous face, his crumpled overcoat, and his goloshes, not understanding what had happened and supposing that he had slipped down by accident, could not restrain herself, and laughed loud enough to be heard by all the flats:

" 'Ha-ha-ha!'

"And this pealing, ringing 'Ha ha-ha!' was the last straw that put an end to everything: to the proposed match and to Byelikov's earthly existence. He did not hear what Varinka said to him; he saw nothing. On reaching home, the first thing he did was to remove her portrait from the table; then he went to bed, and he never got up again.

"Three days later Afanasy came to me and asked whether we should not send for the doctor, as there was something wrong with his master. I went in to Byelikov. He lay silent behind the curtain, covered with a quilt; if one asked him a question, he said 'Yes' or 'No' and not another sound. He lay there while Afanasy, gloomy and scowling, hovered about him, sighing heavily, and smelling like a pothouse.

"A month later Byelikov died. We all went to his funeral—that is, both the high-schools and the seminary. Now when he was lying in his coffin his expression was mild, agreeable, even cheerful, as though he were glad that he had at last been put into a case which he would never leave again. Yes, he had attained his ideal! And, as though in his honor, it was dull, rainy weather on the day of his funeral, and we all wore goloshes and took our umbrellas. Varinka, too, was at the funeral, and when the coffin was lowered into the grave she burst into tears. I have noticed that Ukrainian women are always laughing or crying—no intermediate mood.

"One must confess that to bury people like Byelikov is a great pleasure. As we were returning from the cemetery we wore discreet Lenten faces; no one wanted to display his feeling of pleasure—a feeling that we had experienced long, long ago as children when our elders had gone out and we ran about the garden for an hour or two, enjoying complete freedom. Ah, freedom, freedom! The merest hint, the merest hope of its possibility gives wings to the soul, does it not?

"We returned from the cemetery in good humor. But not more than a week had passed before life went on as in the past, as gloomy, oppressive and senseless—a life not forbidden by government prohibition, but not fully permitted, either: it was no better. And, indeed, though we had buried Byelikov, how many such men in cases were left, how many more of them will there be!"

"That's just how it is," said Ivan Ivanovich, and he lighted his pipe.

"How many more of them there will be!" repeated Burkin.

The schoolmaster came out of the barn. He was a short, stout man completely bald, with a black beard down to his waist. The two dogs came out with him.

"What a moon!" he said, looking upwards.

It was midnight. On the right could be seen the whole village, a

long street stretching far away for four miles. All was buried in a deep, silent slumber; not a movement, not a sound; one could hardly believe that nature could be so still. When on a moonlight night you see a broad village street, with its cottages, haystacks, and slumbering willows, a feeling of calm comes over the soul; in this peace, wrapped away from care, toil, and sorrow in the darkness of night, it is mild, melancholy, beautiful; and it seems as though the stars look down upon it kindly and with tenderness, as though there were no evil on earth and all were well. On the left the open country began from the end of the village; it could be seen stretching far away to the horizon, and there was no movement, no sound in that whole expanse bathed in moonlight.

"Yes, that is just how it is," repeated Ivan Ivanovich; "and isn't our living in town, airless and crowded, our writing useless papers, our playing *vint*—isn't that all a sort of case for us? And our spending our whole lives among trivial, fussy men and silly, idle women, our talking and our listening to all sorts of nonsense—isn't that a case for us, too? If you like, I will tell you a very edifying story."

"No; it's time we were asleep," said Burkin. "Tell it tomorrow."

They went into the barn and lay down on the hay. And they were both covered up and beginning to doze when they suddenly heard light footsteps—patter, patter. . . . Some one was walking not far from the barn, walking a little and stopping, and a minute later, patter, patter again. . . . The dogs began growling.

"That's Mavra," said Burkin.

The footsteps died away.

"You see and hear that they lie," said Ivan Ivanovich, turning over on the other side, "and they call you a fool for putting up with their lying. You endure insult and humiliation, and dare not openly say that you are on the side of the honest and the free, and you lie and smile yourself; and all that for the sake of a crust of bread, for the sake of a warm corner, for the sake of a wretched little worthless rank in the service. No, one can't go on living like this."

"Well, you are off on another tack now, Ivan Ivanovich," said the schoolmaster. "Let us go to sleep!"

And ten minutes later Burkin was asleep. But Ivan Ivanovich kept sighing and turning over from side to side; then he got up, went outside again, and sitting in the doorway, lighted his pipe.

Chekhov's Story on the Soviet Screen

The Film and *à propos* of the Film

The adaptation of well-known novels for stage or screen is common enough the world over. But probably nowhere are such strict demands for the utmost faithfulness to the work under adaptation put forward by public opinion, audiences and workers in all spheres of art as in the Soviet Union. Anything like a careless, superficial treatment of a classical work meets with the most outspoken and determined criticism. A recent example is the adaptation for the stage of Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* shown this summer by the Kursk theatrical company (one of the largest provincial theaters) during a tour in Moscow. The audience became suspicious immediately after the curtain fell on the very first of the twenty-one scenes in this adaptation. Slight dissatisfaction turned into boredom, rapidly transformed into irritation and indignation. And the next day *Pravda* said in a review: "The play, constructed largely on the development of the external plot of the novel, ultimately degenerated into a tale of trivial adultery. . . . Sensational 'action' and the spouting of the actors, which never touched the audience, could not make up for the lack of the penetrating and profound human truth of Flaubert's novel." The critic ended his article with an expression of astonishment that a theater could have chosen such a production for showing in Moscow.

Such failures, however, are exceptions. Quite a number of plays in Moscow theaters are founded upon great works of world literature. *The Pickwick Club* in the Art Theater, and *Eugene Grandet* in the Maly Theater were well received by the press and public and remained in the repertoire a long time. And it would be easy to find many examples of such successful adaptations of literary works.

Two films are at present being shown in Soviet cinemas for which works by two of the greatest Russian writers of the preceding century have been used. We are speaking of *The Fair of Sorochintsi* and *The Man in a Case*, based upon the works of Gogol and Chekhov bearing the same names. These two films enable us to see two approaches, radically differing from one another, to the screening of a literary work. The producer of *The Fair of Sorochintsi*, Regisseur Ekk, is well known as the pioneer of Soviet color films. One of his productions, *The Nightingale's Song*, or *Grunya Kornakova*, was extremely popular with Soviet audiences. His last work, *The Fair of Sorochintsi*, met with a less spontaneous welcome. This is quite natural, for here Ekk strove primarily for external effect and the play of colors rather than for faithfulness to the spirit and idea of the story. This gives rise to faltering in the development of the action, to the overloading of the picture with scenic and landscape stills, and to the failure to penetrate into the psychology of the characters. All this somewhat removes the film from Gogol's idea, which does not get a sufficiently artistic exposition on the screen.

The Man in a Case is quite different. The importance of this picture consists first and foremost in the fact that it was made for the thirty-fifth anniversary of Chekhov's death. There are few names in Russian literature, rich as it is with the names of world-famous writers, which are dearer to our readers than the name of Chekhov. The gift of satire is a rare one. Chekhov possessed this art to perfection. His well-known story, *The Man in a Case*, acquired special popularity in the Soviet Union since the leader of the Soviet people, Stalin, utilized it for satirical purposes in one of his speeches. One of the characteristic features of Lenin and Stalin is the ability to make brilliant use of the weapon of satire and humor for the ridiculing and destruction of their foes. They have used the weapon of Juvenal with telling effect. The great significance attributed in the classics of Marxism to this form of weapon is

well seen in the following extract from a letter written by Engels in 1883 regarding the successful struggle of the German workers of that day against the police: "This struggle is being carried on continually and everywhere with the utmost success and, what is best of all, with great humor. The police are being at once conquered and ridiculed." And Engels remarked that he considered this form of struggle especially useful in the given situation, since it fostered in youth an "unrelenting contempt of the foe."

The above considerations show how responsible was the task before the producers of the film, *The Man in a Case*. And it must be admitted that they have coped with their task successfully enough. The extent to which the authors of the scenario and the actors taking part in the picture have understood Chekhov's ideas and the characters of his personages may be a matter for controversy, but there can be no denying the fact that their whole attention has been concentrated on the task of keeping as close as possible to the original, thus aiding the Soviet audiences of today to form a vivid picture of tsarist Russia during the last ten years of the nineteenth century.

Some critics, Alexei Kapler, for instance (author of the scenario of *Lenin in 1918*, recently published in this magazine), consider that N. Khmelev, of the Art Theater, distorts the character and external appearance of the hero of the story, Byelikov. Writing in *Pravda*, Kapler says: "Byelikov, that petty, cowardly creature, afraid of everything, is, despite his worthlessness, a terrible and tragic figure in the corrupt atmosphere of tsarist Russia. Instead of showing this, Khmelev presents a kind of sadist, feared by those around him because he embodies the power of the state machinery for oppression."

The proper representation of Byelikov is undoubtedly of prime importance for a general appraisal of the picture, but, whether Kapler is right or not, it must be frankly admitted that the film as a whole is a successful product of Soviet cinematography.

The well-known English novelist, Sylvia Townsend Warner, in a letter to this journal about *Second Lieutenant Also*, recently printed by us, said that this story seemed to her an excellent example of the use of satire, to which she herself attributes the utmost importance. According to her letter, she had considered that Left writers ought to make more use of irony and satire, the more that the proletariat knows how to appreciate irony, the love of which is its characteristic feature. On the other hand, she writes, irony and satire are sharp weapons; they need to be wielded by a hand at once strong and light, only then will they be effectively used.

It seems to us that Sylvia Townsend Warner's last words apply to the producers of *The Man in a Case*. This satire goes home like well-aimed gunfire, flying lightly and unnoticed, but dealing destruction to the enemy. The picture shows a little corner of the life of tsarist Russia, and shows it in such a manner that the film becomes a symbolic image of the gloomy, dank and suffocating dungeons into which the autocracy then transformed Russia. The screening of Chekhov's story has been very subtly done. Wherever there is the slightest possibility Chekhov's own words have been used in the film. Chekhov's humor

People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. N. Khmelev as Byelikov

Honored Artist of the R.S.F.S.R. M. Zharov as Kovalenko

has been jealously preserved, and no small credit for this must be given to the actors. The most successful of all are the figures of the teacher Kovalenko and his sister Varinka. Zharov, who plays the part of Kovalenko, has an incomparable gift for gaining the sympathy of his audience. In a very short time the audience is in love with the character and follows the development of the action eagerly.

The story itself did not provide the producer of the picture, I. Annensky, with sufficient material for the complete presentation of the image of Kovalenko, as an advanced man, a progressive teacher, unwilling to reconcile himself to the vulgarity, triviality and dull submission and servility of his fellow teachers, who actually tremble before authority no less than Byelikov himself. The producer and the actors interpreting these teachers have managed to convey vividly the way in which even the teachers in privileged schools, such as were the gymnasiums under tsarism, were a veritable set of wild beasts. This chamber of horrors seems to include every variety of human vice. Here are frank baseness, hypocritical villains, pharisaically covering unsavory deeds of all sorts with lofty utterances. The character of the director of the gymnasium, in whose person the authors of the picture aptly satirise a loathsome type not seldom to be met with among the bourgeois intellectuals in tsarist Russia, is especially successful. He is next-of-kin to the liberal intellectual who, as Saltykov-Shchedrin showed long before Chekhov, begins by acting "within reason," quickly slipping in practice to "adapting himself to baseness."

A brief dialogue between the director of the gymnasium and Kovalenko skillfully exposes the essential baseness of this veritable liberal. A part of this dialogue may be quoted as an example of the successful transmission of Chekhov's literary methods of humor in the corresponding idiom of the film. The director remembers how, in his youth, he was once actually arrested for a few days for too much freedom of expression and taken to the lavatory under convoy by (oh, horror!) a common soldier. "There I understood everything," says the director significantly, meaning the pointlessness, from his point of view, not only of struggling, but even of dreaming of any sort of better life. "There? Where?" Kovalenko interrupts, and the audience breaks out into loud laughter, thus showing its approval of the success of the methods applied by the authors of the picture.

It is greatly to the credit of the producers that they have not taken the path of idealizing the real hero of the story. Kovalenko is by no means shown as a fighter, still less a conscious fighter, against his social environment. No! Kovalenko in the film is so far only a protestant in whom the audience can guess the awakening forces capable in the future of a great and passionate struggle for freedom and happiness. Much of the success of the film must be laid to the door of the thoughtful work of the producer. Artist, camera-man and composer have all contributed their part to the success of the whole. The artist, Putyevskaya, has given a picture of provincial middle class life skillfully, subtly and without caricature; and the composer A. Golubentsov has done more than merely provide the action of the picture with an attractive accompaniment; he has, by means of music, aided the audience to understand better the underlying essence of Chekhov's story. Here is an example: Kovalenko's sister Varinka and Byelikov with his strange courtship, are strolling along the boulevard. A military band is playing an old-fashioned waltz. The well-known incidents of the story take place, as a result of which Byelikov dies. We see Varinka, this time with her brother, rowing in a boat

along the river and passing the very places where she so recently walked with the chief character in the story. And once more we hear the strains of the old-fashioned waltz, and are shown in all its loathsomeness the horrible figure of Byelikov, dead in the flesh, but present in the spirit. The natural conclusion is that "Byelikov is dead, but everything goes on just as before." The producer successfully develops this potential idea, leading it, through a series of pictures in the end of the film, to its outlet in optimism. These scenes are not to be found in the story, but they arise legitimately out of the spirit of the whole of Chekhov's creation.

Here are Kovalenko and his sister forced to abandon the townlet and the walls of the gymnasium; the teachers who drove from their midst the progressive advanced teacher, whose ideas did not suit them. Kovalenko and Varinka depart in a one-horse shay on a dark night. In the distance there is a vague presage of dawn and at the edge of the town the producer shows, emphasizing the symbolic nature of this scene, the barrier on the border of the town being lifted by the watchman, as if opening a road to a new life, in which the struggle for happinesss becomes the symbol of faith of such protesting intellectuals as Kovalenko.

Chekhov himself believed in this dawning happy life, this joyful future. One of his characters in *The Three Sisters* says that "the time has come, something great is coming upon us all, a healthy, violent storm is brewing up." Chekhov believed in the new times, in the coming happiness for humanity, but he was much mistaken as to the time of their occurrence. His hero Uncle Vanya thought that "there would be a beautiful life in a hundred years or so." This belief in progress underlies all the works of Chekhov and makes him, despite the apparently pessimistic tone of his innumerable plays and stories, a writer with high and passionate optimism, one whose creation is directed towards progress and the confirmation of the principles of humanism and human happiness, as the chief foundations of social life.

The Man in a Case is produced quite in accordance with the spirit of Chekhov, and will surely meet, beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union, with no less warm a reception than that accorded to it by Soviet audiences.

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

Kovalenko and Varinka depart in a one-horse shay on a dark night

POEMS

ANTONIO MACHADO

Spring

War is less strong, horror and fear less strong —
When with the awkward sweep of bustard-wings
The ominous three-motor swerves along
And over deserted roofs, hovering, swings,

Today your first bow stirs the fields alive,
Your clear green guards the maple buds of black,
And melting snow from mountaintops will drive
Across the brown earth in a crimson track.

While hillsides echo and the seas renew
The siren-wail blown saddening around,
And silver shines the plane in lofty blue,
Then tingles on all sides across the ground,
O Child immortal, Goddess ever true,
Your shepherd's lute with sweet and crystal sound.

Translated by Jack Lindsay

ANTONIO MACHADO

Death of a Wounded Child

The fever's hammer in the night of pain
Throbs in the child's tight-bandaged temples, cries
And throbs. O see the yellow bird again,
Mother, the black and purple butterflies.

—Ah, sleep, my son. The little hand holds fast
The mother by the bed. O flower of fire!
Who, flower of blood, will cool your brow at last?
Lavender scents in the poor room expire.

Outside, a round moon loops in drifts of white
The sombre town, each dome and tower glows.
A plane is droning somewhere out of sight.
Sweet flower of blood, has sleep now brought repose?
The balcony-glass rings tinkling through the night.
Ah, cold, ah, cold, cold, cold, ah, cold it grows.

Translated by Jack Lindsay

Walter Scott and His Historical Significance

The notes appended were written as a rejoinder to certain objections urged by Sylvia Townsend Warner (in *International Literature*, No. 9, 1938) to the first installment of George Lukacs' article *Walter Scott and the Historical Novel.* As I feared lest her objections might obstruct the proper appreciation of George Lukacs' article I drafted these notes in reply. Neither Sylvia Townsend Warner nor I knew, at that time, that a second installment of Lukacs' article was to appear. And now that it has appeared her objections, and my reply both alike are seen as concerned with an aspect of the question which is of only very minor and subsidiary importance.

The only value, therefore, I place upon these notes is that they may help to excite an interest in Walter Scott and to draw some of the close attention to George Lukacs' essay, that so brilliant and original a piece of work deserves.—*T.A.J.*

George Lukacs's central thesis is passed over by Sylvia Townsend Warner without comment. This is regrettable because one of the objections she raises—one that is entirely valid in itself—actually brings into view a group of phenomena which adds weight to his thesis and sharpens its point considerably. That central thesis must therefore first be stated.

Scott chooses for presentation historically engendered conflicts in which a man (or woman) of relatively mediocre gifts and station but capable of rising to a great occasion proves to be instrumental in resolving the conflict, and at the same time(or alternatively) in demonstrating concretely the "falsehood of extremes," and the larger wisdom of the "middle-way."

Such, broadly, is Lukacs' thesis. Sylvia Townsend Warner does not attack this thesis. She makes objection only to incidentals. Sylvia Townsend Warner's strongest point is her charge that Lukacs seriously misunderstands Scott's national status, and accordingly fails to draw a moral of great significance for our own time. She is right on both counts; and yet, for all that, this admitted failure by Lukacs makes no difference at all to his central thesis—except so far as it gives an opportunity for proving it even more thoroughly than he does. But Sylvia Townsend Warner deserves to be quoted in full on this point.

"There is (in George Lukacs' article) a serious misunderstanding of Scott's national status. Scott had no quarrel with the Act of Union between England and Scotland; but he was always a Scotsman; and his training as a lawyer certainly reinforced this national consciousness, as the Act of Union left intact the Scots law—a legal code with a different method and terminology from

that of the legal code of England. This is a serious misunderstanding in that it leads George Lukacs to overlook an aspect of Scott's writings which has a lesson for the world today. Strongly conscious of his nationality, proud of his country's history, always delighting in the portrayal of Scottish character and customs, Scott was yet quite comfortable, so to speak, in the United Kingdom. He is a most important example of the fact that a minor nationality can be blended into a compound state without either servility or the chauvinism of racial theories, and as such Scott is relevant to the question of national minorities today.

"Under quite different social circumstances, as a dweller in bourgeois society instead of under Socialism, Scott can thus be dimly related to those folk poets whose work appears at times in *International Literature*, who preserving their national traditions and idioms, use them to express their loyalty to the U.S.S.R., to Lenin and Stalin."

This is an admirable point, and its concluding clause is an exceptionally brilliant one—all the more so as Scott began to discover in himself his power as a writer by being a diligent collector, restorer and imitator of the folk tales and ballads of his own land. It is indeed astonishing, from the angle of Britain, that anyone—let alone so acute and penetrating a critic as George Lukacs—could produce a comprehensive survey of the novels of Walter Scott (novels which to contemporaries were for long known specifically as the "Scotch" novels) without stressing the fact that Scott is enthusiastically Scottish, or that the history from which he draws his materials is as often Scottish as it is English. Out of twenty-five novels—ignoring, that is to say, a number of shorter stories—the action takes place wholly or mainly in Scotland in fifteen cases; in four cases the action takes place outside of Britain—in France; in Burgundy, Switzerland, and Provence; in Palestine; in Constantinople—in six cases only does the action take place mainly in England. (Of course in many cases in the first category part of the action involves a visit to England—*e.g.*, Jeanie Dean's visit to London which is the crisis of the novel.)

But herein George Lukacs follows a custom usual on the Continent. It is, possibly, absurd to expect that non-British observers, viewing Britain from the angle of Europe at large, should see any significance in the national distinctions within one comparatively small island; or to expect them always to remember the subtleties of the distinctions between English, Scots, and Welsh. The Irish, occupying a separate island, and being belligerent withal, have contrived to force their national distinctiveness upon the whole of the world. But, in most cases, Continental writers see no more significance in the distinctions of English, Scottish and Welsh than Britons do usually between Parisians, Normans, Bretons, Gascons, etc. etc., in France, or the corresponding distinctions which world affairs are now forcing upon our attention in the various states of Central Europe. And, indeed, though it causes a measure of more-or-less mock indignation when sturdy Scots are forced to accept the designation "English" at international conferences (our comrades of the U.S.S.R. can as little accustom themselves to using the terms "Britain" and "Briton" as we can cure ourselves of the habit of using the term "Russia" for the whole Soviet Union, and "Russian" as a designation for all its many peoples)—in all but exceptional cases the specific distinctions between English, Scottish and Welsh are of negligible moment.

So that, although it is true that George Lukacs certainly missed a

chance of scoring the point so well made by Sylvia Townsend Warner—with its special significance for our own day which she so rightly underscores—yet, at the same time, this omission makes only this much difference to Lukacs' central thesis, that, by a recognition of this fact, he might have made his central thesis even more convincing and impregnable than he had.

Lukacs says, for instance:

"Through historical research in the entire past of England [and Scotland] he tried to discover the 'middle' road, to find the 'mean' between the two contending extremes, English [and Scottish] history furnished him with comforting examples; the most embittered [national and] class battles, where sometimes one and sometimes the other came out victorious, resolved, in the long run, in some 'mean' spacious enough to enclose and reconcile both hostile elements."—Lukacs, *International Literature*, No. 4, 1938.

It will be seen at a glance that the addition of the words we have inserted and placed in square brackets—words which bring Scotland as well as England, and their historical conflicts, into the picture—raises George Lukacs' thesis actually to a higher power. It is not merely extended, it is qualitatively intensified. Not only the class conflicts *within* England, but *also* the class conflicts *within* Scotland; and not only those, but the *national* conflicts between England and Scotland and the reaction of those conflicts upon the class conflicts—such is the qualitative difference that this quantitative addition makes.

This can be seen if we scrutinize the historical examples which Lukacs himself selects to support the proposition just quoted:—

"Thus, out of the war of the Saxons with the Normans emerged the English nation in which both belligerent peoples became amalgamated. Out of the Wars of the Roses the 'glorious' reign of the Tudors emerged, particularly that of Queen Elizabeth. Similarly the class conflicts which marked the Cromwell revolution, after a series of civil wars, including the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, became neutralized in contemporary, balanced English society." (*Ibid.*)

All true enough; but how much stronger the case becomes if we add the Scottish data! Firstly, to the conflict between Saxon and Norman which are predominantly important for England, add the conflict between the Celts of the Highlands and the Saxons of the Lowlands in Scotland—a conflict whose resolution into a harmony was, from Scott's angle, of even greater moment, since it had provided a vehicle for the Scottish aspect of all the historical conflicts listed by Lukacs. The Wars of the Roses, as such, did not affect Scotland, which was then an independent kingdom. But Scotland had its own series of destructive conflicts involving the greater feudal lords among themselves and in combination against the crown into which conflicts the Highland clans were drawn periodically as allies on one side or the other. Then the Reformation struggles culminating in the struggles around Mary, Queen of Scots, had, in the upshot, as potent a force in preparing Scotland to welcome the Union of the Crowns of Scotland and England—by the succession of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England on the death of Elizabeth—as the Wars of the Roses had had in preparing the English to receive the Tudor dynasty, and support it in its measures for the destruction of the relics of inflated feudal-baronial power.

Again the Puritan Revolution while it concerned Scotland along with England, and actually came

to a crisis first in Scotland, at the same time affected the two countries in different ways. One stage in the conflict was the virtual (but temporary) domination of England by the Scottish Kirk and Covenant. A later stage was the subjugation of Scotland by Cromwell, after his victory at Dunbar. And in these struggles the changes in the national attitude of Scotland to England and *vice versa* were not more important than the divisions within Scotland itself—generally the division between Lowlands and Highlands; more particularly the divisions in the Lowlands between the Westland Whigs and the "Erastians" and "malignants" of Edinburgh and the Lothians, and in the Highlands between the Cambells led by the Whig Earls and Dukes of Argyle, and the Grahams and their allies led first by James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, then by John Graham of Claverhouse (called alternatively "Bloody Claverhouse" and "Bonnie Dundee"). All these conflicts had as their final outcome the prolonged struggle for and against the Stuart and Hanoverian dynasties in which both England and Scotland were involved, and which had as its most important outcome for Scotland and England, the final extinction of the hereditary jurisdiction of the clan chieftains and the breaking-up of the tribal system in the Highlands.

It is this latter process which in one form or another forms an ingredient in the majority of the novels of Walter Scott, and it will be seen how widely, profoundly, and with what special significance the inclusion of the distinctively Scottish angle of approach enriches the data in support of the Lukacs thesis.

Let us give details. The Jacobite and anti-Jacobite conflict forms an ingredient in each of the following novels: *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *The Black Dwarf*, *The Heart of Midlothian* (incidentally only), *The Bride of Lammermoor* (as pre-condition), and *Redgauntlet*. The earlier stages of the struggle for and against the Stuart monarchy—the Puritan Revolution—enters as an ingredient more or less into *Old Mortality*, *The Legend of Montrose*, the *Pirate* (remotely), *Peveril of the Peak*, and *Woodstock*. Still earlier stages (the Reformation struggle) enter into *The Monastery* and *The Abbot*. And the pre-Reformation struggle complicated with baronial struggles on the one side, and Highland clan feuds on the other with a general undercurrent of conflict between burghers and feudal barons enters into the *Fair Maid of Perth*.

Two others, *Kenilworth* and the *Fortune of Nigel* center predominantly upon the struggles of personal intrigue at the English court, but they bear upon the question in the respect that they bring into the picture actual historical characters of such importance as Queen Elizabeth, Leicester, Burleigh and Raleigh in the one, and James I and Buckingham in the other. *Ivanhoe*, though incidentally linking on with the stories of the Crusaders, has as its main theme first the resolution of the conflict between Norman and Saxon, and secondly the causation out of which grew, ultimately, the conflict between the Crown and the Baronage which begot so much of the subsequent history of the British Constitution. To these may be added *Anne of Geierstein* in so far as it has its general presupposition the Wars of the Roses in England, and the endeavors of the exiled queen of Henry VI to obtain allies for a reopening of the struggle for restoration—a process which, in fact, ended in the establishment of the Tudor monarchy. Also there should be added *Count Robert of Paris* in so far as it has as its presupposition and jumping-off point the Norman Conquest of England, while *The Betrothed* has as its theme the border

conflicts between the Normans and the Welsh—and incidentally brings into view, if only momentarily, Henry II of England, and his sons Richard (Cœur de Lion) and John. *The Talisman*, too, cannot be excluded, since, although its scene of action is Palestine and its primary theme is the contrast between the self-centered rivalries of the kings and potentates engaged in the Crusade, on the one hand, and the chivalrous superiority to all such meanness of the Saracen chief Saladin and his friendly enemy Richard Cœur de Lion, on the other, yet it has a direct "British" significance in its emphasis upon the importance each to each of good-will and friendly relations between England and Scotland.

Thus out of twenty-five major novels twenty-two bear at some point or another upon the part played by historical conflict in general (and by the resolution of historically begotten conflicts into a higher harmony in particular) in the development of the total synthesis of then contemporary Britain. Conflicts predominantly internal to Scotland play a part in seven novels in this group. Those predominantly internal to England, and of less or no significance for Scotland, are the theme also of seven. Conflicts common to both England and Scotland, or involving their interrelation in more or less of urgency, provide matter for nine—one, *The Abbot*, falling into two of these categories.

The remaining three novels prove the point (of the Lukacs thesis plus the Townsend Warner amendment) in another way. These three, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, and *St. Renan's Well* all have their action located predominantly in Scotland, and all turn on the issues of contemporary domestic and family conflict. All three pivot upon cases of dubious, disputed or concealed marriage; all involve a temporary or permanent exclusion of a legitimate heir from his rightful inheritance. And moreover, while in two cases, villainy is exposed and a happy ending ensured—one which achieves incidentally, the uniting of families long estranged—in the remaining case, that of *St. Renan's Well*, the failure of all efforts at mediation ensures the common ruin material or moral of all the primary antagonists.

It is by the way notable that for all his surface romanticism Scott is much more ready to depart from the convention of a "happy ending all round" than was usual in his day. The conclusion of the *Bride of Lammermoor* is like that of *St. Renan's Well*, disastrous for all the central characters. So, too, so far as the "hero" and "heroine" are concerned is that of *Kenilworth*. And, as we have seen, there is an element of disaster in the otherwise placid outcome of the *Heart of Midlothian*. In fact Scott's optimism, though real enough, is a dialectically qualified optimism involving as it does a recognition that, only on the whole, and as the general outcome of a process from which suffering, sacrifice and tragedy can never wholly be excluded, is ultimate happiness to be attained.

This has a direct bearing upon Scott's nationalism and its political significance. He understands so well the standpoint of the ultra-Tory Jacobites, and of the Scottish clans to whom the Jacobite struggle brought final disaster, that he has (though unintentionally) assisted in fostering the stupid romantic nonsense beloved of reactionary sentimentalists—the legend of "Bonny Prince Charlie" (who died of brandy complicated, it would seem, by venereal disease). But he understands no less well, and sympathizes no less keenly with the

ultra-*anti*-Jacobites—the Westland Whigs and the Cameronians. If he does ample justice to the Marquis of Montrose, and more than justice to Claverhouse, he does equal justice to the Argyles, the Earl and the Duke. In their way, in fact, his studies of the Whigs, in old David Deans, in Balfour of Burley and the other leading characters in *Old Mortality* and in their English counterparts in *Peveril of the Peak* and *Woodstock* (though to be sure his grip is less firm and his touch less sure in the cases of the English Puritans) are finer than his studies of Jacobites and of Cavaliers. It was not for nothing that Karl Marx said that *Old Mortality* was a work of genius.

George Lukacs notes acutely and forcibly how in depicting Mary Queen of Scots, and the preparations of her adherents for a counter-revolutionary *coup d'état*, Scott indicates clearly those characteristics in Mary which made her defeat and that of her cause not only inevitable but necessary. He could have developed the point equally well in the case of the Pretender and of Jacobites as depicted in the wholly imaginary episode of its final effort described so convincingly and arrestingly in *Redgauntlet*—which more than one good judge regards as Scott's best novel. Whatever else emerges from the episode Scott leaves no doubt upon the main point that Jacobitism was not only a lost cause in fact, but had been an impossible cause from the very outset.

Scott, in fact, was ideally placed in time and in circumstances for viewing Scotland as a whole and in synthetic relation to the government of Britain. As a youth he met with, and was bound by ties of kinship with, men who had fought on both sides in the last Jacobite insurrection of 1745. At the same time he had lived himself, while still in his early manhood, into the period of a new portent, that of *Jacobinism* which was radically inimical to Hanoverian and Jacobite alike. Scottish and Irish noblemen who had fled overseas to escape the consequence of their participation in the struggles to restore the Stuart dynasty and who had taken service under the Kings of France, had left descendants who were welcomed in London and Edinburgh by the highest representatives of official society in their new capacity of French royalist refugees from the avenging fury of Jacobin republicanism. The Jacobite thus became, viewed in this new light, no longer a menace but an heroic instance of devotion to monarchism, regardless of all consequences and in despite of all calculation. As a Jacobite he had been, no doubt, misguided. But his error had been due not to positive viciousness so much as to an unreasonable excess of virtue. On the other hand the Whigs who withstood the Jacobites—they were no less praiseworthy; alike in so far as they had refused to be seduced into rebellion, and in that, when occasion demanded it, they had stood out as the champions of liberty against tyranny and arbitrary power. Hence the more it became apparent that if Britain had set a bad example to the Continent in her rebellious resistance to the Stuarts—even to shedding the blood of one king, and driving another from the throne into permanent exile—the more it was revealed, too, that she had been, undoubtedly, provoked by their "tyranny" and had set a splendid example of the "middle way" by the canny compromise of that post-Revolution settlement of her Constitution whereby she had recovered from these lapses.

The argument, too, was capable of further extension. The Whigs and still more their Cameronian Left wing—the men of Bothwell Brig—had been admittedly fanat-

tical even to bloodthirstiness. But their timely and courageous resistance had, in fact, saved—or helped materially in saving—Scotland and England alike from the spiritual tyranny of Popery and (under the Stuarts) its inevitable concomitant, political subjection to the Kings of France and to their *ancien règime*—with the risk of the logical consequence, an induced Jacobin uprising, with pikes, Bastille stormings, tumbrils and guillotines in Britain itself.

Moreover, in actual fact, Westland Whigs and Eastland Tories had, in day-to-day practice—great occasions like the '45 set on one side—always been subjected to a constant irritation of incursions, cattle-liftings, abductions and blackmail so long as the clan system obtained in the Highlands. In his plaid, his kilt, and his bonnet the clansman had been picturesque enough. But in practice he had been the two ends and the middle of a damned nuisance. Safely relegated to the museum of history the Highlander could be admired and even sentimentalized over. But always on condition that he remained immovably *in the Past*.

It was the same with the sturdy Borderers to the South of Scotland. While England and Scotland remained separate countries it was no doubt an admirable thing to have plenty of hard-riding, quick-handed Scotts and Elliots along the frontier capable of lifting cattle, and movables, in a moonlight foray into England and back before dawn. But the price demanded in practical reality for Watty Scott of Harden, Auld Beardie, Kinmont Willie and Jolly Jock Elliot and their like was a no less hard-riding, quick-handed, moss-trooping band of Percies, Lowthers, English Elliots, and Armstrongs, equally able of a moonlight foray and a return to the English side of the Border. Taking it by and large it was just as well, and better, that these things, too, should pass into the limbo of things remembered with a measure of relish heightened by the sense that there was no danger of their ever happening again. It was all very fine to remember the grim old ballad:

There never was a time in the
march parts[1] *yet*
When the English and the Scottish met,
But it was a marvel if the red
blood ran not
As the rain does in the street.

But that sort of thing was a serious interruption to traffic and no sort of comforting prospect for a man who saw a chance of turning an honest penny or so by a trip beyond the Tweed and to the riches on the South side of York.

On the whole then it was a good thing that the English and Scottish had composed their differences. And no less of a good thing that the same was true of the West and the East, the Whigs and the Tories, the Hanoverians and the Jacobites, and, above all, the Lowlands and the Highlands.

In a very real sense Walter Scott's nationalism—with its emphasis upon the distinct and distinctive role of Scotland in the British synthesis—was a progressive innovation. Before his time the Highlanders had been only a little more included in the customary conception of Scottish nationality—except by Englishmen too ignorant to know better—than the Red Indians had been included by the Fathers of the U.S.A. in their conception of American nationality. The further the Scottish Lowlanders developed away from feudal conditions the wider grew

[1] March parts—"march" equals the border or frontier, "march parts," the land claimed in the days of indeterminate frontiers by both sides; hence also the "debateable lands."

the gulf between them and the Highland clans. Their descent, their speech, their mode of life, often their religion, and always their culture, were all—despite incidental admixture—basically different, and were growing more so until the culminating crisis of '45—in which, by the way, the clans were used as pawns in a game with which they had no real concern, and from which only a few of their chiefs had anything to gain. After the defeat of Culloden Moor the clan system was shattered beyond recall. And with the menace of the Highland peril forever removed it ceased to be true that Scotland and civilization both ended at the Braes of Balquidder or even at the Brig of Aberfoyle.

Alike as a Lowlander, an antiquary and a lawyer, Scott was ideally placed for seeing the significance of the change which had come, if not in his own time, at any rate no earlier than the lifetime of his father. While the Highland menace remained—with or without the impetus of Jacobitism—respectable society in Scotland, and especially official circles in Edinburgh—in which as lawyers both Scott and his father were included—leaned more and more on the protection and support of the English crown. It was quite fashionable in Scotland as well as in England, to speak and think of Scotland not so much as a separate entity but as "North Britain." (So, too, after the Union of the Parliaments of Britain and of Ireland in 1801, it became fashionable among Tories and toadies in Dublin to speak of Ireland as "West Britain.") Before the industrial revolution had gathered headway sufficiently to make the Scottish coalfields of importance, and to establish, first, a textile industry, and then a ship-building center in Glasgow and on the lower Clyde, there was a measure of truth in old Johnson's savage saying that "the noblest prospect a Scotsman ever sees is the highroad that takes him to England." First the "settlement" of the Highlands—*i.e.*, the abolition of the magisterial powers of the clan chiefs *plus* the Ross-shire, Sutherland-shire and other "clearances" (wholesale evictions and transportations overseas); then the growing industrial and commercial importance of Scotland; and thirdly the increasing value of the Highland regiments in the Napoleonic wars—all these had created a basis for a new outlook. Scotland was in fact more of a unity than ever before, and the French Revolution had by example and by reaction intensified the sense and significance of *nationality* beyond anything it had possessed before. Moreover with the conventional "grand tour" and visits to the continental "spas" and holiday resorts alike rendered impracticable by the war, the advantages of Scotland as a new and delightful playground for the rich emerged into common comprehension for the first time. Scott's earlier writings, his poems, especially the *Lady of the Lake*, had themselves had vogue because of, among other things, their enthusiastic description of Scottish scenery. What had been to the inveterately Cockneyfied taste of Johnson's day a bleak and forbidding prospect of crags, hills, moors, bogs, mists and torrents seemed a vision of romantic delights to the newly enriched of the days of Walter Scott.[1] Thus in glorifying, quite sincerely, the beauty and the distinctiveness of the scenery of his native land Walter Scott achieved the supreme success of being highly attractive to the English while being devotedly Scottish, and, incidentally, while doing

[1] An epigram of Johnson's day illustrates the change forcibly: "Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom; not forced him wander, but confined him home."

good business for Scotland, commercially and politically, as well as culturally.

And moreover, in face of the titanic upheaval of the Jacobin and Napoleonic Wars all the conservative classes in all the countries in Europe sensed the need for closing up their ranks against the common enemy—the Insurrectionary People. The Confederation of Princes of Coblence prepared the way for the Holy Alliance of 1814-15. The political need for recognizing merit in all the nations which would come into the alliance against "French principles" and Napoleon Buonaparte could not help but emphasize the significance of the unity in diversity and the diversity in unity exemplified by the Constitution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain. And, with diversity in unity, and to ensure unity in diversity, there must go hand in hand, along with firmness in the maintenance of authority, an understanding moderation in its exercise. The Bourbons had gone the way of the Stuarts through a failure to learn from their mistakes. The democratic elements in Britain might if they were not checked go the same way as the French ultra-democrats had gone if they, too, failed to learn from the mistakes of Jacobinism and Buonapartism. If the English insisted too much upon their predominance in the United Kingdom, and made too injudicious a use of their superiority in numbers and in wealth, an explosion of Scottish separatism and republicanism might easily be provoked as it had been in Ireland in 1798 and again in 1803. If Scotland insisted too much on her right to be treated as an equal, she, too, might provoke repressive reprisals as disastrous as those which had overtaken Ireland, Napoleonic France, and the Highlands after Culloden. The wise way was the reasonable way, the golden mean of give-and-take:—to insist respectfully but firmly upon Scottish nationality as against over-riding Englishism, and concurrently to insist upon the title of Englishman to respect in the eyes of Scotchmen and to both upon their mutual need each of the other. Such was the program of Scott's Scottish nationalism; and such equally was the program of his middle-way Toryism.

Thus the distinctive quality of Scott's nationalism which Sylvia Townsend Warner insists, quite rightly, has an outstanding lesson for our own day, was not only determined by the whole interconditioning of his social, personal and historical circumstances, but was at the same time an aspect of that very middle way "moderatism" and toryism which Lukacs finds combined with acute historical insight and profoundly comprehensive social sympathy as the central *motif* of Scott's creative art-work. In correcting George Lukacs' most serious omission Sylvia Townsend Warner supplements and extends his central thesis.

T. A. JACKSON

Chukotka

Notes of a Teacher in the Arctic

It was in the very dead of winter. The sun disappeared beyond the ocean, and the full December moon climbed out from beneath the horizon. Huge and dim, it hung low over the snow-covered mountains. It seemed as though some one had suspended it on the edge of the skyline and it eyed with mistrust the Chukotka land. The only source of light, it climbed the sky very cautiously, throwing slanty rays on the earth. The moon rose very slowly and its light was meager until it would climb very high. One felt like shouting to the moon:

"Give us some real light, why don't you!"

Indeed the absence of light depresses a person who finds himself in the Arctic for the first time.

The buildings of the Cultural Base were snowed under to the very roof tops. One building was completely buried in snow, and dog sledges beat a track over it. A cable extended along all the houses, serving as our life-line in case of a blizzard. The stakes to which the cable was attached had to be pulled out of the snow frequently. Blizzards would snow them under time and again.

We cleared the path to each building daily, and to enter one of them was like descending into a cellar.

The boarding school was empty, there was no beaten path to it. The path to the hospital was trodden but little, and each day life grew more tedious.

For fully two and a half months we had no contact with the Big Land. We received no news from there nor could we dispatch any since the radio station was not functioning. We had no radio operator. Above all, we were irritated by the fact that in the district center, Wellen, 125 kilometers away, they did have a radio operator, who for some reason could

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Photos by M. Tepliakov.

not establish contact with other stations.

The hospital had everything it needed, medical supplies as well as a staff of experienced physicians who knew their work well. But the hospital was empty. No patients ever showed up. The Chukchi stuck to the age-long customs and resorted to the services of the *shamans*.

The medical personnel was languishing in inactivity and boredom. It seemed as though all of us had been buried alive in these deep snows of the Arctic.

When a sick Chukcha would accidentally be lured into the hospital he was examined and treated by a whole concilium of doctors.

On such days the staff would eat with great appetite. The patient would be the subject of conversation for a whole day not only for the doctors, but for all the workers, of the Cultural Base.

"Today we earned our bread, we examined one Chukcha and gave him an aspirin tablet," the doctors would say.

Such was the beginning.

The boarding school was ready only by the end of December. A special messenger was sent to all settlements informing them that the school was open.

The messenger left and we all waited with impatience and anxiety for his return: the Chukchi might go back on their word and not send the children to school after all!

We watched the sentiments of the people on the coast. In all settlements a struggle had been raging over the school. Some agreed to send their children, while others held on to their fear for the fate of their children.

Ulkhvurgyn traveled to various settlements and each time stopped at the Cultural Base to relate the school news to us. He was very active and his work contributed to the success of the school. Knowledge of the mode of life of his people enabled him to raise correctly a number of problems in helping us get pupils among the Chukchi.

"My job is difficult, terrible," he would say. "Should anything happen to the children, I'll have to answer for it."

We tried to calm his fears, promising that the children would be surrounded by love and care.

"My dogs will soon be angry with me," Ulkhvurgyn would joke, "I don't give them any rest."

But three days later our doubts and misgivings were dispelled. Two dog sledges drove up and brought an eight year old boy and nine year old girl.

Wrapped in fur clothes, very shy, they little resembled the usual Soviet schoolchildren.

The next day fifteen sledges bringing children from many settlements arrived all at once.

The Cultural Base became alive. The air was filled with the hum of Chukchi conversation. "*Pot-pot, kurr-kurr*" (right, left), the Chukchi orders to the dog teams resounded frequently.

A crowd of natives gathered near the school. Dog teams in traces were scattered all around. The children were accompanied by their mothers, fathers and sometimes even by infirm old people. Clad from head to foot in furs, the children resembled frightened marmots. The parents descended with grave fear into the "cellar" of the school porch.

But there was no way back, they had done it of their own free will! Almost half of all the children in each settlement were here. The Chukchi walked in their fur boots on the shiny school floor and it seemed as though they were mov-

ing on smooth ice. Some even timidly attempted to skate on the floor. But their faces would darken from time to time, for soon they would have to part with their children.

The school hall was crowded. A muffled noise came from the entrance—more and more Chukchi were coming in. With reindeer ribs they were beating cut the snow from their fur boots and clothes, beating it out to the last snow flake. To leave snow would mean to let it melt in the warm house, and the fur would spoil on that spot.

The school was not like the *yaranga*. It was as spacious as the tundra. But this unaccustomed spaciousness, as well as the bright light in the building seemed to depress the children as well as their parents.

They would come near the walls and touch them with their fingers as though testing their smoothness. They would carefully lean with their backs against the walls, testing their resilience. The children would sit down on the benches, the like of which they had never seen, would rise, try to move them and would sit down again.

This big *yaranga* of the *tangi* was amusing but at the same time frightening, and it evoked many other still vague feelings.

All the children had *shaman* signs on their cheeks and foreheads, and some on their bellies and backs.

These signs were made with special dyes or animal blood to protect the children from evil spirits, the *kele*.

The Chukchi parents had taken these precautions, but even though "protected," the children were frightened and held close to each other in the school auditorium.

The tea kettle was boiling continuously and the parents and relatives of the children were treated to tea. The guests drank their tea with great concentration. At other times they would drink enormous quantities of tea, but today somehow their drinking was not up to the mark.

They were not the only ones who were anxious. The teachers felt no less on edge. The girl teacher spoke in great confusion:

"What am I going to do with them? How will I work, not knowing their language? They are so frightened, they are afraid to look into one's eyes. They cling to their parents all the time."

It was difficult to dismiss the matter with just a smile or a shrug of the shoulders, for each one of us was obsessed with the same tormenting question:

"How to work? How to start?"

The medical inspection committee established itself in one of the larger class rooms. Today was a red-letter day for our medicos. So many patients at last!

In the center was the chief of the hospital, a man in spectacles, and our woman oculist camped in a corner.

"These *tangi* with the strange things in their hands are most probably *shamans* from the Big Land," the Chukchi decided.

Children, accompanied by their parents, timidly crossed the threshold of the class room. Not only the children, but even their parents failed to understand why it was necessary to undress whereas all the *tangi* were fully clothed.

But most surprising and strangest of all was that the "white *shaman*" tapped with a finger on the child's chest and put some kind of a tube against his heart, and the heart, the Chukchi knew, was also his mind.

But that was not all! Sometimes the *shaman* would turn to the woman dressed in white. It seemed that she also was a *shaman*

and the man *shaman* was seeking her advice.

She would then approach the child and put some terrible thing to its heart, and then stick some ropes into her ears as though she wanted to tie the heart of the child to her ears.

The child stood frightened, more dead than alive. The parents also gasped.

The woman *shaman* would then look into the eyes of the child, upturn its eyelids so that the child would feel as though the end had come, and the parents in the meantime would have the creeps. But to protest was already too late. Another second, and the child would be returned all intact to his father or mother standing nearby.

Questioned about the age of their child, the parents revealed utter ignorance. So did the children themselves.

"How is it that you don't know the child's age?" the amazed doctor demanded of a native.

The Chukcha shook his head and replied:

"We don't count the years of our children, we count how many children we have."

The doctor laughed and asked of one of his colleagues:

"Well, how are we going to determine the age?"

"We have to find out somehow, this is indeed interesting," and he asked the father whether he couldn't somehow recollect when his child, Tagrai, was born; how many winters had passed since then.

The father thought for a while and replied:

"Tagrai was born in the summer when the American trading schooner, the *Polar Bear*, came over to our shores." This was all he was able to recollect.

"But, my friend, how do you expect me to know when that schooner paid you a visit!" the doctor said in Russian, and turning to the woman physician remarked:

"Can't do anything; we will have to determine the age by some outward signs. Let's put it down 10-11."

"That's the way the veterinaries do it," she observed laughing. The doctor patted the boy on the shoulder.

"Atta boy! We will fix you up a bit and you'll be O. K. You may go." Tagrai took his clothes under his arm and vanished from the room instantly.

A Chukcha woman came in with her daughter. The girl had a mobile face and large, wide open eyes.

"Why doesn't the father come in?"

"No father," the woman said calmly.

"Where is he?"

"Father not Chukcha. He was American trader. Now don't know where he is."

"What's the girl's name?"

"Tayet Khema."

"Well, Tayet Khema, get undressed."

The girl began to undress, greatly embarrassed.

"Why do their bellies look as if swollen?" the oculist asked.

"Most likely it's the food," the doctor answered. "I was told that they eat a great deal of meat. We will have to pay attention to this. In general, however, the kids are rather fine specimens. Next!" he shouted into the corridor.

And so until late into the night thirty-five Chukchi children, one after the other, filed by the "white *shamans*."

I invited Ulkhvurgyn, the chairman of the Soviet, for tea.

"The old man Tnayrgyn also has to be invited," he told me.

The three of us sat down to drink tea. Something had happened to

Eskimo girl trumpeter for her group of Young Pioneers

Ulkhvurgyn, he was unusually quiet. There was anxiety written all over his face. He was silent and so was the old man. Finally Ulkhvurgyn spoke up:

"You know," he said, turning to me, "none of my children are here. They have grown up long ago and become hunters. And so I fear for the children of others. I fear more than if they were my own. My heart aches."

He again grew silent and stared into the corner, filling his pipe. I too was silent, waiting to hear what else he might say. Also Tnayrgyn kept his silence, placing his unfinished cup of tea on the table. It was a long and unpleasant silence. I could see that Ulkhvurgyn wanted to put his faith in me, but at the same time he kept thinking that possibly something bad might come of the whole undertaking.

I took out a cigarette and lit it.

"Let me have a cigarette," Ulkhvurgyn asked, putting away his pipe.

The three of us smoked in silence.

"What are you afraid of?" I finally asked Ulkhvurgyn.

"Don't know."

"Why don't you know?"

"It was I who persuaded them to send in their children, and I will have to answer if anything goes wrong."

"Oh no, Ulkhvurgyn, why I, too, took part in persuading them. Let me, too, answer. Here is the old man Tnayrgyn, he also helped us. He, too, will agree to answer." It seemed that this "sharing" of the future bitter fate appealed to some extent to Ulkhvurgyn. On the other hand, however, he might have thought to himself: "You are talking nonsense, how can you answer for any evil, you are not a Chukcha, but a *tang*."

Throughout the conversation Tnayrgyn kept his silence, but he listened carefully.

"Some more tea? May I?" Ulkhvurgyn asked.

"Drink as much as you want."

"Well, Ulkhvurgyn," the old man said. "Let the children remain here, let them."

Immediately Ulkhvurgyn's spirits rose. It was evident that the opinion of the old man was decisive.

The children walked about the rooms and looked at everything with a mingled feeling of amusement and fright.

Feeling "orphaned" they timidly clung to the teachers and looked at them longingly. Particularly did they cling to the girl teacher. They could not understand her conversation, but it was so soft and tender. They followed her about in a crowd from place to place, run-

ning their eyes over the unusual things. They were amazed by the spaciousness of the "wooden *yaranga*," the school building.

After they had sufficiently taken in the strange and wonderful things in it, we assembled them and told them how we would live and what we were going to do. Next we organized an "excursion" through the school building.

Being the only one who had knowledge of the language, I had to assume the role of guide.

They followed me in a solid group listening seriously and attentively.

They had to be shown how to sit on chairs, how to use a bed, pillow and blanket.

Lost in amazement, they did not understand everything I said, but no one mustered enough courage to ask questions.

Most of all were they surprised by the bed sheets. What were they needed for if the mattress was good and nice without them? It was even nicer. It had stripes of different colors, even red which the Chukchi like so much. The sheet concealed all this beauty and was just white. It looked the same as the covering hunters use in the winter. But this covering was needed. They knew that if a hunter should go out without this disguise he would return empty handed. The white color deceived animals. But why have it here? Who was to be deceived? Strange people, these Russians. Their faces are white, their *shamans* are dressed in white and to top it all, you have to sleep on white, just like on snow and sleep on "supports" (beds) into the bargain. All this was frightening.

The teachers were faced with very unusual educational activity. The pupils had to be taught not only how to hold a pencil and pen, but also how to eat, to sit on a chair, how to sleep in a bed, how to wash.

In the evening the woman teacher and Lyatuge brought in school clothes and underwear. The children were called to the class room and told that this clothing was prepared for them.

But what kind of clothes were these?

Not a single stripe of red on them. True, no one dared to protest. Now that the parents were far away it would not do to cry or protest. Only Lyatuge was of their race. True, he was deaf and mute, but it was good that he was here.

With a grave business-like air Lyatuge sorted out the clothes, and then, smiling, fitted them on the children.

Again surprise: why was it necessary to put on both white and black pants, isn't one pair enough?

Only before they went to sleep did the children realize why it was done this way.

The Chukchi have a practical bent of mind. Many of our pupils had taken part in hunting more than once. They all had the excellent habits of hunters and a knowledge of hunting life. They were children, but at the same time they were fully matured hunters, as it were.

They were used to activity of one kind or another. The girls could handle a needle well, and many of the boys had more than one seal to their credit, having killed them and dragged them to their tents.

Any one of the pupils could skillfully skin a killed animal, or tell an interesting story of the life of seals or walrus.

They could tell you the food each animal thrives on, their habits, the season open for hunting, and times when the killing of seals was forbidden. And these were nine or ten-year-old boys.

Their childhood had not passed in idleness. They worked a great deal, though without any compulsion on the part of the parents. Labor to the full of their abilities was an organic necessity.

We had to divert their energy to some other channel at once, or we knew they would not be happy in the school.

The time for our first supper was approaching. The children as well as the teachers were somewhat perplexed and confused. It was impossible to prepare in advance for all the misunderstandings that could arise in the course of our first supper.

The children were told that the moment they heard the bell they were to go to the dining room. The bell, in general, was familiar to them since in reindeer herds the leader has a bell on his neck. The ringing of the bell helps the Chukchi to locate animals which go astray during snow blizzards.

When the teacher explained to the children the schedule and illustrated his words by ringing the bell they all smiled.

The children scattered. Some continued to examine, "to feel" the school, others walked away to the sea shore. Some were lured to the hospital by the doctor. He conducted them from one room to another, showed them pictures on the walls and by mimicry and gestures gave them lessons in hygiene which they could not very well understand.

Running like a deer, a schoolboy chased through the street ringing the bell with all his might.

On hearing the signal the children darted out of the hospital, leaving the doctor at the most interesting point of his lecture.

The teacher seated the children at the table. For the first time in their lives they were to eat in such a big family. They all sat in silence and looked at the teacher. She was the only adult at the table and was to have supper with them.

She took her spoon and began to eat. As if by order, all the children picked up their spoons and reached for the soup. But hardly had they swallowed the first spoonful when to a man they threw their spoons on the table. The teacher was perplexed.

"What is wrong?"

The children grew silent, staring at the teacher. Their faces clearly said: "Let the *tangi* eat such food themselves."

"Salt there, salt bad," a boy said, sticking out his tongue to show how really bad the soup was.

It may sound strange but the Chukchi do not use salt. Their fish, meat or any other food is never salted.

The children remained silent and motionless. Neither could we feed them porridge.

The children were to go without supper, it seemed.

"Will you have bread and tea?"

"Tea good and *kav-kav* (bread) also good," several children said.

As a rule bread was not used by the Chukchi. Prior to the Revolution it was not brought there, and the Chukchi hardly knew of it, regarded it as a luxury, without which one could very well get along, if only there were meat.

With gusto, the children took to the bread and drank tea endlessly. They were not sorry to miss the soup or the porridge.

They liked the bread supper this evening so much that they would have readily agreed to live on bread exclusively for the rest of their lives.

The news of the children having only bread for supper soon became known throughout the Cultural Base. The doctor came at once.

"Listen, comrades," he said to

the teachers. "What are you doing! You are feeding them with slag. Bread is no better than slag for the body and what about soup? Porridge?"

"The point is, doctor, they won't eat any soup or porridge."

"But why?"

"It has salt, they say. And they don't eat salt."

"So you mean to say they haven't eaten any of it?"

"Yes, none at all."

"Well, here is something to learn in one's old age," the doctor remarked, and added: "By the way, salt is not absolutely essential for the body with the local food they have, which contains a lot of salt."

The children were divided into two parallel groups. A difficult test was in store for the teachers. How was a Russian who did not know the Chukchi language to handle a class room of Chukchi children who did not know a word of Russian?

The woman teacher was earnestly preparing for this day. She learned some Chukchi words, but her vocabulary was so meager that she could not even form a sentence, let alone conduct a conversation. She and her fellow teacher were about to enter their classes, but they lost their nerve at the very last moment. They sat helplessly in the teachers' room. It was then decided to conduct the first lesson jointly for both classes, with my aid.

The children were sitting at their benches in the class room and waiting patiently for what was to happen next.

The teachers brought paper. The children watched every move narrowly and whispered among themselves.

They had seen paper before. Nails, powder and other articles were wrapped in it at the store. Bolts of cloth sometimes had a label, and the fortunate one to receive it would tack it onto the tent wall. The real purpose of paper was unknown to them. There was not even a word for it in the Chukchi language. It resembled cloth, but was less durable and tore easily.

The teachers distributed a sheet of paper to each pupil. The children examined it in the light, rolled it in rolls, and some even managed to tear it while testing its "tensile strength." These had to be given other sheets, but they were warned that the paper is not strong and should not be "pulled" in different directions.

"We, *tangi*, can speak with the aid of this paper. If my friend lives in Wellen and I here, I send him this written paper and he will know everything I want. The paper will tell him everything. This paper is just like talking, just like thinking."

"No!" said one boy categorically. "One can speak only with one's tongue."

The children grew noisy.

"Dogs don't talk," quietly said one girl, Tayet-Khema, "and they have a tongue."

The boy looked at her with surprise and then burst into laughter. All laughed. Everyone joined in.

"I spoke about man, the dogs can only bark and lick water with their tongue," the boys said reproachfully in a mentorial tone.

"But a man can talk not only with his tongue, but also with a paper," the teacher intervened.

"That's true," the boy Tagrai spoke up.

As proof of his words he related the case of a *tang* who forgot his boots in another settlement.

"This *tang*, I have seen it myself, made such a paper and sent a Chukchi with it to another *tang*, and stayed overnight in our tent.

The next evening his fur boots were brought. It must be true that the paper spoke to the other *tang*," the boy finished with assurance.

The children named paper *kelikel* and hence all the derivatives: to write—*kelitkulken*, pencil—*kelitkunia*, teacher—*kelitkurken*, or *kiyual*, a person who can write.

The teacher gave each child a pencil. These sticks left a mark on the paper, but that produced no big impression on the children. They knew of stones which could make a mark even on the skins of reindeer and seals. Similar pebbles were used by the Chukchi women designing their clothes.

But this stick was more elegant, handier than the pebble. It was wooden and inside of it was the "dirtying stone."

The unusual form of the pebble held inside the wooden stick attracted most attention. The children were curious to learn how the *tangi* managed to put such a thin pebble into the little wooden stick. After recess, when the teacher came into the class room, he encountered an unusual sight. Some pupil with a bent for "research" accidentally discovered that the stick consisted of two halves pasted together. He applied his knife and opened the wooden stick. Tagrai was the enterprising "investigator" and his "discovery" proved very popular. Even the girls became imbued with the spirit of "research." And now before every pupil lay two halves of the pencil and the graphite lay separately.

The incident was thoroughly discussed, then the children were given new pencils, but were warned that the school did not have too many of them.

"And so with the help of this sheet of paper and this stick which is called pencil the *tangi* speak to each other," the teacher again explained.

"*Tangi* have a special language, we cannot understand what the *tangi* talk. We have a better talk, understandable," one boy announced.

"You will also learn to speak your own way with the help of these sticks and paper," the teacher replied.

"When?"

"You have to study, study many days."

"We want to learn today. Tell us now how to speak from the paper."

"Does a hunter, who wishes to become a sharpshooter, learn in one day? The same here. In order to learn this language many days are needed. And now you can 'make' a *yaranga*, walruses, seals."

"To make" meant to draw. We could find no word for it in the Chukchi language. But the children also could not understand what we meant by the word "make."

The children took up their pencils. It was evident that they were interested in what we told them, and wished to speak at once their own Chukchi language with the aid of a paper.

These children had never seen a pencil used. It was not surprising that some held the pencil as if it were a hammer or an axe.

Very quickly, however, and with astonishing skill the children learned to draw.

Gradually they grew fond of it and took pleasure in drawing whatever they could.

The visual memory, the visual perception of the children of the tundra was amazing. A youngster merely had to take one look at an object and would remember it well to the minutest details, even if he had never before seen the object.

The children were so absorbed

Schools like this one at Wellen are spreading enlightenment through the Far North

in their pencils and paper that they wished to spend the rest of the day drawing.

During the free hours in the evening some children played at "speaking from a paper." One would scribble something on a sheet, hand it to another, muttering something unintelligible.

It was getting late, time to sleep. So ended the first school day in the first Chukotka boarding school.

Each day several dog sledges drove up to the Cultural Base.

The parents would neglect their hunting and household affairs. Even a blizzard could not force them to postpone their meeting with the children.

Frequently the whistling of the fierce north wind would be broken up by the shouts of drivers: "*pot-pot*," "*kurr*." These were dog sledges driving up to the school, and the children ran headlong to the door.

A Chukcha hunter, all covered with snow, would appear in the hall-way. Dozens of children's hands reached to dust the snow off the newcomer.

With amazing reserve the Chukcha would ask the children how they were getting along. Then the children would shower him with questions about the settlement, hunting and the like.

Everything was of interest to them: Were there any seals killed? Were there any unfrozen patches of water amidst the ice on the sea? What did the younger brothers and sisters think of their disappearance? Did they think them dead? Were the little puppies growing up and who was feeding them?

Surrounded by children, the Chukcha sat and gave detailed answers to all the questions. He was reporting things to the children earnest-

ly, as to equals, and they listened attentively and seldom made remarks.

"Few seal now. Lots of ice driven together. Very little seal-fat in the settlement. It is cold in the *yarangi*. It is warm here and it will be warm even if all seals disappear from the sea because your *yaranga* is heated with coal and ours with fat."

Sympathy and understanding was immediately reflected on the children's faces. Some of them advanced their suppositions. The ice would probably soon break up and the seal would again appear. It was an important question, for the seal is the staff of life to the Chukcha people.

"More news," said the Chukcha hunter, "yesterday a white bear came over to the settlement during the snow blizzard. Imoya's dogs sensed him at once and raised a yelp."

The children pressed closer around the hunter.

"Ankat swiftly started out with his dog sledge after the bear. The bear ran away towards the ice packs. Then Ankat unloosed his dog Utilkhen. Utilkhen caught up with the bear, attacked him, grabbing him by his paws and kept him at bay until Ankat approached. He killed the bear on the spot with two bullets. A big bear! A she bear. We carried her on two sledges and could hardly bring her to the settlement."

"Very good!" the children shouted enthusiastically.

"And so I brought meat for all of you. You will eat it with pleasure. *Umkatol* (*umka* is a white bear and *tol* is meat) is good food."

"Very good food!" the children cried in delight.

The Chukchi now started out on a hunt only when an animal strayed close to the camp. Distant hunting and long trips were abandoned; they had no time, they had to visit their children every day, and every day they came to us, covering ten, twenty, forty kilometers and even more.

Endless conversations about the children were held in the *yarangi*.

At night, when the blizzards grew fiercer, the tambourines of the *shamans* were beaten in the *yarangi*, driving away the "evil spirits" from the children who stayed in the "*yaranga* of the *tangi*."

The children were kept in a warm, spacious and clean building. They were studying, enjoying themselves, playing games; and thoughts of "evil spirits" rarely came to their minds. The parents began to feel that nothing evil could befall their children. Their anxiety was not allayed completely, however, and they were lonesome without the children.

The first days of our school life passed smoothly.

Soon, old Tnayrgyn came to visit us. He walked slowly through the school rooms, scrutinizing everything. The old man was known as a teller of fairy tales and the children loved him.

"You haven't come to tell us a story?" Tayet Khema asked.

The old man smiled.

"No, I came to see how you live here, whether no one is mistreating you."

"No, old man, no one is mistreating us. Only we are lonesome. Tell us a story."

"What kind of a story?"

"A long one about courage, about the brave hunter."

"Good. Only I will have to seek for it. Many tales lie in my head."

"Seek, old man, seek!" the children beseeched him.

The old man kept thinking for a long time, and the children who stood in a circle did not disturb him.

"I have it," he finally said, "only let me sit down properly."

He sat down right on the floor, bending his knees under him, and told the story of the beautiful girl Neuskat and the young hunter Aivan.

He was relating it unhurriedly, and the moment his pipe would go out, Tayet Khema would light a match for him. The children listened with bated breath.

The children did not feel well at school for long. Days of anxiety soon broke in upon us.

The schoolchildren became homesick and their former gaiety disappeared. They were no longer attentive to the teachers, and the persistent thought of their *yarangi* was clearly written all over their faces.

When good weather set in and a score of dog sledges had come to the Cultural Base, it was no longer possible to keep the children "indoors," even during study hours.

They all crowded about the sledges, petted the dogs, spoke to them tenderly, and seemed to complain to them about their "bitter lot."

The school routine was disrupted and the children lost all interest in the studies. Neither pencils nor paper held any attraction for them any longer, not even the gay noisy games in such a big *yaranga* as our school auditorium. They were bored with listeningto "mute" teachers with whom they could converse only through interpreters.

The teachers were in despair, and the children were terribly irritable. They were homesick for their *yarangi* and the visits of their parents merely intensified their longing. Why didn't the parents take them home?

Ulkhvurgyn, the chairman of the Soviet, visited us daily. We sat with him for hours, talking about the children.

Ulkhvurgyn agreed to let the children stay in school, but deep in his heart he was against this 'idle' undertaking which caused so much trouble and distracted the parents from hunting.

"Will they have to live with you all winter?" he asked dismally.

"Yes, the whole winter. But we will arrange a recess so that the children may go home and see their own people and live at home for a while."

"Oh, oh, this is very good! I think if they take a trip home it will be better."

Ulkhvurgyn visited the pupils. They surrounded him impassively and kept up a pitiful silence. He tried to cheer them up, but was unsuccessful. The children stopped listening even to Ulkhvurgyn. They scattered to the corners of the room and thought of only one thing: how to escape from here.

Seeing their longing and understanding their feelings Ulkhvurgyn grew morose himself.

He returned to my room, and filling his pipe in silence probably thought:

"What an unhappy affair you've involved me in."

But he would not go back on his word. This was not in his make-up. His people would never break a promise. Deeply engrossed in thought, he smoked his pipe in silence, sweat running down his brow.

As chairman of the settlement Soviet he was in a difficult position. He understood the sentiments of the children and knew the thoughts of his kinsmen, the hunters. Whether things were good or bad Ulkhvurgyn was no longer able to distinguish.

"Would they have to stay many more days here?" he asked.

"That's nothing, Ulkhvurgyn.

Even with us on the Big Land where schools exist for many, many years, it is the same; children are lonesome the first days, then they become used to it and everything goes well."

"You speak correctly. Even foxes become tamed when you keep them caged. But children. . . . I pity them," said Ulkhvurgyn, the chairman of the village Soviet.

Once, walking past the buildings of the Cultural Base, I noticed two schoolgirls quite a distance from the school.

"Why did they walk so far away?" I asked.

"They are not walking, they ran away home," said Tayet Khema with perfect composure.

"Why didn't they tell me they wanted to visit their home?" I asked her with equal calm. "I would have sent for their parents and then they would have ridden home on a sledge."

The children were embarrassed and after a short silence Tayet Khema asked:

"May one wish for this? May we go home?"

"Of course."

"I want! And I do! And I!"

"You must have forgotten what I once told you. It wouldn't do to go singly. You can all go home when all of you want to."

Tagrai, a boy who had listened in silence, spoke out:

"We all want to!"

Tayet Khema slipped away quietly and ran to the school. She swiftly spread the news, and all the schoolchildren immediately came up to hear the pleasant tidings.

All this went on in front of the building; we talked and kept following the runaways with our eyes.

It was at the end of December and night would fall soon. Some measures had to be taken, since the girls were heading for the mountains. I was worried about them for the sky held no promise of good weather. I asked that the best dog team be prepared and decided to catch up with them, dress them in warm clothing, and then take them to their settlement.

The schoolchildren were horrified at my orders. This chase after human beings seemed very wicked to them. They all huddled together in one room. The teacher ran after me in alarm. I drove up to the school, came into the room and asked the children:

"Does anyone want to come along?"

Silence.

"I have to overtake the girls, dress them warmly and bring them to the settlement. They might be cold."

"Yes, it is cold, and do you want to bring them warm clothing and take them home on the dog sledge?"

"Yes, that is it! Well, will anyone join me?"

The children's faces brightened, but no one expressed a desire to take part in this chase which they considered improper for a "real person." They found nothing evil in my intentions, but did not wish to take part in the chase.

"No. Go along yourself. We will stay here. You are a *tang*, and we are Chukchi. You may do it, but we, no," Tagrai said.

Lyatuge was sitting on the sledge, holding in his hands a wooden stick with an iron point which served as a brake. It was evident that he, too, did not fully approve of my plan, but "the call of duty" and our excellent relations had created an atmosphere of mutual confidence and respect. With a broad smile on his face he nodded, inviting me to take my place in the sledge.

Twelve dogs leapt forward and we were off. The runaway girls

were already out of sight, nor were there any traces of them. But Lyatuge knew where to go. He probably never drove his dogs as fast even when chasing a white bear. He rapped his stick on the sledge, bellowed at the dogs and they ran at top speed. Their tongues hanging out of their mouths, the dogs ran faster and faster, but the runaways were not to be seen. In forty minutes we covered twelve kilometers and reached the settlement not having overtaken the two eight-year-old runaways. They probably had surmised that a chase would be undertaken, and, to throw the pursuers off the track, had headed for the mountains. Through ravines they walked on, we later found out, to another, more distant settlement.

I expected great unpleasantness and headed directly for Ulkhvurgyn's *yaranga*. Standing near the sledge I told the chairman the purpose of my visit, and though I tried to restrain myself Ulkhvurgyn noticed my agitation and this, it seemed, appealed to him. He also liked the fact that I had taken along warm clothing for the runaway children. To my surprise Ulkhvurgyn smiled and slapping me on the back said:

"See how much trouble the school is for both of us! But never mind, let's have some tea in my *yaranga*!"

Then Ulkhvurgyn called Tnecheigun, the father of one of the runaway girls.

"That's nothing, they are somewhere in the tundra or possibly went to another settlement. The other girl is from the Akkani settlement," Ulkhvurgyn reassured me.

Tnecheigun came and Ulkhvurgyn told him the story about his daughter. Tnecheigun drank tea and

That the Chukchi have their own trained nurses is indicative of the cultural and hygienic progress made by this northern people under Soviet power.

also laughed it off. I soon joined in the merriment.

"That's nothing," Tnecheigun agreed with Ulkhvurgyn. "They are familiar with the locality. During the summer they go away far, collecting various edible roots which our women save for the winter. Girls always help in collecting these roots and they know the locality well."

The Chukchi drank tea unhurriedly and joked about the runaways. They were not in the least worried about the girls being alone in the tundra. Was the tundra more dangerous than the school? Besides, there was nothing strange about an eight-year-old girl walking fifteen or twenty kilometers in the hilly tundra.

Still, as soon as we finished drinking tea, several dog teams were harnessed and the Chukchi rode out into the tundra.

Night descended.

I wanted to join the party, but Ulkhvurgyn talked me out of it.

"Why go? They will come just the same. I sent the dog sledges only so you don't worry," he added smiling.

The girls of course were not found in the tundra, since they had come to the Akkani settlement. Dressed in the clothes they wore at the Cultural Base, they were surrounded by all the inhabitants of the settlement who watched them with curiosity as they drank tea.

"We wanted very much to come to the *yaranga*. We were lonesome and saw the *yaranga* in our dreams. From great desire to come home, our head ached. We thought that if we wouldn't run away, we would die there. We thought so, but did not tell anyone about it. The others also want to go to the *yarangi*."

I stayed overnight in Ulkhvurgyn's *yaranga*, waiting for the arrival of Tnecheigun's daughter. I wanted to see her, but on the other hand I also had to return to the Cultural Base as soon as possible. I knew that the remaining children would be terribly worried.

I told Ulkhvurgyn about it and he immediately ordered that a messenger be sent to the Cultural Base. A young boy soon came into the passageway of the tent, ready to leave.

"Tell them that everything is well."

"*Egei!*" the boy replied.

Remaining inside the tent Ulkhvurgyn was shouting his orders:

"Tell them: the girls are home! Drinking tea and telling tales of their life in the school! Many people listen to them. Semushkin is spending the night at Ulkhvurgyn's. Tomorrow we all come to the *Kulbach* (meaning Cultural Base). Go ahead now!"

"*Egei!*" said the young Chukcha, and left.

How many new experiences the school had brought to the Chukchi, it occurred to me then. How many people on the Chukotka land there were now, whose thoughts were connected with the school! Prior to the Revolution, thoughts of school had never entered the mind of a Chukcha hunter. Along the entire coast there was no single native who was able to read or write.

The night seemed very long in the stuffy *yaranga*. I wished I were at the school. And to think that the children would do anything to come back! These filthy, stuffy *yarangi* were sweet home to them.

The next morning, as soon as I woke up, Ulkhvurgyn told me that Veemneut, the runaway girl, had already arrived.

After his tea, Ulkhvurgyn was sitting up naked, cutting a seal skin into thin strips. He was making use of every free minute for

household work, since most of his time he devoted to the school. Ulkhvurgyn offered me raw frozen walrus meat for breakfast. I had never before eaten this hard meat, and could not force myself even to taste it then. But to refuse meant to insult the hospitable host. I had to invent an ailment of the stomach. Ulkhvurgyn readily agreed, for he knew that I was not accustomed to eating walrus meat, but he would not believe that it can hurt the stomach. He even laughed out loud when he heard my explanation. The expression on his face seemed to say: "You are a grown up, but you talk nonsense."

"Well, so be it. Have some tea, and some *kav-kav* with it," he said.

Kav-kav are flat cakes made of wheat flour and seal fat. *Kav-kav* is far from being tasty but it is edible, its only real shortcoming is the absence of salt, just as in all Chukchi food.

After breakfast we went to Tnecheigun. Seated in a corner, the runaway girl was sewing something. She looked very embarrassed when she saw us, and lowering her head she began to work with her needle even more industriously.

"Veemneut is sewing fur boots for herself, eh?" Ulkhvurgyn asked. He stretched out on the furs and good-naturedly continued to tease the girl.

"The girls need strong boots. It would be difficult to run away from the *yaranga* of the *tangi* in poor boots," he said. Veemneut looked at us from time to time and frowned.

"That's nothing! We will put walrus skin soles so the boots don't spoil from running away," her father said.

"Only boats and the *yaranga* roofs are made of walrus skins, not boots!" Veemneut hastened to retort to her father's joke.

"That's the kind of soles we will fix for you."

In her own *yaranga* Veemneut felt herself much more courageous. She understood the jokes well, and grew more talkative.

"Why did you run away without telling me?" I asked her. "If you wanted to go so badly you should have told me about it. I would have called your father and he'd have taken you home on a dog sledge."

"Don't know," she answered.

A little later Veemneut told me the story of their flight. In the beginning everything had been interesting at school. Then all things became familiar and she grew very homesick. The children could not muster enough courage to talk about it. They thought they would never see the *yaranga* again. To run away in the evening was also frightening. What about wolves? But they did think of this possibility and took a box of matches from Lyatuge, planning to light matches at the sign of danger. For emergency, in case of a blizzard, each took a piece of walrus meat from Lyatuge's supplies. In a word, the flight turned out to be a well-conceived and organized affair. They did not confide in Lyatuge since they did not trust him and thought he might give them away. If a blizzard should catch them in the tundra, they would wait in the snow till it blew over. On the eve of their flight the girls saw the *yarangi* in their dreams.

"Just the same no wolf would think you great hunters," Ulkhvurgyn said.

"But we would have used the matches!" the girl retorted hastily.

I proposed to Ulkhvurgyn that he come to the Cultural Base with me.

From the moment I left for the chase after the runaways, to my

very return, all the children were in a state of great excitement.

The fact that the girls had left, or that something might happen to them troubled them very little. To be more exact, they were not concerned with this possibility at all, since they knew that the girls would safely reach their settlements. They were impatient to see how all this would end, what would be the final result of the entire incident.

That night the teachers did not sleep in their homes, but kept a vigil all night.

The girl teacher was more upset than anyone else. She let her imagination run riot, and thought the girls would freeze in the tundra, and the parents would then come, and there would be no end of trouble.

"Before we know it, the children might run away to their settlements at night," she said. "What with those little girls who ran away in the evening. We must adopt more serious measures to safeguard the children."

When they were all in bed, all doors were locked stealthily so that the children might not notice it.

In the morning, as our sledges drove up to the Cultural Base, the children rolled from the roof tops like an avalanche. Since early morning they had been up there, keeping a lookout for sledges from Yangadai.

Before we stepped out of the sledge, the children surrounded us. They immediately showered us with questions.

Ulkhvurgyn kept silent as though his mouth were full of water. We had agreed that he was not to answer individual questions. He was to address the children at the general meeting.

His persistent silence agitated them greatly.

"Why do you keep quiet? I am not going to speak Russian any more if you continue to do so," threatened Tayet Khema.

After this "ultimatum" we announced that all the children were to gather in the classroom for a general meeting. They assembled slowly and unwillingly.

At the meeting I told them first of all that the children who had fled were home and that they would soon return to us. I then told them that they mustn't leave, as the girls had, for one could freeze in the clothes they wore at school which were unsuited for remaining outdoors for a long time. Besides, wolves might attack them. If anyone had a great desire to go home, he should tell the teacher about it.

The children listened carefully, but time and again they kept looking at Ulkhvurgyn.

They were evidently more interested in the strange position which the chairman of the settlement Soviet had adopted. This position, from their point of view, was entirely inexplicable. He sat next to me and would every now and then confirm my words with short exclamations:

"Yes, that's true!"

At home almost all the children smoked or chewed tobacco. They also smoked in school, since it was impossible to conduct an offensive on all lines simultaneously. Had we forbidden them to smoke they would have run away long ago.

Now, at the meeting, the children also smoked, and some chewed tobacco which their parents had brought them.

When I finished, Ulkhvurgyn beat the ashes out of his pipe, put it away in his pocket and began to speak. He behaved with exceptional calm and reserve. Ulkhvurgyn understood the sentiments of the children, he well knew their

psychology. His deliberate speech with long pauses, during which a dead silence reigned, was very convincing and comprehensible to every pupil.

The very fact that Ulkhvurgyn at last spoke cheered up the children. They thought Ulkhvurgyn was angry with them because of the runaways, and felt ill at ease. As soon as Ulkhvurgyn finished, many voices exclaimed: "No, no, we won't do it." "The runaways had no brains." The entire collective condemned the two girls.

At the meeting the children reconciled themselves to their fate. But longing, an irresistible longing haunted them.

They hadn't seen their *yarangi* for many days. A vacation should have been out of the question, for the children had arrived at school quite recently and the school had begun work after a considerable delay. However, the depressed sentiments of the children were felt at every step and we decided to arrange for a short vacation.

The very same day we assembled the children in the class room and I told them:

"Boys and girls! Tomorrow we shall go with you to your *yarangi*. We will come as guests of your fathers and mothers, your brothers and sisters. The teachers will live together with you in your settlement until you return to the Cultural Base. We will be your guests for three days and then return to the school."

The faces of the children lit up with great joy, and their eyes sparkled.

"How good!" they all shouted.

Without waiting to listen tc anything else—they wanted nothing else—the children jumped from their seats and ran out of the class room. Jumping about gaily, they dashed like young reindeer through all the rooms of the school.

A Chukcha reindeer herder

They were impatiently waiting for the end of the day to fall asleep as soon as possible, so the night might pass quickly and the morning come, when they would start for home.

To shorten the passage of time and to leave a good impression of the school, we decided to utilize the evening to the best advantage. We had a cinema apparatus and films. In the evening we organized the first showing of a movie. The children had no conception of this magic machine which "makes life on walls." They watched all preparations for the evening with great interest.

When everything was ready and the children seated, the hall was completely darkened. The children, thinking that some great sorcery of the *tangi*, unknown to them, was about to begin, raised a tumult.

They recalled that the windows in the bedroom were draped so that the shine of the moon would not penetrate. "Most probably the *tangi* trying to throw off the track the evil spirits, the *kele*," the children thought. "When the *sha-*

man beats his tambourine the lights are also extinguished in the *yarangi.*"

The darkness did not last long, and before the children had a chance to really grow frightened, the cinema projector threw a shaft of light on the screen. "Now it's beginning! It is dark all round and only the wall has light which extends through the whole room."

A large circle was formed on the screen, it expanded and spread over the entire wall. Everyone grew silent at once. It became dark again and immediately a picture appeared, a big reindeer, bigger than a real one! The children had seen pictures in books and now they were surprised only at the size of the reindeer and at the fact that he was suspended on the wall. The reindeer on the wall looked like a real one. And then, a turn of the handle, and the reindeer began to move. He lifted his feet and shook his big antlers.

"It's beginning now!" The children sat quietly, afraid to budge. The reindeer disappeared, and an entire herd came into view instead. The reindeer moved about, their antlers knocking one against the other, they pawed the snow with their hoofs, found moss, ate it!

As soon as the reindeer herd appeared on the screen, all the children grew excited. They could not refrain from exclamations; they lost all control over themselves.

"Here is where it is beginning—the sorcery of the *tangi shamans.*"

The faces of the children, their mouths agape and eyes wide open, expressed fright, amazement and indescribable elation. The chilren looked at the film and then turned to the "cracker," the dynamo. One teacher was turning something there and the other was helping him. The sorcery was very unusual.

For the beginning we picked a film depicting life familiar to the children. To show a picture of life unknown to them was impermissible for they would have been scared to death.

They were watching familiar tents, reindeer, seals and walruses, for the film showed them a world of things magical but comprehensible.

When a boat, an icebreaker came in view on the screen, with thick black smoke pouring from its funnels, the children felt that they could almost touch it. It seemed to them that they could hear the thunder of the crushing ice floes. And when the boat moved in the direction of the auditorium all the children jumped out of their seats and ran to the wall. The boat moved about on the screen, but remained there and soon disappeared entirely.

The people on the screen moved about, worked, spoke, waved their hands, but no words could be heard.

"Live, white little devils," this is how the adult Chukchi describe films.

The moment the film was finished the children were taken to their bedrooms, but they could not fall asleep for a long time. Long after midnight one could hear the whispering of the children: they spoke about the film, discussed the plan for tomorrow's homecoming, relishing in advance all the pleasures of the next day.

Early in the morning, long before the usual rising time, the children were sitting on their beds, ready for the departure. They even decided to give up breakfast if only to start out sooner.

And just as early in the morning all the Chukchi parents came from the settlements on dog sledges. They were even more overjoyed with the vacation than the children. We were surprised at their

swift arrival. How did they learn that we were sending the children for a vacation? The decision had been adopted only the night before.

The secret was discovered later. A Chukcha had applied for work that evening and he learned from the schoolchildren that they were to go home in the morning. This was news of such importance that the Chukcha deemed it his duty to immediately inform the parents. It was his good fortune to learn such important news. He ran to the nearest settlement. There were many people who were glad to spread the good news, and the moment they learned about the vacations they started out for other settlements. Dog teams were driven from settlement to settlement throughout the night and the news was spread swiftly.

The first sledge bounded into the Cultural Base directly from the mountains. It dashed by at high speed near the living quarters and stopped at the school entrance.

No sooner did this sledge come into view than the children started a big tumult: "They're coming, they're coming!"

All the children ran out of the building. I also came out to meet the first dog sledge and was greatly surprised to see Ulkhvurgyn step out of it.

"Where did he come from, and for what occasion? There is no child of his in the school!" I thought to myself.

I invited Ulkhvurgyn for tea and for the usual little chat.

"Ulkhvurgyn, the children are dying to go home and do not even wish to have breakfast," I told him.

"No breakfast is needed. Can eat home. Now have to drive home fast."

Before we had a chance to drive up to the settlement, we heard shouts:

"They've come, they've come!"

This cry was taken up by the entire settlement. In their clumsy clothes the women dashed about the settlement, spreading the news. Not understanding the cause of the excitement the dogs and puppies whined furiously, but ten minutes later when the guests arrived they took an active part in the rejoicing of the Chukchi.

We stopped near Ragtyyrgyn's tent. His wife, Rultyna, rolled out of the tent half naked. This usually clumsy, slow moving woman now resembled a fox which had found its lost offspring. Beaming with joy the mother seized Rultynkeu and carried him into the tent.

Inside, the boy was undressed, but none of the *shaman* signs, painted before he was sent to school, had remained on his body. They had been washed off, and he came home dressed in our clothes. Having looked her son over, Rultyna again embraced him and began to smell him. The mother's great love and her overflowing joy found expression in this smelling, the equivalent of kisses on the Big Land.

When Ragtyyrgyn had loosed the dogs he climbed into the tent and asked with great surprise:

"And where is tea?"

"Oh, I have forgotten!" exclaimed Rultyna, and became busy at once.

To forget to put up tea even for "unimportant" guests was something incredible. Whenever visitors arrive tea is prepared almost automatically. The moment a woman hears that someone is driving up to the *yaranga*, even an enemy, she immediately puts the tea kettle over the pot with burning seal fat. But this time, seeing her son back home, she forgot her duty.

Rultynkeu sat in the center of the tent, with his two sisters, one

a year older and the other a year younger than he, and his five year old brother. The children were very quiet and looked with great curiosity at their changed brother. At the beginning they looked at him sideways, silently and cautiously. But soon they could restrain themselves no longer and began to feel the shirt and pants brought by Rultynkeu from school. With no less curiosity was he scrutinized by his greyhaired grandmother. It was difficult to ascertain whether she was displeased by the unprecedented innovations, accepted them with complete indifference or whether she concealed her approval. The old woman remained motionless on the furs, the extinguished pipe almost falling out of her hands.

Rultynkeu himself sat silently and did not move. He tried to show off with his new suit, and did not mind having everyone examine him, but his indifference was feigned. Soon he unbuttoned the collar of his shirt, displaying his underwear. He sat calmly puffing his cheeks a bit and evidently enjoying the feeling of his superiority and dignity.

He removed his clothes and remained in his underwear, and a half hour later removed this also. Now Rultynkeu assumed his usual appearance at home.

The tea boiled.

Suddenly Rultynkeu remembered that he had something else with which to surprise his people! He took his trousers, took a handkerchief out of the pocket and began to rub his nose, though there was no need for it.

I must admit that I had not expected such a turn of events and could not keep from laughing.

Rultynkeu was embarrassed.

"What's so funny about it?" he said. "Don't all the *tangi* rub their noses with white cloth?"

He put the handkerchief back into the pocket and ordered his little brother to take the trousers to the corner. The brother willingly fulfilled this mission, crawling on all fours to the corner, and remained there to guard the strange trousers!

Rultyna climbed out of the tent and came back with a delicacy for her son, something she had been saving for him for a long time. This was a raw frozen eye of a seal. The children always fought over this dainty morsel, but now no one dared to claim it. On the contrary, all agreed that Rultynkeu had a full right to it.

And even Rultynkeu himself considered it to be so; he put the seal's eye in his mouth.

The meeting had taken place in complete silence, but everyone understood each other well.

Only the old woman spoke to her grandson: "Your father?" she asked in a hollow voice, pointing her bony hand at me.

"Yes," he replied tersely.

I admit that this short dialogue between the grim grandmother and her little grandson, the schoolboy, sounded like sweet music to me. It told me a great deal, first and foremost that notwithstanding their grim nature and amazing ignorance, these people, even this old woman, regarded us well, with confidence.

They all believed that I was maintaining the school at my own expense, and thought I was a very wealthy man. The idea that the state provides for its schoolchildren was hard to grasp for the Chukchi.

When I came out into the street, a group of children, our pupils, crowded around Ragtyyrgyn's *yaranga*. They ran over to me, silently took me by the hand, pulling me toward them. This was an invitation to the *yarangi*, and

all invitations had to be accepted.

We visited all the *yarangi* and in each one spoke at length on the one and only topic, the boarding school, and all along we drank tea endlessly. To refuse tea is to insult the Chukchi host. We, of course, would not insult the parents of our pupils.

The old man, Tnayrgyn, walked about the settlement, looking into every *yaranga* where there were schoolchildren, and thought with satisfaction that his was the first settlement to see the light. He was in this a wise old man and never yet gave poor advice to his people. The old Tnayrgyn was proud of himself that he had not failed in this important matter, for it was he who had insisted that the children be placed in school.

Once back in their *yaranga*, the children immediately forgot all about their homesickness. They gladly told the old man about the interesting life in the wooden *yaranga* where they were happy, well taken care of, and where no one mistreated them.

"I was sure of it all along. I knew that it would be good for you there. An old man would never advise you bad, never teach you bad," Tnayrgyn would say and go to the next tent to repeat these words.

For three days the teachers lived in the Chukotka settlements. They went hunting for seals, caught fish with hooks and line together with the children.

While living with the pupils and their parents these three days I was planning our future work. Here I conceived the idea of inviting some old Chukcha woman to work in our boarding school as a nurse. It seemed to me that this measure would cement our relations with the Chukchi, and that this elderly woman could play a big part in handling the little problems of everyday life. We assembled the parents for a meeting, and I outlined to them my considerations about a nurse who would be their "eye" in the school.

The proposal was enthusiastically endorsed.

"That's very good!"

"Let Rolchina go!"

"Let Panai!"

"Let both of them go!"

This meeting was well attended and for the first time women took part in the social life of the settlement. How could they stay away from this meeting? It was a matter concerning the lives of their children. Ordinarily Chukchi women did not participate in the affairs of men, but no one dared to encroach on their rights at this meeting.

It was decided to send Panai to the Cultural Base.

She was a woman of about fifty, of good health. Her face was so tattooed that it was half concealed under the blue designs.

Panai herself insisted that she go, for she had five grandchildren at the school.

Some twenty-five years ago an exhibition was held in Seattle. Panai was then recruited by an American schooner, and, together with her husband and the household, formed an "exhibit." But she had acquired no culture in this big city.

Panai was as filthy as all the Chukchi of her age. Her greasy clothes had the odor of pickled walrus skins.

But there was no choice. All that remained for us to do was to attempt to re-educate also the old Panai.

This "object for training" was unusual and very difficult, but the fact is that everything here was unusual and difficult. Not-

withstanding her trip to America, Panai had retained all the prejudices of her people. "*Klyukum minki?*" (What can be done?) is what the Chukchi usually say in such cases.

With all her negative traits, we needed her. Panai had to become the connecting link between the pupils and the teachers, and the course of events would prompt us how to handle her.

The remarkable days of our stay in the settlement came to an end, and it was time to prepare for the trip back to the school.

It seemed as though the children were changed. They prepared for the return trip willingly. Now, living away from the Cultural Base, they grew somewhat lonesome for our atmosphere. The parents were sending their children to school but were by far not as worried as they had been before.

Throughout the settlement the *shamans* spread a rumor to the effect that the "evil spirit in the *yarangi* of the *tangi*" did not molest the children only because the *shamans* took the "necessary" precautions. Judging by all signs the school was becoming a profitable source for the *shamans*. For who would begrudge a fox skin to prevent any evil befalling his child at school?

Still, when the children were now being fitted out for the trip, it so happened that they were not smeared with sacred dyes, and the ritual was limited to beating the tambourine.

All the inhabitants of the settlement, from the youngest to the oldest, came out of the *yarangi*, and we started on our way amidst the hubbub of many voices.

Along the way I asked Rultynkeu's father:

"Why weren't the children smeared?"

"*Kop!*" He answered with a trace of fright in his voice. "Have probably forgotten."

"Well, nothing bad," I said "I think the *shamans* are fooling you plenty. On the Big Land the *shamans* also used to fool the people, but now they have been driven out. And life has become much better. They used to do nothing but eat a great deal and drink even more."

It was the first time then that the Chukcha listened to such daring thoughts, and he did it not without some timidity. "Why, the *shaman* might know what the hunter was talking about right now," so he probably thought. On the other hand I felt that this Chukcha could not but help believing everything I was telling him. He himself had seen that the *tangi* really treated his child well, and this evoked confidence.

After listening to me, Ragtyyrgyn said:

"And our *shamans* also have lots of food. The hunters bring them the best meat and best furs."

"And they work little?" I asked.

"Yes. The strong *shamans*, those do not work at all. They only beat the tambourine, call the walrus to our shore, heal the people. They always have lots of food, furs, too."

"Lenin, the one I told you about, said that no food should be given to those who do not want to work." And then I related to him the story of our Revolution, how the poor defeated the rich and did away with them.

Ragtyyrgyn became engrossed in thought.

We drove up to the Cultural Base where many dog sledges were already waiting for us. Soon the elderly Panai, the new employee of the boarding school, arrived.

TIKHON SEMUSHKIN

The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition

Tens of thousands of Moscow dwellers as well as visitors from all parts of the Soviet Union crowd to the Agricultural Exhibition opened here in August. It vividly demonstrates before the Soviet people the tremendous achievements of the collective farm system. It shows the squalor and ignorance of the village of tsarist times, and, in contrast to it, the cheerful and prosperous collective farm village of today.

The collective farm villages have sent remarkable examples of peasant arts and crafts to the Exhibition. Everywhere one sees fine frescoes, rich carpets, panels, sculpture, exquisite carving in wood and bone, delicate embroideries. All the republics and autonomous regions of the Soviet Union, from the frozen North to the sub-tropical districts, rival each other not only in the agricultural field, but also in showing the cultural growth of the village, the advance in the cultural standards and needs of the peasants, and in their arts and crafts.

The great Soviet plant wizard, I. M. Michurin, as painted by the artist A. Gerasimov

A review of collective farm amateur theatrical and musical groups is going in on the Exhibition grounds. Each republic and region is represented by its best, its most accomplished ensembles of singers, dancers, actors, and tellers of folk tales, in Moscow.

"There is no doubt that an exhibition like this has never been seen anywhere," Petrass Zvirka (a Lithuanian writer) says in "The Literary Gazette." "It is difficult, indeed, not to be excited over it. No matter what pavilion you may visit, you are at a loss to know what to admire most, the painting of the ceiling, the mosaic parquet and rugs, the remarkable frescoes, panels and sculptures, or the yet more splendid fruits and vegetables, the golden gifts of collective farm orchards, gardens and fields. . . . All-Union Agricultural Exhibition is too modest and unimposing a title. For this is a wonderful fairy-tale of Socialism triumphant. . . ."

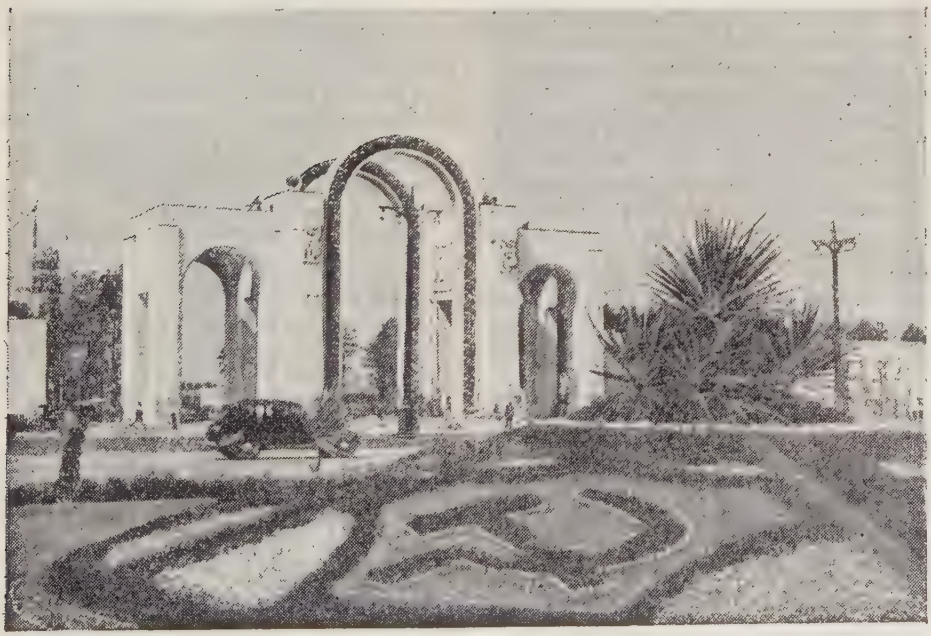
This statue of an Oirot woman was carved whole from the trunk of a cedar by S. Padolsky. It stands in the Siberian pavilion.

Right: Statue of worker holding aloft a copy of the "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)" in front of the Press Pavilion at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition

Below: view of Collective Farm Square at the opening of the Agricultural Exhibition

Tower with sculpture near the main pavilion at the Agricultural Exhibition

An Uzbek girl, member of an amateur state farm and collective farm song and dance ensemble performing at the Exhibition



Arch at the main entrance to the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition

NEWS AND VIEWS

U.S.S.R.

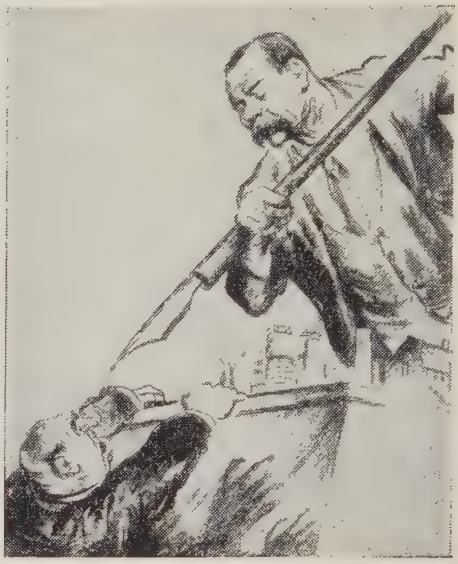
IN MEMORY OF GORKY

The press and public organizations throughout the Soviet Union widely observed the third anniversary of the death of Maxim Gorky, that great literary artist, father of Socialist literature, who was foully done to death by enemies of the Soviet people. Newspapers and magazines were full of articles, reminiscences, documentary material and unpublished works of the great writer.

Literary evenings devoted to Gorky's life and work were held in clubs and palaces of culture in the capital and other large cities. A contest for the best readings from his works was arranged in the Gorky Central Park of Culture and Rest, Moscow. A cycle of Gorky broadcasts, organized by the All-Union Radio Committee, included radio versions of his plays, *Vassa Zheleznova* and *Summer Cottagers*, as well as the following lectures: *Gorky's Path Through Life, Gorky the Founder of Socialist Realism* and *Gorky the Friend and Comrade-in-Arms of Lenin and Stalin*.

The Institute of World Literature of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. devoted two days to lectures on Gorky. M. Yunovich's paper dealt with a work written by Gorky in 1907-08, *History of Russian Literature in the Nineteenth Century*. Only the rough draft of this history was preserved; certain chapters and pages were lost. But I. P. Ladyzhnikov and Yunovich have restored the sequence of the exposition and the work, now ready for the press, is to be published soon. Another noteworthy paper in the Gorky series was that of Academician I. Luppol on the writer's didactic poem, *Man*, written in 1903. This philosophical work in verse was in its day an original militant manifesto issued by the young writer and humanist. A paper on Gorky's unrealized plan for a story, *Son*, was read by the Leningrad scholar S. Kastorsky. Gorky intended the story as a sequel to his famous *Mother;* in one of his letters he wrote that Lenin had given him the idea of writing *Son*. Gorky, however, did not put his plan into execution; only a few preliminary sketches for the story remain, in which he treats of a revolutionary worker.

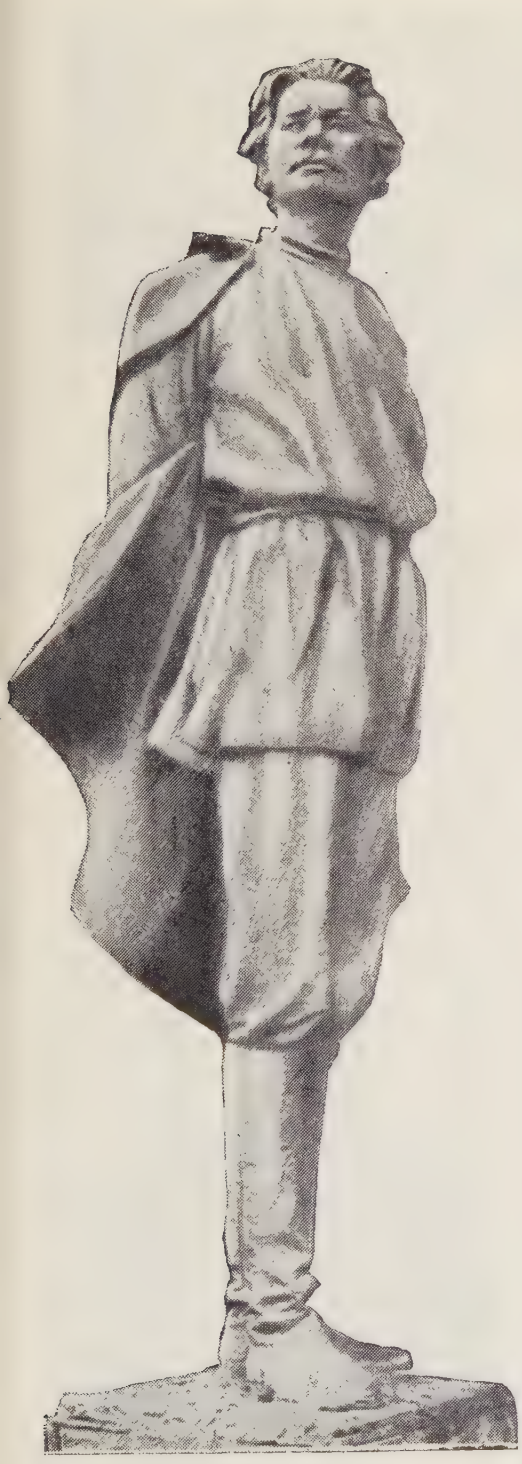
The public commemoration of the anniversary of Gorky's death in Kiev, Kharkov and other cities of the U.S.S.R. was marked by productions of his plays in professional theaters and factory clubs, special exhibits and lectures. In the writer's home city of Gorky (formerly Nizhni Novgorod) the City Soviet held a special plenary meeting, attended by about a thousand representatives of public organizations, Stakhanovites from the factories, and intellectuals. Gorky museums were dedicated in a number of places, among them at the village of Manuilovka in the Ukraine, where Gorky lived in 1897-99. The museum here has assembled exhibits connected with the writer's residence in the locality.



"Gorky and Capitalist." Drawing by Fred Ellis. The original is at the Moscow Museum of New Western Art

According to figures released by the All-Union Book Chamber, 38,570,897 copies of Gorky's books were issued in sixty-one languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. between the time of the October Revolution in 1917 and April 1939. Yakutians, Abkhazians, Kalmyks and other Soviet peoples who had even no alphabet before the Revolution, now read Gorky in their own language.

The Gorky Archives, established two years ago at the Institute of World Literature, have been made into a veritable treasure-house of material for study of the writer. They contain some 65,000 documents, including manuscript works of



By V. Mukhina

the author, his letters, reminiscences of him and the like. Documents flow to this point literally from the whole world. Here are the letters of many Russian writers, actors, musicians, artists and scientists; the correspondence of many years with Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse; lengthy and most interesting letters from Stephan Zweig, H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Theodore Dreiser and other well-known writers.

Among all these epistolary treasures one comes upon documents and letters of the most unexpected and unusual character. A commission on the erection of a statue to Heine in Düsseldorf considers itself bound to consult Gorky; he receives letters from the Society of Friends of Rabindranath Tagore and the Mark Twain Society; the Tom Mooney Defense Committee applies to the proletarian writer for assistance; the American Geographical Society and even the Brazilian Association for Aiding Inventors ask his advice.

DESIGNS FOR MONUMENTS TO MAXIM GORKY

Some twenty-six designs for monuments to Maxim Gorky, the work of outstanding Soviet sculptors, are now on view in an exhibit recently opened at the Gorky Museum in Moscow. By a decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., monuments to the great author are to be erected in Moscow, Leningrad and Gorky (the former Nizhni Novgorod), cities where Maxim Gorky spent the most important periods of his life, where his literary, political and public activities took place.

Most of the sculptors who submitted designs went beyond the bounds of the contest and presented two or even three variants, besides separate figures or busts of Gorky. The most imposing entries are those of V. Mukhina, the sculptress whose figures adorned the Soviet pavilion at the International Exposition in Paris, and I. Shadr, both of whom have succeeded in presenting an exceptionally convincing portrayal of Gorky.

Mukhina's design is for the monument to be erected on Gorky Street in Moscow. On a high pedestal, the figure will stand out in sharp silhouette; the molding of the head is particularly well done. It is undoubtedly the best portrait of Gorky, expressing the loftiness and daring of his thought, and his unconquerable will power. The composition includes a figure

of one of Gorky's characters, the dying Danko who holds aloft the flaming heart he has torn from his own breast to light the way of mankind.

Shadr has submitted two different designs for the monument to be placed in the city of Gorky, the first of which is similar in treatment to Mukhina's design. But there is more of volition than intellectuality in Shadr's figure of Gorky, and the rendering is simpler, more direct. Gorky has looked up, greatly moved, from a book he has just read, and the passionate, receptive, emotional sides of his nature are well expressed by the sculptor. He is not only a keen observer of life, he wants to remake and rebuild it. The figure seems to have drawn back a little, as if ready to spring and deliver a blow.

Among the designs for a monument in Leningrad are those of M. Manizer, V. Domagatsky and two young Ukrainians, L. Muravin and M. Lysenko. In Manizer's design, the pedestal is decorated with reliefs on themes from Gorky's works. Domagatsky has adorned the austere pedestal in his design with the words, "Great son of a great people."

CLASSIC WRITERS WIDELY READ IN U.S.S.R.

How widespread is the interest of the Soviet public in classic works of Russian and foreign literature—a fact already known both here and abroad—is shown both by book publishing figures and by the number of articles on such subjects that appear in the daily press.

There is a steady and still unsatisfied demand for classic works of literature, notwithstanding the fact that such books are issued in editions totaling literally millions. Taking a few examples from among foreign writers alone, we find that 3,500,000 copies of Victor Hugo's books have been issued in the Soviet Union; Maupassant, about 3,000,000; Romain Rolland, about 2,000,000; Dickens, 2,000,000; Anatole France, 1,500,000; Shakespeare, more than 1,000,000; Heine, 1,000,000 copies, etc.

As for the newspapers, in the two months of April and May this year practically every paper in the U.S.S.R. printed articles on various classical writers. The articles dealt with Shakespeare, Balzac, Anatole France, Beaumarchais, Flaubert, Byron, Henri Barbusse, Charles de Coster, Shevchenko, Saltykov-Shchedrin and Sholom Aleichem. Among foreign classical writers, Shakespeare was the subject of the greatest number of articles. Next in order were Byron, Balzac and Beaumarchais.

By M. Manizer

The Uzbek Dance and Song Ensemble

FESTIVAL OF KIRGHIZ ART IN MOSCOW

With the participation of more than three hundred actors, singers, musicians, popular bards and improvisors, and story-tellers who have kept alive the epic poetry of the Kirghiz people, a ten-day festival of Kirghiz art in Moscow scored a great success.

Moscow spectators saw leading representatives of the art of the Kirghiz people in a series of performances that gave a vivid idea of the blossoming of culture in that Union republic, and showed the poetic imagination of a people who for the first time are experiencing the joy of a free creative growth. It is comparatively recently that Kirghizia was perhaps one of the most backward and oppressed tsarist colonies. With cruel persistence, tsarist officials persecuted the popular bards and actors of this subjugated colony. The great Kirghiz singer, Toktogul Satylganov, was exiled to Siberia by the tsarist government; leading *akyns*, or people's bards, were met with blows and insults. Among those who experienced this unbearably hard life were many who are now still alive and prospering: the *akyns* Kalyk Akiyev and Alymkul Usenbayev; the famous musicians Murataly Kurenkeyev and Karamoldo Orozov and a splendid actress, Kanymkul Aibasheyeva.

In the brotherly family of peoples of the Soviet Union, Kirghiz culture has blossomed forth exuberantly, and in a short period the republic has been transformed. It has produced its first writers, dramatists, composers and poets. Last year alone forty-five original works by Kirghiz writers were published. Classics of Russian and foreign literature are available in the Kirghiz language and read by the Kirghiz people who in the past were nearly all illiterate. The republic has seventeen theaters, of which the Kirghiz Musical and Dramatic Theater is deservedly very popular. There are a Kirghiz State Philarmonic Symphony and a number of music schools, while many gifted young Kirghizians are studying various branches of the arts in Moscow schools.

The program of the Kirghiz art festival in Moscow included the musical dramas, *Altyn Kyz (The Golden Maiden)* and *Ajal Orduna (Not Death But Life)*, and their first national opera, *Aichurek (The Moonlight Beauty)*.

Written by a young Kirghiz playwright, D. Bokombayev, *Altyn Kyz* depicts the prosperity of the collective farms and the relentless struggle of the collective farmers against the remnants of enemy classes. It was produced by a young Kirghiz director, O. Jetykashbayev, and the sets are by a Kirghiz artist, Aitiyev. Composers V. Vlasov and V. Fere, who are Honored Art Workers of Kirghizia, wrote the music on the basis of Kirghiz popular melodies, and a number of the songs are now popular in the cities and collective farms of the republic.

In *Ajal Orduna*, too, music plays a prominent part. Composers Vlasov and Fere have again made extensive use of folk tunes and have introduced a considerable number of polyphonic choruses. The libretto, written by Yusup Turusbekov, tells of the tragic flight of more than half a million Kirghiz into China, after the uprising of the Kirghiz people against the tsarist government had been crushed in 1916, and of their return to their native land after the Great October Socialist Revolution.

The first Kirghiz opera, *Aichurek*, is based on themes from the *Manas*, the great Kirghiz epic which has long been tremendously popular among the people. The libretto deals with one episode of the epic, the legendary tale of Semetei, son of Manas, and his bride Aichurek,

daughter of Akhun Khan. Colorful and charming, this ancient folklore theme brings to the stage beloved characters in whom the Kirghiz people have embodied the traits they held in honor: the brave and noble Semetei, who frees the people from the yoke of the invader Toltoi, the seer Bakai, personifying the wisdom of the people; the gentle Aichurek, who carries her pure love for Semetei intact through all the trials that beset her. The production of Aichurek in Kirghizia was a memorable event in the history of the national culture. The audiences saw their favorite heroes brought to life in this colorful opera.

Among the outstanding performers, the Soviet press has made special mention of A. Maldybayev, tenor; A. Botaliyev, baritone, praised for his interpretation of heroic roles; A. Kuttubayeva, soprano, who in *Ajal Orduna* plays the part of Zulaika, the young girl who is sold to a Chinese mandarin for half a sack of flour. Her interpretation of "Zulaika's lament" is very popular with Kirghiz audiences and invariably evokes tribute of tears and enthusiastic applause. Honored Artist of the Republic Saira Kiizbayeva has a splendid lyrico-dramatic soprano voice; her natural gifts and her feeling for music show to good advantage in her performance of the role of Aichurek. This young singer of twenty-two, who came to the theater but recently from a collective farm, has already won a name for herself throughout Kirghizia.

Scene from "Aichurek"

SOVIET TEACHERS ARE DECORATED BY GOVERNMENT

For outstanding services in the field of Soviet education and the training of children in village schools, for exemplary conduct of class work and active participation in public affairs in their rural communities, 4,331 teachers have been decorated by the Government of the U.S.S.R. Among them 408 received that highest award, the Order of Lenin.

Soviet teachers, of whom there are 969,000, represent a foremost section of the Soviet intelligentsia; they are devoted fighters for the upbuilding of the Socialist society. In tsarist Russia, primary and secondary schools had a total enrollment of 8,000,000, in the Soviet Union today there are 30,000,000. The appropriations for popular education in 1913 amounted to a miserly 204,900,000 rubles, or 1.20 rubles per capita. In 1938 the U.S.S.R. spent more than 20,000,000,000 rubles for education, or 118 rubles per capita.

Particularly striking are the changes that have taken place in village schools since the establishment of the Soviet Government. It is enough to point out that enrollment in rural primary and secondary schools now totals 20,800,000, or two and a half times as many school children as in all tsarist Russia in 1914. Among the 20,607 new schools built during the Second Five-Year Plan period, 16,353 are in rural localities.

One of the most important tasks of the Third Five-Year Plan, as outlined at the Eighteenth Party Congress, is to complete the introduction of a universal ten-year education in the cities, and of seven-year education in the rural districts and all national republics. The total enrollment in primary and secondary schools in cities and industrial settlements is to grow from 8,600,000 to 12,400,000 by the end of the Third Five-Year Plan period, and in rural districts from 20,800,000 to 27,700,000.

To teach and train these tens of millions is no easy task. The army of teachers already at hand will have to summon all their strength and energy for it, and a tremendous number of new forces, approximately 550,000 to 600,000 men and women, will have to be added to that army.

The Soviet press was particularly gratified to note that many awards went to outstanding teachers among the non-Russian nationalities. It was significant of the change from the days when in the former tsarist colonies schools dragged out a miserable existence. A striking example of rapid growth of Socialist culture is furnished by the Tajik Republic, where under tsarism only one-half of one per cent of the people were literate and school enrollment totaled 369; in 1938 the schools of this republic had 257,240 pupils and more than 10,000 teachers.

IN THE NATIONAL REPUBLICS

The state of literature among the Crimean Tatars and a survey of prose, verse, plays and translations now being produced by Tatar writers there formed the subject of a recent report read at a meeting of the Union of Soviet Writers.

According to A. Derman, the speaker, the Simferopol writers' organization includes a large group of poets, dramatists and prose writers. Among the works they have contributed to Tatar Soviet literature are two volumes of verse, *The Earth Smiles* and *Songs of a Red Cossack* by Shamil Alyatdinov, who is also the author of a number of prose writings. From his pen comes *Shalanda*, a story for older children, which was awarded a prize in a contest of Crimean writers.

Rakhim Tyncherov's play, *The Altaians*, has been produced by the Tatar State Theater. Yusup Bolat is writing a historical novel dealing with the legendary Crimean robber Alim, about whose name cluster many melodramatic stories. The author aims to use historical and documentary material to give a true picture of his hero.

Osman Amit recently published a collection of children's verse and a book of his poems for adult readers entitled *The First Furrow*. Amdi Alim is doing a great deal of translation from Russian and foreign classics into the Tatar language; works by Gogol, Turgenev, Ostrovsky, and Shakespeare's *Othello* are among the productions he has made available to Tatar readers. A long poem on Stalin is being written by Maksud Suleiman, author of many verses about the Civil War.

Where the Altai and Sayan mountain ranges meet, live the fifteen thousand Shors people. Like other nomads of Siberia, they had not even an alphabet before the Revolution; their country was called a "region of ruin" by N. Naumov, writer on Siberian life and customs, and they themselves had a song which ran:

Lost in the taiga far, a man
Lived out alone his whole life-span;
And in the forest where he was born
He died—with not a soul to mourn.

Today the Shors people not only have their own alphabet, but their own writers

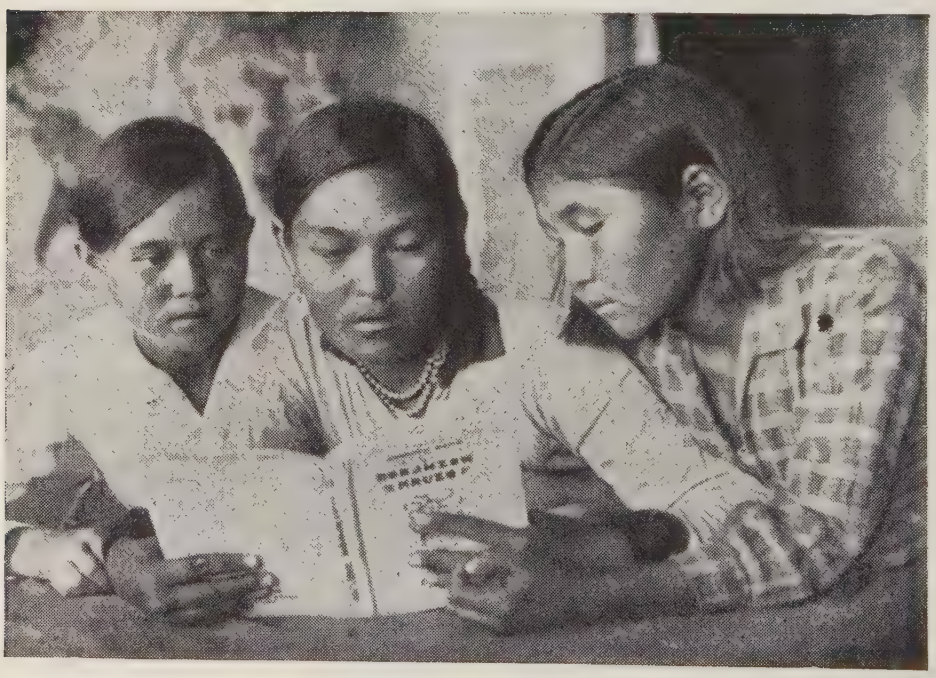
and poets as well. A Novosibirsk publishing house has issued a book by the Shors writer F. Chispiyakov, containing a number of his stories and a collection of verse. Other young writers of this people have published prose and poetry in periodicals, and translations of their works, as well as Russian versions of Shors folk tales, are now available for Russian readers. On the other hand, the writers of this Siberian people are translating Pushkin, Gorky and Tolstoy into their own language.

Among the seventy-one persons awarded Orders and medals by the Soviet Government for distinguished services to Kirghiz art, are such talented representatives of the republic's young literature as Kubanychbek Malikov, Tokobayev Moldogazy, Musulmankulov Moldobasyan, Karalayev Sayakbai and others.

Following the exposure and driving out of the bourgeois nationalists, Kirghiz writers have begun gradually to master the style of Socialist realism. They are making a thorough study of their material, in order themselves to comprehend and then to tell their readers of the complex changes in the psychology of yesterday's downtrodden nomads, who today are well-to-do collective farmers, valiant border guards, Stakhanovites of the mines, engineers and scientists. The Soviet man is becoming the central figure in Kirghiz literature.

Many works are devoted to the October Revolution, to the struggle waged by the Kirghiz people together with the Russians under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, and to the emergence of the new Socialist man. Defense of the country is another popular theme. Outstanding among such works is G. Samanchikov's play about a frontier collective farm, *Bermety's Sons*; a poem by T. Sydykbekov, *The Night Herald*, telling of a brave border guard who defends his country against frontier-violators; and a collective poem, *Immortality*, dealing with a mountain shepherd who takes part in the Civil War and later becomes a distinguished statesman.

The first Kirghiz fiction for children includes T. Umetaliyev's *Alpkarakush*, adapted from folklore themes. The *akyns* or popular bards, A. Usenbayev and K. Akiyev have, in addition to composing many songs, done a great deal of purely research work for the study of folklore. A piece of work most significant from the historical point of view is the preparation of Kirghiz and Russian



Kazakh schoolchildren read "Robinson Crusoe" in their own language. They are pupils of a secondary school at the town of Nizhni Baskunchak

editions of the great popular epic, the *Manas*.

A people's poet who has seen the old order with its oppression and strife overthrown and a new and better life come to take its place, is the hundred-and-five year old Kasbot Bagyr-ulu Kochkarov, who lives in the Caucasian mountain *aul* (village) of Krasny Karachai.

Situated among lofty and almost impassable peaks in the Karachai Autonomous Region, the *aul* is reached only by a path which winds dizzily through the canyon of the Aksaut River.

The venerable poet has seen a whole epoch in the life of his Karachai people; he well remembers how severe was the oppression of the *bais*, the local landowning gentry, and the *mullahs*, or Mohammedan clergy; he remembers, too, the bloody national dissension of those days.

But Kasbot, who has preserved his vigor and youthful joy in life, has lived to see his people happy and prosperous. Every day he sees realized hopes which he formerly hardly dared entertain. Hence springs the old man's profound love for the new life, for his happy fatherland. When the anniversary of the October Revolution was being celebrated in the *aul*, Kasbot spoke at a collective farm meeting in the name of the old men; with swarthy, wrinkled countenance uplifted, he sang the following lines:

Into our hearts he gladness brought;
United poor men; all he taught
To love their labor as they ought;
Our land's defense 'gainst foes he wrought.
All joy to Stalin is my wish. . . .

He homes upon the poor bestowed;
And on the landless lands bestowed;
And on our children schools bestowed;
And fram'd our law's sagacious code.
All joy to Stalin is my wish. . . .

HELPING YOUNG WRITERS

Poets, writers and critics took part in a meeting at the Central Committee of the Leninist Young Communist League to discuss problems of aiding young writers in their creative work. Shortcomings in teaching these beginners in the literary field, as well as certain mistakes the young men and women themselves make, were brought out by the discussion.

Critics and writers warned young people from too early a decision to devote themselves to a professional writing career.

"It often happens with us," said Y. Dolmatovsky, "that a person begins to write, writes—let's say—twenty successful poems and already makes up his mind that he is a writer, becomes less exacting of himself and as a result remains stuck on dead center, never doing better than his first literary attempts. The regrettable fate of such writers is not their fault alone, but in very great degree that of our critics, who have praised the writers extravagantly instead of giving, at the proper time, a sober and objective estimate of their first literary efforts."

Professor V. Kirpotin spoke along the same lines. "Here in the Soviet Union, thanks to the splendid opportunities for work afforded to writers, they can turn professional very early. But the young worker in the arts, if he wishes to create something artistically valuable and worthy of the Soviet era, should himself fight against launching too soon on a professional writers' career, for such a step is very harmful to an artist."

NEW BOOKS

"MAC CUMHAIL'S GUARD"

Attention is called by the press to the publication of the first Russian historical novel dealing with Ireland's movement for national liberation, *Mac Cumhail's Guard* by Evgueni Lann. It treats of the early Fenian period in the sixties of the past century.

This new Soviet historical novel, says critic L. Borovoy in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, "is undoubtedly a talented and profound book. . . . The plot moves slowly and as if with difficulty; historical digressions are constantly stopping its flow. It covers the events of a few years, but Lann tells nearly all the history of the Irish people as he proceeds (among other things, the ancient legend of Finn Mac Cumhail which gives the novel its title).

"The central figures are very well characterized; they are endowed with many and often conflicting traits; sometimes they act entirely out of tune and spoil their own 'portraits,' just like real people.

"Evgueni Lann's book is not a chronicle but a novel. He has tried, and frequently successfully, to show what his characters found 'for themselves' in the common cause, what they thought of their times, their comrades and themselves."

THE RUSSIAN THEATER BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

Portrayal of theatrical life in pre-revolutionary days furnishes the background in a new biography of a famous actress, *Kommissarzhevskaya (The Russian Theater Before the Revolution)* by D. Talnikov, issued by the Art Publishing House.

Talnikov's biography traces V. F. Kommissarzhevskaya's stage career and analyzes the roles she created. At the same time a number of chapters are devoted to such features of theatrical life at the turn of the century as the state of drama criticism, the early days of the Moscow Art Theater and the like.

"POETS OF AMERICA"

A new anthology, *Poets of America: Twentieth Century*, compiled and translated by Mikhail Zenkevich and Ivan Kashkin, has just been issued by the State Literary Publishing House.

It contains verse by the founders of American revolutionary poetry, whose activity dates from the period of the so-called "poetic revival," (Carl Sandberg, Edgard Lee Masters, Robert Frost), as well as a number of poems by younger revolutionary writers—Langston Hughes, A. B. Magil, Joseph Kalar.

"The aim of our collection," the preface states, "is simply to give the indispensable material without which a further study of American poetry of the twentieth century is impossible. We therefore limit the scope of our selection in the main (except for Edward Arlington Robinson) to the twenty years from 1910 to 1930."

NEW TRANSLATIONS OF WHITMAN'S PROSE

On the occasion of the hundred and twentieth anniversary of Walt Whitman's birth, the Moscow literary paper, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, revealed that Russian translations of the American poet's prose works were in preparation by Kornei Chukovsky. These works will be included in the new, tenth edition of his translations from Whitman, which offer the Soviet reader the most complete collection of Whitman's works yet published in the U.S.S.R.

The edition will also include a letter from Whitman in 1881 to an unknown Russian translator of *Leaves of Grass*.

The newspaper points out the significant fact that Whitman in this letter sends his greetings not to the Russian people alone, but to the "great peoples of Russia."

ANNIVERSARY OF SALTYKOV-SHCHEDRIN

Meetings and lectures throughout the country were held to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the great Russian satirist, M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin.

In Moscow a memorial session was held under the auspices of the Union of Soviet Writers, the Academy of Sciences and the All-Union Committee on Arts. The meeting was addressed by the well-known writer, Academician Alexei Tolstoy, and by Professor Valery Kirpotin.

The extent of these meetings and the great numbers attending were a fresh indication of the popularity of the great satirist's works among the reading public. From 1917 to 1938 inclusive, 180 of his works have been published in 24 languages of peoples of the Soviet Union, comprising a total of 5,587,000 volumes. But in the twenty years preceding the Great October Socialist Revolution, only 39 titles were published, and all the editions totaled 65.000 copies.

COLLECTIVE FARMERS PRESENT PLAY IN MOSCOW

The Moscow Theater of People's Art recently was host to an unusual visiting troupe, a group of collective farmers from the village of Podoleshye, Gdov District, Leningrad Region, who produced their own play, *Old Times in Gdov*.

The plot of this folk play is simple. Katya, the heroine, loves a fine, spirited young chap named Yemelyan but her father gives her in marriage to a rich widower, the miller's son. Katya has to accept an unloved, but rich husband. The wedding takes place. Toward the end of the celebration Yemelyan appears, but it is already too late; the girl's fate is decided.

But this simple plot holds the audience enthralled because of the play's natural, vivid, realistic qualities. The plot is but the groundwork on which is embroidered a rich pattern of folk songs and dance. One press comment points out that "when you listen to these simple, musical songs, you understand the soul of our people; it is revealed to you in all its beauty, its charming originality."

The peasants of Gdov Uyezd (as it was called in the past) long ago tried their hand at dramatic performances. In 1896 they presented a play, *Yermak*, which

From the new production of the Georgian opera, "Abesalom and Etheri," at the Bolshoi Theater, Moscow. Here is the scene at the wedding celebration in the palace of King Abio

was soon suppressed by the tsarist censor. Two years later they put on another play, *Stepan Razin*, and at the beginning of the century *Emperor Maximilian*.

The years of the World War interrupted the artistic activities of the Gdov peasants for some time. It was only after the October Revolution that folk art found real opportunity to develop. In the winter of 1917, Z. Savelyev, a teacher, initiated the organization of a community center called *Zvezdochka* (Little Star), with more than three hundred singers and players on the accordian and *gusli*, an ancient instrument similar to a psaltery. Savelyev collected old ceremonial songs and proverbs which gave vivid expression to the former life of oppression and want in the old village. Old men and women sang to him the former wedding songs and he wrote them down. In this way the present play, *Old Times in Gdov*, gradually took shape.

There is not a professional actor among the collective farm troupe which presents this play; all the participants are from Podoleshye and surrounding villages.

Collective farm life today, freed from the curse of want, materially secure and happy, has brought dozens of new talents to light in Gdov District. Their songs, too, are different, reflecting the joy of the life they live. The troupe who present *Old Times in Gdov* have ambitious plans. The next work they intend to tackle is to be a play on the Soviet village, showing the new, prosperous life of the collective farmers and their devotion to their country, to the Red Army and to the great Stalin.

OPERATIC PRODUCTIONS

GEORGIAN OPERA IN MOSCOW THEATER

An opera which is deservedly considered an outstanding classic of Georgian music, Z. Paliashvili's *Abesalom and Etheri*, has met with a warm reception in a Russian production by the Bolshoi Theater, Moscow's state opera house. The opera's theme of fidelity and sacrifice for love's sake makes it akin to the immortal stories of Tristan and Isolde, Romeo and Juliet, Paolo and Francesca. . . .

The legend on which *Abesalom and Etheri* is based is one of epic simplicity. Hunting in the mountains, the crown prince Abesalom and his vizier Murman meet Etheri, a peasant girl, and this encounter marks the beginning of profound love between the heir to the crown and the peasant girl. But during the marriage ceremony Murman, who has also fallen in love with Etheri, presents her with a

charmed gift which causes her to fall ill. No one but Murman himself can heal her, and Abesalom lets Etheri go to Murman; after curing her, the latter keeps her imprisoned in his crystal castle. Abesalom pines away from grief and implores Etheri to come back to him; when at last she does return, he dies in her arms and she stabs herself.

The action of the opera, as brilliantly staged by R. I. Simonov, unfolds like a sublime and epical tale of days long past. Y. Shaporin, the composer, writes as follows of the production:

"In the first act the librettist's somewhat naive development of the action has hindered the composer from showing the full originality of his style. But beginning with the second act and continuing to the last page of the score, the music continuously mounts and reaches its culmination in the last scene—that of the death of Abesalom and Etheri.

"The vocal parts of the opera are written with expert knowledge and furnish rich opportunities for the singers. True, for Russian singers the captivating melodic line of Georgian music is unusual because of the wealth of ornament, and therefore difficult. Purity of intonation and vocal flexibility are among the basic qualities that audiences demand of a singer; and the melodies of *Abesalom and Etheri* very greatly raise the degree of excellence required on these points. Persevering work by the singers under the direction of A. Melik-Pashayev brought substantial success in overcoming these difficulties. Nevertheless, in the ensembles abounding in the opera, the singers' intonation is not always faultless. . . .

"The sets designed by V. Ryndin contribute to the success of the production. The mountain scenery of the Cauacasus, the king's palace, the stairway in the third act—all are treated most originally, with severe and noble simplicity. . . . Dances were splendidly staged by ballet-master D. Javrishvili.

"On the whole, it must be stressed that the production of *Abesalom and Etheri* is an important and profoundly gratifying event. The freshness and nobility of the opera's music, the novelty of its characers and its rich vocal material are a real find for singers, and through them for audiences."

YOUNG COMPOSER'S FIRST OPERA

The musical talent of young Tikhon Khrennikov is confirmed, critics say, by his new opera, *In a Storm*, recently produced by the Nemirovich-Danchenko Musical Theater, Moscow. The libretto is an adaptation by A. Faiko from *Solitude*, a novel by a young writer, N. Virta.

Press comments agree that most of the characters in the opera are clearly and expressively drawn, but the characterization of Antonov and Kosova, enemies of the people, is not successful. Antonov is a caricature and Kosova is schematic, lifeless. The general structure of the libretto is termed satisfactory, but certain scenes are shaky and overloaded. The text, too, is uneven, dialogue of considerable power alternating with trite "operatic" verse in a crude "peasant" style.

Pravda comments: "Khrennikov's music is highly talented. The richness of intonation and the variety of very tuneful airs that fill the opera reveal the young composer's gift for melody. His harmony is clear and rich in contrasts. A lofty note of passion is characteristic of Khrennikov and this adds to the impression created by the opera and enriches the musical characterization of his heroes.

"V. Nemirovich-Danchenko, who directed the production, and regisseurs P. Zlatogorov and P. Markov have put the breath of life into the performance. The people, the heroes, all the characters seem to live on the stage. And the fine romanticism of a revolutionary epic pervades this vital musical drama. It is felt in the music, in the progress of the action and in the sets designed by artist Volkov."

TATAR OPERA THEATER OPENS

In Kazan, capital of the Tatar Autonomous Republic, the new Tatar State Opera Theater has opened with the premiere of the first Tatar opera, *Kachkyn (Fugitive)*, by the young composer Nazib Zhiganov. For the first time in history, Tatar audiences are hearing opera in their own language, a circumstance which the Soviet press appraises as a great cultural triumph.

"Everything is young in the Tatar Opera Theater," writes D. Zaslavsky in *Pravda*. "The young composer, Zhiganov, graduated only last year from the Moscow Conservatory. Almost all the actors —trained by the Tatar choral studio of the same conservatory—are young. Zhiganov's music has a wealth of dramatic expression and deep lyricism. *Kachkyn* is a genuine opera, in the better, classical sense of that word. *Kachkyn* is a national opera. The folk character of the opera never once disagrees with its musical representation; this is not, as sometimes happens, a national ethnographical piece in a framework of modern orchestration. Zhiganov is a Tatar composer with a quite fluent mastery of the cultured

language of music, and he has made the heritage of the great Russian classics his own.

"The theme of the opera is an episode from the Pugachev peasant war. Bulat, a serf of the woman landowner Bieke, flees to Pugachev and becomes his lieutenant. The peasants await his return with impatience so as to rise in rebellion. Raikhana, who loves Bulat, pines during his absence and then hides him from the mistress and her savage overseer Ablai. She behaves bravely under torture, showing herself a true comrade for Bulat. . . . The opera closes with the triumph of the rebellion.

"The Tatar follower of Pugachev is a dramatic figure of stern heroism. Events follow one another in rapid succession and with unremitting suspense, holding the spectator. There are no feeble or empty spots. The peasant songs and dances are organically woven into the musical fabric of the opera. Its whole tone is vigorous and elevated."

SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY OF IVAN MOSKVIN, FAMOUS ACTOR

His whole artistic career inseparably linked with the Moscow Art Theater, Ivan Moskvin, famous Russian actor and Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., was widely honored in the press on his sixty-fifth birthday.

His stage career began in September 1893 and from the establishment of the Art Theater in 1898 he has played in all its most important productions. Moskvin's name occupied first place in the theater's first program, when he played the title role in *Tsar Fyodor Ioannovich*, the opening production. He awoke the next day to find himself famous, and since that day has continued to be a distinguished member of the Art Theater troupe.

Moskvin as an actor is distinguished by the sweep and scope of his art. *Pravda*, leading Soviet newspaper, writes of him:

"Moskvin is stern and merciless toward falsity on the stage. He maintains that the actor must clearly understand the social position of the person he is called upon to act. He must know precisely who that person is: nobleman, merchant, peasant or proletarian; for a man's social position makes a tremendous impression on his entire character and appearance. If the actor neglects this, he will surely strike a false note in his role. In adhering to these principles Moskvin is following the same broad road of realism as those great teachers of realism on the stage, Shchepkin and Stanislavsky."

This amusing doll represents the famous actor of the Moscow Art Theater, I. M. Moskvin, in the role of Khlynov in «An Ardent Heart». The doll was made by the workshops of the Art Theater and presented to Moskvin

YOUNG SOVIET MUSICIANS

A recent concert recital by the music schools of Moscow called attention once again to the outstanding place which young musicians occupy among the talented youth of the U.S.S.R.

The doors to professional musical education are open to all children who show any gift whatsoever, and a great number of distinguished youthful musicians have been trained since the establishment of Soviet power. Among them are winners of all-Union and international contests who are already widely known here and abroad.

Each year brings an increase in the number of music schools. There are now 27 in Moscow with an enrollment of 8,600.

Nor is musical education lagging in the provinces. For instance, the music school in the city of Kirov, with an en-

rollment of 533, recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary.

At a recent recital given by the Moscow music schools, the program ranged from solos and duets to orchestral and ensemble pieces, with violinists, 'cellists, players of the harp, *dombra* and other instruments taking part. The program selections included Russian and foreign classics and the works of modern Soviet and foreign composers.

The most striking feature of the concert was the performers themselves, from eight year old Inna Perlin to seventeen year old Lisa Monakhova, and the excellence of their rendition in both solo and group performances. The program opened with the singing of the *Internationale*, by the clear and well-trained voices of a united children's choir from a number of the capital's music schools under the direction of A. Kapulsky. They also gave a splendid rendition of the song of the Polovets maidens from Borodin's *Prince Igor* and of a new song, *Forward With Our Beloved Stalin*, written by Kapulsky.

People's Artist A. Goldenweiser, director of the Moscow Conservatory, writes in an article in Izvestia:

"The interpretative art of our youth is distinguished for its healthy joy of life, and embodies features of true artistic realism. It is just this that has helped our young people win a number of brilliant victories in recent years in difficult and important musical contests."

FILM SHOWS LIFE OF ACADEMICIAN PAVLOV

Work is drawing to a close in Leningrad on the filming of a long documentary picture dealing with the world-famous physiologist, the late Academician Ivan P. Pavlov. The authors of the film, Professor Andreyev, one of Pavlov's students, and Director Golub, have produced a striking screen characterization of the great scientist.

The film is introduced with Pavlov's own words: "Whatever I do, the thought is constantly with me that in this way I am serving, as far as my strength permits, my native country above all, and our Russian science. This is at once the strongest of incentives and the most profound satisfaction."

Ivan Pavlov devoted thirty-five years to study of the higher nervous activity. The film shows his research with dogs as his subjects and his celebrated series of experiments on chimpanzees. "Observe and observe again" was Pavlov's motto and whatever he was doing—reading a lecture, playing the Russian game of *gorodki*, or performing an operation—he was always absorbed in it to the exclusion of all else.

From the first the Soviet Government and the great Lenin fostered science and

A concert of musical school children in Moscow

helped the men who were blazing trails to a new, happy future. As the country grew richer, millions of rubles were appropriated for Pavlov's work. The splendid newly built Pavlov laboratories at Koltushi are shown on the screen.

. . . . A brief announcement, "On February 27 Academician I. P. Pavlov died at Leningrad." A warm telegram of condolences sent to Seraphima Pavlova by Joseph Stalin and Vyacheslav Molotov. With these the film ends.

NEW COMEDY FILM IN COLOR

Well-rounded, naturally-colored faces of the actors are termed the greatest achievement of a new Soviet color film, *The Fair of Sorochintsi*, produced by N. Ekk from Gogol's immortal tale of the same name. But critics are unfavorably impressed by the color work in the exteriors and speak sharply of the picture's failure to catch the humorous spirit of Gogol's work.

Faithful rendering of the color of the human face gives a tangible, sculptural quality, but landscapes are less happily treated in the picture; trees, sky, clouds, fields have a faded appearance and the restricted range of colors gives something of a picture postcard effect.

Izvestia mingles praise for the mass scenes with outspoken criticism of the lack of humor in the film. "In his scenario, Ekk has diverged from the paths of popular comedy so clearly suggested by Gogol. *The Fair of Sorochintsi*, therefore, is not amusing; the audience laughs very rarely, hard though it is to imagine Gogol deprived of laughter. Ekk is successful with his mass folk scenes; the best bits in the film are those where the director portrays Sorochintsi and its inhabitants' life and character with broad, colorful brush strokes. The fair itself is splendidly done with its rendering of the merry, tumultuous, many-voiced crowd. The direction is excellent in these scenes and reaches a high pitch of artistic expressiveness. However, the director was aiming to produce a 'lyrical comedy'; and the hearty, sparkling, vigorous mass scenes are followed by 'lyrical bits' distilled from sugared water. This is not Gogol's lyricism, with its romantic flights and fiery hyperbolization of feeling, but a kind of cold and conventional lyricism, sentimental and high-flown. These sentimental interludes and the many special numbers drag out the action, ruin its movement and distort the plot; and suddenly the whole picture seems to have been transformed from a popular comedy into a stage show with dances, chorus and corps-de-ballet. The plot is Gogol's, the action takes place at the fair in Sorochintsi, the characters bear the names Gogol gave them; but for all that, this is not Gogol's *Fair of Sorochintsi*."

FILMS IN PRODUCTION

Work has begun on a historical-revolutionary film, *The First Cavalry Army*, dealing with that famous episode of the Civil War in 1920 when the cavalry under the leadership of Stalin, Voroshilov and Budyonny broke through the Polish front and freed Zhitomir and Berdichev. The scenario is by Vsevolod Vishnevsky and the director is E. Dzigan.

Preparatory work was very extensive and included several journeys by the group taking the picture to the actual ground over which the First Cavalry Army fought. Artists made sketches and photographers recorded the landscape on films; assistants of the director interviewed eye-witnesses of the battles and inspected the historic locations. Old documents, photographs and reminiscences were studied.

The role of Stalin in the film will be played by Golfstab, an actor of the Kirov dramatic theater.

Shots on location will be taken in the Kuban. More than five thousand people will take part in the main battle scenes, reproducing the fight to free Zhitomir and Berdichev from Polish occupation.

A film soon to be released for the screen, directed by B. Barnet from a scenario by I. Chekin, deals with the first days of the Stakhanov movement, so carefully fostered by the late Sergo Ordjonikidze. The picture shows the heroism of youthful workers in the Donbas coal fields as they fight for high productivity of labor against machinations of enemies and the stagnation of routine. The part of Orjonikidze is played by a Georgian actor, Abkhaidze.

CULTURAL NOTES

The Moscow Union of Artists has arranged a special exhibit of paintings, water colors and etchings to be shown to Red Army men in the Far East. Some

five hundred works by Moscow and Leningrad artists were sent to Khabarovsk, where the exhibition opened at the end of June.

The Yaroslavl Regional Executive Committee has decided to hold a regional literary contest, with prizes for the best play, tale, short story, poem and song. Contestants are to write of the past and present of the region.

The puppet theater of the Kazakh Republic has produced a dramatized version of *Utegen-batur (Utegen the Hero)*, from a poem by Jamboul Jabayev, famous people's bard. The veteran folk singer is now helping the theater produce another piece based on one of his poems, *Talpar the Magic Horse*.

The Voronezh Union of Soviet Composers has accepted as members a group of talented women chorus leaders from collective farms. One of their number, a collective farm woman named Lebedeva, has written the music for songs which are sung in the collective farms all over the region.

The Karelian Cultural Research Institute has collected thirteen thousand works of folklore. In the last two years the Institute has sent out eleven folklore expeditions, which have written down dozens of new folk tales.

CHINA

GORKY IN CHINA

"Gorky has come to be like their own writer for the Chinese people," writes the *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Moscow, pointing out the large circulation of his works in that country, "for he is close and understandable to them. Gorky's ideas and sentiments, his ardent love for man and grim hatred of the enemy—these are the qualities that make Gorky near and dear to the Chinese people."

China first became acquianted with Gorky in 1917, when the first Chinese translations of his works appeared. These early translations (by the noted Chinese philosopher Hu Shih and by Chow Kuo-siang) did not, however, give a proper conception of Gorky, for they were retranslated from English or Japanese translations. It was only at the end of 1919 that more or less accurate translations began to appear.

Mother, translated by Chen Kwang-siang, soon won tremendous popularity. In newspapers, magazines and special editions, almost all of Gorky's important works began to appear in translation, and

"The Eighth People's Revolutionary Army of China Everywhere Organizes the Masses of Workers and Peasants." Drawing by the Chinese artist Lu Syao-fi

then his articles, letters and stories. *My Childhood* ran through ten editions from 1930 to 1937. *My Universities, Foma Gordeyeff, Forty Years—the Life of Clim Samghin* and collections of stories have been issued repeatedly. Some hundred and thirty Gorky titles have been published in China and his translators include some of the best Chinese writers—Lu Hsin, Tsu Tsubo, Mao Tung and others.

A whole group of younger Chinese writers have grown up on Gorky's works. Tiang Kiung, known for his splendid novel of partisan warfare in Manchuria, *A Village in August*, says that Gorky's writings exercised the greatest influence on his literary development. The writer Shu Tiun also speaks of the influence Gorky had on him.

"In all their creative work," the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* continues, "their efforts to build up a 'defense literature' as a mighty, active force in the national revolutionary war, the Chinese writers have shown that they know how to hold Gorky's banner aloft. When Gorky made his proposal for the production of the book, *A Day of the World*, Chinese writers at once took up his initiative. In the same year under the editorship of Mao Tung, great contemporary writer, appeared a large volume, *One Day of China (Chungoli Izhi)*, clearly reflecting the readiness of the people to fight for independence.

"When Gorky's appeal, 'With Whom Do You Stand, Masters of Culture?' was heard in China, all the country's progressive intellectuals turned to follow the proletariat. They helped to organize the numerous organizations of the united front and the Association for National Salvation. To Lu Hsin's appeal to 'turn the rifles against the common enemy, since this is the main thing at present,' they responded by going to the masses to agitate, argue and teach them to see the common enemy—Japanese imperialism and the internal traitors and betrayers of the fatherland.

"Maxim Gorky lives not only in the many cultural institutions, schools and organizations which bear his name in China; he lives, too, in the greatness of the cause for which the great Chinese people are fighting. . . ."

THE PRESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE JAPANESE AGGRESSOR

In the two years of war for liberation carried on by the Chinese people against the forces of Japanese imperialism, the press—both political and literary—has grown into a mighty weapon of struggle for the country's independence. Today newspapers and magazines supporting the platform of the united national front are being issued in all large cities.

It would be difficult to list all the various publications, many of which are tremendously popular and have circulations unprecedented in China. For instance, the paper *Salvation* (*Chuwanji Pao*), which was published first in Shanghai, later in Canton, and after the fall of Canton in still another place, sells in 100,000 copies. In Shanghai the editorial staff included representatives of all political groups; the editor was Han Fotsiang, professor of Funan University. In Canton, the editor was the writer Sha Yang, a translator of Gorky.

The magazine *Resistance* (*Dikan*) has a circulation of 60,000. It is published in Chungking and edited by Tsao Taofeng.

In September 1937 the four largest literary magazines in Shanghai merged to put out a literary and political journal, *The Beacon* (*Fengho*), edited by the noted writer Mao Tung. It won great popularity from the first.

Later other publications appeared uniting the Chinese intelligentsia. In Hankow, till it was occupied by the Japanese, the magazine *Jusi* came out, edited by Hu Feng, a literary critic; in the same city another magazine, *Chan Di*, was published under the editorship of Ting Ling, a woman writer who had worked in the ranks of the Eighth People's Revolutionary Army. A magazine called *Literary Positions* (*Wen Ichendi*), which is edited by Mao Tung, is now appearing in Hongkong.

There are a number of other splendid magazines such as *Woman's Life* published by the United Association of Women's Organizations; *Resistance to the End* published by the Left intelligentsia grouped about General Feng Yu-hsiang; *Counter-Attack* published by the Association for the National Salvation of Manchuria. There are also hundreds and thousands of wall newspapers, special army papers and the like, which spread the ideas of the triumphant United Front.

It would be difficult even to estimate the number of printed and handwritten papers being issued in the rear of the Japanese army, in partisan areas and in Manchuria. In the "conquered" province of Shansi alone there are forty-five anti-Japanese papers and a number of handwritten journals. The staff of the Eighth People's Revolutionary Army has been issuing a large newspaper for more than a year.

BULGARIA

FORBIDDEN ANNIVERSARIES

The Russian edition of *International Literature* publishes the following letter of a well-known Bulgarian writer:

"The difficult social conditions under which Bulgaria's progressive writers have to live and work, police persecution, harsh censorship—all this made it impossible to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the literary and public activity of George Bakalov,[1] one of the most distinguished Bulgarian writers and publicists. Bakalov is known in Bulgaria as a keen writer on public affairs, a literary critic, historian, popularizer of Marxist literature and ardent friend of the U.S.S.R. Even in the most remote village, you are sure to find some of his books.

"Born in 1873, Bakalov began his literary career toward the end of the 'eighties. He was active in revolutionary circles of the time. Thoroughly understanding the necessity of a fundamental grounding in Marxism, he took up the translation of Marxist classics. He has made hundreds of translations from the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and others. The translation of the first volume of Marx's *Capital* into Bulgarian is his. At the same time he was working on the popularization of Darwinism and the translation of Russian and European classics (*Faust*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Mother* and others). For many years Bakalov has edited first one, then another leading organ of progressive thought in Bulgaria, such as *The New Way*, *New Literature*, *The Star*, *The Worker's Friend*. He is the founder of a genuine literary movement and has encouraged scores of young poets and writers to fruitful creative work.

"The attitude of the bourgeoisie to Bakalov is far from friendly, and the reactionary government does everything possible to paralyze his literary and public activity. Many of his works have been banned by the censor. The reactionary Bulgarian authorities forbade any celebration of Bakalov's anniversary for fear it would prove to be an impressive demonstration of all the popular forces in behalf of the democratic traditions of the Bulgarian people, in the name of love for peace and freedom; and at the same time would be an expression of profound gratitude to the man who has devoted his life to fighting for his people's culture and progress.

"Another proposed celebration that failed to take place was that of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the literary career of Nicholas Rainov, well-known writer. Rainov is a professor of history of art at the State Academy of Arts. He has never been a Marxist or a revolutionary. From press reports, it appears that his anniversary was banned at the insistence of clerical circles, displeased by his novel *Between the Desert and Life*, in which the birth and life of Christ are portrayed in an unorthodox manner.

"There were, however, other reasons for banning the jubilee of the writer. Not long before the anniversary Rainov published in the newspaper *Zaria* (*Dawn*) a caustic article against war and the imperialists. In the anniversary pamphlet printed in his honor, Rainov says: 'In our epoch of economic disorders, struggle and the dictatorship of capital, a truly creative writer cannot write only for himself. His alarmed conscience will not allow him to remain indifferent to the fate of the peoples. He becomes a writer who is also a public man, and, in serving his art, begins to serve the highest interests of mankind.' He cites a number of writers, in the first place Romain Rolland, as examples."

[1] During publication of this issue George Bakalov died.

ARGENTINA

INSTITUTE FOR STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA

Upon the initiative of two writers, Gonsalez Trillo and Ortiz Beeta, an Argentine Institute for Latin-American Research has been founded. The new institute aims at establishing closer contact and effective cooperation among the peoples of Latin-American countries. It expects to form Latin-American unions of writers, composers, artists and architects, and to hold lectures and exhibitions.

FILM ADAPTED FROM PLAY BY GARCIA LORCA

With the screen adaptation written by Edmund Gieburg, theater critic of one of the largest Buenos Aires papers, a film has been made from the play, *Bloody Wedding*, by Garcia Lorca, the famous Spanish poet.

The role of the Mother is taken by Magarita Girgu, noted Spanish actress now on tour in Argentina, while other members of her troupe complete the cast.

The dialogue in the film is all taken from Lorca's text. The songs in the film are also Lorca's. Gieburg wrote the prologue to the picture, treating of events that are referred to in retrospect in the play.

Cover of Federico Garcia Lorca's book of Gipsy life

THE FATE OF THREE WRITERS

A well-known Argentine poetess, Alphonsina Storni, has committed suicide by throwing herself into the ocean. This is the third case of suicide among Argentine writers in a comparatively short time; the others who put an end to themselves were Horatio Quiroga and Leopoldo Lugones.

Quiroga, though born in Uruguay, had lived all his life in Argentina and was considered one of the country's best story writers. A long illness exhausted his funds and when he came out of the hospital he was literally reduced to begging on the streets of Buenos Aires. As a writer he had long been exhausted. His last works gave evidence of a "flight from reality" and complete indifference to burning questions of the present.

Hunger and poverty caused the suicide of Lugones and similar causes are attributed for Alphonsina Storni's action.

VENEZUELA

NEW BOOKS BY OTERO SILVA

Two new books by the Venezuelan writer, Miguel Otero Silva, have been published by the New Mexico Publishing House, Mexico City. They are a collection of *Revolutionary Verse* and a novel, *Fever*. In his novel Silva describes his native country with its fertile lands, its rich mineral deposits and coffee and rubber plantations.

"Look at the map," writes the author, "and you will see endless groves of rubber trees, cotton fields, impassable forests. And look at the people, see how hard they toil in these fields, creating the country's wealth with their sweat and blood. . . I look at the beautiful scenery of my country through the eyes of my heroes . . . and it is only now that I have come to know my land."

Fever deals with the life of Venezuelan farm laborers, their peonage and the cruelty with which they are exploited. The newspaper *Today* comments: "A great master of landscape, Otero Silva creates remarkable human types and characters as well. The peon Palenko, whose life passes before our eyes until he is beaten to death in prison for 'insubordination,' will forever remain in the literature of Latin America as a symbol of the insurgent people, fighting for better conditions of existence. *Fever* is a great artistic success for the author."

The same paper speaks as follows of Silva's volume of poetry: "Silva has introduced new subject-matter in his beautiful, precise and limpid verse. Many of his poems are devoted to the most oppressed toilers of America, Indians, mulattoes and Negroes."

CUBA

JUAN MARINELO IS HONORED

The Cuban writers' and artists' union has given a banquet in honor of Juan Marinelo, leading Cuban literary critic and member of the bureau of the International Writers' Association for the Defense of Culture. For four years he taught literature in the Havana Pedagogical Institute but was discharged for his Left views and political activity.

Among the prominent poets, writers and artists present at the banquet were Enrique Serpa, Luis Amado Blanco, the well-known American dramatist Clifford Odets, who was in Cuba at the time, and the Venezuelan poet Miguel Otero Silva.

On these pages we present several caricatures by the Lithuanian Left artist, Stepas Zukac. They are taken from his album, *Faces and Masks, Cartoons From Daily Life and Political Caricatures, 1934-1938*, which was published recently in Kaunas by the artist himself. In the foreword to the album, by Valys Drazdauskas, we read:

"In Lithuania, the art of caricature is just taking its first steps. Heretofore it lacked earnestness and an understanding of its mission. In most cases it was not caricatures, but only cartooning. Its humor had no sting. It was laughter for laughter's, 'art for art's sake.' It is only very recently that the Lithuanian caricature has begun to understand its real mission. In a social sense it has been growing ever richer. It now takes the floor not only on problems of domestic life, but also in regard to international events. At a time when the pure literature and art of Lithuania are still unable to raise their voice on matters of importance to all mankind, Lithuanian caricature is commenting openly and firmly on many questions of great interest to all mankind, questions that excite and harrass the most noble hearts and great minds of our epoch."

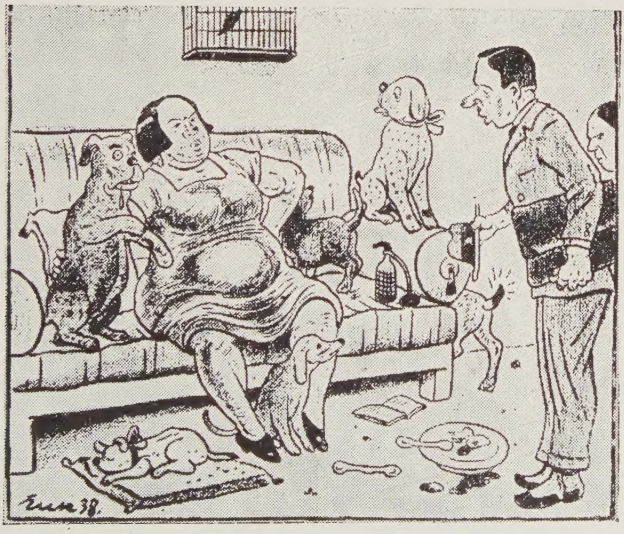
The Dance of War

The Hour of Reckoning is Nearing

CARICATURES

My Chief's Wife

Kulak



CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME
"Please, Madam, aid the unemployed."
"Don't you see how many mouths I have to feed?

About Our Contributors

BORIS GORBATOV. Young Soviet writer whose short stories and newspaper articles about the North have attracted much attention.

ANTONIO MACHADO. A great contemporary poet of Spain and faithful son of the Spanish people. In January this year he died in exile in France, sixty-four years of age.

T. A. JACKSON. Noted English writer on public affairs and Marxist critic, author of the well-known books, *Charles Dickens: the Progress of a Radical* and *Dialectics: the Logic of Marxism and Its Critics.* One of the oldest participants in the revolutionary movement in England, he is a brilliant popularizer in questions of esthetics, theory of literature and the arts.

TIKHON SEMUSHKIN. Our readers should remember the first part of *Chukotka* published in No. 6 of our magazine. Its author had taught for seven years in the Arctic Region, where he studied the life and customs of the Chukchi people.

Associate Editor TIMOFEI ROKOTOV