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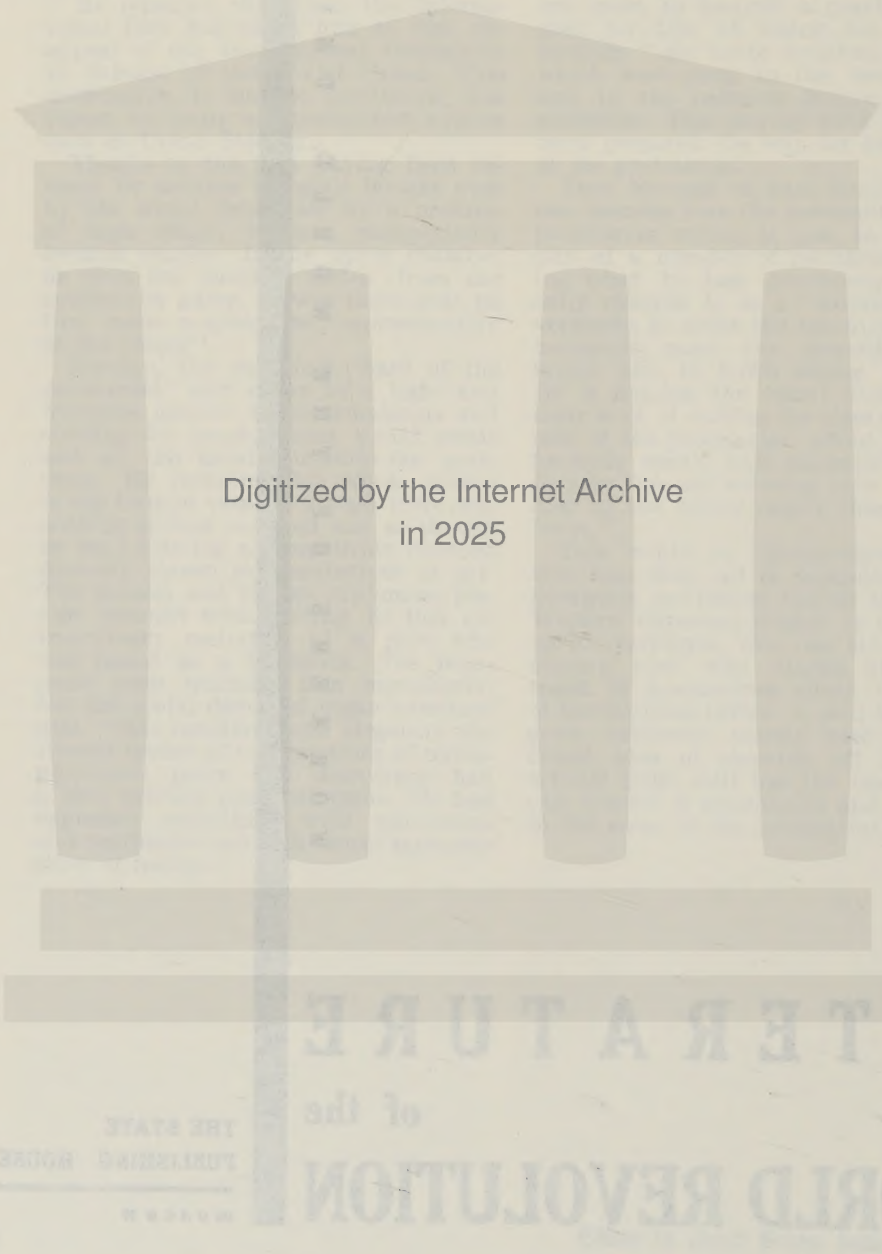

STORIES OF SHOCK WORKERS

FOREWORD

The authors of the stories included in this number of our magazine are factory workers, most of them from Moscow.

The enrollment of the shock brigade workers into the ranks of literature would have remained purely theoretical if their creative efforts had not been published.

It is extremely likely that literary connoisseurs will find many faults

The enrollment of the shock brigade workers into the ranks of literary productions of the workers before the court of literary criticism.

We are aware that our authors often try to prove in their works some point or other not by artistic means, but by the direct expression of their ideas; by propaganda. In this way their writings assume, in part, a journalistic tone.

This is undoubtedly true. But the stimulus of the literary creation of the shock brigade workers should not be forgotten. This stimulus is the desire to solve the problems facing the Soviet Union in the process of socialist construction.

The authors are front-line fighters for socialist construction. Political questions come first with them and questions of art second.

It is quite natural, then, that the prose and verse in this selection should be permeated with journalism. This accounts for the pathos that sometimes becomes open propaganda. It is impossible to speak smoothly and evenly in the heat of the fierce battle, in a war, the greatest and most important in the history of humanity, when, as one of the authors included here expressed it:

Some in their sweat
Are taming the steel rods,
And carry stone and sand
For buildings great,
While others with a sly
And vicious smile
Stick deftly spokes in wheels
To stay their course.

While we acknowledge certain defects of style to be met with in this selection, we would by no means agree to place these productions on a lower level than those of the so-called professional writers.

All the questions treated in these productions are burning ones today, and in this lies their principal social value.

May these stories act as a call to workers to enlist in the ranks of literature.

It is only natural to expect that the more advanced part of the peasants, organized in the collective farms, will follow the example of the workers and become writers also.

We are sure that the critics will help the rising worker-authors to overcome their shortcomings.

These shock brigade workers, "coming out to the proletarian literary front, will overcome all the difficulties and contradictions associated with the period of growth, and will create, within the shortest historical period, a literature worthy of their class, which through war and privations is building the road to a communistic society where classes no longer exist." (From a declaration of the All-Russian Association of Proletarian Writers).

Peter Vorobyev

BUILDING THE STALINGRAD TRACTOR WORKS

In the early morning, when a great swollen sun rocks on the steely waves of the Volga, the persistent strokes: ugh! ugh! ugh! that come from over the steppe, sound like a call.

A peasant from the village of Lebedyan, in the province of Tambov, came along with me to work. Ivan Tulupov, as he was called, frowned at the first sight of the giant building. He couldn't understand just yet the proletarian pride of ownership. But soon the greatness of the construction gets hold of him, too.

"That's fine, now. A big works. Never saw such a one in my time. It must be about five kilometers round, and more."

And his rugged, furrowed face melts into a smile.

The works is really a huge one. The area covered by it stretches from the banks of the Volga, and bends round along the sinuous banks of the stream known as Mokraya Mechetka. On the south-west, there is a fringe of high hills, where the tops of the water accumulators can be seen. A square of steppe — about five kilometers. Deserted land, every foot of it stained with the blood of workers. who fell in the struggle against Wrangel and his band. When ditches were dug here for the foundations, the remains of the heroes were found. The place is now occupied by the main shops.

The assembling-shop is a long, long one, so long that a man's voice would be lost in it.

In this department the tractors will be assembled on conveyers. An American, Calder, is the chief engineer. He used to work in Ford's plant in America. Now he says, with pride: "Every six minutes a tractor will come out of this department. Two hundred and forty every twenty-four hours. We're making a Soviet America."

Right and left are the foundry, the tool-shop, the forge, the power-station, the works' institute, the laboratory, the fire-station, the garage, yacht-club, restaurant, dining-rooms, theater, museum, and hundreds of workers' dwellings. This is to be the first socialist town in the world.

In Comrade Bogrov's brigade we don't talk any more. We are infected with the general atmosphere of delight in building. And we have no time to talk.

"Now, lads! Help us to fetch this column along."

We grasp the long ropes. Now for a long pull.

"What was desert before
Is desert no more
But a great, big factory for us.
Now lads, a long pull
Now lads, a strong pull..."

Through the united efforts of the workers the column is moved forward.

"Ho—ho—ho!" bellows the brigade leader Bogrov, beside us.

The column is dragged to its place.

"Heave!" shouts the brigade leader.

The crane, like a fine, strong steel giraffe, picks up a girder of several tons' weight. It vibrates. Its valves snuffle, its winch shrieks hoarsely. The steel ropes creak, and the girder — a beautiful single piece, rises higher and higher. Now it is very high up. A single movement — and the workers above fasten the girder with bolts.

"Down!"

This means that the steel giraffe is lowering its head obediently. The girder seems now to grow out of the two columns, and forms a fine metal arch.

Tempo. Tempo. Tempo.

Socialist construction and Bolshevist tempo have strengthened the season workers' faith in the Soviet Government, and in a good life.

"What's the bourgeois West, or gilded America, to us. We'll build ourselves. And we'll build the first socialist town in the world" — the bold young voice of Mishutka rang in the ears of the season workers.

After a good square meal in the evening some sat about, and others lay on their wooden cots in dormitory No. 823.

"Mishutka — now don't get mad. Well, we'll wait and see what'll be. Eh—ah—oh" — the old stonemason Ipat drawled out, wagging his mousey beard.

Beside him somebody mimicked, teasingly — "Oh—ho—honko-o-o."

The others laughed. Ipat said in an offended tone:

"What are you squinting your mug for? What d'you think I am, a horse? A feller. With a beard, not a mane. And you neighing there."

"Now don't get mad, uncle Ipat. Why should you take it to heart so? They fed you porridge at the dining-rooms, not poison — so why should you get mad so easy," said Nikolai.

Peter Vorobyev
Building the Stalingrad Tractor Works

"I know why Ipat's in a bad humor, lads. Ay, I know. I swear by the tractor there, I know," Mishutka affirmed.

Ipat looked in his direction, drew at his cigarette, stretched his legs more comfortably on the bed and said nothing.

"The postman brought him a letter from the village today — that's why he's in a bad humor. His sons have gone off with their mother to the collective farm, and left him. Because, although he's oldish — still he's a rum fellow."

"Shut up, I'm telling you. What harm have I done you, anyhow?" shouted Ipat and writhed on the bed. "You think I'd go in the kolkhoz? The plagues of hell on you! Bugs! Can't call 'em people. Soviet rubbish; took even the bell down from the church. All over Stalingrad took them down and at our place as well. What a life!"

"But we did it for the sake of industrialization, uncle Ipat."

"Industrialization," sneered Ipat.

Bogrov, who had been almost asleep, now raised his tousled head from the pillow and, peering at Ipat with sleepy eyes, asked:

"You always tell the truth, Ipat, don't you?"

" 'course, I do."

"You wouldn't hide anything?"

"No."

"Well, then, tell us how before the revolution you asked to take your trousers off when the police were going to flog you."

"And wouldn't you have taken them off, too?" asked Ipat. "Wouldn't you? They'd have dragged them off you, anyhow."

Bogrov sat up on the edge of his bed.

"Yes, Ipat, it's hard, isn't it? Let's overthrow the Soviet Government, eh?"

Those listening to the conversation laughed. Ipat also hid a smile in his thick beard.

"Why should I throw it down, I put it up myself?"

"Oh, that's all right. All we need is to be in agreement with each other. We can start right now. Ipat, go and get hold of the secretary of the communist cell and we'll wring his neck for him. Then we'll go, the whole barrack-full, to Stalingrad. We'll take the power into our own hands. You like power, Ipat, you'll be president, and I'll be your secretary, your right-hand!"

"Go on, make a joke of it — it's funny enough as it is. Long-eared devil!" said Ipat with a smile.

"What'll we joke about?" continued Bogrov. "You'd fetch your sons back, flog 'em so as they wouldn't bother about a collective farm any more. You'd dip your old woman in the ice-hole, or poke her eyes out — don't bring heathen sons into the world any more you'd say! Then you'd start to get things clear little by little. The same policeman would come again, just as before. He'd look round and ask: 'What are you called, eh? Ipat? Get your trousers off. Sharp, now come on'."

Everybody laughed. Ipat realized that they were just making game of him. He buried his head in the pillow, and said hoarsely.

"Well, do as you like, but I won't go against myself."

The last two words he pronounced with perfect sincerity, perhaps without realizing their significance and depth.

"All right, Ipat, let's get the tractor factory built, then."

" 'course we will," replied Ipat in quite a different tone.

The inhabitants of dormitory No. 823 went to sleep on these ideas. Snores and heavy breathing and sleepy whispers were heard oftener and oftener.

Ink-black night at the windows of the barracks. The cold September wind howled over the steppe.

Bogrov always loved at a time like this to sit on his bed while all the others slept, his legs drawn up under the patch-work quilt, and think out his own thoughts.

The people slept, sprawled about on their beds. Bogrov knew them all, individually, knew their needs and their joys.

There were moments when it was very hard for him. His whole face would be distorted with rage. He would feel like taking out a box of matches from his pocket and stealing out quietly to set fire to the building and burn the whole barrack from end to end. He gazed, for a painfully long time at one of Ipat's feet, thrust out from under the jacket thrown over them. It was rough, all in great yellow corns, deep cracks and bruises.

"How many times this foot, straining under the weight of the bricks he carried, has gone over the scaffolding and the ground. How many bricks these coarse, horny hands have laid. Times past counting. The great martyr, the season worker, Ipat, lying asleep. Sleeping, like enough, his last years."

"As soon as the new houses are finished, the workers, and only the workers, will go to live in them. These barracks 'll be all scrapped."

Pleased at this realization, Bogrov stretched himself. Sleep reigned in dormitory No. 823.

They worked day and night. Night in the steppe is grand and spacious.

Ugh! Ugh! Ugh!

The beating, and shrieking of the pneumatic hammers never ceases. There is not a silent moment day or night. The entire area of Tractorstroi has been declared an active front in socialist construction. A desperate, intense advance is being made along the whole line.

Night is drowned in a flood of electric light. The stone-crushers chew and spit out stones and slag. The screens rattle, the dust from them rises in a silvery cloud. The concrete-mixers gobble up iron puddles into the smoking mixture of cement. Iron squadrons of columns. Girders. Beam-ties. Compensators. It all seemed to have grown up out of the ground and into the blue sky.

At the forge stood the heater, Artyushka. Three of them from the young brigade of riveters. Brigade leader, Mischka Bakhirev, with his round face and snub nose, dressed in linen overalls, scrambled like a young bear over the scaffolding, round the columns. He had a pneumatic hammer. With him went his assistant, Sokolok. Then they stopped. They began the riveting of the joint of the columns.

As he was unscrewing the nut on a bolt Mishka shouted "Artyushka! I say! give us 'em hotter!"

Artyushka extracted, with the pliers, a red-hot bolt from the forge and threw it up, dexterously, like a juggler. It described a fiery curve in the air, glittered like a falling star. Mishka caught it on a scoop and stuck it in the hole in the joint. Sokolok promptly held it fast.

"Tt-r-r" the hammer beat monotonously in Mishka's hand. The rivet got rounded out, and shone like a red mushroom.

After a few minutes the joint of the column was riveted. Mishka, wiping the sweat from his face, said softly to Artyushka: "That makes three hundred and seventy rivets. You know what, go on and see how many Natolka's brigade has done."

Artyushka put down the pliers and was preparing to go, when Mishka suddenly called him back: "See you don't let 'em guess what you've come for."

"I know all that," said Artyushka, winking, and strode quickly to the other shop.

As he came up to Natolka, Artyushka looked around slyly at the bluish rivet-heads and said:

"The hammer's out of order in our brigade."

"You're a liar," said Natolka.

"What'd I lie for? Think I'd be lounging round the shops if there was anything to do? See him, messing about?" — and Artyushka made a gesture of disgust in the direction of Mishka. Then he asked: "How many rivets have you done today?" "Two hundred," Natolka replied. Artyushka rapped with his fingers on the angle of a girder, whistling softly. Then he said: "Not bad. S'pose you'll do another two hundred before you break up — an' our hammer's not working."

Artyushka took the news to Mishka: "Business over there's going rotten. Why, they're nowhere compared to us. Two hundred they've done, that's all."

"I thought as much" — Mishka smiled.

"Then we've no need to hurry. Lots o'time. Let's have a smoke, lads," Sokolok suggested.

They sat down by the forge to smoke. Without noticing how, they got deep in conversation. About girls, about the Young Communist League and so on. Time goes quickly in talking and so does American tempo. The first to come to his senses was Sokolok.

"Mish, ay! How we sit talking. And it's getting light already, the day shift'll be coming in soon."

"What the hell, we've been sitting like stumps for hours. Artyushka, heat the rivets, quick. Come on, Sokolok, up the column! Well!"

The forge had long since cooled down. When Artyushka switched on the air-conduit, a cloud of cold, grey ash flew out of the forge.

"Gone out, has it?" said a member of the committee, as he passed by on his rounds to check up the amount of work got through by the competing brigades in each department.

"Gone out" — repeated Artyushka gloomily. "Did you think it hadn't? 'Course, it's gone out," he said again, now furious.

"Getting light," said Sokolok.

"Well, of course, it's getting light, can't you see it's getting light?" growled Mishka.

The air was noticeably bluer. The electric light paled. From the lower reaches of the Volga a fog floated up, as thick as cement dust. The hooter sounded. Time. Now the tools had to be returned for the day-shift.

The boys went out silently.. As they got up to the control gate Mishka noticed a crowd round the board where the results of the socialist competition were always announced. Somebody shouted at him and jeered as he came up: "Mishka, you've slid down from the first to the tenth place. First from the tail end. Ha! ha! That's a lad, bravo!"

The laugh cut Mishka to the quick. His brows drew together and his forehead seemed to swell up in bumps. Natolka's brigade occupied first

place on the board. It had made a record of six hundred and three rivets.

Mishka turned on Artyushka and cursed him angrily:

"What sort of a scout are you, anyway, damned fool! I told you to be careful how you asked. And you believed what they told you, like a fool. Ay, you'll stay a candidate for the Komsomol for ages yet.

Artyushka shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, all right, Mishka, you needn't be so mad!"

"We'll outdo them tomorrow, by jiminy, we shall."

The boys went off to the barracks to sleep. A light, playful wind bore wisps of fog into the steppe. The steely bays of the Volga glinted in the first rays of the red sun.

A new day of toil was born amid the ringing laughter of steel.

The approaching winter threatend to stop the building of the tractor-works.

The workers said: "No. The frosts won't cool our enthusiasm." And they declared parts of the work a shock-brigade front. The season workers were drawn into the socialist system of competition. Whole families of season workers laid the brick walls.

The bearded old Ipat laid his bricks evenly, quietly. His wall grew ever so slowly. His son — Mishka — challenged him to competition through the newspaper "On with the Tractors!"

"Ay, the blackguard," said his father.

Sweat, mixed with cement dust, rolled down his face. A dormant aptitude and swift-handedness awoke in the old man. Instead of the usual three hundred bricks a shift, Ipat lays six hundred. The wall rises quicker and quicker. Then, it seemed that the old man had fizzled out and Mishka challenges again: "Six hundred and fifty."

Ipat strains every nerve and lays six hundred and seventy bricks. Mishka challenges again: "Seven hundred!" Then Ipat spat and swore — "Go to the devil, you an' your bricks!"

Mishka felt a bit sorry for the old man. He admitted quietly—"I cheated you twenty bricks, dad. I couldn't lay more than six hundred and fifty myself."

"Ugh, crook! An' I was thinking, and what if he really lays more'n me."

Pleased with his superior efficiency, old Ipat goes on laying brick on brick with assurance.

We've gone a long way now from the slow sickening tempo of tsarist days. American methods are outstripped by the Bolshevist enthusiasm of the workers. Engineer Calder says straight out: "You can do things with workers like these."

According to the plan the assembling department had to be finished in fifty days, a short enough period.

As a result of socialist competition the principal assembling-shop was finished in record time — twenty-eight days.

A speed like that might be envied by capitalistic America.

The approximate cost of the works is eighty million rubles. The main departments are finished. In 1931 our Soviet land will have tens of thousands of new tractors, of the International type, produced in this country. A sixth part of the earth will be ploughed in a new way.

Peter Vorobyev

ANGUISH

1.

"Well, how are you?"

"Not very well," growled Peter Agapitch. He stretched his long, clumsy arms and yawned so that his mate, Nikanor, could see the curving rows of teeth.

"Well, what do you think, Nikanor? — are we getting nearer to socialism or not? Eh?"

Nikanor also yawned, and droned out —

"It doesn't concern me. It's not my business. It is the works' committee's. My business is to find out about my pay, that's what!" He was silent for a minute and then added: "I'd send them to the devil with their socialism and go back home to the village."

"Ha-ha-ha! If I was you I'd have run away long ago!" laughed Peter Agapitch.

"What, you'd run off?" muttered Nikanor, and fell to thinking.

Peter Agapitch idly took up the dividers, and began to scratch out circles and ellipses on the table. Nikanor watched him for a while and then, combing out his red beard with his fingers, said in a low voice:

"They want to make Russia over again in five years. Catch up with America! Ever been in America, Peter Agapitch?"

"No. Never got as far as tha," said Peter gloomily. He sighed, remembering how, until quite recently, he had been head foreman in the works. A secret hatred burned within his heart. He turned to Nikanor and said angrily:

"See what fools we are! At first we strain at the bit like a horse, break all bounds, and then, when we cool down — we go under the same yoke and into the same mess again. Lie down! Take a good stick! Beat the fools right and left! Beat them until we drag them through to socialism!"

"God save us! What's up with you, Peter Agapitch? You can get into jail for saying things like that. I'm against the Government, myself, because I'm old. It'll soon be St. Nikolas' day, I'd like to get to the village for then, for the holiday, to a relation of mine. That's all. But if it wasn't for that, the Government's all right. You can't speak against it like that," said Nikanir, agitated.

Peter Agapitch frowned. Their ears caught the loud echo of the works' hooter:

"Too-ooo-oo."

"Hooting, devil take it, never satisfied. People are tired and want to sleep a bit longer and this damned hooter wouldn't sleep for thirty years and still wouldn't get tired." Peter, frowning, looked out of the window.

Nikanor coughed a little reproachfully:

"Still, you can't exactly blame the hooter. You might remember that when you were foreman, it was you who had the hooter put on the roof to make folk punctual and now you're cursing it!"

"Yes, it's true, I put it up. Yes, I admit I put it there for wasps like you —." Peter Agapitch shut up suddenly without finishing what he had meant to say.

Nikanor did not understand the reproach left unsaid. The door to the office opened and Kravchuk, the present head foreman, untli recently a worker, came in.

"Talking politics, Peter Agapitch? And you didn't do calculation for the worm-gear, eh? They're casting just now, there may be some delay. Tempo'll be delayed, devil take you! We may have to throw away forty tons of steel castings!" shouted Kravchuk angrily, tramping up and down the office with his heavy boots.

"Could you be a little more civil, Comrade Kravchuk, I wonder? Ludwig Smith, my former boss, was a lot more polite than you."

"Excuse me, Peter Agapitch! We went to the tsar's throne very uncivilly, too, you know, in bare feet. Yes, we did that. We valued you, Peter Agapitch! We know you, as an old expert, who came out of our own ranks — from an apprentice founder to head foreman. We know you're more competent than an engineer. We know this and we value it. Now, what more do you want, just tell us?"

Peter Agapitch's eyes gleamed with an inner hatred, his lower jaw twitched, he stretched out his right hand impatiently towards the door.

"Is it really worth chewing the rag?" he said.

Kravchuk stood up. The muscles of his chest seem to start. His hands gripped the leaf of the table. Looking straight into his burning blue eyes, Peter Agapitch added proudly:

"I'm the old wolf of the works, grey like coke. Now, or when the time comes for me to close my eyes, I can tell you — I want nothing from you. You've taken my best."

"What have we taken?" Kravchuk cried impatiently.

"My life!" and Peter went out slamming the door. He hated Kravchuk. Sometimes he would play with the idea — "Better to end by doing something cruel and terrible than die with one's hands folded. What if I was to kill Kravchuk?"

As he went into the workshop he stumbled over a mould. He stopped. The huge blast-furnace was clacking. Through a small opening, protected by a layer of mica, came the blazing light of the molten mass. Peter Agapich could judge the state of the metal at a glance. Below, it slid like live green-gold snakes over the white-hot coke; above, it was crimson and the coke burned with a blue flame. Peter Agapitch noticed several fitters busy around one of the motors. The air whistled in the blast pipes. The twyers snuffled and sang their iron song.

He walked up to the opening and glanced into the interior of the furnace where the mighty flame roared. Suddenly he looked more attentively. It flashed into his mind — "Cooling-points! Are the charges in the right position? There's probably not enough fuel." He took another look. "Yes, there's no doubt but a breakdown might happen. Should I warn Kravchuk?" he thought, going back a few paces. Then he changed his mind. "It's not my business anyhow. Let them manage it themselves."

As he walked through the shop he remembered past cases of breakdowns. There had been two of them. One had been caused by the sudden stopping of the motors, during a workers' strike before the revolution. They had held the works in their hands for three days and three nights. And the other case had been the result of carelessness. He remembered the first instance with particular clearness. Before the police had had time to interfere, it was too late: the red-hot coke cooled, the iron melted into a great horned lump, the iron parts had to be removed, the metallic clink-

er and slag had to be broken off and after that the brick lining of the furnace had to be renewed.

"I won't say anything, let them go to the devil!" said Peter Agapitch aloud. At the gate Peter halted, and looked around. The tremendous mass of the works roared and vibrated. The huge muzzles of the chimneys smoked. Through the smoke and soot the sun looked purple.

"Too-ooo-oo," screamed the hooter. At the top, of the iron furnace, before its open, fiery jaws stood the short, thick-set operator, like a bronze statue.

"Coal" — he shrieked.

Below could be heard the clank of the steel ball joints, and the heavy iron skip came up slowly. It reached the top and turned over into the mouth of the furnace. At this a huge column of flame darted up, and the skip sailed on its rattling way down again. Above sounded the voice of the stoker.

"Ore! come on with the ore!"

2

While Peter Agapitch wandered about the workshop, Kravchuk and Nikanor remained in the little glass office. Nikanor felt a little embarrassed. In order not to attract the attention of Kravchuk to himself, he started to examine the plans of some iron constructions. Glancing a few times at Kravchuk, he thought:

"Why has he got such strong blue eyes? Why is his face so pimply, as if it had been sprinkled with steel filings?"

Kravchuk, noticing that Nikanor was idle, said:

"Go to the small-casting foundry, Nikanor, and bring me the workers' suggestion-book."

Nikanor went off obediently. Kravchuk tried to do the bevel-gear calculations himself. The points made by the dividers did not meet. A bitter yearning for knowledge seemed to rack his brain.

Nikanor returned with the book, scrawled over with scores of workers' signatures, marked by the prints of many a worker's stained and dirty fingers.

Kravchuk read:

"Founders doing piece-work should not be paid by weight, since they frequently make too heavy patterns on purpose. The patterns are too thick, and valuable time and material are wasted."

"Hell! that's true, quite true! Why, this is important for the whole of the founding industry. This point should effect an economy of hundreds of thousands of rubles. It should be brought up at the work's conference."

Kravchuk O. K'd the suggestion. At that moment Peter Agapitch returned. He sat silent a few minutes and then said dryly:

"The furnace is getting dark. It's evidently the air that's gone cool in the blast-pipes or else the charge of fuel has been laid wrongly, there's too much flux."

"Getting dark?" said Kravchuk and darted for the furnace.

As soon as he came in, the fitters, round the motor, got on their guard. Kravchuk glanced inside the furnace. In the very center a small dark heap of cooling coke could be seen. Kravchuk beckoned and the fitters from the motor ran towards him.

"Shaparow!" shouted Kravchuk to one of them. "Bring some drills, and braces and revolving punches here. Drill four holes in ten minutes! Ten minutes — I'll watch!"

"But" — began one of the fitters. Kravchuk made a threatening gesture and shouted:

"Not a word out of you! Ten minutes, remember!"

He stretched out his wrist and began to count the minutes by his watch. The drills and punches appeared immediately. At every moment Kravchuk's face got paler, till it looked at last as it had done at the front during an attack. "Forty tons of metal. The furnace will stop. The program of work will fall through!"

One of the fitters could not manage it. Kravchuk ran up himself. He tore at the handle of the punch. It moved more rapidly, throwing off a bright silvery turning on the drill. Now the drill had passed the iron and reached with a soft, horrid screech the fire-proof store. Kravchuk pressed harder. A dry crack was heard and the drill jumped at one bound from the square and flew into the furnace. A long tongue of blue flame burst through the opening. Those standing round realized that it was a critical moment. Kravchuk found a blast-pipe in his hand. He put it in the opening and turned the stopper. A powerful stream of air rushed into the very center of the furnace, fanning the flame. With the inrush of air the flame grew and expanded, as if all were on fire.

A fitter came up to Kravchuk and snatching the pipe, said guiltily: "Give it to me! I'll keep it up now."

Kravchuk's hands let go. He glanced into the opening.

The dark heap was getting lighter, glowed and melted. Thick drops of sweat stood on Kravchuk's face. Rust from the iron walls and black ashes covered his face. The wild, severe eyes suddenly became joyful and kind.

"Ready for melting!" he said.

"Too-oo-oo!" screamed the hooter.

A new shift started work. With a habitual movement of the hands they opened the hatch. Suddenly a red-hot moon of metal lit up and began to fling its scorching rays about the gloomy workshop. A flaming cataract flowed quietly and grandly along the lined groove into a huge scoop, bending into an arch like a glowing rainbow.

When the white-hot mass was poured into moulds, a fascinating picture unfolded before the eyes. The earth seemed on fire in the workshop. The cross-beams, the moulds, the rafters, the compensating joints, were all a bright flaming red. From the ground to the ceiling of the workshop a silvery fog seemed to be rising. At the great windows a crimson dawn was burning.

Peter Agapitch was there. A strange and disturbing sensation was weighing on his heart. It was something between repentance and envy. In his brain an idea burned like fire.

"Why can't I get all worked up about my job like Kravchuk? Why don't I feel that the works are mine, too? Kravchuk does! Why?"

When Kravchuk was leaving the works, Peter Agapitch caught up to him, and called him for the first time by his name:

"Ivan Alexandrovitch! You know what — when Ludwig Smith, my old chief, was going away to America, he said that without me and without

him the furnace would stop, the fire would go out and everything go to ruin."

"It's a pity you think about these things. If neither you nor me existed the works would go on just the same. Because you and me are just sparks from one enormous class. And anyhow, you had better chuck these philosophic ideas. Come along tomorrow and make an honest calculation of that gear. Or else there may be a stoppage."

Peter Agapitch stretched out his hard old hand. They said goodbye and went their ways. Kravchuk to the left, Peter Agapitch to the right.

3

At home Peter could not calm down for a long time. He felt that in his last years he had cut himself off from his own class, and was homeless.

He tramped up and down the room for a long time, and then went to the window. Moscow, the great Red City, slept. The ancient Kremlin slept under the waving red banner. A peal of bells rang out softly in a revolutionary hymn and then — silence once more. The Red City slept and it seemed as if its even, mighty breathing could be heard. Everything and everyone slept.

Only Peter Agapitch could not sleep. Anguish crushed him and oppressed him. He was lonely and sad.

Peter Agapitch did not understand, or only very dimly understood what it was that he wanted, what he was striving for, why his heart failed him at times. His loneliness was unbearable. He was tormented with the realization of the awful emptiness of his heart. Weary and worn, he raised himself again from the couch.

In his unshaven face his red, inflamed eyes glittered. He breathed heavily, his fingers picked convulsively at the grey beard. Looking slowly round the room, he let out a stream of curses in a hoarse voice.

The half-light was depressing, irritating, it oppressed and crushed. It was close, hot.

"Eh-h-h" — broke out in a prolonged groan from the jaws clenched convulsively, and he beat with his fists on the wall, like a madman.

"Anguish!" — he whispered, "Anguish!" The floor-boards creaked softly and drops of water from the wash-stand kept falling with a light monotonous tap onto the bottom of the bucket. And anguish crushed his heart in its icy embrace, and his mouth went dry, and the blood rushed to his heavy head and the realization of an aimless life that nobody wanted tormented him as never before.

"But where are you? Who are you?" he shrieked in despair. "Where shall I go? Who shall I go with?"

There was no sound in reply, only the black window-panes seemed to stare back at him in surprise.

"It's all so childish!" — and he laughed wildly. "Pitiful childishness. Oh, hell!"

And his laughter sounded harsh like a shriek in the silence of the night. One thought after another ran through his brain with feverish rapidity.

He rooted mechanically in the table-drawer and drew out a small bright revolver. He turned it over in his hands, remembering a certain moment clearly. In the old, richly-furnished manager's room in a deep armchair upholstered in blue and decorated with lions' paws, sat his old

boss, fairhaired, a stately figure; his face, well-preserved, without a single wrinkle, the determined double chin with the small black mole on it. He remembered his measured walk, and dignified look. Outside the windows of the office the workers were shouting.

Ludwig Smith handed him this little bright Browning and said:

Here's a present for you! If any of the workers annoy you, just pull the trigger! There'll be punishment for killing one of that rabble."

Thirty years this present had lain by. Not one bullet had been shot from it. The barrel was red with rust.

Suddenly Peter's eyes flickered, his face became distorted. The hard, gnarled fingers dropped the Browning and clutched at his grey head. He shook all over. With choking sobs he gasped out:

"Eh, if I could lay my hands on you now, Ludwig Smith! If I could just lay my hands on you now!"

"Love for the works" — he said sarcastically. "Love, attachment?" he repeated and was silent, waiting for a reply.

"Cut off — alone! And for the sake of what?"

Should he go to the works and say:

"Dear mates, here's my hand, it's washed clean and it's got white. But the marks of toil are still there. They've the stamps of a class. I want to work — I want sincerely to work. Would they understand? Is there no way back for me to my own class?"

But anguish and depression lay over Peter's heart, Breathing heavily he threw himself on the pillow again. And again burst into convulsive sobbing.

Peter Agapitch raised himself at last. He could not remain another minute in the room. The darkness and the wearying stillness oppressed him. He dressed hurriedly, almost as if he was trying to escape from someone and went out.

The cold night air refreshed him for a moment, he felt easier. But his grief did not leave him for long.

Where should he go?

Everybody was a stranger to him. Not one near to him. He stood brooding, and a late repentance stirred in his cold, sore heart. He was sorry for himself, sorry for his broken life...

Where should he go?

And suddenly a strange and, it seemed, inexplicable idea came into his fevered brain. "To the works, — to talk to Kravchuk."

Peter Agapitch glanced round astonished, as if he was looking for someone who gave him this advice.

And the thought, timid at first, came over him like a burning wave.

He did not belong to himself any more. He left the yard of his house and went out towards the works.

Moscow, the Red Capital, slept. The streets seemed dead and the moonlight lay in vague patches on the grey pavement.

And the night looked on quietly, brooding.

Peter Agapitch tramped and tramped. He felt no weariness, noticed nothing.

Now sand and black coal-dust crunched beneath his feet.

The trees swayed dreamily above the pavement. A narrow band of light could be seen in the east. The dawn was approaching when Peter Agapitch came to a standstill before the stone wall of the works, with its broken stucco.

He went up firmly to the gates and kicked them, but they were shut, and the iron groaned plaintively.

"Closed" — Peter said to himself, somehow surprised, and shook the gates harder.

But now the iron, instead of a complaining groan, gave a maddened screech and rattled its chains.

A great heap of scrap lay in the works' yard, and among it he could see huge, black fly-wheels, Diesels and gear wheels.

Peter Agapitch had a sudden desire to lie down among these iron veterans to forget himself among them. But the iron and stones were cold and the furnace looked somehow unfriendly and gloomy.

His anguish rose again in his heart.

"Open!" he shouted hoarsely. "Open! I'm lonely — alone, I am alone!"

The works watchman came up reluctantly to the wicket-gate. He rubbed his sleepy eyes, and yawning, swore roundly through the bars:

"What d'you come knocking here for, before it's light? Gone crazy? Coming round in the middle of the night. Got drunk, I s'pose — go an' sleep it off, then. Wait for the hooter before you come round again!"

Peter Agapitch, weary, worn-out, turned up the street home. The night was still. Everybody and everything slept in forgetfulness. Only Peter Agapitch could not sleep — he was groping for the forgotten, long-lost path to his own class.

S. Tarasevitch

MY LATHE

I'm on real good terms with my lathe, I am. Whiles I used to sing, grinding the cylinder-block. The songs I sang — no end to them. Why, I used to even make them up myself — about motor-cars with my blocks and about how they'd run all over this great big Union.

The lathe was never quiet. The pinions and the wheels, they'd repeat everything. I'd raise the good old tenor, I'd lower it — and the lathe would keep right on in an even basso.

We worked together, we sang together.

Before my day off, I'd clean the old feller up — so as he'd shine like a new boot, and the handles would polish up like silver.

And when I'd go out of the shop, I'd look back from a long way off, and it'd seem as if my lathe was standing up, staring after me, and the spindle raised up high like a hand, same as if it was asking to come with me. And I'd nod to it: "No, old feller, you stay where y'are — and if you wanter know, I've bought some new trousers and I'm off to the meeting in them."

The striped trousers suited me down to the ground. Marusia from the turning-shop, she sat by me all evening in the club. In the morning — it was my day off — I put on my spotted cap. Marusia saw me, pursed up her mouth like a bolt nut, and took my arm.

I was nearly cracked with joy. Well, who'd go and do social work at a time like this.

It was late when we said goodbye, and I swore I loved her more than my pay. She laughed and slapped me over the jaw with the spotted cap.

I was at the works before the hooter, but not at the lathe. I treated her to apples and drank boiled water from the urn. It stood right opposite Marusia.

Well, and how the days went round — like hot turnings coming out of a steel cutter.

I sang too, but not about automobiles and the holes in the blocks this time, but about Marusia's little nose and the green comb in her brown hair.

Once the feller that's told off to look for flaws came up to me an started a new line: "And I'm telling you, brother, the holes in that thing are getting biggish."

I took a look at the block — and nearly fell off my perch. It seems I'd been working the drill not at 11.5 millimeters, but 17! And the holes were not so much holes as great eggs.

I ran to the urn to have a drink. Marusia waved her hand to me.

"Oh, well, what about it," I thought to myself, "what's a reprimand, especially as it's the first time. And anyhow, what do I care if the others in the brigade look sideways at me?"

I went out for the whole evening.

The lathe began to get my back up. Stopped humming, began to sound hoarse and turned the drill a bit slow-like. It came to my mind that I hadn't oiled it lately.

The foreman saw me. He came rocking up, like an elephant or something, and took off his glasses.

"What's that you're doing, numskull, starting to break the drilling-machine? Look out, else I'll send you to the manager."

I popped off again to the urn. Marusia smiled at me. I drank two mugs of water instead of one.

In the evening I didn't even wait to sweep the turnings off the table; tidied up the tools just anyhow, and rushed off to see her home. But she wasn't anywhere near the lathe, couldn't see her at the meeting, and only just by the control gate I caught a sight of her yellow hat and along with it — Vaska's cap, Vaska from the milling shop.

"Eh, snake, you think because you're getting the fifth payrate, you can do what you like," I hissed to myself and started out after them.

Vaska grinned and said: "We were sure you'd gone to the works' conference."

I made as if I didn't notice him, and took Marusia's arm.

"Marusia, I say, Marus. I'm dying for a drink of something. Let's go and buy some caviare or cakes?"

"What do I want with your old caviare!" she said, mad about something, and snatched her arm away.

That was the beginning of it, that evening.

Work went clean out of my head. I was always screwing my eyes round as far as they'd go and craning my neck to see what Marusia was doing at the turning-lathe. Vaska often went up to her. I'd grind my teeth, and shove the drill in the wrong spot.

I'd drunk so much water, my belly was ready to burst, and still I kept running to the urn, trying to draw attention to myself. A fat lot of use! They never noticed me. Vaska stood there waving his cutter. And just on purpose it seemed, the foreman wouldn't be there to see him, just to frighten him, the swine, and send him away from the lathe that wasn't his own.

I used to twist my eyes, trying not to miss what they were doing there.

My lathe began to stop when it wasn't asked. I used to curse it, and put on the speed, higher and higher. The lathe refused.

Nearly crazy, I threw myself on the lever.

The lathe stopped dead.

Something creaked inside it, the driving belt hung down helpless-like. The spindle slipped down like dead.

Broken!

They lowered my pay and put me on to other work.

This to me, and for what? Marusia...

It's a month now I'm working in a new department, and every day at a new lathe. And what's work to you, if you don't know where you'll be tomorrow and what you'll be doing!

My pay slid away from me. I got hoarse even without singing.

I used to find myself looking at the old brigade, and my heart seemed ready to burst. At last I couldn't stand it any longer and asked to be sent back to my old lathe.

The foreman shuffled his feet: "Such a block-head you were. And now the workers may not want you in that brigade any more. Well, go and talk to them yourself."

I could just see my old lathe from a distance. I made up my mind to go to the brigade meeting.

My, how they dressed me down there!

"And this time see that you work properly, no fooling?"

Early in the morning, long before the buzzer went, I came to my old lathe...

"Well, old pal, back again. And how've you been gettin' along? eh? You'll have to excuse me this once. You know, it's a weakness with us. But you've got a different sort of nature, you have..."

And I went over it with a clean, dry cloth.

The lathe, all glossy, so tall and somehow famialiar — mnie, I felt. It seemed to laugh a welcome to me with the rattle of its pinions. I was that touched: "Well, let's give you another rub over!"

I'm on real good terms with my lathe, I am.

Translated by Anthony Wixley

Takidzi Kabayasi

THE FIFTEENTH OF MARCH, 1928

A True Account of the Events

1

Okée could not get accustomed to it. The police came to the house quite often now, but she was just as alarmed as she had been the first time.

Her husband's comrades from the trade union used to come to the house, and Okee would bring them tea. She often heard her husband say.

— "Yes, but I can't alter my wife all at once!"

"I suppose you realize, comrade, that the revolution will have to go through the kitchen, too" — someone said, "but you are too soft."

"Well, that's true, maybe, but you can't do much with my wife. She's rather backward."

"You're too easy-going, that's what it is," his comrades taunted him.

Rinkidji gave an embarrassed snigger. He was a little ashamed of his weakness.

One morning as Rinkidji was cleaning his teeth, and his wife was standing by, pouring warm water into the wash-basin, he asked suddenly, with the tooth-brush still in his mouth,

"Do you know who Rosa was?"

Rosa — a man or a woman?"

"Rosa."

"I know Lenin, but Rosa — no. I've no idea who that could be. Who is it?"

She had often heard the names of Lenin and Marx from the lips of her daughter Yukiko, and she remembered them. The people from the trade union, Kudo, Skakanishi, and Senzomoto, often mentioned Lenin and Marx. Once she asked her husband —

"Is Marx the workers' god?"

He nodded and smiled — "How did you guess?" She could not understand why he was so pleased at her question.

When the general strike started, Okee heard many strange tales. She did not quite grasp all she was told. She could not believe that this terrible strike was being organized by that same Mr. Kuda of Mr. Senzomoto that came to her house.

"And who do you think the strike hurts," asked her husband, "the rich or the poor?" But the question was beyond her.

Every day the newspapers came out with flareing headlines about the strike.

"Strikers bringing ruin on the whole town! Houses of rich men to be burnt to the ground!" Or — "Clash between strikers and police!

Hundreds arrested!" "Strike still hanging over the town like a curse!" Kudo and Vatari had already been arrested.

Okee knew that her husband spent nearly every night at the Trade Union. That he was taking part in organizing the strike she also knew. He would come home at last, weary-eyed, and ask her to wake him at five in the morning. She would sit by his bed for hours, never taking her eyes from his face. Okee could not understand him. Did he never think of his little daughter Yukiko?

But later on, when active workers from the union came and told her of the workers bitter lot, she sympathized with the workers' struggle. She herself grew to hate the exploiters who were robbing the oppressed classes. She came to understand that the work of her husband and his comrades was indeed a great work. Okee began to feel a pride in her husband, and to agree with the movement for which he labored, though she did not believe in its success.

After his third detention, Rinkidji lost his post as teacher. Then he opened a tiny shop, and sold haberdashery, hoping in this way to support his family. Okee had expected that he would lose his job. She had known for a long time that it would turn out like that. Still, tears would not help, she thought, and so had remained silent.

Rinkidji had more time to spare now, and he worked for the trade union with greater zeal than ever.

As a result, the attention of the detectives redoubled.

The first time Okee noticed that a spy was strolling up and down in front of their shop, she was terrified. The worst was yet to come, however. Sometimes one of these persons would study the sign-board for some time, suddenly enter the shop and announce — "Come with me to the police-station, will you?"

A couple of policemen would then come up and Rinkidji would be taken to the police station.

Okee could not overcome her terror. The visits of the police always upset her, and Rinkidji would have to calm her.

Early on the morning of March 15, Okee was rudely awakened from her sleep. Another search! Five or six policemen dragged Rinkidji away with them, without giving him a chance to exchange a word with his wife. This time Okee was thrown into a kind of stuper from terror.

2

It was three o'clock in the morning. The cold nipped the hands and face and pierced through one's clothes to the very bone.

Five or six men were tramping over the frozen snow.

They came out of dark, narrow alleys and turned up the wide street leading to the Union hall. The street was lined with tall, naked telegraph poles.

These men were police, and they had their belts in readiness, their sabres grasped firmly in their hands. They halted before the Trade Union headquarters and then burst into it, without even stopping to take off their shoes. [1]

[1] In Japan it is regarded as very bad manners for a person to enter a house with his shoes on. They should be left in the hall.

The members of the union had lain down to sleep only an hour before. They had fixed on March 15 for a public protest against the force of arms. The entire membership had been mobilized. Leaflets had been pasted at every corner. Agreements had been concluded with the owners of the meeting-halls.

The executive committee had met once more, and by two o'clock that morning preparations had been completed. And now, instead of the rest that everyone stood in so much need of — a raid. Seven or eight of the comrades suddenly became aware that the blankets were being torn roughly off them... The tramping of feet — They all scrambled to their feet, in silence heavy as lead, staggering from want of sleep. Senzomoto was in despair, He had feared this before, but still a faint ray of hope had sometimes lightened his heart. "These dogs want to arrest our speakers the night before Tanaka's reactionary government should resign! It's a favorite trick of theirs! Just what one would expect of them."

Skakanishi, nicknamed by his comrades "Don Quixote," was still half-drunk with sleep. He asked one of the spies —

"Well, what's up now?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know? Don't try to fool me?"

The officer was silent.

The police started to root about among the books and papers.

"If you lazy hogs would work more, you wouldn't have the time to go poking your nose in everything! It's all your own fault," said one of the police to Senzomoto in a loud, insolent tone so that everyone could hear him. Senzomoto snapped at him:

"Stop your nonsense there! I didn't ask you to speak."

Vatari was trying to make his way unnoticed towards the staircase. One of the police became aware of his movements and caught him.

"Where are you making for? Don't you dare to budge!"

Senzomoto had been watching Vatari for some days. He was astonished. What could be the matter with him. Vatari was usually so quiet. Just now his face was whiter than chalk. Vatari, in spite of his youth, had always worked in the front ranks. He had seemed like a man forged out of iron, and now? — Senzomoto felt puzzled and alarmed.

At length the prisoners, surrounded by the police, started to descend the stairs. With the exception of Vatari, they were all lively and even nonchalant. Sessito — who always encouraged them with "Heads up! The great thing is not to lose courage" — was the most lively of all. He edged closer to Senzomoto, and whispered:

"We must be firm, otherwise —

"Yes, that's so, or — "

"What are you muttering about there?"

The policeman caught hold of Sessito and flung him away —

"The people's flag — " somebody in front was singing. The sound of a heavy blow followed.

"You've gone crazy, you swine!"

A worker gave one of the police a great push with his shoulder. There was a blow of a sabre, a loud smack, and then silence.

The workers marched in step, arm in arm.

"Halt!" shouted Sessito and stood still. "Halt, comrades! I protest against our being arrested without any explanation. We want to know the reason."

"That's right!" shouted the rest. Senzomoto glanced at Vatari. In cases like these Vatari was usually ready to fly out at the faintest provocation. This time he was perfectly quiet. He stood still as if chained to the floor.

The police surrounded little Sessito. The workers shouldered their way in between the police.

"Are you going to tell us, devil take you, what we've been arrested for?"

"You'll find out at the police-station."

"Always the same answer! We're not going to be locked up in those dirty, stinking cells again!"

Somebody shouted from the rear —

"It's an abuse of government."

One of the police started to beat Sessito.

A clump of human bodies swayed to and fro. The workers fought their way into the center of the group. A general scrimmage ensued.

"You — swine, you — "came the half-choked voice of Sessito. —

"You think — you can put down our movement — like this — you dogs — you think you can do that — "The disorder increased.

Vatari, who had stood motionless up to now, suddenly threw the full weight of his hulky body into the tussle. Senzomoto felt something like relief.

"Unless you tell us the reason, we shan't admit ourselves arrested. We'll fight with all our might!" Vatari roared in his deep voice. His sonorous tones never failed to make a profound impression.

Ishida stood apart and watched his comrades. Childish would have been too mild a term to apply to their conduct, in his opinion. He always got angry when people like Sessito — and there were many such in the union — made rows on the slightest provocation. According to Ishida, it was only advisable to use defensive methods on exceptionally important occasions, and then do it thoroughly. In general, it was better to save one's strength than to get worked up over every trifle.

"What is all this rubbish for, anyhow? Fine militants they are! What good are they?"

Ishida was almost beside himself with rage.

The workers felt surer of themselves after Vatari had joined in the fray, but ten more policemen soon appeared on the scene and the unequal fight had to be given up.

It grew lighter. The icy fingers of the morning crept inside the prisoners' clothes and made them shiver.

The snowy street lay silent under a grey and heavy sky.

Ashida and Sessito were dressed in thin corduroy jackets thrown on hastily next their skin. Their bodies ached from cold. Their fingers and toes were numb.

Shibata, a lad of twenty who had only joined the union a few weeks before, had not yet recovered from his fright at being arrested. He saw the others defend themselves and shout. He also wanted to shout, but had momentarily lost all control over the muscles of his face. His mouth moved heavily and clumsily, as if his lips were made of wet clay, and he could not emit a sound. He knew that more than one arrest was before him now, and still his teeth went on chattering involuntarily.

The comrades marched in rows, forming a solid mass. They kept very close to each other so as to get a little warmer, and tried to march

in step. The footsteps of the twenty men gave back a hollow sound in the empty morning streets. No one spoke. But in the hearts of all a feeling of mutual sympathy and kinship arose. Senzomoto, Vatari, Skakanishi, "Don Quixote," Sessito, Ishida, the novice Shibata and all the other members were conscious of this feeling. In moments of danger it never left them; it was the feeling of solidarity — the solidarity that unites the proletariat into one unbroken front.

These members of the union were no longer a loose conglomeration of individuals, but one tremendous united whole. They marched hand in hand, their dark eyes saw only one great end, to which they were all moving. This end was called — revolution.

3

"Get up!" shouted the policeman. He groped about in the dark for the electric switch. Kudo's three children awoke and began to cry. The police could not find the switch and went on groping about in the dark. Then they found it and snapped it twice.

"What's the matter?"

"We have no light."

Kudo spoke in a slightly irritated tone. The light had been cut off two months previously. Kudo had not enough money to buy candles. In the evening they would send the children out to the neighbors, and go themselves to the Union. They had lived like that for sixty days now. ("Bright lamps are the best adornment for rooms," said the advertisement in the shops for electrical goods).

"Hush, children, they won't eat you," said Kudo, laughing. His wife, Oyoshi, tried to soothe them, too.

"There's nothing to be frightened about, these gentlemen come to see us quite often now."

So one after another, the children stopped crying. These visits were indeed no new thing to them.

Kudo's comrades from the Union had asserted, more than once, that Oyoshi was developing class-consciousness in her children. As a matter of fact, their up-bringing was not carried on along any definite principles. Life itself educated them.

Oyoshi's hands hung down to her knees and seemed too large and heavy like the claws a crab. Dirt had eaten into her skin, which had grown as coarse and rough as a potato-grater. She never washed now.

In the course of her short life Oyoshi had more than once discovered who were her "enemies." When her husband joined the union, this knowledge became even more plain to her. Sometimes, when there was much work at the union, Kudo did not return home for weeks on end. Then Oyoshi had to work alone. She did everything: helped to coal ships down at the dockside, and made sacks for potatoes and other vegetables. Sometimes she was lucky enough to find work in the canning factories, where she had to wash bones. Before she gave birth to her third child, she worked right up to the last moment as a coolie, carrying sacks of coal.

In Kudo's room the wall-paper had long since peeled away. The wind blew freely in through the cracks. Oyoshi had no money to buy new wall-paper, so she went to the union and got a few old numbers of the "Proletarian News" and the "Workers' and Peasants' Chronicle." These she pasted over the cracks in the door. The flaming announcements of the strike

stretched the length and breadth of the door panels. Whenever Oyoshi had a few moments to spare, she would read the headings of the articles. Sometimes the children would point to different words and ask what they meant. She would read slowly out to them. She pasted old leaflets and proclamations all over the half ruined walls. Once Kudo and Vatari and Senzomoto came in and looked around at the walls with astonishment. Then they said: "This is indeed our house." They were delighted with it.

Kudo got up and dressed himself.

How would his wife and family exist while he was in prison?

Every time he was arrested he asked himself this question.

He tried not to think this when working with his comrades in the union, but as soon as he was alone for a moment, the thought of his family would come to disturb him.

Oyoshi helped him to collect his things, and then nodded to him —

"Don't worry about us! We'll manage without you."

Her voice rang out bravely.

The eldest boy, who understood something of what was going on, ran up to his father and said —

"Well, goodbye, then, father, good luck!"

The policeman was astonished. "What a disgusting family," he thought to himself, and said aloud:

"They all take it as if it was the proper thing, and wish each other good luck into the bargain!"

"Oh, well, if we started to bawl every time this happened, we'd have no time left to work for the movement," Kudo spoke lightly, trying to disguise the fact that his spirits were low.

"Hey, you dog, you, we'll plug you if you start any of your impudence!" the policeman roared.

Kudo wanted to say something more to his wife, but his mind seemed a blank.

"Don't be upset. We'll get on somehow," said Oyoshi with conviction. She looked at her husband. He was silent. He could only nod his head.

The door closed behind them.

4

Okee learned from Oyoshi that there had been more arrests this time than ever before. The metal-workers had been dragged off to prison just as they were, in their overalls. Every day from five to ten dockers were seized. There were many students among those arrested.

Seato, a clerk, was arrested two days later. He had been in the habit of visiting Rinkidji on Thursdays, when all the comrades came together. He lived with his old mother, who had worked her fingers to the bone for many a year, so that he could attend a commercial college. She had hoped that when he graduated from college he would get a good post in some big company or bank. She would be able to boast of her son's salary to the neighbors. And she need not work any more then, but could go every year to her home place. Or her son would pay for her to go to one of those health resorts. There would be no need to tremble for fear that the rent would not be paid in time, nor to go to the pawnbrokers, or put off the creditors. How fine it would be then! She had dreamed of this all her long life of toil, and this dream gave her the strength to carry on.

At last Seato finished college and got a post. When he brought home his first earnings and put them on her knees, she sat for a long time with closed eyes, pressing the envelope with the money to her wrinkled brow. Later, when Seato came down to supper, he saw a new candle burning on the altar. His pay lay beside it.

"I have been showing the money to your dead father," the old woman said in a broken voice.

On March 16 Seato heard that the comrades met at Rinkidji's and the Trade Union had been arrested. The people who told him this did not know the exact reason. Seato went home immediately, collected all his books and papers and took them over to some neighbors. Nothing happened that day. Seato wanted to go to the Trade Union but the others dissuaded him. The place was occupied just now by a number of detectives and it would be dangerous to show up there. Several comrades had dropped into the Union and they were arrested immediately.

Seato was glad he had not gone there. The same evening, however, he was arrested at his house.

As soon as it grew dark Okee left Kudo's wife and made her way home along the crowded main street. Sleighs, motorcars and buses raced past. A young couple were standing gazing in a brightly-lighted shop window.

They stood close together, whispering. Women in warm coats and men in thick camel-hair jackets went by. Workers and young lads with big empty bowls, children arm-in-arm, strolled past. Okee's sorrow grew and grew. Hundreds of people were sacrificing their lives — and for what? For the workers. Was it right, was it just — that nobody thought anything about it, that people went by laughing and chattering as if nothing had happened. Okee could not understand it. Here in the street there did not seem to be any signs of trouble. Maybe the passers-by did not know anything about the arrests, and that was why they had such happy faces. Of course, the government would not permit any news to be printed about the arrests.

"Why did my husband do that? For whom?" Okee asked herself. She felt terribly lonely. The world was very empty. All her husband's comrades had been fooled. Nonsense — that wasn't true, either.

5

It was the 16th of March. All the morning the door of the police head-quarters kept opening and shutting, letting in and out police, armed to the teeth. Police motors with blue-striped wheels had kept driving up with a loud hooting of horns. The door of the head office would be flung open, out would come a few police with sabres in their hands. They would board the cars, the engines would hum, and the cars glide away down the street. After a few minutes they would return with a new batch of prisoners. The prison in the police headquarters was full. Every time the keys grated in the lock, the prisoners inside would stop their talk and look up eagerly. Vatari, Senzomoto, Sessito and Skakanichi would recog- a fuss and splutter. Nobody paid any attention to him. All the fifteen men nize the new-comers and welcome them. The policeman standing guard would get as red as a turkey-cock. He would puff out his chest and make locked in this cell had been comrades, had fought side by side in the front rank. Since they were all together they amused themselves by making as much noise as possible.

Takidzi Kabayasi
The Fifteenth of March, 1928

Sessito curled himself into a ball, and threw himself with all his force on the wall. Then again he bit his lips, puffed out his cheeks and hurled himself on it like a bull. "Be quiet there!" shouted the guard.

When Sessito saw that this was no good, he began to kick the walls. The others followed his example, and the wooden walls creaked. Only Ishida remained quiet.

He walked up and down with folded arms, muttering something to himself.

The door opened again. Senzomoto and Vatari were led away. What did that mean? Left without their leaders, the others no longer kicked the walls.

Ishida's eyes fell on Rinkidji who was sitting in a corner with his eyes closed. "He is here too," thought Ishida. He was afraid that there was something more serious behind today's arrests than they had all imagined. He went up to Rinkidji Ogava.

"Comrade Ogava."

Rinkidji raised his head.

"Comrade Ogava, what does this all mean?"

"I can't make it out myself. I was just intending to ask Comrade Vatari about it."

"It's evidently connected with our meeting about the present cabinet."

"Yes, I thought of that, too. But if such is the case they need to lock us up for one day. But as it is — "

The others crowded round them, listening eagerly. They got more and more excited. When had it started, this habit of seizing workers like puppies and throwing them into prison for no reason whatever.

"Look here, the law says — 'It is forbidden to enter any one's house without permission of the occupants,' understand — 'against the will of those living in the house, either after or before sunrise, except in cases where the life, health or property of the population is endangered.' This law applies to all save gambling-dens and brothels. And what are they doing to us? They have attacked us in the middle of the night when we were sleeping peacefully and arrested us without giving any reason for it. The police allow themselves all sorts of license."

The workers listened attentively to Rinkidji Ogava. Sometimes they shouted excitedly, and stamped their feet.

Rinkidji added:

"It says in our constitution, comrades — 'No Japanese subject can be arrested, imprisoned or punished without lawful reason.' And how do things really stand? We have never done anything that could be regarded as lawful reason for arrest. We have been thrown into prison without trial and sentence. Our laws and constitution are a network of lies and fraud."

His words found their mark easily, since the workers themselves felt the injustice of their treatment. At the realization of their helplessness, they shuddered, as one shudders when a nerve is laid bare.

"I say, let's break down the door and go to the Chief of the Police! Make him tell us why we've been arrested!"

"Yes, come on!"

"Let's do some shouting."

"It's no use," Rinkidji shook his head.

"Why isn't it any use?" Seato started on him, as he had always done in the Trade Union during a hot debate.

"Now there's no sense in that. We're locked in. If we make a row it'll only make things worse for us, and give them a reason to wipe us out. Our movement must develop in the streets, we must have the support of the whole working population. And actions like these, carried out by a score or so of people — are no good for anyone. Besides things like that are altogether against our principles. We should never forget that."

"But how can we sit here quietly and do nothing. Should we just listen to your theories?"

At that moment four policemen entered the cell. One of them, a thick-set man with a square beard, looked at them quietly for a moment and then said:

"You know, I hope, that you're in a police-cell now. What's all this noise about?"

He started to knock the workers about. When he went for Seato, the latter jumped quickly aside and the policeman struck out too far and lost his balance. Enraged, he shouted "Eh, you rascal!" and threw himself upon Seato. In a second Seato's body struck the wall with a dull, heavy thud. The policeman was breathing heavily.

"Remember!" he shouted hoarsely — "You'll have to pay dearly for your insolence!"

Another policeman called out the names of several men from a list he was holding. These were led out. As they passed through the low door they stooped slightly. Now only six men remained in the cell.

Seato tried to rise from the floor, but the policeman kicked him twice.

Some more police came in after a while to guard the six men left. All conversation was forbidden.

Rinkidji sat near the high barred window. The outlines of the people in the room swam.

It seemed as if shadows and not people were moving up and down the cell. The yellow lamps paled. It was growing light. The cell became a faint blue. Rinkidji's head ached from weariness. Day began. It was very quiet in the Police Headquarters now. A sort of frozen silence lay over everything. Footsteps now approaching, now receding, could be heard. They would halt for a moment and then begin again. A door would open.

Every few minutes a noise would come from the next cell. The sound of a heavy body being dragged along. Some resistance seemed to be made against the dragging. Dead silence. Somebody passed by, yawning loudly under the window, in the street below.

"Why don't they let me go to sleep?" somebody muttered in a dark corner of the cell — "It's getting light. It'll soon be day." The eyes of the police on guard were swollen from want of sleep and their faces were pale.

When Rinkidji awoke, the pale morning light was pouring into the cell. It lighted up the weary faces of the prisoners. One sat with his head dropped on his chest, another stood leaning against the wall, a third stared fixedly before him.

Every time that Rinkidji was taken to prison, he felt a terrible yearning to see his child. It grew well-nigh unbearable and robbed him of much strength. He had often noticed how fear for their families had drawn many of his comrades away from the movement. He knew that this fear was an enemy of the movement. He tried to jump over it like an acrobat.

A new set of police came to relieve those on guard. One of them Senda, went up to Rinkidji. He had known the latter for a long time, and had frequently been sent to take Rinkidji to the Police Headquarters.

"You know, Mr. Ogava," he addressed Rinkidji, "these arrests give the police a lot of trouble. We're called out on duty even in our spare time, and no matter how tired we may be, we've got to go. I'm absolutely worn-out." He sounded sincere enough. Rinkidji wondered for a moment if the man was sincere or not.

"Well, I'm sorry for you," he answered without the slightest touch of irony.

As the other police went out of the room, Seato shouted jeeringly "I'm sorry for you too!"

Senda waited until the others had left, and then asked Rinkidji softly:

"Is there any message you'd like sent to your family?"

Rinkidji was silent for a few seconds. He stared in a bewildered way at the policeman.

"No, no," he said at last — "No, I don't want anything."

6

As Seato was being led to the lavatory in the morning, he heard a voice calling out "Hello!" from a cell at the end of the corridor.

Seato stopped. It was Vatari's voice. Seato saw Vatari's face pressed against the bars of the grating.

"Is that you, Vatari?"

"Yes, that's me."

"Are you alone?"

"Yes. How are all the others?"

The policman escorting Seato came up at that moment. "Be quiet!" whispered Seato and passed on. Why should Vatari be in solitary confinement? What was behind all this? Seato could not guess for the life of him. When he came back to his own cell he told Rinkidji about it. The latter listened in silence and bit his lip.

Ishida also met Vatari in the lavatory. He had no chance to speak to him, but he saw his quiet, resolute face.

"Listen, do you know Bancroft?" Ishida asked Rinkidji on his return.

"No, who is he? A communist?"

"No, he's a film-actor."

"Well, why should I have such aristocratic friends?"

The fact was that Vatari's appearance reminded, Ishida of Bancroft, the film-star who had played the part of the hero in some pictures of the life of New York dockers. Like Vatari, the hero had met every danger with a calm and courageous face.

As soon as the door of the solitary cell closed behind Vatari, he experienced a feeling of relief, as if, after a long and tiresome journey, he had found a place of rest. Many comrades have felt the same.

Vatari stretched out his legs and began to examine them in turn, raising them high over his head. Then he scratched his neck and shoulders and gave vent to loud and prolonged yawning. Suddenly he remembered that it was a long time since he had been able to yawn in such comfort. That amused him. Then he sang the prisoners' song in a loud voice. Senzomoto had often sung it. And now Vatari got a lot of enjoyment out of each verse. As he sang he walked up and down. He was in an excellent mood. He saw nothing sad or hopeless about their confinement.

The great thing was, he had always been true to the movement and would be so always. In spite of prison, torture and the strain of work, he had never experienced doubt. He was perfectly sure of how to behave. All unpleasant thoughts that arose from time to time in his mind he shook off immediately. He never thought that he was sacrificing his life for an idea. What he did he regarded as his duty. He felt no fears for his family. All his actions sprang from love and devotion to the cause.

Vatari flung back the hair from his brow. He kept walking up and down on his short, stout legs, which were curved like those of a jiu-jitsu master. His torso rested on strong, firm supports. He thought about his comrades. What worried him most was the fear that they might lose courage if the examination lasted too long.

The wall was covered with drawings and scraps of writing. Vatari began to examine them. The sexual parts of both men and women figured most often among the sketches. Texts such as, "Yes, I am a thief!" or "This policeman's mug deserves a whack," signed, "Physiognomist," were popular. There was also some advice.

"People who have been brought up in orphanages — those are the people who have trodden all the paths of life. Socialists, help us!"

"Workers, be strong!"

"I would beg those who come here after me not to scribble on the wall. It is hideous!"

"I am fed up with everything!"

"Scribbling is the only amusement left to a man deprived of freedom. I advise everybody who is put in here after me to go on with the scribbling!"

"I have a wife and children. I am hungry. I hate this order of society. Yes, hate it!"

"Work!"

"We are working, but do you imagine that the world is any the better for that, ass?"

Long live socialism!"

Vatari started to scribble on the wall. He wanted to write a lot, so as to prolong the satisfaction. He set his jaw and scratched away thoughtfully and purposefully —

"Hello, listen to this! This cell exists only to shut in unfortunates like us.

"The Police have been bought by the rich. The police are the watchdogs of the rich.

"Could you imagine a rich man being put in this cell?

"The world belongs to the toilers. The world belongs to the workers and peasants. We shall destroy the world of rich men and parasites who drink our blood. Let us build a new world!"

He wrote for a long time. When he had finished, he stood back a little to admire his handiwork. But it was already growing dark in the cell and he could not make out the letters. The pale daylight could penetrate into the cell only through the little barred window.

A key grated in the lock. The door was flung open and a policeman in straw-sandals entered noiselessly.

"Come out!"

"Ah, you're going to let me out?"

"For examination!" replied the policeman.

7

The same day five more workers were brought to the prison. The cell was overcrowded now. The workers were placed in the gymnasium of the police headquarters. Half of the hall was covered with straw matting. On the sides there were great windows. They admitted so much light that it was almost painful to look through them. In the middle of the hall stood a big warm stove.

The workers, who were almost all acquainted with each other, squatted on their haunches around the stove and talked. Four police stood on guard near the stove.

In the evening all the prisoners were taken out for a walk. They were lined up, and made to march in single file, once around the police yard and back again to their cells. This was all the fresh air and exercise granted them.

After this they were given some salt bean soup, and a little glutinous rice. They all squatted down round the stove again after their meal. About half-past eight Kudo was sent for. His comrades watched him go with some misgivings. This time arrest seemed a more serious affair than before.

The night seemed endless. The fire, which was made with the cheapest coal, yielded more smoke than heat. Rinkidji Ogava got out a warm kimono that he had remembered to bring with him. Just then Ishida came up to him.

"I didn't tell you anything until now, Comrade Ogava" — he whispered. "I didn't know whether I should let the others know about it or not — "

"What is it?"

It appeared that Ishida had been to the lavatory a little while before. The lavatory was the only place where it was possible to meet prisoners from other cells. When Ishida entered, a short, thick-set man was washing at the opposite side of the room. At first Ishida took no notice of him. Then suddenly, the man raised his head. Ishida started back in horror. His whole body shook.

"They have been torturing me!" said Vatari. He forced a smile and pointed to his face. It was distorted with pain. What a terrible smile! Ishida could not get a word out.

"But they didn't get to know anything from me," said Vatari. "I'm not so sensitive as all that. Tell all our comrades that they must not let fear break them down."

Vatari and Ishida were not able to exchange more than these few words.

"It must have been something frightful!" Ishida whispered to Rinkidji.

"Yes, I can imagine it. Well, the chief thing is not to lose control of oneself, as Vatari said," replied Rinkidji.

Both of them turned towards the stove. The men were telling each other stories. The police joined in the conversation. Men who had got into prison for some reason other than political, sat silent and terrified at first. Little by little, however, they began to join in and laugh and joke. At intervals the conversation dropped. Everybody sat quiet then and sadness settled down over their faces like a dark cloud.

Seato started to tell some yarn. He used comical gestures. Everybody listened intensely. When he got to the climax, he suddenly cried out, smiling covertly:

"Please, Mr. Sergeant, give me a cigarette."

The policeman laughed, got out a crumpled cigarette from a side-pocket and offered it to Seato.

"Thanks. Well, do you want me to explain the matter in more detail."

He looked slyly at the policeman and laughed. Then he put the cigarette on his palm and licked the paper.

"As a matter of fact, it's a pity to smoke it all at once. I'd better save it till later," and he stuck it behind his ear.

"That's true, better to enjoy a smoke at leisure. How long is this going to last?" someone called out from a corner. His question electrified them all.

"They dragged me away from my home. My family will be very anxious about me. What are my wife and children going to eat, if I stop working?"

"I'm just in the same position," said another.

"And I've had enough of this movement. It's too dangerous for me here," said one of the workers. He had been a member of the union a long time.

"Why?" asked Seato.

The man was silent.

"Come on, tell us why?" Seato persisted. Seato was getting indignant.

"All right, all right, now," Ishida slapped Seato on the shoulder and nodded his head in the direction of the police.

This worker was called Kimuro. He had never been arrested before. He regarded work on the docks as much too hard for him. He had heard once that the union was fighting for better jobs and better pay for its members. Kimuro joined the union. He had no intention, however, of doing anything illegal or spoiling his relations with the police.

This arrest provided him with an excellent pretext for leaving the union. He resolved to break with it as soon as he was let out of prison.

"Cowardly fellow" — decided Seato, but aloud he said —

"Comrade Kimuro, if you are a member of the union you ought to behave like one, especially when you are in prison."

Kimuro was silent.

Rinkidji could not understand why workers of this type joined the "left" union, and why there were so many of them in these unions.

Shibata, who had been taken into the union on Kimuro's recommendation not long ago, sat close to the stove with his knees drawn up to his chin. He had heard everything. Shibata had also been frightened at first. He had grown as pale as death when police had raided the union that night. It was clear to him now that such things were inevitable for those taking part in the workers' movement. So now he watched the other comrades closely and tried to behave as they did.

This arrest was, in its way, a test. Sad to say, by no means all of the candidates were likely to pass it. On the other hand it would serve as a means of selection. "Well, I'm still young, of course," Shibata thought to himself, "but at any rate I'll be able to stand the test."

The conversation broke off.

Straw mats were laid down for the night. The prisoners took off their belts and socks. They slept two on a mat. Only sleep was free in the prison.

"Now, let's sleep. Maybe we'll have sweet dreams!"

"Prison dreams can't be sweet."

"They are more likely to make you sick."

Voices continued to come first from one corner, then another. The intervals in the conversation grew longer and longer and in about twenty minutes complete silence reigned.

Rinkidji lay down beside Seato.

"Will you be able to sleep, Seato?" — he asked.

But Seato never stirred. He was already fast asleep.

Rinkidji could not restrain a smile.

"Hello, there!"

Rinkidji started. He must have been dozing off.

"Hello! Get up and come for examination."

Rinkidji jumped up in alarm. This was another of the police methods — not to let the prisoners sleep properly, but to drag them off for examination. Rinkidji followed the policeman.

Kudo returned in half-an-hour, escorted by a policeman. He was terribly pale. He gathered up his things that he had left in the gymnasium in the morning. He turned at the door once more and glanced back at his sleeping comrades. Then he went out, a little stooped. The door closed again. The heavy breathing and snoring of the sleepers hung in the room like a suffocating gas.

8

For two weeks the prison at the police head-quarters was filled to overflowing. Up to two hundred workers had been driven into a sty, like pigs. They were only let out after a whole week of torture. The examination began.

The police decided that it would be advisable to detain Vatari and sentence him to some serious form of punishment. They were watching the legal Labor Party and the legal trade unions, principally in order to find some excuse for arresting Vatari. They had worked for a long time in this direction, but so far Vatari had been careful and quick and they could not find anything to bring against him. During the recent raids, however, they had caught him. The police were delighted. This time they were out for his blood.

At the examination Vatari had refused to answer any questions. The only words he had uttered were "As you like!" "What does this mean?" The superintendant of the police and the head of the legal department were beginning to lose patience.

"It can mean whatever you like."

"We'll force you to speak yet!"

"I suppose you will."

"Don't try any tricks with us! You'll pay dearly for them."

"You should know by this time the sort I am! Do you really imagine you can make me speak by torturing me?"

The police officials were actually at a loss to know what to do with him. It was quite possible that a man like Vatari might refuse to say anything under torture. And if the police-superintendent failed to get any information out of Vatari under torture, it might threaten his career and cost him his post. There could be nothing more terrible for the superintendent of the police. Supposing Vatari should really keep silence? In any case they could not kill him. He was, after all, the ringleader.

Vatari was stripped and beaten with bamboo sticks. The sticks whistled through the air and cut into his body. The police beat him with all their strength.

Vatari clenched his teeth. He strained every muscle to meet the blows. After half-an-hour he dropped down on the floor like a dried-up cuttle-fish. His legs and arms twitched convulsively. He fainted away.

In spite of all tortures, Vatari remained master of his body. Every time he was tortured he strained the muscles under his skin and could thus bear the pain comparatively easily.

In the penal code there is, no doubt, a paragraph saying that the prisoner must be treated as humanely as possible and should be given an opportunity to confess at regular intervals.

The police now poured water over Vatari and he came to his senses. The officials now changed their tune a little and became kinder.

"You see now that what you're doing is absolutely useless," said Vatari. "You're only wearing yourselves out talking. I don't intend to say a single word."

"But we know everything already. Admit the truth and you'll get off lightly."

"If you know everything, so much the better. You needn't worry about my punishment."

"Now look here. Mr. Vatari, be sensible. We only mean to help you. You can't go on like that."

"I'm all right. Tortures are nothing to me."

Behind him his tormentors stood ready.

"Insolent dog!" One of them caught Vatari by the throat and started to choke him.

"It's all through this fellow that disturbance keeps on cropping up in Otaru."

Vatari fainted away again. Every time he had been in prison, he had smiled when he thought of how people regarded the police almost as heroes, guarding the peace, safety and happiness of the townsfolk.

The police, it seemed, were well able to throw dust in the eyes of simple folks. They never made any mistake about that. Vatari would have liked to learn this art from them.

"Hey, you, listen! You say tortures have no effect on you. But we've got orders from Tokio to finish you off. How do you like that?"

"Yes. Very interesting. Well, why don't you finish me off then? I might think twice about it if the workers' movement would be hurt by it. But don't you worry; the movement's growing every day, and I've nothing to fear."

At the next examination, Vatari was stripped naked again and strung up by the wrists to the ceiling, so that his legs hung about ten inches off the floor.

"This time you'll have to give in."

One of the police who knew jiu-jitsu well, hit Vatari in the leg with his fist.

"Give in yourself!" shouted Vatari.

"Ha-ha! Wait a second, it'll be better still."

The pain was unbearable. They stuck great needles, the kind used for sewing mats, into his body. At every prick Vatari squirmed and twitched as if from an electric shock. He twisted about like an eel and shrieked — "Kill me! Finish me!"

It was ten times worse than being beaten with an iron rod or a whip. Vatari was overwhelmed with a deep hatred of the capitalist class and his obstinacy increased. In later days, whenever Vatari lost confidence in

himself, and deviated, sometimes to the left, sometimes to the right, it was sufficient only to remember his tortures to find his balance again, and stand firm.

At every prick of the needles his body shrank. His head dropped on his breast. He lost consciousness. For the third time Vatari died and for the third time came back to life.

"It's all the same to me now." He seemed to be in a dream. The head of the legal department showed him the list of names of the Japanese Communist Party and announced:

"You see what we've got here!"

He did not take his eyes off Vatari.

"Very good. Fine!" replied Vatari, who looked as if he was drunk.

"But we don't want you to praise us, Mr. Vatari."

The police were at a loss now how to make him speak. They stamped on his bare feet with hob-nailed boots, and went on like that for a whole hour. Vatari's body was flung from one to the other like a sack of potatoes.

After three hours of unremittent torment, Vatari was taken back to the solitary cell. There he lay without moving until the next morning.

Kudo was the next to be questioned. He kept more or less quiet and gave very wary replies. He was not so full of life as Vatari, but underwent just as terrible tortures.

Then it was Senzomoto's turn. They choked him three times running. Afterwards he could not remember anything except that the superintendent of the police and the head of the legal department had stood by him and talked to him. But what they were talking about or what replies he gave he could not remember.

In Seato's cell there were four of five common crooks. Seato thought about his mother and of the peaceful life that he had knowingly broken up. Now he would spend the rest of his days in prison and she would have to toil from morning till night, just as she had done before.

One night an orphanage boy who was placed in Seato's cell seized him by the shoulder and shook him.

"Listen," he said.

Seato heard a low whisper.

"Hush," he said. The silence drummed in his ears.

He became fully awake.

"Did you hear?" the boy said again.

A strange sound came from a distance. It was like the blows of a bamboo stick on a man's body. At times it was mingled with groans.

"What is it?" — asked Seato.

"Torture!"

Seato's teeth began to chatter.

"Do you hear? he is shouting 'kill me', — listen again!"

Seato stopped his ears and buried his head in the dirty pillow. But the cry pursued him — persistent, terrible. At last the sounds died away. A door banged. Seato and his companion jumped up and pressed close to the bars of the tiny window in the door of the cell. They saw the dim contours of two men, carrying the body of a third. And a voice came out of the silence —

"Yes, there's no doubt that you're an obstinate fellow."

Rinkidji had been arrested several times when he was a teacher. The police had always been very polite to him and had even seemed slightly embarrassed. Now, since he had been turned out of the teaching

profession and started officially to work in the union, all was changed. Still they treated him a little better than the others. During this last imprisonment, however, he was tortured no less than Vatari.

Rinkidji knew that many of the victims died under torture. He knew, too, that when the police returned the body to the relatives, they always explained that the dead man had taken his own life. As a rule the corpse would be thrown into the street at night, and if it happened to be found afterwards, the authorities asserted that the prisoner had been let out some days ago, and must have met with an accident.

When Rinkidji returned from the examination, shaking, half-dead, with torn flesh and swollen face, he decided that the tortures were not so frightful as he had anticipated.

He felt that his resistance grew as the tortures proceeded. It was true that one shrieked and groaned, but that was more from rage than pain. Nearly all the time the victim was in a half-conscious state and at times did not feel anything at all.

He was still thinking of this when he got back to his cell, and fell asleep.

And the examination went on in the gymnasium. Seato lost his reason. He jumped about and yelled. He threw his arms up in the air, stamped his feet and shouted:

"Va-va-va-va-va!"

The police stared at him like dolts.

"He's only pretending — go on," said the superintendent curtly.

One of the police struck Seato across the face with a bamboo rod. Blood spurted from his nose and mouth and dyed his kimono a dark crimson.

"Va-va-va-va!" howled Seato, louder than ever. His face was a mass of bleeding flesh.

"It's no use — leave him alone," the head of the legal department ordered.

The police took off Seato's blood-stained kimono. They would have to destroy it. Then they led him back to his cell.

He was only re-examined after ten days. In three days time his wounds started to heal up. But his mind was obviously not the same. He seemed confused. He would talk to himself for hours.

The arrests went on. New workers were thrown into the prison every day. The police worked overtime. They were getting paid 50 yen a day. They scoured the streets from morning till night and had scarcely time for rest.

They would doze off while on duty. The workers would look at these rough police with astonishment. Were these the men who had tortured them? Now they were hardly able to move, with exhaustion.

"Ah, maybe you won't believe me, but it's really all the same to me. All I want is that it ends as soon as possible, so that I can get a good night's sleep," said a policeman who stood there pale and exhausted. "This is really too much. I've not seen my wife and children for twenty days now."

"Yes," he went on, thoughtfully. "At all events our life is much more difficult than it seems from the outside. I'll tell you something — I don't mind telling you because you used to be a teacher."

Rinkidji smiled and nodded. "Yesterday," the policeman told him. "We were so tired that we couldn't hold out any longer and fell asleep

on duty. And just at that moment a new warrant for arrests came out. We were quite exhausted and still we had to go out. On the way we decided to go on strike."

Rinkidji tried to restrain his laughter. "And someone said it would be a good thing to throw out the superintendent, and then get a good sleep — sleep as long as we wanted. You see, just now the superintendent needs us a lot, so he looks pleasant. That's only because the landowners and the capitalists have given him plenty of money for the support of the force."

Rinkidji looked thoughtful. "So last night we simply went on strike. Went out and did what we liked and then came back to the office, had a good sleep and talked a lot of nonsense."

"And then?"

"Well, that's all."

9

One night when the prisoners in the gymnasium had gone to sleep, Kinoshido was brought into the cell. Rinkidji had known him through the union.

"Is that you?" he greeted Kinoshido.

The latter looked at him and nodded.

"I'm being sent to Sapporro" — he said simply.

To be sent to Sapporro prison meant that things were hopeless.

Then Rinkidji noticed that Kinoshido's head was shaven.

"What have you done with your hair?"

Kinoshido frowned.

"Those pigs tore my hair out, so I had my head shaved."

Then Kinoshido collected his things and the police ordered him to go. He stopped for a moment as if undecided and said something to the policeman. The latter went up to Rinkidji.

"Kinoshido wants to know if you would give him a few cigarettes — that's if you have any."

Rinkidji searched about and found three.

"I've only got three."

"Well, come on, it doesn't matter."

Kinoshido put out his hand for them like a child.

"One's enough!" said the policeman and took the other two. The prisoners glanced at each other in silence.

"Its quite enough that I allow you to smoke at all," said the policeman.

"What does that mean — 'at all'?" Rinkidji was trembling with indignation.

The officer led Kinoshido away and Rinkidji remained alone.

Three days passed — four, ten and the end was not yet in sight.

Seato's cell was not very far from Vatari's. Seato's nervous system had been shattered to such an extent that he could not sleep. Only when Vatari sang the prisoner's song in his deep bass, Seato quietened down a little.

Vatari would repeat the last line several times, and then his voice sounded particularly fine. Seato began to wait for this song every day.

At night-time Seato often dreamt of his mother. This happened several times after she had visited the prison.

Five days after her visit Seato was set free. He was so happy when he got out into the street. His head went round. Free at last!

Yes, there was his house, the bridge, the telegraph poles, dogs. Yes, and children and people! — Free, free!

He wanted to shake hands with everybody, to talk, to run, run far away! He did not notice that the passers-by were looking at him in astonishment. He was half-wild with delight. — Free at last!

The others were to be sent to the prison of Sapporro after the examination. The tortures had been of no use whatever.

Before giving them up for trial, the head of the legal department had given them all a good dinner. He had been most kind and pleasant.

The prisoners had heard the superintendent say — "In any case, you shouldn't say any more at the trial than you have told us. It might only do you harm. I'm just warning you for your own good."

"We really find it most touching, all this anxiety about our fate," said Vatari to the superintendent. "I don't suppose we're going to say anything. Yes, and what could we say? We've already said everything here!"

Everybody was amazed at this travesty of justice.

Vatari explained afterwards to them that if new or more detailed evidence was given at the trial, it would show that the superintendent was inefficient and would probably cost him his place. Vatari made good use of this circumstance. He got some satisfaction out of seeing the people who had tortured him and his comrades quaking in their shoes with fear.

The prisoners were taken to the railway station, and sent in a closed wagon to Sapporro. The prison at the police headquarters was deserted.

Only a few lines scratched by Vatari on the walls of his cell remained to tell the tale of those terrible days. Here they are.

"Comrades! Never forget the 15th of March! Never forget the blood that was shed for you all! Struggle on! Destroy the empire and the robbers that are keeping it up! Fight against the White Terror and imperialistic war! Fight for the dictatorship of the workers and peasants! Workers of the World Unite!"

Translated by Anthony Wixley

Myra Page

GATHERING STORM

Extracts from a new novel

It was April, 1917. Wilson, who had been re-elected on the slogan "A Vote for Wilson is a Vote for Peace;" Wilson with his talk of neutrality and "Too Proud to Fight" went before Congress and passionately demanded a "War to Make the World Safe for Democracy... History demands of us that we save civilization." Eighty-six men in Congress, claiming to speak in the name of the people, promptly voted one hundred and ten million into the conflict that had been tearing Europe asunder for more than three years.

Overnight the scene changed. Word had gone out from Wall Street to the White House; and from the White House, War, glorified and ecstatic, swept into the schools, press and churches of the country. Headlines screamed "Huns Attack Defenseless and Aged," "Children's Hands Cut Off at wrists by Germans," "Women Branded on the Breast with Iron Cross," "Huns Plan Attack on America by Way of Mexico." The British and American Intelligence Offices worked overtime, concocting ingenious atrocity stories. One world famed story about which an English lord boasted his authorship some years after the war, pictured dead allied soldiers being carted behind the German lines to be manufactured into soap! Movies reeled off pictures of "Our Boys in Khaki." Gay posters appeared everywhere. Liberty, a beautiful woman, was shown harrassed by the terrible Hun. A soldier pointing directly at the spectator accused, "Your Country Needs YOU." Red-cheeked young men in natty uniforms stood before army tents on street corners, flirted in a guarded way with admiring girls, and enticed young men in, to join up.

Soldiers, with flags flying and bands playing, marched through the streets while crowds lined the curbs, hurrahed and came to attention as the "Star-Spangled Banner" boomed forth from brass trumpets. School programs were practically set aside for patriotic services. White-haired men and maiden school teachers exhorted the children in trembling accents to do their bit in the great cause.

Middle-class women deserted their bridge-tables and teas two afternoons a week to cut bandages. Gossip gave way to horrible tales of what was happening to defenseless peoples on the other side, and to tearful boasting about their sons who had donned the uniform and were fighting the war behind desks in Washington, dancing late with pretty girls at Fort Monroe or one of the other army posts.

Liberty Loans, Red Cross drives followed fast upon one another's heels. No one was safe who did not have a button or window card to prove he'd "given till it hurt" and "done his bit for Uncle Sam."

Preachers thundered from the pulpits, making of the war another holy crusade to wipe out the iniquitous heathen. These high priests burned

candles, draped their altars in flags, chanted hymns of hate, took up collections, and wept and pleaded with their national god to lead their armies into battle against the forces of darkness. "Let Democracy reign supreme throughout the world." Dark threats were made against the "secret enemies in our midst." Community sings were organized in every hamlet and the entire nation sang "Keep the Home Fires Burning Till the Boys Come Home."

Men were drafted from field, office, and factory, and women poured in to take their places. Bankers and manufacturers left their offices to go to Washington as Dollar-a-Year-Men, organizing the economic phase of the war machine, and became millionaires in a few months.

War, which long ago had penetrated the factories, now redoubled its hold there. There were noon hour talks by local patriots, flags were raised over the buildings and posters were placed in work rooms and toilets, pointing out the role of good workmanship and speed of output in winning the war. The manager, with instructions from the central office, called in foremen who, armed with subscription lists, would go from one machine to the next, putting the factory "over the top" for the Red Cross or Liberty Loan.

Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, from his comfortable headquarters in Washington uttered his solemn proclamation, "This is Labor's War," became a member of the Council of National Defense, and gave Wilson his aid in ending strikes Meanwhile Bill Haywood and the wobblies organized strikes and fough' against the draft. Socialist Party leaders stated publicly. "We will certainly not embarrass our government in this hour of crisis." Many among the ranks of the membership joined Gene Debs in protesting "this ruthless slaughter of millions for the profit of a few." These the government immediately branded as German spies, traitors and fat bellied puppies and clamped them into jail, along with the wobblies and a handful of pacifists.

Tom together with Fred and a score of wobblies was put behind bars.

"They say," Fred's voice boomed across the sea of faces, "that we should fight to honor the flag. What is the flag? An emblem for the business men. It's got the dollar sign all over it. Wall Street's made millions out of this war, shippin' munitions and supplies across, 'n now they're steppin' in to grab all they can. And who's to be the cannon fodder for 'em? Their sons? No sir, but the common workin' stiffs like you'n me. What we got to fight for, tell me that?"

Murmurs from the crowd.

"Thats right."

What about the Belgian children?"

"You're a blasted Hun!"

"We say," Fred drowned their voices, "this war must stop. Let the workers of Europe, England, and America refuse to fight!"

"Hurrah! Hurrah!"

"You slackers! You dam traitors!" Policemen's billies descended with dull thuds on the listeners' heads as the blue uniforms hewed a path through to the speaker's stand. The crowd, recovering from the suddenness of the attack, hurled itself on the police. A few slunk off down the side streets. Fists shot out, bodies went down and were trampled underfoot. Overhead the train roared by on its serpentine course. More blue-

coats rushed to the scene, revolvers drawn. Tom, one eye closed, wrestling madly with a monster in uniform, felt his knees give way as another sprang on him from behind. "You dirty coward." His last vision was of Fred, teeth bared and blood running over his face from a gash on his forehead, dealing blows to right and left as a circle of police closed in on him. Handcuffed but still shouting "Down with War," "Keep up the fight," they were hauled into the waiting Black Maria.

At the station, Tom and Fred were charged with sedition and resisting the draft.

"Cowards, that's what!" the desk sergeant sneered.

"Do your worst," Tom muttered under his breath, "if you send me into the army I'll know where to point my gun!"

During the night, guards and plainclothes men entered the cells where Fred and Tom had been herded, and in a business-like manner proceeded to beat the two handcuffed men to the floor, kicking the unconscious bodies and hurling curses at the devils who dared defy this great government of law and order.

The onward swirl of the war current reached Row Hill, South Carolina, engulfing Marge and her neighbors in its flow. At first the general feeling was one of indifference, mixed with suspicion. "Tain't our war," a few mumbled, and others, "A bunch of ferriners fightin' in Europe, why we gotta mix up in it?" But the drive widened, carrying all before it. Even Sal, roused by events, remarked, "It's like it was in the Spanish-American War---like a circus, somethin' doin' all the time."

Her words made Marge pause. What had Tom told her about that war? Disturbed, yet feeling herself powerless in the great flood, fearful of being called a slacker, Marge swept on with the rest.

Bob threw himself into the on-rushing torrent with boisterous enthusiasm. Its throb and glamor fired his blood. He and Marge were standing on a corner in Greenville, where they had walked to see a movie. The beat of drums and thumping of marching feet to martial airs was more than the youth could stand out against. "Marge," he cried, "I'm gona sign up!"

Fear and anger engulfed her. "Come on Bob, we'll be late to the show," and she pulled him along the crowded sidewalk. They went inside, feeling their way in the dark for empty seats.

A news reel was on. French soldiers and English tommies marched across the screen, "Our allies in the fight for democracy." Clapping and hurrahs. Then flashes of the scarred fields of France and Belgium. "What the Huns are doing." Next a mother with child in arms, bearing the caption, "My daddy is doing his bit fighting for mamma and me—is yours?" Finally, "Uncle Sam's Boys." Wild applause and the audience clammered to its feed as the pianist plaed "Oh Say Can You See?" Bob and Marge joined in the singing. When they sat down, she could feel trembling in the arm that Bob placed around her.

All day at the machine Marge puzzled and got snarls in her cotton. At noon Bob was nowhere to be seen. When the day shift left the mills, Bob was waiting for her by the entrance. His face told her even before his words, "Marge, I've signed up."

Later when he begged, "Woan you, afore I go across?" she gave way. So they were married that Saturday afternoon, in the company church, with all the family and neighbors present. Marge, her fingers clutched tightly between Bob's, torn between fear and joy, listened to

Parson Brown's voice as it droned from a great distance, "Dearly Beloved, We Are Gathered Together in the Sight of God and Man..." Why did Bob have to go? Would he ever come back? Would she be lucky, or would she get caught right off and have a kid? Was it wrong or right, what they were goin' through with? An insane desire possessed her to call out, "Stop, parson, I ain't sure." But when he directed his question at her, "Marge Crenshaw, do you take this man?" she colored and murmured, "I do," and it was over.

Monday Bob left for Camp Lee at Petersburg, Virginia, and Marge went back to her machine. She heard whisperings and caught eyes, sympathetic and envious, looking in her direction. Bob had been acknowledged the catch of the village, and now he was one of Uncle Sam's heroes, too. While her fingers flew from spindle to spindle, she lived over the past two days and tried not to look at the uncertainties that lay ahead.

As more and more men were drafted or voluntarily signed up, more mothers and young girls crowded into the mills, and when news of the first dead reached Greenville, the feeling against "slackers" waxed higher. Those Huns had killed sons of their people, the war had come to their own door-steps.

All of Bob's letters were stamped, "Passed by the Censor." What right, Marge asked, had the government to do that? What she and Bob had to say to each other was their own affair! Once or twice there were sentences blacked out. What could that mean? Not until long afterwards did she find out.

Bob had written, "A terrible thing has happened here at camp." Quite a number of boys from the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and North Carolinas had been drafted and brought to Camp Lee. In general they had come unwillingly. The mountain people had felt, "Tain't our war." Here for generations they had battled with Federal agents over moonshinin', "why should they fight for 'em they'd allays fought against? Why go across the seas to fight ferriners they'd no grudge against?"

Now if it had just been a war against the agents, an army could have been mustered in a few hours' time!

Much persuasion and a few shots had been exchanged before the recruits had been rounded up. Among those brought to camp from Deep Hollow was Will Hendericks, a raw youth who had never seen a train or an electric light, and though versed in the ways of the out-of-doors and quick on a trigger, had never opened a book in his life. He shared the Hollow's contempt and dread of the outside world whose few intrusions into the valley had created a suspicious dread of the stranger.

Lined up for inspection one morning, the snappy second lieutenant ordered Will to step out.

"Why's your collar open?"

"Can't stand the damn thing," Will stuttered.

The men snickered. The second lieutenant, not long out of the classroom and very conscious of his spurs, took this as an affront to the dignity and authority of his position. Glaring at the awkward figure, whose wrists dangled from sleeves that were far too short, he said curtly, "That is no way to answer an officer. Your manners are as bad as your dress. Three days K. P. for you."

This was the beginning of a feud between Will and his commanding officer. It was not long before the mountaineer was charged with insub-

ordination and thrown into the guard house where he brooded sullenly and grew homesick for his mammy and the mountains. As soon as he was released, he struck out for Deep Hollow. Later, when caught by a detachment of soldiers sent after him and brought back in disgrace as a deserter, Will was more defiant and confused than ever.

The major who came to cross-examine him in the guard was frankly puzzled. "You know," he had confided to others on the staff, "we've got to learn to handle these moutaineers right. It can't be they're yellow. You know their traditions. Yet this isn't the only camp that's having trouble with them. They're excellent marksmen, but damn hard to discipline."

All threats and persuasions had been equally ineffective in drawing out the prisoner. He only jerked at his neckband and waved his arms about to show his disgust. Once he shouted, "Gimme a gun 'n let's start warrin'. This... this..."

"Then it's not that you're afraid to fight for your country?" the lieutenant inquired. Will swung around on him and the officer beat a hasty retreat.

After two weeks solitary confinement and many lectures on his duty, Will was sent back to his company. Some of the men avoided him. But Bob, seeing how distraught he was, and knowing enough of mountain life from his grandpa's side to sense Will's feelings, went out of his way to make friends. He showed him Marge's picture and talked to him of Row Hill. The hill boy, once his suspicions were allayed, responded as eagerly as a child with stories of the hills. "All this drillin', dressin' up, and doin' woman's work, peelin' taters! If this was a sure-nough war, why didn't they fight! Anyways," he confided, "it taint our war... I'm honeing fer the hills, 'n to see the last of this place." In spite of Bob's entreaties he again disappeared.

This time he reached the valley before they caught him and brought him back to the guardhouse. After a good thrashing and no food or water for twenty-four hours, he was visited by the colonel.

"You know the way we treat deserters in the army?" his superior warned him, "We shoot them. You try this again, 'n that's what you'll get."

Will, cowed and sullen, was finally returned to his company. For several days he went about his duties in a wooden manner, refusing to talk even with Bob. When the mill youth, fearful of his friend's restlessness tried to break through, Will snarled, "Leave me be."

For the last time Will left for the mountains. The soldiers sent after him, ran him down near the railroad tracks at Staunton, but before they could lay hands on him he jumped in front of a passing freight. There was not enough of his mangled body left to bring back for burial.

The story crept around the barracks. Bob, oppressed, longed to be out of it and back with Marge and the simple life on the hill. This camp part was sure different than he'd imagined. Somethin' was plum wrong somewhars, and he'd be full glad when they shipped 'em over. Could Marge's brother be right? Did Will know more than he seemed when he said. "It ain't our war?"

Before the month was out, Bob's detachment had entrained for Hampton Roads. The order had come suddenly. There had been no chance to send word to Marge or his people. Now they were massed aboard a steamer whose sides were painted in black, green, and orange zig-zag

lines — "to disguise it from enemy submarines," a corporal told him, — and heading for France. He stood by the rail, straining his eyes for a last glimpse of the dim shoreline, and nibbling at the chocolate which tearful young ladies had slipped into each soldier's hand as the officers counted and hustled them on board.

The war had also come to High Point, North Carolina, where the Johnson family had gone to live when they left Back Row. Aunt Polly, broken by the lynching which had robbed the Johnsons of their friends, had come down with heart trouble and "crossed over the river" a few months afterwards. There were only Uncle Joey and George left.

The passion to serve his race which Ben Morgan's stories had kindled in young George had been blended, since that fearful lynching, with a burning hatred and determination to right the wrongs of his people. Just how this was to be done, he did not know. Shyly the boy tried talking it over with Pa, but the old man only grew troubled, cautioning him to mind his own affairs.

"No good'll come of it, my boy. Thar's but one way to git along with white folks 'n that's to let 'em have their way. They allays have ruled this country, 'n allays will. You're nigh sixteen, 'n maybe feelin' your oats. But mark my words 'n leave things be." George snatched his cap and made for the street.

He thought over the young fellows and girls his age. Most of 'em, when work was over, were too taken up with jazz 'n craps to pay other things much mind. Yet George located three others who were willing to ruminate over what could be done. On Sunday afternoons they'd ramble into the country, singing work-songs or spirituals and try to figure it out.

When the war spread its flood over High Point, the Negro section of the town underwent a great transformation. For silver-tongued orators set forth a doctrine from pulpit and press which fell like sweet music on the ears of Negro people. "In this great war for Democracy, the colored people, like the white Americans, have their part to play and much to gain. They have shared in the country's benefits, they must share in its hour of trial.

"Unfortunately, at times the colored race has not shared equally with the white. It has even been mistreated in some respects. But if the Negroes will forget past mistakes and do their part in this emergency, this country will live up to its obligations in the full sense of the word and undertake to seee that the Negro gets full justice." Wilson's talk about the "rights of minorities" and the "self-determination of peoples" was interpreted by national and local patriots, agitating among the colored population, as a virtual pledge to these twelve millions that "Full economic and political equality is at last to be the heritage of the colored people — if they do their bit."

Many, Uncle Joey among them, shrugged their shoulders. Others openly muttered to their own kind, "Their words sound sweet, but when white folks talk soft, they's after somethin'." Nevertheless, when those looked upon as outstanding Negro leaders added their voices, when an editorial appeared in the "Crisis," "Close ranks. Stop agitating. Fight the common enemy," many doubters joined in the swelling tide of fervor. At last their race was to be free!

In far away India and Africa, Great Britain's statesmen were using similar eloquency to persuade some three hundred million dark peoples

to place their youth and resources at the disposal of the allies, who were fighting to establish Democracy throughout the world.

George and his friends saw in the war their great opportunity. America needed, called on them, offering a chance to win freedom for their people. With shining eyes and high hopes, George signed up. Although far below minimum recruiting age, he was a husky, over-grown lad and the officer, following instructions, did not question too closely but wrote down as George had given it — "Age, eighteen years."

In the midst of the War the November Revolution in Russia broke out like an earthquake. The allied press, which a few months previously had welcomed the overthrow of the tsar in front-page headlines, now screamed as loudly in denunciation of this people's further move toward freedom.

Industrialists and Wall Street bankers conferred secretly with Washington and European statesmen. Today Russia. Tomorrow Germany, Austria, and the whole of Europe?

Some of the most far-seeing among the world's financiers had anticipated this day of rising. Judge Gary, head of the Steel-Trust, had stated at a public dinner in 1910, "Another French Revolution is coming... Once more the people will rise against their oppressors... But this time it will be our class, the business class, attacked by the laboring masses. Against that day we must prepare."

Now it was upon them. The Russian people had committed the unpardonable crime of not stopping with the tsar but had kept on until they had cleared out all those who, as Tolstoi had once vividly described it, — had ridden on their backs.

Tom in his cell seized on the news with quivering hands. Maybe she was there, taking part in it! Now the war would end, the Russian people would make peace. Oh to be out of this place... Feverishly he scrawled off a note to Marge, ending "Hurrah for the Russians... Us American workers'll learn to follow suit!" The guard caught him trying to smuggle it out and Tom got solitary for his pains. Yet the hours in the mouldy blackness were lit by the radiance of a hope fresh-born. "The first time in history... The first, but not the last."

Only faint echoes of the struggle taking place in the ranks of labor in the industrial centers of the north and west reached Row Hill. Marge, now heavy with child and drugged with labor, barely noted that somewhere in far-off Russia, so the papers said, an unknown people had murdered their rulers and chaos and immorality were running riot throughout the land... When would this war be over, and Bob safe home? How much longer could she hold out at the machine?

George Johnson was driving army mules along the Mexican border and cursing himself for the fool he was to fall for the white politicians' talk about a war for democracy. Here he was, who had planned on winning everlasting glory for his people, driving mules in Texas! Being called "nigger," and treated like one. A low-down trick the government'd pulled off. They were afraid to give us Negroes guns, afraid to train us how to fight. All they wanted of us was to drive mules. Disgusted, he thought of making off, but the quick fate meted out to one boy in the company who tried it led him to abandon the idea. No sir, he'd not be shot down in the back. He was goin' to live to get even.

Then, almost before he knew what had happened, he was bounding along in a cattle car and herded with his mules aboard a ship headed for France. Here, alongside black, brown, and yellow coolies who spoke in many strange tongues, he labored endless hours in the mud and rain, and was cursed and ordered at the point of the gun, until a fog settled on his brain, blotting out everything but one dogged thought: — Wait till' this is over. Sullenly he heaved logs, dug ditches, hitting back wherever he dared. Just wait till this was over, and he was back in the old USA!

The machine belt had broken. The women spinners, glad of a moment's respite, sat on window sills, leaned against the frames or gathered in the toilet "to pass the time away," while Art, handy-man-about-the-mill, worked at his repairing.

"The cost of vittels 'n coal's gone plum out of sight." Little Miss Jones ran her hands down her apron. "But our pay envelopes ain't swelled any."

" 'n look what goods cost now," Marge threw in, "it's scand'lous."

"I wonder how soon this here war for democracy is gonna quit? If it don't halt soon 'n our menfolks come back, we'll sure have to do somethin' 'bout more wages." The women drew closer, looking around to make sure the boss-spinner wasn't in hearing distance.

"All these here drives they wants us to give to, — I tell you, it's never-endin'." Bertha, who reminded Marge of a young elm, twisted a piece of cotton thread between her thumb and forefinger.

"Yah, but look what happened when Fan MacGray didn't wanta sign up. They found somebody for her place." Miss Jones hit her palms together and bit her underlip.

"It sure is hard times. I tell you the truth, honey," a Negro woman sweeper who had been standing nearby, listening in, broke in on the conversation, "this here's my last rag, 'n when it goes I ain't seen whar another's comin' from. Winter is here 'n my young 'uns ain't got shoes or coats to cover 'em." She sighed and leaned on her broom. Some of the white women deliberately ignored her, but Marge, always friendly, and remembering Ma Morgan and her talks with Tom, answered her, "Yah, Annie, it's hard goin's now."

As the belt swung into place and the power was thrown on, the hum of the machines drowned their talk.

"Peace — Peace!" Marge was jerked out of her sleep as a shrill voice broke in on the night's stillness. "The war's ended — Peace! Peace!" Snatching a wrapper Marge ran to the door. "Boy, here, here!" She held out her coppers for the paper.

Quaking with the chill, she sat on the edge of the bed to read the news while Gertie, huddled up, bedclothes pulled around her shoulders, listened with strained face.

"Thank the Lawd it's over," Gertie murmured and dropped back on the pillow.

"Come on, let's dress 'n go outside," Marge laughed hysterically. "I'm too restless to sleep."

Lights shone dimly from the grey shacks that lined the street, doors banged as millhands joined the rapidly gathering crowd, pulling on jackets and shawls as they ran.

"Hurrah, the war's over!"

"The slanghterin' 'll stopp 'n our boys come home!"

"We'll have a real Christmas this year!"

Villagers pounded one anothers backs, shook hands all round each time a newcomer joined them, threw caps into the air, and paraded the narrow, dirty street, singing and hurrahing until the stars paled in the greying sky and it was time for a bite to eat before going to the mill.

The super and foremen raced from one department to another, scowling angrily. "You all gone crazy? Sure the war's ended. But these orders got to go out!"

After the super left, Miss Jones slipped over to Marge to whisper, "What you know, thar's some that ain't glad this war's over! They been makin' a pile of money, the mill has. N it warn't their sons across!"

Marge caught a glimpse of Bertha's sad face as she wove in and out among the frames. Poor Bertha! Thar'd be no homecomin' for her; her man lay over thar, blown to smitherins.

"We're sailing the end of this week," Bob wrote in shaky, zig-zag lines, "and should be home by New Year's."

Marge sung at her machine. She had Bertha over to supper and made her a chemise for Christmas. When Bertha wept on her shoulder, "Why did the Almighty let it happen?" Marge felt guilty in her own happiness.

The mills, banks, and business firms closed for half a day to greet the returning Greenville boys. Once again flags flew, khaki figures tramped, bands played martial music, flaming speeches were made. These boys (sons of farmers, mill workers, doctors, and small business men) had won the war for Democracy! They were heroes. Let them ask the best that America had to offer, nothing was too good for them!

"Bob?" Marge's vision of his thin, limping figure, his crooked smile, blurred. "You've come home."

"So Uncle Mat's broke down 'n went to spend his last days at his son's farm in Georgy? That's too bad." Bob, his second day back, was still catching up on the news. "What's happened to Tom?"

Immediately the entire table ceased eating, staring at him in a strange way. The two boarders excused themselves hastily and went outside.

"You see, Tom opposed the war," Marge began.

"Tom brung disgrace on us all, that's what," Gertie blurted out. "Ma allays said he would. But — " her voice broke, "I never expected to have a jailbird in the family." Billy and Sam, the younger brothers, reddened, looking down at their hands.

"Doan you dare say that 'bout Tom!" Marge thundered, "he ain't no ordinary criminal. I ain't ashamed of Tom, if the rest of you is. He done what he thought was right. He's got convictions 'n the government put him in jail for it."

Convictions or no convictions, he's in jail, ain't he?" Gertie demanded. "If they find it out at the mill, they'll turn us offa the hill."

Later Bob asked Marge. "Just what is it Tom believes?" They talked far into the night.

"Now the war's over, why doan they let him out?" Marge questioned anxiously. "If he was a rich man's son, they'd not keep him locked up like that."

"If he was a rich man's son, he'd never got took up in the first place."

Bob was restless to be at work. "But wait awhile," Marge begged, "till you get rested up a mite, 'n I can feed you up on grits and gravy, 'n take that peaked look off'n you. Your lungs 'n side ain't right yet, the doctor says."

"But honey, I can't be a-livin' offa you. You look like a rest would set you up right smart, yourself."

"Gee, Marge, it's good to be back! These fifteen months were the longest I ever spent." Only fifteen months! They looked at each other. Where were the carefree youth, the starry-eyed girl of a brief year and a half ago?

"Marge!" Gertie's whining voice sailed forth from the kitchen, "time to be a-fixin' supper."

It was evident, even to Bob, that he couldn't do a day's work at the mill. Even odd jobs around the house tired him out. What troubled Marge more than anything else was that he didn't seem to improve very fast. Then he was changed. The old Bob, with his ready laugh and boisterous confidence was gone, and in his place was this quiet, brooding creature who wandered about the house as though looking for something he couldn't find.

She'd come upon him sitting with his hands hanging down between his knees, eyes staring ahead.

Bob would mutter, "Yah, us mill folks gotta fight for our rights," "If I can jest get my strength back. Seems like they done for me."

"Doan say that. It takes time, but you're perkin' up a lil' every day. When you spose we'll hear 'bout that government compensation you been writin' about?"

"Aw, the government doan care 'bout us no more, now the fightin's over!"

"But at the parade they said—"

"They said! Then what for they put so much in the way between me 'n Burke 'n the others over thar gettin' the pay that's due us?"

"I dunno. Reckon it takes time, or somethin'."

Billy and Sam were persistent in their questioning of Bob and his two buddies, Burke and Walter. "Ah, go on, tell us more about what it was like, fightin' in France. Was it sure-nough like the movies shows it?" The family was still grouped around the cleared supper table. Various neighbors had dropped in.

Bob's fingers drummed restlessly on the red cloth. "Thar ain't nuthin' worth tellin'."

"Ah, brother Bob," Sam wheedled, "doan act tight-mouthed. What about the night of the gas attack when you'n Burke—"

"Do leave 'em alone," Marge urged, "can't you see they doan wanta talk?"

Walter pulled irritably at the empty right sleeve. "If you wanta be filled up to the guzzle with war stories, go in town to the American Legion. Thar's plenty boy's thar who lap up this hero-stuff. Us ain't got the stomach for it."

"They sure is modest ones," Ben Tilson's wife spoke in an admiring stage whisper.

"Naw, that ain't it Miz Tilson," Burke gave an embarrassed cough. "Beggin' your pardon ladies, but—", suddenly he exploded, "me 'n my pals is plum shet to hell of the war 'n war talk. Let's change the subject."

"Tell you what," Billy, unheeding, addressed his younger brother. "What you say in a coupla years we join the army? Oughta be more to it than jest workin' at the mill."

Abruptly Bob lifted his head. "All right, Billy, Sam, and all of you. We'll tell what war's really like." He spoke sternly. "Maybe you young fools can learn some sense in time, though I doubt it."

Toward the end Burke described the unrest and near-mutiny in his battalion because of bug-infested rations, brutality of officers, and senseless wasting of lives. "More'n one struttin' Napoleon near got shot down — by mistake you understand. 'N soldiers wisecracked between theirselves, 'I loved this country once, but let me get outta this war'n I'll never love another'."

Bob related his experience with a German soldier. "I was in a detail carryin' prisoners-of-war to the rear. On the way we got a lil' friendly, tho it was contrary to orders. One fella, about Ben's age 'n size offered me a smoke. He could speak a bit of English too.

" 'Why you fight?' he asked me. 'You workman, me workman, why fight?'He told me he was a textile weaver, from a place called Saxony. Jest think, a mill hand like us!" Bob marveled.

"By gorry!" Ben exploded, "you mean it?"

"Yah," Bob nodded wearily, "it was all lies, 'bout them bloody, man-eatin' Huns. I seen a lotta other prisoners, 'n once you got to study 'em close-like, they turned out to be just common folk like us... Now this one I was tellin' you of, he showed me a picture from round his neck of his wife 'n lil' boy." Bob gulped. "'n he said, 'I'm glad I'm prisoner, no more fightin'.' He asked me over, 'Why workmen fight each other? For their rich men! Workmen should stand together.' Then an officer comes up 'n we didn't get to talk any more. I never saw him again."

His listeners talked this over.

"When you come to think of it, what we got out of the war?" Ben ruminated. "Us here on the hill is bad off as ever, with talk of wage-cuts flyin' round."

"I tell you what we got," Walter spoke bitterly. "Bob 'n Burke got bad lungs. 'N me, I got an arm missin' outta the war. 'N thar's a new crop of millionaires outta the war. That's what we got."

"The mill-owners sure musta made money. Look at the new places they bought down in Floridy. You seen the pitchers in the papers? 'N all the mills what went up."

"That thar war for Democracy," Walter continued, "it was one rich man's war 'n poor man's fight." This saying was taken up and spread from hill to hill throughout the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama, "Yes sir, it was a rich man's war 'n a poor man's fight."

"The next time they wanta war," Bob frowned intently at Billy's perplexed face, "they can go fight it theirselfs."

"Democracy me shirt-tail," Burke bumped his chair against the wall, "they sure can count me out."

"John Nelson was a-tellin' me," Ben spoke cautiously, "that thar's a rich man over to Atlanta what says thar's only one more war a-comin'. That's a war between the poor 'n the rich. A new civil war."

"Wal," Walter also made to leave, "when it comes, I guess me 'n Burke 'n Bob'll know on what side to fight."

"Don't speak that way," Gertie rasped. "Don't—."

Burke stared down at her. "Walter's fight. When it comes, I guess we'll be ready."

Peter Kozlanyuk

THE HAPPY IDEA

The agent for compulsory insurance was making the rounds of the cottages accompanied by the village elder and a policeman. He was collecting all that he could lay hands on. Just at that time at the other end of the village the peasants were talking things over in the hut of Ivan Guli, who was dead.

The yard was thick with the sludge of autumn, and so the earthen floor was as dirty as the street. (The smell of death enveloped the hut and the sadness of death lay over the cupboard rattling among the pots, as if awaiting the burial feast.) The figure of the dead Ivan, stretched out on a bench, glimmered through the thick trails of smoke. His face was frozen in a mask of terror, as if he had been accused of something he had never known to be a fault.

Outside, autumn rain was falling. It sobbed persistently, almost cheerfully, as though glad that Ivan was dead, and that compulsory insurance was being enforced, and that the potatoes were rotting in the peasants' fields.

The smoke curled and wound its way up to the ceiling of the hut, then stretched itself languidly and fell again, heavy like care on the heads of the peasants.

Ivan lay on the bench with hands folded on his stomach. The flies ran busily over his face. They had a purposeful air, as if they were about to stage an entertainment in the dead man's mouth.

The men in the hut were talking things over. One stout little old fellow, with a wart under his eye, thought the agent should be given a good thrashing, but this was strongly opposed.

"What's the good of beating him? What do you suppose will come of that?" admonished a man in a ragged sleeveless jacket.

A tall, thin, tousled peasant explained that nothing could be worse than prison, where he would probably have to spend the winter.

"There's nothing to sit on at home. They taxed me last spring for the dog, in the summer for the board I put across my cart. Now they're taxing us for the insurance and then they'll take the guts out of us altogether — for taxes. What's a man to do? There's nothing to pay with and nowhere to get it from. I'll go to the prison. I'll sit there on the steps with the children and say:

"Well, now, gentlemen, here we are! Give us uniforms and lock us up. Let's warm ourselves by your leave, anyway."

The peasants agreed mournfully that there was nothing else left to do. Only the old man in the new sleeveless jacket objected.

"They'll skin us all right — but they won't take us into prison for the winter. There isn't such a "drought" in the prison as all that nowadays.

By no means. If the peasant wants to go to prison — well, let him go in summertime, not wintertime. Even in summer it's not certain if they'll take you or not. And what do they want with peasants in the prison. It's only the peasant's money — they want — that's all."

"He's talking gospel truth," said a peasant in a collarless kaftan. "I should have been put in jail last year on account of that goose. How many times I had to go and ask them to let me in for the winter. Well, and what came of it? 'No, there's no room, now,' they said, 'either pay or come in the spring.' And so I had to borrow the money from the man who keeps the beershop and pay them."

One man suggested shutting up the cottage and hiding in the stable. The others said that the insurance agent always went about with a policeman, who had the right to poke his nose everywhere and might even give them a beating for a trick like that. And in any case the police would be able to get in through the window.

The men turned things over in their minds for a long time, but they could think of no way out. Various plans were suggested but none of them seemed suitable. The little old man fingered his beard. The man in the ragged jacket looked at the man in the new one for a minute or two and said sardonically.

"Oi, Simon, keep a tight hold on your jacket, it's burning on you."

Simon looked over his jacket attentively, with a kind of pity and then said angrily:

"To the devil with it! Let them take it. It's the only thing left, but let them take it, hope they get a fever from it! And do you think they won't take yours? They surely will! Just watch them!"

The fellow in the ragged jacket laughed.

"Oho, if one of the judges gets this mantle on his back he'll look like a priest in his robes" — he pointed to the hole in the shoulder, laughing all the time.

The old fellow with the wart was just getting ready to say something when a newcomer appeared in the doorway. It was Lesh, whose cottage was right in the middle of the village. The widow of Ivan came in behind him. Her arms were full of clothes, — a waiscoat, a leather jacket, a kaftan, and some shawls.

She raised her voice in a loud lament.

"Oi-oi-oi good people, have pity on me. Help me to hide these things, or I'll be left without a stitch, I will indeed, oi-oi-oi!"

The men sat like hares hunted down. Simon tried to soothe the widow-woman.

"Now, god help you! Don't take it to heart so. It'll all blow ober. Maybe, the damned agent won't take anything."

But who can quieten a widow?

"Lesh says they take everything — they don't spare a soul!"

"Did you say that, Lesh?" all the men asked incredulously. "And do they really take everything?"

Lesh was affronted.

"That's not the half of it! They took away the sucking pigs from the lad without a nose, (because he had worth wearing,) and they beat old Vassilissa because she wouldn't give up her jacket."

"A cart follows them round to carry away the things they take."

"The hailstones destroyed the rye, the potatoes are rotting in the fields, and these devils won't even let us draw a breath, take the last stitch from our backs, too."

The peasants fidgeted and grew more worried than ever. The widow threw herself down by the corpse and began wailing and wringing her hands:

"Oh, my man, my dear master! Why've you left me alone at a time like this! The devils w'll take the last shirt from my back — What'll I pay the priest for the funeral with?"

Ivan's children ran up and joined their mother in the lament. The peasants sat more dead than alive. The widow's tears fell on the dead man's face and it seemed for a moment as if he wrinkled his face up and wept.

Suddenly Simon, the man with the wart under his eye, jumped up as if he had been stung. He began to soothe the widow cheerfully:

"Don't cry, listen to me, listen to what I've thought out just now. Let's dress Ivan up in these things. Maybe, they won't take them from a corpse!"

The widow awoke as if from sleep, rose, and suddenly let her arms drop helplessly and sat down on the bench by Ivan.

The old man with the wart turned to the others.

"Well, what do you think? Come and help me dress up poor Ivan. God rest his soul!"

Everybody brightened up. They stood the corpse on its feet and dressed him in the sleeveless jacket, the kaftan belonging to his widow, the leather jacket with the apron sewn on to it. They stuffed the shawl and kerchiefs into his bosom and laid stout Ivan back again like a bundle of hay on the bench.

The widow thanked them, shuffling and sobbing quietly. Then the man in the new waiscoat turned to the rest.

"Look here, supposing we put all our clothes under the corpse. Eh? Maybe the swine wouldn't look under a dead man, what do you think?"

The peasants brightened up considerably.

"Let's put all our things under poor Ivan there and cover him over with straw and a canvas shroud — suggested the man in the worn-out jacket.

"Now, Simon, go and take off your jacket in case anybody is spying on us from the yard," ordered the one with the wart. The other went out cheerfully.

Soon Ivan lay as fat as a barrel on a pile of jackets, kaftans and leather coats. Straw hung over the sides.

The peasants said their prayers and gave thanks for the happy idea, some turning to the oak table as high as a cow, and some to dead Ivan, or rather to the heap of clothes hidden under him.

And dead Ivan lay high up on the peasants' garments and seemed proud of his position. At least his under-lip could plainly be seen to puff itself out. He lay smiling — at the peasants' prayers, perhaps, and at the autumn sludge, at the idea of compulsory insurance and at everything to which the Galician peasant is doomed while the power of the landowners lasts.

Translated by Anthony Wixley.

A. Kurella

UNEMPLOYED

Letter from Italy

The economic policy of fascism has given rise to tremendous unemployment in Italy. It is impossible to estimate the actual figures. The thought of unemployment is uppermost in the minds of the workers. I can remember a talk I had with one worker, who at the time had a job in the chemical factory at Palermo. He said to me with a significant expression, lowering his voice to a whisper: "There is terrible umemployment over here. There are four thousand inhabitants in Palermo. Of these a hundred thousand must be out of work."

He doubtless exaggerated. This figure could be taken as approximately correct if the dependents of the unemployed be included. I mention his remarks to show the proportions unemployment assume in the minds of the workers. Every worker has a dozen or so friends and acquaintances whom he knows to be out of work. He generalizes from his own personal experience and says "We have a hundred thousand unemployed."

The fascist press publishes daily, long articles on unemployment in other countries. Most of the workers and peasants will be able to tell you how many unemployed there are in Germany, England, America and other countries. The purpose of such articles is to show unemployment as a world-wide disease for which fascism cannot be held responsible. The fascists are always assuring us that there are few unemployed in Italy.

The official statistics gave the number of unemployed for March, 1931 as 800,000 (as against 450,000 for March, 1930). In interpreting these figures we must take into account the fascist unemployment laws and the way unemployment statistics are worked out. The regulations are as follows: —

Only those unemployed workers who are entitled to unemployment benefit are registered. Only those workers who can prove that immediately before registration they have been employed for sixty consecutive working days are entitled to benefit. Unemployment pay is cut off after three months.

Under such a system the official unemployment figures are always many times lower than the actual figures, especially in agriculture. In agriculture only permanent workers can be registered. Thus the army of daily workers, old hands and poor peasants offering their labor for short periods, numbering as they do hundreds of thousands, are completely excluded from the official statistics. None the less it is just this type of worker that lays one of the heaviest burdens on the agricultural labor market.

The number of workers ineligible for registration is greatly increased by the law preventing free movement from place to place. Before they can leave their permanent place of residence, they must obtain a so-called internal passport. Such passports are issued by the prefectures of the police and only when satisfactory reasons are given for leaving. As a result of

this law whole districts have become isolated, as for example the hill country of Abruzzia, where formerly laborers used to descend annually into the valleys for the winter season. A special police force has been established and is posted at the stations to prevent the hill dwellers from descending into the valleys and the towns in search of work for the winter.

In the towns also, the unemployed are under constant control. A worker who has not a job in his own line in the town and fails to find one in two weeks is compelled to return home. Arrived home he is naturally not entitled to unemployment benefit, on account of not having been at work during the required period. Thus this category also is excluded from the official statistics. But this is not all. Unemployed metal workers in Milan and Turin recounted to me how they had been duped into losing both their job and the right to unemployment benefit. One fine day the firm announced that temporarily it did not need their services. They suggested, however, that these workers put their names on the reserve list, naturally without pay and on condition that during that period they would not register as unemployed. For quite a long time they waited for the work that had been promised them, but without any results. Eventually they were informed that there would not be any work for them after all. Now again they were unable to register as they had not been working continuously for the period immediately preceding registration. This practice, which has become widespread, turns the unemployed statistics and the payment of unemployment benefit into a mere farce.

If, in spite of all these traps, a worker succeeds in registering himself as unemployed, he is given 3.75 lira a day (that is approximately 9¾ d. or the cost of five pounds of bread). The payment is stopped after ninety days, after which the unemployed worker is given no assistance whatsoever. In Italy the victims of the crisis are not provided for and there are no charitable institutions. The only thing the worker can do to aviod dying of starvation is to stoop to applying to the local fascist party organization where they will give him, as to the lowest of beggars (provided he has not in any way won their displeasure) a portion of soup and a chunk of bread or a pound of rice.

But we must do them justice: fascism has done something to fight against unemployment. In the middle of March of this year, all the large Italian papers were decorated for several days with the following promising headlines:

> "Fascism liquidates unemployment. Thanks to the personal intervention of Mussolini, it has been found possible to reopen after a lockout lasting five months, the coal mines in the Arno valley. The workers of Castelnuovo dei Savbione have returned to work gladly."

On the 19th of March the central organ of trade-unions "Il lavoro Fascista," Fascist Labor) published a dispatch from one of its correspondents who was present at the reopening.

> "Early yesterday morning while it was still quite dark the acetylene lamps were burning. The men went down from the town into the mines. They were going to start work again today after four and a half months idleness. There was no speechmaking, there were no ceremonies; holiday clothes were left behind and fustian workers blouses took their place. All look of depression and despair had faded from the faces of the miners. All the men who passed me were composed and pleasant. The miners had preserved, to an extraordinary

degree, their consciencious attitude to their duties. As they bid each other good day, a deep contentment could be heard in their voices. A whole district was returning to life, eleven mines were being reopened.

"Who would not be allured by this? How could I miss an opportunity of witnessing such a triumph over unemployment? How could I let pass unheeded this 'miracle' in the Arno valley?

"People must visit the place, people must study this life from all aspects... Do the miners deserve to be shown on the cinema? Yes, they really do deserve it."

I, too, came to this conclusion when I paid a visit to the town and the mines on the April 9.

I left Florence early in the morning. The valley of the river Arno extends 30 kilometers from the town. On the south side of the valley, between the town and the mountains, there is a flat plain. Here at a depth of 500 meters there are seams of brown coal. I left the train at the town of Santo Giovanni Baldarno. Santo Giovanni was once the center of a large number of feudal estates. The arms of this owner are still to be seen decorating the galleries of the ancient town hall. The town has long since developed into a small industrial center. The market place and the streets present a scene typical of industrial towns. From early in the morning they are crowded with groups of unemployed workers, most of them ablebodied young men. I asked what time the bus started for Castelnuovo. This led to a conversation with a group of workers who were standing about. In a few minutes we had got on to the same old subject, the economic conditions and the terrible poverty of the workers. Many of those present had previously been employed in the local works and mines, some of them for fifteen and even twenty years. It was usual for the sons to go down into the mines with their fathers at the age of 12 or 13. They were now living a dog's life. They had long ago been reduced to poverty. No work was to be had in the factories of Santo Giovanni. How did they manage to live? Occasionally they succeeded in finding small odd jobs in a factory, or at loading and unloading of the railway. A few of them had small gardens in which they managed to grow potatoes and vegetables. Most of them were dependent on their relations — brothers, wives and sons who were still working in factories or on the land.

"If only we could leave the place! Not a soul would stay here! But we're not allowed even to move into the next town!"

Then followed the most bitter abuse of the so-called trade unions and the fascists. Although we were standing in sight of everyone near the railway station, no one thought it necessary to be careful of what he said. Later I learnt from the Party comrades, who have formed strong communist centers here, that the discontent of the workers had long ago reached boiling point and that the fascists dare not apply repressive measures.

I told them that I intended to visit Castelnuovo and see the recommencement of work in the mines and works. The men smiled "Yes, go there and have a look at the miracle!"

I wanted to ask them about it. Had not they themselves worked there?

"No, no, go and see for yourself. I might tell you something that wasn't true. Better go and see for yourself what's happening there."

This conversation did me a good service. The workmen gave me the name and address of a certain mate of theirs, who appeared to be known

all through the district and was thought a lot of by the men. They gave me his christian name and not his surname. I was to go to him without fail as he would probably be at home and would show me round. Very pleased with the information I had obtained, I started off for the bus. One or two fascists watched me as I went. However, nobody followed me and I made my way without difficulty to the street where my future guide lived. Very soon I came to some tumble-down army huts. Here the miners took rooms at 5 lira a month. In one of these rooms I found a middle-aged man. This was Secondino whom I was looking for. He was mending boots as I came in. He put down his tools immediately, took off his overalls and went out.

"You see how I spend my time now," he said as we went out, showing me his cobblers tools.

"Then you dont work in the mines?" I asked.

"I worked there nineteen years, but you heard how they were closed down last autumn? I was one of those who lost their jobs."

We were coming onto the wide loading ground of the mine. On either side huge piles of brown coal rose up.

"Look over there. That coal is not very valuable. It is used only as fuel. It is not worth transporting. Formerly, all the brown coal that was mined here was used on the spot. You see over there that large works, that's a power station. Electric energy used to be sent from here into Santo Giovanni and then on to Florence. We, ourselves, don't quite know what happened. It seems that the directors got into some sort of a mess with the power station. Anyway one fine day the power station stopped taking in coal and closed down. That was the beginning of everything. It was too expensive transporting this light weight coal and so the mines had to stop working.

The structures near which we were passing seemed to have been built recently — between lifting towers and sorting machines passed rows of open cars joining up separate loading trestles among themselves and then with the cable ways. But everywhere a deathly silence reigned. Not a man was to be seen.

"But what work there used to be here!" my companion exclaimed. "In those days we earned good money. The place swarmed with people and there was a tremendous clatter of work. But now?"

"But hasn't work started again?" I asked. My companion smiled.

"Started again? Do you know what happened? In the old days 4,000 men used to be working here, and in periods of boom 6,000. That was during the war. In those days workers used to come in from other districts. But all though last year workers were dismissed dozens at a time, and in October they shut up shop altogether."

"But what about the recommencement of work about which all the papers were shouting?"

"Yes, I know all about that. I rose to the bait myself. When things got bad here I went off to look for work somewhere else. I was in Umbria and spent a time in Skoleto. But there was nothing doing there either. The wool factory had just closed down. Working on the land you can't get more than seven lire a day. So when the papers came out with the news that work had begun again here I naturally came back as quickly as possible. After all I had worked quite some time in the mines. Everyone here knows me. I naturally thought that I would be one of the first to be taken on again. Anyone would think it. But do you know how many they took back? Two hundred men. A whole two hundred. And what men

they were! Of course they had their reasons for not taking us old stagers; especially me. They've got me down on their black list."

And he told me something about his past which I will not repeat for fear of compromising him.

From the loading ground we climbed up onto one of the lifting devices. It was here that we saw workers for the first time. They were strong-limbed young men from thirty to forty years of age.

"Have o look at them. They are not the sort of people who can live on air and sunlight. And each of them has a family of half a dozen kids or so. But ask them how much they get now."

We stopped beside a group of workers. The work did not require very great effort. The trucks slid along trolleys placed far apart. We were given a friendly greeting. I noticed, too, that my companion seemed to have great influence among the workers.

"This comrade," my guide started straight away calling me comrade, "has come to have a look at how things stand. He's from Germany. He wants to know how much you earn."

They answered immediately: the workers on the surface were given ten lira a day, of which 12% (more than formerly) was deducted for various purposes. The workers below surface were given 16 lira a day. You had to support your family on that.

"You can imagine how we live, and then anyone who hasn't got a family has his income eaten into by the taxes on bachelors. But do you know how much we used to get before? On the surface, 18 to 20 lira and 26 to 32, below. Doing piece work you could earn 40 lira a day."

This meant a 50% wage cut. I further learnt that the working time below surface had been increased to nine hours.

"And hasn't living become cheaper since then? One sees a lot in the papers about a fall in prices."

"Yes, you see a lot written about it, but we workers haven't noticed it. Everything costs the same as before. Do you see that building over there, that used to be our co-operative. We built it last year with our own funds. In the old days we used to take part in the pricing of goods, but now the fascists have taken everything into their own hands. They took our secretary away and in his place put the manager of the factory canteen. They wangle things so that our money returns to the bosses. Everything here belongs to them, the works, our living quarters, the gardens, in fact every square yard of the land you see. About 500 peasants rent land from the company. There's poverty if you like! The poor things let themselves be led by the nose. For a whole year they work like slaves only to find at the end of it that they are 500 or 1,000 lira in debt."

We moved on, working our way through mine shafts, elevators and piles of coal. In one place there had been a surface outcrop of coal, but now it had been exhausted and coal could only be obtained 500 meters below. In these shafts the temperature was anything up to 38 degrees centigrade.

The place was in a scandalous condition. The men lived like dogs. Arbitratiness everywhere. The capitalists did what they liked. They had corrupted everyone. Everywhere they are the overlords, no one has any control over them. In the provinces the prefects govern and the prefects nominate the podesti. The podesti always take the side of the fascist directors. Whatever they do they are always in the right, and the capitalists know very well how to take advantage of this. They give bribes right and

left and the fascists live very well on them. That is only the big guns of course. The rank and file of the fascists-workers — of which there are a few here, though only a few, live as poorly as we do. They, too, are discontented.

Our conversation then turned into political channels. My guide turned out to be a socialist of long standing. He still had the idea that the communist section in Livorno was a mistake. We returned at leisure to where he lived. On the way I asked him whether the government had given the company anything to commence work.

"Of course it did. A good half million. That's what keeps them. Look over there,' my companion pointed at a villa surrounded with cypresses on a neighboring hill. "That's where they hang out. Signor Raffo and his nephew Signor Erini. They have undertaken to keep the works going for a year. Half a million will last them out till then."

I had heard and seen enough. The reopening of the works was a mere take in. By reducing wages 50% and lengthening the working day, two hundred workers out of four thousand had been given work. And that meant that "a whole district was returning to life, eleven mines were being reopened." That was what the "elimination of unemployment" meant.

On the way back a number of other workers accompanied me. My host, offering me eggs and bean salad as I left, told them about the object of my visit. We passed the house of the administration. I noticed a young tree surrounded by a railing and asked him what it was.

"Oh that was planted in memory of an engineer by the name of Lunghi. He was killed at this spot. It was in 1920 or 1921. There were a lot of new workers then, and it was really a misunderstanding. The workers got into conflict with the administration. They were greatly worked up and wanted to kill that bloodsucker, Raffo, but they did not know him by sight as he never came near the mine shafts, and so took Lunghi by mistake.

When we had gone a little further one of the workers said, as if to himself:

"We ought to hunt out a little tree in Raffo's park suitable for planting on his grave."

"The only thing," another put in, "is that there will be no one left willing to plant a tree in his memory."

We all laughed and they said goodbye to me, laughing. I left the place where the fascists had carried out their miraculous cure for unemployment, fully convinced that not very much longer will the workers stand such a mockery.

V. Panferov and V. Ilienkov

COKE, MEN and FIREBRICKS

1

The foundation of the coke furnace, with its thousands of tons of concrete, have been planted down, a dead weight on the piles, one thousand two hundred piles covering an underground bog where the ancient refuse of the giants, tree stumps and plants, have collected through the ages, carried thence by the slime of the rivers rushing from the mountains. The greedy, spongy bog, never satisfied, swallowed up everything that fell into its maw, and nothing remained above its surface but a thick veil of fetid fog which dispersed only on sunny days, leaving a cloud of midges and gnats risen from the weeds, hovering over the watery expanse.

The mud, trees and plants falling on the dark bottom, began to crowd out the bog, and so also did the reeds venturing further and further from the banks into the very middle, until the bog began to surrender. The mud and trees and plants advanced upon it from all sides, and in advancing, dried it up so that its surface became covered with a lumpy crust like so many hedgehogs.

Centuries passed, the crust hardened, collected mould and rubble and became overgrown with thickly growing herbs and small bushes of wild acacia, raspberry bushes and mulberry trees.

Thus, nature walled in the stagnant bog, leaving no memorial, no title deeds or records.

And then men came along here at the foot of these hills, struck plans for a foundry, decreed for the construction of a coke furnace not far from its site. The flat headed excavators began their work and men descended into the opening they had made. The men descended quickly. They blew up the earth with dynamite, they tore away the sod, breaking it into loose-grained pieces which they threw up onto the surface. They were conquering the earth.

But when the upper layer of soil had been removed, and the excavator, vomiting enormous lumps from its steel jaws, brought its powerful ribbed neck again to work, the undersoil was seen to be loose and sticky like underdone porridge. None of the engineers expected that they would have to build their furnace on a swamp. The swamp was as unexpected as gas in a mine. The further the men went down the stickier it became. The mud gasped and gurgled around their legs, sucked them down toward its fetid depths.

This is how they opened the bog.

It would have been possible to make an end of it there and then, to fill up the opening with earth and replant it with birch cuttings and red catkins or merely leave it to nature to form again its stagnant swamp with its midges and gnats and wild ducks.

But according to the Plan it was just here that the furnace had to be built. Removing it to another site would mean saying goodbye to a mass

of cement, gravel and iron in the foundations of the blast furnaces, to the furnaces themselves and to the casting and rolling houses; it would mean holding up the work of construction and abandoning the site altogether.

It was impossible to retreat.

So the men, splashing about in the water, began to build piles. First they stuck in wooden stakes, and then they pulled them out again with jacks and cranes and made moulds which they filled with concrete.

They put all their ingenuity, all their strength and all their resources, in spite of the biting fifty degrees of Siberian frost, to building piles — one thousand two hundred piles.

Shock brigadier Shidek knows very well that the concrete experts, in giving him and his firebrick workers the polished parquet-like furnace base, have given him the fruits of their labor to entrust to the bog and that now it is up to these workers to put in the furnace which is to give a yearly output of five hundred and fifty tons of best quality coke, a furnace from which the gases will be led off to a chemical factory for the preparation of ammonia, carbolic acid and other products. He knows that without coke the blast furnaces, which are to give the country a yearly output of a million two hundred thousand tons of iron, that is to say as much as the whole of the grey Urals gave the country in a year in the old days, will never be put to work.

Shidek, slight and angular, climbs to the upper level and watches from there the work of his brigade, inclining his head first to one side and then to the other as though he were listening to the ticking of a watch. He tells by the sound that the masons make how the work is going in the lining of the furnace.

The grey mother of pearl, fireproof bricks sound like thick heavy glass. The bricks are highly polished and when you take them in your hands it seems as though they must slip out of your grasp and fall to the ground, there to break into a thousand tinkling splinters. But the master masons handle them quickly with practised skill. Pale, ribbed reflections glance from the surface of the bricks poised in the experts hand, then the gentle hammering of mallets, the shouts of the workers, the creaking of wagons. From time to time the cries and talking of the men cease and then the notes from the bricks, the squeaks and rustling, all mingle together to form a single hum of work like the seething of malt.

The hum gets louder, fills the building and with the silver dust finds its way outside. This is the peculiar music of the brick layers.

Thus for two or three hours.

"Cement!"; from several different directions the cries of the masons break in on the hum, and women with red handkerchiefs on their heads, stockingless with shoes on their feet and dressed in ragged country jackets, empty the grey clay for cement, from their barrows into the masons' troughs.

"Lining bricks!"

"Lining bricks?"

Five hundred and eighty six bricks are required for lining a coke furnace. All that is really necessary is to know how to choose the right bricks. They are kept in a store. They have to be carried to the building and the furnace has to be sorted out from them just as the parts of a motor, a sewing machine or a tractor might be sorted out. They must be chosen and spread with cement and the furnace is ready. A simple matter.

But whenever the masons are fitting a new lining brick they wrinkle their foreheads. The bricks are of different shapes, they are not just simply red bricks, such as are used for building the ordinary broad-based Russian stoves such as you would have built into your house. The lining bricks are of all kinds, conical, pyramidal, cubic, spiral, hooked. You have to know the place of each of these bricks. You have to know how to spread on the cement in the right way, spread it so that there shall not be a single fault, for very soon the furnace develops a thousand degrees centigrade and at that temperature gas will find a way out through the very smallest crack. And then there must be absolute accuracy. Neither a centimeter more nor a centimeter less. Everything must fit like the wheels in a watch. That is why there is always an instructor superintending the lining work. Even where there is only the very smallest defect he makes the masons do the whole row again.

That's accurate work for you.

And every time a mason puts in a new brick he wrinkles his forehead, or in the case of Zhilin, strokes his coarse whiskers. Zhilin's whiskers are always covered with cement. Just now his upper lip is covered with some, like a lump of hardened putty. He strokes his whiskers and looks disconcertedly round him. Eventually his glance falls on the foreign instructor and slapping his thighs and saying with a squeaky voice in broken Russian: —

"Ah-ee, ah-ee, ah-ee, my nob, no big enough, ah-ee."

He speaks in broken language thinking that the foreigner is bound to understand him better. The foreigner looks blankly at him and then turns round to look for the interpreter. But Zhilin is on the spot. He puts the brick up to his head and rolls his eyes, swinging to and fro as in a high wind and cries: —

"Understand? there's that cuteness in the brick. You'd sooner persuade a young woman."

"Ya, ya," says the foreigner, catching his meaning, and they both begin to laugh together, the foreigner, in a deep bass and Zhilin in a hoarse rasping voice.

"That's the way to do things," he shouts out through his laughter, "in donkey language one can catch on all right... talk things out. But you keep a person hanging round you, an interpreter... a young woman too — she's all right, but not necessary. You send her away as not wanted. Why don't you come into our union?" he adds in a whisper as though it were a secret. "It's time you did, you know. It's our own union, mate," and before he had finished he had again raised his voice. "What? shaking your nob again as if the flies were biting you... What? Not understand? the trade union you know."

Zhilin has the air of a forlorn starling. He came to the site of Kuznetskstroi quite a short time ago. Over there where he came from amongst the scattered Siberian villages he was looked upon as a past master in his trade. For about twenty years he had put in broad-based Russian stoves, and his linings were famed like the trade-mark of a good firm. When he was working in a house the owner always entertained him with vodka and soup with meat in it, knowing that the stove that Zhilin would put in would last till the end of time. And you would have difficulty in counting the stoves made by Zhilin which are keeping the peasants warm in villages all over Siberia. Zhilin is confident that whenever a Siberian hunter, a fisherman or a simple driver coming upon one of his stoves out

of a snow storm, is sure to pat the warm bricks with his hands and remember Zhilin saying: —

"Ah he was the lad, was Zhilin, he knew how to make stoves. You won't find his like nowadays."

Oh and Zhilin had a good opinion of himself, too, out there in the country. He threw his weight about like a harmonica player at a wedding. He knew what he was worth, what he was worth, that is, as an independent stove expert and so he set off for Kuznetskstroi with "big money" in his mind saying to everyone with a laugh:

"Who have they got there? Collected together a lot of muts I expect. I'll soon show them how things are done.

On the way he made himself properly drunk.

They say that when he was passing through Novosibirsk he went into a shop and after surveying all the shelves in turn came to a stop in front of a lot of bottles of Eau de Cologne.

"How much are they?" he asked, indicating the shelf with his hand.

"Four rubles a bottle."

"Pour me out half a bucket full."

He took the bucket with the Eau de Cologne and there where he stood in the middle of the crowd that had begun to collect, poured it down his throat, remarking loudly:

"That's the sort we are, a few rubles here and there won't ruin us!"

But here at the work lining the coke furnace they took him off the second day. When the group of fire-brick workers in which he was had finished their shift, the line of bricks was ten centimeters out. The instructor had three whole rows of lining bricks taken out and where Zhilin had been working under one of the bricks a small wooden splinter was found in the cement, as a result of which the bricks lay unevenly and the edges were out of alignment. This was the reason why the work of the whole group was ten centimeters out.

"The splinter would be bound to burn away at the high temperature and the gas would make its way out" they explained to him.

Zhilin did not believe them and an argument followed.

Then they asked him: —

"But where did the splinter come from?"

"What do you think, I used it to mash up the cement of course!"

And they took him off the work and made him carry bricks. They put him with people who had never handled a mason's shovel in their lives and Zhilin protested.

"But my dear good comrades, you don't seem to understand... stoves... all over Russia... ask anyone you like. I'm not a..." he began to explain, thinking of his long years of experience, and his brows knitted painfully as he tried to get the word he wanted.

So they put him to carrying bricks and for about a month he spent his time behind a truck following narrow winding passages. Sometimes he would stop and look longingly towards where every day the decorated walls of the coke furnace rose higher, and as he looked a lump rose in his throat. One day he found the word he had wanted, brightened up and catching everyone in turn assured them: —

"I'm not an impostor you know."

But nobody listened to him. It was of no concern to them. The furnace had to be finished in time, indeed it had to be finished before time, according to the instructions that the masons had recently received

and so everyone was straining every muscle and using their last ounce of skill.

"How can we find time to think about Zhilin."

And Zhilin's spirits fell. In the end he felt as though he had got old. Got old suddenly and unexpectedly, withered up like the green of the trees withers up in a hard frost that comes prematurely.

"If you're no good at your work, on to the rubbish heap with you. Just the same as down our way in the country, you get into a hole and they kick you further in."

After that he lost heart, kept apart like a half-fledged starling in early spring, homeless as yet, hungry and dishevelled. His face became overgrown with a coarse stubble and the inside of his ears became black with dirt so that the girls in the red kerchiefs used sometimes to laugh at him and tell him that you could grow cucumbers in them.

It was only now that Zhilin was beginning to thaw.

"Well Zhilin, how's things?" brigadier Shidek calls to him.

"How am I? I'm all right. I know what's what, I'd get a thing from the bottom of the sea if I wanted it. I'm working like a taut wire."

"Be careful the wire doesn't snap."

"Don't you try pulling at it too hard" says Zhilin and there is a fire in his eyes as he looks at him.

In his eyes there are both joy and fear: Fear that the wire may snap and that they will then turn him away from the lining work, — this time for good (Zhlin knows very well that next time it will be for good); joy because he has learnt the knack of those five hundred and eighty six different fire bricks, hard polished tinkling firebricks resembling thick glass.

"Good man! The wire won't snap. You've learnt the game with the bricks all right," and he slaps him on the shoulder and is about to move on to the next apprentice.

But Zhilin has taken the lid off a tooth-powder box.

"Have one, mate. Here you are — " and carefully selecting a cigarette he places it in Shideks hand.

"Now I've done it, I've taken a bribe" Shidek says, as he lights his cigarette, hiding his amusement.

"Really" gulped Zhilin, "Now cut that out, cut it out, I say, I'm with you, you know. I'll stick to you and all our mates through thick and thin. Help yourself everyone, try one of Zhilin's fags," and the box was passed round.

Shidek passes on, a smile has spread across his face, — the kind of smile that you see on the face of a father who has seen his son do some great feat.

"That fellow," he says to us, "was taken off the work by the foreign experts. He used to shout as he spread his mortar, refused to recognize the brigade, wouldn't do anything that didn't suit him; but we got him into the brigade eventually. I put him between two master masons as a pupil. They took a lot of trouble with him and now all the muzhik has evaporated from him. He has become an expert, but not a private independent expert." Shidek smiled, "He has joined the trade union. Have you seen? He's quite an asset to the union. That's the stuff. What do you say?"

Shidek will take in a breath; Zhilin will say "Shidek has taught me to handle the firebricks."

A long time afterwards, when we were passing Shidek's brigade, a propos of something or other he finished his train of thought. "Competition, as far as I see, also demands the training of new workers as well as quick work."

2.

The miners are digging into the richest seams of Kuzbas. Day and night they are breaking up the bright polished coal in the bowels of the earth. They throw it by the hundred tons onto the surface where it is loaded onto platforms and taken along steel rails to the Kuznetzky metal works, where only two years before lakes and swamps spread out, where winds laden with sand and dust from the mountains lashed the traveler, and where at the end of the branch railway line two broken down wagons served as a station.

Cargoes of coal are carried to Novo-Kuznetsk — the socialist town, the town of industry which has been built in the desert by the working class.

Here the coal first passes through the crushing machine and is broken into lumps and cleaned, after which it is loaded on to trucks which bring it into the hot jaws of the coke furnaces, and from thence, in seventeen hours' time, glowing coke-pies emerge. The coke is quenched and hisses like lime; it is sorted and mixed with ore, after which it continues its journey into the mouth of the blast furnace.

Coke is food for the blast furnaces, for the power station, for the chemical works.

The new town lives on coke.

Yes... but that is only a dream as yet: before you get any coke you have to bind it in fireproof armour, you have to bind it firmly just as the builders bound the bog in concrete... Then the dream will come true, then the furnaces will start working, the casting and rolling shops, the power station and chemical works will be put into action, then motor buses will run, educational institutions will open and those who came here only quite a short time ago from the country, and each day do their share in the work, will move out of their tents and their mud huts into the socialist town, the town of industry.

It was of this that the brigadier Shidek was dreaming.

Today he got up early, while a transparent morning mist still quivered over the site and the youthful rays of the sun played on the banks of the river Tomi. Over the foundations of the rolling shop the derrick had already begun working, floundering into the pit like an enormous crab, grabbing up the earth and swinging it onto the platforms. Further on the skeleton of the casting house could be seen rising up, and, further still, blast furnaces, power station, brick factories stood out against the sky. The new town for a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants was being built, and all around people swarmed. Everything was growing like grass grows when the sun comes out after heavy rain. Shidek smiled as the thought of the first brick he had laid there amongst the waste. But this morning, for some reason, what attracted his attention most was the mud huts. There they were black and moulded, forming a ring on the hills around the factory buildings reminding one, from a distance, of burnt villages. No one had asked these people to come. They come daily in crowds from Russia, from the Ukraine, from Siberia to settle in the

hills. They come with their cows, their horses and all their paraphernalia and make a place for themselves here. Some of them after putting up a mud hut plant it round with trees. "Well" they figure it out "we'll be here now for fifty years or so." Others go further into the hills and dig themselves vegetable gardens. Neither the orders of the town Soviet nor the regulations of the militia has any effect on them; they settle down every day, grow like mushrooms after the rain. They will not go into tents or army huts. They cling to the hills in their mud huts. And there ten, fifteen, twenty thousand people are living (who has ever counted them, and how indeed could they be counted). They have scraped up a mud hut for themselves and offer their labor on the building site.

"They have the vitality of bugs, these Russian peasants of ours," Shidek exclaimed to himself, "and all these people are Zhilins, Zhilins and yet more Zhilins.

To construct a coke furnace is to give fodder to the foundries which will help to turn Siberia, the convict settlement, into Siberia a land of socialism. That means remoulding and educating this mass of hill dwellers and persuading them to move into the socialist town. This was the dream that Shidek dreamed and he thought of the responsibility that the Party an the Soviet Government had placed on his shoulders as the trusted leader of a shock brigade that had got through one thousand five hundred bricks per man per day working at the red furnace-lining.

But here it was a special firebrick lining with which he was asked to deal.

Now he is standing on the upper level and inclines his head first in one direction and then in the other and turns as though on hinges. He seems to be quite unable to stand still, he fidgets and looks about him as though there were constant danger of the roof falling on his head, and as though he would go to any length to escape from such a fate.

He has now left where he was and climbed down, scrambled across a heap of bricks and come up beside one of the learners.

"Aye aye aye! spreading it with your fingers, you must not spread with your fingers. Fingers are all right for killing bugs with. When you get home and a bug comes along you can take your finger to him if you like, but it's no good here," then taking a brick in his own hand he skillfully tosses it up so that it alights gently in the palm of his hand, takes up a mason's shovel, lays on the cement and claps the brick into place where it lies perfectly evenly, fitting as comfortably as a pig in the place he has warmed for himself in the straw.

"Surely that's not the way?" asks Khromov who is working next to the apprentice, blushing as he speaks.

"Of course that's the way, how else do you think," Shidek answers, speaking through his teeth, "any other way is merely bungling the job."

He always speaks like this as though he had something between his teeth and was biting it firmly. He has a dried up face, with hollow cheeks and lines on his forehead. There are lines in all directions, from the eyes to the ears and from the chin to the nose, where they gather together and run down to the tip, giving it a bias towards the upper lip and consequently a slightly hooked appearance.

"Damn them but they've got some funny ideas" he mutters with his peculiar stress on the word "damn," and he climbs to the upper level again and from there intently watches the brigade of 60 men, frowning and every now and again writing something in a note book.

He is a man who is usually calm and self possessed. Something must have put him out that he is so fidgety, and frowns and runs about from one place to anothek. Today he has again been beaten by Obolenski's brigade.

True, he has some excuse. His brigade are experts in laying red-brick lining and this is the first time that he has had to deal with this special firebrick. Of a brigade of sixty men there are only eleven experts, the rest are merely learners, people like Zhilin. That morning he had asked Zhilin "Well what sort of a fight are you putting up?" and Zhilin had answered "I'll follow you to the bottom of the sea if necessary."

What sort of sea is there here? There's the sea...

But what could you do with a man like Zhilin, a mere child where any kind of collective work was concerned, a devoted child, it is true, but a child for all that when it came to creating anything. Obolenski's brigade was made up almost entirely of apprentices, and the instructors came from the Donbas where they had had experience putting in coke furnaces.

Yes, Shidek has some excuse.

But do we want excuses in this country? Can you ever stop if you start tracing "objective" causes? No. Shidek is dreaming. He has lost calm, he is losing his confidence. Why the first time his brigade came to do the firebrick work he said to them:

"Well you fellows, how are you going to manage it?"

"Who are we competing with?" the master mason had asked. "What Obolenski! Why he ought still to be having his bread and milk out of a spoon."

And it is quite true, you would be surprised if you saw Obolenski. His name is well known on the site as the leader of his shock brigade. but he is only twenty one and he still has a youthful blush on his cheeks although he leads the brigade which has beaten Shidek's.

On the first day Shidek's brigade went down amongst the fire bricks and firmly and confidently took up their positions without any delay and started work. Shidek was then quite sure they would win. He himself joined in for a whole shift, working as hard as he could. Mallets tapped away, bricks tinkled. The strain increased towards the end of the day just as fishermen get worked up as they pull in their net laden with fish.

But that evening Shidek was thoroughly dejected. His brigade had laid 0.5 tons per man but Obolenski's brigade had laid 1.4.

"Ough," he muttered "we'll put that right to morrow."

But the next day they were beaten again. The brigade wrestled with their firebricks, but do what they would they could not lay more than 1.2 tons per man. True, Shidek had already attained the official standard which had been set by the foreign instructors at 0.5 but which the administration, knowing their brigades, had raised to 0.8. But he had been beaten by Obolenski, that young slip of a Komsomol who smiled shyly and hid his eyes whenever you spoke to him, but yesterday had laid 2.2 tons per man.

They said this was a world record. Just imagine! — laying 2.2 tons per per man and then smiling!

They said this was a world record. Just imagine! laying 2.2 tons per man and then smiling!

In one night Shidek grew thin. The lines on his face turned into deep furrows. His nose drooped still further. His back became bent, but his eyes began to move quickly, taking in the whole process of the bricklaying, analizing it into its component parts.

That is why Shidek is so agitated to-day.

"Damn it all" he mutters, "what are we going to do about it?"

"The experts? The experts are already working as hard as they can. They are ready to work ten hours instead of eight, more, they suggest dividing the whole brigade into two shifts and they themselves will work sixteen hours a day. But that is not what is wanted. One could work twenty hours a day. One could break one's back at the work. But is that what the country wants? Is that what you call the joy of construction?"

No, that's no good.

But what's to be done?

Raise the wages?

It may seem strange but it is not for money that the brigade is working at such high pressure. If they were working for "rubles" it would only be necessary for them to lay 0.8 tons each in a day but they are putting in 1.2 tons for the same amount of money.

Thus, day after day Shidek sought a way out. He watched the work of his brigade intently, analyzing it into its component parts, took notes, summed up, changed the experts' positions, frequently went up to the top and listened to the hammering, compared the noise made by his brigade with that of Obolenski's brigade, and each time he listened he frowned. The sound from Obolenski's brigade was like the ticking of a good clock, but from his own brigade there was a kind of grating noise as though from wheels that needed oiling. Then Shidek would sit up late at night in his army hut, where there was always the sound of crying babies from the other side of the partition. He was often awakened, or to be more correct, lifted from the table.

Then, on the first of June, Shidek came to his workers with glittering eyes.

"Well how are things going?" he asked the experts.

"Well enough but it's a tough job, these bricks are a match for us all right."

"A tough job. There's no tougher job than building socialism, but we're building it." Shidek answered.

He had learnt Obolenski's method of lining and had perfected it. Instead of having the cement spread on each brick in turn he had it spread over ten bricks together, and he placed the experts at the ends of the rows and wedged in four of the learners between them. Then he noticed another thing. The bricklayers were often held up by the people who brought them their bricks not being quick enough.

Shidek came to an agreement with these people according to which they would get paid in proportion to the tonnage of bricks laid in a day. This gave them an interest in the progress of the work. But not only this, he divided his brigade into two shifts, took one section of the furnace and transferred his brigade onto econemical counting.

"We'll fight like devils" the whole brigade threw themselves at their work.

"Co at it!" Shidek shouted, climbing up to the top and he started to listen to the sound of the mallets. The noise made by his brigade had become elastic and had lost its grating sound. It had become soft and sometimes quietened down to a sound like the rustling of birds such as you hear in the woods when the grass is dry under foot. From above Shidek watched the backs of his men, bent down and almost motionless. Only their hands moved swiftly, deftly swinging the firebricks into place and building up the patterned walls of the coke furnace, pale and smooth.

Shidek again looked in the direction of Obolenski's brigade and saw Obolenski himself coming towards him.

"Well you see we're catching you up" Shidek said.

"Yes... good, Obolenski answered, smiling and blushing slightly.

Shidek waited — Obolenski was shy, he was not quite at ease with him, or was it that he was laughing at him? Laughing at him, Shidek, who had behind him twenty years of experience? But Obolenski smiled as he always did.

"I don't know what sort you are at all," Shidek said unable to find any other words, and he slapped Obolenski on the back.

Night.

The outskirts of the town and works (as yet there is no town and no works, there are still only the foundation and the iron skeleton work of buildings) are lit up by electric arcs, the arcs sway in the wind and from a distance Kuznetskstroi looks like a huge floating dock rolling at anchor.

The town is growing.

Twenty-four thousand workers are daily busy raising up the town out of its foundations — twenty-four thousand Shideks, Obolenskis, Zhilins. In changing surrounding nature they are changing themselves, their relations to other people and to work, and work is actually becoming "a matter of honor and fame, an opportunity for courage and heroism."

Here we are again at the furnace lining, and here are Shidek and Obolenski again before us.

What is it that is moving them, what is it that prevent them from sleeping at night?

"It wasn't for rubles that we came here (rubles we can pick up anywhere and we don't refuse them if they come our way) but we came here because we wanted to show ourselves what we Komsomols are made of" Obolenski answers.

"I don't know" Shidek answers at first, then after a moment adds, "it's something in my bones I suppose, but I feel I must be altering things, creating something, so that our people may say afterwards, Shidek and his brigade are great workers."

Our class is busy creating.

We are living in an age of great endeavor.

HOW I CAME TO WRITE MY BOOK "WAR"[1]

1

Not long ago there appeared in "Young Germany" (Jungdeutsche) an article entitled: "Is Ludwig Renn a Communist?" And not only in circles connected with "Young Germany" have people thought that there was something inconsistent about the author of "War" being a communist. For this reason I should like to give a little information about my bringing up and at the same time throw some light on the question of the book itself.

I am not altogether the same Ludwig Renn whom I portrayed in my book. I myself come of a well known family of soldiers and civil servants. My mother was born in Moscow, and her family, although German, was nevertheless foreign enough to Germany. We used to hear her speaking Russian and from her we learned to love the language, as well as everything else that was Russian.

My brother and I were very delicate and were reared with difficulty. My memories of childhood are of a long series of sleepless nights, of constant weakness and lying in bed with a temperature. At six I was so small and undeveloped that the scholl doctor refused to admit me into the school. When, at eleven, I was due to enter the gymnasium the master said to my father: "Your son is not up to the level of the middle scholl; he is too stupid."

All the same I did enter the gymnasium. Small, weak and timid, I agreed with the general opinion that I was stupid. "But why do they go on at me about it the way they do?" I used to ask myself. "After all it is not my fault that I was born like that."

I was not able even to count aloud, because I was ill too often to learn anything systematically. Besides this I was repressed too much to say anything with confidence. There was only one thing I was able to do, and that was to write stories. Later on I began to study mathematics. As regards Latin and Latin literature I am still unable to make as much of them as I should.

After my eleventh year I began to grow rapidly. I began to see that I was not so stupid after all, that I had never really been stupid. The modest thought passed through my mind that perhaps my teachers and parents were not altogether right. I had always been observant, but up till now I had never thought of imparting my observations to other people. I began now to be troubled with all sorts of doubts. One day, a few years later, during a divinity lesson, our schoolmaster Haase told us something about Jacob's fight with the angel, and ever after a memory of this

[1] See "a Soldier and Miner" in No. 3 Literature of World Revolution.

remained in my mind. Now I understand more or less why. Somehow or other the story did not quite hang together, there was something illogical about it. Besides this the master was very irritable. Eventually he hanged himself. Perhaps there was some causal connection between the two things.

Thus began my intellectual life. Nobody knew anything about it except a friend with whom I used to go rambling through the woods every day. We used to chat together and make up poems — he for the sake of girls and I — for the sake of what? That I could not have said. I used naively to suppose that we were prompted by more or less the same motives. This isolation was itself a symptom of my non-acceptance of the society in which I lived, although his non-acceptance showed itself only in a few casual remarks and was as yet of a very modest nature.

The remaining years of my school days were passed in the midst of such vague doubts. I wrote a diary, and whenever I succeeded in expressing anything particularly well I experienced the greatest elation. My failure in other spheres of life, however, had a proportionately depressing effect on me, especially my shyness in the presence of other people. I had the greatest difficulty in holding myself straight and in giving myself an air of self-confidence. I had a weak spine, my muscles soon began to fail and I began again to get curvature. I took myself in hand, began to mingle with people and I sought out as my acquaintances those who seemed to me the most manly. Perhaps it was with the same intention that I told my father that I would like to enter the army. He was delighted. That had been the profession of my grandfather, my great grandfather and many others of our set... My father had also been afraid that I might become an artist or in some other way follow my esthetic tendencies. He knew sufficiently well from his own experience what that meant. I left the gymnasium at the age of 21, knowing almost nothing of life outside of my own immediate circle.

I entered the 1st Lieb-grenadier Regiment No. 100 while it was stationed at Dresden. The work was not at all easy, but in spite of this I was in the best of spirits al the time I was there, and I was so happy that I wanted to share my happiness with everyone. This I could not do, however, as I myself did not really know the cause of my elation.

Anyone who served in the army during the few years before the war will know the kind of reception any young officer met with everywhere he went, even when he was not particularly conspicuous for his military bearing. He was treated with respect by everyone. He became suddenly transformed into an important personage. He had money which his father had given him and he had a brand new uniform with shining buttons. Anyone belonging to such a famous regiment as mine and able to wear the Guard's lace was in an even more respected position.

But this was not the chief cause of my happiness. Nor was my elation entirely due to the fact that I now did a lot of walking about in the open air, although this too was very good for me. No, the most important factor was my coming into contact with plain soldiers.

Until this time I had known very little about the people. House maids, butlers, some artisans were known to me — people who in some way of other served us and whom we looked upon patronizingly even when we were not conscious of so doing. Now I began to have direct contact with them, saw how they lived and heard how they spoke. I had always looked upon them as people who were lazy in their work, who never had

a thought in their heads beyond their girls and vulgar amusements, and seldom had a proper wash. And now in actual fact it turned out that they had the most varied interests. It is true they had different conventions than we, but then their conventions seemed to me very much more sensible. Their friendship was more spontaneous, and so was their hatred. I never found, with them, a bitter mutual hatred lurking behind delicate relations of friendship. I realized too how false was my attempt to be other than was natural to me. In fact I think it was in my dealings with them that I first learned to be myself and realized that that is the way one should be and that there is nothing to be ashamed of in such behavior.

The influence was so strong that I tried to talk about it with my friends and acquaintances. They listened with friendly attention so that I never noticed that they were not in the least interested. If I had noticed I would, of course, have stopped talking about it and my enthusiasm would have been dampened. In this way eight happy months passed before I entered the military school in Hanover.

In the military school we ensigns and cornets, were in the charge of the officers. They talked a great deal about honor and dignity but were themselves dissolute and ill-mannered. Our inspecting officer was particularly fond of bragging but that did not prevent him from giving himself up to such dissipation that eventually he made a mess of any kind of systematic work that was given to him. Very often officers appeared on parade far from sober. Naturally we drank too. More than once when I was on duty I had to conceal in the back ranks those of my companions who were in a particularly helpless condition. Once it happened that I myself was so far gone that my companions had to conceal me.

Mixing with plain soldiers made me so happy that I was inclined to look upon the army, as a whole, as a kind of heaven against which only a few unprincipled people, through some unaccountable blindness, could dare raise a hand.

Soon I saw the army in a different light.

At first this disillusionment caused me great suffering, then I protested against it, but only inwardly and ineffectively, because I did not know the cause of it all. I thought that it was only in Prussia that things were so bad and that in Saxony, where the officers were given a considerably better general education, the state of affairs in the army would also be better. After taking my officer's exam I rejoined my regiment and soon became a lieutenant. I came back with great hopes. I was transferred to another company, where I found myself under the command of an officer who decided "to make a proper soldier of me."

He was tall, well built and unusually good looking. Every morning as he entered the parade yard of the barracks he would give the sergeant-major such a dressing down that his shouts resounded from the walls and brought the hospital patients to their windows. But this very sergeant-major was, as a matter of fact, a model of soldierly discipline. After the sergeant-major it was my turn to be sworn at.

I, in my turn, tried hard to learn to swear at people in the way that was expected of me by my seniors, although I was inwardly convinced that you could do a great deal more with quiet words. But I was so overborne by the self-confidence of this captain that I tried to put my own private opinion as far out of sight as possible. I had the same lack of confidence even when off duty. I was able to dance very well and continued

to be a success in this sphere. At dances I tried to be cheerful as everyone round me was cheerful. Inwardly, however, I was not a bit cheerful, and longed to be with my soldiers who were much nearer to me and whom I could understand much better than the people I met in society. With them I need not be under the least constraint and need not laugh if something did not please me.

In despair I began to smoke and drink heavily. How was I to get out of these habits without completely altering my mode of life? I began to work on my own, began to continue my military and general education. Thus it was that I learned Russian. From my childhood I had always had a liking for it and my ear was very sensitive to it. But how could that lead to anything of importance?

In the spring of 1914, when the winter balls were over, I thought with dismay of the following season. The question kept coming into my mind with morbid insistence; "How am I going to avoid having to go out into society? Declare myself sick? Take myself off to some place where there are no balls or society?"

One of my friends, also a lieutenant, had the boldness to say that he did not dance. He was the son of a general, and his father tried to force him to dance, but he would not give in and eventually won. Such a struggle was beyond my strength, and besides everyone knew that I danced very well indeed. I racked my brains trying to think of some way of avoiding social duties. The best thing of all would of course be if some member of my family were to have an accident. But then the period of mourning would last only a few months and so a mishap of this kind could only save me if the official period of mourning happened to coincide with the dancing season.

Why not retire from the army? I thought of that, but I was too attached to my men and my duties gave me no small amount of enjoyment.. The last hope was war. I of course still had the romantic view of war and believed in heroism. Completely false ideas had been put into our heads by the lying accounts of the last war. Of course I had a certain amount of suspicion of these accounts. I had read an account of the Russo-Japanese war by a Russian officer. The book was called "Settling the Account." I have forgotten the name of the author. I had been struck by the exactness of the description and now that another war was inevitable, awaited by some with hope and by others with fear, I made up my mind to write an account of it in just the same way. Personal considerations made me wish for war, but, on the other hand, I felt ashamed of putting personal advantage before the public interest.

Well, war began.

2

When the war began I was seized with the greatest uncertainty with regard to everything that concerned my life, and felt no less dissatisfaction with my immediate circle, in spite of its external distinction.

In my opinion the time had now come for all the officers to become living incarnations of duty and courage. On mobilization day there was a tremendous noise in the officer's mess. One of the mess officers was examining his trophies.

During these days a lot of the people died whom I have described and with whom I was very closely acquainted. Then something strange happened. I was at first merely surprised. Afterwards I tried to account for what happened. No one understood me and apparently no one could have

understood me because it was not perfectly clear even to myself. I wrote about it in my letters — but it was no good. I started writing down everything I saw, hoping in this way to reach a solution of the riddle. I continuously made experiments but they all proved fruitless.

This stubborn and persistent work resulted in a three, thousand page description of the war. In order to solve the riddle I began to study the most varied sciences.

And what happened? One broiling hot day I was leading my men, weak and fainting from exhaustion, into the attack. I ran across a meadow. Shells were bursting behind us and in front the rifle-fire rang out with terrifying insistence. My men could no longer run, they were too exhausted, they just staggered forwad. What was to be done? It seemed to me an impossibility to lead them in such a condition to a loyal death.

Then it was that the strange thing happened. I suddenly became quite calm. I had a feeling that somehow I held all these people in my hands. They were following me — I could not see them but they had to follow me, because — I did not understand why. I felt myself in an extraordinary way bound to them.

That day the losses were enormous, but the astonishing feeling of unity remained.

Some will say, of course, "Is that all?" For me it was something of enormous significance. I believe that in actual fact this experience opened out a new world before me. Until then I had been an individualist, literally doubting everything — the possibility of progress, the significance of civilization and the justice of class demands. I now underwent a group experience of such force that it completely took me off my feet and my sole desire was to experience it again. Wheras I had formerly lived in a state of hopeless discontent, I now had a glimpse of new horizons. But I was only able, finally, to free myself from the network of inconsistencies when the mighty community of communist labor showed me the way out of the old world.

I became completely absorbed in the problem, and it became more and more acute as I became subjected to hunger, sleeplessness and that nervous tension which results from daily battles and daily encounters with death. We were all in an unusually high-strung condition, but we talked little and quietly. A tremendous excitement was concealed under our restrained manner. Sometimes people would wake up at night with cries, wrung from them by horrible dreams of yawning abysses. We were getting weaker and weaker. Eventually I caught typhus and found myself in the hospital.

Af first I was confined to bed. Then I began to get better and started to go out to dinner at the Casino with the officers of the base. These officers were all elderly men who were getting bored and who used to recount indecent stories with coarse voices. Smutty jokes and stories about victory exhausted their whole stock of conversation. It was thus that they saved themselves the trouble of thinking about what was going on.

But what about myself? Whenever I had news from the front, I used to rush out of doors to see if it was raining or whether my men would be suffering from frozen feet at night. The weather at the time was cold and gloomy. I feared for the lives of those who were left when I came away. And all round me the officers would begin their noise again, laughing at some low jest. They wore beautiful uniforms, but mine was shabby and there were black bloodstains on my sleeves. I did not beong to these people

but to the others over there in the fields in the mud, amongst the bullets and rain. Every day I longed more and more to be with them. Eventually I could not hold myself back any longer, and before getting properly cured I again started for the front.

On the way I learned that my only brother had been killed.

Two days later — it was already night — I knocked at a certain house in search of my company. A soldier stood at the gate.

"Isn't this where the 4th. company is stationed?"

"What, you, sir!" he cried. This was one of the few who was still alive and he was pleased at my having come back. I, an officer! My dealings with the officers at the base had accustomed me to the idea that officers can not be liked.

He led me into the house. He gave me something to eat and made me a bed in the straw. There was nothing extraordinary about this, because they had plenty to eat and enough room. But for me this meant a good deal. I again sensed that astonishing unity. I was again with them all.

I was in command of the company at the front until Christmas, 1914, when I was promoted to adjutant of the regiment. In accepting this appointment and abandoning my friends of the trenches I did not realize what I was doing. It flattered my pride to be made an adjutant so young.

But what did it mean? It meant that I had to live with the colonel of the regiment and his clerks, in a house protected from the firing by powerful beams and stones. I, as a front line soldier, was ashamed of living under such cover, especially as a single shot never penetrated to where we were. For whole weeks I was cut off from the trenches and from my friends whom I understood.

I did not understand the colonel of the regiment.

He was always worrying as to how he could avoid getting into the bad books of his chief, the general, and yet if there was one thing that the latter could not stand it was obsequiousness. For the colonel one word from above, even if it was the result of a complete misunderstanding of the actual situation, meant immeasurably more than a state of frightful disorder in the trenches.

Life in the trenches was indeed awful, what with insufficient defenses, dampness, mud, exhausting night-sentry duty, depriving people of their few hours of rest, and continuous hauling of building materials, also at night, over shell-pitted roads under the blinding flares of rockets.

The colonel and other officers, were hidden behind the lines; neither had, nor wished to have, the slightest idea of what it was like in the trenches.

A great number of them subscribed to the so-called "keep them busy" theory. The theory was as follows: The soldier must be kept constantly busy in order to prevent stupid ideas coming into his head. It was usually not mentioned what the essence of such stupid ideas might be, but one thing was generally understood and that was that the soldiers must not be allowed to reflect on the awfulness of their position.

I felt the deepest hatred for this obtuseness on the part of the senior officers, but there was nothing I could do about it. The staff officers were hopeless. Even the youngest lieutenants, who succeeded through some kind of interest in attaching themselves to the staff, returned from the front contemptuous. I was forced to submit. However I submitted only up to a point. Under cover of carrying out my duties with promptitude I waged the most uncompromising war.

It began with the field log-book of the regiment.

After carefully reading the book of reports I was overcome with rage. What was written there was not exactly invented, but the most important things were always left out whenever they did not please the commanding officers. Not a word was said about the wretched condition of the regiment, not a word about one of the company commanders who abandoned his men and went over to the French, thus giving the latter an opportunity of almost surrounding us and inflicting the heaviest casualties.

I tried to bring at least some degree of truth into the entries.

But this attempt was met with opposition and grimaces. It was then that I made up my mind some time to write the whole truth about the war.

In the end I had to suppress my rage, and clenching my teeth, had to write entries which I myself considered pointless and which went very much against the grain, as in my own heart I was always with the men. Eventually I could stand it no longer and asked to be sent to the front again.

The colonel thought that this was merely the result of a nervous condition brought on by my continuous state of inward unrest, and so he told me first of all to take a rest cure. I insisted, however, and returned to the front.

It was not courage, or daring, or patriotic enthusiasm which urged me forward again to meet danger. It was that I was definitely incapable of working within the system to which I had been bound and I had a personal antipathy toward the officers hiding behind the front line. An officer commanding a company in the trenches need not pay too much attention to orders from above, especially when there is firing going on and the members of the command dare not show their noses outside their fortifications.

Thus it was that the war separated me more and more from the officers hiding behind the front line. However, I did not yet dare to make the decisive step toward the proletariat, since men were still classed, military fashion, as officers and soldiers and not according to their economic position, as bourgeois and proletarians Nevertheless my position as officer had already begun to appear to me as ludicrous. I could not help seeing the contradictions that were implied by it.

3

War had given me a mass experience which I had not understood. A child who has been taught to avoid with contempt all children of less well-to-do parents, finds himself out of it at school. Very often he wants to mingle with the other children but he does not know how to do it.

This isolation must be very much more marked in the case of a man, who, for 25 years has had instilled into him a feeling of contemptuous ill-will toward "common people" and who finds himself suddenly thrown amongst these same common people and immediately notices in them something which no one had ever told him about. Such an experience will immediately make him lose confidence in the people responsible for his education.

I had already lost confidence some time before. But I had always lived among the kind of people who had been untroubled by any doubts. They were perfectly sincere in their convictions, since they had never known any others. I, on the other hand, had always felt suppressed in my own

circle. Even before the war I had become acquainted with expressionism, and had tried to understand it.

When returned to my regiment after being wounded, I found there two new friends, an artist (a lieutenant of my regiment), and a young student of the history of art.

In secret we read books, especially "Aktion." In this anarchist periodicals, expressionist engravings and poems were to be found. The political articles did not interest me so much. Some of the officers knew that we amused ourselves with "Aktion" because the young history of art student used to show it to everyone interested and get into arguments with them about it. Being young, he did not understand why it was that a periodical proclaiming destructive ideas could not enjoy much popularity amongst people who would not for anything allow it to get into the hands of the rank and file.

That was in the spring of 1917. The word "Bolshevism" also reached us, although we had no very clear idea of what it meant. It was a destructive idea coming from "Asia," the officers said with scorn, and they did not take the trouble to find out anything more about it.

But it was then that the so-called explanatory instruction began. The object of this was to convince the soldiers of the necessity of continuing the war. I do not know what effect such explanations had on the soldiers. As far as I was concerned they made an impression on me which I think was even greater than the periodical "Aktion."

So Germany wanted to seize Belgium, did she? Then all the talk about a war of defense was only talk after all, was it? None of the front line officers had dreamed that the intention was to appropriate territory except my battalion commander, whom I hated because he used to insult some of my best men if they were unfortunate enough to displease him in some way.

It was this man who first made me consciously take the side of my soldiers.

The senior officers were in the habit of requiring their subordinates to do the most unheard of work. Once I figured out that my men who were overwhelmed with all sorts of exhausting daily duties had a period for rest amounting to three hours. Every day I wrote reports about the impossibility of carrying out the appointed duties and every day I received the same pointless orders. My indignation reached such a pitch that my thoughts became centered on one thing: how to render my battalion commander harmless.

The other company commanders resorted to a much simpler method of solving this problem. They simply confined themselves to carrying out only those duties which were subject to personal inspection, moreover by their chief. And since he did not understand anything and was a coward...

The spring attack of 1918 relieved us of this person, who hastened to get himself transferred to a higher post in order to make sure of his safety. There were also other influences tending at this time to make me approach nearer and nearer to my soldiers.

At the beginning of the war I drank a great deal, especially when we were not engaged in fighting. Our headquarters were somewhat far away from those of the lower ranks. We lived in better dug-outs and had splendid food. I knew that all these advantages were enjoyed at the expense of the men, but did not think very much about it because this was quite a usual circumstance.

At last our regiment experienced its first serious defeat. For long months we listened to the never ending roar of the guns, borne to us on the wind. Would our turn never come?

— But when we eventually found ourselves where the firing never ceased day and night, the greater part of this oppressiveness disappeared. Everything was so simple. And we were together. Yes, that was the most important thing. I again became very much more of a companion than a superior to my men. I then became ashamed of getting drunk and ordering special food to be cooked for me. Even before, I had had a feeling of duty towards my subordinates but it had been only a feeling and it had been unable to compete with my consciousness of being an officer.

Under the influence of the immediate business in hand, my duty towards my subordinates became the greatest stimulus in all my work. In the years immediately following I did not go further than this. Now it is exactly this point of view that constitutes the underlying tendency of my book "War."

It can be followed like a scarlet thread right through the book. I describe the work of officers and men together and the feeling of duty towards their subordinates of which all the officers I know are conscious. I had to endow them with a consciousness of duty in order to be able to describe, what had made such a profound impression on me, that is, the tremendous feeling of unity in the face of the enemy. This feeling was unknown to the junior officers because they were too taken up with their own person to look for support from below. Thus it is that this tendency of my book is the result of a spontaneous experience, which, though it is not called by any particular name, lies at the basis of all that happened.

It was thus that I came to realize my duty toward the men below me and to desire that they in their turn should realize their unity and their worth. They themselves appeared to me in a particular light, that is, I say that they were not individualists and in that respect did not at all resemble us, officers, each one of whom had his own ambition and his own world of ideas.

This characteristic of the men and this unity was the result of their having been in the habit of working together every day in the factories. This was not yet clear to me. When during the revolution, the soldier became a workman in uniform, I was able to understand the transformation.

The officers treated the idea of revolution very lightly. "Oh socialism? — just talk, nothing more." But what struck me was the fact that such a tremendous number of people with honest faces were devoted to socialism.

My conception of socialism was approximately as follows: It is the religion of poor people who find their greatest happiness in walking through the streets with red flags, in writing resolutions, people who never read anything and think all this will in some way lead to a reconstruction of the world. I had a special view of Bolshevism. I looked upon it as more dangerous and saw in it something not at all similar to socialism.

And suddenly all round cries were heard of socialism, nationalization, social democracy.

There is something serious in it after all, then!

I began to question those of my men whom I knew to be "organizers." They told me a lot. That the need was great I understood. But the nationalization of private property? What a crowd of officials would be required to carry out such a scheme! I had a very good idea of what officers were like; I had learnt enough about them while I was adjutant. Besides they had so many different opinions about nationalization that you could get no clear idea of what it involved.

But there was something about revolution that agreed with my own personal views: for instance, the separation of church and State. Long before the war I had conceived a great dislike for church services; how stupid they were, how primitive! Later, church attendance became obligatory in the army; I had then to smother my rage and assume a pious expression in order to set the lower ranks a good example.

The humiliation of being forced to conform caused me so much suffering that I began to have a religion of my own. I had indeed a religion which to me was holy, namely, my tremendous mass experience. No one could explain it to me. Then I began to combine it with christianity. On account of its lack of clearness it took on a mystic significance.

It is not necessary to say that this christianity of mine had nothing in common with the christianity of the priests, and I hated them because they knew nothing about it.

This brought me nearer to the revolutionaries. My fight with the officers also brought me nearer to them. There was no trace left amongst the officers, of their former consideration toward their subordinates — on the contrary everything they did was directed towards deceiving the masses with false promises, and, whereyer possible suppressing them by force.

They used to bandy about such expressions as "The officer's word is sacred," and woe betide anyone who dared doubt it!

I took sides with the people whom I thought the more honest. This of course brought me into contact with social democratic workers' councils. Compared with them officers were mere children! In order to be fair I must mention that there were some officers who were undoubtedly honest. True, these were the front line officers. Now their importance was reduced to zero.

Some day I must describe in more detail these years of struggle for power. For me this struggle ended in the autumn of 1920 when the divisional administration of the Saxon police offered me money — big money — if I would retire. This, however, was unnecessary since my relation with my superiors had by that time become so strained that I had already decided to leave the army.

4

I had served in the army and in the police for ten years and had thus come to have a definite official view of things. When I lost this view I was beset by all sorts of difficulties.

I could not make head or tail of the different "fronts" that were continuously cropping up: the bourgeois social democrat and the Red Front were equally mystifying to me. I clung to the ideas of justice and love and could not understand why they led me more and more into isolation and landed me more and more in inconsistencies.

I instructed the police in the principles of street fighting and yet would not allow them to fire on the crowd that was advancing towards

me during the Kappa putsch, because I could not look upon them as enemies.

Nowadays such a thing probably appears incomprehensible. But let the reader of these lines remember that our press worked many years with the object of representing communists as a bloodthirsty band of criminals. If we had met a crowd of the sort of villains that our newspapers had described to us I should without question have ordered my men to fire. But before me I saw a crowd of poorly armed workmen declaring themselves to be as much enemies of Kappa as were all these policemen and I, who had just declared ourselves to be on the side of Ebert's government.

The error of my view with regard to officers was not made clear to me until I was turned out of the police force and even offered money to leave.

Now I had no official views left; I was free. But freedom did not bring me what I so ardently desired. I studied law, political economy, Russian. I became a business man, did accounts, talked on the phone, ran round to banks. Then I went to the fields, carted manure, planted potatoes, mowed bound sheaves of corn. I undertook, a long walking tour through Italy, Greece, Turkey and Egypt; studied the history of art in Vienna.

Nowhere could I find peace, nowhere could I find people who could do more for me than ordinary acquaintances.. Everywhere I was looking for something, but I did not know just what I was looking for. I was looking for a way out of the tottering edifice of the old culture whose collapse seemed more and more inevitable as I looked more closely into international relationships.

On the 15th of July, 1927, I witnessed a massacre carried out by the police in Vienna. I naturally looked at it through the eyes of an ex-police officer and I was inflamed. Shortly after this John Reed's "Ten Days that Shook the World" fell into my hands.

Then it became quite clear to me that here was the only way out. What more was there to look for, if the Communist Party gave me everything I wanted! The Communist Party knows how to want things, and it wants all or nothing! That satisfied me.

My book "War" was published before this final decision. It made its appearance during the time when I was helplessly searching and had not yet found a way out, when social democracy put me against socialism and it was impossible for me to return to the bourgeoisie.

I wrote in order to have something to do at any rate. I had at the time no genuine literary purpose, nor could I have had one; I was in such an unsettled condition that I was not even able to represent war in the way I had actually experienced it as an officer. What had I in common with officers as I swung a scythe through the grass? I just wanted to live an honest life, that was all.

Now I wanted to describe war from the point of view of my own perhaps rather romantic ideal of a simple, honest man. For this reason I put my story into the mouth of my former subordinate Degenkolb. This was all the more easy because I knew practically nothing of this man's actual life and so was able to ascribe to him all my own characteristics and observations.

All those people who took by book "War" as the ingenuous confessions of a plain man have been led completely astray. Every word of it is

thought out. If, in spite of this, there still remains a certain spontaneity and fidelity to life it is because I found in all the scenes of war merely a means of throwing light on my great experience. While I do not anywhere speak of it directly the underlying theme is the way people are bound together.

It is impossible to speak in words about these bonds because one can only become aware of them through feeling. I did not then believe in a common purpose, expressible in words, binding human minds together. My hero submits because he does not know in the name of what purpose he should refuse to submit. It is because of this submission to authority that the nationalists like my book. They need such Ludwig Renns who blindly obey and who have no further aims because all the aims they have had have been shattered. They need them for filling the ranks of the Reichswehr and forces for the civil war.

Thus my book "War" is a work of years past and expresses an outlook of years past. Only from a great distance in time is it possible to arrive at that objectivity which characterizes a faithful narration of events. That is not genuine objectivity — such there cannot be — but an artistic creation which may have its good and its bad points.

"Young Germany" puts forwards the question: Can Ludwig Renn really be a communist? I need an aim. The bourgeois world no longer has a great aim, one single aim. The united proletariat has an aim, and it is an aim which includes the whole world in its scope.

FREUDISM AND ART[1]

In his article, "Freudism and Marxism." published in the periodical "Pod Znamenem Marksisma" (Under the Banner of Marxism) C. Iurenets pointed but quite justly that it was no accident that Freudism originated in Austria-Hungary.

"Freudism was born in Vienna and Budapest, in a country which lies in the border land of the history of capitalism and which has not been nourished by the traditions of the heroic epoch of capitalism. Its bourgeoisie has, without making any great efforts, prospered on the backs of the Croatian, Slovenian, Dalmatian and Serbian peasants, who have had their marrows sucked dry Freudism absorbed a great deal of the spirit of that capitalism."

Futher on C. Iurenets offers a characterization of the spiritual culture of Austria, especially of Vienna, which in some of its peculiar features reflects the special position, the special character of Austrian capitalism.

If we reconstruct somewhat this characterization, if we omit some points, not essential for us at the present moment, and more sharply stress some others sketched in his article, then we may say that the most salient traits in the Weltanschauung of the Viennese bourgeois intelligentsia are: 1) eroticism, 2) estheticism, 3) individualism, — traits proper to every bourgeoisie and to every bourgeois intelligentsia which "prospers" in society "without special efforts."

We may be permitted to illustrate this world-outlook by a few passing examples.

First of all, eroticism.

It was in Vienna that O. Weininger lived and wrote. He wrote "Sex and Character" that was quite a sensation in its time. Here flourished a host of similar writers, working on analogous themes and publishing bulky "investigations," for example on the "Three Degrees of Eroticism" (Liska). Here, in Vienna, was resurrected an image of the feudal epoch, which seemed to have passed away forever, — Don Juan in Wassermann's novel, "Masks of Ervin Reiner." Here in Vienna was the second fatherland of an other erotic type, that XVIII century adventurer, Casanova. His memoirs were published there in luxurious and popular editions, and his image came to life again in the poetry of Schnitzler and Hofmannsthal.

Side by side with eroticism, estheticism.

The Viennese bourgeois intelligentsia is always eager in search of new esthetic sensations. As personified by Herr Bara, he burrows through out the world and popularizes the decadents, then impressionism, then expressionism. He approaches life with an esthetic measuring-stick.

[1] All quotations in this article are translated from the Russian.

Life for him is either play, — ("all life's a play, he who has comprehended that is wise," says the magician Paracelsus in Schnitzler), or in a dream, as in the play of old Grilparzer, "Marriage of Sobeida." Art, for him, is a self-sufficient realm, elevated above life — "art for art's — as in Hofmannsthal's play, "Titian's Death." The artist stands like a sorcerer above life, apart from life.

And, finally, individualism.

It will be sufficient to point out that in Austrian-Viennese literature, social problems are extremely rare and fortuitous and are always overshadowed by the motive of the sovereign personality, which is often solitary, sometimes unsocial.

All these traits, so characteristic of the Viennese bourgeois intelligentsia, appear plainly also in the teachings of the Viennese school of art.

Although it aims at applying the psycho-analytic method to the interpretation of the phenomena of artistic creation, Freud's school, however, has by no means subjected all forms of art to analysis. Neither music nor architecture — arts predominantly formal and "contentless" — naturally have not entered their field of vision. As for painting, their chief contribution is Freud's work on Leonardo da Vinci.. They have devoted more attention to poetic creation.

"Poetic productions, more than any other artistic productions, are subject to psychological analysis " (Rank and Sax: "Significance of Psycho-Analysis in the Science of Mind").

In this field one is especially struck by the voluminous work of O. Rank, who has investigated layers of world literature, significant from his point-of-view, from hoary antiquity to our own times, especially in great work: "The Incest-Motive in Saga and Poetry", and likewise in his articles on "Myth and Fairy-Tale" and "Double-gangers" (in the anthology "Psycho-analitische Beitrage zur Mythenforschung"). Here belongs likewise Neufeld's book on Dostoievsky. Here are mentioned those works of the Viennese school in which a number of poems are illuminated and explained from the viewpoint of psycho-analysis.

The erotic foundation of the Weltanschauung of the Viennese school is plainly expressed in its explanation of the origin and essence of the from the viewpoint of psycho-analysis.

According to their opinion, art made its appearance together with culture. Culture begins from the moment when marriage between near relatives, such as son with mother or brother with sister, and as a complement to that enmity of son to father and brother to brothers — was recognized to be incestuous or criminal, from the moment that this form of marriage and the complexity of feelings connected with it were removed from ordinary life by methods of coercion, and consequently thrust into the subconscious, and finding an outlet first in religious creativeness, then in poetic.

Rank has the floor:

"The beginning of genuine culture must be related sociologically to the moment when certain barriers are set up against incest. From that moment these primitive instincts, with all the complexes of feelings connected with them, are subjected to repression and there begins at the same time the striving of the imagination, reflected over and over again in myth, religion and poetry, to fulfil these infantile wishes, which even now so strongly resist repression that they lead to neurosis, crime or

perversion, unless there is an especially favorable predisposition to sublimate these experiences in the form of artistic creation."

Thus, in the distant past, artistic creation and art became possible only thanks to the presence of two conditions: on the one hand, of certain sexual cravings, recognized as incestuous and as such repressed from life and consciousness; on the other hand, of a special gift for reworking in a certain way in the imagination these cravings which were repressed into the subconscious, for sublimating them. Thus, art grows up, at the dawning of its life, from the sex principle, apart from which, apparently, it would have been impossible.

Such an assertion contradicts all we know of art on the lower levels of human culture. Ethnologists and investigators of pre-historical archaeology indicate with remarkable unanimity that among the tribes of hunters, whether palaeolithic or contemporary, neither music, nor plastic arts, nor poetry has, in its first stages, any relation to the sexual factor. Grosse asserts this categorically as regards music, Hoernes, as regards the Plastic arts.

Art is content artistically formed. It is absolutely clear that before this or that experience, even sexual, could receive form by artistic means it was necessary for the feeling for form to have been crystallized in the psyche of primitive man, and that feeling for form — the quintessence of art — arose, beyond a doubt, in the labor process, as a by-product of the rhythm of work.

How the primitive hunter of palaeolithic times became an artist of the plastic arts has been splendidly shown by Fairburne in one of his articles:

"The adaptation of a long splinter of flint, by means of oblique blows directed upon it, was bound, after arousing the feeling of form, to arouse a desire to impart greater regularity to the separate hollows. Hence, the creation of a rhythmical disposition. Like every other regularity, this rhythm was bound to be easily stamped on the memory. The developing feeling of form very rapidly heightened this rhythmical disposition into an ideal which was there for the hunter whenever he was working stone, and it was soon transferred to the working of bone."

Thus, in the process of labor was born the plastic form (first, in the form of geometrical and linear ornament) just as from the rhythms of work, as Bucher showed, arose the musical and poetic form. And just as at the dawning of its life artistic form in no degree owes its origin to sexual feeling, so that which took form in this stage of development, that is, content, also had no relation to the sexual factor, for the content of art of the hunting peoples, both in the palaeolithic age and today — whether it is a hunter of the Madlen epoch or a Bushman of today — is first of all not sexual feeling, but hunting and the experiences connected with that.

If the artistic act presupposes, as the Viennese school teaches, the repression of certain sexual feelings, recognized as incestuous, then, from this point-of-view, how shall the art of the palaeolithic hunter — those splendid representations of deer, mammoths, bison, etc. — be explained?

When the hunter of the Madlen epoch drew these images on the walls of caves or on bone, did he have to sublimate certain "incestuous" sexual cravings? May these animals be regarded as representations of totems? As is well-known, a totem-group used to select one beast or another as pro-patron, but according to the teaching of the Viennese school the totem

is nothing other than the sublimated father, that father who used to be killed by his sons and whom later, at a higher stage of culture, as a sign of tardy repentance, it was forbidden to kill (Freud, "Totem and Taboo"). However, such an interpretation is contradicted by the fact that some of these animals are pictured wounded in the side by an arrow or dying from a wound, whereas it was regarded as a sin to kill a totem.

In the same way, from the viewpoint of the Viennese school one can neither understand nor explain the ornamental art of the following period in the development of humanity: the ornamental style is the style of primitive agrarian communism, when, evidently, matriarchate was supreme, when, consequently, that complex of feelings which the Viennese school regards as the fundamental and principal material of artistic creativeness had not yet been repressed from life and consciousness into the subconscious, when, consequently, if the latter's position is correct, there could have been no art at all. However, artistic creation at this stage too is to be seen.

On the highest stages of culture the artist, according to the Viennese school, in no way differs from the artist of hoary antiquity.

There are three types of psychic organizations.

The normal person in the period of sexual maturity represses the sexual attachment for the mother, which is proper to every child, accompanied by enmity for the father and brothers (or attachment for the father accompanied by enmity for the mother and sisters) into the subconscious. There these cravings, henceforward unnatural and pernicious, slumber peacefully, without violating the equilibrium of the organism, for some sort of kind sentinel or censor stands at the threshold of consciousness, refusing them admittance. And only in sleep, when the censorship of consciousness is weakened, do these cravings come to life in confused or brilliant phantasies of dreaming, which, however, are immediately forgotten when the man awakens.

The second type is the neurotic.

In him these repressed cravings of the infantile period break into consciousness, become real, enter into conflict with reality, provoke the need for different kinds of self-defense against them, lead to psychical trauma, to neurosis.

The third type is the artist.

The cravings of the infantile period, which work in his subconsciousness, provoke from him efforts to repress them, and these efforts in some marvelous manner pass them over into the sphere of the imagination in the form of symbols, so that the artist without suffering eliminates these cravings by overcoming them in imagination, not in real life.

Rank has the floor:

"Artistic creativeness is a solution of the conflict which allows the individual, while avoiding real incest, to be saved from neurosis and perversion."

Or in another place:

"The artist, who is forced to exert intense repression, overcomes his strong instincts in imagination, just as primitive humanity, in the primitive repression of those same cravings, became freed from them by transferring them from reality into myth and religion."

Thus, the artist who is in the power of infantile (and at the same time, pre-historic) cravings represents, in Rank's words:

"Despite his high intellectual ability of sublimation as regards affects as well as in essence (ontogenetically) and also from the viewpoint of the progress of the human race (philogenetically), a throwback, a halt at the infantile stage."

That is how the Viennese school represents every artist and every writer.

Freud does not merely claim that Leonardo da Vinci became an artist at the very time when, by forcibly repressing his sexual attachment for his mother, he eliminated it in imagination by creating his first artistic experiments, the heads of laughing women (that is, his mother). According to Freud there was a long decline in his artistic giftendess (which, by the way, contradicts facts known to us) and he again came to life as an artist when he was some fifty odd years old, precisely because at that time he was invited to paint the portrait of Monna Lisa and at the sight of her again became subjected to his subconscious craving for his mother (Monna Lisa is the artist's mother). Freud goes further, he tries to prove that the very artistic act was for Leonardo, an asexual person who had absolutely repressed all sexuality into his subconscious, nothing other than the sexual act itself. His "real sexual life" says Freud, was reflected, in his creative activity, with its passing from passion to calm and pauses. Neufeld pictures Dostoievski as such an "eternal child," sublimating in his artistic productions the incest (Oedipus) complex; his patricidal cravings he embodied not only in the brothers Karamazov, but also in Raskolnikov, in which case the father is replaced by the old hag of a usuress.

In his "Incest Motive in Poetry," Rank has collected a vast mass of material from all the literature of the world, from Ancient Greece to our own times, in confirmation of his theseis that European poets of all times and nations, in their productions have done nothing at bottom except to emancipate themselves by the help of imagination from the incest or Oedipus complex.

There can be no quarrel as to the motive of love of the son for his mother, of enmity of brothers for each other, of enmity of son for his father, in fact extremely often forming the content of these productions. But, firstly, this incest complex is far from exhausting, as far as subject is concerned, the entire wealth of poetry and even less the entire wealth of the plastic arts of European humanity. And, secondly, it is beyond dispute, likewise, that the Viennese school often sexualizes in a tendentious manner various literary images and also the creator of these images, for, according to their teachings, a poet may reflect in his productions only himself, only his own desires.

One example is sufficient.

Shakespeare's Hamlet is of course not a very clear figure, but yet a certain amount of agreement regarding him does exist. Hamlet represents for us first of all, an intellectual nature, comparatively unerotic, while the duty which was incumbent on him overshadowed all in his soul and finally he loves his father with a tender and inspired love.

Rank offers us a different Hamlet.

Hamlet is a sexual type, he is sexually attached to his mother; if he loves his father, it is only in so far as in his subconscious the consciousness of enmity to him and a desire to do away with him are at work. He learns that his father is murdered, and his desire is fulfilled. According to the principle of blood-revenge he must take vengeance on the assassin, he must kill his uncle, but he is not capable of it. He may slay Polo-

nius (according to the play, he thought it was his uncle), he may despatch to the other world Rosencrantz and Gilderstern, but not his uncle. Why? — Because he does not consider himself entitled to kill a man for that which he himself wanted to do (in his subconscious). His melancholy comes from his sexualness, from his attachment for his mother, from his unconscious enmity for his father, from the impossibility of killing his uncle for that which he himself had wanted to do. The Hamlet with his doubts has disappeared, with his waverings between religion and pantheism, with his hatred for the base world of the court, — there is left an erotic, the victim of an Oedipus complex, the Viennese Hamlet of the XX century.

And, for the sake of a parallel, here is an analogy from the artistic workshop of a Viennese poet.

The myth of Oedipus undoubtedly contains an echo of that hoary antiquity (the age of the matriarchate) when the son could marry his mother and set aside his father, but the myth itself took form in the age of the patriarchate, when such phenomena and feelings had been recognized as pernicious and, therefore, in the myth the hero is overcome by Fate's punishment. Sophocles made use of this old myth merely in order to give the Athenian democracy a lesson on the necessity of obedience to the civil and moral laws of the city-state. In any case, in his interpretation Oedipus is anything but an erotic type. His marriage to his mother is left in the shade. The Viennese poet Hofmannsthal limns another Oedipus — depicted in strong sexual colors, and his play (Oedipus and the Sphinx) culminates in a scene of passionate love-declaration between son and mother, who, it is true, do not know who they are, though that is perfectly well known to the spectator, it stands to reason.

Both of these images — Rank's Hamlet and Hofmannsthal's Oedipus — issued from one and the same Viennese workshop.

The excessive preoccupation of the Viennese school with the sexual factor is nowhere so plainly expressed as in its interpretation of the psychology of the tyrannicide.

It is well known that in general the Viennese school sees in mass political movements nothing other than expressions of the libidinous cravings of the infantile and pre-historic periods. This is no place to deal which this question which has been explained by Freud in his "Mass Psychology" and by Rank in the same spirit in his article, "Myth and Fairy-Tale."

In this we are concerned with the political declarations of these writers and literary productions dealing with the theme of regicide.

Every revolt against the monarch is nothing other than a certain transformed phenomenon of enmity of son for father, which at bottom has its root in the sexual factor of the mother-fixation.

If Dostoievski entered the circle of the Petrashevski, it was because in his subconscious he was moved by a yearning for patricide, which formed the leitmotiv of all his artistic works. In his study of Dostoievski Neufeld says:

"An attempt on the life of the tsar was patricide, to which the writer was urged unconsciously by an incestuous attachment" [1]

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[1] The idea of regicide did not play any great role in the Petrashevstki circle, as is well known; "on the other hand Neufeld asserts that Dostoievski was driven to patricide not only by incestuous attachment," but also by "his father's miserliness," a motive which obviously has nothing in common with the Oedipus complex.

If Shakespeare creates his play "Julius Caesar," it, too, like "Hamlet," is nothing but an artistic projection of his own patricidal cravings. However, granted a rather sharp censorship of consciousness, at a certain stage of culture these cravings came to be regarded as incestuous and criminal, and the artist is compelled to deform them in some way and veil them over; that is why Hamlet consciously loves his father and murders not his father, but his uncle and step-father, that is, a dummy-father. Julius Caesar is merely another variation of Hamlet.

Rank cannot help confessing that Shakespeare's Roman drama is, properly speaking, a political tragedy, "a drama of men," in which there is not one word on love, in which there is neither father nor mother. Nevertheless, he asserts:

"The tragedy represents a classic example of poetry, which, while not containing any references to sex, nevertheless draws its moving forces in infantile, unconscious sexual impressions."

Brutus, who rebels against Caesar, is the poet who in imagination frees himself of his enmity to his father. Cassius, who is consumed by the thought of suicide, is that same poet who beforehand kills himself for that criminal enmity. If on the eve of battle Brutus is confronted by Caesar's ghost, that is the same as the father's shade which rises up before Hamlet. Both warriors, Brutus and Cassius, fall, not by the hand of the enemy, but by their own sword, — they both kill themselves voluntarily because of their rebellion against their father. If such is the case it may appear strange why the poet, when he took as the basis of his political tragedy the biography of Brutus written by Plutarch, did not make use of the detail offered by Brutus, that Brutus was Caesar's illegitimate son. Why, he should have seized upon this detail with both hands; by hiding behind it, he could have deceived the watchfulness of the censor of his consciousness and more plainly have put on the stage his own patricidal cravings. However, explains Rank, a work of art is artistic precisely because the poet does not say everything he wanted to and had to.

But when the question is put as to why, two hundred years later, another poet, the Italian Alfieri, made Brutus precisely the illegitimate son of Ceasar, who killed in Ceasar both father and monarch, the reason for this is absolutely plain and has no relation to the sexual factor; the fighter for political liberty could not have better been covered with glory than by forcing him, in the name of an ideal, to sacrifice even his beloved father, just as another hero of the same poet (Brutus the Elder) sacrifices his monarchist sons in the name of his political ideal, the republic. Then why did Shakespeare leave out this detail? That is perfectly simple. Shakespeare was a monarchist, and if he, who always and in everything glorified the monarch's power (for which there were historical causes) nevertheless depicted in his "men's" drama a rebellion against the monarch, that is because the play was nothing other than the rebellion, artistically depicted, of Essex and his friends against the English Ceasar — but this Ceasar was not a monarch, not a sublimated father, but a woman, Queen Elizabeth.

In the interpretation of the Viennese school a sexual significance is imparted, not only to motives and images such as the warrior for political liberty, but to every other sort of concept and symbol with which the artist of writer works, and in this they often fall into shrieking contradictions. One instance:

In his study of Leonardo da Vinci Freud says: "In the complex connected with father and mother we see the root of religious needs: the omnipotent god and beneficient nature appear to us the greatest sublimation of father and mother."

Thus, according to Freud, the father is sublimated in the form of god (religion, the church, the authority of religion and the church), while the mother is sublimated in the form of the opposite of all these concepts, in the form of nature (scientific investigation, scientific and artistic naturalism).

Taking this thesis as his point of departure, Freud goes on to prove that Leonardo, who spent his childhood fatherless, as an illegitimate son growing up without a father's authority, in consequence was not religious, did not obey religious and ecclesiastic authority, but, since from childhood had a fixation for his mother, his mother became transformed for him into nature which he studied with devotion and enthusiasm both as artist and as scientist.

Thus, we are supposed to believe that at all times, in all countries, the father is always sublimated in the form of religious-ecclesiastical authority, but the mother in no case. On this subject Neufeld holds a different opinion. Pointing out that toward the beginning of the seventies Dostoievski had freed his psyche of the obstrusive, subconscious cravings for incest by sublimating them in the form of artistic images, Neufeld gives a characterization of the writer as a publicist, and once we are talking, not of artistic creation, but of political ideas, it would seem that here at least there would be no sexual lining, — but no!

"The eternal melody of Oedipus is audible even in such a remote sphere. Love for Mother-Earth, for Russia, veneration of the order ordained by god-father-tsar, devotion to Mother Church, the Orthodox Church, this melody sounds forth in many variations."

Thus: Leonardo sublimated his father in the form or religious and ecclesiastical authority, but Dostoievski, just the opposite, his mother. Whether the reason for this difference has its root in the fact that in the first case we have an Italian artist of the XV century, and in the second case a Russian writer of the XIX century, or in something else, Freudism gives no answer.

Besides eroticism, in the teachings of the Viennese school on art, another trait, characteristic for the Viennese bourgeois intelligentsia of the era of decadence comes to the fore, — estheticism.

While the followers of Darwin, who likewise deduced the source of art from the sexual instinct, saw in it a phenomenon highly useful, not only in a biological sense but in the social sense, as a means for bringing the sexes together, it has lost all serious social significance in the interpretation of the Viennese school. The primitive savage singing an erotic song or staging an erotic dance, — similar erotic art is to be found, of course among tribes at a low stage of development, but is not the beginning of art, — was a social being, for the instinct of race and the instinct of the collectivity spoke in him.

The artist, as he appears to the Viennese school, is a being essentially unsocial. Wracked by subconscious desires, he sublimates these individual wishes of his in artistic images. Art, for him, is merely a means for restoring the equilibrium of his organism. Essentially he is just as unsocial as the neurotic. It is true that insomuch as, in distinction to the neurotic, he creates a work of art which others may also enjoy, he accomplishes

involuntarily and indirectly a social work, but the social significance of this work created by him is minimal. Just as the artist himself in an absolutely individual way, eliminates his incestuous feelings in imaginative images, the spectator of a play or the reader of a novel, in just as individual a way, again experiences the cravings of the infantile and prehistorical period which have grown dull in him, as a normal type. In this, art does not serve as a means for welding and uniting people, it does not form means of organizing individual consciousness and social life. Its only social function amounts to rendering somewhat less pernicious certain feelings harmful to culture, which, moreover, as we shall see below, from the viewpoint of that shool, become more and more atrophied with the growth of culture.

Art is an esthetic play, art for art's sake. In our society it is a vestige of the past, not only because in essence it is the incarnation of the experiences of the infantile and pre-historical world, but also because in it alone we find, at our stage of development, the faith, native to the people of hoary antiquity, of the period of animism, in man's omnipotent thought. In it there is an element of magic.[1] This faith in the omnipotence of its thought is later, in the progress from animism to religion, in part renounced in favor of gods, says Freud ("Totem and Taboo") but now, when science is supreme, mankind, "filled with self-renunciation," has submitted to reality, "acknowledging its weakness."

"And only in one sphere has the omnipotence of thought been preserved in our culture, in the sphere of art. In art alone does it still occur that man, wracked by desires, creates something similar to their satisfaction and that this play, thanks to the artistic illusion, awakens affects as if it represented something real."

But this is not that socially utilitarian magic which was created by the paleolithic hunter whem he drew images of animals and thus subordinated nature and life to his hunting-group, not that magic which was accomplished by the neolithic agriculturalist when she modelled a vessel and decorated it with a pattern, to the sound of her song, while both the ornament and song were intended to guarantee the soundness of her houshold; in the interpretation of the Viennese school, art is purely individual magic and play, deprived of social significance, an esthetic illusion of experiencing instincts and wishes unnecessary culturally and even harmful.

Side by side with eroticism, in the teaching of the Viennese school on art, its absolutely individualistic approach to it comes into relief.

It thinks of the artist as a self-sufficient personality, whose creative work is not determined by any external factors.

It is only on the lowest stages of culture, in which collective creation prevails, that it is conditioned by external, even economic and social causes, — so much of a concession Rank is forced to make under the influence of anthropological research. In pursuing in one interesting article the transformation of myth into fairy-tale, he cannot help seeing that the fairy-tale proceeded from the myth in a definite economic setting, that is, in a setting of acute material need, for only by taking into account this circumstance can we understand why the fairy-tale so often talks of

[1] Freud confesses that in all probability art pursued tendencies among which „may have been magical purposes as well," but if art arose as magic (and it actually did), then the entire structure intended to deduce all art from sublimation in the incest complex, crumbles away.

poverty, of material deprivations, while side by side with this there reigns in it a naive rapture with "super-wealth, super-grandeur, super-power, knowing no limits". Ii analyting several fairy-tales, Rank further comes to the conclusion that the fairy-tale was born from the myth, not only in a setting of "crushing material need," but at a certain stage of social development, namely when the rule of the father (the horde of hunters) gave way to the "union of brothers" (matriarchate).

"The fairy-tale represents that stage of culture at which the rule of the father gave way to competition between brothers... The fairy-tale which grows up out of these conflicts and this struggle makes use, for their representation, of the traditional mythical forms of the patriarchal period but now on a different social and cultural level."

One step more and we should have a sociological interpretation of the passage of fairy-tale into myth, and Rank is ready to take this step, but not in the text, but in a foot-note, in which he declares, though quite unconfidently, that "the psychic factor" which gave birth to the fairy-tale "seems to have its parallel in the fact of communal ownership of mother earth during the era of the passage of the primitive European tribes from hunting and herding to sedentary agriculture."

But, firstly, that only "seems" so, and, secondly, there is merely a certain "parallel", and finally, primacy belongs obviously to the "psychic factor" which gave birth to the fairy-tale and not to the material factor of the replacement of one economic form by another.[1]

But what is to a certain degree acknowledged on the lower stages of culture is denied at its heights.

In "cultured" society the artist is a self-sufficient personality, subject to no external influences, while his productions are, in Rank's expression, "personally, individually conditioned phenomena of his own peculiar spiritual life."

In order to comprehend the creation of an artist there is no need to know either the epoch in which he lived, or his environment. For Freud, Leonardo da Vinci is not a Florentine artist of the XV century, but merely the illegitimate son of a lawyer and a peasant woman, who spent his shildhood without knowing paternal authority. From this one circumstance, which could have occurred in any country and epoch you like, he deduces all his creative activity, both artistic and scientific, i. e., his veneration for nature, his naturalism and his scientific approach to art, whereas all these traits are characteristic of the majority of typically Florentine artists (see Berenson, "Florentine Artists"), who were of course not illegitimate children, but all of whom, like Leonardo, were nourished upon the spirit of Florentine bourgeois culture of the XV century, — a culture intellectual, realistic, scientific, irreligious, — which, translated into the language of artistic creativeness, gave us the Florentine naturalistic artist.

In tearing the artist and writer away from their historical environment which predetermined their creative activity, the Viennese school is at the same time powerless to explain the varied and peculiar appearance of the same psychical predisposition. The essential thing is not that Leonardo and Dostoievski were perpetual children gripped by an Oedipus complex, but the question why this complex, — if only it is not a myth, — gave in one case "laughing women's heads" or the portrait of Monna

[1] Such an idealistic interpretation of evolution fully corresponds to the idealistic sociology laid down by Freud in his "Totem and Taboo."

Lisa or sketches of the most various engines, and in the other case such projections as the Raskolnik family or the brothers Karamazov.

And just as the artist or writer, as a self-sufficient individual, is wrenched out of his historical setting, and, of course, from his class, he is likewise freed from literary tradition.

While collecting a huge amount of material from the literature of the European people to confirm the fact of the "universality of the incest motive among the greatest poets," Rank at the same time emphasizes that these "constantly recurring images of the poetic imagination" cannot be attributed "to conscious plagiarism or to literary influence."

But still — if we limit ourselves to a single example from the mass of material presented by him — on the one hand, it is strange why in the German literature of the XIX century the "tragedy of fate" flourished, in which the theme of incestuous love was treated in various tones, while this theme afterward disappeared for a long time in the same German literature (in other words, the sexual nature of the poet had changed!); on the other hand there is no doubt that Grillparzer, author of the "Ancestress," was acquainted with analogous productions of his predecessors, Mülner and Huwald.

In taking its stand on such an individualistic viewpoint, the Viennese school naturally rejects the idea of the historical development of art and literature. If there exists from their point of view a certain development of literature, this consists, not in the social conditioned evolution of literary and artistic styles, genres, forms, but merely in the gradual triumph, as reflected in literary works, of the conscious over the subconscious. To illustrate this process, Rank deals with three plays built, in his opinion, around the same subject, that is, on the Oedipus complex — in Sophocles, the son still kills his father and marries his mother, without knowing who they are (first censorship of consciousness); the Shakespearean Hamlet consciously loves his father, warring with him only in his subconscious, and murders not him, but his step father — stronger censorship of consciousness; Shiller's Don Carlos wars against his father, not for his mother, but for his step mother — she had been his betrothed — and he does not murder his father, his father executes him (still stronger censorship of consciousness).

It is absolutely plain that this gradual distortion by consciousness of the original pattern of the incest complex forms merely an insignificant part of the evolution of the subject itself and the same time has absolutely no relation to the evolution of form and style.

Moreover, this triumph of consciousness over the subconscious, by which literary development is exhausted, is itself very problematical. In the last chapter of his work "Incest Motive in Poetry," Rank has collected considerable material from the modern literature of the West, which proves irrefutably that in it the Oedipus complex is flourishing in its most naked form — the subconscious is again triumphing over consciousness — development has gone backward.

But if we grant that consciousness really triumphs over the subconscious as culture develops, does this not signify that in the future art must die? Rank, himself, makes such a prognosis:

"If the capacity for artistic creation may for a certain lenght of time survive the process of repressing sexuality without loss for the artistic effect, on the other hand, in view of its being predominantly conditioned by the unconscious, it is unable in the long run to adapt itself to the progress of consciousness. As certain phenomena in our contem-

porary poetry permit us to surmise, there is a growing feebleness, first of all, in the capacity for artistic creation capable of influencing wide circles and then, evidently, in the capacity to perceive and enjoy works of art."

The question whether art is possible on a higher stage of consciousness Rank raises in the last pages of his book, while leaving it open, however.

In restricting the evolution of art and literature to the reflection in it of the triumph of consciousness over the subconscious, the Viennese school reduces the history of art to the succession of individual great artists.

"The history of literary development," says Rank, "consists in the consequential appearance and personal development of individual great poetic personalities.

The Viennese school, thus, restores us to the pre-historical period of our science. While we think of the history of art and literature as an impersonal and nameless process, governed by natural law, of literary and artistic development, the Viennese school, faithful to its individualistic position, reduces it as Sainte Beuve once did, to a portrait-gallery of artists and writers.

In setting to one side the problem of the history of art and literature, the Viennese school concerns itself, in Rank's words, not with the history of art, but with the "psychology of the artists", but it is incapable of solving the final problem which arises in this sphere, what is meant by artistic giftedness? If the artist, as distinct from the neurotic, by strong repression of his affects sublimates them in the form of images or symbols, then the question remains unsettled:

"Why he is capable at all of curbing these affects by means of art? Why he does not do so like a normal person? Or why is he not compelled to resort to the symptoms of self-defense characteristic of the neurotic? (Rank).

Thus, Freud as well, in finishing his work on Leonardo da Vinci, admits that, if he succeeded in explaining the psycho-analysis of the entire artist, yet "his extraordinary tendency to repress his cravings and his unusual capacity for sublimating them" remained unexplained:

"Here is the last point which psycho-analysis can attain. From this moment it makes way for biology. Both tendency to repression and capacity for sublimation must be attributed to the organic foundations of character upon which the psychical superstructure is afterwards reared."

In leaving to the historian and sociologist the problem of the development of art, the Viennese school leaves to the biologist the last word in solving the problem of the artist (provided "organic foundation of character" is not rather a metaphysical concept).

We have not touched on all aspects of the teaching of the Viennese school on art. We have not dealt with their conception of the mechanics af artistic creation, their teachings on the origin of the hero, on humor, on the reflection of Narcissism in artistic creation. The works of the Russian Freudians have been left to one side. Our task amounted 1) to showing how certain characteristic traits of the "Weltanschauung" of the Viennese bourgeois intelligentsia have laid a definite imprint on the teachings of the Viennese school on art, and 2) to prove the following theses:

1. In deducing the artistic act, when all is said and done, from the sexual feeling, at times even identifying them, the Viennese school contradicts what we know of the origin of art and of art in early stages of civilization.

2. In regarding the artistic act as a sublimation of the incest complex it makes erotic packages of certain literary images, just as the Viennese poets turn out their heroes in erotic garments.

3. The excessive preoccupation of the Viennese school with the sexual factor has made itself especially obviously felt in their interpretation of the psychology and the image of the regicide.

4. In sexualizing other concepts or symbols with which artists work, they contradict each other downrightly.

5. In their interpretation art is deprived of its character as a principle active in organizing society, and its social significance is reduced to rendering more or less harmless affects which are culturally unnecessary.

6. While admitting the determination of artistic creativeness by external causes on the lower stages of culture, the Viennese school regards the artist on higher levels of culture as free from all social, cultural and literary influences.

7. In examining artists apart from their historical environment, it interprets wrongly their creative work and is absolutely incapable of explaining the peculiarity of their themes and forms.

8. By seeing in the history of art only the succession of great artists, the Viennese school, by that very fact, denies the idea of a science of art as a regular process of development.

9. In dealing, not with the history of art, but the psychology of the artist, it has not divined the ultimate secret of the artist, his capacity for sublimation.

And finally, although we have not spoken of this, it is plain from all that has been said:

10. The entire teaching of the Viennese school about art, as exposed by us here, bears the stamp of an interesting, but obvious, dilletantism.

L. Auerbach

PROLETARIAN LITERATURE AND THE PEOPLES OF THE SOVIET UNION

For Hegemony of Proletarian Literature

VOAPP — the Federation of Proletarian Writers' Associations of USSR — by the very fact of its existence stands up in opposition to the culture of the bourgeoisie, to the culture of the dying bourgeoisie, to the culture of national hatred, to the culture of the parasitic decay of capitalism. This contrast is a manitestation of the struggle between two worlds, between the imperialist countries and the country which has entered the period of Socialism, between the spiritual crisis and the ever widening and deepening cultural revolution.

Not we communists alone are speaking about the crisis of culture in the bourgeois countries. The crisis of their culture is admitted also by the learned servants of the capitalist class. Even the social-fascists, both right and "left," are constrained to admit the crisis of their culture. Thus, for instance, there appeared recently an article by Otto Bauer dealing especially with this very question. The article bears the caption of "World's Spiritual Crisis." Bauer speaks about this crisis without dividing the world into the capitalist countries and the USSR. Bauer ignores and denies the fundamental difference between the former and the latter. Bauer does not care to speak about the spiritual crisis as due to the oppression of the imperialist bourgeoisie, he just speaks about a worldwide spiritual crisis. In so doing, while unable to deny our cultural growth, he merely reflects the extent and scope of the spiritual crisis of capitalism, betraying his — Bauer's — mortal fear in face of the contradictions of his surrounding realities. Arguing like a reactionary petty bourgeois, Bauer shows his utter inability to put up any reply to the revolutionary critique of contemporary capitalism.

Bauer writes: "Technique is the fate of our culture... Mister Babbit spends his evenings monkeying with his automobile, the office clerk with his motor-cycle, the worker with his radio outfit. People become iwbued with the profoundest interest in everything appertaining to technique... Nevertheless, the more we glorify the triumphant march of technique, the more terrible appears to us the world which creates this victory. Behold the worker fastened to the chain. Day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, in perpetual uniformity, in perpetual repetition of one and the same sequence of motions. The office clerk at the adding machine, which does both the recording and calculating for him. His destiny in life to keep accounts of clients whose surnames begin with the letter 'C'..."

Bauer vaguely and casually goes on to mumble something to the effect that Socialism will make a different use of technique, but this mumbling confirms only the petty-bourgeois panic which seizes Bauer

in face of the advance of technique, of an advance which is the expression of the conflict between the already grown forces of production and the capitalist mode of production.

No, technique is not the fate of our culture. It is their culture that clashes with the possible and necessary utilization of technique, whereas we gladly welcome it. "Bolsheviks should master technique." Stalin's slogan is not only a rule of practical action — it is the policy of the young and victorious class that is capable of mastering the technique and of making it serve its puptposes, as againts the policy of the dying class and its flunkeys who are afraid of technique and are powerless, under the capitalist mode of production, to transform the worker from the slave of the machine into its master.

Panic-stricken by the advance of technique, Bauer waxes pessimistic. He wistfully opines: "Of course, a new science emerges. But what can it offer to the masses of educated people? Half-a-century of scientific research work has been disappointing to us: natural science will solve none of the world enigmas." This Bauer dictum alone is testimony of their spiritual crisis! In speaking about the stultifying effect of technical and positive researches on humanitarian thinking. Bauer wants to open the door, and he does, for the thriving of mysticism, for the resurrection of mediaeval superstition upon the basis of the dethronement of science.

No wonder that in Germany, for instance, there were recent trials of new alchemists. Thus, one Tausend was tried in Munich in January, 1931, for fraudulent action. Tausend, a perfect ignoramus, had "discovered", a way of converting lead into gold. In order to exploit this invention, a company was formed with a subscribed capital stock of 750,000 marks. The list of shareholders included the big industrialist Alfred Mannesmann, the two princes Schönburg and Waldenburg, and General Ludendorf! The negotiations with Tausend were conducted by the president of the German Discount Bank, who declared in court: "Having lived through the discovery of X-rays and radio, I did not consider Tausend's discovery as an impossibility." It is interesting to note that all the nationalist parties in Germany had figured on the income to be derived from the Tausend company.

No wonder that in present-day Germany, as well as elsewhere, quacks are frequently better patronized than qualified physicians, while the "intuition" of alchemists and quacks is more honored than knowledge, and this is really justified by Bauer. His advocacy of mistrust in science, in materialistic science, in science which demonstrates more and more the truth and correctness of Marxism, is the defense of bourgeois cultural reaction against the cultural revolution of the proletariat. Both science and technology are still developing in the capitalist countries, but this development goes on in spite of the "prevailing ideas" of the bourgeoisie, coming more and into open collision with them, colliding more and more frequently with the aggressive revival of mediaevalism, and naturally the tempo of scientific development is more and more slackened.

Bauer is most of all scared by the observation that "they (i. e. the technicians and the 'intellectuals' — L. A.) extend the whole of their discontent with our contemporary culture into the domain of politics." He says, in fact: "Some of them are attracted by Bolshevism with its fantastic ideas of world revolution; others are attracted by fascism with its ravings about a national revolution." Yes, indeed, the opposing forces are becoming polarized. communism and fascism are arrayed against each other. And

in trying to detach the questitons of politics from the questions of culture, Bauer exposes himself as the "socialist" wing of fascism, as one of the basest representatives of social-fascism, as one who preaches cultural democracy and peaceful evolution towards socialist culture under the aegis of the very bourgeois states that are becoming fascized.

All that Bauer has to offer is democracy and spiritual freedom. Speaking on the subject of spiritual freedom, he rises even to sentimental and lacrymal pathos; speaking about democracy, he indulges in pompous declamation, in monotonous phrase-mongering that is as bombastic as it is impotent. His "spiritual freedom" is a euphimistic term for evading the essential choice between the two camps, and a subtle means of sponsoring the bourgeois influence over those who begin to waver. His "democracy" is the sowing of illusions as to the possibility of being neutral in the social clash. His articles on the spiritual crisis must therefore be considered as part of the documentary evidence of this crisis.

The spiritual crisis characterizes also bourgeois art. Literature has been reduced to the manufacturing of books for sale. Art has been ousted from bourgeois literature — even judging by bourgeois criteria of art — its place taken by police and detective stories, by sexual vulgarity, and the like. Where the pretense of art still exists, it is inevitably dominated by decadence, petty psychic analysis, and by the shallow waters of little sentiments and little thoughts.

M. Duveau wrote in August, 1930, in the fairly well-known journal "Revue Europeenne": "A crisis of the novel, a crisis of poetry, even a crisis of the despair which has turned into grey decrepitude... The result is that there is not a single work that might leave a profound trace, no moral problems. I will add, running the risk of being paradoxical, that there is even an absence of despair." Substantially the same was written in February, 1931, in "Revue de Paris," by the fairly orthodox bourgeois academician Chomet: "The quest of adventure, travel, pictures of distant countries, monstrosities, the inclination to the unusual and abnormal, the attempts to furnish intoxicant reading matter, — all this characterizes a society in which the writers, if not the readers, pursue but one aim, of running away from themselves. By the way, such phenomena are typical not only of France. The same symptoms we observe also in English and German literature. Throughout the world a state of sickness is felt, which is perhaps due to the nervous concussion caused by the war and its aftermath."

No, this "sickness" does not exist throughout the world, but it certainly exists in all the capitalist coutries without exception.

Fascism has tried, and is still trying, to create, not a decadent, but a militant literature. Notably, Mussolini has tried to cultivate a literature of his own. Alas, literature was not to be fructified by the ideas of fascism, and we find that in Italian fiction, foreign writers predominate. Translated trash, this is what characterizes the literature of fascist Italy.

Bauer too is constrained to admit the decay of the whole of bourgeois art. "And what about the new art?" he queries in the above-quoted article. "Are not the modern novels and theatrical plays, whose technique vies with the film, merely symptoms of the mechanization of spiritual life?" he answers himself in the form of a query. This "mechanization" stands for ideological destitution, standardized second-rate fiction of the mass production type, the lowering of the standard of art to the level of the taste of Mr. Babbit, of the narrow-minded provincial reader who

is thrilled by mass-produced American films. Otto Bauer has all the more reason to denounce the quality of contemporary literature, bearing in mind the manifest failure of the Second International and of all its sections in the field of literature where the leading proletarian writers are marching under the banners of the Communist International.

Senator Giovanni Gentile, who may be described as the philosophical leader of Italian Fascism,[1]) in an article entitled "Spirit and Fascism," writes: "Fascism in culture is directed against the secular, intellectual and liberal character of our past culture; it endeavers to do away with contradictions between word and deed, between theory and practice, between the human nature and the sentiment of fatherland... Fascism is the new rebellion of humanity for integrity and unshakable unity of all energies. Fascism is intolerant like any religion, and like any religion and religious doctrine, Fascism strives to fill the whole spiritual life of the individual."

(Quoted from "Die Literarische Welt" 27/2/1931).

Fascism is indeed intolerant. Thus, the other day the noted Italian conductor Toscanini, at a concert in Bologna, declined to play the fascist hymn, explaining that this was due to no political reasons, but because he had drawn up the program of a serious concert. Thereupon, one of the fascists went up to Toscanini and slapped him on face. A terrible noise over that incident has been made in the capitalist press, and "Popolo d'Italia," the paper that is directed by a brother of Mussolini, is warmly applauding the action of the fascist. Such is fascist intolerance in practice: the fist as the supreme argument. What a splendid occasion for hypocritical sighs over spiritual freedom and democracy!

Interesting in Gentile's statement is not only the direct appeal to religion — the lament over the secular character of our past culture — and not only the crusade against rationalism and science — the lament over the intellectual character of our past culture. Gentile, properly speaking, like Bauer, is merely reflecting here the actual cultural reaction now going on in the capitalist countries. The dreams about "integrity and unity" are merely an attempt to find "spiritual" compensation for the decay and twilight of cultural life, for utter sterility in the realm of creative effort. Interesting is the plea made by Gentile for the "sentiment of fatherland." Nationalist sentiment occupies the most prominent place in all the utterances of fascists on cultural themes.

What, for instance, is the cultural theory of German fascism? It is essentially based on the racial theory. The history of the world is represented as the struggle between Aryans and Semites. The class struggle is rejected by them as a "Jewish invention." Fascism seeks a way out of the spiritual crisis through the triumph of "revealed truth" over knowledge that is based on research. It sees salvation only in militant nationalism, in the subjugation of one nation by another, of all the races by one superior race:

"... in each Negro, even in one of the kindest disposition, is the latent brute and the primitive man who can be tamed neither by centuries of slavery nor by an external varnish of civilization. All assimilation, all education is bound to fail on account of the racial inborn features of the blood. One can therefore understand why in the southern states (of America), sheer necessity compels the white race to act in an abhor-

[1]) By the way in the past he was a collaborator of Benedetto Croce whose esthetics, as is known, was based on intuitivism and irrationalism.

rent, and perhaps even cruel manner against the Negroes. And, of course, most of the Negroes that are lynched do not merit any regret." ("Nazional-sozialistische Monatshefte," 1930, No. 4).

Lynch law is thus held up as a way towards cultural progress, as a way out of the present cul-de-sac. Darkest reaction — is the program of fascism. The fascization of capitalist culture is an established fact, and not the mere ravings of imbeciles. It is a pity that in our press we do not at all adequately expose the agressive onslaught of the cultural reaction that extols all the manifestations of lynch law. Yet, what a great help this would be to the real elucidation of the scope of our cultural revolution!

The Racial Theory in Practice.

Let us take a glance at our capitalist neighbors. Does not their practice of national oppression constitute a peculiar realization of the racial theory? Generally speaking, imperialism must inevitably lead to increased national oppression in the most diverse forms. The division of the world into oppressed and oppressing nations is becoming more and more marked. At the same time the bourgeoisie of the "little" nations vies with the most rabid imperialists in this respect. Do we not know about the situation of national minorities in Poland, in Rumania, and in Finland? Is it necessary to cite instances of how the Polish landlords and capitalists deal with the Ukrainians and White-Russians living beyond the borders of Soviet Ukraine and White Russia? Is it necessary to cite examples of forcible polonization? Is it not known, for instance, that in Galicia, of 2,420 Ukrainian schools that existed under Austrian rule, there remained by 1925 only 617 schools, while 217 more have since been closed by the Pilsudski government? Is it not known that, not only are there no government maintained schools for Ukrainians and White-Russians, but that also their privately maintained cultural and educational establishments have all been suppressed? Can we forget the smashing of even such non-communist organizations as the Ukrainian "Proswita" or the White-Russian "Hromada"? And what about Rumania? Now let us compare the autonomous Soviet republic of Moldavia with Bessarabia!

While such is the situation in the most "cultured" countries, one can easily imagine the situation in the colonies, where the racial theory is carried out even more openly, which serves to illustrate how right Comrade Stalin was when he said that the national question is becoming extended and transformed into the question of the colonies. There is nothing surprising in the advocacy of lynch law. Such propaganda fits in with the sway of imperialism, as it serves to justify the ever-growing national oppression. This propaganda cannot be counteracted by idle talk about spiritual freedom and democracy. The propaganda of the theory and practice of national oppression is countered only by our free state of 150 peoples, by our free Union of equally enfranchised republics!

A Free Union of Equal Republics.

Under imperialism there is no way of solving the national problem except through a proletarian revolution. The experience of the Soviet Union has already fully vindicated the national policy propounded by Lenin and Stalin.

For we have not only the juridical declaration of the equal rights of the peoples inhabiting the territory of our Union. We see also in practice the execution of the policy of the steady elimination of all the inequalities due to the policies of the past. As against the theory and practice of national subjection that prevailed under imperialism, we now have in this country the real theory and practice of the free collaboration of a number of national republics.

Compare the budgets of the several republics of the Union and see the tempo of growth in 1931 as compared with 1930: Soviet Russia — 31,2%; Soviet Ukraine — 32,9%; White-Russia — 87,1%; Transcaucasian Soviet Federation — 50.9%; Soviet Uzbekistan — 61,8%; Soviet Turkmenistan — 87.1%, and Soviet Tadjikistan — 108.5%. The more backward a given republic was in the past, the higher the tempo of its budgetary growth in the present.

Or take the data of the progress of agricultural collectivization as tabulated on May 20, 1931: average percentage of collectivization — 51,9% of all the peasant farms; in Ukraine — 64.1%; in Uzbekistan — 63.9%; in Turkmenistan — 58.4%; in previously backward national regions like Mariy — 32.1%, Chuvash — 26,1%, Kalmuck — 31,1%, Kazak — 53,8%, Kirghiz — 43,6%, and so on. [1])

We get about the same indications from the data as regards industrialization. The geographical map of the Five-Year Plan reflects the strenuous efforts for the industrial development of the previously oppressed tsair colonies. Turksib, Dnieprostroi, Baku — are not merely examples of socialist industrialization, but also an illustration of our national policy.

Or take the cultural indices. Compare the numbers of school children now and before the war. In White-Russia, the first of our republics to introduce universal elementary education, there were 56% of the children of school age taught in the schools before the revolution, and now over 91% of the children attend school. Illiteracy was brought down in 1920 to 13%, and during the current year it is to be abolished entirely. The book output of White-Russia grows year by year, by the number of titles of published books: in 1929 — 331; in 1930 — 1,006; in 1931 — 2,777; by circulation: in 1929 — 2,001,000 copies; in 1930 — 7,863,000; in 1931 — 18,521,000 copies. In Armenia, where schools were provided for 12.3% of the children before the revolution, we now have 100% in the towns and 78.4% in the villages. In Georgia, where 44% of the children were taught in the schools in the past, complete universal elementary education will be effected during the current year. In Uzbekistan, the number of students in the classes for illiterate adults reached 354,886 people in 1930, which was an increase of 20 times as compared with 1929 (even a higher tempo than in Soviet Russia). The total number of schools in Uzbekistan increased from 804 in 1924/25 to 2,454 in 1929/30 (105%) while the network of rural schools increased during these years by 362% (from 561 to 2,034). The number of native children in the schools reached 70.2% in 1930 (as against 63% in 1926/27).

In Tadjikistan now (in 1931) there are 1,300 schools taking care of 50,000 children (an increase of 3 times as compared with last year). Add

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[1] At the time of going to press, we have the collectivization data for Juli 1: average for USSR — 55.1%; Ukraine — 65.7%; Uzbekistan — 64.4 %; Turkmenistan — 55%; Tadjikistan — 27.6%; national regions: Mariy — 34.3%; Chuvash — 27.5%; Kalmuck — 41.3%; Kirghiz — 43.9%; Bashkir — 57.6%, and so on.

to this the new universities and other cultural institutions, and cultural reforms like the introduction of the simplified Turco-Tartar alphabet, and you get a picture of tremendous cultural progress of nationalities that were extremely backward under tsarism.

Thus, the cultural revolution affects not only the nationalities that were relatively progressive in the past, but also those that were most backward and oppressed. Cultural progress goes on at an amazing tempo, deeply impressing all outside observers. Is it not rather a symbolical picture to see a Turque, Uzbek, or Kazak woman driving a tractor? The tractor is destined to take the place of the primitive implements of cultivation, while the woman in charge of the tractor, in a country where she was virtually a slave in the not distant past, is the personification of the progress made by the erstwhile backward people under the national policy of the Soviets.

Socialist Construction and National Culture.

What is our policy of future development? We have now the possibilities for the free growth of all the 150 nationalities. We now have a Union of free and equal republics, and within them, a number of autonomous national regions. Furthermore, we have a number of nationalities that were really formed after the October Revolution which proclaimed the right of peoples to self-determination. Does this mean a retreat from proletarian internationalism, the encouragement of nationalism, a revision of Leninism, or on the contrary, does it mean the consolidation of the international unity of the toilers, an attack on nationalism, the triumphant realization of the principles of Bolshevism?

Lenin wrote: "The aim of socialism is, not only to do away with the breaking up of mankind into small states and isolated nationalities, but also to merge them." And he went on as follows: "Just as mankind can attain the abolition of classes only through the transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, so the inevitable merging of nations can be attained by mankind only through the transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i. e. of their freedom of secession."

The merging of nations is both our goal and our road. The denial of this emancipation and development of nations on the road towards the inevitable merging, is a re-echoing of the racial theory, of concealed imperialism and nationalism. Lenin's doctrine is sharply directed against the least attempt at justifying national subjection on the basis of the future merging of nations and of the advantages of big states. The original Leninist doctrine on the right of nations to self-determination even to the extent of secession was resolutely opposed to any form of imperialism, however masked. The national problem was handled by Lenin in a revolutionary manner, as a component part of the proletarian offensive against capitalism, as a preparation for the alliance of the proletarian revolution with the oppressed nations against imperialism.

Quite a different position is taken by the theoretician of social-imperialism, G. Cunow. In his latest treatise, "The Marxian Theory of Historical Process, Society and State," he writes: "The principle of nationality involves, among other questions, the question of the fight of independent national existence for the numerous fragments of those nations which had played a certain role on the historic arena during a longer or

shorter period but were eventually absorbed by one or another of the stronger nations which possessed greater vitality and were therefore able to withstand more considerable obstacles to their development... The advocates of this principle of nationality attach no importance whatever to the question of the significance of a given nation to Europe, nor of its vitality. In their eyes the Rumanians and the Valachians, who never had a history of their own and who do not possess the necessary energy to create their own history, appear to be just as important as the Italians, who have a history of two thousand years and possess infinitely greater vitality. According to them the Welshmen and the Manxmen, if they should desire it, and however presposterous the idea may be, have the same right to political independence as the English. All this is sheer nonsense."

Clearly, Cunow's argument represents the theory which supports the right of one nation to subject the other, the theory which justifies imperialist national oppression on the false plea of the superiority of the culture of one nation as compared with that of another, the theory which advocates not the free merging of nations, but the forcible assimilation of subject nations.

Cunow's theory is the practice of imperialism. Lenin's theory is the practice of the Soviet Union. What does our practice show? What do we see in this country — the separation or the approachment of nations? Does the flourishing of national culture lead to unity of the toilers in the struggle for socialism or to national separation? The answer must be clearly given, not merely as a matter of theoretical inquisitiveness, but as the reply to a number of questions of practical politics.

Now, we find Comrade Dimanstein clearly stating that our policy of the development of national cultures inevitably leads to ever greater differences and to a certain estrangement between nations.

"As regards the merging of cultures," he says, "this contradiction consists in that, on the one hand, we are carrying on great international educational activity in the direction of the approachment of nationalities, of strengthening the brotherhood between them, while at the same time we carry on, in a certain sense, a great national activity which separates, nolens-volens, and to a certain extent, the culture of one nation from that of the other." (Annals of Communist Academy, No. 31).

It seems to me that Comrade Dimanstein's argument is faulty, among other things, by its separating the form from the content and by its underestimation of the role of the content. Comrade Dimanstein fails to grasp the formula of Comrade Stalin concerning the development of "cultures that are national in form and socialist in content." This failure to understand is essentially due to the absence of a clear conception of the question of nationality, which is not taken adequately from a concrete historic point of view. What is the nation we speak of? What is its course of development? What is its present stage of development? What is the leading class in this nation, and to what extent does it lead? This is really the crux of the question. For, the question of the estrangement or approachment of florishing national cultures, under our conditions, is the question of the power and extent of proletarian leadership over the national cultural development in connection with the course and depth of the socialist construction in progress. What is it that triumphs in the struggle that goes on in every nation — proletarian internationalism or nationalist counter-revolution — is of decisive moment in the question of estrangement or approachment. Which is the winning side?

According to the exact meaning of Comrade Dimantstein's argument it would appear that even our activity for the development of the national culture, i. e. the activity which fosters their development on the lines of socialist internationalism, leads at the same time to the estrangement of one nation from the other. This constitutes a very serious mistake, which should lead either to a negative attitude towards the national form or to relaxation of the struggle for the proletarian content of all national culture.

Stalin's famous formula maps out a course of national development that conforms to the formula of Lenin concerning the two cultures in each national culture, of which we inherit one and discard the other. It means that we approach all past cultures without ignoring one whit of the accumulated experience of mankind, yet without refraining from a critical revolutionary approach to this experience.

Both Lenin and Stalin teach us to approach each national culture, and each nation, from the standpoint of concrete history. Generally, national culture as such, as a separate entity divorced from the class struggle for hegemony in the process of national sulture can be spoken of only by the class enemy of the proletarian cultural revolution or by his agency in our own ranks. As a matter of fact, in many respects this class struggle for hegemony in the process of national culture, can be spoken of only component nations and republics of our Union is still being keenly fought. It is one of the most intricate forms of the class struggle. We are interested in the culture which develops in the practice and for the practice of socialist construction by a given nation, and this constitutes the general line of growth of national cultures in our Soviet Union, the line of surmounting national isolation, the line of bursting the shell of national limitations, the line of doing away with narrow-minded local patriotism. The question of class supremacy, of who will win?', predominates also in our struggle on the cultural front.

The creation of our new culture does not merely consist in laying a proletarian basis under the old culture, or as some say, in imbuing the national culture with a proletarian content. The question is not merely of making the working class join in a given national culture — the question is of the class struggle for the content and direction of the entire cultural development.

International culture by no means implies one without a national basis. We are heading for, and shall eventually arrive at, the merging of nations; yet today we are still far from having disposed of the national forms of culture. Nevertheless, national culture is by no means equivalent to the reactionary Utopia of an all-reconciling common national culture that unites into an integral whole all the citizens of one nation as against all the citizens of another nation. To reason in such a manner is to evade the fundamental and all-important class struggle which divides mankind by other principles than national features and distinctions. Yet, on the other hand, to evade the real importance of the national question, the differences of language, traditions, culture, psychology, to evade the necessity of securing the socialist development in national forms, is to carry water to the mills of the chauvinist elements, both local and imperialistic, repeating the old mistakes of R. Luxemburg, K. Radek, and N. Bukharin.

The development of a culture that is national in form and proletarian in content, leads to the unity of the proletarians of all nations and to their ever-growing "estrangement" from "their own" bourgeoisie.

It is the only kind of cultural development that can guarantee to the proletariat the vanguard role and hegemony in respect to the whole mass of the toilers in the struggle against the remnants of mediaevalism and against the remnants and embryos of capitalism. It is such a cultural development that secures the attraction of millions of formerly downtrodden, exploited, and oppressed, to the work of socialist construction. It is the only development of national cultures which can and will lead us on to the united mankind of the communist society. It is this development of nations and national cultures that is instrumental in drawing the boundary lines of classes, of the class struggle, showing clearly the clash of class interests where bourgeois apologists would like to see but national conflicts. Here is, for instance, the manner in which Otto Bauer had argued long before the War:

"Although certain relation exist between the German and the English workers, nevertheless they are far from being as close as the ties between the English worker and the English bourgeois living in one and the same town, reading the same newspapers and posters, taking part in the same political events, and in sports, frequently entering into relations with each other, whether directly or indirectly, through various intermediaries between the capitalists and the workers. If the relaitons between the English and the German worker were closer than between the English bourgeois and the English worker, then there would be common language not between the English bourgeois and the English worker, but between the English worker and the German worker." ("Die Nazionale Frage und die Sozialdemokratie," p. 116).

It is the theory which prepared and justified the betrayal of internationalism by the parties of the Second International in 1914. It is the theory which harnesses the proletariat to the chariot of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It is the theory of hostility among the working class of different nations in the name of a united and common national culture based on the banal fallacy of alleged identity of national interests. It is the theory which denies the future merging of nations, the future struggle for their organic unity. The fallacy of this theory was thus exposed by Stalin at the time:

"But the kinship and unity of nations declines not only on account of migration. It declines also on account of internal causes due to intensification of the class struggle. In the early stages of capitalism it is still possible to speak of "common culture" as between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; but with the development of big industry and with the intensification of the class struggle, this "commonness" begins to melt away. One cannot seriously speak of a common national culture when the employers and the workers of one and the same nation cease to understand each other. What "common fate" can there be when the bourgeoisie is thirsting for war while the proletariat declares "war against war?" Can any inter-class national union be formed of such opposing elements? Can there be any talk of "uniting all the members of the nation in one common culture" under such circumstances?"

Here we have the militant Bolshevist line! Bauer speaks about the common language of the German bourgeois and the German worker, whereas Stalin says that they cease to understand each other. Bauer tries

to foist the idea of the priority of common national interest over the class interests, whereas Stalin points out the priority of the class interest and fights for it. Bauer "solves" the national question in the interest of imperialism. Stalin solves the national question in the interest of the proletarian revolution and upon its basis, which is the only way in which the national question can now be solved.

Therefore, Stalin's position as regards the development of national cultures is based upon the complete overthrow of the bourgeoisie, upon the utter elimination of its influence, upon the hegemony of the proletariat in the building up of national culture, upon the mobilization of the forces for a socialist solution of the question of "who will win?" in each republic and in each nation. To repudiate the slogan of national culture under the conditions of proletarian dictatorship is to capitulate before the national culture of the deposed ruling class; it amounts to a sectarian underestimation of the need for proletarian hegemony over the large masses of the toilers; it amounts to ignoring the fact that the future united culture will grow not from a schematic emaciation and decline of all the past national cultures, but rather from their flourishing, from the transformation of everything valuable in them into the common heritage of mankind, from the selection and synthetization of everything best contained in any national culture.

On Class Content of the National Question and on the Struggle Against Nationalism.

The solution of the question of "who will win?" in the sphere of national culture is determined, in the last analysis, by the solution of this question in the general balance of the class forces in our country. We have entered into the period of socialism. During the current year of the Pyatiletka, in its third and decisive year, we are completing the foundation for socialist economy. From the standpoint of the internal correlation of the forces, the question of the victory of socialism has already been settled and secured. This has also given the historic solution of the question of the non- capitalist development of the nations that used to be most backward in the past; avoiding capitalism, they are heading directly for socialsm, under the leadership of the proletariat. Yet, this by no means implies the possibility of simply dismissing the question of "who will win?" both on an international scale as well as here, in the USSR.

Regardless of our decided and decisive successes, the enemy class is bound to go on fighting for its own solution of the question of "who will win?" We are still in the stage of acute class struggle, in its latest and most subtle and intricate forms, of the struggle which grows in intensity, especially in the domain of culture, and which is rendered more difficult by the feeble proportionate strength of the proletariat in the country. Under such circumstances we cannot afford to relax in our attention to the national question. The period of reconstruction by no means absolves the proletariat in the Soviet Union from the duty to deal with the national question. Its class nature was defined by Stalin at the 12th conference of the Communist Party in the following words: "Wherein is the class substance of the national question? What is the national question? The class substance of the national question consists in the definition of the relationship — I am speaking about our Soviet situation — between the proletariat of the formerly predominant nation and the peasantry of the formerly oppressed nationalities. Here we have to

deal with the question of establishing the proper relations between the proletariat of the formerly predominant nation which represents the most cultured proletarian elements in our Soviet Federation, and the peasantry, chiefly the peasantry of the nationalities that used to be oppressed. Herein lies the class substance of the national question."

Naturally, from this point of view, our tempo of collectivization and industrialization appears to be the basis of the tempo of the growing unity among the component nations of our Federation. But, perhaps, this very tempo should eliminate the national question during the period of reconstruction? Perhaps, if we successfully solve the problem of putting the peasantry on the socialist course of development, we shall thereby furnish the basis for the discarding of the national question, at least insofar as it concerns the Russian proletariat?

Such a presumption would be entirely unfounded. To begin with, the national question is not merely a peasant question; such simplification would be a crude misstatement of a far more complex and intricate question. Secondly, the successes of socialist construction and the Bolshevist tempo are bound up with the correct handling of the national problem and the proper attention to it, not only in the past, but also in the future.

The attempts at "eliminating" the national question mostly signify chauvinist aggression on the part of the formerly predominant nation, although sometimes they come also from the enemy class of formerly oppressed nations.

National nihilism — pompously espoused by some folks — is really inimical to the policy of our Party. Ignoring and slighting the national question does not give the title to internationalism. Internationalism consists in the capable application of the policy of the Party in stimulating the growth of nations and the flourishing of their cultures along the broad path of socialist construction. Internationalism consists in the struggle against Great-Russian chauvinism as the chief danger, and also against local chauvinism. Internationalism consists in the struggle against "national nihilism" which is frequently the cloak for the struggle against the national policy of the Party.

There is the doctrinaire theoretician who says: "I am a 100% internationalist and I snap my fingers at all kinds of national questions." It ought to be plainly said that such an argument constitutes the best proof of one's ignorance and derision of real internationalism, the best proof of one's refusal to be an internationalist in everyday practice.

It is highly characteristic that in connection with the national question, we find close affinity between the right and "left" deviationists, which discloses their common opportunistic nature. Moreover, in the domain of the national question all these deviations become particularly revealed as the expression of the onslaught of the enemy class which turns the opportunists into its direct agents.

Great-Russian Chauvinism as Chief Danger.

We rarely hear in this country of cases of manifestation of imperialistic sentiment on the part of members of the Great-Russian nationality, although such cases do occur in practice, even if mostly in imperceptible or concealed form. I have referred above to the racial theory as the basis of all fascist arguments on cultural themes. Now, let us take a treatise on pedology published in the Tchetchen region by one, Znamensky, in

which it is stated that Tchetchen children are born incapable of higher psychic activity and the assimilation of knowledge. Or let us take the statements made in Turkmenistan by some Great-Russian imperialist organizers of an art school, that the Turcoman youth was deprived by nature of the sense for the artistic. Furthermore: at Baku, it was declared by Prof. Yevlakhov before a distinguished scientific gathering in the University, that the Turco-Tartars did not possess the mental ability required for the training of learned professors.

In the field of music the Great-Russian chauvinism quite frequently disguises itself under a peculiar "national" cloak. Take most of those so-called songs of the alleged Oriental, Yiddish (Odessa), Little-Russian type, etc. All that exotic music is nothing but a parody of national music, a flagrant mockery, a frank manifestation of the imperialistic attitude.

One of the forms of this imperialism was shown, for instance, by the manner in which so-called "oriental motives" were utilized by a group of Russian composers of the pre-revolutionary, and even of the post-revolutionary period. Composers liks Rachmaninov, Vassilenko, Ippolitov-Ivanov, or Glier, approach the oriental music as something exotic, deliberately and emphatically russifying it, eliminating its specific features, and distorting it on the whole.

Local Chauvinism, its kinship with "National-Demokrats"

Local chauvinism, quite frequently the reaction to Great-Russian chauvinism, under the conditions of the class struggle which goes on, frankly reveals itself as the direct manifestation of the pressure of the enemy class, of the subtle enemy who knows how to utilize in his interest the very reaction to great-Russian chauvinism. It is no accident that the deviations from the general policy of the Party in the national republics of our Union are almost invariably associated with deviations in the sphere of national policy.

While regarding as correct the Party policy of fighting Great-Russian chauvinism as the chief danger, there should be at the same time no relaxation in the struggle against what we designate as local chauvinism. In fact, one may observe the close kinship of the nationalistic deviations in our Party with the national-democratic counter-revolutionary organizations, and even with the nationalist emigrants abroad.

The key-note which characterizes the whole game of the "nationalist" emigration, is the undisguised, quite zoological brand of nationalism. Thus, in the Georgian emigrant journal, "Tetri Georgi," the following is written about the Russian people in general: "The Russian people will never attain a higher civilization; its ideals do not go beyond the stomach. Merezhkovsky describes the Russian people as drunkards, murderers, and ruffians. Such a people can never attain any degree of culture. In our following issues we will demonstrate that the Russian people are indeed totally bereft of any civilization, and if the upper strata of the Russian people have assimilated anything at all, it was by way of imitation and copying." The quoted article concludes with the following diatribe: "You are the descendants and representatives of that section of fallen Georgia which had sold its fatherland for titles and berths, for the shoulder-straps of police captains and constables, or for the ideas of the hooligans — Plekhanov, Chernov, Lenin, and for the interests of the Russian political parties."

This is indeed the quite zoological nationalism of people who have become utterly brutalized. A huge number of analogous outbursts might be quoted from other nationalist emigrant journals, from Turco-Tartar, Armenian, etc. Thus, in the Tartar journal "Milli-Yul," the modest idea is broached of forming a great Pan-Turan state to embrace the whole of the Volga, the whole of the Urals, and the whole of Siberia, which should on the one hand form an alliance with the Turco-Tartar republics of Central Asia, and on the other hand, should jointly with them orientate on Turkey. It is characteristic that this wild idea is the subject not only of leading articles but also of poems published in the journal.'

In this respect all the nationalist emigrant groups are more or less alike. We shall confine ourselves to dealing with the arguments advanced by the notorious Noach Jordania, who, during a number of years, was at the head of Georgian menshevism and still is, enjoying in this capacity some semblance of respect in certain quarters. He was held up by the latter as a man of principle who had steadfastly advocated certain ideas during a number of years. Well, it has lately transpired that in the past activity of the grey-haired veteran Jordania there had been episodes which he did not desire to become publicly known. I refer to the exposure of his connection with the secret police of the tsar. This revelation has put the finishing touches on the picture of this paragon of national chauvinism. Now then, this Jordania contributes an article to "Prometheus" the united organ of the Trans-Caucasian emigration, under an ostensibly objective scientific research title, "A Page of Russian History," in which he develops the following historic philosophy: Once upon a time there had existed a Muscovite Russia. It was a huge country without any stable form of government, so much so that the people were once compelled to invite foreign rulers to put their house in order. Then came Peter the First, who, as the agent of the Europeans, attempted to europeanize Petersburg. Petersburg as againts the whole of Muscovite Russia. The next date is the October Revolution, which he designates as the revolt of Muscovite Russia againts Petersburg. According to Jordania, the October Revolution was nothing else but the reassertion of the old Muscovite Russia with her love of anarchy and disorder, which, as we have already seen, is the characteristic given of the Russian people by Georgian fascist journals published abroad."

Jordania writes: "The other Russia takes advantage of the situation to accomplish the October revolt. The historic duel ends in the defeat of Europe and of the whole work of Petersburg, and in the restoration of Muscovite Russia with her political and economic violence. Russian society, as an active political force, organized and capable of governing itself, no longer exists."

The deduction is obvious. In early Russian history the Varangians were called in to establish order in the country, and now it is the turn of modern Varangian invaders to establish an ordered European regime in this great and abundant country. Clearly, this historic philosophy is nothing else than the philosophy of intervention, the preparation of the ideological justification of intervention, the direct propaganda for the necessity of intervention.

The whole of the "national" emigration, including the Georgian mensheviks, are subsisting exclusively on the doles from military organizations that are preparing for intervention. No wonder that the section of the capitalist press in Western Europe which represents the agency of the imperialist militarists who are bent on intervention, is devoting a good

deal of attention to the national question here in the Soviet Union, while naturally suppressing all information about our great and tremendous achievements in this domain and giving undue prominence to the least defects and shortcomings.

Just as Professor Ustryalov, the spokesman of the Great-Russian chauvinists, has asserted that in preaching internationalism the Bolsheviks were really building up and restoring a "great and undivided Russia;" so the Ukrainian, White-Russian and other chauvinists have put their stake on the gradual "regeneration" of the Soviets, on the slow but certain discarding of the policy of international amity, on the steady growth of the political importance of the nationalist intelligentzia. Just as socialist construction in our country, the policy of eradicating capitalism and liquidating the kulaks as a class, has driven not only the "Industrial Party," but also the mensheviks to the road of direct preparation for foreign intervention; so the nationalist intelligentzia has turned from national-democracy to open national-fascism, to undisguised preparation for foreign intervention against the Soviet Union, revealing more and more the bourgeois and kulak substance of their social program.

No wonder that we have lately discovered the existence of organizations like the "Liberty League" in the Ukraine, the "ex-ministerial" group in White-Russia, the Galiev group in Tartaria, and analogous groups of interventionist plotters in the other national republics.

What is the ideology of all these national-democratic groupings and organizations? All of them are united by the struggle for the bourgeois path of development of their respective nationalities under the cloak of repudiation of the class struggle. The essence of their social philosophy is the unity of their particular nation, the absence of class divisions, and consequently, no ground for the building of socialism.

Thus, not so very long ago at an important gathering in Georgia, the writer Hamsakurdi said as follows: "What is all that talk about a bourgeoisie in our country? All had was about half-a-dozen speculators and capitalists. We have taken away their properties, converting a portion of them into palaces for the workers. Some of the bourgeoisie have emigrated, the rest are dead and buried. Now, the question is, whom are we defending, and what does this defense consist of?" Characteristic in this utterance is not only the denial of the existing class conflict as the result of the entire past history of Georgia. Even more interesting is his attempt to draw the deduction in regard to Georgian literature: since there was no bourgeoisie worth speaking of in Georgia, and what little there was, has been either banished or exterminated, hence there is no bourgeoisie and no bourgeois literatuure in Georgia!

One more illustration. There was a pamphlet published in the Tartar Republic on the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, by one Hanshin, a member of the Galiev group, if I am not mistaken. In describing the class conflicts in the Tartar-Bashkir village in the Ufa province, Hanshin draws a picture as though the whole of the Tartar-Bashir peasantry consisted of poor and middle peasants, while the kulaks consisted exclusively of Germans, Latvians, Ukrainians and Russians. Again the same little idea: we have a homogeneous nation; no class divisions; if we had any bourgeoise, it consisted of other nations which attempted to rule over us.

Analogous in character are the theories advanced by all nationalist bourgeois politicians, such as academician Yefremov, in the Ukraine and

the national-democrats in White-Russia. In fact, the national-democratic philosophy consists in the idealization of the feudal past, in advocating the class policy of the small merchants and kulaks under the guise of the "national idea."

An invariable attribute of all these national-democratic groupings is the messianic idea, an exaggerated idea of the importance and cultural originality of their own nation. Take, for instance, the talk of all the Armenian nationalists who attempt to depict the Armenian nation as the only representative of Western civilization in the East, as the Messiah pointing out the way for all nations of the East. Similarly, the messianic idea occupied a prominent place in the theory and practice of the "Liberty League" in the Ukraine, as was fully shown up during the trial of that organization.

All the bombastic talk about national originality and messianism had merely served to prepare and justify the orientation on the capitalist countries. Has it not been demonstrated that the "Liberty League" was inspired by the worst imperialist elements in Poland? And were the White-Russian national-democrats any different in this respect? The case of the White-Russian national-democrats is particulary illustrative in this respect. Here we see how ardent White-Russian "patriots," who had made a fetish of their nationalism, had really been the faithful servants of Pilsudski! All their behavior, all their tactical manoeuvres had been dictated by the military clique in Poland which wants to play first fiddle in the imperialist intervention that is being planned against the countries that are building socialism.

This orientation on the capitalist countries has been most clearly manifested in the cultural activity of the national-democratic groupings.

Take, for instance, the philological researches of the White-Russian national-democrats. Has it not been confessed by Lesik and Charjinski that in their academic studies of the White-Russian language their sole purpose was the struggle against Russicisms and every support and encouragement to Polonisms; in other words, White-Russian culture was threatened by Moscow, and not by Poland. In fact, they even mutilated the White-Russian language in order to facilitate the influence of the Polish language. Here we see the real meaning of the theory preached by national-democrats about a struggle between two cultures — the Russian and the "national." It is really the struggle between the proletarian, non-national culture, and the nationalist, i. e. bourgeois culture. This constitutes the very essence of their theory which has for its purpose to justify orientation on the capitalist countries, as against the alliance and understanding among the workers of all countries.

In questions of national culture, all the national-democratic groupings (as they are usually called; they should really be called national-fascist) and currents had one line in common — the line of the struggle for the bourgeois-nationalist developement of national culture. Idealization of the past, romantic portrayal of the past glory of the nation, artificial canonization of national heroes, national exclusiveness and isolation — all this is equaly characteristic of Ukrainian, White-Russian, Georgian, Armenian, and Turco-Tartar nationalists. Incidentally, this very similarity of basic ideas exposes the real worth of their vaunted national originality!

There is yet another link which connects all their theories. It is the denial of the role of the October Revolution in the evolution of national culture, the attempt to represent the work of the proletarian revolution

as a continuation of the pre-revolutionary national-democratic currents. Take, for instance, the case of Uzbekistan. There were numerous attempts to trace our work for the creation of a Uzbek proletarian culture, the whole cultural activity of the Soviets in Uzbekistan, not from the October Revolution, not from the international experience of the working class, not from the international ideas of Bolshevism, not from "the elements of democratic culture as against bourgeois culture" (to use the definition given by Lenin); but from Djadidism — the bourgeois-liberal current of the Uzbek intelligentzia. The same story is told by the White-Russian experience. Did not the White-Russian national-democrats try to establish the direct succession of all our cultural work from "Nashenistvo" — the current of the bourgeois-kulak intelligentzia? Thus, the October Revolution is transformed by them, not into the starting point of the free evolution of a given people, not into the starting point of the struggle for the victory of the proletarian culture in its nation-culteral development, but into one of the episodes, more or less important, yet by no means momentous and epoch-making.

These hundred per cent patriots have been unmasked to a sufficient extent. They have been unmasked, firstly, as the agency of imperialism, as the advocates of the "liquidation" of the free existence of their country, as those who favor secession from the Soviet Union in order to become the vassal of any capitalist state — any form of national subjugation of their people that would give them the hope of capitalist development and bourgeois domination! Secondly, they have been unmasked as people who are always, and at any time prepared to form any kind of bloc with the Russian black-hundreds, with the Russian imperialists, with the Russian chauvinists — for the sake of the slightest chance to bolster up capitalist, as against socialist, development.

Take for instance the behavior of Yefremov at the election in the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. Did he not pose as a militant patriot? Yet, he joined hands with the Russian black-hundreds to prevent the election of Ukrainian communist scientists to the Academy! Did not the White-Russian national-democrats ally themselves with the Kondratyevites and with the "Industrial Party" who were by no means inclined to guarantee any free development of an independent White-Russia? All these would-be champions of national independence are in reality betraying the cause of national independence; for, the proletarian revolution alone can guarantee, and has already guaranteed, real independence to all the formerly oppressed peoples and countries. Hence, all these national-democratic would-be patriots are acting the part of deliberate betrayers of the free development of their peoples by struggling for the overthrow of Soviet rule and for the triumph of imperialist intervention. Thus it is demonstrated again and again that, under the conditions of imperialism, the proletarian revolution alone can solve the national question.

It is not enough merely to counterpose internationalism to nationalism. It is essential to expose the class content of a given nationalist deviation, raising the Leninist question of "cui bono" — whom does it benefit? At the same time we must exercise the utmost forbearance and the utmost ideological irreconcilability — the two things not being contradictory to each other. In connection with any manifestation of nationalist deviations or moods, we must expose and demonstrate not only the direction of such deviations and moods, but also the source from which they spring, the soil which nourishes them — and whether there is not something wrong with ourselves. We must discriminate between the

bourgeois opposition to the proletarian dictatorship, the militant agency of the enemy class, and those comrades who, while erring and blundering, are perhaps expressing the reaction to some unsurmounted effects of Russian imperialism of the past. Nevertheless, there is no need whatever to justify nationalist mistakes, even if originating from such a source. All such mistakes must be ruthlessly combatted, while at the same time we must endeavor to win over to our side all those waverers who may yet be useful to the cause of socialist construction.

The socialist drive was bound to activize our work in all the national republics and along the entire art front — in literature, in music, in the theater, in painting, and even in architecture. Our own forces have already grown up, the lines of class demarcation have been more deeply drawn, more serious have become the demands made on art by the extension and deepening of the cultural revolution.

Let us take the field of architecture. Is it not a fact that a project drawn by the architect Strukov for the building of a central railway station in Minsk was rejected by the Institute of White-Russian Culture that was dominated by the national-democrats at the time, and that he was ordered to draw up another project in the style of the mediaeval feudal castles alleged to be the national White-Russian style? Is it not a fact, that for instance, in Tadjikistan, the Peasants' Home has been built as a gloomy edifice of the feudal epoch, composed of an intricate medley of structures, with dead walls and small oblong windows in one section and large windows of the church type in other sections? Is it not a fact, for instance, that the Begovata irrigation dam in Central Asia has been built in full compliance with the feudal style of architecture. with a mass of minarets and cupolas? Are not facts known, furthermore, from the practice of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia, when mediaevalism and eccelesiasticism were foisted as national architecture and national style? This is but one example out of many, which fully bears out the characterization of the deviation towards local nationalism that was given by Comrade Stalin at the 16th conference of the Communist Party:

"What is the substance of the deviation toward local nationalism? It consists in the effort to become isolated within the national shell, in the effort to erect a defense against Great-Russian chauvinism by holding aloof from the general stream of socialist construction, in the effort to overlook that which draws together and unites the toiling masses of the nationalities of USSR, and to see only that which might separate them from each other...

"The deviation towards local nationalism reflects the discontent of the doomed classes of the formerly oppressed nations with the regime of proletarian dictatorship, their effort to segregate themselves into their national kingdom where they might be able to establish their class domination."

Literary agency of enemy class.

In the domain of Art, the struggle for the course of development of national culture, the struggle for supremacy, is waged with exceptional vigor; for here, in the modain of art, the question of national form assumes paramount importance.

It was by no means accidental that all the counter-revolutionary national-democratic organizations that were brought up for trial were found to have maintained their nuclei also in the field of literature. It ought to be said that not only in Soviet Russia, but also in all the republics of the Soviet Union, literature is generally the foremost and leading sphere of the arts. And is is in this particular domain of art that the bourgeois nationalist elements developed the most insiduous activity.

When our comrades in the Ukraine, or in White-Russia, or in Tartaria and Bashkiria, or in Uzbekistan, took up the cudgels against the respective bourgeois tendencies in their national literatures, some people were inclined to consider this as a mere scramble of opposing literary currents, as more or less a personal quarrel, failing to see the underlying basis of the intense class struggle. That such notions were utterly wrong, has been fully demonstrated by the evidence furnished during the trials of the various counter-revolutionary "nationalist" organizations. Thus, it transpired, for instance, that the "Neo-classics" in the Ukraine had been intimately associated with the "Liberation League" — the bourgeois counter-revolutionary organization that had maintained direct relations with militarist circles in Poland. In fact the following confession was made in court by Ivtchenko, one of the principal defendants: "I wrote my stories so that Soviet life was depicted from the negative side... I represented the facts so that the basic lines of Soviet construction were obliterated, and one-sided and distorted pictures resulted."

Did not Ivtchenko confess that all this had been the result of the influence exercised on him by the Ukrainian national-fascists? Did not these confessions vindicate the attitude of our Ukrainian comrade who had exposed the bourgeois-nationalist character of Ivtchenko's creative work long before the trial?

Was not the same demonstrated in White-Russia where our comrades in the Association of Proletarian Writers have steadfastly maintained the true Bolshevist policy in the field of literature, for which they have been accused of intolerance and exclusiveness, of unwillingness to co-operate with fellow-travellers?

It ought to be said that the practice of the enemy class has exceeded all the anticipations and characterizations of even the most consistent and militant Bolshevist critics and publicists. Why, in White-Russia, for instance, the national-democrats had even got up a game of sham orthodoxy and opposition, dividing the roles among their henchmen in the literary discussions, in order to sow perplexity and confusion.

These anti-proletarian tactics are characteristic of all the national-bourgeois literary currents. Thus, it was no accident that one of the principal tenets of the "Djigidyan" literary group in Tartaria consisted in the assertion that the class struggle in the Tartar village was a myth, that 99% of the Tartar people were toilers, etc. etc. — assertions that are the stock-in-trade, so to speak, of all the national-democratic currents.

Or take the case of the "Kzyl-Kalyam" group in Uzbekistan. It is now an established fact that it was merely the literary agency of counter-revolutionary Moslem politicians. Thus, it was urged by theoreticians of that group, like Inogamov, that the Koran ought to be treated as a most valuable source of culture, and so forth.

All these nationalist currents in literature pretended to be proletarian organizations, assuming such disguise in order to conceal their connections with the underground counter-revolutionary plotters. They

carried on both legal and illegal activity, so to speak, prevailing upon some of our more credulous comrades to consider them as honest fellow-travellers while secretly co-operating with the enemy class. It was in this manner that admission to our ranks was allowed to people who are absolutley alien to proletarian ideology.

"Wrecking" on the Ideological Front

The class struggle in the domain of ideology proceeds not only in the shape of disseminating bourgeois culteral ideas that are hostile and antagonistic to the ideas of proletarian culture. On the ideological front we find also deliberate wrecking — not in the wide sense of the term which implies any propaganda of anti-Marxian theories or views that are directed against the building of socialism in our country. No, I am speaking about wrecking in its more restricted and definite sense. It should be noted that wrecking in the domain of culture — in the narrow and direct sense of the term, I repeat — was practiced in those particular branches which constitute the material basis of the cultural revolution. Posts and telegraphs, book distribution, cinema production - these vital sections of the cultural front were honeycombed with wreckers.

Thus, for a number of years a ramified wrecking organization existed in Sovkino — the Soviet Cinema Corporation. The manager of the leasing department was a wrecker, the manager of the economic-planning, department was a wrecker, the manager of the export and import department was a wrecker, and so on. What did those people do? They deliberately wrecked the technical and raw material base, sabotaging the building of a film factory and the production of tone film apparatus in the USSR. They purposely caused a disproportion in our cinema production, for instance, by excessive building of cinema studios, by over-production, by setting up luxurious and costly cinema works in a manner that they might not be adapted for other productions, and so forth. It is interesting to observe that in Europe, for instance the Staaken Films in Germany, they build their cinema plants in old military hangars that can be put back to war use in an emergency; whereas in this country they have built up almost palaces, yet the latter offer no facilities for the production of "talking movies." The wreckers have sabotaged the whole work as regards production of mass films for factories and villages, as regards supplies, the training of operators, and so forth. They encouraged the production of worthless trash while obstructing the production of wholesome educational films. Films which were sharply denounced by the Soviet public were turned out in large numbers of copies while good art films, and ideologically wholesome and useful, were printed in but few copies. It was the set purpose of the wreckers to make the Soviet film industry dependent on foreign capitalist firms, with whom they signed contracts on obviously disadvantageous terms.

The cinema industry of the Soviet Union, of the proletarian country which is building socialism, under the guidance of the wreckers, was not co-operating with proletarian cinema organizations in Western Europe, but rather with the most obnoxious bourgeois cinema firms, e. g. with one Sklaretz, an accomplice in the murder of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

All idea of planning in the cinema industry was utterly ridiculed by the wreckers, with the result that planning was completely disorganized and discredited among the masses of workers engaged in that industry.

The wreckers did not confine themselves merely to the role of "specialists", but endeavored to influence the entire ideology of the Soviet film industry.

In this connection we may recall the discussions we used to have in our "Literary Guard" on questions of the cinema, and the resolutions passed at our meetings. I should refer also to the pamphlet published by Kirshon under the title of "On the Cinema Guard." It may be said without any exaggeration that a good deal of what has now come to light as the result of unmasking of the wrecking organization was already pointed out by us then in our charges against the Sovkino leaders. In many respects the work of the wreckers was done so openly that even the details, now discovered, were pointed out by us at the time.

Well, the wreckers did their nefarious work — the class enemy acted the way he should have acted. Yet, where were the communists responsible for the work of Sovkino, what did they do? I believe this to be the most essential question to ask in connection with the unmasking of the activity of the wreckers in the domain of ideology, where particular class vigilance is required. No one can deny the fact that the leading workers of Sovkino, far from listening to our criticisms, went even out of their way to shield the wreckers. Wherein are the causes of such a phenomenon? They lie primarily in a negligent attitude towards technical questions and in excessive confidence shown to specialists, or more correctly, fake specialists. Another contributing cause was that many communists in Sovkino mistook the specific features of the bourgeois cinema for the characteristic substance of the cinema in general. A further cause was that many of the Party members in Sovkino had become contaminated with mercantilism, with that "commercial spirit" spoken of by Stalin in regard to some of our co-operative trading enterprises. We know, for instance, that some of the leading workers of Sovkino, assuming an awfully superior air of business sagacity, and ridiculing the "boyish zeal of the Literary Guard," had pursued rather a cash policy than a class policy, failing to understand that by their practical pursuit of the cash policy they were really supporting the class policy of the wreckers.

Or let us take the scope of the wrecking activity discovered in the People's Commissariat of Posts and Telegraphs. Do we not know now that the prime objective of the wrecking organization was to paralyze those links of the postal service which had to do with the circulation of books and newspapers, with the whole system of distribution of printed matter? Do we not know now that those people deliberately worked to promote the slowest possible tempo in the development of the network of post-offices? Do we not know now that they had deliberately recruited rural mailcarriers from among the kulak elements?

In analyzing the activity of the wrecking organizations on the ideological front we find that they did not only advance their policy in opposition to our policy, frankly pursuing the policy of bourgeois culture, but that they were frequently constrained to accept our policy in words, while introducing ostensibly "insignificant" amendments or "business" suggestions. Thus, at first sight they appeared to be "excellent" fellows entertaining some "shades of opinion" that were even considered by some of our comrades as quite elusive and unreal. Yet these "shades," in the concrete form of "amendments" and "suggestions," have been eminently successful not only in distorting our policy, but also in foisting their own policy instead of ours.

The unmasking of the class enemy on the ideological front, the unmasking of such forms of his struggle as wrecking, constitutes a sign of our strength, a sign of the success of our work, a sign of the growing maturity of our ranks, a sign of the successful advance of proletarian culture in each nation of our Soviet Union. While we were weak — or weaker — we were not yet able to see through all these things. Now we are successfully learning, and have already learnt something. While we had as yet no cadres of our own, they could as yet frequently hoodwink and deceive us. Now that our own cadres are rising, it is becoming more difficult to deceive us. Probably there is still some deception going on, but it is getting more difficult to deceive as the intensification of the class struggle in the country inevitably leads not only to our unmasking of the wreckers, but at times even to the self-unmasking of the wrecking elements.

Soviet Literature Led by Proletarian Writers.

We, the All-Union Federation of Associations of Proletarian Writers (VOAPP) have every reason to feel proud of the struggle that was waged by our organization as a whole, and by all its component parts, against all and every manifestation of bourgeois ideology.

Of course, there were also mistakes and drawbacks in our activity. Yet, notwithstanding the numerous mistakes and shortcomings, during the last two or three years the proletarian writers of the Soviet Union have gone through a vast school of political training, and this is one of the highly important reasons why we can now speak of the leading role of VOAPP organizations in literary life. Soviet literature is now already led and headed by the proletarian writers. This is a reflection of the successes of the proletarian cultural revolution as a whole. It demonstrates the manner in which the question of "who will win?" is being solved in this country. And the unity of VOAPP in all our recent battles denotes the growth of international solidarity in the proletarian ranks of the national literatures.

Three years ago we changed the structure of our organization: from the All-Union Association of Proletarian Writers we became transformed into the All-Union Federation of Associations of Proletarian Writers (VOAPP). There were comrades then who said: you are giving up the structure of a unified organization, this will lead to the weakening of the international ties in proletarian literature, to the growth and strengthening of nationalist sentiments in the separate links of VOAPP. Three years have elapsed, and we can now say that the new organizational forms of our movement have been fully vindicated; that during this period of time we have attained far greater solidarity — not formal solidarity, not in words and paper resolutions, but real solidarity of the ranks of proletarian literature, real friendly and fruitful collaboration. To-day VOAPP is not merely a mechanical amalgamation of several groups. No, today we — VOAPP — are the only militant and effective organization of the working class on the literary front! It is a union of not only the seven republican organizations, but of all the national literatures, including the literatures of those nationalities which even had no written language before the October Revolution. These comrades are wrong who deny, for instance, the possibility for the development of a Polish proletarian culture here in the Soviet Union as long as there is

no working class rule in Poland. Equally wrong are those comrades who deny the possibility of the growth of Russian proletarian culture in the Ukraine or, say, of Latvian proletarian culture in Soviet Russia. No, the national policy of our Party, and correspondingly the policy of our VOAPP organizations, should ensure the possibility of real development for any and every national culture on the territory of the Soviet Union.

Tasks Ahead.

We are now witnessing a tremendously increased attention to art literature, a growing interest which reflects its grown public importance. Literature today in this country is indeed a mighty weapon for the education of the masses. We are as yet in the initial stages of our reconstruction, and the unquestionable successes which we have attained should rather urge us to realize that our literature still lags behind the tremendous tasks put before it by the stormy tempo of socialist construction in the country.

Nevertheless, we have already all the objective postulates to the quickest achievement of a creative hegemony by proletarian literature. The struggle against lagging behind is intimately connected with the aim of achieving the hegemony. In order to keep pace with the times, we need not lower our art standard; on the contrary, in order to make headway we must struggle for such an art as would constitute, as Lenin said, a step forward in the art development of mankind. And we know that by launching the slogan of the Great Art of Bolshevism we have been fighting for the policy of the Party, for the Party's policy in the carrying out of the cultural revolution, for the Party's policy which stands for a critical assimilation of the entire cultural experience of the past, for the Party's policy of creating the new culture and the new art of the working class.

For the Great Art of Bolshevism.

We are living in an epoch which has not been equalled in human history. The task of the building of socialism calls for a decided raising of the cultural level. And indeed, we see with our own eyes the steady cultural growth of the millions who are building socialism. Can we afford in such an epoch to lower our demands on art? Can we minimize, in such a situation, the tasks which confront our artists? No, we cannot, and we must constantly increase these demands, setting great tasks before the literary workers of the proletariat, the dimensions of these tasks to be determined by the magnitude of our epoch.

The hegemony of proletarian literature we do not conceive merely as compared with the creative level of the literature of the fellow-travelers. It were a sorry superiority — to stand above a miserable scion of bourgeois literature like Pilnyak. Moreover, we cannot limit the criteria of hegemony even to comparisons with better specimens of fellow-traveling than Pilnyak. We must excel the best models of the whole of past literature, and we feel convinced that we shall excel them not only after the withering of the class society, but even now, during our great and onerous struggle for socialism. It ought to be realized that the cadres of our writers will grow the quicker and the better, the more responsible and the more serious the tasks we shall put before them.

In speaking about excelling the best models of past literature we by no means imply the copying of the classics. On the contrary, we mean a qualitatively new literature, a qualitatively new art, as a component part of a qualitatively new culture. Our class has its own criterion of art — what used to be considered by some as art may not impress us as such. Already now, studying the opinions of proletarian readers and analyzing their interests, we find the rapid crystalization of the new esthetical tastes of the proletariat. And from this point of view, the struggle for hegemony, and our discussion of questions relating to creative methods, constitutes one of the forms of the class struggle on the literary front. It is not merely a discussion on the technique of literary writing and the methods of art reflection of our epoch. For, in discussing the art methods we are at the same time fighting, in a complex and specific form, for the qualitatively distinct physiognomy of our class literature.

The tempo of approach to creative hegemony has a direct bearing on the question of our literary policy. We shall get the fellow-traveler to follow our lead, not merely by faithfully carrying out the Party's policy in art literature, by reflecting in our works the slogans of the Party, by being a Bolshevist organization. We shall really get the fellow-travelers to follow our lead by producing literary works of a higher level than those of the fellow-travelers. Only then shall we strengthen and consolidate the leading literary-political role of our proletarian literature which unquestionably exists already.

It seems to some people that by serving the political campaigns of the day the proletarian writers are reducing their chances in the struggle for art quality. This is a big prejudice which reflects the bourgeois canons of art, the bourgeois notions as to the specific nature of art. Our art — being qualitatively different from the art of the past — grows precisely when the masses of our writers join in the practical work of socialist construction, when the masses of our writers learn by writing on current topics; when this day-by-day service is understood by them, not as creating by calendar schedules, not as the writing of vulgar odes that was advocated by "Litfront" theoreticians, but as the necessity to keep abreast of the practical activities of the day, as the ability to gauge this practical activity and to discriminate among the conflicting tendencies of our realities. By relying on the practical work of our class we may achieve an immense amount also in regard to our pure literary development, in regard to the correct creative methods of proletarian literature.

In order to create such Great Art of Bolshevism, we must carry on even more intense activity for the creation of the new type of writer.

Not only the face of our proletarian writer, but even the face of the fellow-traveler, is already a good deal different from the old type of writer. Our writer of today already rarely resembles the bohemian superindividualist, the uncouth messiah of the past. We can already see the distinctive traits of our new writer. Nevertheless we have not yet completed the working out of the new type of writer, of one who would not be a sort of free-shooter, but a professional revolutionary wielding the weapon of art literature. Lenin's words on professional revolutionary Bolsheviks, on the character and style of their activity, should guide us too in the struggle for evolving the type of professional revolutionary writer of the working class.

What has to be done for this purpose? First of all, it is essential that each proletarian writer shall join in the practical work and struggle of today, the practical work of cultural revolution and socialist construction. It would, however, be ridiculous and also harmful to try and outline definitely beforehand the forms in which the proletarian writer is to take part in practical activity.

In a number of Soviet republics there was keen discussion on the question of a "second occupation" for proletarian writers, which means that the proletarian writer should take part in socialist construction as an active builder, not as a mere onlooker, not as a "free-shooter," so to speak. All I can say in this matter is that the question is by no means a simple one and that it cannot be discussed in any abstract, general way, but should be concretely considered in each individual case.

Some people believe the forming of brigades to be the universal method for drawing the writers into the work of socialist construction. These people urge us to form all the writers into brigades, to make them work at an accelerated tempo, to send them from one factory to another. Let the writer stay at the Balakhna Mills today, at the Putilov Works tomorrow, in the Kuzbas the day after tomorrow, and so forth. Well, in this manner the writers do not so much help the workers, and learn themselves, as they make a big noise in the newspapers. In many cases it works out precisely this way: after spending three days in a factory they will devote six days to the writing of verses, and this will be followed by a big noise in the press during three or six weeks. Of course, many of the brigades have been, and will continue to prove exceedingly helpful. There is certainly no sense in giving up the brigade method; but the line ought to be distinctly drawn between efficient brigade work and the mere "raiding" of factories by brigades who make a big noise but give little time to thoughtful study of conditions and to artistic portrayal of their observations in the factories. It seems to me that in the case of some writers this noise about brigades is not only a cover for self-advertizing, but indicates also their evasion of our struggle for the great art, for a literature really worthy of the working class. I repeat, however, that if properly organized, the brigades may be utilized for the remodelling of the old type of writer.

Shock Workers as Proletarian Writers.

Particularly pronounced are the traits of the new writer in those shock workers from the factories who have been called to participate in literary activity. A great many comrades have raised here the question of the chances of such workers to become professional literateurs. This is a matter in which undue haste is particularly harmful. We are building up a socialist system which will, and already does, eliminate the distinction between mental and physical labor. From the standpoint of the historical tomorrow, the question of professionalization may take on a different aspect from what it has today. Besides, it happens also that, for instance, a good metal turner is taken off his job for the presumed purpose of quickening his development as a writer — such procedure, I feel sure, is quite futile and it serves no good purpose.

The calling of shock workers into literature constitutes indeed, a historic landmark, inaugurating a new stage in the evolutions of proletarian literature. We must create such conditions under which the shock workers

that are called into literature might really be assured creative assistance by all our best proletarian writers.

It is essential, of course, to familiarize these shock workers with all the problems of our literary life, with our literary policies, with our creative discussions. The calling of shock workers into literature should result in strengthening the influence of factory workers in our proletarian literature, in giving them the leading role in relation to all our writers.

Our Inside Fellow-Travelers.

I should particularly like to emphasize the possible role of the shock workers in the matter of educating and re-educating the fellow-travelers that we have inside of our own proletarian literary associations. Here again we must carefully approach the individual problem of each fellow-traveler in our ranks. We must see to it that each fellow-traveler within our ranks shall grow as speedily as possible into a genuine proletarian writer.

In this we must lend our utmost assistance, and we are no workers of the proletarian literary movement if we prove unable to create for these writers an atmosphere of comradeship contributing to their quickest bolshevization and to their ideological artistic growth.

We have inside fellow-traveler of diverse kinds. There are those who come to us, but have not yet become completely identified with us. There are others who waver today, under stress of the current situation, while even yesterday they were quite consistent proletarian writers. It would be quite foolish to cast aside such people. It would be "communist pride" of the most vulgar character. It would mean the encouragement of the line of least resistance; for, it is easy to expel, but hard to reform. We must find the sympathetic attitude for each writer, the specific approach in each individual case.

What does the sympathetic attitude imply? It means criticism in matters of principle. Some think that to be sympathetic, one must exercise tolerance and liberalism in regard to a writer's defects. We believe the real sympathetic attitude to consist in frankly and honestly criticizing a writer in the light of principles, thereby helping him in the improvement of his creative methods.

Higher Technical Level and Self-Criticism.

What was said by Stalin about theory lagging behind practice, is fully applicable also in the study of literature. Our basic theoretical task in this domain is the necessity to criticize Plekhanov from the standpoint of the new, Leninist stage in the development of dialectical materialism which we have reached. Plekhanov's contribution to the development of the Marxian study of literature is exceedingly important. Nevertheless, so far we have not yet been sufficiently critical in regard to Plekhanov. This, of course, was one of the manifestations of the influence of Deborinism on our theoretical cadres, of the theories of Deborin which have influenced other sectors of our ideological front even more substantially and seriously than in the field of literature study. Yet, the fact remains that we have so far failed to criticize adequately Plekhanov's literary theories from the view-point of Leninism.

Lately we have had a positive growth of self-criticism. Far it be from us to lay any claim to infallibility. Indeed, we have not the slightest ground

for such a claim: we are working in an exceedingly difficult field of research, in a field which our Party members are only beginning to take up in real earnest, which has not yet been extensively investigated by Marxians, and in which our proletarian Bolshevist cadres are exceedingly young.

Lenin was fond of quoting a Marxian saying, I believe, to the effect that, to leave a mistake unrefuted is to encourage intellectual dishonesty. It is a remarkable saying which should urge us to exercise the utmost Bolshevist self-criticism. Bolshevist self-criticism has always been instrumental in enhancing the prestige of leading workers; for it is a virtue which denotes the real Party member!

"Voronstchina" and "Litfront"

The unfoldment of self-criticism will help us deal the knock-out blow to "Voronstchina."[1] "Voronstchina" remains the chief form of the manifestation of bourgeois influences in our proletarian literature.

"Voronstchina" is our chief enemy in the elaboration of questions relative to the creative method. The effects of "Voronstchina" are particularly felt in the practice of our writers. At the same time new forms of "Voronstchina" must be pointed out. Not all its votaries are as outspoken as some of the writers in the notorious symposium, "How We Write." From that symposium alone an idea may be gained of the confusion still reigning among the former fellow-travelers, and of the extent to which they are still influenced by bourgeois ideology. Who among the writers in the "symposium" takes up the most orthodox position from the standpoint of "Voronstchina?" Eugene Zamyatin. There are passages in the writings of this hidebound reactionary that will bear comparison, and prove practically identical, with the writings of Voronsky, who pretends to be a Marxist. It may be considered as definitely established: the extent of the real realignment of the fellow-traveler is measured by his departure from the theory of Voronsky on general questions of art, and especially on questions relating to creative methods. Does not this furnish fresh and conclusive evidence of the class nature of "Voronstchina?"

On the fundamental question — of the role of mental outlook of the artist in his creative work — we see full similarity in the views of both

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[1] Voronstchina — an opportunistic current in art literature which flourished during the period of 1921—27. Its leader was A. K. Voronsky, editor of the "Krasnaya Nov" magazine. Smashed by the "Literary Guard," Voronstchina dragged on its existence, after the defeat, as the ideological basis of the petty-bourgeois literary group "Pereval," representing in late years the kulak ideology in Soviet literature (Voronsky's banner was upheld by the critics Gorbov and Lezhnev). Politically, Voronstchina identified itself with Trotskism; philosophically, with idealism, notably, with Kant. Voronsky denies the possibility and necessity for the existence of proletarian art. The task of the proletariat in the sphere of art is reduced by him to the non-critical assimilation of bourgeois art culture by the working class. The art portrayal of the epoch of proletarian revolution, according to this defeatist theory, should be entrushed to petty-bourgeois fellow-traveling writers. Voronsky considers the chief ability of the artist to be that of "reincarnation," supposed to be an intuitive ability. In his opinion, the substance of art creation consists in "lifting the veils from life." In his principal treatise on art, he wrote: "It has always been the aim of art to reproduce, to restore, to reveal the world, which is beautiful in itself, to present it in the more purified and direct perceptions." Extolling the subconscious in art, Voronstchina sees the aim of art in the passive perception of reality, detached from the class practice of the proletariat. In Soviet literature, Voronstchina represents the right-wing danger. VOAPP and RAPP are waging an iplacable fight against Voronstchina, both within and without the proletarian literature.

the right wing and so-called left wing opportunists. Separating schematically and conditionally the rationalistic and the empirical currents in the creative discussion, they equally ignore, or directly deny, the role of the mental outlook, i. e. the very point that is emphasized by us who are struggling for a higher ideological level in the proletarian literature. This is our most important task. Proletarian literature will become a step forward in the art evolution of mankind only when its ideological level will have been raised, and the extent of this will be the measure of its progress.

We need writers who are able to take the great ideas of our class, not schematically, not emaciating or vulgarizing them — we need writers who are really capable of rising to the level of these ideas. We need writers whose political enlightenment should not be limited to a familiarity with current editorial articles in the newspapers. We need writers to whom dialectic materialism might not be a handsome and welcome, yet unknown stranger.

What is the ideological level of the majority of the proletarian writers? It is still very low, falling far short of the tasks put before Soviet art by the working class. It is this necessity of mastering, the thematics of the reconstructive period that emphasizes with particular force the importance of the question of mental outlook.

Why must we fight for the delineation of the constructive period? Because the reconstructive period constitutes a new stage in the development of the proletarian revolution — a stage more complex and more imbued with significant content. Therefore, in order to cope with the thematics of the reconstructive period, a higher level of mental outlook is required, greater ideological depth, wider perception of the social realities — a width of vision that is unattainable without the mastery of materialist dialectics in practice. Hence, the struggle for the thematics of the reconstructive period, is the struggle for the higher mental outlook of the proletarian artist!

What was the "Literary Front?"

We are now summarizing the results of the struggle against the "Litfront." It would be most dangerous for us to assume that the "Litfront" has been already completely destroyed, and that its roots have

[1] "Literary Front" — a petty-bourgeois organization formed in the summer of 1930, by the so-called "non-principled bloc" between the Left opposition within RAPP (Bezymensky, Gorbatchev) and a group of former disciples (Bespalov, Gelfand, Zonin) of Professor Pereverzev — the author of the menshevist theory of literature. The organization existed for a few months as a literary-political faction of RAPP. "Litfront" was an asylum for anti-Party elements, for supporters of the right-"left" political bloc of Syrtsov-Lominadze. Being the successor to "Lef" ("Left Front" — a petty-bourgeois Soviet literary organization), "Litfront" had its basic nourishment in the moods of petty-bourgeois revolutionism. The art theory of "Litfront" is one of liquidation as regards proletarian art; its founders propose to substitute for art literature the chronicling of facts, newspaper and publicistic writing, etc. Denying the need for any psychological delineation in literature ("one may manage without psychology"), the "Litfront" people rolled down to speculative schematism in the solving of creative questions, to the varnishing of the realities, acting in the last case against the Leninist slogan of RAPP which called for the "tearing off of all and any masks." The last manifestation of "Litfront" was the illiterate brochure by Rozhkov, "Against Tolstoyism and Voronstchina," in which an attempt was made to dispute the basic slogans of the RAPP movement. Rozhkov's publication, as indeed the whole activity of "Litfront" in general, was condemned by "Prawda" and by the entire proletarian literary opinion as menshevik and anti-proletarian.

been completely torn out. In fact, the major part, of the task is yet ahead of us.

It is not enough to smash "Voronstchina" and Litfront in theoretical discussions. It must be realized that we can really smash these hostile tendencies only by our progress in ideological reconstruction and by the demonstration of its results.

We have vanquished "Voronstchina," and are dealing the final blow to "Litfront," because the works of proletarian literature, its practical and theoretical results, confirm the correctness of our general principles. One of the latest examples is "The Race" by Stavsky. Of course, the book has a number of big defects. Nevertheless, it is a great Bolshevist work, it is on the highroad of proletarian literature and demonstrates the victory of our creative slogans.

In connection with "Litfront" I should like to allude only to a point that is usually quite ignored by us. I have in mind the striking affinity to be seen on creative questions between the more ardent theoreticians of "Litfront" and the more outspoken exponents of national-democratic tendencies in the domain of literary theory. You will recollect that both Khvilevoy in the Ukraine, and Zaretsky in White-Russia, have waved the flag of romantics and romanticism. You will recollect that nearly all the national-democratic currents have assailed us on questions of creative methods. Needless to say, their plea for romanticism was associated with sundry theories on the "romantic" past of their respective peoples, and so on.

More Creative Discussions.

The smash of the "Litfront" should lead, and is already leading, not to the stultification, but to the real flourishing of creative discussion, to the blossoming of creative groupings.

In a leading article on the results of the last plenum of RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Writers) it was stated that it had been the first plenum in which there was no "opposition," and this result was hailed as a considerable achievement. Why was the word "opposition" taken in quotation marks in that leading article? Because the reference was to anarchist strife, to the atmosphere of petty squabbles which Bukharin had once wanted to drag us into. No, this is not the kind of discussion that we want. We are working for the unfoldment of a creative discussion and for the formation of creative groupings on the basis of friendly collaboration and comradely mutual aid. The task of the leadership in this connection consists in not only not hindering the wholesome kind of "opposition," but also in forcing the processes of such demarcations, in stimulating, encouraging and aiding the formation of such creative groupings.

We know that the tempo of the formation of creative groupings is in definite proportion to the level of creative development reached by proletarian literature. And the level reached today is such that we might have a larger number of creative groupings.

The more rapid the growth and the reconstruction of proletarian literature, the deeper and more fundamental will be the development of the creative discussion.

For the Literary Policy of the Party.

The creative discussion should at the same time constitute a creative review of proletarian literature. We should know who is working on

what, what the different creative groupings are interested in; we should be able to picture to ourselves the creative physiognomy of our movement as a whole, of each of our associations, of any individual writer in our ranks. This is the only way for us to take stock of our available creative experience. Without this we shall not arrive at the plannig of the creative output of our members, which is certainly one of our immediate objectives.

Neverthelles, while devoting increased attention to creative problems, we should not neglect important literary-political issues. It must be observed that lately we have been rather lax in the struggle against bourgeois literature, and in the work with the fellow-travelers. In fact, after the "case" of Pilnyak and Zamyatin, we have not conducted a single public literary campaign of such a character. Yet, one has to be an out-and-out right-wing opportunist to deny that we have to contend against bourgeois works, bourgeois influences, and the bourgeois menace that is assuming the most diverse, novel and peculiar forms.

Without an increased struggle against bourgeois literature and an analysis of its works, we cannot secure the communist re-education of our fellow-travelers. We must increase the work with our fellow-travelers, helping those who realign themselves, exposing those who are merely "adapting" themselves, and combatting those who desert to the positions of bourgeois literature. It rests a good deal with ourselves to quicken the pace of differentiation in the fellow-traveling ranks — the mass of the fellow-travelers understand already the justice of our straight question — an ally or an enemy? An ally or an enemy? — this determines our policy in regard to fellow-travelers; yet this policy should be carried out without any "leftist" animus, without immediately denouncing as an enemy anyone who has not yet proclaimed himself an absolute ally.

The noted Georgian writer Michael Djavahishvili recently complained that it was hard to exist as a fellow-traveler. He said, in fact, one wants to be a fellow-traveler, but today one set of demands is made, and tomorrow another — so it is a hard life! This is what many fellow-travelers think in their heart of hearts, thereby showing that they have not only been but have remained fellow-travelers. The change in the demands is due to the actual circumstances of the situation, and indeed, without the quickening of the pace of re-education, the fellow-traveler of yesterday will cease to be one today.

There ought to be a different approach to different writers, and different criteria for different republics.

I consider that the Society of Peasant Writers has done well in changing its name into the Society of Proletarian-Kolkhoz Writers. The change correctly reflects the tendencies of their development, of the writers and of their organization as a whole. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume such tendencies to be already the existing reality. There are writers who are already realizing this tendency, but there are others who hesitate and who are still swayed by the moods of the various groups of middle peasants, and it is important that these should not be repulsed as the result of changing the name of the Society. The Society of Proletarian-Kolkhoz Writers should see to the re-education of such waverers, serving to them as a school, and not losing them.

Current Tasks.

The struggle for creative hegemony — this is our first and foremost task to which the whole of our work should be subordinated. This slogan

dictates not only the necessity of devoting ever greater attention to creative questions, but also clearly raises the general goal; we have all the historic postulates for attaining the hegemony — let us attain it, thus raising Soviet art to an even higher level. I say this emphatically: we conceive the hegemony of proletarian literature not as the consequence, let us say, of the total bankruptcy of the fellow-travelers. No, we want the hegemony of the proletarian writers as the result and upon the basis of the greatest growth of our Soviet literature; not because — if I may put it this way — others write even worse, but because we write better. In so saying I am only confirming the statement that the hegemony of proletarian literature is not far distant, that we do not put off the attainment of this hegemony to the time when the class struggle will have ebbed down, when not only the foundation but the whole edifice of socialism will have been erected. Already today the fellow-travelers cannot lead the whole of Soviet literature. The proletarian writers are as yet unable, but they will be able to lead, providing that they accelerate the pace of study, of reconstruction, of the formation of the new type of writer. We shall then really have attained a big step forward in the art evolution of mankind — and this Great Art of Bolshevism is being wrought by the writer who devotes to the cause of socialism the whole of his strength, the whole of his intellect, the whole of his will-power; by the writer who learns from Lenin and Stalin to combine sober judgement with passionate earnestness, by the writer who does not detach himself from life, but takes a hand in its rebuilding, in the hustle and bustle of reconstruction; by the writer who is polytechnically educated and is capable of struggling for technical innovations — not an empiricist, not a schematist, but a materialist dialectician; by the writer who loves the realities and sees the struggle of opposing tendencies and the trend of development; by the writer of stern and accurate vision, yet what one would call a dreamer. "Fantasy is a virtue of inestimable value, and it is vainly presumed that it is needed only by the poet. This is a foolish prejudice. Even in mathematics it is needed, even the discovery of the differential and integral calculi would have been impossible without fantasy." (Lenin). This new writer is already growing. We must stimulate his growth in practice by fighting for the bolshevization of proletarian literature, by individualizing our approach to each writer, by throwing the whole of our organization into such a cause as the delineation of our heroes of labor. When we speak on this subject we do not mean the drawing of a few hasty and cursory sketches. We want quality in this work of portraying the labor heroes of our socialist construction; we want this task to force the pace of reconstruction in proletarian literature, bringing nearer its hegemony, the creation of the Great Art of Bolshevism.

We have few creative groups, although we talk a great deal and pass unanimous resolutions about them. Why have we few creative groups? Perhaps, this is the result of consolidation? Perhaps, we "consolidate" the groups so furiously that we crush them in the process? No, it is the indication of the level of our proletarian literature. We have few groups in our proletarian literature because it is barely entering into the period of creative flourishing.

What is the further road of our proletarian literature? It is the road of the growth of an ever larger number of writers differing from each other, following their different schools and different paths along the road of creating the method of dialectical materialism. Already today it

would not be at all difficult to form 20, 30, or even 50 creative groups. If an obliging critic be invited, he might even draw up the respective programs for the groups; but what we really want is the formation of such creative groups as would express the different streams of creative activity that have already become or are becoming crystalized. No leadership is at the height of its task unless it is able to discern the traits which distinguish one writer from another, unless it is able to discern tendencies that have not yet become fully revealed. This is the task of the leadership. It should guide the leadership in the whole of its practical work. Only then will it be entitled to real leadership.

When the subject of creative groups was discussed in the Plenum, some comrades pointed out the dangers connected therewith. Indeed, there are many dangers. The dangers consist in that one or another group might degenerate into group-exclusiveness, that it might become detached from the movement as a whole, and so forth. These dangers do exist. Yet, he who speaks and dwells only on the danger, and does not go any farther, does not understand the state of our movement today. The chief danger today consists in the very fact that the creative demarcation is not being forced.

The time has already come when it is both possible and necessary to bring together all the forces of proletarian art. We have already grown into a firm and militant alliance with the proletarian musicians, painters, cinema workers, radio artists — and we must also draw in the proletarian architects. As a matter of fact, VOAPP in many respects plays already the leading role in regard to the whole of proletarian art; but it ought to be said that quite frequently the musicians or the painters know a good deal more about us than we know about them, and yet their experience might be extremely helpful to us. It is necessary to strengthen and widen the participation of all the forces of VOAPP in international work. Comrades, we are now a component part of the International Writers' Organization that has made tremendous progress since our Kharkov Conference, having now considerable sections, as in Germany, Japan, America etc., carrying on big revolutionary activity on an international scale, and demonstrating the growth of proletarian culture even under the yoke of capitalism. We have something to learn from our comrades in Western Europe and America as well as in the East, and we should also impart our experience to them. Do all of us realize here our responsibilities before the International Union? Is this international activity adequately conducted by us?

Furthermore, we must properly organize the participation of proletarian writers in the whole practice of the cultural revolution! We must actively take part in the struggle for Bolshevist tempo of cultural construction, for directing the whole cultural growth into the socialist channel, for the Leninist theory of culture. In the past, we struggled for proletarian culture, and this struggle we continue today as we speak of the socialist culture that is growing strong and is winning in the process of cultural revolution. In the past, for instance, in our discussions with Bogdanov, we counterposed proletarian culture to socialist culture, or to be more exact, to the communist culture, to the culture of the class-less communist society. Such counterposition was quite proper, as we were then struggling for a clear-cut class line, for the cultural hegemony of the proletariat, for the proletarian advance on the cultural front. Today, we must emphasize that we do not counterpose proletarian culture to

socialist culture, that we are building the socialist culture and are fighting under its banner.

Strengthening and Deepening International Unity in VOAPP Ranks.

We must be in the front ranks of the struggle for international proletarian culture against national exclusiveness, against the conservation of any lingering national animosity among the toilers, against nationalistic provincialism, and for the broad horizon of the soldiers in the army of World Revolution. We must bring even closer together all the national sections of VOAPP, ruthlessly resisting the least manifestation of imperialist sentiment — the chief enemy — and clearing the path for ever greater unity of the toilers of all nations.

Comrades, not so very long ago we had to admit that we were more on the defensive than on the offensive. It was one of the most critical moments of transition to the new stage, to the new tempo of reconstruction, to the strengthening of the struggle for bolshevization of proletarian literature under the new circumstances. That phase has rapidly passed away. Our organization has managed to repulse the opponents of the general policy of VOAPP, to demonstrate its loyalty to the policy of the Party, and, despite numerous mistakes and shortcomings, to find the basic keys to further progress. In our domain, in conformity with the policy of the Party, we are today unfolding the socialist offensive. We are the Bolshevist vanguard of Soviet literature!

Sergei Dinamov

THEODORE DREISER IS COMING OUR WAY

Last year a book appeared in New York, called "Humanism and America." This thick volume was a manifesto on the part ot the fascist intelligentzia, which attacks science and tries to "supplement" it by religion. Catholicism is what the humanists propose, what they oppose to the present anarchy of bourgeois society. Catholicism is a militant religion and that is just why the humanists are reaching out for it, emphasizing particularly that catholicism is a special form of discipline. The humanists, like the French fascists Julien Benda and Gaston Rouy, and the theorist of German fascism, Rosenberg, come forward as trainers of a fresh generation of the bourgeoisie, sound and strong, moral and militant. In the field of creative work the humanists preach intuitism and classicism, while emphasizing strongly that the duty of literature is to educate the reader, that literature must create laws of morality.

Theodore Dreiser replied to the humanists in the periodical. "The Thinker" (July, 1930), with an article called "The New Humanism." The humanists indulged in fierce criticism of Dreiser (in the symposium, "Humanism and America," this criticism had a special article devoted to him called "The American Tragedy"). Dreiser is denounced by the humanists for seeing in life mainly the bad and disgusting; they recommend him to turn away from the contradictions of reality, to try to embellish it.

Dreiser correctly grasps the essence of humanism as a phenomenon caused, on the one hand, by the decadence of capitalism, on the other, by the growth of the revolutionary movement. But he does not express this thought with the necessary clarity (for him, the humanists are "lovers of sweet-meats much disturbed by twenty or thirty years of rebellion and discontent, who have begun at last, so it would seem, to lead us to something real.") He notes that the humanists reject the rich heritage of bourgeois realism (Zola, Balzac, etc.), for their art is that of false optimism and sentimentalism, an art of idealism (Proust, for example).

Dreiser correctly notes in passing that the esthetics of humanism are a consequence of a social order in degeneration, but at the same time underestimates the role of humanism. Humanism contains elements of dissolution and decay, but at the same time humanism, as indicated above, is also a militant fascist tendency, which attempts to curb the masses by religion, to bring discipline and energy into the chaos of bourgeois society, to educate strong and well-trained bourgeois elements for the future battles.

Theodore Dreiser's attack on humanism is undoubtedly a fact of great significance.

This attack by Dreiser upon fascism is closely connected with the entire evolution of his social views during the past three years. The

spokesman of the petty bourgeoisie, offering a rather weak criticism of large-scale capitalism and himself enthusing over it (Cooperwood, in the "Financier" and "Titan"), preaching individualism, opposing communism, Theodore Dreiser, in our times is becoming a revolutionary publicist and is taking part in the wide campaigns of agitation carried on by the Communist Party; he sharply attacks the capitalist system and warmly defends the USSR.

As late as 1927 it was difficult to catch a glimpse of this new Dreiser. In a letter dated January 5, 1927, he writes:

"I can only say that I have no theories about life, or the solution of economic and political problems. Life, as I see it, is an organized process about which we can do nothing in the final analysis. Of course, science, art, commercial progress, all go to alleviate and improve and ease the material existence of humanity, and that for the great mass, is something. But there is no plan, as I believe from Christianity down that can be more than a theory. And dealing with man is a practical thing — not a theoretical one. Nothing can alter his emotions, his primitive and animal reactions to life. Greed, selfiishness, vanity, hate, passion, love, are all inherent in the least of us, and until such are eradicated, there can be no Utopia. Each new generation, new century, brings new customs, new ideas, new theories, but misery, weakness, incapacities, poverty, side by side with happiness, strength, power, always have and no doubt, always will exist. And until that intelligence which runs this show sees fit to remould the nature of man, I think it always will be the survival of the fittest whether in the monarchies of England, the democracies of America, or the Soviets of Russia."

At the close of the letter, Dreiser writes:

"In conclusion, I want to say that I know so little of the truth of conditions in Russia I would not venture an opinion as to the ultimate result, but I do hope that something fine and big and enduring does come out of it."

In a letter of March 14, 1927, Dreiser again returns to the theme of the USSR, remarking that he takes a great interest in everything that goes on among us, and in particular, in Lady Astor's experiment, which proved unsuccessful for capitalism (as is well known, Lady Astor offered to send an English workingman, at her expense, for six months to the USSR, hoping that he would return to capitalist England, flee from Soviet conditions. Just the opposite occurred; the metal-worker, C. Morton, preferred not to return to England. During Lady Astor's stay in the USSR an open letter to her from C. Morton's widow was published, comparing conditions in the USSR with those in bourgeois England, to the disadvantage of the latter). Dreiser writes that this case of course gives evidence that our social conditions are better than in England.

In the autumn of 1927, Dreiser was invited to the USSR for the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Dreiser spent eleven weeks in the USSR, traveled through a number of regions, visited villages, factories, Soviet farms, workers' houses, clubs, houses of correction, and on returning to the USA published a book, "Dreiser Looks at Russia." His general conclusions from visiting the USSR he himself formulates as follows:

"First. Its leaders, theoretic and practical, realize that the best thing for everybody is work in some form, either mental or physical, and the worst thing, idleness either enforced or personally desired; and they have set themselves the task of providing work and eliminating idleness. I most heartily approve of that."

"Next. They felt that the amount of work assigned to each should be not more than is necessary to provide all with all of the privileges and comforts of a very highly developed state — a state economically artistically, intellectually and socially agreeable and perhaps beautiful; also that after that the individual may do with the rest of his time as he chooses."

Thirdly, Dreiser takes note of the tremendous work of intellectual education which is leading "man from poverty and ignorance to knowledge and happiness." Further, Dreiser notes with satisfaction that in the land of the Soviets strivings for personal enrichment are not allowed to develop. Dreiser especially approves of the fact that in the USSR labor is genuinely free. Dreiser especially notes the positive character of our system of education, which is directed toward educating, not individualists, but collectivists. The full equality of woman with man is also taken by Dreiser as one of the facts which must be contrasted with the bourgeois West. It is difficult to enumerate all the sides of the USSR which called forth Theodore Dreiser's approval, although at the same time the artist continually emphasized that he was not a communist, but an individualist, that he was trying to see the unfavorable things in Soviet reality also.

In the book there are a number of passages which provoke perplexity or betray the fact that his connection with bourgeois society prevented Dreiser from understanding certain phenomena, but in general the tone of the book is absolutely friendly and it is no accident that the White Guards' spokesman, P. N. Miliukov, felt it his duty in one of his lectures in New York to attack this book.

After visiting the USSR Theodore Dreiser has begun to notice in American life certain features that had hitherto eluded him, or that he had not seen clearly enough. The great artist has been becoming a militant publicist, has more and more often taken the journalist's pen in hand to attack American capitalism. Thus, in June, 1928, Mr. Dreiser published an article in the "Nation" in which he subjected a number of the most "sacred" institutions of bourgeois democracy to criticism.

Capitalism, Dreiser claims, is halting the development of culture by substituting comfort for it. We must see that its far-famed democracy is pure illusion, for America is run by "a far from intellectual handful of moneybags" and the "individual free person" is becoming a plaything in the hands of these dictators.

In this article Dreiser casts hints about there being, a "salvation," but without indicating it precisely, however. In any case, even in this article the writer has already begun to part with many of his illusions, in particular, he already sharply formulates the idea that bourgeois democracy is a blind covering the dictatorship of financial capital. Such theses of Theodore Dreiser's were bound to place him in a rather special position among other great writers. The bourgeois press, without as yet beginning an open campaign against him, still is trying to wound him in some way or other. His correspondence with the newspaper, "New York World," which I have received from Dreiser, lifts one little corner of the curtain veiling this back-stage struggle against an artist who has broken off from the bourgeois world.

Dreiser was invited by the Sunday editor of this paper, Paul Palmer, to write in connection with the series of articles, which had begun to be published, regarding a plan for a congress of social reform, which demanded freedom of divorce. Dreiser agreed, wrote the article, including in it a sentence about the Catholic Church being the greatest truly governmental organization in the world. This sentence proved to be a stumblingblock and after some correspondence Theodore Dreiser sent a letter to the "New York World" in which demanded his article back.

This small episode is at the same time very characteristic for Dreiser's entire line of conduct during the past few years: the artist refuses to give up a single inch of his convictions, categorically refusing to make even

the most unimportant changes in his conduct to suit bourgeois morality or policy.

The crisis which broke out in the summer of 1929, which has trampled in the dust the supposed prosperity, which has brought to light the contradictions of the capitalist system on the one hand, and on the other the successes of socialist reconstruction in the USSR, has been moving Theodore Dreiser sharply to the left. The artist has been taking decisive steps toward the side of the revolution. This stage in the development of Theodore Dreiser began somewhat earlier, from the moment when the writer declared that at the presidential elections he would vote only for the communists, for that was the only party which was really fighting capitalism. Dreiser's broad offensive dates from the summer of 1930, when he sent an open letter to the John Reed Club in answer to the club's suggestion that he speak his opinion regarding the persecutions to which free expression of political and economic convictions is subjected in America.

This letter, written by one of America's greatest artists, and dated July 10, 1930, is exceptionally interesting. Dreiser notes the absolute abnormality of a situation in which overproduction, the excess of products leads to unemployment, to starvation. The government, democracy, is only a tool in the hands of the ruling class, says Dreiser.

At the same time it is difficult for the artist to force his way through the débris of his petty-bourgeois ideology. Class consciousness is no old coat, it is not so easy to cast off. Even in this article Dreiser hopes still that the way of reforms may give something, that partial changes (abolition of inheritance, nationalization without revolution) may considerably lighten the lot of the exploited majority.

A month later, also in 1930, Dreiser writes to the International Bureau of Revolutionary Writers. In his letter he denounces military attacks being prepared against the USSR, he denounces intervention. "I am opposed to any conflict with the Soviet Union, no matter whence it might come," writes Dreiser.

In the winter of 1931 he sends to the USSR several articles published in America also, in which the further evolution of the writer toward the left is plainly reflected. In an article, "The Right To Revolution," by the concrete example of the "revolution" in Panama (carried out at the command of American financiers, who thus replaced President Arosemana, who did not suit them, and put in his place "their man," Doctor Arrias) Dreiser shows the practice of American imperialism and defends the right of the toilers to revolution. The ruling classes may with impunity stage "fake" revolutions and break the laws, if that is to their profit.

In a long sketch, "Unemployment in New York" (which was also published in Germany in "Weltbühne," Dreiser presents a series of pictures from the life of the unemployed, and generalizes his impressions. And in the article the author does not forget to emphasize the fact that only in the USSR is there no unemployment. While dashing off horrible pictures of unemployment and of the unemployed, crushed by long lack of work and equally long lack of assistance, Dreiser writes: "Handing out skimpy money portions will not vitalise or re-vitalise a nation or a people already well along towards economic aenemia. What is needed is a large revision of our whole economic procedure — national and state." But in this article as well Dreiser once more pays tribute to his past, closing his article with an appeal to the government, whereas unemployment, like war and crisis, is an inescapable consequence of the capitalist order and

the way for abolishing unemployment is the way of revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois order.

In his article, "Mooney and America," Dreiser makes a warm defense of Mooney, who has been in prison more than fifteen years upon a faked up charge. In the same article the author presents a series of similar facts. Theodore Dreiser came promptly out in defense of the eight Negro workers who were sentenced to death, though innocent, in Scottsboro, ("Daily Worker," New York, May 12, 1931).

While these lines are being written the American papers are bringing us the news of a new work by Theodore Dreiser dealing with the emancipation of the working-class. In the New York paper, "World Telegram," an interview of the United Press with Dreiser has been published. From this interview we learn that he has become the head of a committee made up of John Dos Passos, Malcolm Cowley, Robert Dunn, Mary Heaton Vorse, etc. This committee has set about investigating the terrible situation of the miners in the mines of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. Dreiser himself has visited fifteen mines and talked with the striking miners and their wives. In his letter to the organ of the Communist Party "Daily Worker", he presents evidence of the provocateur activity of the police and employers. Theodore Dreiser came out sharply in criticism of the social-fascist American Federation of Labor, which provoked an absolutely unconvincing, but angry letter from the leader of the A. F. of L., Green. Theodore Dreiser has already published several sketches from his impressions. These sketches are not passive photographing (as was his book, "Pictures of a Great City," for instance), they are filled through and through with a spirit of struggle, the artist is a participant in the miners' struggle (see "Daily Worker," June 27, 29 and July 1, 1931).

American capitalism, of course, cannot forgive the great writer for coming so close to the revolution. When Sinclair Lewis shamelessly accused Theodore Dreiser of plagiarism in connection with the book published by him "Dreiser Looks At Russia," and Dreiser, losing his head, gave him two blows on the ear, the bourgeois press greatly exaggerated this scandal, for the obvious purpose of discrediting the rebel-artist, who in distinction from Sinclair Lewis, refuses to get on his knees before capitalism.[1] The organ of the German Communist Party "Rote Fahne," gave an absolutely correct estimate of this fact in its issue of August 29, 1931. The paper wrote: "The scandal which has been provoked and the readiness of the Puritan strata of society immediately to fall on Dreiser is to be explained by more profound reasons: the dogged warrior against moralists who are entangled in their own web of lies, is taking a sharp turn to the left, far more to the left than is accepted in American debating societies."

Bourgeois justice has tried to put the screws on Theodore Dreiser. He appealed to it for help in connection with the distortion of the idea of his "American Tragedy," in a film under that same title, made according to the well-known novel which stirred the entire world. June 26, this year, Dreiser sent a letter to the firm of "Paramount Publics Corporation informing it that the film had made, «The American Tragedy," had

[1] At the same time, I personally observed Dreiser's work at his book on the Soviet Union saw how carefully he collected his material for it; of course there can be no talk of plagiarism; the examples presented in their own time by Sinclair Lewis' wife, Dorothy Thompson, speak only of the fact that there were coincidences in using reference books on the USSR.

nothing in common with his novel, that the firm had paid no attention to his comments in the process of work, but had aimed at transforming a social novel into a criminal "shocker." In his letter Dreiser presents a number of reviews of critics and public persons about the film, which fully supported his own estimate of it (Doctor Barnes, P. Kearney, Dr. Brill, Karl Van Doren). A few weeks previous to this letter the "New York World-Telegram" had reported that Dreiser hoped for extensive support from the American intelligentsia. Needless to say, the artist did not receive any "extensive support" and on August 1 of this year the court refused his petition, and among its points was the contention that the film was sounder than the novel, for it did not arouse any sympathy for the hero of the novel, Clyde Griffiths, who ended his life in the electric chair ("New York Herald-Tribune," August 2, 1931). In the same «New York World-Telegram" which announced Dreiser's intention of applying to the court, appeared a challenging caricature on Dreiser. Thus bourgeois America reacted to the author's effort to find "justice."

The venal "radical," Broun, likewise struck out at Dreiser, declaring in the "New York World-Telegram" of August 7, that Dreiser was merely "a brilliant writer of the second rank."

Dreiser's sixtieth birthday was greeted by the capitalist press in a very peculiar way. The "Frankfurter Zeitung" and other German newspapers emphasized strongly the author's German origin, which, in their opinion, was responsible for his talent. But all these papers passed over in absolute silence his recent revolutionary activities (perhaps they too must be connected up with his "German origin?"). The "Frankfurter Zeintung" at the same time was correct in writing that Dreiser was able to grasp a great deal regarding the USSR because he looks upon "Americanism" critically (article by Fritz Schothoffer in the issue of August 28, 1931). The critic of the "Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung," Hans Martin Elster, emphatically attaches himself to Dreiser's "German blood," which had endowed him with mysticism, while ignoring completely all the recent activities of the writer.

The not unfamous P. Schaeffer took advantage of Dreiser's trial suit against "Paramount" to make new attacks on the Soviet Union, just exposing a truly blessed stupidity ("Berliner Tageblatt," August 18). According to Schaeffer it turns out that social conditions in the USSR and in America are the same, for among us "petty-bourgeois eroticism" is considered inacceptable. An astounding discovery, which does "honor" to this specialist in anti-soviet inventions and to the "Berliner Tageblatt" which prints such rubbish.

Needless to say, correct attitudes were adopted only by the communist press. In "Welt am Abend" (Berlin) a telegram of the Workers International Relief, signed by V. Münzenberg, was published; in it the latter points out that Dreiser has linked his fate to that of the toiling masses of America. The "Daily Worker" (New York) contained very warm and friendly reference to Dreiser's sixtieth birthday. In the issue of August 27 a short notice was printed, together with a number of greetings (for example, the Proletarian Cultural Federation, in greeting Dreiser, calls him "a great writer and a courageous friend of the oppressed masses and of the Soviet Union"). On the following day there was published in that paper the article of the communist critic. A. Magil, who writes: "The revolutionary American workers welcome the new Theodore Dreiser and hope he will go further. They recognize in him a friend, a courageous

S. Dinamov
Theodore Dreiser Is Coming Our Way

champion. He has lost a few bourgeois sycophants, and won thousands of friends from the ranks of those who are the heirs of the great cultural achievements of the past and the builders of the culture of the future... Men like Dreiser and Rolland are figures who cast the shadows of history. They have become something greater than great writers; they are among the fighters for the new world."

O. Biha in the Vienna "Rote Fahne" was absolutely right in joining three world-famous names: Romain Rolland, Bernard Shaw, Theodore Dreiser (issue of August 8, 1931). We welcome these allies," writes O. Biha, "who have already served as lighthouses for a whole generation of seekers. And on the broad path of development these old fighters are again going to the fore and helping to tear the masks from the ideals of the bourgeoise, which are being transformed into mere traps." The American periodical, "New Masses," celebrated the writer's jubilee by a friendly article called "Titan" (September).

Dreiser has not yet made himself over completely. His article in the symposium, "Living Philosophies," still echoes his previous philosophical stand, a peculiar concoction of biologism and sociology, of fatalism combined with radicalism and realism, of mysticism and materialism. But the movement forward has been begun. And begun decisively. Some time his strong bonds with the bourgeois world will snap. The artist is growing into unity with the working class, is taking his place in the general struggle of the proletariat. The new environment is beginning to nourish the great writer. Dreiser's path to the revolution is still long. Deviations are possible. Turning back is possible. But the old Theodore Dreiser is already impossible; he is a new artist, struggling against fresh difficulties and carrying off fresh creative victories. Onward and forward, Dreiser!

I. Anisimov

ROMAIN ROLLAND IS WITH US

Romain Rolland is coming over to the side of the revolution. It is well to realize what tremendous significance this fact has. The world-wide crisis has so shaken the foundations of capitalism that it has become evident to the best elements of the bourgeois intellectuals that capitalism is doomed and that its end is near. These men throw in their lot with the revolution because they see in it the only hope for the future. Parallel with the growth of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries one can note amongst those intellectual circles of the west, which have not been corrupted by imperialism in its decadence, an ever increasing tendency to join with the working class in their struggle against disintegrating capitalism.

The magnificent stand of Romain Rolland has the greatest social significance. We see in it the process of differentiation which the bourgeois intellegentzia undergoes during a period of world-wide crisis.

Rolland himself sees the significance of his act. "I can tell you, or rather foretell that I am not alone. Many others in the West will follow me. The events of the last year have stirred the conscience of the West more than the corrupt press supposes. Regard me as a forerunner of the new West, coming towards you."

All Romain Roland's recent public utterances have been in criticism of his past. His confession should serve as a stimulus to the best elements amongst the intellectuals of the West to break with the capitalist world. Rolland says good-bye to the past. The path that he is following will be followed by many others. In this remarkable personality the social contradictions are, as it were, brought to a focus.

How are we to interpret the change through which Romain Rolland passed? His own articles and letters fully answer this question. Rolland has long ago come to realize that capitalism is decaying. The four decades of his literary work prove this. From the very first days of his literary career he stood out against imperialist France. Rolland long ago broke the coarser, more direct and external bonds with the capitalist world. There remained only those more delicate and adhesive bonds which hemmed in his utterances and made them half-hearted and conciliatory.

His preaching of non-resistance showed that, in spite of all he said against capitalism, Rolland was nevertheless bound up with it. It was this that made his position one of compromise with capitalism. In refusing to follow the path of revolution Rolland as a humanist became a force objectively supporting capitalism. And here we see the essence of the humanist doctrine. Outwardly it criticises capitalism, but in actual fact it works for it.

Throughout his literary career Rolland was one of those humanists who sincerely believe that they are fighting against capitalism for a new

and just social system. He spent a great deal of energy in trying to prove the harmfulness and pointlessness of the revolutionary struggle, thus becoming the unconscious tool of the ruling class in their attempts to disarm the proletariat. Rolland sought passionately a "trueness of mind" which could be set up against the bestiality of capitalism. He called people away from the political struggle and exhorted them like Tolstoy to turn inwards and attend to their own moral perfection. Here the humanist, with the best of intentions, merely serves the interests of the bourgeoisie. The preaching of social peace helps no one more than that very bourgoisie which the humanist so indignantly shows up.

The tragic contradictoriness in the position of Rolland the humanist, and other "independent" European intellectuals lay in the fact that their unresisting, neutral, apolitical attitude they took up was nothing but a more refined form of bourgeois ideology. In trying to unmask capitalism the humanists succeeded only in further camouflaging it.

The fundamental contradiction of Rolland's work comes down to this: bold, ruthless and uncompromising in its criticism of capitalism it shows itself to be weak and blind when it comes to formulating a positive program. Humanism, in limiting the scope of Rolland's opposition, took the edge off his criticism of the bourgeoisie.

Now during the crisis when all the ulcers of capitalism are being laid bare, humanist illusions are falling into disrepute and Romain Rolland is beginning to see the class nature of his passive attitude. The delicate threads still binding this great European to the capitalist world are breaking. When he says his "good-bye to the past" this means that he is coming over to the side of the proletarian revolution. This opens up before him new and wide horizons in his literary work. Now his genius will have frec swing, unhampered by the chains of humanism.

Anyone studying Romain Rolland's recent utterances will be struck by the fact that he concentrates his attention on showing up humanism. It is here that we find the key to his sudden change. This is of great importance to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals seeking support amongst the working class. It is through criticising humanism and laying bare the capitalist roots of its illusions that intellectuals of bourgeois origin enter upon the revolutionary path. In breaking with humanism Rolland has freed himself from the last slender bonds binding him to bourgeois ideology.

Rolland's article "Whom are you with?" is a magnificent document showing up humanism. It is directed against the pan-Europeans, the servants of French imperialism hiding behind mild humanist phrases. Rolland indignantly unmasks the pan-European medicine man, Gaston Rioux, author of that pharisaical booklet, written in such honeyed terms "Europe — my native country." He lays bare the imperialist basis of Rioux's humanist effusions. The whole point of this splendid analytical article lies in the fact that once and for all it makes it clear that humanism does not stand above the classes. Not so very long ago he himself was convinced of its independence of class. He is thus all the more uncompromising in his revelation of humanism as essentially bourgeois.

Rolland speaks about his humanist errors. He subjects his past to an open and severe criticism. Instead of humanist passivity, virtually supporting capitalism, we find revolutionary militancy. That is the direction in which Rolland's conversion is taking place. This means a definite break with the past. Rolland used to preach non-resistance and non-participation in politics and on this basis opposed the revolutionary movement and

tried to show its "pointlessness." This is the central point of the humanist doctrine. It is directed against the revolution and so is, in this respect, one of the most refined instruments in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Rolland is now entering on the revolutionary path. The USSR, the fortress of world revolution, has therefore now a new significance for him. He was always a friend of the Soviet Union, but it is only since he has renounced, at last, his humanist dallyings that he becomes a "citizen of our city," a soldier ready to defend the socialist republic. Rolland speaks of Lenin as of his new master. He has started to make a revaluation of all values, to forge for himself a revolutionary philosophy.

His penetrating exposure of Gaston Rioux shows how deep has been the inward conversion of the author of "Jean Christophe." Rolland is only at the beginning of his new path. In going over to the side of the revolution he is making the necessary changes with great thoroughness and great sincerity.

His article "Good-bye to the Past" together with his exposure of Gaston Rioux are remarkable as an exposure of humanism. Here Rolland takes up the most difficult and grandest period of his evolution and at the same time the one most frought with contradictions, the period of the war. As is well known Rolland attacked the imperialist slaughter from its very first days. His lonely voice rang out uncompromisingly in the midst of all the impassioned chauvinism. Rolland was indignant in his revelation of these European intellectuals, who then turned to barbarism. Rolland, in the midst of the hatred, calumny and threats with which he was surrounded stood firm as a rock. And yet this magnificent gesture proved barren. Rolland had nothing with which to oppose war beyond an "inward freedom." Rolland turned to no one but to the "servants of the spirit" — the intellectuals.

"Turn away from you the blind spirit of hatred," he wrote. "Do not become involved in the struggle. It is not by fighting against it that you will destroy war, but by keeping your heart free from war and saving from the conflagration the future which you hold within you."

In this quotation we see mirrored not only Rolland's greatness but also his humanist impotence and blindness. "Forerunners" and " Above the Battle," two volumes of his war essays are permeated through and through with these contradictions.

Looking back on these tragic years Rolland admits now that he made very pale protests. He sees their lack of substance. He speaks of how they were "made barren by the blindness of humanism." To take up the humanist attitude of 1914—15 now, when we are faced with the final struggle against the fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, would mean open defense of decaying capitalism. That is why Rolland has submitted himself to such a searching criticism with regard to the war years.

"At a time when I was only freeing myself slowly and with difficulty from the illusions that had held my youth in bondage (the lie of official history, the lie of national and social conventions, the lie of tradition and of the State) and when the answer which the peoples ought to have given to their governments had only just begun to dawn on mankind in its struggle to emancipate itself, I dared not speak out. But I do so now. The answer is the answer which Lenin gave in 1917: the rising up of the European armies against their war lords and fraternization on the field of battle."

So speaks Rolland now that he understands the necessity for revolutionary action. He sees that his errors are common to large sections of the petty bourgeois intellectuals, who are brought up against the humanist illusions on going over to the side of the working class and who see that only by shattering them can they make the final break with the capitalist world. Rolland feels that it is his duty to make such a confession as will "help tens of thousands of souls to free themselves of a burden." Together with many others, the best of the bourgeois intellectuals who have thrown in their lot with the working class, Romain Rolland, in putting humanism aside, passes over to the revolution.

The post war crisis of capitalism in 1919 and 1920 was accompanied by a considerable increase in the number of petty bourgeois writers sympathizing with the revolutionary movement. This led to the appearance of the Clarte group which united the foremost thinkers and writers of the west on the basis of sympathy with the proletarian revolution. Rolland was one of the best known contributors to this "international spirit." When differentiation took place within Clarte, and the more advanced elements stood for closer contact with the revolutionary proletariat, Rolland took up an uncompromisingly humanist attitude. The polemic with Barbusse showed how very deep rooted were Rolland's humanist illusions. The dispute led to a split. Barbusse went over to the Communist Party, and Rolland was left, a humanist in magnificent solitude.

The novel "Clairambeau" traces out Rolland's development during the war years and the post-war crisis. It is a regular gospel of humanism. Clairambeau who holds that "the sole type of the true revolutionary is the crucified Christ" preaches non-resistance to capitalist evil. Clairambeau knows that capitalism is abominable. He knows it by bitter experience. But Clairambeau's only conclusion is a conciliatory one.

"The most dangerous opponent of the existing order in this world of violence, falshood and base acquiescence is a man who has a free conscience and really desires peace." That is the only contribution the humanist Clairambeau has to offer. He gives vent to bitter sarcasm at the expense of the revolutionary movement, saying the triumph of the revolution would result merely in oppression changing hands. Clairambeau's fundamental idea is that the intellectuals should be "independent" and non-party. By becoming independent the intellectuals are ideologically disarmed; their humanism makes them barren. Clairambeau, the haughty apologist of political neutrality, expresses one of the most characteristic types of humanist dalliance.

In showing up humanism Rolland has to show up Clairambeau as one of the theoreticians of political neutrality. The whole point of his conversion is that all the illusions of neutrality have been revealed. It is impossible to remain "above the battle." One must choose one side or the other. Thus the last utterances of Rolland are documents showing his adherence to the revolutionary party.

In 1924 Rolland brought out a book on Ghandi. Here he emphasized with particular force humanist "truth" as opposed to the revolutionary movement. Rolland saw in Ghandi "the creator of a new humanity" He emphasizes the identity of his views with the teaching of Ghandi. He saw in Ghandi the mighty leader of the masses in the humanist regeneration of the world.

"The real politicians of violence (the revolutionaries and reactionaries) scorn this faith and in doing so show their ignorance of some of the most profound realities. Whether they laugh at it or not, it is my faith."

The main purpose of Rolland's book is to preach non-resistance (which as we have shown involves compromise with the capitalist world), to make a violent criticism of the revolutionary movement and to offer Ghandiism in its stead. The stabilization of capitalism makes humanist illusions particularly tenacious.

"We hold the world in a whirlwind of force. This storm which is killing the germs of our civilization came unexpectedly. A century of primitive national pride, stimulated by an ideology of blind adulation of revolution encouraged by a blind democracy, and as the result: — a century of inhuman industrialization, of voracious plutocracy, of slavish mechanization of economic materialism amidst which the human soul is strangled to death..." Rolland means by violence, revolution and the violence of the bourgeois dictatorship alike. Here we have the whole humanist bag of tricks. However pure Romain Rolland's intentions may have been, his humanist utterances only served to hide the true face of capitalism and distort the truth about the revolutionary movement.

Rolland, in criticising his other past works must also turn his attention to his book on Ghandi since in it we have a clear and consistent exposition of the humanist position. In renouncing Clairambeau, the prophet of political neutrality and dalliance, Rolland must subject Ghandi also to criticism, especially as the events of the past few years have shown that Ghandi's humanism has been directed against the revolutionary movement of the Indian toilers and has served as a powerful weapon in the hands of British imperialism.

This book discloses in the clearest possible way what characterizes humanism in all its forms.

Romain Rolland always opposed imperialist France. He says with perfect truth: "It does not require any effort on my part to join with you. My act of destroying all bridges behind me had only symbolic significance, for, whether there are any bridges or not, I shall never go back." Rolland had long ago broken off direct relations with capitalism. His publicist essays of the war years, however, as also "Clairambeau" and his book on Ghandi, all show that he had retained all along his humanist attitude of compromise with capitalism. It is just here that we find the tragic inconsistencies of Rolland's career. It is just this insidious humanist attitude that Rolland is at last abandoning. In doing so he will free himself of the inconsistencies that have always beset him, the contradiction between his uncompromising criticism of capitalism and his actual impotence against it, and lack of positive principle.

The roots of Rolland's humanism lie in the evolution of French imperialism. In the nineties Rolland brought out his first dramas on the French Revolution. About 1910 he published his greatest work "Jean-Christophe." This was during the rise of the new capitalism in France. Under the shell of a petty bourgois country a process of capitalistic industrialization was taking place. France was becoming an imperialist power. This resulted in a crisis for the petty bourgeoisie. Everywhere the ideology of the lower middle class decadence made its appearance. Rolland was one of the many "seeking salvation." From the very start he was distinguished by his uncompromising criticism of imperialist France, which had brought ruin to the petty bourgeois class. But the petty bourgeosie had no path of its own and so Rolland, in refusing to join in with the working class had no course open but that of compromise. Humanism justified this compromise, presenting it in the light of universal brotherhood.

The novel "Jean Christophe" contains a logical programme of humanist compromise. We find here on the one hand a profound and unsparing analysis of capitalist decay. Rolland reveals the signs of disintegration first of all in art and then in politics and in all the new forms of bourgeois ideology. The decay of bourgeois ideology is merely an expression of the decay of the whole of capitalist society. The book is especially interesting from this point of view. The face of decaying capitalism is disclosed here with tremendous clarity. The part about the Market Square consistutes a particularly searching criticism of capitalism.

Christophe is set over against this decaying France. He knows capitalist civilization for the beast that it is. He protests against this refined barbarism.

But from what point of view does Chistophe make his criticism of imperialist France? What is his program of action? It is here that we come upon the fundamental inconsistency in Rolland's work. The novel has two sides. On the one hand it tears the mask from decaying bourgeois civilization and on the other it is the pathetic story of the life or a "seeker after truth." Rolland calls his novel in this part "the music of souls." Christophe and some other of the novel's heroes answer to Rolland's requirements when he says." Heroes are for me not those who have excelled either in ideas or in strength. I call only those people heroes who have great hearts." All these heroic personalities have nothing with which to oppose the capitalist world but their great hearts. Christophe goes in for art, becomes wrapt up in his work. This is all that he has to throw in the face of the bourgeois world. He sharply condemned this world but would not fight against it. Christophe is a compromiser. He is a Tolstoian. He is not capable of any action: "I belong to the forces of the soul" he says "and not to the forces of coercion."

The end of the novel is profoundly false — the very pathetic book "Coming Days" represents Christophe as victor, but his only victory is that he comes to terms with everything.

The capitalist world celebrates its victory over him. But Rolland represents Christophe's humanist compromise as a sign of his greatness. He tries to show that Christophe's way is the only way in which the world can be regenerated. Thus the humanist attitude of non-resistance is idealized and its class function in defending capitalism is hidden from view.

There is one very important aspect of Christophe's development to which particular attention must be paid, and that is his attitude to the struggle of the working class. When Christophe has discovered the mark of the beast on imperialist France he seeks refuge in the working class movement. Approaching it with a lower middle class mentality he comes to conclusions which prepare the way for a humanist compromise with capitalism. Christophe sees the "falsity of the proletarian ideology and the futility of fighting." He convinces himself that "the proletariat is in no way better or more sincere than other classes, and what is more differs very slightly from the other classes."

Christophe comes to the conclusion which we already know from Rolland's works. He condemns the revolutionary struggle on the grounds that it resorts to physical force. It does not make any difference whether it is the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat that resorts to physical force. This is the key to the whole novel. Christophe, in "unmasking" the idea of the working class movement, is cutting the ground from under his feet. His whole criticism then becomes barren.

Christophe finds a way out in humanism, in keeping "above the battle," in renouncing politics and any party membership. This deceives him into looking forward to the "coming days" of humanism. He becomes a mere contemplator who comes to terms with the capitalist evil he himself disclosed, and he refuses to fight against it. Thus we see that even the novel "Jean Christophe" betrays elements of that humanist program to which Romain Rolland adhered right up to the time when he bid his famous "good-bye to the past." This element is to be found throughout all the previous work of Romain Rolland and now that he has definitely broken with it, a new phase of literary work opens out before this great writer.

The humanist and non-resistor has become a fighter. The class nature of the humanist illusion has been disclosed. Its bourgeois essence has been revealed. Class stands against class. Neutrality has been shattered by the reality of the social struggle. Decadent capitalism is beginning to attack openly, it is no longer hiding its dictatorship. Two alternatives confront the petty bourgeois writer. He may take either sides with fascism in waging its hidden warfare againts the toilers, thus following the example of the greater number of bourgeois intellectuals, including such men as Durten and Duhamel in France, or on the other hand he may join the ranks of revolution and actively struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist order. That is the path followed by the best intellectuals of the West. This is the path that Romain Rolland is taking, and in doing so he is becoming the herald of the last and decisive class battles. There is no third alternative. It is impossible to remain "above the battle."

And so it is no chance phenomenon that Rolland has devoted his recent public utterances to such an energetic and uncompromising criticism of humanism and that political neutrality which comes to terms with capitalism and which in the last resort actually supports the decaying order of things and shows active opposition to the revolutionary movement.

It is through having seen the truth about humanism that Rolland's conversion has come about. In saying good bye to the past this great artist, born of the last days of bourgeois civilization, is throwing in his lot with the revolutionary party. That is the path followed by the best of the intellectuals.

Seki Sano

THE REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE IN FASCIST JAPAN

The first workers' theatres in Japan were organized by the dock strikers of Nobe (1921) and by the printers of Tokio (1925). These theatrical groups soon made room for the "Trunk Theatre," so callied because the entire stage properties could be packed in a small trunk.

The Trunk Theatre was formed by radical intellectual elements who had taken part in the revolutionary proletarian movement almost from its very beginning.

Five years have elapsed since the formation of the Trunk Theatre, five years of stubborn struggle against opportunism, ecclecticism, and social-fascism.

One typical example of the influence of the revolutionary theatrical movement on the Japanese theatre is the case of a few young actors of the classical school of Kabuki, a theatre with a past history of three centuries and now one of the most powerful weapons of the ruling class in Japan. In June, 1931, these young actors revolted against the Kabuki traditions and organized the Dzen Sin Dza (progressive theatre) in which left tendencies predominate.

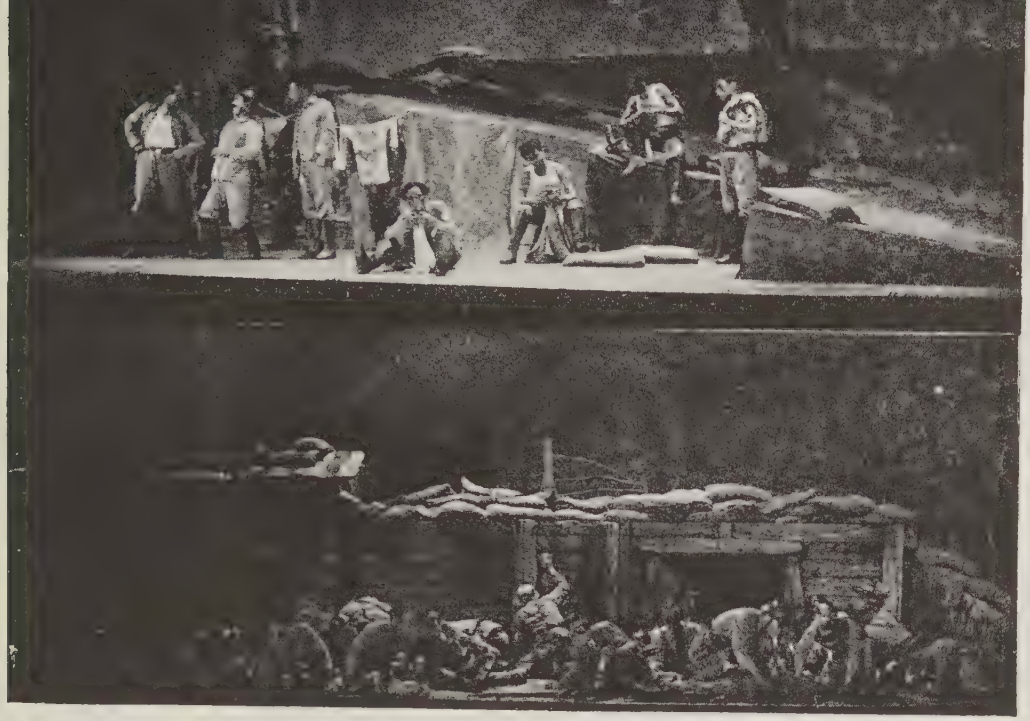
At the present time the left wing of the Japanese theatrical movement is led by the PROT — the Japanese Association of Proletarian Theatres which forms one of the sections of NAPF (the All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Art Groups). Besides this Association there are affiliated to NAPF: the Association of Proletarian Writers, the Artists' Association, the Cinema Association, and the Musicians' Association.

PROT comprises at the present time 12 theatrical groups with a total of about three hundred members scattered throughout Japan (three at Tokio, and one each at Nisuoka, Nagoya, Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, Kochi, Matsue, Kanasava, and Matsumoto).

The Left Theatre of Tokio is one of the oldest and largest of these groups.

The "Trunk Theatre," out of which the Left Theatre has grown, began its activity with five or six workers. At the present time the Left Theatre embraces about 80 members working in seven sections and has its own producers, actors, electricians, decorators, costume makers and stage setters, all of whom give their services without payment.

Among the plays produced in the Left Theatre the following are worth mentioning: "Emancipated Don Quixote" by A. V. Lunacharsky (staged by the "Vanguard Theatre," the new name assumed by the "Trunk Theatre" since 1926); "Crucified Modzaemon," by S. Fudzimori, a play depicting the peasant riots of the Tokugava period (staged in 1928 and banned by the censor); "The Debacle," by B. Lavrenev (staged in 1928, also banned); "All Along the Line," by Toma Muroyama, a play portraying the big strike on the Peking—Hankow railway in 1923 (staged in



JAPANESE PROLETARIAN THEATRE

"All quiet on the western front"

adapted and revised by Tommuray

Japanese Proletarian

The Landlor

T. Kobayashi

Theatre

Gas

Saro Miyoshi

Japanese Proletarian Theatre

1919); "The Sunless Street," by Tokunagi Naoshi, a play showing the printers' strike at Tokyo in 1926 (staged in 1930); Remarque's "All quiet on Western Front," adapted by Toma Muroyama (staged in 1931), and "Victory," by Toma Muroyama, depicting the revolutionary May Day demonstrations of the Chinese proletariat in 1930 (staged in 1931).

Besides the Left Theatre, mention ought to be made of "Sin Tsukidgi Hekigan" (the new Tsukidgi troupe). It is a pettybourgeois dramatic group known also under the name of the "Little Tsukidgi Theatre," founded at Tokio in 1925. Ideologically it resembles the "Theatre Guild" of New York, or the "Theatre du Vieux Colombier" of Paris.

In 1929 the majority of this group formed the new theatre "Sin Tsukidgi" which affiliated to the Left Theatre, and in May 1930 joined the PROT. Its best productions were the following: "Mother," by Maxim Gorky; "Uprising," by Fudzimora; "Roar China," by Tretyakov; "Armored Train," by Ivanov (banned by the censor); "Echo," by Bill-Belotserkovsky; "A Descendant of Genghis Khan," (adapted from the original), and "Oriental Carriage Works," by Toma Muroyama.

Besides these "big" productions, which usually run for two or three weeks continuously, there are the so-called "small" and "medium" productions. The latter consist of one or two-act playlets that are staged in working class quarters in connection with some revolutionary events (e. g. the campaigns dealing with the brutal police raids on homes of Japanese communists in 1928 and 1929, on May Day, on the anniversary of the October Revolution, etc.)

The "small" productions are given by a cast of three or four actors. The plays are of propaganda character, and are naturally banned by the censorship. One of the most efficient among these little troupes is the "Itinerant Proletarian Actor Troupe" of Tokio. Moreover, most of the proletarian theatres are now taking up banned and mutilated plays.

Although the big and medium productions are considered legal, they are nevertheless frequently so mutilated by the sundry censoring organs (the "Law and Order Section," the "Red Brigade," the "Gendarme Corpus," and the police) as to be rendered almost entirely worthless. This is partly combatted by the Dramatic League which has its nuclei almost in every factory, and which prints and circulates illegally the passages deleted by the censors.

The same organization distributes cheap tickets among working people (from 15 to 30 cents and from 7½ to 15 cents each), and explains the real aims of the plays, thus carrying on agitation among the masses.

The "Left Theatre Dramatic League" is the largest illegal organization of this kind in Japan. It publishes a monthly review „Dohsi" (Comrade) in which the 3,500 members of the League exchange views and suggestions on the work of the theatre. It should be noted that the proportion of worker playgoers has steadily grown since 1929. Thus, in Tokio it has reached 78 per cent.

The plays are created either collectively or by improvisation. The first method is employed by the "Association of Proletarian Playwrights" in Tokio which has about twenty members. The improvisation method is naturally more suitable for the itinerant "agitprop" troupes. All the members of the theatre analyze and alter the play, working out the details of its production to suit the purposes of the class struggle.

Associated with the Left Theatre of Tokio is the "Proletarian Theatre Institute" which trains future theatrical workers. The Institute has about

forty members; it conducts half-yearly courses in dramatic theory and practice.

Alongside of the revolutionary organization of NAPF there are also social-democratic art groups, like the "Rono Geijutsuka Renmei" (several splits have occured in this group). Since the last split in May, 1931, the group is entirely ignored by the masses. It publishes an official organ "Bunge-Sensen" (Literary Front) on whose editorial staff are some of the decadent exponents of social-democracy (Koitchiro Mayedako — a Japanese "Upton Sinclair," Suyakchi Aono, Iobun Kaneko, Ioshiki Hayama, etc.). It was this group that sent the open letter of protest to the Japanese Commission of the 2nd World Congress of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. The reply of the Kharkov Conference, showing up the demagogical character of this group, was published in the October issue of "New Masses." At the same time it ought to be mentioned that the majority of the members of this theatre have since joined the Left Theatre of Tokio.

NAPF is the only proletarian art federation in Japan that is working under the distinct influence of the Communist Party of Japan. The official organ of NAPF, published under the same title, carries on in spite of cruel persecution by the ruling class of Japan.

In an article by Comrade Furukawa in the June, 1931 number of "NAPF" the following is said among other things:

"The Japanese proletarian culture movement has made considerable progress in the field of art. Nevertheless, other important branches (anti-religions Propaganda, sport, radio, educational-scientific, Esperanto movement) have been largely neglected. The sport, science, educational, Esperanto and anti-religious movements have already their own organizations, but they have not yet been drawn properly into line with NAPF. In order to be really active as one of the elements of the communists movement in Japan, all the proletarian culture organizations, including NAPF, should be centralized into one federation on all-Japan scale. The five associations composing the NAPF should form part of this all-Japan federation. The leading workers of this new federation should interchange delegates with the Communist Party, in order to ensure the proper political development of the federation. At the same time the associations that are going to make up the new federation (the Associations of writers, theatrical workers, artists, sports, antireligion, radio, cultural-educational and Esperanto) should affiliate to the corresponding international organizations... At the conference of the five associations of NAPF held last year, steps were taken for directing the entire revolutionary art movement along definite communists lines. This year we ought to reorganize all the associations of NAPF, incorporating in them the hitherto neglected workers' and peasants' art groupings, in accordance with the criticisms given by the masses of our last year's activities in the factories. In this manner we shall prepare ourselves for the forthcoming stage in our movement..."

The 3rd Congress of PROT, despite provocation and repression by the authorities, was held in Tokio on May 17 last.

One of the most important resolutions adopted by the Congress in connection with the Profintern Theses on revolutionary cultural and educational activities and the decisions of the 1st Congress of the International Workers Theatrical Movement stressed the necessity for in-

creased initiative of workers in the theatrical movement. Concretely, it urged the necessity:

1. To organize and strengthen the dramatic troupes in the factories.
2. To increase the proportion of workers in the theatres now comprising the PROT.
3. To work out repertoires through collaboration of the theatres with the proletarian spectators.

Further, the Congress outlined the following tasks: to extend the PROT organizations among all important urban and rural centres of the population; to strengthen the Dramatic League under worker and peasant leadership; to combat the bourgeois and social-fascist theatrical movement; to put an end to the persecution of the proletarian theatrical movement through the support of the masses, and to form fraternal alliances with our brothers by class in China, Korea, and Formosa.

The Japanese revolutionary culture movement has succeeded in establishing a firm position for itself in spite of bitter persecution by the forces of fascism. Nevertheless, in order to ensure further development of the revolutionary culture movement in China, India, USA, Mexico and other Latin-American countries, as well as in Japan itself, it is essential to establish closer ties with these countries. With this purpose in view, steps have been taken for the creation of the first Pan-Pacific Secretariat of the Proletarian Culture Movement.

BOOK REVIEW

THE ROAD BACK OF ERICH REMARQUE.[1]

> "... In my new book there is as little tendency as in "All Quiet on the Western Front." The different situations arise on the basis of action, and not of any preconceived ideas. The characters in my book are simply faced with the problems and conflicts that are raised by the post-bellum period on every hand, and they endeavour to cope with them and to fight also spiritually their way out of the war..." (From an interview in "Pester Lloyd" Nov. 10, 1930).

Such is Remarque's road back. His road out of the horrors of war and the chaos of the post-war period. It is a retrogressive road, in its idea, in its aims, and in the dellineatory force with which the author describes his experiences.

To be sure, the nucleus of this development was already fully in evidence in his first book. The horrors of the material battles, the gruesome nature of gas-warfare, of the destruction and extermination of the flower of youth, should have led on, in dialectical fashion to the logical abhorrence of the coming war. Yet, in that book of horrors, everything pertaining to ideas and consciousness was sophisticated and presented in a nebulous, romantic style which was spiritually no less harmful in its action, and could turn out to be no less dangerous, than the "smoke curtains" on the battlefront. War, in Remarque's first book, is Fate — gruesome, inexorable fate; but in the trenches of peace the humble citizen is coaxed by Remarque into a mood of submission. The front of battle, so he tells us, had levelled down the class distinctions of peacetime. Thus, the schoolmaster Kantorek, who had incited the youth to war on hypocritical patriotic pleas ("... the Fatherland calls you, you are Germany's iron youth ... it is sublime and superb ...") is finally "out of it;" he gets back to his old position, and the spirit of conciliation and leveling takes the upper hand. The sub-officer Himmelstoss, who used to drill his men in true Prussian fashion, is depicted as transformed by the "spirit of the front." On the firing line he meets some of the men he used to drill. To his command, "Bring your legs together; stand up!" the answer comes from the men: "The trenches ain't no barracks, Himmelstoss!" Thus Remarque essays to adjust the antagonisms of rank and portrays events and incidents in a manner calculated to lull the consciousness and the spirit of rebellious resentment in his readers. After all, there is still the great spirit of "camaraderie" abroad. After all, there is still something good in the trenches of death. Such seems to be the message he desires to convey. The outward varnish of self-satisfied and complex culture is rubbed off, and the true, rough, real human individual appears in his heroism and in his blank anxiety. The firing on the front is appalling. Squalor and hunger, dead bodies entangled in the barbed wire, are gruesome sights. Yet, the "steel bath" purifies; it wipes out class distinctions, it makes people more natural, more genuine, more heroic.

Why should not the youth be eager for this bath? Does not this book, in spite of

[1] All quotations in this article are translated directly from the German.

all the herrors it depicts, really hold up for admiration the exploits of romantic heroism as against "cowardice," to entice the unsuspecting youth?

It is true, Remarque shows the youth to be deracinated and crumpled. It is true that he does not see any sense in the war, that he deplores its horrors. We grant even that there is a good deal of truth in the things he says, in the experiences and fateful happenings he depicts. All the more danger is harbored in these half-truths which, taken out of proportion, turn into lies.

Remarques anti-working-class position was in evidence already in his first book. It beclouds and lulls the consciousness of the masses; it avoids scratching below the surface of events to detect the prime causes and motive forces. This ideology is revealed even more clearly in his second book, "The Road Back," in which it is presented more consistently, albeit in flimsier and more transparent imagery. The weakness of his imagery is due, no doubt, to the fact that the writer, finding himself in an epoch of fundamental social phenomena, is no longer able to take refuge in abstractions and generalities. He has to show his colors, and he does so. He is too wise to believe himself in what he writes. Yet, despite his cleverness, he fa'ls to render plausible the lie which he conjures up.

While in his first book he gave now and then a reflection of the process that took place in the spiritual experiences of the author himself, of struggles and developments which he could not even conceive from the class point of view, in his second book we see the gradual evolution of a writer of the Ulstein Press, a spokesman of the German bourgeois democracy which no longer believes in its own empty phrases about pacifism, democracy, and spirituality, a writer who identifies himself with the Order of Young Germans. While in his first book the hero is the embodiment of the soldier imbued with a sense of class conciliation; the hero on the return journey is either a grandmaster of the Order of Young Germans, or a bombastic preacher of bourgeois democracy.

What are the problems handled in the book, and how are they solved? The horror of the return journey begins in Remarque's book by no means from the realization of the wanton sacrifice of a great many young lives on the altar of war; oh no, — Remarque's home-coming soldiers are horrified to learn about the downfall of the monarchy in Germany! According to the monarchy in Germany! According to Remarque, the soldiers are deeply shocked to learn that there is no longer a Kaiser in Germany:

> "... all of us are thoroughly dismayed. The last of our possessions have been taken away from us, and now we have lost the ground from under our feet... Yes, we have been betrayed,"

says Koslole (one of Remarque's heroes),

> "it is quite different from what it was yesterday, when we formed our lines and marched forward... A lost company; a betrayed army..."

Remarque how the leader of the company, Heel, locks himself up in his room and weeps. The soldiers outside peep into the room and watch their dismayed leader tearing off the epaulets from his uniform. Intensely moved, they march away. Here we have it — the pose of the hero who degrades himself, of the fascist who, in the subsequent course of the story, will give orders to shoot upon revolutionary workers, upon his former "comrades," soldiers of his regiment; it is a false pose, because in reality he dons the clothing of a plain soldier in order to escape revenge at the hands of the soldiers over whom he had tyrannized when commanding at the front.

This was the real reason for this touching act of self-degradation.

Now Remarque shows his own attitude towards the situation which he finds on returning home. On arriving at the railway station of his home town, he depicts, with naive untruthfulness, how he and a companion — a young lieutenant who had "even been wounded" — were met by revolutionary sailors. The latter demanded — and apparently Remarque con-

siders it an injustice — that the lieutenant shoud remove his epaulets, the symbol of the might and glory of the Hohenzollern militarism. As he refuses to comply, a scene of violence is enacted, which Remarque depicts as follows:

" 'A lieutenant!' screams a feminine voice. 'Strike him dead, the bloodhound!'

" 'What? I should help him? I'd sooner be slapped on the face so that I should see stars!' "

A turbulent scene is then described which purports to demonstrate that the revolutionary sailors are cowards, and the following dialogue is recorded, as one of the home-comers tears off his epaulets:

> "I am doing this because I want to do so, not because you want me to... It is my own business. The other one over there (pointing at Ludwig) is our lieutenant. He wants to keep his epaulets, and — woe to him who will interfere."
>
> The one-armed fellow (one of the revolutionary sailors) nods his head. His face betrays his inward emotion. 'Man alive! I too was out there, at Verdun.' (Excitedly, he displays his arm-stump).
>
> And as Ludwig, the officer passes by, ...the sub-officer lifts his right arm and touches his cap, and we understand what he does. He salutes, not the uniform, and not the war, but his comrade of the front.

This first meeting of the heroic and idealistic "three musketeers" reflects a point of view which is clear and definite. It is fascism of the first water.

This is the point of view from which the problems of the new life at home are handled. All these soldiers who surround the home-returning heroes have hardly any contact, or a very superficial one, with the tremendous events that are going to take place in the country. This book leaves the impression that soldiers returning from the front have nothing whatever to do with the revolutionary struggles which come in the wake of the military defeat. One gets the impression that the revolution is nothing but the work of a mob of slackers and deserters. In fact, the Russian Revolution does not exist for the author of this book.

The poignant elements in the home return are: the longing after "comradeship," the dreams and reminiscences of trench life, the estrangement of the family and the homeland, the loss of affection for home and kin. Many of the home-comers cannot strike root here again; they can no longer work, earn wages, adapt themselves to the hum-drum of everyday activity. This is the great psychological problem of the writer.

One of them came back from the war infected with syphilis and he commits suicide; another kills the swain of his former sweetheart and surrenders himself to the authorities; a third is driven to despondency by learning that his wife was unfaithful while he was away at the front; a fourth traverses the whole of the somewhat tortuous path through fascism and the shedding of all ideas, to the decision to take his own life. For this very purpose he undertakes a journey to the battlefields on the French front where he stages a peculiar romantic setting of mystical symbolism for the scene of his suicide.

However, in a preceding stage the hero expounds his thoughts on the revolution, which we cannot keep back from those who wish to possess an idea of the evolution of Remarque.

> Once, for a brief instant, as the revolution was in progress, I thought: "Now comes the liberation. Now, the stream is subsiding and is digging new shores, and, by God, I might have been there! But the stream has broken up into a thousand gutters, the revolution has become the bone of contention for sundry berthseekers, it has become soiled and polluted, sucked dry by professional and family ambitions, by party strife....

Could the miserable philistine give himself away any worse? He might have been there; but he was not there! He indulged in musing, dreaming, and philosophizing, while the masses were fighting to overthrow the system which needs and

causes those wars which Remarque describes as horrid. He disparages the standard-bearers of the revolution because he cannot raise any substantial objection to their ideas. In the name of "front comradeship" supposed to level and reconcile the classes, he wants to divide the masses by the criterion of who was on the battlefront and who stayed at home. Thus he actually distorts the truth and misrepresents the facts, as was done in a different sphere by the social-democratic leaders, the betrayers of the proletarian revolution in Germany.

It is characteristic how the principal hero, i. e. the author himself, tries to establish himself. He becomes a teacher in a small village; first, as a strong beer-drinker he gains the confidence and affection of his new environment, and then he takes up his educational activity. And suddenly he discovers again that all this was useless. In the textbooks of the pupils are again the lies of patriotism, of heroic deeds and heroic death.

Slowly, and step by step, the children are being prepared again to be willing victims in a coming war. As all this is contained in the books, he throws the books away and leaves the children. It does not occur to him to oppose the ideas contained in the books, to look for an antidote, to fight for true education. He has no ideology of his own, his mind is blank, — he is tired and played out.

Here was the possibility of a dramatic and effective end. Indeed, for those who cannot share in the new, positive tasks, in the only constructive ideas of our present epoch, in the struggle of the working class, — resignation and despair should be the fitting end. Such an end would have been truthful, yet unprofitable from the point of view of bookselling. The "democracy" does not pay its ideologists to preach despair, and accordingly, Remarque switches off again into the realm of sophisticated musings and reminiscences. Again he entertains the reader with tedious descriptions of his soul sufferings, of his grief about the stupidity of his fatherland, about the disillusionment of his love, about the narrow scope of life, and thus he returns into the placid groove of the pious and pastoral idyll of a docile petty-bourgeois.

After witnessing the military drilling of school children by fascist teachers during an excursion into the woods, he unburdens himself of the concluding moral of his book:

> "I want to teach my lads what their fatherland really is, that is, their native country, and not a political party. But their native country are the trees, the tilled land, and no pompous slogans. For a long time I pondered over these things, and I have found that we are old enough to have a task to fulfil. Mine is this."

It is a hopeless task, to be sure. We are convinced that the time is fast going when teaching of this kind can lead the youth astray. The proletarian youth in town and country will be able to answer to their idealistic teacher who "has found a task," that their native land is not the acres that are tilled, as long as the big landowners reap the harvest. No, the native land of the toillers is not the land that is owned by the oppressor, not the trees which do not nourish them.

The conclusion of the book is in keeping with the empty sentimental bosh which forms its contents. It gives us a gallery of miserable philistine characters — narrow-minded, avaricious types drawn by the author apart from their social connection, picked up at random and in totally unconvincing fashion. The principal characters have nothing to do with the great masses, with the million who "sought the way back." Their problems are individualistically posed, their sorrows and yearnings are of a private nature, divorced from the collective fate of the masses. Petty-bourgeois egotism presumes to delineate the tragedy of mass suffering and mass privations; yet the individualistic delineator loses himself in a maze of details and fails to perceive the fundamental laws which govern the real course of events.

It remains only for the perplexed author to seek an "alibi" for those who, in an epoch of tremendous social upheavals, declare themselves as "siding with no

party," as "pursuing no tendency" in their imaginative writings. This no-tendency pretense, this concealment of the real purpose, is often far more dangerous for the working class than the outspoken tendency of the enemy. It is a cloak that is either consciously or unconsciously donned by a good many bourgeois writers who realize that their ideology, if frankly expounded, would be promptly rejected as downright reactionary twaddle. In Remarque's case; however, this is a deliberate and strategical plan of combatting the ideology of revolution. It is a book which is, in its way, as dangerous in time of peace as poison gases are in time of war. It is an intoxicating concoction and it has been put up by Remarque to serve the interest of the classes who employ him. Its set purpose is to lull the masses and to poison their minds, to misconstrue the real course of historic and political events in Germany. In the epoch of tottering imperialism, in the midst of a world-wide crisis resulting from the world war and its aftermath, the scared and flabbergasted petty-bourgeois is looking for a new point of support, and he can hardly find it. Economic and political chaos, inflation, depression, these phenomena drive him to despondency, to despair and resignation. Utterly opposed as he may be to the aims and strivings of the proletariat, he nevertheless fears the might and determination of the working class in a tense revolutionary situation, while at the same time he cannot find any solid and stable ideological position in the social apparatus of the ruling class.

The intensification of the class antagonism, the social clash which has demolished all the bridges for conciliation, no longer leaves room for the ideology of class conciliation, of parliamentary democracy, of pacifism. Revolution and counter-revolution are marshalling their opposing forces. There is no neutral ground left. The time is gone in Germany for beating about the bush, for juggling with conceptions, for literary pranks — the ruling class has no longer any use for propagandists who are dreamers, it demands deliberate exponents of bourgeois ideology who merely pretend to be "dreamers" in order to gull and befuddle the mass readers.

A representative purveyor of such dream-books is Erich Maria Remarque.

This book is not going to win for him the tremendous literary success of his first book. For the masses of the workers have since that time approached somewhat closer to a true conception of the realities and of their sequence, and have become less susceptible to the maudlin "dreams" manufactured by the Ullstein Press. One thing is certain: by writing this book the author has found his own "road back", back to the fleshpots of capitalism at whose bidding he produces his ideology.

O. Biha.

INTERNATIONAL CHRONICLE

USSR

VOAPP.

The All-Union Federated Association of Proletarian Writers (VOAPP) is the chief organization of proletarian writers in the USSR. The last years of the civil war saw the first attempts to form a federation of this kind, but it was only a few years later, after the rise of the proletarian literary movement in the USSR, that these attempts were brought to fruition. The Ist All-Union Conference of Proletarian Writers, in 1928, finally set on its feet the All-Union Federated Association of Proletarian Writers.

VOAPP is a mass organization which draws its membership from budding writers among the worker-correspondents and accomplished proletarian writers alike. The appeal for shock-workers to join the ranks of proletarian literature has turned the proletarian nucleus of VOAPP into the basic and leading group. The VOAPP is, in ever greater measure, assuming the leadership of Soviet art as a whole, as is shown in the case of the cinema and theater. Its role of leader of the peasant and fellow-travelers literature is becoming assured. It is developing into the prime support of the Communist Party in the latter's literature policy.

VOAPP has never separated art from the political problems of the proletariat; it has consistently advocated Party allegiance in art, developing its political activity in the domin of literature, without ignoring, however, the specific character of art as a form of throught in imagery, as a special front of the ideological struggle of the proletariat.

The strength of proletarian and revolutionary literature throughout the world lies in its international unity. This principle also underlies the activity of VOAPP. The 43 national units which it comprises, beginning with the literature of nations having a rich history of cultural development, and ending with the literature of nations which have developed a literature only after the October Revolution, all meet upon terms of equality.

The development of a culture that is national in form, under the conditions of the Proletarian dictatorship, does not lead to the isolation of nations, but to their united struggle, to their close association and collaboration. The path of development of national culture in the USSR is the path of the attraction of the peoples that were oppressed under tsarism, to active participation in socialist construction. The proletariat wages a ruthless struggle against the ideology of national seclusion, against chauvinism of every kind, against all variants of the so-called "race theory."

The proletarian writers, working in different languages, are united in one organization upon uniform basic principles, because while creating a literature, national in form, they do not strive towards class peace within the realm of the literatures of their separate nationalities. National in form, yet proletarian and socialist in substance, such is the literature fostered by VOAPP. This presupposes that each proletarian literature shall

stand four-square against the bourgeois or feudal literature of its own nation.

The internationalism of proletarian literature in the USSR is opposed both to imperialistic chauvinism (which expresses the ideology of the defunct exploiting classes of the formerly predominant Great-Russian nationality), and to local nationalism (which express the ideology of the defunct exploiting classes of the formally oppressed nationalities of the Russian Empire). Nowadays imperialistic chauvinism seldom comes out into the open, (although even now there are bourgeois minded professors who occasionally advance their "race theory," asserting that, for instance, the Turcomen, or the Uzbeks, are not "adapted" for cultural development). As a rule, imperialistic chauvinism comes forth under a mask denying the importance of the national question, and on the plea of "internationalism" demanding the retention of the monopoly of Russian culture which existed under tsarism.

As regards "local nationalism," in recent years, in connection with the intensification of the class struggle in the USSR due to the socialist offensive of the proletariat, it frequently comes out in the open, creating its basis of support upon the front of literature. There is a number of literary groups in the national republics of the USSR which are really nuclei of counter-revolutionary organizations. Thus, in the Ukraine there was active a literary group, the "Union for the liberation of the Ukraine," an organization which was preparing for foreign intervention. In White Russia the "Polymya" and "Uzvishma," groups were really literary branches of the White-Russian nationalist counter-revolution which draws its inspiration from fascist Poland. Of similar kind were the pseudo-nationalist groups in Uzbekistan (the "Red Plume"), in the Tartar republic ("Semerka"), and so forth.

As against the slogan of international cultural co-operation of the peoples of the USSR, as against the alliance of the proletarian culture of the USSR with the proletarian culture that is maturing within the capitalist world, all these groups advanced the slogan of cultural (and political) orientation either on the bourgeois West or on the feudal East. They constituted a link in the chain of the international front of the interventionists. Denying the proletarian character of the October Revolution, endeavouring to fan the flame of national strife in the USSR, advocating counter-revolutionary ideas in the guise of art images, they constituted within the USSR the ideological agency of the kulaks and of the urban bourgeoisie.

The progress of the cultural revolution in the USSR, the tremendous successes of socialist construction, the courage and creative enthusiasm among the toiling masses, — all have stimulated the growth of proletarian literature and assisted in exposing anti-proletarian ideologies and in emancipating large groups of intellectual writers from influence of nationalism.

The 2nd Plenary Session of the VOAPP Council, which met in May, 1931, showed that the proletarian literature of the USSR, by creating its own militant organization — VOAPP, is already exercising a real leading political role in the domain of literature. In the discussions that have taken place in recent years, VOAPP has vigorously opposed the various theories hostile to Marxism-Leninism, exposing and smashing the bourgeois theories of art, menshevik conceptions of literature, and petty-bourgeois "Left" phrase-mongering which amounted to urging the "abolition of art." The significance of the Plenary Session of the VOAPP Council consists in that it has for the first time made a broad statement of the national problem in the realm of literature, taking its starting point from the principles laid down by Lenin and by Stalin. Furthermore, it has set before proletarian literature as a whole, the task of winning creative hegemony within the shortest period of time.

Upon the background of the crisis of bourgeois culture throughout the world, the Plenum of the VOAPP Council has furnished convincing proof of the growth and consolidation of proletarian culture in the USSR.

SPAIN

THE LITERATURE OF REPUBLICAN SPAIN

The April, 1931 coup d'etat, resulting as it did in a change of attitude on the part of Spanish intellectuals, could not fail to be reflected in art. The political influence was evident even in the most backward branches — in the theater and the cinema. Thus the greatest theatrical event of the last few months was the production in the "Teatro Victoria" of the three act comedy in verse "La prima Fernanda" (Cousin Fernanda) by the well known Spanish poets Manuel and Antonio Machado. This play was written two years ago, but since it was a most bitter satire on the directorate it was banned by the censor. The authors attempted to give a burlesque of Spanish public life as represented by the characters Don Romano Corbacho the politician ("such as he is beyond the Pyrenees"), the financist, Leonardo, his father-in-law General Bernardino, the Marquis de Oncala and others. Over against these monstrous burlesques of the older generation the younger generation is set in contrast in the persons of Jorge and Aurora.

In the cinema quasi-political films such as "Prison" and "Ivan the Terrible" (which as the advertisment states was banned during the old régime), "Marseillaise" and "1980, A Fantasy of the Future" have appeared. The fact that the public is interested in political and social subjects has resulted in the formation of the society, Proa Filmophone which included in its first program film versions of Gorky's "The Volga Boatman" and "Cain and Artem." In the criticisms of these films particular mention was made of the technical achievements of the Soviet Kino, its bold realism and its substitution of collective acting for the performance of a few stars.

What kind of books do the reading public in Spain want nowadays? We can get a very good idea from the information published in the Spanish press about the results of the annual Book Week. In comparison with Book Week last year, interest in books has definitely declined, a fact that is probably due to political causes. The sale of books was 30% less this year than last. The greatest demand is for books dealing with political subjects, especially those by members of the provisional government or political exiles (Marcelino Domingo, Manuael Azaña, Graco Marsá, Lerroux, Rafael Sánchez Guerra, General López Ochoa etc). The books of the minister of education, Marcelino Domingo were bought up especially rapidly, in especial, "A que espera il rey?" (What is the king waiting for?) a book that before had a very poor sale. Other best sellers are „Plumas y Palabras" (Pens and Words) by the minister for war, Mannuel Azana and "La Revolucion en Jaca" by the political exile, Graco Marsá. There is a great demand for books on the Russian and French revolutions. As regards novels, the works of such classical writers as Fernández Flórez, Mata, José Más, Insúà, Catá, Francés, Unamuno, Pérez de Ayala have the greatest sale. Of the younger writers Joaquín Arderíus, Díaz Fernández and Benjamín Jarnés have had some success. Of the older poets Rubén Darío, Bécquer and Campoamor enjoy about equal popularity. Finally there has been considerable interest in translated literature and especially in the Russian works. There is practically no sale for scientific literature.

As one can infer from these facts, Spanish literature showed itself incapable of rising to the political occasion and giving the kind of politico-social books that was required. Tired of the trashy modern novel of his own country the Spanish reader turns to translated literature which he finds better meets the demands of the present day. He also turns to Spanish classics.

What sort of book does the reader from the so-called "lower orders" read, since it is in him that we are most interested? And what kind of person is he? If we are to believe an article published in the Madrid leberal paper "La Libertad" the regular readers in the library of the "Casa del Pueblo" are chiefly

young workmen. Out of the 10,641 visitors to the library during the first four months of 1931, only a very small percentage were women. In 1931 most of the books read were works of fiction (6,691 applications) and next in order of popularity came books on social questions (1 225 applications). Literature translated from Russian and German was especially in demand (Tolstoi and Gorky from Russian, Remarque from German and Zola from French). Of Spanish authors the classicists, B. Pérez Galdós and Blasco Ibáñez were far the most popular. On the whole, poetry and drama were little read, though of the first the greatest interest was shown in the poets of the second half of the nineteenth century, Bécquer, Zorrilla and the reformer of modern Spanish poetry, Rubén Darío, while of playwrights, Jacinto Benavente and Joaquín Dicenta the author of the first workers' play "Juan José" were most in demand. Of books on social questions the most sought after were the works of Karl Marx, his followers and commentators, as also the books of the minister of justice in the provi ional government, the "socialist" professor, Fernando de los Ríos. No interest was shown in scientific literature. The book most in demand in 1931 was "All Quiet on the Western Front." From this rather scant data we may conclude that the worker-reader shows definite advance in the sense of increased class-consciousness. In contrast to educated readers, we find evidence of thought and system in the choice of books. Amongst novels the worker reader is most interested in the social and historical, and amongst sociological books he picks out the works of Karl Marx.

As a result of the coup d'état of April 14, 1931 there appeared a number of political works which have already been reviewed by Spanish critics. Amongst them the following deserve attention: — "Gonzalo de Reparaz Don Alfonso XIII y sus cómplices; Memorias de una de sus victimas" (Don Alfonso XIII and his accomplices: the Memoirs of one of his Victims), "Hernández Mir Un crimen de lesa Patria; la dictadura ante la Historia," (A Crime of lese Patrie; Dictatorship before the tribunal of History) with a foreword by Joaquín Aznar and the collected speeches and essays of José Ortega, "y Gasset La redencion de las provincias y la decencia nacional," (The Redemption of the Provinces and National Decorum). Apart from this a number of novels appeared on the book market which took as their subject the political adventurer, the favorite type of hero during the past years. To the last category belongs Pío Baroji's book entitled "Aviraneta" (The Life of a Conspirator). This, the third book published by Pío Baroji last year, published in the series 'Spanish and Spanish-American Biography of the 19th Century" gives, in the words of the writer "the true life story of the person who is hero of several of his novels." The new book takes in the period of the war of independence, the emancipation movement in Egypt and Greece, the conquest of Mexico, the outbreak of the Carlist wars and so on. At the present moment Pío Baroji is planning to write a novel on the life of another adventurer of the 19th Century, Juan Banalén. To this type of book belongs the novel by El Caballero Audaz: "Alejandro Centellas aventurer del Mundo. La vida de un aventurero en accion que logró ser Presidente de una República" (Alejandro Centellas, the world adventurer. The life of an adventurer who succeeded in becoming president of a republic).

The large quantity of novels of adventure that are published is yet another proof of how little prepared Spanish literature was to meet the needs of the revolutionary period.

The events of April, 1931 called forth a large quantity of caricatures and popular couplets of the type of the Russian chastushki, deriding Alfonso XIII and his government. The following couplet which was sung by the masses in the streets of Madrid on the occasion of the 14th April coup d'état is an example.

"Why do you search in such distress,
Alfonse, my lad, you a r e a sight."
"I'm looking for a fast express —
I have to leave Madrid tonight."

Now that the old national anthem "The Royal March" has been abolished, various attempts have been made during the past months to compose a new one. The laurel would seem to be awarded to Oscar Esplá for his "El Canto Rural a España" (Rural Hymn to Spain) to the words of the poet Manuel Machado.

The present crisi in Spanish fiction, resulting from its inability to rise quickly enough to the occasion, is a source of great anxiety in Spanish literary circles. Two kinds of attempts are being made to deal with the situation. On the one hand one finds individual writers (Pío Baroja) and groups of writers stating their intention of creating a really good novel of the Spanish Revolution. Of special interest in this connection is the plan of a novel "Tempestad sobre un Trono" (Storm over a Throne) which, according to its authors, is to depict the period 1898—1931. The authors of this novel are Dionisio Pérez, Pedro de Répide, Luis de Oteyza and Diego José with Cristóbal de Castro as general editor.

On the other hand we find attempts to explain the crisis in fiction. One opinion worth mentioning is that expressed by Pío Baroja to José Montero Alonso, a member of the editorial of the paper "La Libertad" According to Pío Baroja the near future well see Spanish literature completely supplanted by political writing which is creating a language of its own. Pío Baroja displayed a manifestly class approach to the question, by giving forth against Soviet Literature, which he regards as much inferior to pre-revolutionary literature, as excessively heavy and subservient to didactic aims, since it leaves the artistic interest quite out of account. But his answers to a questionnaire drawn up by "La Libertad" are still more significant. This questionnaire was based on the following thesis. "For some years now Spain like all other nations, has been passing through a period of political and social rejuvenation. In spite of this, Spanish fiction lacks purpose and quite fails to respond to the new pulse of life which in other countries has given rise to such an abundance of interesting literature." Amongst those who answered were Cristóbal de Castro, Rafael Cansinos Assens and José Más, three famous writers. We shall quote the most interesting passages from their answers. According to Cristóbal de Castro "There is no new life in Spain and for that reason there is no new literature. It is true that a certain social hubbub, a droning of the masses is making itself evident but nothing more. The Spanish social novel cannot exist, even in a popular form since the literary Spaniard has the soul of a grandseigneur which is even coarser and less eager for sensation than the soul of the bourgeois." Referring to the strange absence of any Spanish writers at the Kharkov Conference, Cristóbal de Castro remarks "Switzerland and Denmark were there, but nobody breathed a word about Spain, and yet it was just at that time that Spain was hatching revolution. There is no new literature because there is no new life. The life of Spain is senile and so its literature is senile. What life there is is a mere semi-European existence, subsisting on 2 pesetas a day, and what literature there is consists of semi-sociological novels nourished by an occasional exultant cry from the masses..." "We must admit" Cristóbal de Castro concludes "that the Spanish writers are unable to reflect the Spanish revolution in their works for the reason that they know nothing whatever about it. Until the very moment when the old régime was overturned, things happened in Spain almost automatically, so that the nation and the writers had no opportunity of realizing the tragic reality of the great events. Thus it was that great and tragic pages were lost for ever and will never be written. The Spanish writers could not hear the voice of the masses as the Russian writers did." This is explained according to Cansinos Assens by the desire of the younger generation of Spain to escape from reality and to keep a detached and cynical attitude to social problems.

José Más' judgment was almost the same. Nothing interesting had happened in Spain, everything had been petty. There had been nothing dramatic or symbolic

about what had happened. But in contrast to Cristóbal de Castro and Rafael Cansinos Assens, José Más has not lost faith in the future and asks us to wait. A number of interesting novels have already been written, he says, novels about the country, the factories, the mines and the prisons. In José Más we have undoubtedly one of the fellow-travelers of the proletarian literature of the future. The opinions expressed by Cristóbal de Castro and Rafael Cansinos Assens caused some perplexity, since already the beginnings of a proletarian, may be noted literature, in Spain, but they are characteristic of the attitude of mind prevailing in Spanish literary circles. The regret expressed by Cristóbal de Castro at the absence of any Spanish writers at the Kharkov Conference is particularly significant.

On July 13, 1931, the famous Catalonian painter, dramatist and novelist, Santiago Rusiñol died at Aranjuez. Rusiñol was born in Barcelona in 1861 and was famous not only in his own province but throughout Spain. A day of national mourning was observed in Catalonia in his memory.

FRANCE

Recently "Crisis," a group of French revolutionary intellectuals, published a manifesto in which its announces its acceptance of the platform of the Kharkov Conference of revolutionary writers. This group appeals to French intellectuals to accept its program. It proposes to launch a review called "Crisis". Below we publish in full the manifesto of this group. It must be pointed out that the manifesto suffers from insufficient clarity in several of its formulations. We shall, however, return to this question in a later number.

Crisis everywhere

An enormous catastrophe has descended upon bourgeois society.

The rumble of class battles; the exploding of imperialist contradictions; revolts breaking out among colonial peoples; tariff battles; groans from millions of unemploye; clashes between wealth and poverty; wails from behind prison walls; buzzing of death-dealing aeroplanes; launching of battleships; production of poison gas.

We witness the collapse of the capitalist world.

Crisis in France.

The crisis, though delayed, has at last reached France. Class contradictions are intensifying.

Unemployement and destitution are masters of the day. The material well-being of the intellectuals is affected also. The mad speed of arming has attained its zenith. French imperialism, desirous of retaining the privileges of the infamous Versaille Treaty is striving after military strength greater than that of other powers. Its hatred of the Soviet Union has made of it the organizer and leader of the anti-Soviet bloc of the imperialist powers.

The peoples of Indo-China, despite brutal reprisals, are waging a heroic struggle for emancipation.

The old fable of democracy has given place to governmental club-law directed against ideas, individuals and groups who fight against the ruling class. Every new idea free from the chains of conformity is strangled (Cinema-censor; the works of revolutionary writers are treated by the press with a conspiracy of silence. Plays and films are banned under the pressure of the police, fascist press and fascist organizations.)

Crisis of ideas.

Bourgeois culture is decaying rapidly. The ideals of progress, democracy, liberalism and faith in science have been reduced to rags and tatters. The philosophy of the ruling class has outlived itself, and this causes confusion among the intellectuals. Who is to be believed? What can be held on to? What is

the way of escape? These painful questions confront writers, journalists, scientists and educationalists. And some of them believe they have found a perfect solution.

Some, having rejected decaying democracy, are making their way under various banners, to fascism. Others adhere to the old formulas and try to adopt "democracy" to the new demands of the class struggle. Of these some call themselves social-reformists but are in practice faithful supporters of the present systems.

There are still others who seek a revolutionary way out. But these often confine themselves to talk; their proneness to individualism, their aloofness, their idealistic outlook, all remnants of their past prevent them from finding that path towards which they strive.

The solution.

The number of those who are attracted by the mighty experiment of the Russian Revolution and support the Soviet Union is continually increasing.

The Soviet Republic shows to the oppressed and exploited masses the road to emancipation.

The Soviet Union knows no crises and is advancing to socialism at a feverish pace, building socialist industry and socialist mentality alike. While the old world is crumbling to ruin the Soviet Union is building the new society. The proletariat has gone into history, victorious, and to it belongs the future.

Along with the working people of the whole world many intellectuals are accepting joyfully the bright teaching that has come out of the Soviet Union. In it they see a true, just, and real solution for all the evils of the present day.

Our position.

Contrary to the view of many intellectuals who call themselves revolutionists, the causes of disorder are not to be sought in men's ideas. They are rooted in the anarchy of material life, economic contradictions and social antagonisms. The workers of Russia put an end to the system that oppressed them, and accomplished their revolution of emancipation and are now building socialism along lines that can by no means be described as idealistic.

The Russian people were victorious thanks only to militant action of the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry and intelligentsia.

We must imbibe those principles which guided the Russian revolution and which guide the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

Only thus shall we find the correct path. That is why we join the ranks of the proletariat and call upon all revolutionary intellectuals to learn from it and master its class philosophy of life.

Only an influx of proletarian blood can cure us from mental anemia. For those who do not want to fall into the lowest depths of despair it is high time to turn to that class which is destined to give a new direction to human history.

Already, in all countries intellectuals have organized groups for contact with the proletariat. And we also are entering this path.

Our objects.

1) To fight against bourgeois thought which is poisoning the brains of the workers.

2) To unite all revolutionary intellectuals in France.

3) To form groups of all writers accepting the platforms of the 2nd International Conference of proletarian and revolutionary writers (Kharkov, November, 1930).

4) To link up closely the intelligentsia with the proletariat in its revolutionary struggle.

5) To work out the fundamental principles of proletarian culture.

6) To defend the Soviet from all its enemies.

Our methods of action.

As a first step our group of writers, journalists, scientists and educationalists will launch a journal. This journal will be called "Crisis," because we see in the contemporary crisis the beginning of the end

of the bourgeois society, on the ruins of which will be built up a society of toilers.

"Crisis" will shed light on problems of literature, politics, economic, social life, science, culture and art. It will not be an organ for useless philosophical dissertations but a militant organ at the disposal of the revolutionary cause.

"Crisis" will also endeavor to unite all writers in an association whose object will be to strengthen the army of labor.

"Crisis" will train the most talented workers into real writers. In exchange for the revolutionary experience of the proletariat we place at its disposal our good will and work.

Revolutionary intellectuals, and proletarian writers, unite around "Crisis" and accept its program.

"Crisis" must become the rallying point for all who want to fight for the emancipation of humanity side by side with the proletariat.

GERMANY

WHAT WAS HE KILLED FOR?

Criticism of the play "Strong Measures" by Brecht, Dudov and Eisler

Brecht's new play, which he produced in Germany in co-operation with Dudov and Eisler, has given rise to a lively discussion both in the bourgeois and the workers' press. This fact alone shows that it is a work of very much more than average importance. For this reason it is particularly necessary to give a true and searching criticism of this dramatic experiment. The play combines in a very original way the workers' choir, the talking choir, modern orchestral effects and epic drama.

The subject of the play is quite simple. Four agitators come before a Party tribunal, which is represented by a choir, to give an account of their illegal work in support of the Chinese Communist Party. Their work has been successful, but the agitators do not wish to accept the approval of the Party meeting before relating a certain incident. They themselves have had to shoot a fifth communist in order to carry out their task successfully. In order to bring out clearly the circumstances leading up to the shooting of their comrade the agitators reproduce before the Party meeting the main outlines of the events, each acting one of the parts. This acting is divided into different episodes and between each comments are made by the choir and there is argument and singing in which the specific principles that are involved are brought out.

The following episodes are reproduced: (1) How the young comrade who is afterwards shot comes to join the four agitators. (2) The preparation for illegal work; the putting on of a disguise, symbolizing the sinking of their personality. (3) The first false move on the part of the young comrade, who, out of pity, takes a step which betrays individualism and compromises the work. (4) The second false move on the part of the young comrade, who, from an idealist idea of justice does something which leads to an immature partial strike which is harmful to the mass movement. (5) The third false move on the part of the young comrade who from a feeling of decency breaks off his connections with the idealist of anti-imperialist convictions who is to supply him with arms for the up rising. (6) The fourth false move on the part of the young comrade, who under the pressure of the radical elements among the workers, who are impatient for an immediate uprising, infringes the discipline of the organization and disobeys the decisions of the Party, breaking out on his own into open fight; as in doing this he comes out into the open the four agitators shoot at him and make their way out of the town. (7 and 8). Just as the four agitators arrive at the frontier with the young wounded comrade, intending to send him across and thus reduce the risk of their being discovered, the situation in the town comes to such a head that the agitators have to go back again. They are followed. If they merely abandon the young comrade he will be searched by the police and in this way the secret of his participation in the work

of the Bolshevist agitators will be discovered. The young comrade recognizes the difficulty of the situation and agrees to their shooting him and covering up all traces by throwing him into a pit. In the 9th and last episode the choir expresses its approval of this action, since through it the desired aim was attained, namely the success of the revolution.

The authors call their production a didactic play. This sub-heading agrees with Brecht's view that art is only a branch of pedagogy. As the program promises, the play aims at showing the wrong way of doing things in order to teach the spectator the right way. Thus the word "didactic" which is applied to the play should be taken in a literal sense.

One has to assume that the young comrade is a personification of the wrong course of action and that the agitators give an example of the true bolshevism which everyone should learn. This aim, which the authors have set themselves in presenting the play, demands a criticism which shall examine very carefully the kind of ideology that is concealed by them in this "didactic performance."

The first and most simple question that arises is: was the young comrade wrong in the course he took and were the agitators right? And it is just here that the difficulty arises which the authors try to hide. The setting which the authors took for their play (the Chinese revolution, the rising up of the masses, the Union of Coolies, the anti-imperialist movement, the Chinese capitalists, the Chinese Communist Party, the Bolshevist Party of the Soviet Union etc.) is an actual historical setting. But in spite of this the authors assert that the setting is imaginary and that they have only selected here and there certain details from the actual historical events. We cannot agree with the authors, however, that their setting is imaginary. We cannot look upon it as merely a convenient site for an ideological field-day which can be altered at will so as to serve the purpose of demonstrating certain definite ideas. Such an artifical limitation of the field is quite inadmissable for the simple reason that the authors wrote their play not merely for the sake of writing but for a definite public, a definite section of the worker's movement to whom the circumstances of the Chinese revolution and other events made use of in the play are, in main outline, familiar, and amongst whom these cicumstances give rise to a very definite set of associations.

In thus giving our opinion as to whose action can be looked upon as right and whose wrong and as to what our attitude should be to the didactic function of the play, we shall start from the assumption that the events take place against the perfectly real background of the Chinese revolution. If then we examine the behavior of the young comrade and the three agitators from this point of view we shall find that it is just the young comrade who represents the point of view of the consistent revolutionary and Bolshevik, while the course taken by the agitators serves as an excellent example of the policy which, in the language of the Third International, is called the right opportunist tendency, for advocating which more than one communist has been excluded from the Party. In order to make this clearer we shall resort to the following artifice. We shall replace the young comrade and the three agitators with actual personalities from the period of the struggle inside the German Communist Party of the year 1923 when the mistakes made by the opportunists led to the defeat of the revolutionary movement. We shall quote from the events in Saxony.

HESSE: There is something about which I must inform you. The new unemployed leaders have been to see me and they have convinced me that we must immediately start the up rising. We must begin distributing propaganda leaflets at once with a call to an immediate general strike.

BRANDLER, TALHEIMER, RADEK: You have already failed us four times.

HESSE: The unemployed are coming out into the streets and want to destroy the spinning machines.

BRANDLER, TALHEIMER, RADEK: New revolutionary paths are opening up, our responsibilities are increasing, and yet you want to go on hanging up propaganda leaflets on the doors.

HESSE: The unemployed can't wait any longer. I can't either. There are too many people in the last straights of poverty.

BRANDLER, TALHEIMER, RADEK: On the other hand there are too few fighters.

HESSE: We have seven men who have come on behalf of the unemployed. Seven thousand men stand behind them.

TALHEIMER: But do you know what forces the government have at their disposal?

HESSE: No.

BRANDLER: Then you know too little. Where are your arms?

HESSE: (showing his hands) We'll fight with tooth and nail.

BRANDLER, TALHEIMER, RADEK: That's not enough. Remember that according to the decisions of the Party together with the congress of factory committees which lead the working masses, the armed uprising has been put off until the delegates from Hamburg, Upper Silesia and the Ruhr district have arrived in the town.

We have chosen Saxony in 1923 because the German worker for whom the play was written knows very well from his own experience that to advocate a point of view such as that of the three agitators means virtually to support right-wing opportunism. This opportunism consists in an underestimation of the readiness of the masses for the revolutionary fight. Opportunism is also shown in the subordination of the Party to the organization that it ought to be leading (For Coolie Union, read congress of workers). Finally, it is quite a false view to hold that arms must be obtained before the fight can be started instead of that they should be fought for and won in the course of the struggle, as also that no move should be made until an agreement has been entered into with the other districts. It was just this opportunist attitude which led to the revolutionary movement being smothered.

We could give many instances of the Bolsheviks and Lenin having acted, in corresponding circumstances, in exactly the same way as the young comrade. It is impossible from any reasonable point of view to detach oneself from the great spontaneous revolutionary movement of the masses, one must start guiding this movement even when there is no certainty of its leading to victory. A classic example of this was the "July days" in Leningrad in 1917 and the rising in Moscow in 1905. Menshevist right-wing opportunism was against the rising. Plekhanov pronounced his now famous formula "It is no good fighting for your weapons!" against which Lenin brought the full weight of his revolutionary theory. So as not to be accused of wandering from the subject of the Chinese revolution we may cite the instance of the rising in Canton, which was discountenanced by the right-wingers but approved of by the Third International, in spite of the fact that it had criticisms to make about certain false steps taken by the Party leaders.

A right opportunist point of view can be traced like a colored thread right through Brecht's presentation of the young comrade's mistakes. Right-wing opportunism is also betrayed by setting the propaganda of the agitators, which one might call abstract, theoretical propaganda, over against those personal urges which the young comrade follows instinctively and perhaps in certain individual circumstances erroneously. Right-wing opportunism is also seen in the condemnation of the partial strike in the textile factory, a strike that the young comrade calls in the course of his open activities against the police. The inability of the agitators to lead the strikers is also a result of their opportunist tendencies. Instead of guiding it along revolutionary lines they allow it to be suppressed by the Coolie Union. The only mistake of the young comrade which one can really condemn is his attitude to the rice merchant who apparently represents the position of the Kuomintang. However, in order to settle this point one would have to know at what period of the Chinese revolution this event took place and whether or no the young comrade's class instincts told him that a break with the Kuomintang, which had gone over to the camp of the imperialists, had now become a historical necessity.

Now what is the explanation of the fact that the authors have started out along one path but found themselves on another;

that with the intention of writing an instructive Bolshevist play they have succeeded in producing an opportunist one? In order to answer this question we shall follow the whole chain of mistakes made by the authors, tracing them to their philosophico-ideological origins.

In order to make their ideas concrete the authors have created an artifical setting. They have not taken, as Lenin demands that they should, all the varied genuinely revolutionary situations from the dialectic-materialists in order to show them in all their aspects with all their affinities and causal connections. They have taken odd pieces of reality in order to make from them a bounderied field for carrying out manoeuvres with the ideas which they wish to demonstrate. They have acted to a certain extent like the amateur gods who try to create worlds starting from ideas. In other words they have approached reality and their material, idealistically (in the philosophical use of the word). This too is not merely by chance, for the idealist standpoint is apparent throughout the whole play. It is particularly noticeable in the way communism and the Communist Party are depicted. Communism is for the authors an idea which is to be found in the "doctrine of the classics." It is this that for them gives it its strength. The doctrine of the classics is the basis of the Party. When Brecht's Strong Measures praises the Party (such passages have genuine beauty from the poetical and musical point of view) and demands a sinking of personal aims in those of the Party, this is only because the Party incarnates a doctrine. The following statement is to be found in the text: —

"Individuality may be anihilated but the Party can never be anihilated because it rests on the doctrine of the classics."

From the point of view of the authors the indestructability of the Party rests on the doctrine of the classics, and not on the fact that it represents the proletariat, the rising class, destined to come to power, which cannot be destroyed, since, if it was, the whole of society would return to barbarism.

We can now determine what are the class roots of this idealistic standpoint of the authors. Certain old survivals are evident in this way of thinking which is characteristic of the radical petty-bourgeois whom the chances of life have turned from the bourgeois camp into that of the proletariat. The petty-bourgeois, breaking away from the class in which he has been been brought up defies its designation of communism as a senseless harlequinade of a crowd of bawling rowdies with the words "no, communism provides the only true banner representing the highest knowledge of reality attained in our days." The petty-bourgeois revolutionary thinks that he has thus completely understood communism. He does not see that here it is impossible to separate theory from practice, that communism is a concrete, historically founded, militant class movement, that it is impossible to understand the communist doctrine and not throw in one's lot with the revolutionnary movement.

This one sided understanding of communism is so ingrained in Brecht that it colors his whole literary work. Brecht, the revolutionary dramatist who in his plays exhorts people to take up the communist ideas and even seeks to associate himself closely with the movement, has not yet succeeded in acquainting himself with the mass movement of the agitational-propagandist groups. These groups, however, give the true political setting for the creation of a revolutionary proletarian drama. Unless their experience is sufficiently assimilated the attemps of individual artists to create such a drama will prove futile. Brecht, on the other hand, supposes that it is quite sufficient to know the communist doctrine in order to create, like a scientist in his laboratory, revolutionary art.

As the ideological analysis which we have given of this play has shown, we are confronted with some obvious contradictions.

The play created a strong impression, (and strong from the revolutionary point of view) amongst a considerable section of the actors and the audience, whereas it was criticised (in some cases quite severely) by the bourgeois press. From this it follows that under certain, concrete historical conditions the play must be ad-

judged revolutionary. The bourgeois press took up the same attitude to it as to a Bolshevist play. How can this be accounted for?

"Strong Measures" forms a contrast to bourgeois art in that it represents an entirely new style. Its style distinguishes it from a bourgeois play and so it is looked upon as revolutionary. We emphasize this question of style rather than form. In passing from bourgeois to proletarian art we always notice this difference in style. Proletarian culture, which is the culture of a new class based on the activity of the great masses of the people, diverts art into new channels. But not only are new channels found; the function of art in social life itself is changed, as also the relations the different arts bear to one another and the kind of methods of which they make use.

It was also a wish to write something that would be a contribution to the young proletarian culture that moved the authors of "Strong Measures" purposely to break with the traditions of the bourgeois theater. Such an attempt, in itself, however wrongly it may have been carried out, deserves particular notice. "Strong Measures" will have a very important place in the future history of proletarian art, and even when the play is no longer produced (which will probably very soon be the case) its influence will be felt in the programs of propaganda theater troops.

The immediate revolutionary effect of "Strong Measures" is, however, not confined to this. In those parts where right ideas from the proletarian ideological arsenal are clearly formulated, the play passes very considerable artistic merit. Such songs as that in praise of illegal work, the Song of Supply and Demand (which would be better named the Song of Merchandise), and that in praise of the Party (omitting the ideological mistakes referred to above) must be ranked with some of the most important revolutionary works of the age, and they will long outlive the play as a whole.

Finally we must not forget that this work of a petty-bourgeois writer appears at time when the campaign of calumny against the communists is assuming the most violent forms, at a time when many intellectuals who recently sympathized with communism are going over to the other side and when on the other hand new sections of the intelligentsia are joining its ranks. Such a play as "Strong Measures," even in its present form, helps the latter forward. Thus from this point of view "Strong Measures" is in the long run a revolutionary gesture, and one which the proletariat must defend against its bourgeois detractors.

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