Workers of the world, unite!

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL
UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

№ 2

1933

THE STATE PUBLISHING HOUSE
MOSCOW

Distributors in the USSR: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Nikolskaya 7, Moscow. Distributors in Great Britain: Workers' Bookshop Ltd, 16, King Street, London, W. C. 2. Distributors in the U. S. A.: International Publishers, 381, Fourth Avenue, New York, U. S. A.

C O N T E N T S

N. 2 INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE 1933

Editorial Assistant this issue WALT CARMON

From Capital *as interpreted in drawings by* HUGO GELLERT

"....the transformation of feudal property and clan property into modern private property (usurpation effected by a system of ruthless terrorism)—these were the idyllic methods of primary accumulation. They cleared the ground for capitalist agriculture made the land part and parcel of capital while providing for the needs of urban industry the requisite supply of masterless proletarians."

Engels' Speech Over the Grave of Marx

Delivered at Highgate Cemetery, London, March 17, 1883

On the fourteenth of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in an armchair, peacefully gone to sleep—but forever.

An immeasurable loss has been sustained both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the death of this mighty spirit will soon enough make itself felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history; he discovered the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat and drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, religion, art, etc.; and that therefore the production of the immediate material means of life and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, forms the foundation upon which the forms of government, the legal conceptions, the art and even the religious ideas of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which these things must therefore be explained, instead of vice versa as had hitherto been the case.

But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present day capitalist method of production and the bourgeois society that this method of production has created. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light on the problem in trying to solve which all previous investigators, both bourgeois economists and socialist critics, had been groping in the dark.

Two such discoveries would be enough for one life-time. Happy the man to whom it is granted to make even one such discovery. But in every single field which Marx investigated—and he investigated very many fields, none of them superficially—in every field, even in that of mathematics he made independent discoveries.

This was the man of science. But this was not even half the man. Science was for Marx a historically dynamic, revolutionary force. However great the joy with which he welcomed a new discovery in some theoretical science whose practical application perhaps it was as yet quite impossible to envisage, he experienced a quite other kind of joy when the discovery involved immediate revolutionary changes in industry and in the general course of history. For example, he followed closely the discoveries made in the field of electricity and recently those of Marcel Deprez.

For Marx was before all else a revolutionary. His real mission in life was to contribute in one way or another to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the forms of government which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the present-day proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, of the conditions under which it could win its freedom. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival. The first *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842), the Paris *Vorwarts* (1844), the Brussels *Deutsche Zeitung* (1847), the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1848-9), the New York *Tribune* (1852-61), and in addition to these a host of militant pamphlets, work in revolutionary clubs in Paris, Brussels and London, and finally, crowning all, the formation of the International Workingmen's Association—this was indeed an achievement of which Marx might well have been proud, even if he had done nothing else.

And consequently Marx was the best hated and most calumniated man of his times. Governments, both absolutist and republican, deported him from their territories. The bourgeoisie, whether conservative or extreme democrat, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were cobweb, ignoring them, answering only when necessity compelled him. And now he has died—beloved, revered

and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow-workers—from the mines of Siberia to California, in all parts of Europe and America—and I make bold to say that though he may have many opponents he has hardly one personal enemy.

His name and his work will endure through the ages!

Zurich Sozialdemokrat, March 22, 1883.

From *The Fourteenth of March, 1883,* published by the Cooperative Publishing Society for Foreign Workers in the USSR, under the direction of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, Moscow.

Langston Hughes

Our Spring

Bring us with our hands bound,
Our teeth knocked out,
Our heads broken,
Bring us shouting curses, or crying,
Or silent as tomorrow.
Bring us to the electric chair,
Or the shooting wall,
Or the guilotine.
But you can't kill all of us.
You can't silence all of us.
You can't stop all of us—
Kill Vanzetti in Boston and Huang Ping rises
In China.
We're like those rivers
That fill with the melted snow in spring
And flood the land in all directions.

Our spring has come.

The pent-up snows of all the brutal years
Are melting beneath the rising sun of revolution.
The rivers of the world will be flooded with strength
And you will be washed away—
You murderers of the people—
Killers and cops and soldiers,
Priests and kings and billionaires,
Diplomats and liars,
Makers of guns and gas and guilotines.
You will be washed away,
And the land will be fresh and clean again,
Denuded of the past—
For time has given us
Our spring
At last.

Moscow, 1933

P. Pavlenko

On the Barricades

Fragment From a Novel of the Paris Commune

On April 11th Marx received a letter from his daughter saying that her husband Lafargue, had left Bordeaux for Paris. Preparations for an armed rising in Bordeaux were almost complete, only a few questions respecting the general management of the affair remained to be settled.

Next morning Marx sent for Alfred O'Brien who was a German by birth and upbringing, though he bore an Irish name. Marx told him the discouraging news that the restless Lafargue had gone to Paris.

"You intend going there yourself soon, don't you?" he asked without beating about the bush.

His visitor replied with the same directness, which showed his appreciation of the peculiar circumstances of the conversation. He said that he would probably leave in seven or eight days' time, since there still were many important matters that demanded his presence in London and could not be postponed.

As he spoke he turned his head rapidly left and right following Marx's movements as the latter marched to and fro across his study. The floor was a stained one, but the paint had long since been worn away in a diagonal line across the floor, evidence that pacing about the room was an old habit of its owner's during his work.

As he talked and walked Marx would finger some object as if the actual uttering of his words was for him a material process, the beginning of action.

His study was on the lower floor. The light from the window looking on to the park poured into the room hovering about the furniture and climbing over the fireplace that was caught in this reflection as if in the convulsive throbbings of a dying flame. The fireplace was flanked by bookcases. The light licked their oaken bases, crept up the glass, behind which the gilded bindings shone as if ready to burst into a blaze.

Everything on the table by the window seemed aflame. The papers rustled in the breeze, curled it seemed in the quick breath of heat before falling into ashes. There was a smaller table in the middle of the room. It was piled with books, manuscripts, lists and tables of figures, littered with stray boxes of matches and cigar stubs in such a lively disorder that they gave the impression of being in process of some transformation that had been temporarily arrested at the crucial moment.

Books lay open on the mantelpiece, on the sofa and the armchair. Marx still retained his old habit of reading several books in turn. And all this attractive chaos of half read books, manuscripts hardly begun, underlined tables, hastily scribbled notes on scraps of paper — Marx disposed of as easily as his own limbs.

"If you will read the last chapter of my book, *The Eighteeenth Brumaire,*" he was saying eagerly, "you will see that this approaching French Revolution will aim not at the bureaucratic military machine simply changing hands, as it was before, but at its complete destruction.

At this juncture he found himself in the opposite corner of the room. Tapping the bookstand with his finger, he continued: "In this lies the preliminary condition of every revolution (that can be really called a people's revolution) on the continent."

Marx had scarcely changed at all since O'Brien had seen him for the first time — taking the children for a walk in Midland Park one Sunday four years earlier. His voice was just as weighty as before, his solidly built figure displayed the same

unexpected lightness and hardiness in its movements. He seemed as though on fire with an inner flame that had lightly touched with ashes the ends of his moustache and beard and the wild mane of hair.

He still remained a man whose enthusiasm could exceed all bounds, a characteristic that often seemed incongruous in a man of his profound logical conciseness and the unmerciful accuracy of his reasoning and actions.

Marx went on talking and tramping up and down the track his feet had worn on the floor. He paid no attention to the obvious embarrassment of his visitor, although evidently aware of it. His speech was so simple that O'Brien found himself almost against his will lost in admiration of this subtle simplicity instead of trying to grasp Marx's meaning.

"The efforts of our heroic comrades in Paris are of exactly this nature. What flexibility," and from the other corner, "what historic initiative," and from the middle of the diagonal track, "what a capacity for self sacrifice these Parisians have!

"After six months of hunger and desolation produced by the traitors within rather than by the enemy withouth, they revolt right under the Prussian bayonets, as if the war between France and Germany had never occurred, as if the enemy was not at the gates of Paris. Their heroism is absolutely unparallelled in history. Don't you agree with me? And if they're defeated the fault will lie in their own goodnaturedness."

He pronounced the last word with an acid emphasis that gave it quite the opposite meaning, and repeated it in English and French.

"No, I don't think I'll go for eight days yet," said O'Brien. The remark was obviously out of place.

Marx gave him a quick glance. "You know it would be a good thing to attack Versailles just now. I mean since Vinois and the reactionary section of the Paris National Guard left town of their own free will," he said in a tone that seemed to imply that O'Brien should go there much earlier. "The opportunity was lost through overpunctiliousness. They didn't want to start a civil war, as if it hadn't been started already by that abominable cretin Thiers, when he attempted to disarm Paris." He pronounced the word "cretin" in the French way which made it even more graphic.

"And secondly, the Central Committee gave way too soon when it delegated its powers to the Commune. This again was due to honesty carried to the point of absurd over-punctiliousness.

"Well no matter what, O'Brien, the present Paris revolution even if it is put down by the wolves and swine and dogs of the old regime will be the most glorious achievement of our party since the days of the July Rising."

He halted in front of O'brien and looked at him with a good natured, slightly guilty expression on his face.

"Well, then — you'll have to tell them this to their faces. You're in a hurry? That's my everlasting talkativeness, I feel. Well, so you'll tell them what I said, and I'll write to Kugelmann in Germany."

He gripped O'Brien by the shoulders so affectionately that the latter was embarrased. In a moment they found themselves by the map. It occurred to O'Brien that this scholar, shut up all day in his study had never known what loneliness was.

It was annoying sometimes to realize that this man could never be intimate, could never belong wholly to himself or to his companion. The conversation with O.Brien had been caused by Marx's anxiety over his son-in-law, but had unexpectedly taken the form of instructions to Paris, a letter to Kugelmann and some sort of vague suggestions that were undoubtedly forming in his mind as he stood before the map, tapping it nervously with his forefinger. New plans were shaping in his head as he was repeating:

"The Versailles scoundrels have placed a new alternative before the Parisians — either to fight, or to surrender without a fight. In the latter case the general demoralization of the workers would be an even greater misfortune than the loss of any number of leaders, which is quite possible in those circumstances."

Then he released O'Brien from his grip and saw him to the door in silence.

"You count on coming back soon?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes, at the beginning of May," said O'Brien.

"Ah, is that so? That's splendid. I shall be waiting for you to bring me great news."

A month later, the thirtieth of May, on receiving the news, along with a note from his son-in-law, Marx dictated a letter to the Paris section of the International. It read as follows:

Dear Citizens Frenckel and Varlane;

I had a talk with the bearer of this letter. Do you not think it would be advisable to hide the documents compromising the Versailles scoundrels in a safe place? At any rate some similar measure of caution should be taken. I have heard from Bordeaux that four members of the International got in at the last municipal elections. Unrest has begun in the provinces. Unfortunately, the movement is too local and peaceful. I have written several hundred letters to all corners of the world, wherever our organization exists. The workingclass, by the way, has been in favor of the Commune from the very beginning. Even the English bourgeois newspapers have altered their attitude which was sharply hostile at first, towards the Commune. From time to time I even manage to get articles sympathetic to it printed in these papers.

In my opinion, the Commune is wasting too much time on trifles and personalities. Evidently other influences besides that of the workers are active. This would not matter, however, if we could only make up for lost time. It is absolutely imperative that we should hurry with whatever you think it is necessary to do outside of Paris, in England and the other countries. The Prussians will not hand the forts over to the Versailles scoundrels but after the conclusion of peace (May 26th) will assist the government to surround Paris with gendarmes.

Since Thiers and Co., have as you know stipulated in their agreement concluded by Pouillet-Cartier, for a huge bribe, they refused Bismarck's offer of assistance from the German bankers — otherwise they would have been deprived of their bribe. As the preliminary condition for the carrying out of their agreement was the subjugation of Paris, they requested Bismarck to postpone the payment of the first instalment until the occupation of Paris. Bismarck accepted this condition. And since Prussia is herself in bad need of the money, she will do everything possible to make things easy for Versailles, to hasten the taking of Paris. You must, therefore, be on your guard!"

R. Fraierman

Vasska, Red Partisan

A Story of Early Revolutionary Days in Manchuria

It was late when Vasska awoke. He turned over on his side. He wanted to fall asleep again; but suddenly had a feeling, sleepy as he was, that he had forgotten something of importance. He threw off the blanket of hare's fur, beneath which he slept with his wife and small son, and sat up on the bench. He pushed his bedclothes further away. They consisted of a bearskin full of fleas and dirt. His naked body that was never washed or exposed to the sun, gleamed an unpleasant white in the halflight. His head ached from the vodka he had drunk yesterday. He stared at the earthen floor of his Manchurian hut, crowded with people, since among the Gilyaks several families live under one roof, at the heap of dried fish in the corner nearest to him. Then he started to hunt for his pipe under the bed-head. His pipe was there, but no tobacco. Vasska was alarmed. Where was his tobacco, could there be none left? Then he recalled that he had left it to dry yesterday on the stove, which was barely visible in the dim light of the morning.

It was dark in the hut even in the daytime. The sun shone feebly through the tiny windows, fitted with fishskin and covered with ice. The room seemed always full of a smoky twilight. Vasska could hardly make out the dirty skins under which his neighbors slept huddled up from the cold. The stove of beaten clay had cooled long since. Only the benches kept a little of their warmth from the flue that ran underneath them.

The desire to smoke grew stronger. Vasska reached out towards the stove, felt for a leaf of Manchurian tobacco, rubbed it between his palms and filled his pipe.

The dogs were whining in the yard. The sound sobered Vasska. "Must feed the dogs now," he thought to himself and began to dress. Then he snatched up 15 pieces of dried fish and went out.

It was a windless, frosty morning. Above the bay and the scattered huts of the Gilyak village the sky seemed high and opaque, but it paled where it met the mounds and the black *taiga* far away. The sun was still low over the distant cape and in the west the moon was still visible. It was white like the sun and looked as if powdered with snow. Vasska peered at it with his eyes screwed up, searched for a star near the moon but could not see any. He decided that the day would be the same as the morning, cold and still.

The dogs scenting Vasska and the fish, tore at their chains, rattling the poles to which they were fastened. Their sharp noses and ears were all snowy. They shivered from hunger and shook themselves violently. From their coats a shower of hoar-frost rose like glittering dust. The sharp air, the snow and his pipe made Vasska feel much livelier. He counted the dogs and threw each of them a piece of fish, and added half a piece for the leader.

Vasska was one of the poor Gilyaks and had made a habit of counting his dogs since that terrible day when Semka the merchant had taken away his dog Oron. Oron had been the best of the leaders. All the Gilyaks from Choma to Pronga had known that. No matter where Vasska went, people would say:

"Your Oron is a witch, Vasska, not a dog. Sell it and you'll be rich."

And Vasska would laugh. He was pleased when people praised the dog but did not think of selling it. If anyone had told him that a day would come when he would

have to do without Oron, he would have spat at them. And yet sell him he did, in the end.

A week before, Semka, the merchant from Sakhalin, had tried to persuade Vasska to sell Oron.

"You're crazy," said Vasska. "I'd sell my wife or my new gun, but I don't want to hear a word from you about Oron. Here's a sea-lion's skin you can have if you want it. I'll sell it cheap."

"All right, I'll buy it," replied Semka, and paid him a good price.

Vasska brought the fresh skin, still smelling of blubber and flesh, and laid it on Semka's knees, as he would have done for any good fellow. Then they "wet the bargain." Some neighbors dropped in an Semka sent for Chinese vodka. They sat drinking all night. Vasska got drunk and boasted of his grandfather's bow of seasoned ash, of his new Winchester gun, of his mother and his dogs.

The guests praised Vasska as is the custom but each of them knew that there was none poorer than Vasska in the whole of the settlement. Seven dogs and six yards of fishing net — what sort of a business was that?

It was late when they returned to their homes. In the morning, when Vasska went out to feed the dogs Oron was not there. Vasska rushed into the hut. His wife informed him that he had sold Oron to Semka the previous night, that the sale had been concluded before witnesses, and that she had the money.

That day Vasska sinned four times, as a man and a hunter: he beat his wife, trampled her tin earrings and leather cased amulets under his feet, cursed the holy rock of Tiri and wept. He had never cried before, not even when his father had drowned in the River Amur.

All that week he drank Semka's money and treated the whole camp. Now all the money was gone, but as he watched the dogs munching the fish, Vasska still thought of Oron. His flat, hairless face wore an expression of gloomy concentration. The fish would hardly last till spring. Seal-hunting was bad nowadays. Maybe he would have to sell another dog.

"Where did all that money go?" he asked himself in amazement trying to recollect his week of drunkenness. Suddenly he remembered why he had given the last ruble to Mitka Galian the day before. Vasska squatted down, pulled off his cap and gave his pigtail a sharp twist, a sign of extreme vexation.

"Ach, devil take it," he cried, "I clean forgot." Pachta, a black, nervous animal, turned her yellow eyes on her master in surprise, but never stopped eating. Vasska spat in her eyes, jumped up and driving back the dogs, ran into the hut. He remembered now what it was that had prevented him from sleeping in the morning. At noon yesterday, he had come upon the tracks of a fox in the *taiga* not far from the camp. He had bought some strychnine from Mitka, made little pills out of a tallow candle and laid them along the trail in the evening. He should have gone to the place at dawn.

Muttering to himself in vexation, Vasska aroused his wife, got out his skiis and his Winchester and started for the *taiga*—the vast Siberian forests. He had not far to go. He descended to the bay from the high bank and went in the direction of the cape, black with forest and rocks. The snows began to glitter in the morning sun. Vasska screwed up his eyes and tried not to look down.

It was clear and cold. To the right the shores of Sakhalin Island lay blue like a strip of sea, against the pale horizon. When he had turned the cape and climbed the rocks, Vasska was already in the *taiga.* Here he put on his skiis. It seemed warmer among the firs. He breathed in the familiar scent of frozen trees and the pine tar that pervades the *taiga* even in winter.

There had been a light snowfall in the night, and the tracks made by his skiis were light. From time to time rotting needles dropped on the snow from firs that had suffered in the fog. Vasska moved wearily round the bushes, for fear of getting caught

in them. He watched the points of his broad skiis, covered with deer skin, Tunguss fashion. White fluff streamed from under the skiis.

Vasska was thinking to himself: "When did the fox come by? Before the snow or after?" He would have liked it to have passed after the snow, and to have been not an ordinary red fox but a fox the color of the forest twilight, with a black cross on its back, and fur softer than a sable's.

He called up a vision of its small lean body writhing in its death agony in the snow near the mark he had laid yesterday. Then he felt a sudden unaccountable alarm. "Supposing the ravens got there first." And the object of his desire was torn to pieces and scattered about the *taiga*.

He bent over his skiis and glided along swifter. In a moment he caught sight of the mark itself — a fir branch stuck into the ground in a clean spot among young firs. The fox was nowhere to be seen, only the dark trail winding away in a semicircle into the bare bushes. It lay along the snow like a rope thrown down. The snow had been scraped a little near it.

Vasska's heart contracted. He stooped to touch the bait. The tallow pill was still whole and frozen as hard as a stone. Only in two places tiny scratches were visible on its dull surface. The fox had evidently taken it in its mouth. Vasska whistled and broke out into curses that he had learned from the Russian fishers on the Amur. After that he cursed in the Gilyak tongue: "She's gone curse her, may the devil eat the heart out of her."

The fox was evidently an old one, it had been trailed before, it knew the smell of strychnine. But hope, like water in a swamp, never dries up in the heart of the hunter. Vasska squatted down and examined the trail carefully: it was not quite fresh. The fox had passed two hours ago at dawn. Still Vasska took his gun in his hand and followed the trail.

The skiis glided smoothly over the dry snow. The forest was still. Only at intervals the fir trees crackled and the squirrels whistled shaking down snow and last year's fir needles.

The tracks remained clear and even. The fox was in a good mood and perfectly sure of herself.

A couple of miles farther on Vasska came to a halt. He was sorry now that he had not taken the sledge, some provisions and the other necessary things for hunting. He looked at the sky through the dark green trees and the snow seemed very deep to him.

"There's not going to be a storm, anyway. The fox has gone, but she won't get away from Langhba," he said calling himself by the name his father had given him.

He never called himself Vasska when he was alone. He would forget that strange name bestowed on him 15 years ago when the missionary, Father Ignatius, had come over specially from the town to baptize the camp. Vasska's father was at that time suing one of the Gilyaks from Varka about a pup that had been torn to pieces by dogs and it was said that the judge was more partial to those who had been baptized.

It would have been easy for Vasska now to turn back on his tracks. A breeze passed over the tree-tops, filling the air with sparkling snow dust. The whistling and chuckling of the squirrels grew still louder. Vasska raised his head. A squirrel's tail tossed a soft paw of snow on his face. He made a little sucking sound with his lips and threatened the squirrel with his mittened hand. The squirrels were moving in a great herd eastwards. The white belly of the nearest glimmered amid the firs as she climbed higher, glancing at Vasska with bright, inquisitive eyes. Like all Gilyaks, Vasska rarely laughed, but just now his thick, cracked lips parted in a broad smile. A multitude of squirrels was a good omen. After the squirrels would come the fox, the wolf, the lynx and the Sakhalin Tungussi, a daring, cheerful crowd. It was from them that Vasska had learned what real hunting was; otherwise he would have spent his whole life like

all the other Gilyaks, drying fish, driving round with the dogs, on visits and harpooning the seal.

"It must be fine to be a Tunguss, a free hunter," thought Vasska enviously. "It's a pity, though, that they cut their hair and don't wear pigtails."

2

His wife had already heated the stove and was chopping the fish when Vasska returned. Some of the neighbors were still asleep, but the women and children had gathered round the cauldron on the hearth. Vasska's widowed sister, Tamkha, who shared the hut with them, was kneading dough for cakes in a sack. Vasska's seven year old son, Panga, was standing near the stove, his little belly to the flames, smoking a pipe. His mother snatched it from him every few minutes, took two or three pulls at it and replaced it in the child's mouth.

The hut was dark and smoky from tobacco and the stove. The odour of jerked fish, seal blubber, and skins drying on poles under the roof, seemed particularly heavy to Vasska after the *taiga*. He seized his pipe and demanded food. His vexation and hatred of Mitka for having given him bad strychnine overcame him. His wife placed a short-legged Chinese table on the benches, chopped up some fish and made brick tea. Tamkha began to bake cakes, sprinkling them sparsely with sealoil, and the smell of burning bread was added to the other smells in the hut.

Tamkha was dressed in holiday clothes, although it was not a holiday. Blue Chinese ribbons shone in her coarse hair, which was arranged in two plaits. Tin earrings dangled in her ears and her apron was bordered with red cloth.

She had dressed up like this for the eldest brother of her dead husband, for Mitka Galian, whom, according to the custom among widows there, she was to marry a few days later.

Vasska knew that it was not a mere matter of custom in this case. Mitka could have avoided that if he had wished. The thing was that Tamkha was young and that her dead husband Nachakh had left her his hut at Timakh, a whole team of dogs, about a hundred rubles in silver and plenty of clothes. She could have remained a widow. But she was childless and the whole of her inheritance went to her husband's brother. No one would return her marriage dowry to Mitka Galian. The fishing had been bad for the last few years. Mitka was rich himself, a widower and not so old after all as he sometimes seemed to Tamkha.

But Vasska had no liking for him on account of his having grown rich by cheating. He acted as an agent for the Russian merchants and at heart was as greedy and sly as a dog. Mitka would have liked people to courtsey to him when they met him, just as if he was a great man.

Vasska finished his meal and began to prepare for the hunting. He changed the straps on his skiis, examined his sealskin boots filled with hay, put on his fur breeches and took up his gun.

Just at the moment in came Mitka. Like all the Gilyaks he was short and broad-chested. He did not wear the usual dogskin cap, but a squirrel one with long ears, in imitation of Semka the merchant, with whom he had dealings and frequently went to law. His black pigtail was turning grey. But he did not look old as he drank very little and hired a Russian laborer at the busiest times — spring and autumn. He could have kept three or even four wives had he liked but chose to remain a widower after the death of Ginga. He did not hoard pieces of brocade and silver ornaments in trunks, like the other rich Gilyaks did. He would not have paid a farthing for the ancient armor that the old folk valued at 300 rubles. But he loved gold and good clothes and always wore a *caftan* of black dogskin, regarded in those parts as extremely smart.

"Well, how goes it?" shouted Mitka in the doorway.

Vasska greeted him coldly. All except him rose from the benches. Mitka, however, was particularly kind this time.

"Off hunting?" he asked with a glance at Vasska's rifle.

"Yes."

"I thought you'd already come back from the hunt and brought a fox with you. Mine is good strychnine, none of your Chinese rubbish. You won't find any better in the whole town, nor in Sakhalin. The fox just gives one sniff at it — and down he lies."

"Well, it's not so good," said Vasska frowning. "This fox took it between her teeth and went off."

"Ho-ho." Mitka shook his head sympathetically. "Are you going after her?"

"Yes, she can't have got very far. There's a trail."

"That's good. Well, I wish you a happy start and a lucky finish."

"Thanks, and I hope your luck won't leave you," replied Vasska indifferently.

"What luck is there for us Gilyaks." Mitka sat down on the bench with a sigh. "A withered tree beside the path. Whoever sees it cuts it down for firewood. Semka is lucky, though. Yesterday he bought two more dogs from Tima Gilyaks. I saw him going from Pogibi to the town. Your Oron was leading the team. That was a good dog, Oron. You were a fool, Vasska, not sell it to me, a Gilyak like yourself, instead of this Russian merchant."

As soon as Mitka spoke like that about Oron, Vasska forgot about his hunting. He went nearer and even offered Mitka his tobacco pouch.

"You're a good chap, Vasska", continued Mitka as he pulled at his pipe. "And Semka is a mad wolf, bites everyone. There's isn't a single hunter who could kill him."

Vasska glanced at Mitka suspiciously and replied wearily:

"Nobody's going to buy that skin. And the hunter will be tied up and taken to the town."

Mitka smoked in silence for a moment and then chuckled:

"Nobody'll buy the skin, that's true, but all the Gilyaks will be thankful. And as for the hunter, maybe he'll be taken to the town, and maybe not. Yesterday a Gilyak came from Varka and told us that a mighty lot of fishermen have collected on the Amur. They call themselves 'red' and 'partisans'." Mitka pronounced this new word with some difficulty. "They're advancing on the town with troops, a lot of troops. They're not afraid of the Japs nor of anyone else. The merchants hire the Gilyaks and their teams to take furs and skins away from the town to Sakhalin. And they are going away themselves. The merchants will come off badly though. And Semka will come off badly, too."

"I'll take Oron back, then, from Semka," said Vasska. "I'll give him three sealskins and my new furboots. He gave me no more money than that."

"Still, you're a fool all the same," Mitka gave Vasska a friendly slap on the back. "Take Oron back and give Semka nothing. He's a sly wolf but he won't get off this time."

"And what about you, Mitka, you being a merchant won't you come off badly, too?" asked Vasska thoughtfully, trying to picture these red troops that the rich feared so much.

"What can they do to me." Mitka glanced round sternly. "I'm a Gilyak. A poor man. Some will come off well and some badly."

"I wouldn't mind being as poor as you," thought Vasska but remained silent and hurried with his preparations.

He rolled up his sleeping sack of deerskin, shifted his matches from his pocket to his bosom to prevent them from getting damp, felt his pipe, his flint and his tobacco-pouch and drank of a jug of cold water before he set out.

His wife gave him some frozen fish and cakes to take with him and followed him out. In spite of his being a "baptized" Gilyak, Vasska glanced into the barn for a

moment. The idols stood here sewn up in skins and a year old bearcub was chained up in one corner. His chain clanked and his eyes glimmered like blue lights in the darkness. Vasska paid no attention to him. He prayed to the evil god, Kinsa — the terrible spirit of death and storm. Then he took his skiis under his arm and turned to his wife.

"Don't overfeed the pups, look after the bear and don't expect me for one sun, two suns. When the sun rises on the third day, I'll come. And if I don't come, don't wait either."

3

Vasska could not remember having had such bright days for his hunting for a long time. He was used to the frequent gales and winds from the Sea of Okhotsk. Down by the shore the *taiga* was composed of small rotten trees, with a rank undergrowth, but further on, among the mounds grew tall trees and cedars. Under them the snow lay in a blue twilight. Here it was so still that Vasska could hear, even through the fur cap covering his ears, the crunching of the snow under his skiis.

He had already slept twice under the cedars and stars in his sleeping sack and twice he had awakened to wet his eyes with snow and see the stars go out. And still the fox was not to be seen and the trail was still there. Even squirrels had disappeared.

"This vagabond of a fox hasn't got any hole to live in and runs away to devil knows where."

It seemed a real misfortune, and Vasska regretted not having prayed to the good god Kusha who had raised the earth out of the sea, and could have saved him from this. He regretted still more not having taken his dog Pakhta along. Pakhta was the only one of all his dogs able to track an animal well.

There was very little tobacco left, and the cakes were all finished. But what hunter cares to go home before he has lost the trail? The Amur was already quite close. The great lake of Kizi lay far to the left. To the north lay the town, and to the right, beyond a bend in the river, the village of Mariinskoe, where Vasska often visited his friend Makarov. And whenever the latter came downstream to fish, he stayed with Vasska.

On the morning of the third day, just as Vasska had decided to go to Mariinskoe, he caught sight of the fox. She ran about 30 paces ahead of him and carried a strangled squirrel between her teeth. Vasska's face darkened with surprise and pleasure and he dropped on his knees and threw off his mittens. A feeble breeze wafted the smell of the snow, the fox and the fir bark to his nostrils.

The fox seemed to be sailing up a snowy creek. She went round a great dip made by snowdrifts, dived under a bush and appeared again under a low fir. Here she halted suddenly and dropped the squirrel on to the snow.

Vasska raised his rifle cautiously. He was at a good distance—and the fir was in the way. If he shot her in the side, he would spoil the fur. And it was a real "cross" fox. Blue-grey, like steel covered with hoar frost—she seemed a shadow left behind by forest night as it hastened behind the mountain range. Vasska waited. His fingers felt already slightly frost bitten on the cock of the rifle, when he finally took his aim. There was no sound. Vasska was motionless, still as the earth. But suddenly he felt that the fox had noticed him. He knew it because just at that moment his heart contracted fearfully and thumped loudly. The wild, startled face of the beast glimmered before his eyes. As he listened to the echo of the shot a moment later, Vasska already knew that the fox had gone. The far flung trail and sharp curves on the snow told him how she had leaped away in terror. He stuck his rifle into the snow, drew up for some reason or other the deerskin thongs on his coat, and inhaling the sweet smell of the powder, gazed bewilderedly around.

Two days' hunting gone for nothing. He would have to go to Mariinskoe. He squatted down on his skiis and filled his pipe with the last tobacco.

"There's no luck for a poor man."

Vasska smacked his lips loudly, thus expressing the whole of his sorrow and disappointment. Tired since morning, he rose and went on further.

The *taiga* melted into the mountains, hills began, the thicket grew darker and closer. Rotting fallen cedars and firs became more frequent. Thinly covered with snow, these rotten mounds were a constant danger to he skiis.

4

Vasska took off his skiis and tramped off in the direction of Mariinskoe. His tired, swollen feet were particularly sensitive to the trodden snow of the road. The cold, greenish stretches around were silent and dead. It appeared to be light but nothing could be distinguished in that shadowy, smoky light. It was impossible to see where the capes ended and the snow and ice began. Vasska stumbled several times into snowdrifts. This glimmering twilight did not frighten him. It was as familiar as the silence and the moon in its orange circle. He tramped along, without thinking of anything in particular. He did not even hear the hollow shout, repeated several times.

"Halt. Who goes there?"

Vasska started back. At first he wanted to turn and run, because there is nothing more terrifying for a Gilyak than a human cry out of the gloom.

But the voice ahead did not sound severe, but even kind, somehow.

"Stop a minute, where are you going? I'll shoot if you don't stop."

The figure that was approaching him, seemed in the light of the moon strange and terrible, especially its shadow that ran ahead—huge, pointed like the shadow of an old fir tree.

When the man got up to him Vasska could see that it was the tall hood and heavy sheepskin cloak that gave the figure its strange appearance.

Blue smoke and a beard covered with hoar frost issued from the felt hood. Then from behind the rocks another figure in a hood came up.

"Who are you?" asked the first.

"A Gilyak," answered Vasska and added by way of explanation: "A hunter, Gilyak Vasska."

The man stooped over to him.

"Eh-hey, a Gilyak, that's true. And where might you be going, pal?" he asked sympathetically. "Where are you off to?"

"To Mariinskoe. My pal, he lives there—Makarov."

"What Makarov would that be? There's a commander of that name in the third company. One of the down stream fishermen ain't he? Andrei's his name?"

"Andrei, Andrei." Vasska stretched out his hand in delight to the speaker—as to a man who knew the name of his friend. But the man did not take it. Thoughtful and with some show of dissatisfaction he turned to his comrade.

"Well, what'll we do with him, devil take him? Take him to headquarters, maybe?"

"How do you like that," replied the other reluctantly. "Trail round to headquarters with a Gilyak. Take him to Makarov. Maybe he'll recognize him, but see you take his rifle away first."

Vasska gave up his weapon in silence and mistrust.

Then he followed the man for a long way, staring at the ground all the while.

The smoothly rolled snow of the road shone in the moonlight like a flame. The lights of the village on the invisible shore twinkled like stars. Whenever Vasska raised his eyes he could see dimly before him the black cloak and frosted hood. They did not seem terrible to him any more.

Deep tracks of sledge runners could be seen on the road. They were quite hard and their edges glinted under the moon.

"Lots of horses must have passed down this road, lots of people, too, and heavy carts. Mitka spoke the truth, then, about the Reds," thought Vasska.

Now he felt more at ease about his rifle. He believed that these people would do him no harm, and gazed with respect at the pointed hood and broad back that sometimes hid the lights on the bank.

In spite of the lateness of the hour the hut to which Vasska was brought was full of people. They were drinking tea. On the table lay pieces of salt fish, bread and sugar—of which Vasska had heard so many wonderful things. It was hot and noisy and Vasska felt he wanted to smoke at once. He sniffed greedily at the hot hair, acrid with smoke.

"Comrade Makarov, I've brought you the devil of a visitor," said the partisan, pulling the icicles off his beard and poking Vasska forward with the rifle.

Makarov was telling some story or other aloud and did not reply at once. Vasska went up to him and stretched out his hand without bending the palm. He had learnt this style of greeting from the Russians.

"How do, Makarka?"

Makarov raised his thick, reddish brows and looked at Vasska guardedly and with some astonishment.

"Vasska, is that you? How do you happen to be here?" Puzzled glances passed from Vasska to Makarov, whose face gradually regained its usual expression of anxiety and care. "Did you come by the Amur through the town?" he asked.

But the partisan did not give it back. He held it up to the light. It was still dull

"A-ah," came in disappointment from Makarov. I was thinking you'd come through the town and brought some news." Then he said, turning to the rest: "A friend, a Gilyak, I happen to know—he's all right, good hunter."

"One of our own sort, then?" said the partisan who had brought Vasska.

"Our own, of course, our own," replied Makarov as if vexed that he had been interrupted in his conversation. "Give him back his Winchester."

But the partisan did not give it back. He held it up to the light. It was still dull from the frost and he looked at it a long minute, shaking his head the while.

"Yes, it's a pretty thing, pity to give it back, it would do us nicely. Who knows what these Gilyaks are up to?"

"Give it back, Bozhenkov, greedy old wolf!" a man with a shaven head shouted sharply from the corner.

"Go on, shout a bit more. Maybe it'll frighten me."

Bozhenkov returned calmly, glancing at Vasska goodhumoredly. He had the face of an elderly man, weatherbeaten with purple veins on the cheeks and under the eyes. Vasska looked at his rifle with heightening alarm. Bozhenkov was silent for a moment as if waiting to see what else they would say, then he gave a broad good natured smile, that lent his face, in spite of its thick beard and elderly veins, a naive thoughtful expression.

"Might just as well give it back, or else they'll ask what sort of a hunter is he without a gun."

Bozhenkov went out stamping his frozen feet in great felt boots. Soon everyone had forgotten about Vasska. He was having a great time with the tea and bread and salt salmon. He smoked the tobacco that lay about in heaps on the table and listened to the conversation, of which he understood very little.

The sugar he now tasted for the first time, and did not like it. Then he ate three pieces and hid one in his bosom for his small son—together with the tobacco.

After two nights in the forest and the abundance of food and warmth, Vasska wanted to sleep. But he sat there gripping his rifle between his knees and trying to

keep his eyes open. The red ribbons on the fur caps seemed blue. The voices seemed sometimes far away, sometimes rang right in the ears. Vasska listened with difficulty.

They were talking about the Japanese. An expeditionary force of over 2,000 numbering among them many White Guards had come into the town. Heavy fighting was expected and if the miners and the Sakhalin folk did not come to help the town would be difficult to take.

Then they talked about the fishing, about how Kusin and big business had seized the whole of the coast. The fishermen had nowhere to fish. There was a food shortage in the gold fields and arrests and shooting of workers in the town.

"The traders are taking all their furs out of the town to Sakhalin," announced Vasska, by way of a contribution to the general conversation.

"Ugh, dirty swine," said the man with the shaven head and sharp voice, whom Makarov had addressed as Kumalda. "They've taken them to the Japs to hide."

"You can't hide all the goods from the people," Makarov rose and turned up the lamp. "Well, now, lads, time to go to sleep, isn't it?" he said in a fatherly way. "We've the devil's own job before us tomorrow. Maybe we'll be ordered to attack—I heard something about it at headquarters."

From his firm tone and assured manner Vasska gathered that Makarov was the chief, and he—Vasska—was the chief's friend. He found this much more flattering than if the Choma Shaman had been his brother. More than once Makarov had slept beneath Vasska's roof, eaten his fish, drank his vodka, and in moments of good humor given little Panga his finger to clutch.

Vasska followed Makarov out into the street. Over the village the moon hung in its orange circle. As Vasska glanced at it he thought that it must be midnight now, just the time when the dogs began to howl at home.

"Listen, old pal," he began. He was overflowing with gratitude for the bread and sugar, for the tobacco, for the shelter, that had not been refused him by these people who wore canvas cartridge belts, and red ribbons on their fur caps. "Listen, pal—you're a good chap. Would you like to have my skiis? You'll not find a better pair in the whole of the downstream country."

"I don't want your skiis," said Makarov, yawning and pulling his cloak closer aound him.

"Old pal," began Vasska once more. "I tracked the fox for two days, and she got away." Vasska has no luck. He wanted to tell someone about the crossed fox, about how he had got lost in the taiga and what he had been thinking about the time he had lain freezing to death beneath the snowdrift.

But Makarov interrupted him to listen to some sound. A buzzing came from the direction of the Amur like a touch on a deep bass-string.

"I can't be bothered with your fox, now." He made an impatient gesture and strode away hurriedly towards the farther side of the village. Stumpy little Vasska could hardly keep up with him.

Someone met them with a loud voice: "Hey, do you know the Amgun folk have come over from the gold fields?"

"You don't say?" returned Makarov delightedly.

Their voices rang out hollowly in the thin air. From the high bank the Amur could be seen, the snow stripped with moon-beams, the glittering ice and a file of sledges on the high road. The end of the file was lost in the darkness beneath the rocks. Blue smoke hung over the foremost of the sledges as they mounted the steep incline to the village. And it seemed as if the pale, prickly stars in the greenish sky shivered from the creaking of the snow beneath the runners.

"They're coming—see," said Makarov excitedly, looking somewhere over Vasska's head. "The Amgun folk, the Kostyukin folk, the Soloviev lads. Are we any worse than the Russian bolsheviks, eh?"

He laughed aloud and frozen smoke came from his mouth and settled on his beard.

Vasska spent a bad night. He lay near the threshold, by a barrel of water, and all night someone kept getting up for a drink, stumbling over Vasska's feet to do so. He rose often and went out. The street was disturbed too. Lights burned in the windows all night, voices could be heard, the neighing of horses, the creaking of the snow. At the gate stood sledges with their shafts pointing to the stars.

Still Vasska got a little sleep from time to time. He dreamed of Oron, and the fox, and that Semka had taken away his rifle.

In the morning the village was all noise and bustle and filled with armed men. A red flag hung from the frozen flagstaff of the headquarters hut. Songs rang out in spite of the early hour and the frost. It was all strange and very cheerful. Never had Vasska felt in such good spirit as in this crowd, not even when he had sat with the other fishermen around the camp fire after a good catch or at the bear feast in the camp.

He knew who the people were by their clothes and shoes. There were fishermen in boots stitched in queer designs, miners from the Amgun district and Chinese in high mocassins, elegant Koreans in their favorite white garments. There were even Golldi from the Amur in chamois leather booths, fearless bear hunters, who used the knife instead of the gun. Their faces were more open and cheerful than Vasska's, their skiis lighter, their eyes surer.

Vasska met Tungussi miners as well, dressed in fur coats and deerskin shoes beautifully decorated in different colors. He had always envied Tungussi—there were no better hunters, no more good natured or truthful fellows in the whole world than the Tungussi.

"Where are you going?" Vasska asked them in their own tongue. "Are you going to shoot at the Japs and the Russian masters, too?"

"Dagot" (which means comrade), they replied, "It is true. We kill only beasts. But Kuzin, the trader, will not let us live. Every Tunguss owes him money, every Tunguss has to pay him. It is worse than paying tribute to the Chinese. In old times the tribute had to be paid only once a year. Winter and summer we take furs to Kuzin's store house, sables, deer horns, bear skins and lynx skins—and it's all too little for him. His flour is bitter, his powder is dear and not pure. We would have used bows and arrows like our fathers, if only we had not learned to shoot so well with rifles."

"Isn't that Kuzin the brother of the trader who owns a fishing grounds downstream?" asked Vasska. "The Chinese, Lutuza, works for him?"

"We never heard of Lutuza. But that's the same trader. He's got big claims in Amgun as well?"

"Ay, ay, and what does he want with so much fish and fur and gold? Do you know why?"

"This we don't know. But we heard in the forest that a big war is going on by the Amur. The miners went to the town to punish their traders. It's a new law that's come out. And we drove 200 deer to the reds for meat and driving."

"Who'll pay you for that?"

"The old folks told us not to think of that."

"Aha," said Vasska and to avoid saying any more, stared reproachingly at the ground.

He recognized the usual care-free way of the Tungussi. They were happy, talkative, good natured as always.

But the proud Tungussi never misses an opportunity to make fun of the Gilyaks. One of them, a young fellow in a cloak with a badger collar, said:

"I see by your bow legs that you are a Gilyak. Listen bandy legs, is dogs meat tasty?"

Vasska understood the sneer.

"Our legs are bowed from rowing: we sit in the bottom of the boat from childhood—and you are just a rotten birch-tree. Come and pay me a visit and I'll treat you to puppy meat. The meat is tastier than deer's belly with moss,[1] and we have more fish than you have lice."

"Dagot," said an elderly Tunguss, "we all have more lice than pleasures. Don't get offended at this chap—he's only young. Russians call him Peter and Tungussi call him Kabarga."[2]

Vasska burst out laughing and the quarrel ended. The Tungussi went away.

He stood for a while, looking after them and admiring their well built figures, their fur clothes, their slender legs that bent inwards ever so slightly and never knew weariness either on the summer trails or on the skiis in winter.

The attack on the town had begun, and the first file of transport sledges was leaving the town.

The sledges were full of men. The barrels of their rifles pointed towards the white sky, that threatened wind and snow.

On one of the sledges—or so it seemed to Vasska, he caught sight of the dirty, rabbit skin cap of Lutuza and his flat frost bitten nose.

Vasska shouted to him, but just at that moment a partisan in enormous boots galloped past, calling out: "Hey, you, devil take you, comrade. What you standing in the road for?" Then a Golldi flashed by on skiis, swinging his arms and the sledges disappeared behind a bend in the shore.

Down the Amur sledges full of Tungussi could be seen leaping out from behind the turning. The deer, frightened by the horses swung right off the road and stretching their necks fell through and were drowned in snow. Peter's cheerful young voice could be heard shouting at the deer. And Vasska stood there thinking about all this unfamiliar fuss and bustle.

What should he do? To go back to the forest seemed impossible: how could he leave a fellow hunter? To stay in the village, when his friend and chief was going away, also seemed impossible. And suddenly Vasska felt he must go with Peter and these unknown Golldi. He must go away to the east, to the town, with his rifle over his shoulder and there confront this terrible beast against which so many people had come out.

"So these are the reds, who respect the poor and hunt down the rich," thought he. "And aren't you a poor man too, Vasska Gilyak, and aren't you against the rich?"

He decided to tell Makarov this, but when he saw his red brows and anxious face, he said something quite different.

"Ten times today people have called me 'comrade'—and I never did anything for them. I never heard a Russian call a Gilyak 'comrade' before. How shall I repay them?"

"Shut up," said Makarov. He was at that moment in deep conversation with Kumalda, the shaven headed man who had helped Vasska to get back his rifle the day before.

"Go home, for God's sake, I've no time for visitors just now."

"Eh, how can you talk like that?" Vasska gave Makarov a reproachful look. He was ready to take offence and turned to go but Kumalda stopped him.

"Comrade, what was it you wanted to say?"

"I wanted to go together with you. Gilyak Vasska is red too."

"Want to be a partisan?" asked Kumalda in astonishment. He stared curiously at Vasska for a long minute. Then he burst out laughing. "It's nothing like trailing a fox—you know. You may be killed." And he closed his eyes and made a terrifying grimace to show how people died.

---

[1] A favorite dish with the Tungussi.
[2] Wild ram.

"Ay, ay." Vasska gave a deep sigh. "A bear is terrible too, but the Gilyak can hunt him no worse than a Golldi. A bear is not my enemy—if I'm lucky, I don't kill him, but I put him on a chain in the barn and my wife feeds him with bilberries and lets him drink out of a long handled spoon until the big holiday comes around. But what could I do with Semka the dog trader, and Gilyak Mitka and Kuzin, the merchant? Can't put them on a chain. Can only shoot them."

"That's a Gilyak for you." exclaimed Kumalda in great satisfaction. "Wears a pigtail, but his brain works no worse than ours. Do you want to come in my detachment of skiers? I've got Golldi and Tungussi and Chinese—a real international. It'll be good sport."

"What's that, international?" and Vasska smiled as he repeated the new word.

For the first time Makarov, in spite of all his anxiety and alarm for the partisans, looked at the Gilyak attentively and kindly.

"I didn't get what you meant, Vasska," he said apologetically. " We went fishing together, and now we'll go fighting together." And Vasska saw before him the weather beaten hand of the old fisherman, with its flat palms and fingers swollen with rheumatism.

Vasska put his own in it. Then he went out into the yard, got his skiis from the shed and sat down on a heap of snow to wait for Kumalda and join his detachment.

He felt uneasy still. It seemed to him as if in the midst of a snowstorm when one should be silent and save one's breath, and drive the team home at all costs—he had suddenly turned to the terrible Amur and sung a loud song:

"Oi-de. O-Lai."

5

More than a month had passed since Vasska had become a partisan of the skiing detachment of the international Amgun regiment. He had ceased to be astonished at many things—even at the sweetness of sugar, which he often tasted now, and at the fearlessness of the Russian fishermen who died from bullet wounds, and at the calmness with which he himself did evertyhing that the commander of the skiing detachment, Kumalda, told him.

He was not surprised when he finally met the Chinese Lutuza among the partisans wearing a cartridge belt across his chest and a red rag round his dirty rabbit skin cap. He had never doubted that Lutuza should be here among them all. He was only a little embarrassed to see that Lutuza had done away with his pigtail.

Vasska greeted him like an old friend who had only yesterday left his house, and he asked Lutuza to get transferred to his detachment. Surprise was unworthy of a Gilyak. One should leave one's heart open like one's eyes. Let it reflect the morning and the snow, the shooting and the desires of fellow travellers.

At first it seemed to Vasska that these desires were many—as many as the folk on the Amur. But afterwards when he took things in better, he decided that there was only one desire—to cover one's house better, that is, to arrange one's life—that put the partisans on their skiis and loaded their rifles.

And thus his trail merged with those of others. He often sought out Makarov at the halts and when the latter seemed free from his usual cares, took the opportunity to ask:

"Comrade, what is is that you want?"

"I'm a bolshevik, Vasska. Do you get that?" replied Makarov in the Gilyak tongue.

"No—tell me, what it is you want?"

"I want the power to be in the hands of those who catch the fish and dig the gold and kill the animals. I don't want Kuzin to use devices that drive all the fish into his grounds, I want these to be in plenty for the fishermen. I want the gold on his claims to belong to everyone: to you, Vasska, and all your folk."

Vasska listened to him in silence wrinkling his smooth, hairless face with the effort to understand.

He had heard this not only from Makarov. The enemy was still in the town, the hills still smoked with the first storms, and in the villages the fishermen were already uniting into working gangs, dividing up Kuzin's fisheries, seizing the rich traders' grounds, the supplies of salt, the tackle. The gold fields were being run by workers.

Vasska did not know whether this was good or bad. He himself would not have taken Kuzin's sack of dried fish or fur coat but he could find no answer to the question that the Tungussi asked and which indeed he often asked himself:

"Why did Kuzin need so much fish and fur and gold?"

Vasska went along the common trail. It was deep and clearly marked. Vasska often thought, too. It would be grand to collect a Gilyak working gang at Chumakh and buy an iron schooner between them. He even heard the rattle of her anchor through the walls of the winter hut but that was the artillery of the whites.

The town was visible now. The night was in flames, a yellow dawn floated above it. It was the glow from the electric lights, that looked into the snowy gloom of the Amur with a piercing, hostile stare.

As long as the fortress with its batteries and the wireless station was in the hands of the Japanese, the town remained inaccessible.

From morning till night guns could be heard from there—they were aiming at the distant fisheries occupied by partisans.

Shells sang like the wind over the Amur. The explosions crumbled the blue ice-floes, but did the partisans no great harm.

Night and day the sledges creaked along the Amur.

Vasska had never thought that there could be so many people in the world who did not grudge their lives and who hated, as much as he did, this town with its Japanese soldiers, white officers, merchants, officials and prostitutes.

At dawn the workers from the port ran in and remained with the partisans, asking for rifles and cartridges. But everyone valued his own too much—there was a scarcity of arms. The workers said that there was neither hay nor wood in the town, the horses were dying in the streets and that in the Chinese quarter the inhabitants were burning down the houses.

Then the headquarters of the Partisan army decided to send a delegate to the Japanese command. Andrei Makarov was to go and demand the surrender of the town. The delegate was received—Major Isikawa, a polite, well educated man listened to him attentively, called him "Mr. Makarov" and even offered him a cigarette, which was not refused.

But in an hour's time Makarov was handed over to the white intelligence service and died in terrible agony. All night his rough red hair had stood on end on the head covered with blood.

A day later Major Isikawa received unpleasant news. It appeared that six Japanese merchants had been seized by the partisans at the fisheries and shot at the front as reprisals. It was the more vexing on account of the fact that some of his acquaintances had been among them, people whom the major had frequently visited that winter and played poker with. He got angry with the whites, with the reds and with himself.

"This idiotic expedition the government has started," he said to the officer Matsusimo, "has done us more harm than good."

He had always been regarded as a liberal among his friends.

"One must be a samurai, Major," said Matsusimo, politely but with a touch of sadness.

"Yes, that's true, of course," returned the major with a little sigh. "But the bolsheviks are beginning to bother us considerably. I would like the peaceful Japanese citizens and the rest to be able if the need should arise, to go to Sakhalin."

He gave an order to send a detachment of marines to guard the road to Sakhalin not yet occupied by the partisans.

Matsusimo left the room and when safely out of sight, chuckled to himself. He knew that by "the rest" the major meant a certain Russian lady, the wife of Captain Boretsky, the chief of the intelligence service.

6

Vasska had made friends in the skiing detachment not only with Lutuza, but also with Bozhenkov.

This was strange, since Vasska could never forget that blue moonlight night, full of icy smoke, the night that Bozhenkov had stopped him on the road and tried to take away his gun. But he remembered too the merry eyes and good natured expression of his bearded face when he had agreed to give back the rifle.

It seemed to him that Bozhenkov and Makarov were like each other in a way, although there was really very little outward resemblance. Bozhenkov could speak a little Gilyak, too, was noisy, fussy and best of all—regarded Vaska as one Gilyak would another. For this Vasska forgave him his hoarse voice, his grumbling, and cursing and even his jokes, which were incomprehensible to Vasska. He was an old vagabond who had been on all goldfields and fishing grounds. Like all gold diggers he wore high boots and trousers of blue Chinese sateen, so wide that he could wrap them round his legs three times. They protected his knees from the damp in the gold fields and from blows of the spade. But even these trousers could not save him who spent 15 years of life in the taiga from rheumatism. In frosts, fogs, and rain he suffered cruelly and often dreamed of a long-earned rest.

It was from him that Vasska first learned of Makarov's death. He came into the winter hut, his face swollen with frost, and sat down by Vasska.

"Eh, well, the whites have finished off poor Makarov," he said gloomily, rubbing his knees.

The news was so unexpected that Vasska's face darkened suddenly. He rose from the log on which he had been sitting, and stamped about in horror and indignation.

That morning he showed extreme readiness to go scouting with Lutuza, Bozhenkov and the Golldi, Khodsen. The Japanese were still anchored in the Kakhinsk Bay. The skiers had to go a roundabout way to avoid them.

They went over the hills and through the depths of the forest. All the way Vasska was preoccupied and gloomy. Lutuza, who as yet did not get along very well on skiis, often fell behind and Vasska sat down once in the snow to wait for him. He sat there without moving, his head between his knees, until Bozhenkov poked him with his ski.

"Don't you get to thinking too much, Vasska," he said, sitting down beside him and getting out his tobacco pouch. "You'll be losing your pigtail if you do—maybe go bald, even."

Vasska made no response to this and went on with the train of his own thoughts:

"Oy, comrade, why did they kill Makarov? Such a good chap."

"That's why they killed him. It's the greatest satisfaction for those whites to kill one of our fellows. That's why there's a war going on—to make things go the right way and put the working man at the top. Give us time, we'll play marbles with their bones yet. That's how I see this business anyway. But you're a Gilyak, what can you understand?"

"Oh-ho! It's only Russians who can understand, you think," Vasska objected. "But I understand too."

"You're a bolshevik, then?

"A bolshevik, of course."

"That's good. And I'd be glad to have done with this war and take a rest fishing somewhere. I'd join with some more fishermen, some good cooperative, or else go as a watchman. O-o-oh, my poor legs."

Bozhenkov rubbed his knees and grunting stood up on his huge legs that resembled tree trunks. Then he sat down again, threatened Lutuza, who had not yet caught up to them, with the rifle he held in his hand.

"You, pig tailed devil, you should be at home gathering bilberries with the women folk, instead of skiing. You keep the whole detachment back."

Lutuza, breathing heavily, sat down beside him to rest. He was a Chinese of about 30 years of age and of a dry and nervous disposition. He stood a little over six feet and his face was the color of old brass. The eyes were hardly noticeable in this face. From the wide nostrils steam issued, red in the light of the sunset.

"A-ah," Bozhenkov drawled out maliciously. "Getting a taste of the *taiga,* are you? Not the same thing as sucking opium and playing cards in barracks, is it? Just wait a bit, this *taiga*'ll finish you off soon. It makes me laugh to look at you." Bozhenkov bared his few teeth. "And what did you join the partisans for, I'd like to know, what d'you expect to get out of it? You think you'll do a bit of thieving, I suppose, and then start a little trade, eh? Going to open a bit of shop in town, aren't you?"

But Lutuza was a dreamy, silent fellow, and it was hard to offend him.

"Why trade?" he asked naively, glancing at Bozhenkov. "In China I watched tea for master and plant rice. In Kharbin my work servant. I clean fish for Kusin down at the fisheries. Very much work, no thieve, no trade. Wantchee fight trader man, wantchee little fight Japanese men."

"Eh—you fight." Bozhenkov said teasingly. "You'd better have stayed home with mamma. What the hell did you all come here for anyhow, all of you working for a shilling a day. See how the price of labor's gone down. And maybe the whites will knock my head off all because of you."

Lutuza stared at him, not knowing what to say.

"You Bozhenkov, me Lutuza, him Vasska—allee same fella."

"The same and not the same. You, you're all naked—and look what a beard I've got," and Bozhenkov combed the icicles from his beard with an air of great superiority. "And then again—I get paid twice as much as you do, because, to tell you the plain truth, as far as working's concerned, you're just muck."

Then he suddenly noticed that Lutuza had thrown open his coat before he had properly cooled down. Bozhenkov fixed him with a terrifying look and shouted:

"Shut your coat, you fool. What an idea to cool down in the wind. And if you peg out, who'll have to answer for it? I will."

Lutuza fastened his coat meekly.

Bozhenkov would not have had to answer to anyone for Lutuza and Vasska, but like all who live in the taiga, he was fond of talking. Conversation for such people is as good as a drink. Although he did not know it, he loved his companions as only a man can love who has spent half his life with them in the fisheries, in miners' barracks, in the Gilyak huts and round the camp fire.

Then they went on side by side. Only the Goldi, Khosden, darted ahead, between the trees, swinging his arms, now disappearing behind the hill, and now coming out again in a closer spot. It was a mystery how he avoided colliding with the fir trees.

"Eh flies like a martlet," said Bozhenkov admiringly. "A hunter like that is as good as any Tunguss."

Vasska envied Khodsen's cleverness, and if it had been holiday time he would have tried to compete with him. But the memory of his recent accident in the *taiga,* when he had been almost unable to extricate himself from his skiis, was still fresh in his mind. He was saving his strength, his legs and his skiis now, as a good master

saves his dogs and his dried fish on the road, for Gilyak Vasska's path was a hard one and the game was not yet in sight.

Kumalda was following the trail of the scouts without hurrying. He kept about two kilometres behind with a party of skiers dressed like Vasska and Bozhenkov in white overalls with hoods made out of women's chemises. Even at close quarters in the daytime this moving white mass was difficult to distinguish from the snow. The detachment was trying to go round to the rear of the Japanese.

That night the scouting party came out on the Amur.

7

The sky over the river was starless. The night was not cold, but somehow looked as if the sky, the road and the whole of the snowy horizon were carefully wrapped in furry darkness. A light wind blew from the bay driving the snowdrifts into the road. It was difficult to tell whether it was snowing or not.

Vasska knew that on nights like these it was as easy to lose one's way as in a storm, to get stuck in one place or to follow one's own tracks till morning. But he knew these parts well. He went along boldly, just feeling for the drifts with his ski and carefully avoiding them.

He was alone. Bozhenkov, Khodsen and Lutuza had remained on the shore and were hidden in the taiga behind the cape.

The road ran sometimes under rocks along the bank, sometimes turned further towards the center. Then a pale stripe like the feathers of the dawn, could be seen along the horizon. The town lay over there. A little to the right tiny lights shone out and disappeared. It was the fort signalling to the town. But down here on the river below the rocks it was dark and deserted and terrifying. When the wind fell, it grew so deadly still that Vasska could hear the dry snow and little icicles slide over the stones. At one moment he imagined he heard a faint creaking. He raised his head and took off the cap that covered his ears: wasn't there a creaking from up in the *taiga?* No, it came from below, from the river.

Vasska slipped behind the rocks to listen. The stones magnified every sound. This creaking could only come from snow under sledge runners. Then suddenly Vasska heard a distant yelping and growling, the voice of a man driving, all the familiar sounds that accompany a drive with a team of dogs. Vasska seized his rifle. It was not the fact that there were people in the sledge that frightened him. He ground his teeth slightly with fright. It was easy enough to get away from them. But he knew how dangerous it was to be caught in the way of the galloping team. The dogs would tear to pieces anything alive that they met on the way. Even heavy transport sledges would turn aside from the path and the horses would shiver in their harness while the dogs ran by.

Vasska ran back. He had only one aim, to turn into the fields and get away from the dogs. But as soon as he turned his skiis cut into a snowdrift and struck the underlying ice. He crawled back on to the road and ran into the darkness once more in the face of the biting snow.

From behind came the loud shouts of the driver. There was a note of terror and bewilderment in the voice and Vasska understood that the dogs had ceased to obey.

Oh, Vasska knew very well the cursed Gilyak dog. It would sooner resign itself to be killed, it would eat its own puppy, rather than stop when a man was running before the team.

Sweat ran down Vasska's cheeks. His skiis whistled under his feet. Wind and blood sang in his ears. His straining eyes began to see hollows and mounds: the skiis got round and over them of their own accord. Now there was no time to turn and shoot. It would not have helped. The dogs were catching up.

Then Vasska grasped his rifle by the muzzle so as to beat off the dogs and shouted in Gilyak:

"Whoa. Whoa, driver. Man in the road."

In reply a yelp went up that in no wise resembled a dog's. Then there was nothing but howling, snarling, the click of bones, the creak of a sledge turning over and amid all this the voice of the driver that seemed somehow familiar to Vasska.

"Hey, Oron, hey. Mad devil."

Vasska was still standing, beating about him with his rifle. Then he laughed, and lowered his weapon. He sat down in the road and called softly:

"Whoa, Oron, whoa, comrade."

He pulled off his white overall in the darkness, tearing the fastenings in his haste. About ten paces away the dogs yelped and tore at each other. He could not distinguish Oron among them, but he heard the dog's voice, stern commanding, calming the voice of the leader. Whenever it was heard, the others were silenced and only blows and the grinding of teeth could be heard.

Not one dog dared to move. A sharp stink and the smell of sweaty fur arose.

The dogs quietened down little by little. People were moving about near the overturned sledge. When they had managed to raise it, Oron, in spite of the shouts of the driver, led the dogs to Vasska. They lay down steaming in the wind and began to bite the snow.

Oron laid his head on Vasska's skiis and licked his boots, that gave off the familiar smell of blubber. Vasska caught the yellow gleam of the dog's eyes and laughed: "Wasn't it because of that I joined the partisans?"

"How do, Semka?" he shouted hastily putting his rifle behind him.

"Who's that?"

Semka raised his rifle and stood staring at the dim outlines of the figure in the snow, surrounded by dogs.

From the other side a tall burly man in a long fur cloak approached Vasska. Judging from the position of his outstretched hand he was evidently holding a revolver before him. Vasska for some reason or other feared a revolver more than shells or the home made bombs of the partisans.

"What's happened? Who's this sitting here?"

Vasska got up. Oron jumped up with a growl at the man with the revolver. The other dogs were ready to throw themselves after Oron.

"Stop, sit down," shouted the tall man. "Who's this? I'll shoot this minute."

Vasska sat down again and the dogs lay down.

"Ach, Semka—and you didn't recognize Gilyak Vasska? We've drunk Chinese vodka together."

"What Vasska? Every dog's called Vasska round here."

"From Choma."

"Ah-h," Semka gave a sigh of relief. "It was from you I bought Oron?"

"My Oron."

"So that was it. I saw that the dogs seemed to scent a man ahead, but the leader wouldn't let them go. It's lucky for you they didn't tear you to pieces."

Vasska gave a hard laugh such as people who are not given to laughing much give vent to in happy moments.

The tall man lowered his hand.

"Pooh, God forgive me. I thought we'd come up against the reds." Grunting with the weight of his clothes, he got some matches out of his pocket, but to light them in the wind was as hard as to get tears and smiles from a Gilyak.

Then Semka said:

"Give it up, Ossip Dmitrievitch," and turning to Vasska: "Where are you going at this hour and why haven't you the dogs with you?"

"I've been to Pronga, having a little booze. Had some vodka."

"Eh, you lazy tribe of bitches." Semka sighed and calmed down. He began to adjust the harness of the dogs. "What these people do. Just booze and loaf—they're worse than convicts. They drink everything they have. Believe me, I've been trading amongst them for 20 years."

Ossip Dmitrievich was no longer listening to him. He was not a coward. But the vast, starless night, with a booming wind, with Gilyaks and dogs and the black forests all around struck terror into his heart.

Vasska could dimly make out a third figure huddled in furs and cloaks on the back seat of the sledge. It was silent and did not move.

Ossip Dmitrievich went up to it and said in a deep cautious voice, trying to keep down the note of terror:

"Were you frightened? It's nothing much. A drunken Gilyak on the road," and he sat down heavily in the sledge.

Vasska got up and went round sideways, trying to hide his rifle first in front of him and then at the side.

Semka sat down on the driver's seat, picked up the whip from the snow and shouted gaily:

"Gee up, Oron."

But Oron did not start forward as usual. He ran alongside Vasska.

"Hey, Vasska, don't spoil the dogs," cried Semka in an angry voice. "Get out of the road."

Vasska turned in to the field. Oron lay down and the sledge stopped. Semka ran to the dogs, cracking his whip furiously. Then in the darkness, through the song of the flying snow came the low but terrible growling that had earned Oron the name of "shaman" among the Gilyaks.

Semka jumped back.

"The curse of God on you, Gilyak, spawn. Vasska, come here."

"Listen, we can't run any risks, better shoot this Gilyak," said Ossip Dmitrievich, cruelly. He was evidently thoroughly alarmed.

"Vasska," Semka called once more.

But there was no answer. Vasska was far ahead, invisible, elusive. The wind tore at the snow and threw it back into Semka's face. The dogs started without hurrying after Vasska. The rocks came to an end. It seemed to have grown lighter. Vasska had disappeared somewhere.

Suddenly Oron tore away to the right, where the rustling forest ran down to the river's edge.

"Whoa, there. . . ." Semka's shout mingled with the wind and the rustling of the firs. Oron pulled up.

"How much longer are you going on with your row, swine."

The most terrifying thing was that this husky voice came out of the darkness very close to the back of the sledge. The frightened cry of a woman seemed particularly shrill and thin to Ossip Dmitrievich after that hoarse bark.

"What's this, Vasska you brought a woman prisoner?" Ossip Dmitrievich fired at the voice and shouted to Semka: "Drive like hell."

Oron growled inoffensively into the white shaking mist and refused to move.

"Throw down your arms."

Men were approaching the sledge.

8

At dawn the Japanese noticed that they were being surrounded, and began to fall back upon the town, under cover of machine-gun fire.

Kumalda had not been able to cross the range at the Amur and now the ski runners were crossing it sideways, standing upright and suffering considerable losses. But still they managed to occupy the road. They crouched over their skiis and dug trenches with the butt ends of their rifles. Then the Japanese moved on the town across the open land. The sun came out and the glass showed 32 degrees; the sky seemed as hard as a crystal and the light reflected from the surface of the snow was agony to the eyes. When Vasska got used to this glare he could make out the figures of the Japanese against the snow. They looked funny, hopping up and down and stumbling in the snow drifts.

In taking aim all Vasska had to think about was their movements. He did not think of killing or being killed. All he knew was that there must not be a single person left on the snow. It seemed to him that he was holding, not a rifle, with which he was accustomed to shoot only at animals, but the string of a snare, and that all he had to do was to screw up his eyes, and twitch this string, and it would trip up a man and bring him down on the snow.

Nothing terrible about that. In a minute he would be able to get up and run off. But others were getting up and running heavily, throwing off their fur caps and shouting. Nearby Lutuza was shouting too, and banging away deafeningly with his rifle. Bezhenkov, lying close by, to the left, bent down to the snow and shouted:

"Hey, you! Well done! Shoot at their transport, that's a good fellow!"

Vasska straightened himself to take better aim at the horses, but Bozhenkov rolled over and kicked Vasska on to the snow.

"Machine-guns!"

Only then did Vasska hear the reiterated rap-rap and shrill, unforgettable whistle, piercing the heart like a needle. Somewhere to the side he could see a high cap sticking out of the snow, full of blood and brains; he wanted to get up and run for the hills, but Bozhenkov held him firmly, and when he tried again struck him with the butt end of his rifle.

"Lie down, they'll kill you!"

Then he began to dig in the snow with his fingers, in a desperate endeavor to hide himself underground.

The Japanese, crossing the range, retreated on the town in good order. In the evening once again they made an unsuccessful sally, to try and force the partisans back against the hills. But Vasska would not go to the hills any more. He carried cartridges along the lines on his dog sledge. He could not shake off the longing to escape, to hide himself in the depth of the *taiga*. He felt as if he could have stood forever on his skiis under a pine, listening with eyes shut to the chatter of the squirrels in the stillness of the *taiga*.

Oron worked manfully, dragging the sledge himself and seeing to it that not a single dog in the team slackened, fouled its reins or snapped at its neighbor. He was not satisfied with Vasska. Hearing his voice again, after long separation, he detected in it much that had not been there before. Oron kept looking round, baring his teeth and twitching with his ears and sometimes as if guessing what Vasska really wanted, he turned the whole team towards the Amur, towards the gulf, gazing with his yellow eyes at the chill sunset, the hills and the smoking snow around the craters. But Vasska stopped him weary accents. He was still honest, as the Tunguss are honest, and he knew his duty and told himself that as well as being here with Bozhenkov and Lutuza, he was in debt to Kuzin, and Semka and Mitka Galyan, from whom in the autumn he had borrowed half a sack of flour.

9

Not until the morning of the next day, when the Japanese had left the Amur at last and dug themselves into the town, did Vasska know whom he had captured besides Semka that night on the road. The prisoners were taken to headquarters. All the men were busy fighting.

The next day, however, not only all the partisans but also the Gilyaks from down stream learned that the three prisoners were--Semka the dog-merchant, Ossip Kusin and Sophia Andreevna Boretskaya, or as she was called in the town: "Madame" from the white intelligence service. In the sledge sables and gold to the value of 100,000 rubles were found.

The name of Gilyak Vasska become well known up and down stream, from Tire to Choma. Gilyak sledges with fish and frozen venison appeared in the train of partisan sledges.

The young Tungus, Peter, was the first to pay his respects to Vasska when he met him. He did not joke now about the bow legged Gilyaks.

"The old people invite you to come and visit them. Come with your wife and children for the big snows, and we'll feed your dogs with meat."

The Golldi, Khodsen, who was standing nearby, touched Vasska on the shoulder: "Don't promise him. Come to us and hunt those days. We'll feed your dogs with fresh fish and bear's meat."

Lutuza said nothing. But towards the evening he contrived to get some light colored vodka from the Kakhinsk Chinese. It gave off a pungent odor of yeast and bread and in spite of the fact that it was strictly forbidden the three of them—Bozhenkov, Vasska and Lutuza finished two bottles.

The platoon commander swore at them and threatened to brain the three of them for their drunkenness.

Vasska got angry with the platoon commaner and went out muttering curses, to complain to Kumalda at headquarters. But on the way he sobered down a little from the snow falling on his lashes, from pleasure, from the scent of the fir bark and the cold and decided that he had much better speak to Semka and see if he could give back Oron for 100 squirrels and five nerpa skins.

At first Vasska was not admitted to the prisoners, but when it became known that this was the Gilyak who had captured them, they allowed him in.

He found Semka sitting on the floor of a dirty room. He was barefoot and hatless, and his pockmarked face was swollen as if he had been beaten. Beside him sat Kusin, also barefoot, in a torn jacket and a beaver cap. His broad face with its gold rimmed glasses seemed dead like a mask. He did not stir or raise his eyes. The woman impressed Vasska most of all. Her squirrel coat thrown on over a knitted sweater and her deerskin boots were whole and sound. Her mad blue eyes were dry and set in an unblinking stare on the Gilyak. They showed neither fear nor disgust but the same hopeless expression that could be seen on the faces of Semka and Kusin.

Everyone knew that she had been Isikawa's mistress and that it was by her request that Makarov had been turned over to the white guards. There was not the slightest doubt but that she would be shot. The dirty, smoky room still smelt of her Japanese perfume.

Vasska moved away from her and looked at Semka.

"Give me back Oron, Semka. I'll give you 100 squirrel skins for him." The five nerpa skins he resolved to add later, when the trader would begin to bargain.

Semka shifted nervously and did not reply.

"Eh, Semka, I'll bring it to court, then."

Then Kusin raised his heavy vacant, short sighted eyes to Vasska's face.

"Fool."

And Vasska understood all of a sudden that no trial would be necessary, that Oron and the whole team were his forever, and that the end had come for trader Semka, and for Kusin—that everything had turned out as Mitka Galyan had told him at home.

He hurried out, glancing back as he crossed the threshold. The woman was still staring unblinkingly. And Vasska felt no pity for those crazy eyes that had betrayed his friend Makarov.

10

It was a clear still noonday when Vasska entered the town on the sledge. The partisans had gone there in the morning, but even now their sledges loaded with hay and arms were creaking through the Chinese quarter, pushing the Tunguss reindeer into the side of the road, where they stood with bloody icicles clinging to their tender mouths.

The gay banners and flags made the street even more crowded. Oron whined and sprang at the reindeer. The Tungussi threatened Vasska with their whips.

He turned into a little lane, but there were people here, too.

"Hey, there—the team's coming," shouted Vasska.

"Uhu, you son of a bitch, driving dogs in the town?"

People pressed close to the houses, ran into gateways, climbed on to snow mounds. The team galloped by furiously—13 dogs with red streamers and ribbons in their harness. Vasska held the whip in readiness—watching that nobody got in the way. And still he was not sharp enough. The sledge seemed to rise suddenly in the air. A piercing squeal cut the air. A young pig had got in the way. The dogs were confused. Vasska could only see their haunches trembling with rage. He beat them with the whip, kicked them, called to Oron. It was no use. In ten minutes' time Oron moved away of his own accord, licking his chops and shaking the bloodstained panache on his head. Vasska threatened him with the whip. The dog glanced back insolently and took his place at the head of the team.

"Eat then," said Vasska. "It's our holiday anyhow."

The owner of the pig peered out through the gate, but seeing the dogs, the red panache and the partisan ribbons on Vasska's cap, he slammed it shut.

The sledge turned into the yard of the inn where Gilyaks usually stayed.

Only in an inn like that could one hear so much good and bad news as Vasska did. He learned from the Tima Gilyaks, that his wife had sold two pups to Mitka so as to buy a stock of flour. This vexed him a great deal. On the other hand the Gilyaks from Varka had brought him a paper with a seal on it, and elected him as delegate to the district congress of the soviets. An old Gilyak who had watched the snow melt and the ice float away 80 times, kissed him on the cheek as a mark of profound respect.

"You are a hunter, Vasska, and a wise Gilyak. Everything would be well if only flour, nets and powder got cheaper."

Vasska promised that this should be. Then they smoked and drank tea with reindeer milk in silence. Someone fed Vasska's dogs with so much dried fish that one of the dogs actually got ill.

It was dull for Vasska at the congress. There was a great deal of difficult and serious conversation. The first few days he came regularly to the huge hall of the cold stone house, sat down on his haunches by the wall, lit his pipe and shut his eyes so as to hear better.

Vasska understood only one thing, that the Soviet power was a sea that washed all coasts. And did not Vasska love the sea? A strange greed took hold of him. He looked at the round electric lamp hanging from the ceiling and thought: "Wouldn't

it be fine if we had a lamp like that to hang over the beds at home, and if we could kill the seals with a machine gun, and if the Kusin fishing nets would pass over to the Gilyaks."

Once he even came out to speak on the platform, exuding the smell of fish and seal skin all around him. He was allowed to speak. He stood scratching himself, started to hunt for his pipe and then thought better of it and said:

"The Gilyaks want that flour should be cheaper—and tobacco and gun powder and nets. The soviets can do everything. This I, Gilyak Vasska, have said."

They all clapped. The noise and shouts frightened him. He stumbled as he got down from the platform. He somehow felt he would like to be at home again.

Nine weeks had gone by since Vasska had said to his wife "Don't wait for me." But still she was waiting and there could not be any flour left. The supply of dried fish must be dwindling away. And soon it would be the festival of the bear.

Vasska could have returned home a happy man. He had six of his own dogs at home besides those of Semka. This was wealth that any Gilyak would envy. But in spite of that, in spite of the dullness of town life, Vasska was in no hurry to go. At first it seemed to him that the dogs were after all not his but Semka's. Then, when he had assured himself that it was not so, he began to think: "Was it only because of Oron and the dogs that I went the long and terrible road of the reds? No. If the Soviet power is a great sea that washes all coasts, then will it not bring some good to the Chomi share?"

The idea of a Gilyak *artel* of fishermen at Chomi kept returning to him. He even went to the fishermen's union, and talked all day, annoying everyone with questions. At last he found out that it was no good to hope for a great deal yet; still a little salt, barrels, and even a small shamporka [1] could be obtained on credit.

He decided to consult Bozhenkov and Lutuza. Maybe, they would help him and join the *artel* themselves. They were his nearest friends among the partisans.

Vasska found them in the barracks. They were sitting on the benches near the window playing cards. Lutuza had no luck. Bozhenkov won. He counted 30 fillips on the Chinaman's nose and complained:

"To beat your Chinese snout is just about the same as trying to shave water. The game's uneven, my lad."

They gave Vasska a warm and noisy welcome, and treated him to caviare and Japanese biscuits. They were very sweet and melted in the mouth. Then they told him that many of the partisans had been allowed to go home, so as not to have to feed them for nothing here in the barracks.

Vasska listened thoughtfully. He was picking at the end of his pigtail which hung over his shoulder. Then he began in a roundabout way. He spoke of the congress, of the price of fish and flour and told them in a casual way how the Gilyaks of the whole village went hunting seals.

"Yes," drawled Bozhenkov dreamily. "An *artel* is what we need. Both on the gold fields and for the fishermen, it's an *artel* we need. And tell, if you please, why don't Gilyaks get rheumatism, they're in the water just as much as I am?"

"But don't they get it?" said Vasska sadly. He turned down the tops of his boots and showed his blue, swollen knees.

Bozhenkov cheered up. He suddenly felt something more than his usual friendliness towards Vasska. It was that strange, melancholy affection that only people suffering from the same ailment feel for one another.

"Do you take bilberry leaf tea for rheumatism?"

"Yes, tea from the root and leaves."

"A li'l cheremsha is good," Lutuza put in.

---

[1] A small fishing boat of the Chinese type.

Bozhenkov looked at him sternly.

"Cheremsha is for scurvy, not rheumatism. The whole barracks stinks with your cheremsha."

"Ginseng root very good."

"Ginseng," repeated Bozhenkov exultantly. "Just find it for me, will you, and I'll do anything you want."

"I go look for it."

"You'll go and look for it," jeered Bozhenkov. "Look for it in your head. You're afraid to go to the mounds for bilberries."

Lutuza, in spite of his height and his look of being a desperate fellow, was actually terrified of the *taiga* and the bears. But like many Chinese he often dreamed of leaving the salting tables, slippery from entrails of dog salmon, and the barrels soaked in brine, and going away into the *taiga,* to the Amur and the Usuri to search for ginseng, the all healing root, that could prolong human life. Others had found it and been happy. He gazed through the window with unseeing almost drunken eyes.

"Lutuza," said Vasska.

He was silent. Maybe he had another name, a real Chinese name but he had never failed to answer to this nick name.

"Lutuza."

He tore his sad eyes away from the window at last and turned to Vasska.

"Let's all three go to Chomi, we'll all go fishing together. I heard that *artels* are now being given salt and nets on credit. And I've got dogs, and a house, a boat and a wife."

It was a serious proposal. Bozhenkov asked for time to consider. But he had not thought of it at all, and when Vasska called round again he simply looked inquiringly at Lutuza, complained of his rheumatism and agreed. In any case, neither Bozhenkov, nor Lutuza had anything to do in the town.

When it fell dark and the lights were lit, Vasska went to the barber's in the Chinese quarter and had his pigtail cut off. It was a break with the past and he had no idea of what the Gilyaks would say.

Oron ran cheerfully out of the town, glad to return home. The sledge track was straight, wide and easy, the dogs did not quarrel and Vasska did not have to use the whip to them once. The road promised to be a good one. Only Lutuza froze a little in his padded gown and the old coat that was worn out in the back.

In the downstream village through which they passed, Soviets had already been elected and the fishermen were holding meetings. Lutuza attended these reluctantly, but Bozhenkov never missed one. Sometimes Vasska stayed at them for a couple of hours forgetting the dogs thus left without anyone to feed or look after them.

"In a storm all the trees rustle alike," he said to Bozhenkov.

The people in the villages were thinking and arguing about the same things as he was. The fishers demanded the destruction of all the boundaries, the supervision of large private fishing grounds and that all tackle and vessels should be given up to the *artels* and divided fairly.

"What is there bad about fishing in *artels?*" they asked. Over in Vlassh Bay whole villages have fished together for ages, and done it no worse than in other places. The year before last they bought a schooner between them."

"What's true, is true. A fishing *artel*—why it's nothing new. Every village should have its own *artel.* Of course. Private fishing was the cause of lots of quarrels and for the soviets coming into power. Formerly if you were rich, you hired 20 or more Chinese and salted 100 barrels in a summer. If I had the money I could do that, too."

There was a great deal of swearing and stormy argument.

"What's it got to do with me? Did I work and save to come into the *artel,* and how much more will you give me for putting my goods into the *artel?*"

"More? Don't you want this then?" Sometimes hairy fists would be shaken over the heads.

"What's this? Robbery, that's all. This barefaced riff-raff."

"Go on there now—the time's gone by for that sort of talk."

Sometimes it ended in talking and shouting, but occasionally they reached the stage of voting for the *artel.*

In these cases Vasska, Bozhenkov and Lutuza raised their hands too, as if by mistake. But usually the opposition noticed them and cleared them out as strangers.

It was a lively journey on the whole, and little by little Vasska's nervousness and fright melted away. He arrived home without his pigtail, but in good spirits, with a full team of dogs, and with guests all smelling, as he did, of dog's sweat and wind.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Harold Heslop

Ten Thousand Men

A Story of the British Coal Miners

Hunton Colliery had certainly withstood all the shocks peculiar to the post-war phase of British Capitalism. Even during the war the men found time to assert their positions and conduct two highly successful strikes. After the war, in adition to lining up in the three national strikes, the 1920, 1921 and 1926, the men had asserted themselves on thirteen other occasions. Apart from the great strikes already mentioned, the general result of the local conflicts had failed to stem the encroachments upon the standards of living of the men and their conditions of employment. Each had meant a worsening of conditions.

Even when the Federation Board was born.

Old Jack Thompson was the first to point out the significance of the situation of the collieries around Shielding. Now, Jack Thompson was not an orator. He was something more, he was a thinker. He simply got up and said bluntly one day to the Whiteburn men: "Men, here we are! There are four pits all belonging to the Hunton Company. Each pit has its lodge. Each lodge keeps apart from the other. We are strangers, and yet we belong to the same union. The boss can play one off against the other, and has done for nearly fifty years."

Ted Blackie wasn't slow to ask bluntly: "Well, what about it?"

"That's just it," said Jack Thompson. "We ought to have a Federation Board. Each lodge should send representatives of the board. We should meet on common ground in the interests of the defense of our standards of life. . . . ."

Oh, no!. . . Jack Thompson wasn't a revolutionary. He was an old type of working-class leader. But he had one characteristic which he did not hold in common with others of the old type of leader—he hated humbug. He wasn't a liberal.

The seed he sowed fell upon the usual varieties of ground, and finally the harvest was gathered. The Federation Board was born. Aye! It was born many times. . . .

The owners of the Hunton Colliery Company never recognized the Federation Board. And when that Board showed resistance it was able to buy out some lodge leader. The Board was born thrice in ten years. It awaits the resurrection of a new 1926.

I speak of its death. *Ne parle pas mal de la mort* may be a good precept when it concerns mankind. Of man's organizations be critical when they die. Let me speak. . . . .

II

Joe Trotter had been away for the week-end when it happened. He had been staying with his wife's people over Saturday, and had just returned on the Sunday evening. He had scarcely uncovered the canary and changed its water, when Bill Raey came in.

"What do you think, Joe?" he asked, sitting down heavily on the chair near the fireplace. "The Federation Board's out on strike."

"What for?"

"I just tuned in on the wireless," Bill explained. "And the news came through. He said that the whole of the four pits were laid idle."

"But we've no dispute on," expostulated Joe Trotter.

"Balden's got the dispute on. The Federation Board's standing by them."

"We'd better go out and find out a few facts," said Trotter.

They went out into the night and left Cleavon. The moon was riding high in the heavens. The whole earth seemed blue and sombre. Nobody seemed to worry. In the distance the pit head at Hunton stood out hideously black. As they walked they passed couples mooning in the hedgegrows.

Bill Raey lit a cigarette. "Bloody fine for courting couples," he remarked.

"Don't be so damned Rabelaisian!" snarled Joe Trotter. He was feeling angry because the strike had taken him unawares. The first strike he hadn't assisted at birth since he grew up.

"What's Rabelaisian?" demanded Bill.

"Seeing muck when there isn't any. . . . ."

"Is that Joe?" came a shout from the hedgegrow.

They both stopped. It was Ted Forde.

"Didn't see you at the meeting," said Ted Forde.

"No. Been away for the week-end. What's it all about, Ted?"

Ted lit his pipe and expectorated to the far side of the road. Expectorating was his accomplishment. "S'far's as I can make out the devil wants to turn Balden inside out, and pay nothing for the privilege. If they accept his terms they'll be bigger fools than I took the Balden men for, take that from me."

"No?"

"No they broke the Federation Board last time, but this time they'll get our help. By all accounts they want it badly."

Slowly Joe Trotter got the facts from the stubborn mind of Ted Forde. A grand type of fellow, Ted Forde. Could work a day's work at the face like any two men; staunch to his trade union; knew nothing about politics, but took the worker's case for granted. The whole of the agreements governing working conditions at Balden had to be scrapped. That was what it all meant. Ted Forde wasn't standing for that. "You see, Joe," he asserted in a quiet voice, "if he get's away with it at Balden, then it'll be our turn next."

Simple logic, born out of the simplicity of the struggle. Proletarian logic.

Joe got the facts. It was damnable not being there to get a word in. Still the strike was on. He walked on towards the pitgates. The timekeeper was there. The place was lit up ready to receive the workers. The buzzer blew. There was no need for pickets. Nobody came. The buzzer died with a screech. Life went on. Silence swept over the earth. Peace and stillness.

Satisfied, Joe Trotter went home.

III

He was early astir. So was Bill Raey. He came ambling along the garden path, and walked in without any ceremony.

Bill never did stand on much ceremony with anybody. The mine had not been so kind with Bill Reay one time and another. One day, he had a fast tub. He struggled until he freed it, but in doing so a prop sprang out, hit him in the face and rendered him unconscious for some hours. The result of it was that Bill Reay contracted nystagmus long before his time. There never was a worse case than his. One had to forgive him a lot of his uncouth mannerisms because of his eyesight.

"What are we going do?" he demanded. "The four pits are on strike."

Joe Trotter continued with his breakfast as he spoke: "We'll get down as soon as I am finished," he said, "and we'll see how the lads are lining up for a bit of fraction work. Seen any of them?"

"None."

"We'd better be pushing along," said Trotter.

They left the house, walked down the garden path, and along to the end of the street. Jos Mackey was waiting at the corner, opposite the Co-operative store.

"Well?" demanded Trotter.

"Where were you?" countered Jos.

"I went with the wife to see her people," said Trotter.

"What about Reay?"

"I stopped in the house," answered Bill a little truculently.

"We had a hell of a fight," said Jos. 'We hadn't the faintest idea Balden was going badly. The union meeting was going along quietly when a deputation came along. My! but the boss is giving them hell at Balden!"

"Oh!"

The usual. We listened to what they had to say all right. Then Prestcott, the chairman, got up. He wasn't committing himself. . . . ."

"He wouldn't commit himself to anything," snarled Bill Reay.

"Sure! We know the damned man. Stramper, the secretary, was about as bad. . . . ."

"How did Blinker stand?" demanded Trotter.

"He saw the situation all right," said Jos. "He saw the popular side. He made a speech in favor of the Joint Board functioning. Tools down at once. . . . you know. . . ."

"A good speech, eh?" asked Reay.

"Sure."

"That man's a real opportunist. . . . ."

"Shut up, Bill," growled Trotter. "You can't tell us anything about Blinker, or any of the crew at Bede treet. The point is, they're on strike. What's our next task?"

"Keep them out, I suppose," said Jos.

IV

They set off down the road towards Bede Street. On the road they met many companions of the mine who greeted them with cheery words. The sun made the strike a pleasant project. . . until the belly began to ache. . . .

They reached Bede Street. The Union Hall stood in the same old place, opposite the Shakespear Inn. They went upstairs. In the hall upstairs were a few loungers, sittingabout, probably awaiting the emergence of someone with the wherewithal for a drink. They greeted the trio.

"Committee's sitting," somebody sang out.

"Then we know where Blinker is," said Trotter.

"Yes, he's inside."

Trotter began to wonder where the fraction was. Joe Watt's came in.

"Where's the boys?" Trotter demanded.

"Waiting for you," said Joe Watts. "Down in the Golden Fleece."

They went out, walked along the street, and went into the back parlor of the Golden Fleece. The boys greeted the newcomers. They sat down. The barman came in discreetly, and retired with the necessary orders. When he had fulfilled his obligations, Joe said curtly: "See that we aren't disturbed, Rob."

"Now!"

"It's like this . . . . . ."

They chattered like so many hens clucking about a handful of corn. They congratulated each other on the fact that there was a strike. That in itself was all they seemed to worry about. It hurt Joe. He listened to all that was said, drank it all in, weighed it all up, so to speak . . . and he found there wasn't much to congratulate oneself upon. He hated being out at the commencement of the dispute. However, let them chatter.

"Look here!" he began. "What are we?"

"The Minority Movement fraction," answered one.

"Sure?"

"What do you mean? Sure?"

"Yes, what do I mean. It seems to me, we're just a gathering of yattering old women. Tell me, have we achieved something because we're on strike? Not a bit. The county of Darlstone has known thousands of such strikes as this, Federation Board or no Federation Board. Tell me, do *we* lead the strike?"

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. *Do we direct the strike?* No, we don't. And what is more, we can't count on our friends in the committees of the lodges. Let us see! There's Bill Pearlman. He used to be a member of the Party. He's chairman of the Joint Board, too. Will he lead?"

"No."

"Will Blinker?"

"No."

"Will Marleton?"

"No."

"Will Guest?"

"He might."

Then out of a committee of twenty five we can count on Guest," said Trotter bitterly "Now what can we do?"

"Seem's to me, observed Jos Mackey, "that if we don't do something they'll settle the whole thing behind the backs of the boys."

"How can we prevent it?" demanded Trotter. "Any of you an idea. Don't start to talk about officialism and all that bunk. If the strike is left to itself it'll fizzle out after a week. We've got to do something. Strikes ought to be like rivers, broadening out from their sources, gathering fresh forces until you have something really worth fighting about. Here we have a Federation Board leading ten thousand men. A good number, but easily controlled." His voice dropped. "We've got to get a district committee meeting going and see if we can't get a move on . . . ."

They fell to discussing the matter in low tones. They arrived at common agreement. Trotter was to go to Tymecastle to acquaint the District Organizer of the facts. He would see to matters from there. Reay was to go to this pit; Jos Mackey to that; Watts to the other one; every man to a task — the task of broadening the struggle, indentifying a local struggle with something big in the county, driving it into channels not allowed by the professional trade union leaders at Darlstone, unorthodox leadership...

They were interrupted by Blinker blowing in upon their privacy.

"Jos Mackey here?" he called.

"Come in and shut the door," said Trotter angrily.

"The Bolshies!" Blinker cried gayly.

"Look here!" began Trotter. "If the class-struggle has lost its significance for you, it hasn't for us . . . ."

"You weren't there when the call came, anyway," snarled Blinker.

"Unfortunately I was away with the wife on a visit to her family," said Trotter quietly.

"And I made a speech which brought our men out with the rest of the Board."

"It was your duty. A man need not be proud of performing his duty. The trouble with you Blinker is that you are always ready to follow the masses . . . ."

"Oh! I like that!"

"Will you go to Borden and ask them to line up with the Joint Board?" Trotter asked suavely.

"Borden! What the hell's Borden got to do with our dispute?"

"There you are. It's your duty to bring the boys out on strike, but not your duty to try and get Borden to line up. Your logic's a bit rotten. Is there any difference between a worker at Borden and a worker at Hunton?"

"Silly devil! Hunton's in the Federation Board, Borden's. . ."

"Borden is in the Darlstone Miner's Association, isn't it?"

"But it isn't the same!" screamed Blinker.

"No! Billy, boy you're a rotten opportunist, old scout," said Trotter. He got up. "There's not much time to waste, boys."

They went away to their respective tasks.

V

The fraction did its level best to carry out its revolutionary task. Each member went to his allotted colliery in the district. They went into the higways and byways of Darlstone, proclaiming to the masses of workers the tidings of a strike in Shielding.

Ten thousand men on strike! Striking against the callous disregard of life and conditions at Balden! What are you going to do about? Isn't it time for you all to to line up with the men of Shielding, your brothers, in this struggle? Line up! Line up! Extend the struggle until the whole coal-field is involved....

But the task bore little fruit. They toiled against the ramparts of opportunism, builded through the past generations from the headquarters of Darlstone. It was back-breaking work. The masses asked their eager questions. Cardinal questions: What are they striking for? Who is the aggressor? Are the men of Shielding solid. The answers were given truthfully. Added to that they said, Even the bourgeoisie of the town appreciate the rightness of the case of the Shielding miners.... And then the bureaucrats spoke up, prompted by the officials of Darlstone, prompted by the crafty manouvres garnered through the generations: Is your strike in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Darlstone Miners' Association?

— What do you mean?

— Have you given notice to the owners?

— No.

— Then Darlstone does not recognize your strike?

— What the blazes does that matter?

— It might not matter to you, but we believe in legal ways. You get nothing by being so revolutionary.

— But isn't this the concern of all? If they win in Shielding it'll be your turn, and then what?

And so on, but the legalists kept hold of their paltry little excuses. It was hard, diffficult to shift these people. Dynamite is the only thing to manage such a task. It would be easier to collectivize the bourgeoisie of South Kensington than to beat down the trade union legalism rampant in the lodges of Darlstone.....

VI

So the group returned to report a progress which was non existent.

"They're the devil's own," groaned Jos Mackey. "I've used all the arguments I can think of, but you can't shift them. The men are eager. The whole county would strike, only these devils of local secretaries won't move. Strikes me they daren't. They generally save their faces by moving a five pound grant to the strike fund....

"Who the devil wants a five pound grant?"

"Now, now! It adds to the staying power. Even a grant shows a spark of human decency....."

They sat in the back parlor of the Golden Fleece and considered the strike now nearly ten days old. They were dejected. They wanted to perform a revolutionary duty. The strange thing about it was that the masses in a general sense were agreeable to this performance, but somehow they were held back. Trade Unionism is nearly a century

old; it is rather difficult to clean such old stables. Legalism isn't frowned out of existence . . . . Still, there was the strike. Ten days old. Going strong. Ten thousand men solid against the unseen enemies who would do them wrong . . . . .

Blinker came in. The Committee had paid itself its fees. He called the drinks.

"Well?" asked Trotter.

"It's going strong," said Blinker. "I see you had a warm reception at Hebden Colliery." He laughed, and his laugh jarred on Trotter's ears. His face slowly reddened.

"I had a bad time." said Trotter, "but that ought not to give you cause for congratulation."

"No!"

"No!"

"Look here, Trotter. Don't you get high and mighty. I've had just about enough of your splendid theorizing. It seems to me you're just mad you didn't get on to the committee. . . ."

"Is that so?" said Trotter. "Well, don't worry. I'm not concerned with your opinions. If you want to know, I'm concerned about this strike. So you get that? And I consider that here is an opportunity to get going in a real revolutionary manner."

"And that you'll never do," snarled Blinker. "Broaden the struggle! The struggle's broad enough as it is. What we want is to get the men back to work on the best possible settlement."

The attitude of the traitor in all industrial disputes!

Joe Trotter left Blinker's drink where it stood and walked out.

"I'll see you at the meeting tomorrow," he called back to the group. He felt that he could leave Blinker to the hot tempers of his comrades.

They told him about it afterwards. Jim Reay had even threatened to hit him.

The leven was working. Opportunism is a terrible thing in such moments, a terrible poison which destroys . . . destroys . . . . .

VII

But the masses were not to be intimidated. A pictures house was taken for the purpose of a meeting, and to it came the miner and his sons, the real salt of the North's proletariat, the man who knows how to fight.

Stramper, the secretary, stood up and gave a report. He outlined the Balden grievance. He brought the abcess to a head. He gave a close resumé of the struggle from its first active moment. He took the men into the room where stood the round table, and in his own inimitable manner — for Stramper was exceedingly clever in such things — he showed them the bosses and he revealed their arguments.

The masses sat stolid. Therein lies their greatness. Their stolidity. Their wonderful capacity to take blows without flinching. In the semi-darkness of the theatre they smoked on, expectorated, and refused to ejaculate.

The chairman added his quota. Blinker stood up and told his portion of the tale . . . .

The Federation Board . . . . . .

The Federation Board. . . . . .

And after that the men. Crude questions, and, cute questions. Question aimed at drawing out the tidings they desired. Question answered evasively. The neat question answered at length. Yes, it is a terrible poison, this opportunism.

Joe Trotter stood up, and the masses made way for him. They had a kind affection for Joe Trotter. He was a thoughtful lad. A bit revolutionary, and all that, but you could trust him. He might mean mad things, but he thought they would be for the best. If you followed Joe Trotter, well you wouldn't go to the boss for comfort.

"It seems to me," he said quietly, "that the boss is adamant on this point. He doesn't mean to give in. That's clear to anybody who cares to look . . . ."

"Why?" rapped Blinker.

"Because his logic is as clear as ours. We say, if we go down then we'll all suffer. He says: if given in to Balden under pressure from the Federation Board, then I'll very soon be giving in on all sides. That's simple, I suppose, even for your rather thick head, Mr. Blinker. . . ."

When the laugh died down, he started on his tack again. "Our job is to make this a county question. You might say that the leaders at Darlstone will not allow it. True, they won't. But why worry about a handful of bureaucrats? Go over their heads to the masses. That's the only way. . . ."

"Like you did at Hebden, and got caned for it," sneered Blinker.

"Yes, like I got it at Hebden," assented Trotter. "They were able to say to me: You ask us to come out on strike with you, but do you carry the mandate of your Federation Board? And I had to confess that I didn't. I'll ask the men here: Men, comrades, I went to Hebden Colliery the other day, and I asked a meeting of the men to come out on strike and help us. Did I do right?"

Here was appeal. The masses sat up.

"Yes."

And when they roar approval, they mean it. The masses understand logic in its simple forms.

"Had I been able to carry a mandate from the Federation Board the bureacrats at Hebden Colliery could not have stopped the men from lining up with us. That is the next step, comrades. You cannot isolate yourselves in struggle. Your fight is wider and and deeper than any Federation Board. You've got to make it a larger question, a county question, a national question. You've got to line everybody up, class against class, until capitalism is swept away from the earth. That is the only way.

"Now what is the Federation Board going to do? From what I gather they are prepared to negotiate the best terms possible. What are the best terms possible? There's nobody on that platform can answer that question, except to say, acceeding to Balden's demands and removing the cause of the trouble. You can take it from me that if the Federation Board is not prepared to ask the rest of the workers to help us in our struggle they'll. . . ."

"They'll what?" barked Blinker.

"Let him alone!" yelled the crowd.

Trotter stood until the interruptors had finished protesting.

"Trotter's not going to cast any aspersions on the Federation Board." growled Blinker. "I won't stand for it. I want to tell the men that I'm no traitor. . . ."

When the further interruption had been controlled by the chairman, Trotter went on quietly.

"Mister Blinker ought not to protest until he has got something to protest about. Nobody wishes to cast any aspersions on anybody. If there are any aspersions to be cast, Mister Blinker will manage that all right. But to resume, I want to say that if the Federation Board is not prepared to gather strength from the wide masses of the county, from whom will they gather the strength to come to terms with the boss? They say they won't give in. They say they want the men back to work. Somebody must help . . . . shall we say certain members of the bourgeoisie in this town . . . . . the Town Clerk and the Mayor. . . ."

And the men of Hunton gasped at the effrontery of Trotter's suggestion. After that, fear struck home . . . . .

VIII

It is a noble sight to see the masses on parade. There is nothing to compare with it. On the Red Square they march in all their wondrous glory, carrying their banners, weaving their simple tunes, laughing gayly, streaming the air with their slogans, shou-

ting and singing, stopping to dance and to laugh into the smiling vault above. A truly nobel picture which culls from deep down in the rostrum set up on route a sigh of pleasure which lapses over the years to be recalled often and often. It is a tremendous sight — the joy of the toilers . . . . . But how terrible is the march of men who seek salvation, the strained glance, the iron of endeavour ill-concealed, the march upon the enemy . . . . . Tramp, tramp, slowly, without joy, terrible, fierce, tremendous in its placid, calculating stolidity . . . . .

So the men of Shielding marched through their town on the following Sunday morning. Bands and banners, blaring and waving, and the sea-breezes sending a slight shudder over the empty-bellied throng.

Ten thousand marching . . . marching . . . marching . . . .

The sea, blue, eternal, plucking its white undergarments from about its body and waving them in the air, always at war, never still, greeted them. It pounded away at the pier as they gathered about the platform. The men, like the waves, pounded upon the sand about the platform, and waited, tense and still . . . . Ten thousand . . . . a contrast eternally with the sea . . . .

And they heard their doom. The Federation Board, together with the Mayor and the Town Clerk had waited upon the agent, who had agreed to reconsider the whole question of the dispute as soon as the men had returned to work.

"There will be no questions," roared the chairman. "You will all return to your lodges and full explanation will be given there."

"And the masses roared back in such a voice that the sound of the sea was stilled. "WE HAVE BEEN SOLD!"

The platform disappeared.

IX

Joe Trotter felt like getting drunk.

Reay, Jos Mackey and he went into a pub and called the drinks. They paid ninepence.

"I'll tell you a little rhyme," said Jos Mackey.

"Go on," said Trotter.

The Federation Board,
It had ten thousand men,
It marched them up the hill,
And it marched them down again.

They drank their yellow beer and became still. There are moments that are too sacred to be broken by even the quietest thoughts.

The bar passed from their consciousness. They did not hear a sound in Shielding. Proletariat called to proletariat. They heard the beating of hammers on anvils, and in their hearts they knew that although bitterness of defeat was their portion, there was still the recompense of giant struggle nobly achieved in other parts. . . .

It is good to have this comfort. . . .

X

Joe Trotter put down his pick and slowly wiped the sweat and coal from about his gleaming navel. He looked fearlessly into the eyes of Blinker who, in his capacity as local mines inspector had come to inspect his working place and to interrogate him.

"Look here, Blinker!" he said, "You aren't the stuff heroes are made of. . . ."

Blinker laughed. "Come off it, Joe," he said. "Why do you take such a high and mighty stand always. Can't you see that in these days you've got to be a bit more than an idealist . . . ."

"A realist, I suppose," Joe sneered.

"Of course."

"No, Blinker," he said. "You've merely got to be human. The proletarian expression is the highest. . . ." He stopped because he knew he hadn't thought that out well enough. "Listen! We can't afford it, man! Don't you see, over there, in the USSR, they are building Socialism! Do you understand that? We have got to help. We've got to line up some day. And the likes of you, Blinker, are not going to be allowed to do any damage. . . ."

"But . . . .."

"When you lead ten thousand men up the garden for a fortnight, like you lot did, you become a menace to the whole world. Men who do a thing like that wouldn't hesitate to destroy all that has been so nobly achieved since 1917. But you shan't. . ." He struck the face fiercely. "No, you shan't, he shouted. "Hands off. . . ."

And Blinker left him with his vision. He saw one hundred and fifty millions toiling to build a new world.

Fussao Hayashi

Cocoons

A Story of Japan

Whenever I see cocoons, I am reminded of Yasuo Sakai. Of late I have become so completely a city dweller that it is only by the patterns of autumn grasses on fabrics in the shop windows that I know the fall has come. No longer can I wander along country lanes where migrant crows drop seeds as they fly, the baskets of live cocoons swaying on the carts as if ready to topple off any minute. . . .

Sakai and I were bosom pals in the middle school. We shared a room and with our two little desks side by side were as inseparable as Siamese twins.

At the back of the school rose hills covered with low pines. Whenever summer drew near wild flowers blossomed round the roots of these trees.

"Funny little guys; beauties, aren't they?" I remember his remarking solemnly one day as we watched a little snake, all its scales aglint in the sunlight, disappear noiselessly under a bush.

There was a tinge of bitterness in his words. He himself was always called "the dirty guy" by the bullies of the class as he was always in rags. Were he a spineless chap that nick-name alone would have been enough to humiliate him. Their scorn, however, probably contained an admixture of jealousy since he was unusually intelligent and was generally at the head of the class. He combined the extremes of cleverness and poverty. In this he was strongly contrasted with me who was remarkable neither for brains nor poverty. I was his only friend and whenever he got behind with his school fees I would offer part of my allowance as a matter of course.

Yes, in that dormitory at the foot of those hills, with our desks side by side, we were as inseparable as twins.

From the hills you could see the sea. The two boys would often climb up and lying down facing that blue dish of sea under the sky, try vainly to throw stones into it, or yell down at it the duet "River of Love," in voices strangely out of tune.

One day, under a wild briar bush we found a snake eating a grass-green frog. Out of the open jaws of the snake only the little suckers on the end of the frog's hind legs stuck out, waving as if sending out SOS signals. I noticed Sakai's eyebrows twitch, and then he let fly with his dusty boot and kicked the snake fiercely right in the belly. Then, squashing it with his heel, he watched it intently as a thin trickle of crimson blood came out of the yellow mouth.

"The devil," he snarled.

The frog had been rescued and it lay motionless on the grass with the snake's slimy saliva still clinging to it.

"The rotten devil," he repeated.

I remember another incident.

One of the abuses of middle school life was that the older boys invariably bullied the younger ones. One practice they delighted in was to get their miserable victim in some lonely field and, on some trumped-up charge, lay into him savagely with their fists. As we were wandering over the hills one day we had the bad luck to be caught by a gang of bullies.

One of them—his father owned a silk mill in our town—a rough, stupid fellow, called Okawa, came rushing at us.

"Look here, Sakai, you've been getting too cheeky lately."

Sakai gazed into his face for some time and then blurted out impulsively: "How do you make that out?"

The big boy suddenly gave him a punch in the chest.

"I'll teach you to answer back a senior. That's what I call cheeky."

Sakai rolled over on the grass but soon picked himself up and made a mad rush at his assailant's chest. But he was much smaller and anyhow it was three to one. The next minute he was on the ground again and was beaten like a dog. Then he rose a second time and I saw the glint of steel. It was his new pen-knife he held in his right hand.

The color left Okawa's lips. Sakai's face too seemed to go a shade paler. Swiftly as a rat Okawa scurried but Sakai ran him down near the place he had once squashed the snake. The patch stopped there. Okawa stood waiting with the strength of one at bay.

"Stab me if you dare." Peeling off his coat, Okawa threw it on the grass and in the manner of all bluffers he bared his breast and extended both arms.

"You think I won't stab you?" Sakai's voice sounded strangely calm and collected. The gleam of cold steel rent the air.

"Oh!" All my blood went cold within me and this cry sprung from me, as I saw how Okawa fell prone on the grass.

His fellow bullies ran to him to pick him up and carry him away. Sakai, limp and apathetic, followed them with his eyes, but once their figures had disappeared behind the bushes he collapsed and lay motionless on the grass.

When I regained my presence of mind, I hurried anxiously over to him. His face was buried in the summer grass and his shoulders were heaving.

Why? I could not understand the reason.

Talking about not understanding reasons, there was another thing about Sakai that I could never fathom. In his desk he always kept a single white silkworm cocoon. Once I asked him why he kept it, but when he refused to answer, out of spite I cut it up into little bits with scissors. For a whole day after that he did not speak to me. A week later a similar cocoon was in his drawer again.

Later these two riddles were solved together.

I think it was on the second or third day after this incident. Sakai suddenly asked me to go with him to the town, and took me to a small silk mill that stood near the water front. He seemed to be no stranger there, for with just a nod to the doorkeeper he hurried into the mill. I followed him.

Inside the mill, murky with steam and dark like the inside of a kitchen on a rainy day, the old-fashioned spindles turned noisily. The foul smell of dead grubs and the heavy humid air almost suffocated you. Before each girl stood two pots full of boiling water, one big and one small; in the small pot white cocoons kept bobbing up and down. One or two boiled cocoons would be transferred by the girl's hand into the bigger pot and, as they danced round in the hot water, they gradually became thinner. At the same time an almost invisible thread passed from them, above the girls' heads and was wound round the droning spindles behind. With the revolutions of the belt, the reels of silk became fatter and the cocoons thinner. When one cocoon had been completely unwound, the little black grub would appear floating dead on the surface. I watched it all with unaccustomed eyes.

"Wait just a minute," Sakai hurriedly disappeared behind the machines, coming back after a time with an elderly woman wearing a mill girl's uniform.

"This is my mother."

"Eh?" I was completely taken back and bowed my head in confusion.

"Now, mother, thank him."

Sakai's mother was about 50 and had smooth brows unlike the woman of today. Bowing her head, in which white hairs had begun to show, she kept thanking me for my kindness to Yasuo and implored me to remain his friend. This made me very bashful. I blushed scarlet, and could do nothing but keep bowing too, unable to look up into that face, so full of brooding and humility.

On the way home Sakai related his early history. Of how during his fourth year at the primary school his mother and he had been left alone through his father's death and reduced from comfortable circumstances to poverty; of how she had started working in this mill to help him enter the middle school. He had stuck out against going, but the teachers urged it on him saying it was a pity to leave off at that point, and his mother, her eyes full of tears, tried to persuade him saying there was no one but him to restore the fortunes of the Sakais, so he finally yielded; but when he saw his mother wearing out her aged body in the unhealthy mill in order to pay his school fees, he could not feel much like school; with her whole month's wages they just managed to pay the minimum fees; but if he left school it would only sadden his mother who was straining herself to keep on working, and would shatter her last hopes; so partly as there seemed no way out of it, and partly out of gratitude to her, he kept on at school.

"I've never told anyone these things. I've never felt it necessary. But you—you've always been so decent to me. And then sometimes I've told my mother about you and she has said, with tears in her eyes, how much she wanted to meet you and thank you, and that's why I brought you today."

"And also," he soon continued, "there was another reason for bringing you to the mill. Perhaps you know that the owner of that mill is the father of that Okawa I knifed the other day?"

"Yes," I nodded.

"That's why I think I was in the wrong the other day. Of course, it's mean to bully younger boys, but defiance, when a personal grievance enters into it, is worse, it seems to me. If Okawa had been alone that day—that Okawa who is always jeering at me just because my mother works in his mill—I don't think I would have gone so far as to use a knife. When I realized what I had done, I howled at my own meanness."

I watched the red evening sun between the roofs of the town as it sank into the sea.

Two or three years passed. We both became students of the same high school. Sakai received a scholarship from the prefecture while I somehow or other succeeded in passing the entrance examination.

We were lying in the grass on a hill that overlooked the school building and talking idly as the summer sun shone down pleasantly on our faces and our new gold buttons.

"I still keep my cocoon," said Sakai, as if he had suddenly called it to mind.

"Do you? Is your mother still in that mill?"

"I can't get her to leave. She says she'll keep on, no matter what happens, until I graduate. Of course, in a way she has reason on her side for as long as I stay at school there is no other way for her to live except the mill."

Sakai bit his lips as he plucked stalks of grass, and his voice became thoughtful.

"Lately I've begun to have doubts about life," he said. "For instance, take that mill: now there are about 300 girls working there. They're mostly from 15 to 24 years, all farmers' daughters from the neighboring villages. When they come they're young, country girls with good strong bodies, but after a year or two, they begin bandaging up their throats and coughing suspiciously; their eyes become red and swollen, and their fingers whitish and rotten, and then they return home. Some of them wither and die while in the mill and you hear sometimes of girls getting their hair caught in the machines.

"The humid air; the long hours from morning right on into the night; undernourishment—when I see those girls under such conditions, wearing out their young bodies before my very eyes, I think of the kettles and of the cocoons which the girls reel.

"Each one, boiled in the hot water becoming thinner and thinner, its life drained from it by that single invisible silken thread until finally the black grub—now a useless dead thing—is cast up on the surface of the water.

"But on the other hand—and this is what you've got to notice isn't there, exactly corresponding to the reels winding and winding above the girls' heads, a group of men who grow continually fatter and fatter?"

Sakai paused for a minute to wipe the sweat from his brow, and then in a voice deliberately lowered, went on.

"And you know, I have a feeling—it's horrible to think about it—but still I have the feeling that something will happen to mother in that mill before I get safely through the university. My mother holds to it almost like a religion, that the ruin of the Sakai family is our fault and that we must somehow restore it. Not only that, but as a mother she naturally feels a deep joy and an object in life in giving a proper education to her only child. I can understand that feeling quite well.

"But so long as she's in that mill, isn't she too, just one of those miserable silkworm cocoons? An invisible silken thread is drawing, drawing at her life too. . . ."

Words seemed futile as an answer.

We were third year high school students. It was a winter's day with graduation close at hand. Late at night, in spite of the snow, Sakai came to my lodgings.

"What's the matter?" Looking at his face, bloodless and like that of a man just come from a tomb, I felt intuitively that something serious was wrong.

"My mother is dead. . . . Too late, too late."

Almost snatching from him the telegram he had received I recalled his prophetic words and a cold shiver ran down my spine.

". . . . . ."

My voice failed to utter a word. For a moment that face which I had seen in the silk mill, among all those droning spindles, with its smooth brows, so unlike the women of today, rose before me and then was gone.

"Too late. In the New Year vacation I begged her to let me leave school. I told her no son could bear to send his mother out into a mill like that, and that there was no rest for me while I knew she was surrounded by all sorts of dangers, and helpless against them. It was the first time I'd been back home for a long while and I realized with a shock the great change in her. She wept but would not hear me."

His lips quivering, he brushed away the tears that welled up.

"But talking like this won't do any good now. I'm going home by the night train. Would you mind lending me the fare?"

I put together all the money I had and gave it to him and walking through the snow saw him off at the station.

About a week later I got a letter from him.

"This morning we gathered up my mother's ashes. They all went nicely into an urn less than seven inches high. Sitting with it before me, I realize more deeply than ever the terrible blow I have suffered. More than ten girls from the mill came to the funeral. They were girls whom my mother had been kind to. More had asked to be allowed off just to attend the funeral but as you can imagine, permission was not granted. Those who came had managed to escape knowing they would be punished for it. I was deeply moved by this.

"When in the New Year vacation I was stopped by mother from leaving school, I thought out a plan of my own. Were I to enter university, I would try to find work

to do in my spare time. If I succeeded even if I got mother to leave the mill, we would have enough for the two of us. But as things turned out, this too has ended in nothing.

"Sitting before this urn, my thoughts turn to the system, which silently, with subtle force, destroyed my mother's life.

"The cocoons getting thinner, the reels fatter—the dead black body of the grub.

"My mother wanted me to get on in the world. That was her only wish. I too tried to comply with it and exerted all my energies towards that goal—and see what's happened.

"But I will not despair. In the crematorium in the hills, just as I was getting together her ashes by the light of a candle, suddenly an idea came to me. It seemed a new road opened up before me. There was not only one cocoon. My mother was not the only sufferer.

"In this land of ours, alone, how many millions, no tens of millions of human beings like the cocoons in the boiling water, are having their life blood sucked from them.

"It may sound funny to you to say it abruptly like this. But I know the enemy. I have to fight. I expect I shall have a chance of talking about this with you more in detail sometime. I remember how once in our middle school days, I used my knife against one fellow who bullied me. The road I am talking now is not a mean, cowardly one like that. This is work fit for men, which I must give up my whole life to. It would please my mother too, I think.

"I'm not coming back to school. It will be some time before I'm able to meet you again, probably. I hope you'll take care of yourself and study hard.

"One other thing—in the left hand drawer of my desk you will find a white cocoon. It's a funny sort of keepsake, but I'd like you to keep it in memory of my mother."

That must have been ten years ago.

Whenever I see cocoons, I am reminded of Yasuo Sakai. But there are few chances for me to see them, since I have become so completely a city dweller, knowing that the fall has come only by the patterns of autumn grasses on fabrics in the shop-windows.

There is no need of cocoons to remind me of Sakai now. I too have joined the ranks of those he calls "Comrade."

V. Stavsky

In the Marshes

Fragment From A Novel

The driver pulled a wry face and drew in the reins. The horses tossed their heads, snorting, and sat back on their haunches, digging at the earth with ringing hoofs.

Chekan gripped the handle of his revolver and flung himself out of the cab, his coattails flapping as he crossed the yard.

At one glance he took in the scene and it remained fixed on his mind forever: the broad square of the Cossack farmyard, the shuddering acacia boughs naked against the cold blue of the March sky.

Makeitch lay in the middle of the yard, his legs in their tan boots drawn up to his stomach. A clot of melting snow clung to his long black hair, bits of dung stuck to his ear.

A reddish black pool oozed from under the head. But the chest rose and fell slowly.

The partisan, Kovgan, sobbing out curses, ran past Chekan to the man lying on the ground.

Chekan knew that the enemy had gone and rushed through the open door into the chilly house.

He dashed out again in a second with huge pillows in his arms.

Kovgan was kneeling by Makeitch. He raised a distorted face to Chekan; the great swollen purple veins on his neck started right under his chin.

"He's going!" he cried hoarsely. "Shut up! I'll wallop you with this if you don't!" Chekan made a swing at him with the pillow.

"Lift him up, take him this way. Now carry him!"

Placing the pillow under Makeitch's head, he took him by the shoulders while Kovgan lifted the legs.

Makeitch's face was a bleeding pulp. Blood streamed from the corner of his mouth. The chest went on rising and falling slowly.

The horses strained to the side, their flaming eyes squinted wildly.

"Hold them!" Chekan shouted in a choked threatening voice to the driver. He himself sat down in the cab with Makeitch's head and shoulders on his knees. Kovgan sat there holding the legs.

"To the hospital!"

The horses swept forward. The wheels hummed over the hollow, paved road.

Makeitch's breathing grew still slower and more difficult.

"Get on there, you son of a bitch, lash 'em!" Kovgan roared, his lower jaw twisting to one side.

The whip cracked, the horses flew on. Chekan sat, all his strength, all his life in his eyes he listened to the hoarse, gurgling breathing of his friend.

His whole life passed in disconnected scraps through his mind; bathing in the cheerless, tepid stream, after the days work in the factory, the tricks they had played and the scrapes they had got into in the workshop. Their first days in the Red Army, their pride in the bandoliers with metal ribs strapped across their chests, the first revolvers with thick red cords.

And just as willingly as he had then joined up with the Red Guards, Makeitch left his newspaper work and came to this Cossack settlement.

"You only know how to fight but you've got to learn to talk to folk as well," he had told Chekan, laughing.

The snorting horses galloped past the villagers running down the street to the Soviet.

Chekan bent his head and wiped the sweat from his brow with the upturned collar of his coat.

"It's nothing! It will pass! He'll get well, and be wiser next time," he consoled himself. He caught a glimpse of the doctor's white coat through the hospital window. The cab drew up.

"They'll just bandage him and we'll take him back again," thought Chekan. Kovgan was shouting something to him. But he did not rise, he was suddenly seized with fear for Makeitch, he could not move. His grey eyes, bloodshot from sleeplessness stared without winking at the door of the hospital.

"What are they doing, anyhow? Are they asleep or what?"

And just as his indignation was ready to burst all bounds the door banged and the doctor ran out. In a broken voice Chekan called out:

"I'm the OGPU agent. Bandage this man at once!"

The pale faced doctor took Makeitch's hand, feeling for the pulse.

Makeitch's last few sobbing gasps blotted out the world for Chekan.

He caught the doctor's alarmed glance, rose slowly, and laid Makeitch's head carefully on the chilly leather cushions of the cab.

And went away, staggering a little, baring his teeth and breathing as if he was biting at the air.

II

The meeting arose spontaneously. The crowd surged like water in a gully around the settlement soviet. A farm woman was shouting something from the high flight of cement steps leading to the building.

Chekan remembered having seen her a week ago at the early morning market. A lot of women had collected then, empty handed, and set up a clacking. The Cossacks stood gloomily to one side, glancing furtively at the approaching figures of Chekan and Makeitch.

The center of the crowd was the hottest. Chekan and Makeitch pushed their way through the women to the heart of the trouble. This same farm hand stood there, with her thin hair streaming, the handkerchief from her head fallen on to her shoulders. She had seized a stout peasant woman, evidently well-to-do, by the breast of her orange leather coat and heavy shawl and was shouting:

"You, nit, you, going against the collective farm, you bloody leech! I went and ruptured myself working for you, and you took my last few kopecks for yourself! Get out of here."

"There's a class struggle going on here!" Makeitch had said gaily.

And now this farm woman was telling the people about Makeitch, while bright tears rolled down her face.

A lump rose in Chekan's throat and a kind of bitter vexation overcame him. He called up in his mind the tall, stooped figure of his friend, the bright, gay expression of his black eyes. And how he had gone off to persuade that bandit of a Mishchenko to plough and sow, and how the latter had kept silence and turned away his dark unshaven face. Makeitch had called out good-humoredly, "Come round to the soviet,

we'll have another talk about it." and gone over to his horse. The blow of a pitchfork over the head had stunned him and he fell before he could get his feet out of the stirrups.

Mishchenko had turned into a wild beast, had trampled Makeitch into the ground and ridden away.

Makeitch's son had run to the soviet and told the tale.

"Makeitch picked a rare one to persuade at a time like this," Chekan thought.

Now Kovgan, the partisan, jumped up on the steps, pushing the woman aside. He tore off his sheepskin cap. His burnt face seemed alight with astonishment, due to a white scar aslant his forehead like a brand.

"They flogged us and killed us!" shouted Kovgan. The crowd listened in dead silence, as an echo would take up and repeat the ringing words.

"They drove us to a cruel death. I've lost two brothers for our cause. Now they want to flog us and kill more of us; this god-damned bandit has been the death of our Makeitch, the one we all loved best!"

Kovgan drew in a sharp breath and beat the air with his hand.

"But I'm going to get him, this bandit. I'll drag him out of the bowels of the earth! I swear it! I'll fetch him alive to this spot!"

Chekan's lips were swollen with biting. He thought, "The crowd is silent, it's waiting for something. That old, White bandit, Mishchenko, has run off to the marshes but there are plenty of his sort here in this crowd, they've all sorts of ideas in their heads. Some don't know yet, which side to take. And the others, they want to get out to the marshes, that nest of bandits. This murder is the last flash in the pan of an enemy that knows he is finished, the collective farm brigades are ploughing over all the boundaries of the steppe allotments. This spring, 1930, it'll be rooted out of the marshes, they'll have to pay in full for Makeitch, and they'll pay right here in the settlement!"

Chekan's young, dark face had now cooled down and looked like iron. He came out to the edge of the steps. He straightened his collar with its red tabs and orange pipings.

He was silent for a few moments, while his glance roved over the crowd.

His blood seemed to surge through his veins, his thoughts beat and whirled in his brain — should he go after the enemy and avenge Makeitch? No!

"Comrades, collectivists and individual working farmers!" Chekan's brows were drawn tightly together, his voice was cool and quiet. The crowd listened, scarcely breathing.

"I, as a member of the Communist Party and of the Cheka, give my oath to bring the murderer to this place. We aren't storybook heroes or anything of that sort—this has got to be done!"

The crowd responded in various ways. Chekan looked in the faces as he was accustomed to, when he wanted to form an estimate and verify it. And he felt still more sharply, by the hoarse approval of the Red partisans and of that farm woman, by the secretive silence of that group forming over there, that there was more than one obstacle to be overcome in the settlement, and that it would all have to start with the taking alive, at all costs, of Makeitch's murderer.

A quarter of an hour later, as he was taking leave of the comrades in the settlement Party nucleus, his parting words were:

"The chief thing is mass work, do mass work, lads. To strike a blow isn't at all that difficult; we'll strike till the earth'll rise up in a pillar from under them, but you do the mass work so that the masses themselves will rise like a mountain!"

III

For three days now Chekan and Kovgan had been chasing the murderer. Mishchenko was dashing about the farms and settlements on Makeitch's horse.

"Going round his pack," Kovgan guessed. Chekan nodded. "That's true."

Mishchenko, the hefty bandit who once had belonged to the Cossack captain, Riabokon's squad, was undoubtedly visiting his old connections. What purpose, except escape, he had in view no one knew.

Chekan hurried Kovgan all the time, he made inquiries at all the Communist nuclei, at all village soviets, and everywhere he said the same thing.

The news of the murder went round the district, people pricked up their ears, the Communists and Young Communist Leaguers, the active collective farmers, the Red partisans.

"We're fighting alongside of you, aren't we?" whispered a man of about Kovgan's age, one of the collective farm brigade leaders, to Chekan. The two had halted in the steppe to give the horses a rest.

"That's right! You carry on the mass work. But don't forget the farming. See!" Chekan's eyes wandered over the gay spring steppe.

From day to day spring blustered in with more and more force. Green things came out. The little dells swam in a miragecreating mist, the blue crests of the mountains to the south lifted themselves to the azure of the spring sky. And the sky was full of the song of the larks.

Just behind Chekan's shoulder Kovgan grunted.

"What's up?" asked the former,swinging round.

"You think I don't want to plough," said Kovgan gazing with misty eyes at the fields.

"Wait, when we get our man, you'll plough to your heart's content!" Chekan chuckled, drawing his brows together still closer.

"That's just like a partisan, wants to plough right off, and won't be happy till he does it!"

When they reached Demin Yerik, Mishchenko had just two hours start of them. He left Makeitch's hard-ridden, skew-bald gelding by the wayside, took the ferry across the River Protoka and made for the Solodky farm.

"He's making for the marshes!" exclaimed Chekan, frowning, and his grey eyes went very cold.

"Well, stir yourself Kovgan, or we won't be able find him!"

They made their way in the dark to Solodky's farm. The wind had changed during the day, it was blowing now from the mountains on the Black Sea, driving the clouds before it. The air was sultry and evening brought a sprinkling of soft rain.

The sweating horses squelched along the muddy road, their heads hanging wearily. They stumbled frequently.

"We'll take him wherever he gets to!" Kovgan bristled. "I went through the Astrakhan desert, it was an unknown part, we came out at the Caspian Sea and lo and behold! frosts. We would make a hole in the ice in the estuaries but the water stank, it wasn't fit to drink. Snow fell in the night and when I went out in the morning the whole battery was snowed up. The horses and camels were frozen and lay like hillocks under the snow. Then, I see their ears twitching, better get them on their feet. What we went through before we got to Yashkul! But I feel quite at home in the marshes. I used to hunt here; what game there'll be about just now!"

Lights twinkled ahead of them. A dog barked.

"And what if he's here?" Chekan was about to lash the horse's lean sides. "No, it would be better to go up slowly!"

They tied the horses to the fence. Scarcely breathing they picked their way through the damp murk to the vague whiteness of the house. A door creaked.

Kovgan, taking no notice of Chekan's angry "Sh-sh!" rushed on ahead. Chekan was about ten paces behind him.

"Halt!" sreamed Kovgan. From behind a corner of the house a deafening fire was opened on him.

"Halt! Halt there!" shouted Kovgan, running in the direction of the shots. Two bodies flopped heavily into the mud.

When Chekan, getting out his revolver, dashed through the gate, a figure darted out from behind a heap and vanished behind the house.

Kovgan jumped up at that moment and knocked Chekan off his balance.

"Fool!"

"The gun!" roared Kovgan. "There it is—it's one of our guns!"

"He's got away, all thanks to you! Devil take you! In a hurry, weren't you?"

The ten farmyards awoke to life in a second.

Chekan dispatched Kovgan to watch the ferry of the Protoka and to warn their own people to close the roads leading from the marsh.

Then, resolved to bide his time, he tied the nose-bags of oats round the horses' heads and sat down in the house for a long chat with the farmers.

"I dont know what sort of a fellow he was. Where's he from? I never saw a soul!" the master of the house, a thickset, redhaired Cossack disavowed all knowledge of the affair, but his eyes were shifty and sparkled evilly. And again the image of Makeitch, dying on the pillow, the melting snow in his already dead hair, rose before Chekan's eyes. But he controlled his furiously beating heart. Shading his tired, puffy eyes from the light, he told how the big, collective farm "October Revolution" was being organized at the Vysielka settlement.

"Our government is strong, it's built a lot of factories, turning out machines! We're going to reform farming so that the poor will forget how they suffered for lack of horses and how they used to run begging round the rich farmers, slaving for them. And what are we building up the collective farms for?"

Kovgan came in covered with mud and joined in the conversation as soon as he crossed the threshold.

"I'll tell you what it is, citizens, there are some folk in the settlements who don't want the collectives. They're enemies. And then there are some of the working farmers who don't rightly know what the idea is. They're like those Kalmyk horses. In our 'Steel division' we had some Kalmyk horses, they wouldn't take to oats for anything, you could skin them alive and they wouldn't. Our commander, Jloba, gave an order to tie on the nosebags. And the horses reared, kicked. Funny! Then they got that used to it after awhile you couldn't get them away from it!"

"But these are folk, not horses!" said Chekan, when the laughter had died down. "You should explain!"

"And me and Jloba —"

Chekan gave a deep sigh, moved further into the corner, into the shadow, dozed off and woke again. His head was full of noises, there was a bitter sickening taste in his mouth, his legs and the small of his back ached from the saddle. His sweaty palm gripped the ribbed handle of the revolver.

It was his third sleepless night. All of a sudden he seemed to see the wall of the cottage whitish in the murk, and the shadow of the bandit.

"I should have shot him. I wouldn't miss!" he thought, and then scolded himself.

"But we've got to take him alive, show everybody, so they can see the enemy for themselves."

IV

As soon as it was getting light they started out with a stock of bread and water.

The marshes began right from the farms. In the damp grey half light reddish heads of the reeds could be faintly seen. They rustled sharply in the wind. Naked stumps and poplars glimmered round about the farm.

Mischenko's tracks led straight to the marshes along a narrow ridge. Every nail of his heavy hobnailed boots could be clearly seen on the damp track.

"He's making tracks for Kara-Kuban!" said Kovgan and his face grew sterner. "Keep close on his heels and get him before he gets another gun."

"I will that!" snorted the other. "How shall we get across Yerik, that's what I want I want to know?"

The horses moved with difficulty over the sticky, sweating earth. On both sides the reeds rose up like a wall. Water splashed over the porous ice that had been overtaken by spring.

The air was full of sound. Somewhere behind the reeds ducks were raising a din, snipe whistled. Over the travellers' heads a flock of barnacle geese flew in martial order; their gutteral, brassy cries pierced to the heart.

"How many birds I've shot here!" Kovgan drawled in the wistful tone of a hunter, and he wiped his wet face with the red cloth top of his black fur cap.

"Come on, come on!" replied Chekan. He listened in alarm to the loud clop clop of the horses' hoofs as he studied the bandit's trail.

"He couldn't have turned off anywhere could he?"

"If he did, that would be the end of him! This isn't the marsh." Kovgan poked the reeds with his whip. "He can only beat it along the ridge to Yerik!"

Towards midday the wet low clouds disappeared somewhere to the east. The sky shone. Chekan could see from the saddle the wavy blue of Caucasian mountain spurs and the mirror of the estuary ahead. The horses breathed heavily, dropping foam from their bits.

The ridge finished at the Yerik. The travellers dismounted. The track went over the ice. But near the other side a big hole yawned in the ice; the wind ruffled the water.

"He must have fallen in. Look, he broke the ice right up to the other bank!" Kovgan whispered. The horses pricked up their ears.

"We've got to go! He went over!"

"But what about the horses? They'll sink."

"Tie the reins together and let them go. They'll find their way back to the farms."

Kovgan started out first over the ice, feeling it with his foot.

His horse gave an alarmed whinny.

"Get on!" and Kovgan waved her back angrily. The ice crackled hollowly. Kovgan went warily forward. It cracked once more under his feet. Only six paces remained to the other side but — the ice gave way.

"Ugh!" Kovgan yelled, holding on to the edges. Cold green water lapped in the hole.

Chekan slid down from the bank and over the ice with short steps.

"It's a bog, it's sucking me in!" cried Kovgan with trembling lips. He had gone as white as death.

"Just a minute!" Chekan kept to the right over the hollow ice. When he got up to the danger zone, he lay down carefully and crawled through the water, first twisting his revolver round to his back. His coat was wringing wet. The cold penetrated him and he began to shiver violently but he was already on the shore. Undoing the strap of his revolver, he leapt over towards Kovgan. There he lay down on the ice and threw the strap out.

"Don't tear it! Careful!" he shouted threateningly as he drew in the strap, to the other end of which Kovgan was clinging convulsively.

The water chilled him and made him shiver, it soaked through to his chest. But Kovgan was already lying on his chest on the ice. It cracked and dipped but Kovgan crept out. Big beads of sweat rolled down Chekan's face, the strap wound round his hand numbed his fingers. His boot soles sank deep into the mud of the bank. The sky shone serenely overhead.

Kovgan, very pale, staggered on the bank. "Ugh! You're the one!" he gasped in admiration.

"Come on! up!" Chekan interrupted, wringing out the skirts of his coat as he went. The sticky soil clung to their feet, their boots seemed to weigh about a ton each. The revolver strap was unbearably tight on the shoulder. Chekan tramped on, swaying a little. Kovgan followed in his tracks.

Mishchenko had taken the old bandit and hunters' trail to what was formerly Riabokon's haunt, where a few guns still remained buried. Chekan guessed his intentions. And he tramped on and on. Sometimes his head swam. The reeds would seem to throw themselves under his feet. He ground his teeth and marched on. On and on!

The seasoned hunter, Kovgan, used as he was to tramps like this in the marshes, now swore wearily to himself and looked with respect at the slight figure of this member of the Cheka. The sun was now no longer high in the sky and still they tramped on, munching their bread as they went. Mishchenko's strides had evidently become shorter. It was clear that he had been lying on the bank of the estuary, crushing the reeds beneath him.

"What do you say to a rest, eh?" suggested Kovgan timidly.

"Come on!" Chekan gasped out, taking deep breaths.

The reeds now alternated with bare islands. Last year's brown grass rustled over them and the reeds closed their crests over Mishchenko's trail. The day was going. Kovgan was bursting with weariness and indignation; he broke out into threats of disembowelling the murderer.

"Shut up, you! You'll get tired sooner swearing!"

"Get tired! You've worn me out long ago, you tough little devil."

At last they caught sight of a man about a kilometer ahead.

Kovgan dropped on one knee, snatched the gun with its sawed-off barrel from his shoulder and took aim. Chekan knocked the weapon out of his hand. Kovgan hit out furiously and there was nothing for it but to hit him back. Then Kovgan sat down stupidly in the mud and blinked.

Chekan unfastened his revolver.

"You won't get either the gun or the revolver now! See! We've got to take him alive!" he said, trying to control himself. Then he strode on bending under the additional weight of Kovgan's arms.

The dizziness came on oftener now, but he tramped on and on, without turning, listening to the snuffling and swearing of the partisan.

The sky flamed an even yellow. Flocks of wild duck flew at the travellers oftener, and filled the air with the whirring of wings. Geese cried. Huge black cormorants flew straight as bullets. In broken zigzags the gulls swooped down, their underwings glistening at the travellers and uttered cries that tore at the ear drums. The distance between Mishchenko and his pursuers was getting shorter and shorter. He caught sight of the pursuers from an open clearing. And ran on, and fell, ran on again, falling and picking himself up alternately. He was plainly at the end of his tether. Soon he had to go slower, dragging his feet out of the mud with greater difficulty.

The two behind him came on inexorably. Chekan stumbled oftener now, the marshes swam before his eyes and the sun flamed evilly.

Mischenko fell over a mound, mad terror and hate swept over his hairy, doglike face. He tried to rise, could not, and crawled, roaring and sobbing, into the bog grass. The two men were rapidly covering the distance dividing them from him. Blood was streaming from Chekan's nose; he snorted, spitting out clots of blood.

The grass tripped up Kovgan and he fell. He did not rise.

"Creep on!" Chekan commanded him and staggered. He, too, fell, and crawled on.

Ahead of him, with his face in a small ditch, Mishchenko was yelping. Beyond the ditch a hut built of clay could be made out. It was one of the Cossack captain Riabokon's haunts.

The sunset burned out quietly and high against the pure greenish mother-o'-pearl sky the stars came out like shining drops. The wild duck clacked desperately in the estuary. The brassy cries of the geese rang out. In the distant river course a swan's melancholy trumpeting could be heard.

Chekan raised himself, striving to control the wild beating of his heart. He undid the strap and bound the wrists of the yelping bandit.

With great difficulty they dragged him to the hut. Kovgan heated the little stove. He took bundles of reeds stored up in the corner, sprinkled them from his flask and threw them in the fire. They crackled and blazed up like powder. Chekan glanced at the fire, a face that was given an expression of permanent surprise by the white scar running across the brow. Then he said reproachfully:

"Why the devil did you start comparing them with Kalmyk horses over there on the farm. You're a fine propagandist, curse you! Now it'll get round that we're going to harness them like horses in the collective farm! You should try to convince them by talking sense, and not like that!"

Columbia

Columbia,
My dear girl,
You really haven't been a virgin for so long
It's ludicrous to keep up the pretext.
You're terribly involved in world assignations
And everybody knows it.
You've slept with all the big powers
In military uniforms,
And you've taken the sweet life
Of all the little brown fellows
In loin cloths and cotton trousers.
When they've resisted,
You've yelled, "Rape,"
At the top of your voice
And called for the middies
To beat them up for not being gentlemen
And liking your crooked painted mouth.
(You must think the moons of Hawaii
Disguise your ugliness.)
Really,
You're getting a little too old,
Columbia,
To be so naive, and so coy.
Being one of the world's big vampires,
Why don't you come on out and say so
Like Japan, and England, and France,
And all the other nymphomaniacs of power
Who've long since dropped their
Smoke-screens of innocence
To sit frankly on a bed of bombs?

O, sweet mouth of India,
And Africa,
Manchuria, and Haiti.

Columbia,
You darling,
Don't shoot!
I'll kiss you!

SIX DRAWINGS FROM CAPITAL

By Hugo Gellert

From a book of drawings from Marx's Capital *summarized in 60 pages of extracts from the original text and interpreted in 60 lithographs by a leading American revolutionary artist. Text below from the introduction.*

"*Das Kapital* is often called, on the Continent, "the Bible of the working class,' that the conclusions arrived at in this work are daily more and more becoming the fundamental principles of the great working class movement... that everywhere the working class more and recognizes, in these conclusions, the most adequate expression of its condition and of its aspirations, nobody acquainted with that movement will deny... the theories of Marx, even at this moment, exercise a powerful influence upon the Socialist movement which is spreading in the ranks of the 'cultured' people no less than in those of the working class."

Thus wrote Frederick Engels, life long friend and co-worker of Karl Marx, in a preface to the first English edition of *Das Kapital* published in 1886.

And today we might add the long list of names of those excellent American writers and artists who rally to the support of the Communist Party since their recent discovery of Marxism.

"Philosophers hitherto only interpreted the world, now it is time to change it."—Marx.

And the world is changing.

Under the leadership of Lenin, the great disciple of Karl Marx, the Russian Proletariat created the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. This first Workers' and Peasants' Republic, confident in its strength, conscious of its historic role, is Hercules and Prometheus rolled into one. (And all the Gods in the world cannot chain him!!) This young giant had cleaned up his own "Stables of Augeas" and with his mighty hands he is building the future of mankind. And bright lights flare up in his wake.....

His "little" brother is Soviet China: and a hundred million Chinese workers and peasants roar that Marxism is a living reality!

Unlike the Bible, *Das Kapital* asserts its influence far beyond the boundaries of "western civilization," and the oppressed colonial peoples of the four corners of the earth, regardless of race or color, are drawn into its orbit.

Unlike the superstition and super-naturalism of the Bible, which paralizes the reasoning faculties of the masses, *Das Kapital* makes them conscious of their relationship toward their fellow men, and provides them with the means by which they learn to understand the mechanics of society.

And unlike the Bible, which only promises heaven in the hereafter, *Das Kapital* points the way it can be realized here and now. *Das Kapital* was never more significant than it is today, when the entire capitalist world is in the grip of an unprecedented crisis: at the period of the greatest expropriation in the history of America since the white man grabbed the land from its Indian owners.

In this book only the most essential parts of the original text are given, but with the aid of the drawings the necessary material for the understanding of the fundamentals of Marxism is included.

It is my hope that in this abreviated form *Das Kapital* becomes accessible to the masses, to the evicted farmers, to the unemployed worker, to the worker in the factory or the farm.

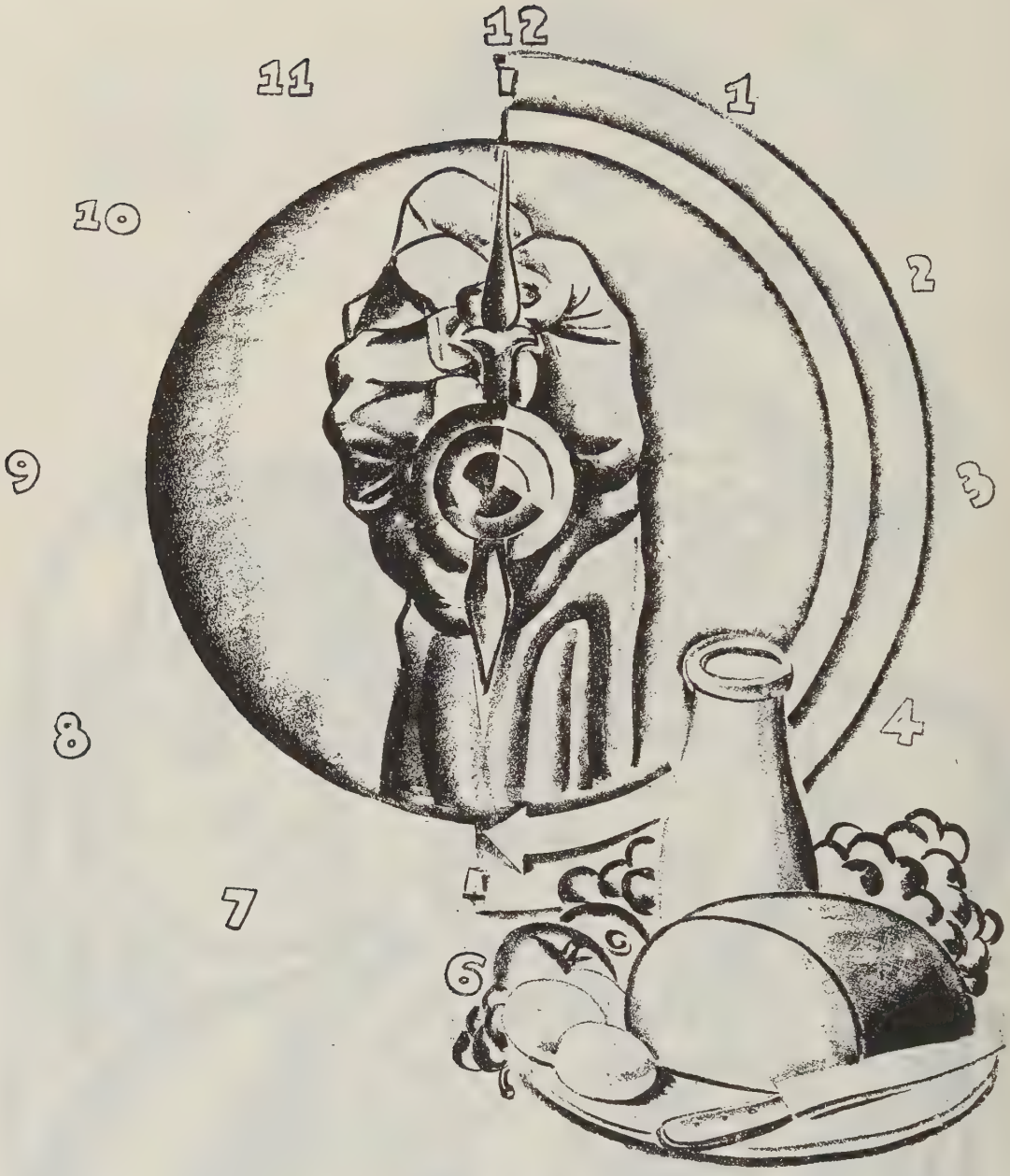
The problem of translating into graphic form the revolutionary concepts of *Das Kapital,* was a source of inspiration and stimulus to the artist. Other proletarian artists will find in the works of our great working class leaders Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin a wealth of material for their very best artistic efforts. A great advantage over our bourgeois contemporaries, who have the alternative either to chew the cud of conventional tradition or to flee into the realm of "pure form" and "abstractions" to escape the ideological bankruptcy of decaying capitalism.

Hugo Gellert

White Plains, New York November 7, 1932

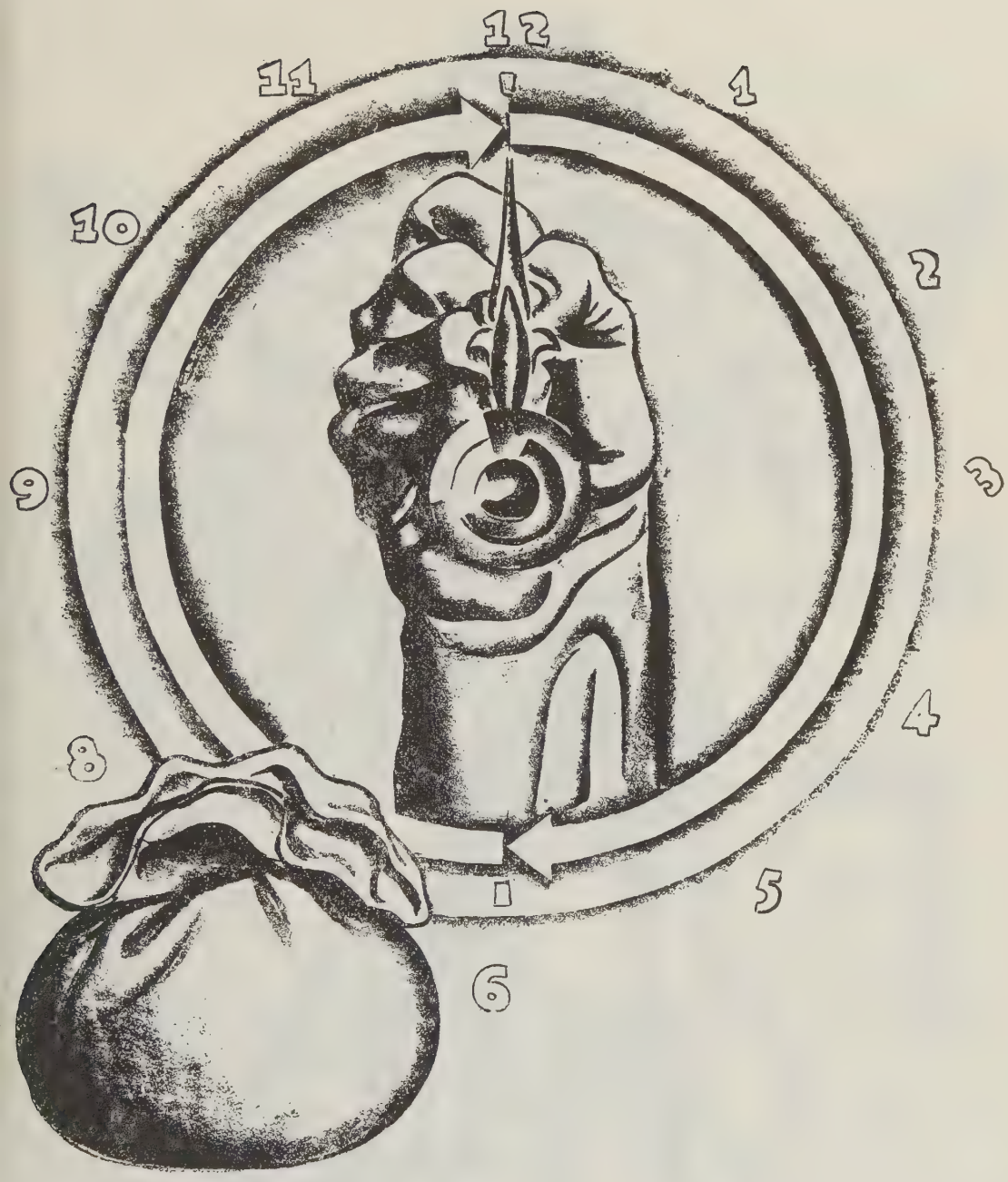
SIX DRAWINGS BY HUGO GELLERT

"...When a capitalist converts part of his capital into labor power he thereby augments his total capital. He kills two birds with one stone. He profits not only by what he receives from the worker, but by what he gives to the worker. The capital given in exchange for labor power is converted into necessaries of life and the consumption of these serves to renovate, to reproduce as it were, the muscles, nerves, bones, and brains of existing workers, and to promote the begetting of new workers..."



"Reassume that the value of labor power for one day is three shillings and that six hours of labor are incorporated in that sum. This means that six hours labor are required to produce the average amount of the means of subsistence daily required by the worker.

The value of the product is precisely equal to the value of the capital . . . advanced. There has been no expansion in the value. . . advanced; there has been no creation of surplus value; there has been no transformation of money into capital. . ."



"... It is true that the daily maintenance of the labor power costs only half a day's labor, and that nevertheless the labore power can work for an entire working day with the result that the value which its use creates during a working day is twice the value of a day's labor power... if we now compare the process of creating value and the process of creating surplus value we see that the process of creating surplus value is merely the process of creating value prolonged beyond a certain point.

If the process of creating value continues only up to the moment when the value of labor power paid by the capitalists has been replaced by a new equivalent, we have nothing more than a simple process of creating value but as soon as the process of creating value is prolonged beyond this moment it too becomes a process of creating surplus value...."

"... In handicrafts the worker uses a tool; in the factory he serves a machine. In the former case the movements of the instruments of labor proceed from the worker; but in the latter the movements of the worker are subordinate to those of the machine..."

"... with adequate profit capital is very bold. A certain ten per cent will insure its employment anywhere; twenty per cent certain will produce eagerness; fifty per cent, positive audacity; 100 per cent will make it ready to trample on all human laws; 300 per cent and there is not a crime at which it will scruple, nor a risk it will not run, even to the chance of its owner being hanged. If turbulence and strife will bring a profit, it will freely encourage both."

"... Labor with a white skin cannot emancipate itself where labor with a black skin is branded..."

Marietta Shaginyan

Interest in Life

The title does not fully correspond to what I am going to say. Interest, the word is not Russian, but is there hardly a more Russian word in its possibilities with respect to pronunciation, intonation, meaning, nuances in most truly Russian fashion, from deep honest interest in the facts of a problem to human interest in fleet hounds, than the word "interested?" Every human being is interested in life in his own way. Only the interests of a generation are common. Fifty years ago, out of this common interest of a generation and consequently, the difference in interests between two generations arose a big theme: fathers and sons, discord between parents and children.

What is this "interest of a generation?" It is first of all those questions about which people think, which are uppermost at the time. The problems of an epoch, of a definite decade. They are all interconnected. This interconnection is due to historical events - politics, engineering, philosophy, art, the dance, styles in dress, discoveries of new lands, new laws, criminal events, great personalities - all are interconnected, interwoven and the complex is called "culture." To be equal to these problems, capable of judging, to know the most essential points of each one means to be in pace with one's age, to be an "educated person."

I remember very well the educated person of twenty-five years ago and what constituted his "interest in life." Recently, sitting in the dust of an old trunk dragged out of the cellar, among the wood lice and mouse leavings I suddenly came upon a forgotten round of young interests - circulars, lecture programs, library blanks with calls for books, themes of school compositions, post card photos. . . . Haughtiness rose out of this moth eaten rubbish, the haughtiness of my generation to our fathers, the narrow, closed, humanitarian world of the reactionary student of the years 1907—1911. It will be hard to explain to our youth of today the system of thought in which we lived. To begin with I'll tell one thing; in all this paper heritage so carefully preserved, there was no sign of only one kind of paper - neither in whole nor in clippings - of a newspaper. And not because a mouse ate it. I remember a great number of students of my year and my course. We read more than is being read now. But we read no newspapers. In that sphere of interests in which we lived, newspapers were considered the after dinner business of the old folks. And not only newspapers. All social functions, production, economic questions, hunger somewhere or other, a war somewhere, or a technical discovery somewhere - all the material business of life was considered of secondary importance. Of this one did not and it was not necessary to think. It was not a subject for thought, and the subjects for thought, were in all seriousness, questions on which hung the fate of worlds. I remember them. An educated person grew up in them. Here they are - "culture" and "civilization" (where culture included intellectual growth, civilization technical development, the first being accepted, the latter rejected) : "culture" and "the church;" "personality" and "synodics;" "mystery" and sacrament" (as if the translation changed the meaning) ; Nietzchean love of fate - "amor fati," sexless Eros, white marriage - "marriage blanc".

The decadents had the power over our minds. The Polytechnic gathered tremendous audiences to listen to lectures on Oscar Wilde and no one in those audiences ever thought or perhaps even knew the meaning of the name of the institution which lent

its halls for these lectures. Neither engineering nor physics rose in the minds of youth higher than their applied meaning and to be "educated" meant really to be "humanitarian - educated."

I remember how engineers and mathematicians at that time spoke of themselves humbly as "not well read" "uneducated" because their interests lay outside of the range of that which was the breath of society, of what was the subject of conversation and discussion at the time.

I am telling this not in order to compare the past and the present, but to evaluate one more undoubted result of the Five Year Plan. No one has mentioned this, and perhaps it is not very evident. But it is more important than tens of summaries from our cultural fronts. More important because it is a synthesis, integral and not to be subdivided into summaries, percentages of literacy, attendance, included in socialist competition; more important because the arithmetic of the summaries can be obtained in any country, but the result, the integral human result, is not only a product but a direct *proof of the existence of a new culture.* I have in mind the birth of a new "educated person."

First a definition: to be "educated" does not mean to be informed. Those older engineers of whom I spoke above understood that very well and were entirely honest in their assertion that they were "uneducated." What did they understand by that? To educate oneself, make oneself into a complete integral image of the age in which one lives and which one represents does not mean to fill one's head with information but to obtain such a system of knowledge as the dominating interests of the age require. An entire society lives in this interest and you represent, express this society. And your every act, every creative exertion, will be influenced by this leading interest and will unfailingly be guided by it flowing in its channel and continuing it.

What does he look like this new, integral, "educated person?"

One evening last year I climbed the five flights to my home with a bundle of books. My daughter, also with a bundle of books in a strap also came up and we met at the door. Statistics are silent, but were one to dig into them they will tell accurately how many tired mothers and fathers, and how many thirteen year old sons and daughters, met at their doors on this lovely Moscow evening white with snow, all coming from the same place: from school. The parents came from their communist, industrial, planning, chemical academy or institute; the children from the technicum, plant, or public school. The mere fact of studying, of both the parents and the children studying is already unusual. And again we'll ask statistics: Is there anyone here that does not study? And statistics will answer none. In offices courses are instituted for employees; in theatres artists are studying political sciences; writers are listening to talks on political economy; the housemaid, after washing the dishes attends an evening school; in Solovky the political prisoners are relearning history; thieves in houses of correction are taking various courses. "Construction" say those who draw up the balance of the five years. "Study" say we, honestly having the right to it. But listen further.

Having come home, father (or mother) sits down to prepare his lesson. He came with his mind agog, right from a discussion in the mathematics department. The words used were foreign but their intent was peculiarly Soviet, and had no existence anywhere else: a discussion of students and teachers mixed organized by the politically responsible leader - that is by the head of the department. And what was the subject of discussion? Zeros. Here I write and know that millions of Soviet high school and other students understand, but over the border they will not understand. Millions of our high school students know that within the entrails of mathematics, having discovered some papers of Marx's where he speaks of the meaning of zero and a special method of differentiation (a qualitative analysis of zeros), a discussion is raging and our scientists are divided into two camps. And this, seemingly devilish discussion of zeros, abstract to the extent of the ludicrous, headbreaking, narrowly specialized, suddenly stirred up the

minds of forty year-old students, stirred the minds of a whole generation, stirred... yes, let's mention a fact: when a debate is announced at the communist academy between Holtzman and Janovskaya (our great mathematicians) try to ask for a ticket on the phone! I'll bet you will not get one, and if you are lucky enough to obtain one you will find no room there for an apple to fall, just as twenty-five years ago at a concert of Chaliapin or Vialtzeva.

And so, the stirred father has opened his note book. At his back son or daughter, the restricted quarters have brought them closer, back to back,—has also opened his note book. Opened and shares with father: "You know, papa, we had an extraordinary lesson in mathematics today. It develops zeros aren't zeros at all!"

A complicated system of ideas—fathers; a simple one—the sons. But the interest—the actual interest occupying the mind—is one to both. In the newspaper we read excellent simple articles by Nadejda Konstantinovna Krupskaya that from year to year advance polytechnicalization in life. We hear of the tremendous work within the schools, of the concentric system of teaching. But we do not have a clear idea of what has been no more, no less, this: the problem of fathers and sons has disappeared. Our generation and the generation of our children have found common interests. We, two generations, represent about the same cultural type, we are working to create an "educated personality" common to both.

Themes, subjects, questions, problems that stir the higher schools in their simplified form also stir the lower ones. You, the older one do your lesson (workup as it is nowadays termed) in political economy on the subjects of "commodities and money", and your thirteen year old son in social science works on the same question. At the academy you are solving an electrical problem involving a rheostal, and your son in the sixth group at school is also bothered by the rheostal in physics. You are making a drawing, so does he; you have economic geography, so has he. Now and then you will, using the language of Sostchenko, scoop up from the boy—use his simpler text book as it's easier to grasp; or you will happily explain something to him according to your text book. Interest—a real, tremendous, common interest in life that has welded two generations—this is behind the general optimism of our youth and the older folks drawn to study. This is the intellectual content of the new Soviet intelligentsia. It would be foolish to assume that this intellectual is as futile as the diseased interest in "mysteries and sacraments." Why has this new system of knowledge gripped us, held us and is continually developing further? Why do abstract zeros fascinate and hold in hot discussion students, communists, men of moment in the practical world? Because the zeros are not so simple and so abstract. Because they burn. And the other abstract problems that occupy the intellects of our educated people are also incandescent and burn. These are all questions of principle, decisive, of world importance, questions not only of new knowledge, but of a new *weltanschauung,* (philosophy of life) which is being born in battle, tested and tried in fire, and will like a sword enter the practical field to plow untilled soil, analyze the qualitatively unrelated, be the new weapon of a future communist culture.

So one desires to tell the millions of readers instead of happy new year—happy new education! And may this new education during the Second Five Years serve as a bridge between men of intellectual and men of physical labor, may unite in a common interest not only fathers and sons, but also work and thought!

AT THE KOLKHOZ UDARNIK CONFERENCE

Russian leaders greet the congress of shock-workers: left to right:—Budenny, Molotov, Yakovlev, Stalin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Kalinin and others

Pioneers come to greet the kolkhoz shock-workers

HELD IN MOSCOW, FEBRUARY, 1933

National Minority delegates to the Congress

Delegates from the Gorky Region arrive at the Kursky Station

Alexey Tolstoy

ADJARIA: Pages from a Notebook

Recalling Some Crafty Englishmen

In 1916, in January, English government officials and press representatives feasted the Russian correspondents in London. Not long before this event General Yudenitch had taken Erzerum. The Englishman drank to this with delight and also to the Russian army and to Russian national culture.

The Russians (used to considering themselves inferior) pressed palms to frocked shirts, bowed and were tender as behooves representatives of the complicated Russian spirit.

At that time, while the banquet speeches were echoing, spiced with good natured English humor - in Transcaucasia, particularly in what is now Adjaria, the process of assimilating small nations to Russian culture was being conducted with military rapidity.

Adjaria is a mountainous country where two rivers, the Adjariszholy and Charoh wind in and out of the blue perspectives of wooded gorges. On precipitous bald-patches corn shows yellow and at great intervals mountain huts are perched over chasms like swallows nests. An old land of waterfalls, sheep herds, orange groves, old customs and grub agriculture. Happy with young wine the Adjar walks beside the arba singing The arba is filled with cornshucks on which the Adjar woman sits with lowered chadra over her face. Rolling about in their yoke two stunted buffaloes draw the arba tearing out clumps of yellow gorse with their feet. Up in the mountain pasture the grim Kurd, leaning on his biblical shepherd's crook watches thoughtlessly the flight of eagles.

The same clouds have drifted for centuries over this land. Time has stopped its course here. The rivers are spanned by moss-covered bridges built by Attic Greeks.

It is of course purely accidental that Adjara and the Adjarians (there are about eighty thousand of them all told) were forgotten by history. General Yudenitch quickly corrected this error.

I happened to be on my way by horseback from Batum to the Turkish border that spring at the time of the offensive. The mountain artillery had built roads to places where even the tsar's village police hardly ever looked in. Tufts of mist that got stuck in the gorges, eagles over the peaks, the noise of waterfalls and from time to time a canon shot reverberating in the mountains. The place was uninhabited. In the mountain villages vacant huts, scattered corn shucks, broken twigs of orange trees, broken bee-hives, fragments of fruit boxes. No man, no animal. And this was Russian territory presumably inhabited by Adjars and Kurds.

From an interview with the general commanding the front it appeared that the Adjars and particularly the Kurds were undependable.. The sentiment of patriotism is as foreign to them as to savages. The Kurds are born robbers and rogues. They are all connected with the Turks. . . for this reason. . . .

The general sat before a tremendous marble inkwell, at his back in a corner stood the flag in a cover, through the open window the noise of horses hoofs. A Gruzian regiment was passing. They were dressed in short black jackets and peculiar small hats, something like a doges cap.

The general glanced through the window not without humor and touching his forked beard, said:

"We must take into account national peculiarities here, in Transcaucasia. Just look, we knocked together an excellent Gruzian regiment. We gave them their national costume. They sing Gruzian songs. What else do they need? Well, the border regions however, had to be cleared of undependable elements of the population. Adjars, Kurds! The scoundrels got arms somewhere and settled in the mountains from where they give us lots of trouble."

I found out later that the high command (General Yudenitch) had taken under suspicion all so called "non-Russians." General Yudenitch acted with military resolution. Several hundred persons were put to the wall and shot. The excellent agricultural soil on the banks of the Adjariszholy and Charoh were confiscated. An organization for the purchase and sale of these charming nooks formed itself immediately. General Yudenitch became one of the largest holders of this land. He must have been seeing the green waters of the Adjariszholy that gloomy autumn day, when sitting gloomily at Gatchine he sent that desperate rabble that covered their complicated Russian souls with English uniforms on Pulkovo.

This fall I was at Batum again. The People's Commissar of Education of Adjaria took me to the Adjariszholy where an electric power station was under construction. I recognized the road, now peaceful, with auto trucks disturbing the dust. On the mountain slopes small houses, among corn fields where one often has to tie a rope around himself to keep from falling off. Pointing to the houses that almost touch the clouds, the Commissar said that next summer they will have electric lights. "There is very much work here yet, hard work," said the Commissar of Education, "up in the mountains there are villages from which they come down once a month for salt and matches. And we must overcome illiteracy and remove the chadra."

In a deep crevice of the river, a little above the age old bridge, the foundation for the power house is being laid. Here also ends the tunnel through which the Adjariszholy will be diverted for three kilometers. The tunnel, a fresh underground bed for the river, is 4.4 meters in diameter, 3,000 meters long. The difference in elevation 44 meters. The tunnel will carry the waters of another small river the Hohnu, besides the Adjariszholy, taking the water through a 60 meter vertical shaft. The power station will be of 24,000 horsepower giving 105 million kilowatt hours a day.

The construction engineer Djandjanidze led us to the middle of the tunnel. The work is conducted from several points simultaneously. This middle part is the longest, about one kilometer. The dust covered electric lamps under the roof of fresh broken stone get lost in the dimness. The walls are wet. Today the tunnels should be joined, an important event and a holiday for underground work.

Now the lamps are altogether dim in the dust. The noise of the drills is deafening. In the dust one hardly distinguishes the drillers. Suddenly the noise stops and from the dusty mist we hear a voice "They are our prisoners.... We got hold of their drilling iron. . . "

According to mining custom, when tunnels meet and the drill passes the membrane wall, if the steel drill is caught and pulled over then the crew on the other side is considered "in prison" and it's a great shame for them. The origin of the custom lies in the fact that in drilling a membrane wall one must be very careful as the steel might be forced through killing someone.

"Hey, you are our prisoners! Do you hear?" from this side. From the other side one could hear underground voices cursing and arguing that, well, they were the first to make the junction anyway.

An important and joyous event. Tomorrow is declared a holiday. The government is coming from Batum. To all centers of USSR telegrams go out that the prison for the self- willed river Adjariszholy is completed.

On the return trip we meet laden asses. Black bales dangle at their sides. In front of them go bronze faced men in mountain footgear, homespun clothes and felt hats. Beautiful, colorfully dressed, sunburned women. Their headgear is caught by a frontlet as in the middle ages, necklaces, earrings, beads. Those are the Kurds coming down from the mountains to winter in the Batum plains.

On the roadside, on a harvested cornfield their black tents are open on the leeside. The bedding and pillows, tied up as yet, lie at the corners of the tents. Here at the pillows, blackeyed youngsters, swaddled and motionless like dolls. Before the tent a camp fire over which meat is being cooked in a copper vessel. On a very hot flat rock a corn flap is baking, covered with an iron sheet on which live coals burn. Women and girls knit stockings, the designs are like those seen on Egyptian tombs. White teeth glisten gaily, proud black eyes gleam, the knitting needles flash rapidly.

In the fall, when the Kurds spread their tents on the plains they fall into the hands not of the general now but the commissar of education. Boys and girls are taken from the campfire to Batum schools where all subjects are taught in their native Kurd tongue. There they find out that their angry river Adjariszholy, by the power of the Five Year Plan, has been driven into a tunnel, to tame power.

The second material base of Adjaria is tea. Four factories, Chavka, Salipaury, Babokvaty and Histubany, yield five million kilograms of tea per year. By the end of the second Five Years the plantations of Adjaria and Gruzia should provide all the tea required by the Soviet Republics. Even now some plantations (Kabulety) - low, dark green bushes, in rows like potatoes, reach 1,300 hectares.

The third base, now only beginning to be developed, is that of the higher agricultural cultures: fruit and berry orchards,rice, tobacco, bamboo and industrial wood.

The gardener, Comrade Chanturshivili conducts us over the terraces and gulleys of the botanical garden (near Batum) where almost every tree in the world is represented growing in the open. He tears off a fluffy, pale green cluster, a vinegar tree. Digs in with his nails into another and rubs a red lump, a soap tree. Scrapes a little of the poisonous sap of the lacquer tree with his knife. There are the narrow brittle leaves of the camphor tree, there the wax tree, there the tallow tree. There is a tree that stops the blood. There long, brown little horseshoes, the kind that one finds in chocolate boxes, that must be the bearing tree. By 1935 two hundred thousand of them will be set out, they are of the kind that on the third year after planting give a good pood (16 kilograms) of raw material for every 20 stems. Orange ,lemon, tangerine, bamboo and camphor trees are being cultivated even now on a commercial scale.

This is the material basis at the end of the First Five Year Plan for the development of the national culture of Socialist Adjaria one of the most beautiful countries that almost got into the broad pockets of General Yudenitch and his friends.

Looking at the angry waves of the Adjariszholy I involuntarily recall the emotional speech (at the London banquet) of Lord Northcliff, the newspaper king, on the Eastern soul: The east should be proud of its soul, its mysterious ancient soul. And on this, you Russians - stop. . . .

Crafty Englishmen. . . . .

Pantelelmon Romanov

THE MAN: Reflections of a Writer

After a Visit to the Red Army

I am not a specialist in things military. I am only a writer. Should I begin to write like a military specialist, I would not only betray my ignorance in military matters, but worse, there would be little sense in what I wrote.

But the Red Army is very inviting to us writers, and we find there the most hearty welcome.

What do they need us for?

Perhaps to say those very things about the Red Army Man which we, unacquainted with things military, can say.

And we, naturally, talk about the man in the army as we come in contact with only the man, as an individual or as a mass.

The writer here finds rich material for himself.

If the old army had its ideal of turning the soldier into a senseless automaton able only to execute certain motions on command, the Red Army is primarily concerned with keeping the man and extend the sphere of his thought.

The Red Army attracts men from still another angle. Here as in no other sphere, I can see how the man is reforged from old to new. From a Russian to a citizen of the USSR.

How from an undisciplined, blundering, loose, inaccurate creature he is turned to a strong, disciplined, collected and intelligent man.

This is not a military affair simply, this is the education of a man. Here we have a tremendous haven of culture.

The thing that strikes one on first acquaintance with the Red Army is the intelligence of the individuals constituting its mass.

2

The uncultured man, with undeveloped mind betrays himself most in his attitude towards an unfamiliar thing.

If you wish to judge the degree of culture, of intelligence of an unknown individual do not question him, but give him an unfamiliar thing to play with. You can immediately tell by his manner of handling the object, whom you are dealing with, what work you can entrust him with and of his general usefulness.

If you see that he haphazardly presses now here, now there, with a look of dull irresolution on his face, and an occasional glance at you, you may be tempted to suggest something — that's bad. His own intelligence is blind and his mind inactive.

If on the other hand, you see him study the thing, attempt gropingly to glean its secret not even looking at you and relying altogether on his own intelligence — such a man gives promise.

In the Red Army the main thing is to educate the man for intelligent behavior.

During a contest my attention was involuntarily directed to the way the Red Army men handled revolvers the first time in their lives on that occasion.

In all their motions it was evident that they have been trained to think and reason.

Another guiding principle in the Red Army is the teaching not of "letters" which drills thinking initiative out of the fighter, but to take him through the process beginning at once with the substance.

As result, what took months in the old army and still takes much time in Western armies, is done considerably faster here.

Why? Because here people whose own mind has been awakened and is being exercised on substantial matters all the time, are the subjects of instruction instead of automatons whose heads are being crammed with ready made thoughts in ready made words.

We observed rehearsals for the 15th anniversary parade. Row after row of Red Army men passed before us presenting arms. Stirring music kept time with their step. The last row passed turning to the right, their rhythmic heels disappearing around the corner. The next regiment appeared its commanders at regular intervals from each other.

Again the rows of steel bayonets passed one after another flowing on like mowed rows of grass.

All the guns are alike, the postures of the men alike, but the faces, the expressions on them are all different.

The man has become disciplined without losing his individuality, more, having gained a great deal.

The power of the Red Army lies in the fact, that it has raised not cannon fodder which it is easy to destroy, but developed individuals animated by a common class consciousness. Unity in diversity.

Observing the Red Army men at work, seeing the man preserved in discipline, one naturally becomes curious: — how do they live? What are their habits? How is this intelligence which is so strikingly brought out?

3

The automobile brings us to a tremendous yellow building. This used to be called a "caserne." (barracks.)

The world "caserne" implies all the colorless, soulless monotony, poverty of internal content and exterior coloring of official barracks.

The exterior has remained so. The hopelessly depressing symmetry of the rows of windows, the stone entrance. I have no doubt the spirit of the Red Army will create an altogether different type of *house* eventually that will not even resemble the "caserne."

A cast iron stairway leads to the upper stories, in the dull heavy semidarkness of stone vaults.

But already on the second floor this semidarkness is lit up by the many colored paintings hung on the walls — portraits of leaders and panels. One stumbles on the probability the Red Army attracts not writers but also artists, painters.

This is true. It develops, however, that the paintings in question were made by their own artists, by Red Army men.

We enter a long chamber, the office of the commander of the regiment. At the head of the table sits a young man, at the table two other, even younger men.

We are introduced. The young man at the head of the table turns out to be the comander of the regiment.

"You want to look over the place? Please, from kitchen to club."

"Here is the officer in charge of the club. Show them the club, comrade."

The comrade that up to now was sitting and talking freely with him, now jumps up, straightens and says:

"Right Comrade Commander!"

"Let's have a talk first," I said.

And the comrade again became the same man he was before, in comradely conversation the equal of his commander.

Business and conversation are entirely different things. This difference every worker in the Red Army clearly feels and understands. In a moment from a comrade talking over a matter with another one on an equal footing, on the call of business, he becomes a subordinate, promptly executing orders of his superior.

"Too bad you will not see the people, they are at work now," said the commander, "but there will be some about."

It is not necessary to see the people to understand how they live in this *once upon a time* caserne. It is even pleasant to exercise one's sight to view, not people, but the rooms they occupy, the things they use.

Things speak a definite, clear language. One must only be able to decipher them.

Having conversed a little we go upstairs. On the hall stairway walls are hung large paintings. Some are so well executed that one cannot credit them to "amateurs.". These are real artists of great individuality expressed in style and color.

Then comes the club with its tremendous theatre and stage, reading room, and a separate room in which are gathered photographs showing the life and doings of comrade Frunze. From there we go to the artists' work room. Here we find one Red Army man at work on a canvas. Leaning against the wall is a completed painting of Gorki.

Then we look at the chemical study - gas masks and models of hands showing the effects of poison gases.

Then comes the chess room and I forget what others.. It is however clear, that the fighter comes in contact with all spheres of culture. Every individual can here follow his natural bent. Not to speak of course of the political education which comes in the first place.

Would they have permitted a writer to visit a caserne in the days of the Tsar? I asked the comrade who was showing me around and who had served in the Tsar's army.

"No. They feared any outside influence. We are not afraid of it as every Red Army man is himself competent to discriminate and give the necessary rebuff."

In the reading room we found two men; one, evidently only recently come from the village. This can be seen from his figure which still has the crude unwieldiness of the villager. He sits at the table absorbed in a book, picking the words with his finger and pronouncing some of them aloud.

On our coming in he did not change his posture, paid no attention to us. He was absorbed in a difficult job. In his entire figure could be seen the heaviness of the still uneducated, untrained body. He evidently spends too much energy on everything. He barely has time for it all and will not waste any to raise his eyes.

At another table there is a different one. You see an entirely different face. He is writing something. This one threw us a short look in which he evidently got a rapid idea of who we were, what we were after, and went back to his absorbing work.

This one already has acquired rapid coordination of mind and body. The body easily obeys the mind, which works rapidly and accurately in such a man.

One can say with certainty that the latter came a year ahead of the other man.

Here a man goes up the curve and not down. Here a man is continually "broadened" and is not allowed to "get cold." Even if he were not told anything he comes across so many different phases of civilized existence that he cannot help but feel the many-sidedness of life.

A WRITERS BRIGADE VISITS THE RED ARMY

An International group of revolutionary writers on a visit to the headquarters of a Moscow division of the Red Army. The writers led by Comrade Sergei Tretyakov, noted soviet writer received a comradely reception and later wrote their impressions for the Komsomolskaya Pravda (Young Communist League Truth) the newspaper which arranged the visit together with the IURW. The visit included a trip to the kitchen (Upper Left); a talk with the commander Nicolai Galitsky, (Insert) who was formerly an assistant machinist in the Donbas; a band concert (Upper right: note the greetings on the wall inscribed to Maxim Gorky who is an honorary member of this division); a talk with the men of the Red Army and a visit to their sleeping quarters (Center); a meal in the Red Army dining hall (Lower Right); and a visit to the recreation and study rooms, the library, wall newspapers, radio, etc. The Writers Brigade included: (Lower Left—from left to right). Hans Gunther, seated (Germany); behind him Sergei Tretyakov (USSR); seated, Langston Hughes (America); standing, Lund (Denmark); at radio, Walt Carmon (America) and at right, Commander Nicolai Galitsky.

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

M. Lifschitz

Marx on Esthetics

Marx's views on esthetics are an integral part of his consistently revolutionary creed. The aim of this paper is to show the logical process of the rise of Marxism insofar as it found expression in the development of Marx's views on art.

1. The pre Hegelian Period

Esthetic interests occupy first place in the initial stages of Marx's spiritual development. In his university days (1835—1841) he studies the history of literature (principally ancient literature) and the most important works of classical German esthetics, together with law and philosophy. But young Marx's interests in art are not only of a theoretical nature. He tries his powers in many experiments with verse, fairly weak verse barring a few exceptions. To judge by his own evidence, he tried with continually increasing strength to stifle in himself this inclination to write poetry. The struggle between the inclination towards poetry and the stern necessity of searching for an answer in the spheres of science to the questions propounded by life constitutes the first important crisis in Marx's spiritual development. The result of this inner battle was a renunciation of poetry and a conversion to the philosophy of Hegel and his doctrine of the inevitable fall of art in the society of the new time.

In his first period of independent spiritual life Marx is completely immersed in romanticism and his attitude to Hegel is extremely negative. His romanticism is of a radical, Fichtelike shade. "Onslaughts on the present" take their turn with poetic proof of "the pride of man" continually forging ahead and in its course breaking through existing barriers. Everywhere we have before us the enthusiastic dreamer (the poem "Longing"), the god wrestler ("Prayer of the Desperate") in general a man at war with the eternal forces. He may perish in the uneven struggle, but his defeat will be also a triumph of the spirit of man:

In his very defeat
A victory he celebrates.

Hegel, hated by Marx for his refusal to overcome reality, is ridiculed as a "pigmy." In Marx's youthful poetry the Fichtean contradiction between "is" and "should be" holds almost undivided sway. However the summer of 1837 sees a decisive break in his creed. "From idealism, which I, a propos, had levelled and imbued with the Kantian and Fichtean idealism, I came to the point of seeking the idea in reality itself. If the gods before had lived over the earth, they were now the center of it."

Hegel's esthetics bear the same relation to romantic philosophy of art that Ricardo's "pessimism" bears to the utopias of romantic economists. No economic theory up to Marx's has given Socialist thought such a powerful instrument of criticism of bourgeois society as the heartless Cynicism of Ricardo. Equally, no classical German work on esthetics contains so many revolutionary critical elements as Hegel's *Esthetics*. From Hegel's point of view, bourgeois society (*die burgerliche Gesellschaft)* and the "Christian State" are not favorable to the development of art. Two inferences are here possible: either art must perish for the sake of the triumph of the "absolute state" or the latter will be destroyed and a new "condition of the world" will bring with it a new flourishing of art. Hegel himself inclined to the first inferences, but it only needed a change of stress to give the teaching of the anti esthetic spirit of reality

a revolutionary tone. Such inferences from Hegel's *Esthetics* were made by the radical representatives of his school whom Marx joined in 1837.

This is why young Marx's renunciation of the romantic doctrine and acceptance of Hegel's *Esthetics* instead marked a rise to a higher stage of political consciousness.

2. The Hegelian Period

The first work Marx undertook as a follower of Hegel was a study of later Greek, particularly Epicurean, philosophy. In the various intellectual tendencies of the period of decay of the ancient world the left Hegelians saw an analogy to their contemporary phenomena.

German idealists did not look upon Epicurean pholosophy with favor at all. Hegel enters into open and concealed polemics with Epicurus in many of his works. In the Atomistic principle, developed by the ancient materialists he saw a more lofty expression of a society of individuals, isolated from one another, and conscious only of the conflict of private interests, "a war of all against all." In the opinion of the German philosopher, Atomism, concretely realized in economics and politics, was the fatal force which ruined "the kingdon of beautiful mortality" (as Hegel called Greek society). But when under the influence of the development of individual "empirical" freedom, existing social life disintegrates, what remains is inner freedom, ideal life, self analysis (*Erinnerung*). This true freedom, as opposed to egoistic "arbitrariness" appears, according to Hegel, in Stoic philosophy and then in Christianity.

Marx's dissertation on the physics of Epicurus also contains a critical analysis of Atomism and the "Atomistic society." But Marx's attitude towards Epicurus, the Stoics and Christianity differs from Hegel's. This difference, in which can already be seen the contrast between the last representative of classical bourgeois philosophy and the future founder of scientific socialism, is of great importance for the understanding of Marx's views on esthetics.

Choosing this topic for a dissertation on abstract questions in the history of philosophy — on the difference between the natural philosophies of Democritus and Epicurus, Marx, in the manner of classical German philosophy, utilizes the theme for an allegorical treatment of the fundamental social and political questions of the time. In the teachings of Atomistic natural philosophy Marx sees the reflection of the principle of the isolated individual and independent political citizen — the principle solemnly proclaimed by the great French Revolution. The contradiction between bourgeois democratic ideals and the realities of life which grew apparent even during the revolution and immediately after it, Marx, as a disciple of Hegel, attempts to deduce from the concept of the "atom," by "being for one's self."

The original atom exists only in vacancy, in abstraction, in the empty space of the constitution of 1793. The world of similar and at the same time existing in themselves, atoms-citizens is afraid of life as every real motion, any manifestation of vital forces and interests threatens to disturb its abstract equilibrium. To make clear this dualism of the philosophical political ideal and real life Marx makes use of an example from Epicurean theology. Epicurus expressed the idea of the independence of the individual in his teaching of the deflection of a falling atom from a straight line. The idea of "deflection" penetrates all Epicurean philosophy. This is the refusal to participate in real life, which is how the atom conserves its "abstract solitariness." The gods of Epicurus serve as the highest expression of the principles of deflection:

> "Many jests have been made," writes Marx "at the expense of these gods of Epicurus which, resembling man, live in the space between the worlds of the real universe, have no body but a quasi-body, no blood but quasi-blood, and always happily resting, hear no prayers, have no care about us or the world, and who are adored for their beauty, their grandeur, their perfection and not for any gain. These

> gods are nevertheless not an Epicurean fiction. They existed. They are the plastic gods of Greek art .... Theoretical rest is a major trait of Greek gods, as Aristotle says: 'That which is best of all has no need of action as it is its own purpose.'"

This explanation of the peculiarities of Greek sculpture is a step in the direction of the denial of Hegelian idealism. In subsequent polemics with Stirner, who in the customary style of speculative construction of German idealist philosophy portrayed antiquity as an era of predominance of "body" over "soul," an era of extreme realism. Marx makes the following remark by the way:

> "... the ancients in the history of the Idealist politician, represent the *'citoyen,'* while the new ones in the end amount to *'bourgeois,'* realistic *'ami du commerce.'"*

We observe that this very side of antique reality is, in the opinion of Marx, expressed in the images of the Greek gods, serene, without a care for their surroundings, shunning all the practical flux brought about by world trade, money, the modernization of social relations. But in this is hidden the secret of the logical deterioration of Greek art, its historical limitations. The underground forces which are the bane of antique policy destroy the stone barrier of the Acropolis. Together with it goes the plastic dignity of Greek art; the gods now exist only in "between worlds" of the stylized religion of Epicurus.

While working on this dissertation Marx occupied, in general, the position of Hegelian Idealism. However, he introduces a material correction into the Hegelian teaching of the fall of antiquity, and adumbrates entirely different conclusions to be drawn from the experience of the Great French Revolution. Not, as Hegel asserts, the realism of antiquity is the cause of the decline of Greek democracy. On the contrary, the inception of decay is rooted in the idealism of abstract civic freedom, which is incapable of mastering material development. *The historical limitation of antique sculpture is not its corporealnes, its adherence to life, but on the contrary its departure from life into empty space.* "The abstract singular" i.e. the atom "of civic society," "cannot shine in the light of being." It hence, follows, that freedom and material life must be united on the grounds of a higher principle than the "abstract singularity" of the atom-citizen. Or, to translate the philosophic statement into the language of politics, democratic demands must obtain a realistically plebeian coloring, a broad mass base. This is the latent tendency in the work of the young Marx on the natural philosophy of Epicurus, that first theoritician of the "social contract."

Just then, in the early forties, when Marx was completing his dissertation, the German middle class was living through the spring of its illusions and hopes of beneficient reforms from on high in connection with the ascension to the Prussian throne of Schleiermacher's pupil, the liberal-romantic crown prince Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Under these circumstances Marx could do nothing but draw even closer to the left-Hegelian group of Bruno Bauer, that criticized the German liberals for the half way policies of their philosophical and theological representatives. It was necessary to draw a contrast between the progressive elements in Hegel's philosophy and its religious, Philistine side. So the circle of left Hegelians issue two anonymous pamphlet-parodies, unmasking Hegel as a Jacobin and infidel. Although these pamphlets *(Trumpet Voice on Hegel, Atheist and Anti-Christ,* 1841, and *Hegel's Teachings on Religion and Art from the Point of View of Faith,* 1842) were written by Bauer, Marx worked with him in their composition. He was supposed to write the part of the second pamphlet dealing with art. He is entirely taken up with this work the winter of 1841—1842. In the first months of spring, however, for various reasons, he decides to revamp his *Treatise on Christion Art* into two independent articles: On Religions Art and On the Romantics. These articles did not come down to us, but the basic principles of his *Treatise on Christian Art* are not difficult to reconstruct from the anonymous pamphlets of 1841

and 1842 and the existing excerpts Marx made from books read by him while working on the *Treatise.*

The preliminary work of Marx for the *Treatise on Christian Art* is permeated by the same contrasts as we find in the satirical pamphlets of 1841 and 1842. On the one hand the esthetic perfection of antique art resting on the democracy of the Greek Republics, on the other hand the religious creeds of Asiatic peoples, general dependence and oppression of man. Christian Art of the post classical period reproduces the Esthetics of Asiatic barbarism in a new stage.

Instead of organic forms created by artistic imagination, mathematical dryness and calculation predominate in religious art. Marx underlines the crude naturalism of the religious conception of the world, the lecherousness and perverted sensuality of the religious rites. In contrast to this he stops on those passages in Grund's book where the nudity of Greek statuary is shown to be an expression of the high moral culture of the Greeks.

The idea of "fetishism" has a tremendous significance for the entire subsequent development of Marx. Its origin can be traced back to his abstracts as early as 1842. When Marx later, speaking of commodity fetishism turns for an analogy to the "misty realms of the religious world" (*Capital* Vol. 1, chapter 1), he has in mind the very trait of the religious conception of the world which was supposed to figure in the *Treatise* of 1842 as the fundamental cause of antagonism between religion and art. The fetishistic essence of religion lies in the worship of the material nature of things, in imbuing them with the qualities of man himself. It is often thought that these objects of worship are only symbols, forms of representation into which believers put a special meaning. But this is not correct. The objects of the fetishistic cult are not *symbols* but real *being, not form* but *matter.* In their materiality as such man sees the source of all good, their natural image takes the place of the expression of his own forces. On the contrary, form and artistic finish, a theoretical disinterested relation to natural objects, are foreign to the fetishistic world. Only in Greek poetry and art do we find the apotheosis of the creative powers of man producing and adapting objects, while religious egoism knows only a preying relation to nature.

The fundamental theses of the *Treatise on Christian Art* thus come to an anthitesis of the antique principle of form to fetishistic worship of the materiality of objects. The crude naturalism and practicality of the fetishistic world is contrasted with the creative activity of man. Marx is then still far from understanding that the newest fetishism is itself a product of a definite historical mode of production. And so we do not find in the excerpts of 1842 any even distant indication of Marx's later views on the historical disproportion between the development of the productive forces of society and its artistic development. On the opposite, here art and artistic genius still appear in close unity against archaic and modern barbarism.

3. Struggle Against Romanticism

Disappointed in its hopes on the new kingship the Prussian bourgeoisie turns left, attempting to head the democratic movement in Germany. Agitation about the customs union of the German States is intertwined with political agitation: the *bourgeois* tries to talk in the language of the *citizen.*

In his criticism of bourgeois liberalism Marx does not take the way of political romanticism which proved in the end the "premises" of Bauer's antibourgeoisism (Marx's letter to Engels of Jan. 18th, 1856). On the opposite, he criticizes liberalism for these very romantic elements which cover up the crudest and most barbarous forms of oppression and exploitation. The policy of the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV was an early attempt to induce developing German capitalism into the cage of the socalled "Prussian" way after the final bankruptcy of the old absolute monarchy.

Romanticism becomes the official ideology for this new trend. In the early forties it is everywhere triumphant — from the royal offices to the Berlin University where aged Schelling holds sway.

Romanticism itself, as a politico-esthetical doctrine, has now gone through a characteristic evolution. Originally a middle class opposition to "enlightened absolutism" of the 18th century, it becomes in the first half of the 19th century the theoretical support of the "Holy Alliance." The party of romantic reaction did not stop at direct protection of feudal land ownership. It also appealed to the bourgeoisie, proving to it that the "freedom" of the cities of the middle ages was closer to the spirit of bourgeois ownership than the "freedom" and "equality" of the Great French Revolution. On the other hand, it tried to utilize the lower strata of the population in its struggle against the progressive bourgeoisie which had adopted the idea of "enlightenment." In this complex system of liberal gestures and police kicks Romantic doctrines did not take a back place.

Romanticism in politics, science and art was the chief enemy of the *Rheinische Gazette*. The contradictions between poetic form and prosaic content, free appearance and reactionary essence of Romantic doctrines were of deep interest to Marx in 1842. We know that in his work on Christian art he intended to have a special part "De Romanticis." With the help of separate statements from his articles of 1842 the fundamental ideas of his critique of Romanticism can be reconstructed without difficulty.

Throughout all the articles Marx wrote about 1842 there constantly recurs the thought that this topsy turvy world of a "bourgeoisified feudalism" gives rise to a host of illusions, fantastic images and fictions. Marx, as distinguished from the left Hegelians of the Bauer type, even then looks for an objective base of these fantastics in social relations. The representatives of "Christian Knightly, modernly feudal, in a word, of the Romantic principle," writes Marx, can not understand "the self evident": how freedom is "an individual property of separate persons and estates" and hence the property of social man to be free is embodied in "certain individuals" just as sovereignty in the physical nature of the monarch.

> "Not understanding this, they perforce turn to the miracle and to mysticism," "futhermore, as the actual position of these gentlemen in the modern state is far from what they imagine it is, as they live in a world which is outside the real one, and as the power of their imagination takes the place of brains and heart with them, they are not satisfied by practice and perforce turn to theory, to the theory however of the other world, to religion. In their hands religion acquires a polemical, full of political tendencies, bitterness, becomes more or less consciously the cover of very wordly, and at the same time very fantastic, lusts."

Romanticism wraps in a magic glory all that which is in reality a dry prosaic fact. The noble sham of Romanticism is in direct contradiction to its callous reality. Hence the duplicity, or rather, the hypocrisy of Romanticism, "which is also always tendencious poetry."

A similar evaluation of Romanticism forever remained with Marx. In this respect his relations with Chateaubriand, with whom he was occupied in the fifties, is characteristic In a letter to Engels (dated Oct. 26, 1854) we find the following passage:

> "In studying the Spanish cesspool I came upon the honorable Chateaubriand, this King of Eloquence, uniting in himself in the most obnoxious fashion the aristocratic skepticism and Voltairianism of the 18th century with the aristocratic sentimentalism and Romanticism of the 19th. Of course in France such a unification, as a style, had to mark an Epoch, although in the style itself, regardless of its aristocratic artifices, the hypocrisy is self evident."

It is easy to see that this characterization of the duplicity of Chateaubriand's creed, uniting in itself sober skepticism and Romantic sensitiveness coincides with what Marx wrote about Romanticism as far back as 1842. This consistency in the evaluation and

5. From Hegel to Dialectic Materialism

The *Rheinische Gazette* was closed by the Prussian government early in 1843. Almost at the same time Ruge's *German Annals* met with a similar fate. The time had come for drawing conclusions from the lessons of the "movement of 1842, "a period which each one of the then existing parties in Germany had lived through in its own way. Marx for a time retired "from the political scene to his private study" to concentrate on the solution of the problems presented by the experiences of the recent political struggle. This experience proved sufficient to convince young Marx of the unsatisfactoriness of an idealist conception of history.

Already in 1842 (according to Lenin) can be noticed a shift in young Marx "from idealism to materialism, and from revolutionary democracy to communism." Marx sets himself the task of studying the communist doctrines of his contemporary France, although he comes out as a determined opponent of light minded flirtation with communism. Such flirtation was gradually getting into fashion in the Germany of the early forties and played into the hands of the reactionary defenders of feudal landholding against democratic division of land (parcellation). The mere circumstance that Marx understood this complex woof of the varied interests of different classes of German society shows that his articles of 1842 were his first steps in the comprehension of material interests. But these were only first steps.

The problem before Marx, both in its esthetic and political aspects followed from the whole combination of problems of the bourgeois democratic revolution, but led beyond its limits. The critique of private ownership from the viewpoint of the "true state" has its conservative side. As an abstract criticism of individual egotism, it comes down equally on landowner, forest owner, financier, and the oppressed mass that, against the privileged egoism of the governing class, asserts its own right to material goods, its own mass egoism. That is the reason such political ideology has not the support of the masses (that is why, for instance, the Parisian workers and paupers were indifferent when the Jacobin government fell). But the Spartan ideal of Rousseau which was revolutionary at the end of the 18th century becomes positively reactionary in Bruno Bauer and his friends who criticize the "masses" for their adherence to material interests. In like manner the negation of art according to Rousseau, as inseparable from material existence, becomes reactionary, as behind the problem of the historical rights of art was hidden the question of the right of the massses to an improvement of their sensual, material existence. The first lesson Marx learned from the fall of the *Rheinische Gazette* was the burning consciousness that it is necessary to first do away with the old doctrine of the sinfulness of the flesh, irrespective of whether this doctrine appears in its Christian-Feudal, Idealistic-antique, Romantic, or Classic form. It was necessary to move on from the abstract to the concrete, from the "ideals of 1793" to "flesh and blood."

Seeing how abstract the criticism of social relations from the viewpoint of "a true state" was, Marx sought an approach to concrete reality. But the experience of 1842 already leads him to the conclusion that the true solution of the contradiction between economic necessity and formal political freedom lies in the elimination of this contradiction. The social force which can solve this problem can be only the proletariat, the class representing in itself "the decay of the previous world order." This prophetic recognition of the role of the proletariat appears in Marx for the first time at the end of 1842, the beginning of 1843, after a thorough study of French and English political literature. The doctrine of the historical mission of the working class was for him the untying of the knot of contradictions of Hegelian philosophy with its recognition of bourgeois society and the State that is built on it as the "final end of historical development."

A detailed criticism of speculative esthetics is contained in *The Holy Family*—a book written by Marx and Engels against their former friends Bruno Bauer and his group. The greater part of the book is taken up by an analysis of the article by the left—

Hegelian Schelling on Eugene Sue's *Mysteries of Paris.* Actually however, Marx goes beyond a criticism of Schelling to a devasting analysis of not only Sue's novel but also of the entire moral and esthetic creed of the "dominating personality" of the 19th century of the bourgeois.

Mysteries of Paris, that "European Sheherazade" as Bielinsky expressed himself, enjoyed a tremendous success in the forties of the previous century. Flirtation with social problems and their hypocritically-virtuous solution made Eugene Sue extremely popular in Europe. Among the admirers of Sue's talent were the brothers Bauer, publishers at that time of the *Literary Gazette* in Berlin. Through the mouth of Schelling (Zikhlinsky) the *Literary Gazette* averred that the philantropically-visionary solution of the social problem in Sue was really a "speculative" solution. Comparing *Mysteries of Paris* with its critical interpretation by Schelling Marx finds all along a perversion of the actual contents of the novel in the interests of "critical criticism" and its speculative interpretations. But he does not at all deny the analogy between the speculative method and the spirit of Bourgeois Romanticism. On the opposite, Marx ironically shows that "the mystery of speculative interpretation" and *Mysteries of Paris* have one and the same ideological and social basis.

One of the principal parts of the analysis of *Mysteries of Paris* in the *Holy Family* is the classical chapter on Speculative Interpretation. Marx here shows that Hegel's method, which is the basis of all discoveries of "Critical criticism" is based on Idealist mystification. From manifold real phenomena the philosopher constructs a general concept, declaring it Substance (e.g. "fruit" as the substance of the pear, the apple, the almond etc.). From the standpoint of the Idealist, this Substance only has real, absolute existence, while the various concrete phenomena have only a seeming, visible existence. However, this dissolution of material existence in the general concept is abstract. Recognizing this deficiency, the Idealist tries to renounce abstraction, but does so in a "special, speculative, mystic, manner." He compels the abstraction to convert itself into an active spiritual essence producing manifold variations of concrete, earthly existence.

The methods of speculative esthetics are based on this Idealist deduction. Not only Schelling makes use of this method in his criticism of the book, but the author of *Mysteries of Paris* himself does so. He converts living characters into allegorical figures as proof of a definite idea:

> "The personages of Eugene Sue's book (Resaka, Mastak) must show his own, that is the author's intentions, to make them do this or that, as the result of their inner reflections, as the conscious motive of their acts. They must continually repeat: in this or that respect I have improved, also in that and in the other thing and so on. As they do not live a real full life they have nothing to do but stress the meaning of entirely irrelevant acts. ."

This criticism of speculative interpretation of literature has remained apt to this very day.

With the Idealist subjugation of the sensual-concrete to abstraction Marx contrasts the self development of vital forces and characters. In sensual, real, experience "We never know in advance either 'wherefrom' or 'whereto'." It is entirely different with Idealist philosophy. There everything reeks of teleology, all exists for a purpose, the individual is only the announcer of the developing idea. Together with Idealist esthetic and hypocritically-idealistic literature Marx criticizes the "condition of the world" which makes the individual out to be a tool of blind social forces and is hence the exact opposite of the "epic condition of the world" of Hegelian esthetics. Schelling's attempts to portray 19th century Paris as a basis for epos and the complicated plot of Sue's novel as an "epic event" merit Marx's ridicule.

If the hypocritical Sue attempted to solve the dialectics of good and evil by means of an abstract assertion of nobility and honesty, his critic Marx takes the side of that half of the world painted in *Mysteries of Paris* which openly admits itself to be in direct opposition to honesty and other virtues of "civilized society." Such are the butcher

Resaka, the gizette Rigoletta, Mastak, Fleur de Marie and other personages of *Mysteries of Paris* representing the reverse side of the civilized world. In portraying them Marx also partly follows Hegel.

The author of *Mysteries of Paris* is far from presenting the transition from "conscious indignation" to revolutionary consciousness. On the contrary, all strong, sensually-beautiful characters in the *Mysteries of Paris* must, for the sake of the novel's structure develop in the opposite direction, or rather stop the natural evolution of their natures. Marx sees in this two coincident signs of the literature of the bourgeois apologists: the Idealist method converting the living character into an automaton to prove the abstract concept of the author, and the Idealist moral, which hypocritically rejects sensuality in order to readmit it in a more "dishumanized" historically presented form. The self-development of sensually-concrete reality or its subjugation to a force foreign to it, conciliation of fight—this is in the end the fundamental distinction between the philosophically-esthetic ideals of Marx and the creed of Schelling and Sue.

But this is exactly wherein the materialist and idealist methods in esthetics and literature differ. Materialist dialectics, founded by Marx, issues from historical reality with all its contradictions and chiaroscuro. The solution of the contradictions it sees not in speculative "higher unity," not in restraining the centrifugal forces of reality, but on the opposite, in a full and allsided development of these contradictions and antagonisms. Marx's doctrine of the historical mission of the proletariat amounts to really this—that this class "is not a mass of humanity mechanically bowed down under the weight of society, but a mass originating out of decay" and it therefore becomes a revolutionary constructive force which in its turn subjects to negation all the negative sides of the society which made up the conditions of its life. It is true, in *Mysteries of Paris* we are dealing with the representatives of the "lumpen-proletariat." However even in these fallen representatives of a great class Marx sees much more that is worth artistic presentation than in the prose and boredom of bourgeois relations. What Marx considers the most thankful subjects for artistic treatment are virile determination, readiness to fight, and strength of character—traits inherent to characters of the type of Resaka, Mastak, Fleur de Marie, etc. But Marx does not stop with pointing out that plebeian-proletarian types should be the objects of literary portrayal. He speaks also of literature originating in the "lowest classes" (according to Bauer's terminology).

> "If criticism," writes Marx against Bruno Bauer, "were more familiar with the movements of these lower classes (Marx here has in mind movements of the proletariat) it would know that the determined resistance which the lower classes meet in practical life causes them to change continually. The new prose and poetic literature that in France and England is originating in the lower classes would show the critics that the lower classes can rise spiritually without the patronage of the Holy Spirit of critical criticism."

This is sufficient to see Marx's attitude to the problem of proletarian literature. As the working class in the process of revolutionary reconstruction of the world rebuilds its own character, it produces a prose and poetic literature that stands much higher than the bourgeois-apologetic novel

6. *Dialectic Materialism*

"Only the philosophical materialism of Marx," writes Lenin, "has shown the proletariat a way out from the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have vegetated till now." On the other hand, it was exactly the recognition of the historical role of the proletariat which served Marx and Engels as a transition to the theory of dialectic materialism. From this height attained by the founders of Marxism they subjected to devastating criticism all "German ideology," i.e. the Idealist school of philosophy and the various forms of middle class Socialism and Anarchism connected with it.

We have already seen that criticism of Hegelian esthetics was for Marx also to some extent self criticism. If the material sphere of society before seemed to him to be lower in importance, the gradation now acquires an almost opposite significance: The lower becomes the base on which everything built up on it stands. The development of all sides of the social reality of people is determined in the final accounting by the self development of their material production and reproduction. In accordance with this the position of artistic creation changes. Art, like law or the state etc. has no independent history. Independence the latter receives only in the brains of ideologists. In reality literature and art are functions of the historical development of society.

It does not, of course, follow from this, that in the theory of dialectic materialism art plays a secondary role. On the contrary, it is the Idealist exaltation of art over material reality that has its reverse side of ascetic debasing of it for its sensual—concrete relation to the world. While Hegel explains the fall of art on account of its sensual nature, Marx sees the cause of this phenomenon in the unfavorable historical circumstances and defends the rights of the senses as such. In this respect his acquaintance with Feuerbach's views on esthetics played a definite part.

In social content the philosophic-esthetic ideal of Feuerbach was the ideal of "progressive bourgeois democracy or revolutionary bourgeois democracy" (Lenin). To the speculative doctrine of undervaluation of sensual existence and the corresponding practice of subjugation of the "oppressed creatures" to their oppressors Feuerbach contrasts the defense of the rights of the flesh. Since to Hegel all the material-sensual has a quality of "alienation" (*Entfremdung)* of the spirit, the only method of "mastering" *(Aneignung)* the world of things is to him by means of cognition. Art itself is an imperfect form of cognition. Against this conception dissolving art in cognition Feuerbach justifiably launches his criticism. Man makes the world his own not only by means of thought, but also with the help of all his native powers. Analagous thoughts we also find in Marx: "Man asserts himself in the world not only by means of thought, but also through his senses. . ." (Preparatory work for *The Holy Family.)* The transition from Idealism to Materialism is inevitably bound up with the emancipation of art as a sense activity from abstract thought. In his Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy* Marx distinguishes the "artistic, religious, practical and spiritual mastery of the world" from mastering it by means of the "thinking head."

However, rejecting the Hegelian conception of history as a constant struggle of spirit and matter, Feuerbach with it rejects all contradiction and historical "agencies" altogether. Mastering of the world remains to Feuerbach purely a matter of contemplation while even the Idealist Hegel considers it—an activity, true an activity of pure thought, of "abstract spiritual labor." Hence, Feuerbach develops those sugary apologetics of "man" (in his harmony with "nature") which was the basis of the entire German literature of "true" socialism. The Humanistic Esthetics of Feuerbach and Grun amounted in the end to a varnishing of the condition of the labouring individual in bourgeois society. It was only required that "man" cognize his unity with the surrounding world and at once the world became his own, notwithstanding that he was in fact surrounded by the "strange." The critical annihilation of German "true" socialism in "prose and poetry" fell to Engels.

With Marx and Engels "mastering" acquires an historical character. Rejecting the Idealist conception of the world of sense—objects as an alienation of the spirit Marx fully recognizes that the world becomes his "own" to man not by virtue of our capacity of pure contemplation, but as a result of a long struggle. The senses have their history. Neither the object of art, nor the subject capable of esthetic understanding, come by themselves—they arise in the process of creative activity of mankind.

> "Only music awakens the musical sense of man; for one with no ear for music, the finest music has no meaning, for him it is not an object. The feelings of a public spirited man are different from those of one not public spirited; only by virtue of the

> objective (thing) unfolding of the wealth of man's essence the wealth of man's senses is obtained, comes the musical ear, the eye that distinguishes the beauty of form, in a word, arise partly new, partly existing senses of man develop for pleasure." (Preparatory work to *The Holy Family)*

Esthetic needs are not something biologically inherent, prior to social development. It is an historical product, the result of a long development of material and intellectual production.

> "An object of art," writes Marx in his Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy,* "as well as any other product creates a public with a sense of art and capable of finding pleasure in its beauty. Production therefore not only produces an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object."

And so, with the development of object activity, i.e. material production our abilities are also developed: "Consumption comes out of its initial crudity and directness" and in its turn influence production, completing it, "strengthening the ability to produce which developed in the first act of production by means of repetition to the degree of an art." Such is the dialectic solution of the problem of the subjective and objective in art and the relations of esthetics to reality. Here, as in the materialist theory of cognition the point is not in abstract relations but in historical development. The main thing is the tradition from the inartistic to the artistic, the gradual development of our creative abilities and understanding by means of intellectual production itself and before all by means of the extension of the "object world" of industry. The stone hammer, clay dishes, the keyed instrument are landmarks in the development of our sight, musical ear, artistic comprehension as a whole. But these means and objects of production do not exist as such, outside of definite forms of society. And this makes the dialectics of the development of art in its relation to material production even more complicated.

On first view it might seem that from a Marxist point of view the development of material production forces and artistic development proceed parallel to each other: the higher and richer in art merit. We find such a solution of the problem in many authors who wrote on the Marxist conception of the history of art. But such a view point is abstract and hence wrong.

Marx himself expressed his point of view with sufficient clarity in the famous aphorisms of his Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy.* He speaks there of "the unequal ratio of the development of material production to artistic production."

> "With respect to art it is well known that its flourishing in certain periods does not correspond whatever to the general social development and hence to the development of the material base of the society constituting, so to say, its skeleton. For example the Greeks in comparison to modern peoples, or say Shakespeare."

The view of nature which is the foundation of Greek mythology and art is incompatible alongside of Roberts et Co., alongside the famous bank Credit Mobilier.

> "Is Achilles possible with gunpowder and lead? Or the *Iliad* as a whole together with the printing press and typographical machine? And do not inevitably disappear sagas and songs and muses and with them the necessary premises for epic poetry with the appearance of the printing lever?"

This entire passage, which has been misinterpreted a great many times, seems to contradict the materialist conception of history. Either art in its development follows the development of the productive forces of society, in which case one can speak of the materialist conception of the history of art, or there is no correspondence between the two, in which case the possibility of applying historical materialism to art is impossible. Thus, or almost so, the question is often put. But to put it so means not to understand the fundamentals of historical materialism.

The process of the formation and development of demands, the historical process of "mastering" the object world, does not proceed evenly. The "mastering" of the world

comes about by means of "alienation" of human social forces, together with the growth of freedom grows the strength of natural necessity. Thinkers have long ago called attention to this paradox of progress and it would take us too far afield only to name these thinkers. But only in the theory of dialectic materialism, the intellectual expression of the communist, revolutionary proletariat, does this problem of the unevenness of progress acquire an historical character. Only in Marxian theory is the question of the historical fate of art scientifically put and solved.

The secret of Greek art is rooted in the undeveloped state of exchange which here appears in its simplest and almost naive form. The economic base of its ancient flourishing period is the small peasant economy and the production of independent artisans. However, free petty ownership almost always coincides with slavery or serfdom, in the first place. Secondly, this method of production "is compatible only with narrow traditional limits of production and society." The tendency to prolong it is tantamount, according to the just remark of Pequer, to the tendency to "decree general mediocrity." The classical type of petty producer, as he hampers the development of productive forces, must inevitably recede to the past, giving way to the concentration of property and socialization of labor, even if this progress is "progress on turtle back." The fall of ancient society and with it of classical art was a necessary and progressive phenomenon.

"A long and painful process of development" separates small scale individual production from the collective production of socialist society. The relative proportionality of the simple goods economy resting on an undeveloped state gives way before the gigantic disproportions and antagonisms of growing capitalism. The prologue to the history of Capital is the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and the expropriation of the masses of people. The moving causes of this are "the most shameless, dirty, disgusting and trivial passions." All patriarcal relation, personal, family, and social ties are destroyed, and in their place a single strong connection establishes itself — the rule of "heartless cash."

> "The view of nature which comes with the domination of private ownership and money is a real contempt, a practical dethronement of nature... a contempt of theory, art, history and of man as an end in himself... this is the actual conscious point of view, the virtue of the moneyed man." *(The Jewish Question)*

This peculiarity of bourgeois society of excluding all esthetic comprehension has its roots in the very nature of the mercantile world.

> "Born leveller and cynic, it is therefore ever ready to change not only souls, but bodies as well with any other commodity, even though the latter is even more ill-favored than Maritornes." *(Capital,* vol. 1 chapter II)

The moral and esthetic indifference of the commodity as an exchange value comes out in the utterance of the old man Barbon, whom Marx quotes in *Capital:* "Any goods is good enough, if taken in proper quantities."

> "The exchange value of a palace can be expressed in a definite quantity of boxes of shoe polish and on the reverse London manufacturers expressed the value of many boxes of shoes polish with their palaces.' *(Critique of Political Economy)*

From the point of view of objective relations of capitalist society the greatest work of art is equal to a quantity of manure. The quantitative relation is entirely unimportant when such a qualitative equation can be made.

The levelling quality of the capitalist method of production which is indifferent to all individual properties of things and men, is the exact opposite of the social relations existing in the past when art flourished. The relation of exploitation of man by man was then a relation of personal dependence. Earthly power and the right to command others' labor were not separable from the external features and individual abilities of the possessor of the power. Even deportment and manner of speaking, clothes and precious possessions were attributes of greatness. Hence a procession of Lorenzo d'

Medici or a feast in the house of a Greek kinglet could be the subjects of painting and poetry. But the economy of capitalist society cannot be described in verse as the ancient economy was described by Hesiod. The place of personal dependence was taken by an abstract, although none the less actual and severe, dependence. "In bourgeois society capital is independent and personal, the labor an individual dependent and impersonal." However the capitalist is also impersonal being only a "personification" of capital.

If ancient society issues from the specific quality of a thing, its use value, the capitalist world is ruled by quantity, exchange value. Qualitative differences are reduced to simple quantitative relations.

It is exceedingly interesting that in the period of creating the *Critique of Political Economy* Marx again returns to the problems of art and especially to those which recall the ideas of 1842. The external cause for taking up these problems was Chas. Dana's proposal to write an article on esthetics for the *New American Encyclopedia.* The proposal appeared ludicrous to Marx as according to Dana's plan the encyclopedia was to devote only one page to the subject. (letters Marx to Engels of May 23 and 28, 1857) However, detailed excerpts from various articles on esthetics in French and German encyclopedias indicate that Marx took Dana's proposal seriously. In the same copy book dating to 1857-58 which contains excerpts from Meyer's *Konversations Lexicon* we find also the thorough syllabus of Friedrich Theodor Fisher's famous *Esthetics.*

A great many of the excerpts from Fisher's *Esthetics* are on the question of interrelations between the natural and esthetic significance of things. The latter is not a natural characteristic of things. In substantiality there is not a vestige of what is called beauty. "The beautiful exists only in consciousness,"—is Marx's rendering of Fisher — "The necessity for beauty, on account of which the viewer is juxtaposed with it." Beauty is therefore a property of man although it seems to be a property of things, "of the beautiful in nature." This does not mean that the "esthetic" is purely subjective. Knowing the role played in Marx's economic and philosophic views of the subjectively-objective productive activity of man, it is easy to understand the significance of the following thought of Schiller's — which Marx quotes from Fisher:

> "Beauty is at once an object to us and a state of the subject. It is at once form, as we judge of it, and at the same time life, as we feel it. It is at once our state of being and our creation."

Like the excerpts of the Bonne period, these excerpts from Fisher show a definite tendency for criticism of naturalism as accepting what is human for material and vice versa. The connection between this attitude of Marx to esthetic values and his discovery of comodity fetishism and the solution of the problem of the subjective and objective in economics is entirely self evident. This as in the preparatory studies to his *Treatise on Christian Art* Marx is interested in Fisher's exposition not so much of what is "esthetic" as of its exact opposite. But while during 1841-1842 criticism of fetishism as inimical to art was a democratic negation of "the old order," categories and forms bordering on the esthetic interest Marx, in the period while writing *Capital,* for their analogy with the contradictory vicissitudes of the world of categories of the capitalist economy. It is easy to establish the connection between the esthetic and the economic preoccupation of Marx also in the transscriptions about "the lofty" in which he dwells on those which indicate the quantitative character of this category (in the lofty "quality becomes quantitative"), the tendency of endless movement, aiming at the colossal, stepping out of limits and out of all "measure." This interest in the "lofty" is of course not accidental to Marx. In his preparatory work yet for the dissertation he speaks of the "dialectics of measure" which is followed by the "measureless," contradiction and "discord." In *Poverty of Philosophy* and in *Capital*

the "dialectics of measures" appears in a much more developed and scientific form. "Measure is a relative ratio of simple commodity, the point of origin of capitalist development, and the capitalist epopee itself, with its disproportion and antagonisms between higher forms of production and old methods of appropriation, is the inevitable violation of "measure." In capitalist society, there is the domination, in the words of Hegel, of "the measureless as measure."

Measureless is the tendency to amass capital. Measureless and innerly disproportional, uneven is the very basis of capitalist progress,—"production for the sake of production." This contradictory form of development of the productive forces is absolutely inimical to some fields of spiritual activity, as for instance art. Marx speaks of this in this *Theory of Surplus Value* with a clearness that does not lend itself to any misinterpretation. In spiritual production, writes Marx, another sort of labor is used than in material production. The investigation of the connection between given varieties of production and their interrelations, "can leave the field of empty phrases only when material production is regarded *sub sua propria specie*" (in its singularities).

> "Another kind of spiritual labor corresponds to capitalism than to the methods of production of the middle ages. Since Storch considers material production not from an historical point of view, as it appears to him a production of material goods in general and not a given, historically developed, and specific form of production, he tears away from under his own feet the ground, standing on which only can be understood both the ideological component parts of dominant classes, and the free (or "defined") spiritual production of a given social formation. He has no way of going beyond general, empty phrases. And these relations are not so simple here as they seemed to him. For instance capitalist production is inimical to some branches of spiritual production, such as art and poetry. If this is not understood one can come to the invention of the 18th century already ridiculed by Lessing—since we have gone so far ahead of the ancients in mechanics and so forth why not create an epic? And so a "Henriad" appears instead of an *Iliad!*"

Marx subjects to criticism generally "general, superficial analogies and juxtapositions of spiritual and material production." He ridicules all attempts to represent artists, men of letters, economists, "as productive workers in the Smithian sense" because they seemingly produce "not simple products *sui generis* (of their own sort) but products of material labor and hence direct wealth." All these attempts show that "even the highest forms of spiritual production are recognized by the bourgeois and become pardonable only because they are represented direct producers of material wealth and are falsely given out as such."

In this passage Marx has expressed his views of the place of art in capitalist society with the utmost clarity. But what are his conclusions from this? Does Marx aim at reestablishing ancient social relations in the spirit of the democratic ideal of the Jacobins? Is he issuing a call for the lost proportionality of past ages as the Romantic writers did, as did Proudhon? On the reverse. The greatest significance of Marxian theory lies in that it goes beyond the limitations of the contrast between apologies of capitalist progress and Romanticism. Marx understood that the destructive forces of capitalism themselves are great productive forces. From the very beginning of their development the progressive elements of capitalism appear as a "harmful side of society" *(Poverty of Philosophy)*. But private interest which at first is "an individual crime" against society, becomes the source of very much higher social ties. Social forms of production develop antagonistically, through their direct opposite—atomization and splitting up. Poverty, "Herodian punishment of children," the extinction of entire peoples and much else—this is the price humanity must pay for the gigantic achievements of capitalism—socialization of labor and concentration of production.

But the greatest desert of capitalist society is that it produces a revolutionary proletariat, which establishes its own dictatorship as a transitional stage to the classless society. And in this way the uneven antagonistic character of progress is forever removed,

This general dialectical conception of history also determines Marx's views on the development of art. The fall of artistic creation is inseparable from general social progress. Its high level in the past, on the opposite, was due to the lack of development of social contradictions. For example let us investigate the relation between the handicrafts of the middle ages and modern production.

> "The artisan of the middle ages," writes Marx in *German Ideology,* "still has a certain interest in his work and in the art of labor which could rise to the degree of limited artistic taste. But for this every workman of the middle ages was wholly absorbed in his work; he regarded it with a sort of sentimental serflike dependence and was much more subjugated by it than the modern workman who regards his work with indifference."

Hired labor under capitalism, excluding all interest in the work and hence any esthetic relation to it is a progressive phenomenon in the exact and deep significance of the term.

And so, the very "disdain of art" so internally characteristic to bourgeois society, is a powerful revolutionizing factor. If the bourgeoisie destroys all "patriarchal, idyllic relations," if it prostitutes everything and "has resolved personal worth into exchange value," if, finally, it "has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honored and looked up to with reverent awe"—including the work of the poet, then this "nihilism" of the bourgeois mode of production is also its great historical desert.

> "All that is holy is desecrated and men are compelled at last to look with sober eyes at their mutual relations and their positions in life." *(Communist Manifesto)*

Dethronement of illusions and merciless destruction of "motley threads" which tied individuals in older social formations is necessary and progressive. It is a necessary condition for the creation of a truly universal human culture. Already in the capitalist society

> "in place of the old local national seclusion and self sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National onesidedness and narrowmindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures there arises a world literature." *(Communist Manifesto)*

Hence, however paradoxical it may seem, the fall of art in capitalist society is progressive even from the point of view of art.

Marx's doctrine of the uneven development of art culture with relation to social development as a whole is closely related to his theory of social revolution. The disproportion between artistic and general social development is by no means the only contradiction of "civilization." It rests itself on a more general and deeper contrast—between social production growing up in the bowels of capitalist society, and private ownership which has come down from the period of individual production. The relative "proportionality" of the classical form of individual production was the basis of prospering art in the past. The antagonisms of bourgeois society naturally growing out of this proportionality are the cause of the descent of artistic creation as a specific form of culture. Finally the communist revolution of the working class will create the necessary conditions for a new renaissance of art but on a much wider and more developed base.

The contradictions between the possibilities which are opened up for art by the development of the productive forces of society and the position occupied by art under capitalism, is a particular case of the general social contradictions of the "bourgeois period of history." The further fate of art and literature is closely bound up with the solution of these contradictions—which of course cannot be expected to drop from heaven. The materialist conception of the history of art has nothing in common with the doctrine of the fatal perishing of art. Men themselves in the process of critically-revolutionary

rebuilding of the world are capable of solving all seemingly "fatal" contradictions. Success in removing the contradiction between artistic and economic development by mankind can be determined only by struggle of the proletariat and at the present moment it is also a phase of the struggle between two systems: the socialist and the capitalist systems. Thus the problem of the further historical fate of art is by no means an abstract question—it is the problem of socialist art.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

Anne Elistratova

Fascism and Italian Literature

Fascist literature, the development of which, in its various stages, can now be observed in all capitalist countries, is being built up by the imperialist bourgeoisie as one of its weapons to be used in the period of final decisive class battles. This literature is the last gasp of a dying class before it expires and has all the fundamental traits of capitalism in its last stage. Activising, battle-ready, agressive in its class tendencies, this literature nevertheless bears the inevitable stamp of decay, of a sort of historical degeneration, which is manifested both in its general impotence and in manifold forms of intellectual decay—like mysticism, inner emptyness of thought masked by exceptionally demagogic phraseology, a return to classicism and similar trends characteristic of international fascist literature in general and of Italian literature in particular.

In studying Italian fascist literature, it is necessary to view it in the general perspective of its historical development. The political overturn staged by the Fascists on Nov. 30, 1922 cannot of course be considered an historical dividing line, marking any new qualitative change in the process of fascization of the dictatorship of the Italian bourgeoisie. And the literature of Fascism, in the proper sense of the term, is of course inseparably connected to its immediate source—the literature of Italian imperialism as a whole.

The development of Italian imperialism is a vivid example of unequal capitalist development as taught by Lenin. Italy entered the period of imperialism much later than most capitalist countries. In 1915, Lenin writes in a note on *Imperialism and Socialism in Italy:*

"The Italy of revolutionary-democracy, *i.e.* revolutionary-bourgeois, that has thrown off the yoke of Austria, the Italy of the time of Garibaldi, is finally turning before our eyes into an Italy oppressing other nations, robbing Turkey and Austria, into an Italy of a crude, hideously reactionary, dirty, bourgeoisie, that licks its chops with satisfaction when it too gets a share of the booty." (*Lenin vol. 18,* 3 ed. pp 289-290)

Italy appeared on the arena of imperialist politics at a time when the sectioning of the world among the imperialist beasts of prey had in the main, been completed. This historical circumstance could not but whet the imperialist aggressiveness of its foreign policy. On the other hand, the internal contradictions of Italian capitalism—the limited sources of raw materials, tremendous overpopulation, the agricultural crisis weighing down all Southern Italy and Sicily, on account of which "Italian imperialism came to be called 'the imperialism of paupers' (*Imperialismo della povera gente*)—having in mind the poverty of Italy and the desperate poverty of Italian emigrants" (ibid p. 290)—these peculiarities hastened the process of ripening, overripeness, and decay of Italian imperialism, predicating simultaneously its exceedingly aggressive, crudely rapacious, cut-throat nature.

Italian imperialism assumed its final form about the end of the first decade of the present century. The war of Tripoli in 1911 marks its first momentous appearance on the international arena. At this point Italian imperialism had already worked out its political program. It finds expression in its theorists, especially in the utterances of the Italian nationalist leader, Enrico Corradini, as early as the beginning of the 20th century; the first convention of the Italian nationalists, later to become an integral part of the Fascist Party, its backbone, took place in 1909. This period also sees the formation of the

literature of the Italian imperialist bourgeoisie, and Italian Futurism is one of its most vivid expressions (the first manifesto of the Italian Futurists was published in 1909).

In the manifesto published in 1913 under the title of *Futurist-political program* the Futurists give their credo as consisting of the following:

"Absolute sovereignty of Italy. The word Italy takes preeminence over the word Freedom. All the liberty except the liberty to be cowards, pacifists, anti-Italians. A more powerful navy and a more powerful army; a nation proud of its being the Italian nation, for war—the only hygiene for the world and for the greatness of Italy, intensively agricultural, industrial and commercial. Economic protection and patriotic education of the proletariat. A cynical, insidious, and aggressive foreign policy. Colonial expansion. Irridentism. Pan-Italianism. Primacy of Italy. Anti-clericalism and anti-socialism. The cult of progress and speed, sport, physical strength, brave manhood, heroism against the mania of culture, classical education, museums, libraries, and ruins."

In their declarations the Futurists appear as the fighters for an industrial Italy, an Italy of highly developed capitalism, as against the Italy of the past with its ancient cultural traditions. Marinetti proposes the slogan of "compulsory modernization of cities." His manifesto to the Venitians is well known, where Futurism announces its problem of "preparing the birth of an industrial and military Venice, which would be capable of taking up the fight with our ancient enemy, Austria." All Futurist manifestoes' aim at supporting an aggressive policy of Italian imperialism, propagandize the militarization of Italy, call for colonial expansion and so on.

Futurism openly takes sides with the imperialist bourgeoisie in its attack on the working class, begins a struggle with the socialist movement, offering the working class, instead of revolutionary internationalism the slogan of unity of class interest "within the ideal circle of the Nation." In his speech of December 1913 at Florence, Marinetti says: "For us internationalism means masking with empty phrase preoccupation with one's own belly and the safety of one's own skin. To be an internationalist means to be swallowed or crushed by other's nationalism... The socialists must be convinced that we, representatives of the young generation of Italian art, will fight mercilessly and with every means their dastardly attacks on the political, military and colonial prestige of Italy."

Authors of the infamous slogan "War—the only hygiene for the world" the Futurists come out as protagonists of the cult of compulsion, strong men, heroic "supermen"—a phenomenon peculiar not only to Italian but to imperialist literature as a whole. In his "speech to Englishmen" given in London just previous to the world war, Marinetti declares: "To the Greek superman, born of library dust, we juxtapose a man multiplied on himself, enemy of books, friend of personal experience, bred on machines, enthusiastic trainer of his will, clear in the brilliance of his inspiration, armed with catlike sensitiveness, lightning calculation, wild instincts, intuition, craftiness, and rashness."

During their entire political career, Italian Futurists act as a detachment of soldiers of Italian imperialism. Throwing themselves bodily into the war of Tripoli, conducting a mad agitaion, by word and deed for the imperialist colonization policy of Italy, beginning in the very first days of the imperialist war a campaign for Italian participation against Germany and Austria, the Italian Futurists conscientiously fulfil their role—the role of agents of Italian imperialism.

Italian Futurism goes hand in hand with the fascist movement from the first days of its inception. Marinetti's book *Futurism and Fascism* published in 1924 contains ample material that sheds light on the relations between them. From the very beginning of the imperialist war in 1914 the Futurists, agitating for the entry of Italy into the war, work in close contact with the socalled interventionist groups, the founders of Fascism later. A number of provincial organs, founded by the Futurists during the war and immediately after it, during the period of inception of Fascism play a role of understudies to Musso-

lini's *Popolo d'Italia,* central organ of Italian Fascism. As examples one can cite the *Roma Futurista (Futurist Rome)* issued in Rome beginning with autumn 1918 under the editorship of Mario Carli, Marinetti, and Settimelli, *La Testa di Ferro (The Iron Head)* founded by Mario Carli and other Futurists who took part in the Fiume adventure when Fiume was captured by D'Annunzio's detachments, and so on.

2

Beginning with 1919, when Italy faced a direct revolutionary situation and the Italian imperialist bourgeoisie in close contact with Italian landowners launch in the form of Fascism, an open counter offensive on the working class and farmers, the Futurists take a direct part in smashing the revolutionary movement. It requires no special effort to uncover the class role of Futurism. In his book *Futurism and Fascism* that historical register of Futurism, Marinetti himself tears off the mask of demagogic slogans of National Unity, Class Harmony within the nation etc. and shows the true class face of Futurism.

If Italian Fascism comes out now with its theory of harmony of class interests for the sake of the greatness of the Italian Nation as a whole, the ground for this was prepared by Marinetti and his followers way back in 1919. In the spring of 1919 Marinetti comes out with a series of articles attempting to prove that Italy is free from those problems which other countries face in connection with the class struggle. According to Marinetti, Italy is "saved" from the class struggle by the exceptional, specific, peculiarity of the Italian race—that in Italy... there's a "gifted proletariat." In an article in *L'Ardito* for April 1919, entitled Futurist Conception of Democracy, Marinetti writes,

> "We have not enough raw materials, our agricultural possibilities are limited. Our Italian pride is based on the superiority of our nation, on the tremendous number of gifted individuals. Italy represents a sort of minority of genius in the world, consisting entirely of individuals excelling the average man in powers of improvization, innovation and creativeness... To 1,000 Slavs there are two or three persons of individuality. Our recent stern victory demonstrated that there is not one group of Italians (of 20, 30, 40 people) which does not contain 10 to 15 individuals capable of exercizing initiative and assuming leadership. We suffer from no neurasthenic laziness, inertness, mysticism, ideological Byzanthism or theoretical mania like the Russians. We can for this reason grant all rights to a numerical majority, to quantity, masses, because our numerical majority, masses, will never, as in Germany and Russia, be a numerical majority, quantity and mass of mediocrity, giftlessness and fatuity."

The evident thrusts at the October revolution and the revolutionary movement in Germany, combined with the crudest social demagogy masking the attack of the bourgeoisie on the working class, made these utterances of the founder of Italian Futurism the direct preface to the corresponding work of Mussolini and his followers.

This is the class aspect of Italian Futurism. The theory and the entire meagre artistic practice of Futurism are there to serve imperialism. Marinetti's first notable book is the novel, *Mafarka the Futurist.* In it, he attempts to transplant to literature the cult of the heroic superman, physical strength and bravery, "people with broad foreheads and steel jaws" as one of the fundamental points of their imperialist program. Simultaneously, in this book which marks the dawn of Futurism we already meet the characteristic symptoms of decay. In spite of its pretense of ultramaterialism, Futurism in this novel of Marinetti's appears as very mystic in its tendencies.

This mysticism can be seen in the very idea underlying *Mafarka the Futurist* amounting to the announcement of the necessity of artificially creating a mechanically "harmonious" superman—an idea which persistently repeats itself later in a series of Futurist manifestoes.

This is one of the extremely few "contructive" slogans of Futurism as distinguished from the numerous purely nihilistic negative declarations.

Poor, both in quantity and quality, Italian Futurist art has remained mainly declarative. The alluring artistic platforms of the Futurists remained mostly on paper. Futurist art

with all its ostentatious activity, with all the ostentatiously dynamic force, proved in fact an art searching for form, an art of dead theoretical slogans, unfruitful of living creative practice, proved a still born art, a parasitic art, an art of the period of decay. The art history of Futurism fully confirmed the, in this respect, striking words of Marinetti's own manifestoes, where he says:

> "A tremendous sweep of madness tore us away from ourselves and pushed us over streets, deep and craggy, like dried out streams. Death ran before us. ."

Really, all Futurist creation, as well as imperialist art on the whole, is marked with the stamp of internal desolation, artistic impotence. Of significance, in this respect, is the pitiful state of Futurism at present, when its founder and leader Marinetti has stepped down to the role of a sort of personal cook to the dying bourgeoisie setting forth in his last manifesto, a complicated system of relishing taste sensations, a whole program of Futurist gastronomy.

3

Along with Futurist literature Italian imperialism also expressed itself in the art of D'Annunzio and writers close to him (as such can be mentioned for example, Guido de Verona, the author of an untold number of estheto-erotic novels, who headed the first fascist professional organization of writers in Italy, in Milan; or Anni Vivanti with her chauvinistic novel *Woe to the Vanquished,* written during the imperialist war.)

The fight of the Futurists at the beginning of their activity, against D'Annunzio is well known. In his already quoted speech before the English Marinetti announces:

> "We must by all means fight against Gabriele D'Annunzio who has with his talents refined four intellectual poisons which we must destroy at any cost: (1) the morbid sad poetry of distance and remembrance; (2) romantic sentimentalism shedding moonlight and rising to woman—ideal and fatal beauty; (3) the temptation of sensuality with its triangle of adultery, the pepper of incest and exciting spice of sin; (4) a deep passion for the past, strengthened by a mania for the antique and collections."

It would however, be fundamentally wrong to infer, based on these external seeming contradictions between the Futurists and D'Annunzio, that there is any real inner difference between them, or look upon them as representatives of two separate styles expressing opposite currents in imperialist literature.

Under cover of the stately, passive refined estheticism of D'Annunzio's art there has always run a stream making him one of the most active representatives of imperialist literature. Elements of decay and parasitism there meet with the most active, fighting imperialist purposefulness. In his very first poem, composed at school "To the Great Sovereign of Italy, Humbert I" (1879) D'Annunzio glorifies the power of Italian monarchy and we have a vividly expressed nationalist idea which later becomes an openly imperialist tendency in D'Annunzio's art. In his drama, for instance, *Stronger than Love,* (1907) D'Annunzio creates in its hero Corrato Brando, the type of an active promoter of Italian colonial expansion, the prototype of the heroic "strong men" so dear to the heart of modern Fascist literature, putting into his mouth the imperialist slogan *"Teneo te, Africa!"* the slogan of subjugating the entire African continent to Italy.

Going back to the historical past, the period of the foundation of Venice, D'Annunzio in the drama *The Ship* (1908) utilizes it for affirmation of the thesis of Italy's sea power. The earlier *Sea Odes* (1893) *Praise to the Sky, the Seas, the Earth and Heroes,* (1903) as well as *Songs of Heroic Deeds Overseas* published in 1912 after the war of Tripoli also brand D'Annunzio as an imperialist artist. But the artistic peculiarities of D'Annunzio find an even better expression in *Nocturne,* published in 1921. This last book written as the semi-demented dreamings of a severly wounded man doomed to

eternal darkness and immobility, glorifying the "heroic deeds" of the Italian army in the days of the imperialist (world) war, is drenched in an almost mystic cult of war, presents a remarkable unification of parasitic, static elements on the one hand with active battling imperialist ferver on the other, so characteristic of all of D'Annunzio's work.

From the first days of the war of 1914, D'Annunzio begins an eager campaign for the severing of the triple alliance by Italy, and entering the war against Germany and Austria. D'Annunzio's speeches on this subject in various cities in Italy form a booklet entitled *For a Greater Italy* (1905) *Against One, Against All* (1919) *Italy or Death* (1919) and *For Italy of Italians* published after the Fascist overturn, in 1923, make up the most vivid imperialist literature. Taking part in the war personally, D'Annunzio after it was over, becomes the organizer of the notorious Fiume adventure (the temporary occupation of Fiume by Italian detachments under D'Annunzio's direction) and one of the Fathers of Fascism. The pronouncement of D'Annunzio as "the greatest poet of Italy since Dante" [1] by the Fascists is therefore only a logical expression of their relations as is granting him the title of Prince Monte-Nevoso (1924) the publishing of a "national" complete collection of his works under the honorary editorship of Mussolini, etc. The drawing closer of the Futurists and D'Annunzio [2] about the time of the inception of Fascism is in this connection, also very logical.

It is necessary to stop a moment on the policy of Italian Fascism with respect to literature. Unlike Fascism in other countries (for instance in America, where Fascist literary tendencies are represented mainly by the neo-humanistic school, this is by no means a prepondering tendency for American literature as a whole) in Italy, Fascism, by virtue of the openly Fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, has the opportunity to put through its literature as the official one by means of government pressure.

Italian Fascism recognizes the political significance of art as a weapon in the class struggle. In this respect, the value placed on Fascist art by Francesco Sapori, *Popolo d'Italia* of Sep. 4, 1931, for example, is characteristic.

> "Art," writes Sapori, "is the privilege of a few select minds, which a small unerring voice calls to the arms of creation; at the same time however art is a weapon for the defense of the greatness of one's Fatherland from an esthetic point of view blossoming and extending in time... The march on Rome is an historical fact, opening up a new era. Writers have a ready theme, a glorious problem—to define its significance in pages which would reflect its idea, confirming the loftiness of a style intimately bound up with the very name of Italy."

But in spite of all measures taken by Fascism in this direction, as the creation of the Fascist National Royal Academy, the organization of a whole series of literary prizes, the organization of annual Fascist book bazaars, Italian Fascism not only failed to create a rich, ample literature of its own but on the opposite, all literary life in Italy is undergoing a socalled "book crisis." The creative impotence, the fruitlessness of Fascist artists (and poets) is one form in which the general slump, the general decay of Italian imperialism appears. Italian Fascism is incapable of producing anything new in the field of art, of bringing out one great name in literature, one artist of talent—just as other Fascist literatures are incapable of doing. Italian Fascism attempts to draw in the widest reading circles into absorbing a literature evidently propagandist in its function. Popular songs, popular novels, books of the colonial adventurer-type—these are the means by which Italian Fascism tries to influence the broad mass of readers. One must underline the significance of and the danger lurking in this kind of literature. The fact that the period when the bourgeoisie was capable of producing its "great art" is inevitably drawing to a close, does not tend to lessen their activity in the field of art and particularly in

[1] Angelo Sodini. *Il Poeta-Soldato* Poet-soldier. Almanaco del *Popolo d'Italia* 1930

[2] It is well known, for instance, of the letter of greeting sent to Gabriele D'Annunzio by Marinetti after one of the former's speeches in defense of Fascism.

the field of literature. We must therefore abandon the disdainfully negligent attitude to this openly inimical Fascist mass literature which is prevalent among many of our critics. We must put an end to the method of disposing of such Fascist mass production by means of a disdainful gesture, meaning the stuff is drivel beneath criticism. There can of course be no two opinions on the artistic value of Fascist literature, but can it be approached at all from a point of view of "pure art" criterions; rather, it must be approached first of all, as a political phenomenon, as a class weapon of the imperialist bourgeoisie by means of which it tries to influence wide masses of readers. It is the function of revolutionary criticism, not only to register the failures simply of Fasicst literature but also to disclose Fascist activity and methods on the literary front, uncover the true face of Fascist literature and liberate the wide mass of readers from the sway of its inimical intellectual influence, taking into consideration that, in this respect the main danger lies principally in its popular literature.

Along with this, however, all Fascist ideology is imbued with mysticism. It is significant, that the theoreticians of the Fascist movement themselves consider it as above all a sort of mystic transport, a semi-religious tendency, a singular resurrection of the crusade spirit of the middle ages, etc. The following quotation of Giovanni Gentile, the foremost representative of Fascism in philosophy and the first Fascist Minister of Education is characteristic. In the artcle *"Il Fascismo nella cultura"* (Fascism in Culture) (collection *What Is Fascism?)* Gentile writes:

> "How often has our Duce, with his deep understanding of Fascist psychology uttered the following truth: we all submit to an inner, mystic urge... In minutes of mysticism, when the soul sinks in the twilight of a nascent world... and we are filled with a new heretofore inexperienced, energy,—it is then that creative faith is born in the heart of man, that faith which inspires you O Fascists, which has given you so much joy... which has supported you in days of suffering; although it was not our rational doctrine, it was our feeling, our very being."

The attitude of Fascism to the Catholic church is also of great significance. Up to the moment when Fascism usurped the power of government, it could afford through Mussolini, to indulge in not only several anticlerical outbursts for the sake of social demagogy, but even openly atheistic slogans. Mussolini's utterances on the question of religion, dating to 1920, quoted by Alfred Kurella in his book, *Mussolini Ohne Maske (Mussolini Unmasked)* 1931, are in this respect characteristic.

> "God, declared Mussolini once, does not exist..... Religion is from a scientific point of view an absurdity; in practice it is unmoral and people who are under its way are sick people."

Upon coming into power, however, Fascism gradually joins hands with religion, with the Catholic church. Mussolini's speeches in connection with the conclusion of the Lateran agreement with the Pope are well known, in which he contradicts his previous "revolutionary" observations on the immorality of religion, declared that, "Religion is necessary to Fascism. Only religion can guarantee complete morality." His activity in putting the schools under Catholic influence, in connection with the general Fascist policy with regard to the church, is also well known, and it was effected by Giovanni Gentile on the very next day of his appointment as Minister of Education, right after the Fascist overturn. In view of this reconciliation between Fascism and the Catholic church a great many of the most reactionary Catholic writers joined the ranks of the Fascists.

Luciano Gennari wrote a very curious booklet, *L'Italia Qui Vient (Future Italy,* published in Paris, in French) on the question of the relations between Fascism and the Catholic church both in the fields of ideology in general and literature in particular. Gennari, like every Fascist ideologist, begins as an apologist and loyal bearer of arms for Italian imperialism, the class content of which he tries to hide as much as possible.

> "Italy," writes Gennari, "is being accused of 'imperialism', about which, perhaps there has been too much talk among us. But it is only a national 'metaphor', a spiritual reality, which could be expressed in the words: patriotic feelings, a feeling of independence, world freedom, finally—Italian pride."

Coming out fundamentally as a political ally of Fascism, Gennari however makes the condition that Fascism must by its policy really promote "the future Catholic rebirth of Italy." With this Gennari defines the parting line between the Catholics and Fascism, pointing out that the latter has no yet completed its political "mission" with respect to the Catholic church.

> "Future taly, "is an Italy that has solved the Roman problem, a traditional and having reestablished the monarchy in a cooperative form, has only, so to say, put up the walls of the house. But the Italian people have not yet entirely entered the house."

And Gennari further states, before the Fascist government in the name of the Pope, his program of building the "future Italy."

> "Future Italy, "is an Italy that has solved the Roman problem, a traditional and catholic Italy, which of course, Fascism will try to represent but better and better. An Italy which, severed from the Pope in 1849, dragged out an inglorious existence under the sway of different sects from 1860 to 1922 while the basic tendencies of Risorgimento[1] remained misunderstood—those tendencies of the great Risorgimento which were caught up by Fascism and followed since that day when the Black Shirts, following in the steps of the Reds, entered Rome and captured power. An Italy which will direct all its forces to establish, together with other nations, the peaceful empire of Christ throughout the world."

Fascist literature is saturated with mysticism, supported on Fascist philosophy—a philosophy of the most reactionary battling idealism. In this respect the intellectual program of Fascism promulgated by Antonio Bruers in one of his articles in *Anti-Europa,* is characteristic. He writes:

> "While the modern era is imbued with the laws of matter, a great reaction is brewing within the depths of human consciousness in defense of spiritual values. In the coming historical moment material values will receive a tremendous alchemic setback; undergo the crisis of the conversion of matter into ideas. Hence, the problem... to produce a new class of people, stern, wise, disciplined, brave and at the same time patient... but, above all, inspired by the transcendental vision of life, capable of being inspired and guided in all their actions by eternal ends."

This problem of "producing patient, disciplined etc. people" which Fascism places before itself is a direct political problem. In its advance upon the economic, political and cultural standard of living of the workers, Italian Fascism makes use of these calls to patience' to endurance of all suffering and want in the high name of "spiritual values" as a mask for its class aggression. Hence, the role of these reactionary idealist theories of Italian Fascist literature. As an example of this one could take, say, the novel of Cipriano Giaccetti, *L'Homo In Catene* (*Man in Chains*) warmly welcomed by Fascist critics. The chains from which man, according to Giaccetti must free himself are those of sensual reality. "How terrible is the law, condemning man to be a slave to his senses, making man a pitiful herd of cattle, ready to sacrifice happiness, health, and life itself for the sake of the body!" exclaims the author of the novel. Giaccetti attempts to prove this theses by means of the hero, a young Fascist, Consalvo Munos, who for love of a woman leaves the Fascist movement and accidentally perishes at the hands of revolutionists, thus showing the necessity of asceticism, renunciation of the material goods of life for "pure spirituality," for the spiritual values of Fascism.

Fascist policies with respect to the working class are masked by the crudest social demagogy. In this respect the activity of Fascism with its slogan of class harmony comes very close to the theory and practice of Social-Fascism. As the VI Congress of the Comintern has pointed out:

[1] Risorgimento—a bourgeois democratic movement of the 19th century for the national liberation and unification of Italy.

> "in more or less developed form Fascist tendencies and Fascist movements in a stage of inception are met with everywhere. The ideology of class cooperation, this official ideology of Social Democracy, borders on the ideology of Fascism in many points." *(Stenographic Report of VI Congress of the Comintern Vol. 6; p. 65)*

This "joining hands" of Social Fascism also finds its expression in literature. As an example of this Giuseppe Regio's book *L'elogio Proletario di Mussolini (Proletarian Praise of Mussolini)* published in 1929 can be mentioned (not in vain did this book earn such wide advertising in Fascist publications).

The sermon of class harmony, unity of the Italian nation, is repeated by the artist-ideologists of Fascism together with persistent glorification of the political past of Fascism, clothing itself in a veritable "Hurrah revolution" phraseology. Historically inseparably bound to bourgeois democracy Fascism here pretends to "forget the relation." The Fascist overturn of 1922 becomes the "greatest Revolution of the 20th Century" a "Revolution" zealously praised by Fascist sworn bards as the opposite of the socialist October revolution. Such works as Chiapparelli's "heroic" poem, *La Marcha su Roma (March on Rome),* together with Asvero Gravelli's *Y Canti della Rivoluzione (Songs of Revolution)* and Bettino d'Alloja's *Ynni e Fremiti Fascisti,* can serve as examples of such literature flooding modern Fascist Italy.

All this demagogic phraseology of Fascism is closely connected with Italian Fascism's general literary methods of glossing over the contradictions of reality.

In this connection the sentimentalism which occupies a prominent place in Fascist literature is interesting as the sheep's clothing under which it hides its reality: a rapacious wolf face. All Fascist literature is built up of a combination of aggressiveness and sugary sentimental lyricism. For instance, among the songs mentioned by Gravelli, there is one about the history of the Fascist movement told in connection with the black shirt made by a girl for her Fascist lover. Another, telling of the mother of a Fascist gone on a punitive expedition:

> "His mama has been waiting for him so long at the cold portal, and has not tired of waiting, hope has not died in her... Her son will soon, soon return! Your boy will return to you, tired woman, to cover your holy old head with kisses... Death lied when it said one evil day 'I brushed him with my wing.' Valorous youth cannot die. Black Shirt is eternal life!"

As a vivid example of Fascist sentimentality take the essay of the noted Fascist writer, Guelfo Civinini entitled *Night on the Gard (Anti-Europa,* January, 1930) written in connection with the funeral of one of the foremost representatives of the Fascist movement Guido Keller.

> "Here lies now the poet, known by but few, a bearded gypsy in love with the night's stars, with loneliness, with roses, with the skylark, with little girl beggars, with homeless dogs, with all lovely, deep, and touching, to which his thoughful, wandering, restless soul was drawn during its wanderings on earth and heaven."
>
> "Such was Keller, the man, unarmed hero, poet that wrote verse mystic and pagan, ascetic and sensualist, man of the sun and man of the night — harmony of disharmony."

Who would recognize in this sugary image of poet in love with roses and skylarks the battling Fascist whose name is connected with the first days of the Fascist advance? Wo would recognize under this innocent sentimental mask the "hero" of a robber venture of Italian imperialism — of the Fiume adventure of 1919?

In view of this sort of beastly "sentimentalism" of Fascist literature, its treatment of youth is exceedingly interesting. The chorus to the official Fascist hymn is no accident: "Youth, youth, springtime of beauty, in Fascism lies the salvation of our freedom!" In this quadruplet beginning with, what would seem, such an innocent lyric address to "youth, springtime of beauty," we have such an essence of Fascist ideology in which both the content and the method of realization of Fascist demagogy are evident. Fascist ideologists attempt to show the entire Fascist movement as elemental passion of youth

"in general" which was supposedly the moving force of the Fascist "revolution," thus on the one hand representing Fascism as the embodiment of eternal youth, the unfading "springtime of beauty," and on the other hand providing for it a broad base in the masses of young workers addressing them as the only genuine rightful representatives of this Fascist "springtime." These tendencies are particularly evident in the already mentioned *Songs of Revolution* of Gravelli:

> "Fascism — this is Spring crowned with roses and laurel, eternal youth of the immortal Fatherland singing: We all have one will — a holy — victory or death!" "How could the Black Shirts help but remember that which was the instinctive and mystic essence of their life, of Spring, the blossoming of youth, ideal harmony of almond trees in bloom!" exclaims Gravelli. "O, careless song, born mid blood and passions! O song of new adventurers, lovers of life: Forward, towards Spring the Black Shirt speeds with bombs in his hands!"

This sugary hypocrisy, this glossing over of reality is most fully expressed in that trait of Italian Fascist literature which is also the most vivid expression of the ideology of the dying imperialist bourgeoisie. We have in mind the "search of optimism" the attempts to be optimistic at any cost and full 100 per cent of which are characteristic of all Italian Fascist artists. In his time yet, Marinetti, unfolding his program of Futurist esthetics in one of his manifestoes declared: "To skeptic and pessimistic determinism we contrapose... a cult of creative intuition, free inspiration and *artificial optimism,"* (italics mine A.E.). These words that unguardedly slipped off the tongue of the imperialist artist lift, for an instant, the mask from the truer face of the literature of the imperialist bourgeoisie. It shows up as almost a corpse full of the poison of decay, the face of a dying class, vainly endeavoring through the mouth of Fascism with its appeals to youth, as the saving motor, to recapture its long spent historical youth, vainly trying by means of artificial optimism to mask its shaking horror before the approaching fall of capitalism.

4

Characteristic of Fascism are an acute nationalism, theories of national superiority, national Messiahnism (the theories of the Gallian Primate of France, the Nordic theory which enjoys such wide popularity with American Fascist circles, Hitler's national-socialism in Germany, etc.). From this point of view the problem of inheritance, the problem of historical traditions, the national past turn in the hands of Fascism to methods of building up an imperialist theory of "national primacy." The traditions of ancient Rome, theories of a "Great Italy" "a third empire" etc. become an arsenal which supplies the Italian imperialist bourgeoisie with arms for its attacks. Announcing itself the heir of Roman civilization, Italian Fascism attempts to represent its aggressive, rapacious policies as peculiar propaganda of culture, the carrying over of "eternal Latin culture" into colonial lands.

Classicism, which generally serves very frequently as a flag of Fascism in the field of literature, is also typical of the literature of Italian Fascism — here of course classicism serves only as a purely superficial attempt to utilize ancient traditions to mask a very modern imperialist ideology. Poems singing praise to Rome as the symbol of Italian greatness, "Rome wrapped in imperial purple"—Chiappareli's poem, *La Marcia su Roma (March on Rome);* historical novels asserting the thesis of the historical hegemony of Rome (for instance the series of novels on ancient Rome begun by the now dead Luciano Zuccoli, Massino Bontempelli's novel *La Capitale del Mondo (The World's Capital,* etc.); Latin odes singing the praise of Fascism, especially of the "Duce" Mussolini—such is one of the basic lines of development of Italian Fascist literature.

The departure into the past, this cultivation of the historical genre is significant not only for Italian but also for a host of other Fascist literatures. It will be

sufficient to refer, for instance, to German Fascist literature or the literature connected with the American neo-humanistic movement — say the novels of Thornton Wilder. One of the latest examples of this tendency in English literature is the prose translation of Homer's *Odyssey* — the fruit of leisure of the not unknown agent of British imperialism Colonel T. L. Lawrence, or as he prefers to call himself now Private Shaw. Building all its ideology and particularly its literature as a weapon of attack on the working class, as an aggressive colonial policy, Italian Fascism in its impotence for creation is compelled to cover up its poverty of ideas and theoretical nakedness with the pied rags of the culture of the historical past. But aren't those pictorial symbols of ancient Rome which Fascism has adopted as the political symbol of its own dictatorship, those "traditions of a Great Rome" to which they refer as a justification of colonial expansion—isn't all this superfluous phraseology of Fascism another indication of the rotting, the decay of Fascist ideology, the ideology of a moribund class? Isn't it a significant fact that Fascism looks for its ideologist, for its defender, not among the representatives of modern science, but in the distant, historical past — a past of no more, no less, than 2,000 years before our era—to Virgil? It is of course not pure chance, for instance, that in 1930 we have the publication of the Latin poem of Anaclet Traci, *Return of Virgil or Of the Life.* The book cover represents Virgil on a background of railroad trains, automobiles, dirigibles, aeroplanes, and telegraph posts — symbols of Italian technical progress under the heel of bourgeois dictatorship — and the book itself tells of the return of Virgil to Fascist Italy of 1930 and his rapture over the "achievements" of Fascism beginning with aviation and ending with Futurism and the monument to Virgil in his native city Mantua.

The Fascist cultivation of Virgil is not limited however to such literary curiosities verging on an anecdote. It penetrates the very sanctum of Italian Academicism, grows to an entire singular "science," which with all its extreme abstractness and innocence, has a very practical and definite political purpose. For instance, in the first volume of the series *Studi Vergiliani (Researches on Virgil,* published in 1931 by the Institute for Study of Roman Questions) what strikes one immediately are such articles as *Exaltation of Labor in Virgil's Works* by Giuseppe Bottai, *Return to the Soil as Taught by Virgil,* by Pietro Fedele, *Virgillian Echoes on the Relations between Rome and Africa* by Pietro Romanelli, etc. The realistic political significance of these articles, notwithstanding the protective covering of academicism, is evident to any one in the least aware of the social problems Fascism has to contend with in modern Italy. Are not the reflections on *The Return to the Soil as Taught by Virgil* a direct reflection on the theory of Ruralization of Italy proposed by Fascism as a patent remedy against unemployment and the paralysis of the industrial crisis? Is not *The Exaltation of Labor in Virgil's Works* closely related to the lavishly expended social demagogy of Fascism addressed to the workers in order to help realize the policy of compulsory Fascization of the trade unions? Aren't the researches in *Virgilian Echoes on the Relations Between Rome and Africa* an attempt to put a classical "basis" under the Fascist imperialist colonial policy?

Fascist ideologists appeal to the traditions of Italy's past as a means of preventing a proletarian revolution. Thus, for instance, Antonio Bruers in his article "Inspiring Principles of Italian Life from a World Point of View" (*Anti-Europa,* June 1929) listing the "basic principles of the program of new Italian youth" in other words the program of Fascism which considers as one of its fundamental principles "respect for the past."

> "Every really great nation," writes Bruers, "rests on a sense of uninterrupted contact with the past. To deny the past, to consider that you are called upon to reshape the world or your nation, from its very foundation means to condemn yourself or your children to a sometimes very painful return to the right road, to condemn yourself to a futile waste of many years of activity and valuable heritage of labor. *A balance between conservatism and revolution,* between past and

> future is the secret of great institutions, of great civilizations: it resulted in a power ful Egypt and Rome... Great is the nation that possesses a sense for tradition and for whom tradition is the ferment impregnating new activity." (Italics mine, A.E.)

The entire supposedly "classic" tendency in modern Italian literature is thus discovered in practice to be one of the most active principles of a fighting Fascist ideology.

5

The importance of the colonial problem in the practice of Italian Fascism, the offensive policy which it applies mainly in North Africa, the scene of concentration of its rapacious imperialist lust, makes the colonial literature one of the basic genres of Italian Fascist literature. From the very inception of Italian imperialist literature the problem of colonial expansion played the part of that common platform on which all its various representatives united beginning with the Futurists and ending with D'Annunzio. In the article "Colonial Passion and the Spirit of Adventure" (*Italia Litteraria* 8/III/1931) Bonaventura Caloro in the wonted style of Fascist demagogy, jumps upon the past "colonial passivity" of the Italian bourgeoisie.

> "There was a time when our bourgeoisie timidly stayed home and did not dare look out of the world's window. Nothing touched its imagination. The capture of Fiume it met in silence, with lack of understanding... An example originating in the plain people taught it nothing... It denied and hid these outbursts of the plain people like a shameful spot on the entire nation."

After this Caloro makes a special point of the active role of imperialist literature as a weapon of its colonial policy: "What our emigrants did not succeed in doing our literature succeeded," writes Caloro. Establishing the "fundamentals" of colonial imperialist literature Caloro persistently underlines its being foreign to the traditions of eastern romantic "exotics" which he considers the literary expression of that neutrality on the colonial question which he so sternly condemns.

In Italy semi-literary, semi-journalistic books, accounts of expeditions cast in the form of novels, diaries of travellers, memoirs of Fascist explorers working on the colonial political front, are widely circulated as a kind of Fascist colonial literature and flood the Italian bookmarket thus determining to a great extent the appearance of Italian Fascist literature.

Several Italian publishing houses even specialize in this sort of colonial adventure literature. So, for instance, the Milan publishing house, Alps, in 1931 received a premium from the Fascist Royal Academy for its efforts in publishing the series, *Travels and Discoveries of Italian Seamen.* An analogous series is being published by the Florentine publishers, Bemporad, under the general title *Illustrated Collection of Travels and Exploring Expeditions,* which included in 1931 V. Battistelli's *Italian Africa* and Lodovigo Nesbit's *Explorations of Danchalia,* etc.

A vast Fascist literature of colonial adventure is growing up whose theoretical base is to be found in the remarks of Fascist critics of the kind made by Antonio Bruers in his article in *Anti-Europe* already mentioned where he says:

> "It is necessary that Italian youth be imbued with the same love of travel and exploration, contact with oversea lands that their ancient ancestors had. The spirit of adventure, dreams of distant lands.... Colonial empires have always been the result of the bravery of individual seamen, travellers, traders, on whose heels follow political power, the governments of their nations. The industrialist selling the products of his mills, the colonist fructifying his fields, the office man raising the efficiency of the management of the colonial economy—they are all the real missionaries and mandatories of their native lands."

Among the writers who threw themselves into the stream of this literature must be mentioned, among others, one of the noted representatives of Futurism, Paolo Bucci, who came out in 1931 with the book *Adventures of the Meridians and Parallels.*

Andriano Monaco's *Perished in Lybia* (issued by Mondadori) in a series of military novels in 1930) which won the Civinni prize is a characteristic example of this sort of colonial adventure literature. Steeped in Fascist social demagogy, Monaco's book glorifies the valerous Italian rank and file that fought in the colonial wars and appeals to the memory of the fallen "heroes" of the imperialist attack on the colonies to awake in the reader the corresponding "spirit of colonial adventure." To draw in the masses of workers into the colonial politics of imperialism, turn them into cannon fodder for its robber adventures—this is the class function of Fascist colonial adventure literature.

Together with the colonial literature the grasping designs of Italian imperialism are also expressed in the closely allied military literature which also has been diligently cultivated by Italian Fascism. Typical, for instance, is the review of Giusseppe Brisi's, *Garrison Songs,* where the critic, welcoming the book writes,

> "We should really like to have these songs become well known in our army; they would undoubtedly help to raise the moral level of our soldiers, because song, better than anything else, helps overcome with a light heart distress and difficulties and rouse to the struggle against obstacles and dangers."

Bruno Biaggi gives a developed program of these Fascist principles in the field of military literature in his introduction to the collection *The War in its Songs,* by Giulielmo Bonucci and Mario Sandri, published in 1928.

> "Even now," writes Biaggi, "many have a wrong idea of the war, seeing only its hardships, suffering, and danger. But war is not only this—it is also an outburst of youth. The aspects of war are twofold; one is sad, the other joyous. The long torments of waiting in the trenches amid the wounded and the dead, tiring transfers, offensives, all this makes up hardships, danger, suffering. But the spirit of youth and brotherhood gave another side to war, created another mood which made it possible joyously to take part in transfers and in waiting and in offensives. Some small thing like a flower or a green plant, an improvised spree in a corner of a trench, a letter come from afar to call to mind the dear near ones—all this filled the young soul... with a feeling of calm glad humility and made strong and beautiful a life in which personality rose to unwonted heights."

These are the "theoretical" premises on which Fascism builds its military literature—all these endless collections of war lyrics like the *Garrison Songs* Brisi mentioned, or the *Soldier's Songs* of Francesco Bernardini, or the heroic poem of F. Negro, *On Trans-Atlantic Wings,* published in 1931, military novels (the publishers Mondadoni issue a whole series of novels on the war), military tales (like the typical booklet by Nino Podenzani, *Soul of the Soldier,* or the two books of the Fascist writer Guido Milanesi, *Tales of Aerial Warfare,* and *Flame on the Altar,* a collection of short stories glorifying the exploits of Italians that perished in the World War) etc.

In connection with criticism of "Remarquism" it is instructive to discover the traits of Italian Fascist literature that are close to it. Fascist literature does not hide the socalled "horrors of war," it justifies them and attempts by means of the crudest social demagogy an appeal to the necessity of self renunciation to overcome these horrors, relegate them to the background. In this way the "merit" to which Remarque pretends, of having given the only "correct" unvarnished picture of war in literature is fully shared by the entire military literature of Fascism. What connects them even closer is the poetization of friendship at the front, solidarity at the front, which plays such an important part in Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front,* and especially in his later novel *The Way Back* which has the purpose of glossing over the question of class contradictions within the army, to substitute the national struggle for the class struggle. Is this respect Mussolini's utterances on the war of 1914-18 in which he took part personally are significant.

The call to self renunciation, to patiently bear all sacrifices, all want in the name of a "Great Italy" this hideously hypocritical mask of the beast-of-prey-literature of Italian imperialism, gives rise to a special cult of dead "heroes" that took part in the war. Just as most of the capitalist countries which took part in the war of 1914 erect monuments

to the unknown soldier, raising around them a great noise of imperialist propaganda, Italian Fascism in its literature appeals to the memory of the victims of the imperialist slaughter in order to organize a new war. Thus for instance in the already quoted book of Berlutti's *Heart of Italy,* the author devotes an entire chapter to the "Dead that perished in the war."

> "Valorous dead. How many of them? Six hundred thousand, six hundred thousand and all heroes, of the best, the most beautiful! They remained there on the field of battle to guard the borderline of our homeland, that the flag of victory should flutter high in Italy's heaven. Their's is the victory: it was won only because they laid down their lives for it."

This high flown rhetoric of the Fascist ideologist marks the premises on which are based the Fascist heroics so closely bound to the military literature of Fascism.

The cult of Mussolini's personality occupies a tremendous place in Fascist literature, not to speak of the requirement of "good taste" in Fascist literature which dictates that every book almost must be dedicated to Mussolini. To sing his praise develops to be the favorite theme of Fascist poets, who go such lengths in their adulation that their products, all these poems and odes, some even in Latin, are barely distinguishable from parodies. But the heroics of Fascist literature are not limited to adulation of only Mussolini. A special branch of Italian literature has grown up consisting mainly of journalistic work: *Mussolini's Military Daybook, The King Soldier in War Days, Vittorio Soloro del Borgo, Examples of Leaders* by Amadeo Tosti where the biographies of generals killed during the imperialist war are collected, or the book of Malaparte and Fallqui,*Life of Iron Beard,* called *Italo Balbo,* where this Balbo, director of Italian aviation for the Fascists is compared by his obliging biographers to the generals of the Great French Revolution, the heroes of Ariosto, and with the paladins of Karl the Great.

On this plan is built for instance, the recently issued novel of the ex-Futurist Mario Corli, *An Italian According to Mussolini,* and a host of other products of Italian Fascist literature.

In his review of Italo Balbo's book, *Storms Over the Ocean (Italia Litteraria 24-v-31)* R .M. Angelis writes:

> "Daily heroics turn our gloomy life to a poetic fantasy, full of fairy tale adventures, calling for continual humiliation of the flesh... We all recognize an unconquerable urge to abandon our old darth in answer to an unclear demand of the higher instincts... It is necessary to always believe in the fairy tale dream of still greater distances, believe in the eternally abstract heaven, not to submit to doubt and unrest."

Subjective idealism, mysticism, fruitless record strivings, inner desolation covered by pompous rhetorical phrases—this, in the final accounting, is the essence of the heroics of Italian Fascist literature.

6

Such is the literature of Italian Fascism in its more general aspects, the literature to which an artificial monopoly is secured on the Italian book mart due to the power of the Fascist regime. However, if the Fascist terror prevents the legal existence of a revolutionary literary movement, prevents the proletariat from giving its own answer to Fascism in literature within Italy, it cannot keep the proletariat from creating its own literature beyond the borders of Italy. Until lately connected with only the name of Arturo Carotti, a comparatively young writer whose work, inspire of its repleteness with class fighting spirit, suffered from political unripeness, Italian proletarian literature ascends a new and higher stage of its development with the appearance of Giovanni Germanetto (author of

Notes of a Barber and the novel *Fenncottero* dedicated to the underground work of the Italian Communist party, now in process of publication). Here one must also mention the literary activity of another old revolutionist, Edmondo Peluso, author of the memoirs published under the title *Citizen of the World*. The specific circumstances in which this literature is developing, growing up in the forced political emigration of direct active participants of the revolutionary movement, inevitably narrows down its mass base, but also assures it an exceptionally high political level. This literature the Italian proletariat can proudly put up against the whole of Fascist literature as its intellectual weapon in the struggle for a proletarian revolution, showing the degree of political maturity as a class.

G. M. Krzizanovsky

Science and Socialism[1]

Western science and engineering caught in the vise of the unheard of capitalist crisis, are at present undergoing a period of severe reaction. All over the world, in all languages, one hears now that perhaps the main trouble lies in the rapid advancement of technical progress. The noted French financier and journalist, Cailleaux, claims that the world is going to the dogs on account of three evils: the loss of the big Chinese market, the exclusion of Soviet Russia from capitalist world economy, and the progress of scientific and engineering thought, which is supposed to be the greatest evil. To save the world Cailleaux proposes a sort of moratorium on scientific and technical research—a moratorium for decades to come.

The American, Chase, and a whole phalanx of fascist ideologists of capitalism in Germany and other countries broadcast in similar vein.

The situation in Germany is particularly difficult, while that of those German engineers who have not parted ways with the capitalist regime is even more so. The extremely rapid growth of capitalist rationalization with consequent unemployment for millions of workers is an indisputable fact. But how can the engineer rise against technical progress —cut the branch on which he sits? So they write helpless tracts on the subjects of "one cannot deny and cannot but admit" like the article of Professor Heidebrek and the declaration of German engineers published in the October issue of the publications of the Union of German Engineers.

The article and declaration mentioned give an exceptionally clear picture of the position of the upper strata of German engineers and under cover of presumably businesslike, realistic analyses of the causes of unemployment and the role of machinery in the unemployment situation. The diffidence of scientific thought and sheer social helplessness of this upper engineering circle stands out with unusual clearness.

Professor Heidebrek realizes that to lay the entire blame on engineering, to look for a way out by means of technical regression is tantamount to suicide for Germany. He eloquently points out that this technical advancement was the very basis of the powerful upswing of capitalism in the period of relative stabilization. He sees that one must not "reproach the instrument for inability to use it." He realizes that the modern capitalist world in its reliance on modern technique resembles the magician mentioned by Goethe, who, having called out the spirits of the underworld, cannot manage them.

But what is one to do? To renounce engineering, for Germany, means to renounce its "place under the sun," to transfer its prerogatives to other peoples better situatted in this historical moment. Renunciation of technical progress means the immediate step to another severer condition of unemployment. He cites Sombart's calculations that for the century 1800 to 1900 the population of Europe grew from 180 to 500 million. Such growth of the population was made possible only on the basis of machine development and modern industrialization. In the face of this industrialization the previous small trades and primitive agriculture took a very backward place. In modern Germany the so-called net production of industry amounts to 23.5 billion marks while that of agriculture only 10 billions (figures are for 1925). The army of wage earners in the eighties con-

[1] This article is based on the abridged stenographic report of the speech of the academician G. M. Krzizanovsky at the 5th Congress of Engineers and Technicians of the USSR.

sisted of 18 million workers, while in 1925 it had grown to 36 million. During this period the number of agricultural workers increased only 2.6 million while that of industrial workers increased 16 million. At the present moment this army is equipped, in Germany, with mechanical energy amounting to 60 million horsepower, or, in other words, to every worker there are 20 mechanical steel slaves. Just try to set this machinery backward and attempt to make ends meet in the struggle with unemployment under the conditions of downfalling capitalism! Try to turn the present population of Germany to primitive agriculture and small trades!

The entangled Heidebrek attempts to find support in the specific conditions of Germany. Immediately the scene is occupied by the Versailles treaty, the difficulties of working in Germany on borrowed capital, the unseeing hunger for satisfying demands accumulated during years of war and the war's aftermath, and mainly—the "ethical factors." One must, don't you know, overcome this "crass materialism." Unemployment itself, you see, is disquieting mainly "from the social-psychological side"— the matter is with the "inner state" of the individual and so on and so forth. Salvation is to be found in the group of well meaning engineers, technicians, and managers, conscious of its responsibility before technicians, and managers, conscious of its responsibility before the country, considered as an integral unit, and based on "selection" and "self criticism," joining forces to raise the quality of their work and beat the other nations in the world market! And such pitiful junk passes for the innermost thoughts of the entire German nation.

II

We correctly characterized our first Five Year Plan as a program of great undertakings and developed socialist attack. This in the face of a backward country, under conditions of colossal after-war ruin, and the heavy detrimental historical heritage which we continually feel as a burden on our shoulders. Our experience, to begin with, shows the greatness of the work and the ends set,whose true evaluation will be found when mankind as a whole has freed itself from the chains of capitalism. Delving into the documents of western engineering we can already adumbrate our future gigantic structures.

At the time of the Genoa Conference we discussed with Comrade Lenin a proposal for such an international undertaking. We proposed to utilize the Genoa Conference for the discussion of a project to build an electrical super-trunk line from London to Pekin, passing all most important European capitals. This trunkline was to have been a part of the gigantic plan of electrifying all Eurasia and was to have provided a tremendous field of work for many millions of people. Circumstances at the Genoa Conference were not favorable for broaching this project, but in the speeches of Comrade Chicherin you can find traces of its existence at the time.

Since then engineering has made new gigantic strides ahead. Our own experience teaches us how one must revaluate values in the field of electrical energy, that basis of all modern economy. Only a short while ago we considered power stations of 200,000 h.p. as the largest of this type. We now are reaching a point where 500,000 and a million kw. are considered quantities not at all of a limiting order. Think of our own steps from Valkhovstroi to Dnieprostroi, to Volgastroi and the great Siberian streams with their future giants on the Irtysh, Ob, Yenissey and Angara. But western engineering already has carefully thought out and prepared projects of greater magnitude. We are not referring to the all-European electric transfer system of the type worked out by Oliven. I take the liberty of calling to your attention the project of Herman Zergel for utilizing the current of the straits of Gibraltar. This project received high commendation from a technical viewpoint.

It amounts to this: The Mediterranean Sea is the result of a geologic revolution which raised the present sea 1,000 meters above its old level. The waters of the Atlantic

flow to the Mediterranean at the rate of 88,000 cubic meters a second. The Mediterranean sea presents an enormous evaporation area of 2.5 million square kilometers. The yearly evaporation amounts to over 4,000 cubic kilometers of water. The Gibraltar dam provides for a yearly fall in the level of the Mediterranean Sea of over 1.6 meters. After a fall in level of 200 meters a power station of 160 million horsepower becomes possible in the straits of Gibraltar; at the same time we take a hand in the play of nature correcting some of its destructive work and again make Europe and Africa almost one continent.

We can hasten this process by building a second dam at the Dardanelles by which we secure 7.2 million horsepower. On lowering the level of the Mediterranean we also obtain a tremendous amount of power from hydroelectric power plants on the rivers Rhone, Po, and Nile.

It is understood, of course, that this is work for many decades, but power stations of gigantic proportions would already function after the level of the Mediterranean has fallen only the first ten meters or so. Simultaneously, the Adriatic Sea would practically disappear and Italy would double its territory while a tremendous increase in excellent land under the most favorable climatic conditions would fall to Spain, France and all countries on the shores of the Mediterranean.

From an engineering point of view this project has been most carefully worked out. The dam at Gibraltar would be 29 kilometers long, have a base of 550 meters and a crest of 50 meters. The side walls would be of poured concrete with earth fill. This project is known under the title of "Panropa" and requires a capital investment of about 8 billion dollars for its realization. It is self evident that the capitalist world, going to the bottom before our eyes on account of its harrowing inner contradictions, is not equal to the realization of this project. But would a victorious world proletariat fall back before such projects?

Not less interesting is the project of the French engineer Gadrillon, who called attention to another difference in level which can be utilized taking into consideration that the valleys of the Jordan and Tiberian Lake are 293 meters lower than the Mediterranean Sea, while the Dead Sea is 400 meters still lower. It would be well to remember also that our Caspian Sea is 26 meters lower than the Black Sea.

It is not difficult to show, by means of the most elementary calculations, that these paths open up before future mankind untold fields of work with the most promising prospects. But modern engineering opens up such prospects in a great many directions in the field of electric energy. Utilization of the tides brings us to sources of power of such magnitude that is hard even to imagine them as they run to many trillions of horsepower. Utilization of the hydraulic stroke of the ocean wave—already a possibility as the hydraulic ram shows us the way, and finally the utilization of air cyclones brings us to figures of such magnitude that we can at the moment have only the faintest idea of them.

I call your attention to the remarkably clever project of the French engineer Dubeau to creat artificial cyclones for the future African aero-electric stations. The project is based on the utilization of large volumes of air heated to a high temperature by the sun in such vast plains as the Sahara Desert when there are also steep inclines of mountain ranges abutting the plains as in Northern Africa. It is easy to see, that if we put up exceedingly large diameter pipes with smooth inner surfaces on these mountain slopes, the pipes being throughly insulated against radiation on the outside, and erect at the lower rims of the tubes glass roofed receivers so built as to create wind currents or vortices, we can, on account of the difference in temperature between the upper ends of these tubes reaching up kilometers high in the mountains, and the lower ends subjected to the heat of the desert sun, create veritable cyclones artificially. Of course on top there are air turbines which turn the destructive force to a useful purpose.

I haven't the time to stop on these prospects which open up before the engineer and technician in the utilization of differences in potential of low temperatures by means of

converting chemical to electrical potentials, nor on those paths by which we are gradually but surely coming to the utilization of intraatomic energy. What I have indicated is sufficient to show, how in the light of these ever increasing possibilities the rift between them and the pitiful reality which capitalism in its present crisis presents grows deeper. What derision, what plain mockery of mankind is contained in the labors at falsification of scientific thought, in all these projects of moratoriums on technical progress, in all this pitiful drivel of the sycophants of capitalism when one thinks of our own concrete achievements changing yesterday's dream to today's reality, painting such a majestic picture of the new scale of construction, new possibilities of applying the developments of science to the satisfaction of the demands of workers freed from capitalist chains.

III

The October revolution seems to have drawn the balance of energetics in the past and started the wonderful mechanism of the energetics of the future. This is, from the point of view of energetics the final synthesis. The energetics of the past was based on the fenced in private ownership system. Notwithstanding the destructive influence of the internal contradictions of this system we must not underrate the heritage of this system in achievements of scientific and engineering thought which the world has at its disposal today. But our construction experience bears evident witness to the only, and now already tested, paths by which we can rise to higher stages in the structure of our life. In spite of the heavy grades we made them and are advancing to these stages.

How many times have we thought in the past that we are facing unsurmountable difficulties, how often has our enemy class based its hopes on our failure while we were making the grade. And now we are on the border of the end of the first Five Year Plan—that Five Year Plan that our foreign enemies considered, on account of its very grandeur, a colossal bluff. And now that in the main and decisive points this Five Year Plan is accomplished, a stage passed, this in itself becomes a fact of veritably universal historical importance. Doesn't this fact most eloquently prove the gigantic power of the new socialist energetics which we are developing in our country?

Looking over the literature and the press of the different countries of the world it strikes one that in their search for an outlet from the impasse the thoughts of all seekers turn to the idea of a planned economy.

The same Heidebrek talks of "objectives" in the field of economics and a "healthy plan" for agriculture. Particular efforts in this direction are being made by a group of American economists. But they cannot make ends meet. They cannot understand the simple fact that great achievements are purchased by means of great sacrifices and at a high price.

We know what sacrifices are required when we view the path of our October revolution, when we draw up the balance sheet of our achievements in the building of a planned socialist economy in our country. Every stage is won by furious battle and only the revolutionary working class is capable of such heroic sacrifice.

Behind us we have a tremendous number of active workers, ever growing battalions of proletarian fighters on their way to the last decisive battle, behind us are also the vast number of workers who are achieving results in the fields of science and engineering. Only we can at present with any chance of success tap the most hidden springs of these workers. We fight against fences of private interests on all lines. We approach agriculture and transportation as special fields of industry. We also destroy all fences and build the whole economy on one electro-energetic basis.

The industrialization of all branches of our economy on a basis of electrification means only this - that man is obtaining continually more perfect control over the elements. In all branches of science and engineering we now observe gay springtime freshets. Here

also fences are being carried away and before our eyes occur revolutionary overturns, a new science is being created.

IV

At the present moment, as is well known, a lively discussion is going on in our press on the question of the steps necessary to give the required impetus to science and engineering. In this respect the interesting article by Heiss in No. 45 *U.D.J.* deserves particular attention. Discussing the question of machine development, the author states that there is a distinct difference in the achievements of German chemistry and German machine building. Chemistry is the lawful pride of Germany. This is, in his opinion, due to the fact that the worker in chemistry cannot but be conducting scientific research at the same time. In machine building, according to the author, on the other hand, theory limps behind practice. He finds three conditions determine success in technical progress: (1) Exchange of knowledge between scientific research workers and shop practice in any special technical field. (2) Contact between the research group and plant practice in the given specialty. (3) Contact between the workers in various special branches.

It is quite easy to see what an advantageous position we are in to overtake all others in this direction due to our engineering, research and scientific organizations live flexible forms without any elements of bureaucracy and get them busy preparing broad cadres of engineers for the tremendous campaigns of the second Five Year Plan.

Nothing is more hypocritical than the reproaches we hear from our class enemies that we are building a nation of ants and mar individual development. Every engineer in our country, viewing his own life, can see how he grows from year to year in intellect, widens his horizon—as we all do beginning with the youngsters and ending with grey beard academicians. We are continually reeducating ourselves at our posts in the engineering and technical world.

We see how before our very eyes the prognostications of our first teacher, Karl Marx, are coming true: the expropriation of expropriators over all the world is drawing nearer. The time is approaching when, as Marx foretold, communism will open up the springs of plenty, when from each will be required only according to ability and to each will be given according to his needs. The time is near when a classless structure of society will guarantee each one of its citizens a complete development of his individual capabilities.

The record setting speed of our construction bears evidence that we are going in this direction by sound paths with that unheard of speed which Lenin foresaw in those days when we were still struggling with the colossal ruin of after war days. Our faithfulness to the Red Flag of Lenin is the best guarantee of our certain and decisive victory in this battle for the new man.

M. Koltsov

CHALIAPIN: Mask and Man

Nudity is not nakedness—to be nude is not the same as being naked.

The difference in meaning between these two presumably synonymous words is evident to any one knowing the language.

To denude means to remove from oneself or from others or from something all kinds of coverings, uncover, disclose, show the interior, most important contents. (One speaks of the naked truth.) One sees nude figures of classical sculpture in museums and on squares. It will rarely occur to anyone to throw a skirt over a nude Venus of Milo or offer a nice pair of drawers to that beautiful youth the Belvedere Apollo.

To go naked - that's something else. That smells of the bath or bedroom or some such other place where people are not inclined to broad social contacts or even gregariousness.

The artist, Fedor Chaliapin, in his memoirs published in Paris in 1932 in the Russian language, writes how he endeavored to disclose the image of Mephistopheles on the stage by means of artistic denuding:

"I wanted a nude sculptured figure, of course conventional, as all things earthy, but this conventional nudity proved impossible of realization; I was simply naked within the limits of salon propriety."

Chaliapin grieves over the fact that due to the hypocrisy of society he had to appear on the stage not nude but naked.

But how contradictory are the human and artistic traits in the same individual! Mr. Chaliapin, once His Majesty's Solo Artist, later citizen Chaliapin, undressed quite naked in his book *Mask and Man* without a single sign of grief.

When savages from little inhabited islands fall into cultured surroundings they adopt the habits of their new neighbors, don trousers and use washing soap. But left alone they shed the clothes which they consider an inconvenient convention, scratch their hairy haunches with great satisfaction and hasten to make a feast of raw meat, roasted at a fire made of old newspapers.

Fedor Chaliapin has lived a long life. He has been applauded by the great masses of people and aristocrats and traders condescendingly smiled to him. Chaliapin has maneuvred between the castle waiting room and the driver's tavern, he snatched charitable gifts from the hands of Nicholas Romanoff while at the same time he ran to fraternize with poverty stricken students and even played up to revolutionists.

The tsaristic regime went to pieces. Chaliapin left Soviet Russia having given up hope of recovering ownership of houses, country homes and bank accounts nationalized by the October revolution. Now he lives free, meets only his managers and the gone to seed, dying remnants of St. Petersburg high society and clergy: meets "the loveliest, most cultured and touching clergyman, father George Spassky" of the emigrant church of Paris.

So now, at last, one can sweetly undress, throw off all such inconvenient coverings as propriety and principles, scratch one's ear with the foot, tell oneself and others who you really are without embarassment.

Mask and Man is a terrible book. Terrible not because of any tragic frankness or disclosures. Terrible because of the calm nastiness with which a man pornographically naked shows off some of his body.

"Here I decided to be dishonest," writes Chaliapin. You may think this is intended ironically or jokingly. Every few pages the author reminisces where and under what circumstances he was not straightforward. Such occasions become innumerable.

Backstage of the Imperial Opera:

"I was asked once 'do you know a certain man in charge of repairs?'

Yes, I say, I know him a little; met him on the stage.

'Isn't he a lovely, sympathetic person?'

Yes, a good man, I agree carefully. Before one another actors always praise aloud now one, now another drone."

The year is 1905. Moscow is afire with the uprising. At the request of the public Chaliapin sings a folk song. During the intermission the notorious author of "Spare no cartridges," General Trepoff comes in to him.

"He declared himself one of my followers and our relations were the warmest. Tender, cultured, dressed in an effectively embroidered uniform, smelling slightly of perfume, the General straightened his blond mustache set in the spotted face of a brave soldier and said insinuatingly:

'Why do you, Fedor Chaliapin, sing such useless proclamational airs? Consider a moment, those noisy words are really silly in content and you sing so well that one should like to hear you sing some song of love, of nature. . . .'

"I told General Trepoff that I thought the song a good one, the words beautiful, I liked it, why not sing it? The political reasoning of my visitor I would not hear and did not enter into any discussion with him."

This rule of not mixing with political discussion Chaliapin tries to follow consistently in any and all circumstances. It is safer, quieter so. "As soon as officers raised their voices I immediately grew silent."

But "not mixing" to the famous singer was not the same as neutrality or open renunciation of all part in political and class struggle. Chaliapin sympathizes and feels a tenderness now for the royal princes, now for the enslaved peasant, now for the tsar in his conflicts with the princes, now for the revolutionary workers.

He manages to shine brilliantly with his presence and sympathy in the most diverse camps on one and the same day. The ninth of January, 1905, St. Petersburg is choked with the bodies, flooded with the blood of workers. Chaliapin meets Gorky.

"He was pale and excited.

'They are killing innocent people, those scoundrels!'

And, although I sang that evening at the Nobleman's meeting, I felt that the truth was with Gorky."

The truth was with Gorky, but that did not stop him from singing at the Nobleman's meeting - and probably singing very well too!

He sang well at the Noblemen's meeting on the ninth of January. And the truth was not with those noblemen—the truth was with Gorky. . . .

New masters installed themselves in once tsarist Russia. Workers, bolsheviks, came into power. Chaliapin praises the Soviet power, crawls before responsible officials, invites them to visit him, attends them. He is dishonest.

"I sometimes ask myself with wonder, how did it happen that all these Kuklins and Rakias, the memory of whom is now odious to me, dine with me. The level of life sank so in all respects that one grew accustomed to unsuitable people just as submissively as to undernourishment and shabby clothes.

The explanation is as false as it is boorish. Nothing prevented Chaliapin even during the most difficult, hunger filled "shabby" years of the revolution to meet and associate with anyone he pleased, except perhaps, the royal family and the White generals.

In bringing those Soviet workers to his home Chaliapin pursued only one end—to insure himself, avoid punishment for the monstrous robbery in which he engaged and which stirred the indignation of the citizens of the hungry blockaded Leningrad. The managers of theatres, clubs, Red Army divisions, wishing to give the masses some joy of Chaliapin's singing often sacrificed their last crumbs of food, gave away tens of poods of flour,

butter, sugar to Chaliapin. Chaliapin's agents demanded unheard of terms. They at times did not stop before demanding carloads of foodstuffs. People set their teeth and submitted. Chaliapin conducted complicated trading operations. He obtained sugar for cereals lard for sugar, diamonds for lard. The friendship with "unsuitable people" was Chaliapin's insurance against unpleasant eventualities in his speculations.

These robber speculations were overlooked. Confidingly people considered Chaliapin their own soviet people's artist. But Feodor Ivanovitch Chaliapin [1] was dishonest. And now happily naked, he malignantly sniggers:

"I decided to be dishonest. I began to evolve the thought that my appearance in foreign countries would be beneficial to the Soviet regime, would advertise it widely. Of course, I never really thought so. . . . Soon I had the cherished permission to leave the country with my family. . . When the ship, from the bow of which I was waving my hat and bowing, started, the orchestra of the Mariinsky Opera, my old close fellow worker's played the *International!* Thus, before all my friends,in the cold spaciousness of the Queen Neva, the sham-bolshevik Chaliapin melted away."

The famous singer has been dishonest so often in his life that remembering and telling about it now, he has difficulty himself in disentangling the truth.

The loud instance when Chaliapin publicly, on the stage, fell on his knees before Nicholas Romanoff who happened to be present, estranged all his friends and followers from the revolutionary and bourgeois oppositional camps for a long time. The hero of the incident, in a wounded tone denies:

"Just so, for no particular reason, to throw oneself on all four hooves before a man, even were he three times tsar, such idolatry I was not capable of. That is foreign to my nautre which is more inclined to impertinence than fawning. I did not fall on my knees before the tsar. I felt no connection with the incident. I had just passed a house from which a sign had fallen without harming me, thank God."

So he did not kneel? It was a calumny? Evil minds unjustly wronged Fedor Ivanovitch? It would seem so.

But right there, only on the next page, Fedor Ivanovitch tells a totally different story.

"From backstage members of the chorus, led by an actress, streamed forward and dropped on their kness singing the anthem *God Save the Tsar.* With my tall figure, I felt that to stick out much longer like a scarecrow in front of the chorus was totally impossible. The chair of Boris was handy; I rapidly put one knee on the handle."

So he knelt after all? On one knee? On one.

Why on one knee?

Because to admit kneeling on both is inconvenient for Fedor Ivanovitch after a life long denial of the fact.

To say that he did not kneel at all is now inconvenient for Fedor Ivanovitch living among white guard emigrees who have accepted him as one their own in Paris, as a monarchist.

So Fedor Ivanovitch has hit upon dividing his knees "half and half." So that the wolf shall not go hungry and the sheep stay alive. A wise man is Fedor Ivanovitch!

The toadying in public before the tsar raised general indignation and a boycott of Chaliapin on the part of revolutionary elements. Plekhanov returned a photograph presented to him by Chaliapin and wrote on it: "Returned as useless." Even that com-

---

[1] *Translator's note:* The author calls Chaliapin sometimes Fedor Ivanovich and sometimes Fedya. These appellations are in conjunction with the sense in which he speaks of him. When he speaks of the artist he names him Chaliapin, when he speaks of the man he names him Fedor Ivanovitch as is customary in Russia, when he pokes fun at him or is ironical he calls him by the diminutive Fedya.

paratively tame artist Serov wrote him: "What grief, even you end up on all fours. Have some shame!"

Chaliapin himself tells of these details of the boycott. "They were small wounds in my soul, but they did not heal for a long while."

Chaliapin's answer to the boycott was with another dishonesty. "Under the influence of the disquieting pain I committed a folly which was really contradictory to my innermost feelings: I refused to take part in the festival in honor of the three hundredth jubilee of the house of Romanoff. I think that according to my conscience I had no reason for this. My feelings freely permitted me to sing in the gala performance. But I refused. And I did so only because the recently experienced badgering disquieted me. The mere thought that it may be renewed in any form made me cower."

It follows then that a cowardly, moral fear of revolutionary circles induced Chaliapin to make this gesture of opposition to the autocracy? Is it so?

But no, calm yourself. Twice dishonest in both directions, Fedor Ivanovitch did not forget to be dishonest a third time. Protests are protests, morals may be morals, but a job and superiors are serious matters.

"I was then in Germany and from there wrote confidentially to V. A. Teliakovsky that I cannot take part in the gala performance as I feel ill. It was so easy to consider my refusal 'sabotage' draw 'organizational inferences' take away my title of His Majesty's Soloist. But Teliakovsky was a real gentleman and a representative of bourgeois' culture. He mentioned my refusal to no one. And no one even thought of robbing me of my title of soloist."

What delicate psychological sublety: Chaliapin feels ashamed before revolutionary circles of the fawning act which he committed accidentally or not at all (say only half an act; one knee). Out of shame he decides to do somenthing distinctly opposite and also against his feelings demonstrative sabotage of the Romanoff jubilee. The director of the Imperial theaters, on receipt of Chaliapin's letter, understands that it is a concession to the revolutionists. He covers this up, maintains Chaliapin as court artist and saves him at the same time from the cat-calls and rotten apples with which the revolutionary crowd would have met a new monarchistic demonstration by Chaliapin!

Amiable Fedya Chaliapin, sympathizing with all, everyone's friend, becomes particularly amusing when he smells some material advantage. It makes no difference, big or little, Fedya runs and plays. He unites the coquetry of a cafe girl with the death grip of a "gentleman" from the darker alleys.

The tsar granted Chaliapin a gold watch. The artist found the watch—not very valuable.

"I looked at the watch and it seemed to me it does not reflect the broad nature of a Russian emperor. I should say this watch with its floral decoration would have made the heart of a butler glad."

Chaliapin did not hesitate to return the watch: demanded something more expensive.

"V. A. Teliakovsky went in to see His Majesty and there, together with his friends, settled the matter without publicity. After a while I received another watch, this time a decent one. A propos - I am still using this watch."

Fedor Ivanovitch understands something about watch gifts, he is also a connoisseur of glassware.

At the palace of one of the royal princes, Chaliapin had sung before the tsar. After the performance the tsar went in to another room to have a drink and also a bite. They did not grant the famous singer the honor of having a drink in the presence of Nicholas Romanoff. They brought him a glass of champagne behind the door.

"The emperor asked me to offer you a glass of champagne in thanks for your singing, to drink the health of His Majesty."

Fedor Ivanovitch servilely drinks the glass and answers:

"Tell His Majesty the Emperor that Chaliapin in memory of the great occasion has taken the glass home with him.

"After some time I happened to be called to His Majesty's box. One of the royal princesses present, showing me a glove that burst during applause, said:

'See what you have brought me to. You are an artist that loves to ruin people. Last time you broke a set of a dozen Venetian glasses.'

"Speaking in a deep voice, I answered:

'Your highness, the dozen can easily be brought together again if the other eleven will join the vanished one. . . .'

"The royal princess smiled graciously, but failed to appreciate my humor. The glass remained with me in lonely grief. . ."

In Soviet days Chaliapin got no presents of Venetian glassware. He had to buy it. But a fur coat, for instance, one could grab. And a rich fur coat at that.

"They came and asked me to sing at the Mariinsky Opera for the benefit of some, I can't recall now which 'home.' Instead of money or flour they proposed to pay me with a fur coat. Although I had my little Tartar kangaroo coat and did not need a fur coat, I was interested. I went to the store. They let me choose. What a scoundrelly bourgeois I am! I couldn't pick a cheap one, I picked the best."

It is clear to whom the real sympathies go, who has the real devotion and against whom is directed the real enmity, the real animosity of a *nouveau riche,* once a tramp, but now tenacious owner of several million dollars.

The tsar, the royal princes, General Trepoff, even the little director of the theatre he flattered, fawned before them and was always dishonest. Before the temporary government and merchants he abased himself, lickspittled. Before communists in high places he spread himself, hating them he invited to be his guests, hail fellows well met. Also dishonesty.

His own self, in all the breadth of his artistic nature, Chaliapin uncovered only to small, powerless unanswering people.

These he, to use his own terminology, "knocked into a cocked hat."

There were numerous instances where Chaliapin beat up souffleurs, members of the chorus, theatrical barbers and conductors. There was a time before the revolution when the press was full of accounts of such debauches. Under the Soviets Chaliapin did not dare raise his hands on stage workers. Now the foreign press from time to time still carries stories of Chaliapin's fistic prowess in various cities of the world. He also writes about it himself.

"A dispute arose between Diaghileff (entrepeneur) and the chorus. The chorus demanded a benefit performance to which it in conscience (!) had no right and Diaghileff refused. The chorus decided to make it unpleasant for Diaghileff and incidentally for me as I made no secret of my opinion that I considered Diaghileff right and not the chorus. . . . I was told that the chorus blamed me for the entire conflict and thoroughly abused me. I rushed out to the chorus excitedly and said:

'I presume they lied to me when they told me you blamed me for the conflict and called me unpretty names?'

'No, it was true,' answered a chorus member in defiant insolence.

I confess I didn't restrain myself, and with a sound blow I knocked the insolent fellow off his feet."

In his declining years, in the comfort of his rich Paris villa, with himself and his family secure behind millions on drawing account, the retired actor tells his innermost thoughts of people, of classes, of events.

"The imperial theatres without a doubt enjoyed a peculiar greatness. Russia could be proud of them on good grounds. But it is not to be wondered at for the managing genius of these theatres was none other than the Russian emperor himself."

Fedor Ivanovitch sees in the emperor not only a manager, but also the leading actor of a big, but alas, bankrupt troupe. He feels deeply the failure of this great theatrical venture and gives the unsuccessful actor belated advice based on his own stage experience.

"One must know how to play the role of a tsar. It is a role of great importance and Shakespearean swing. It is necessary that in answer to every gesture I make there should be a response in the breasts of the people that would echo over the entire kingdom:-That's a Tsar! But if I don't get the atmosphere, my gesture, like that of an untalented actor seems false and embarrasses the observer and from the breasts of the people comes a constrained hoarse whisper: Is that a Tsar?! I didn't get the atmosphere and failed. The empire burns."

The revolution came about for the reason that the tsar played his role poorly. Also for the reason explains Chaliapin that:

"To conduct successfully a difficult war unity was necessary between the tsar and his people, as was then said. The Duma did everything in its power to effect this unity. But somewhere in the upper spheres the dark intrigues of foolish, shortsighted courtiers tore the rift between tsar and people wider."

The Russian mercantile class also assumes a touching quality in the vivid characteristic of it drawn by the opera philosopher.

"What is the Russian merchant? It is only a simple peasant drawn to work in the city after he was freed from serfdom. It is the same rough cucumber that was filled with the juice of the village in the spring, ripened under a village sun and from the peasant garden was brought to the city for winter salting. In the cold winter days, after a good swig of vodka, the pickle together with it warms the stomach not only of the bourgeois but also of the proletarian, the simple working man."

Fedor Ivanovitch is not even opposed to a little cheating, chicanery and speculation on the part of the merchant cucumber.

"One knows not by what means he finds out, he reads no newspapers, that potato-flour sells at such a place cheaply and buying it now he can sell it at another place a month later at a higher price. According to the latest trends of thought in Russia (!) he is a kulak, a criminal type. He bought cheaply, so he deceived someone, he sold at a high price, again he deceived someone. To my mind I confess, this only shows evidence that the man has, as he should, sense, shrewdness, energy and some efficiency."

Stripped old Fedya Chaliapin has abused, spat upon and generally insulted everyone. Only before one man does he grow timid, confused.

Before one man does Fedya cover up his shame. Before one man he is embarrassed. Gorky.

He brings praise to Gorky, murmurs words of gratitute for the aid, for the cultural wardship under which Chaliapin, from a church chorister, from a tavern brawler developed into an artist of world fame.

Words of gratefulness and excuses.

But Gorky knew Chaliapin! How well indeed he knew him!

"I remember walking with Maxim Gorky one evening in this wonderful Capri and in the course of conversation I suddenly asked him:

Don't you think, Aleksey Maksimovitch, that it would be more honest on my part to join the social democratic party?

If I have not entered the socialist party, it is only because that evening Gorky looked at me sternly and said amicably:

'You are not fit for it. And I ask of you, remember once and for all: don't join any parties, be an artist as you are.'"

Chaliapin's adventures in foreign countries incensed Gorky. He wished after all, to save the old but still great artist sunk in the swamp of gain, in the quicksands of provincial tours due to evil, human weaknesses. He wrote Chaliapin proposing that he return to the Soviet Union. He saw a possibility for him to work.

"Later, on visiting Rome, Aleksey Maksimovich again told me that it is necessary for me to return to my native country. Again and more decisively I refused telling him that I do not want to go there. . . When I later took the logical steps following my refusal to return to Russia it made a great breach in our friendship. . . I will make no secret of it and I tell it with great agitation, the loss of Gorky is for me the heaviest and most painful."

An avaricious person this Fedor Ivanovitch! Exacting. Everything in the world is due to him. At any price. And Gorky should love him at that. . . . Capricious Fedya sobs and sheds tears like an abused child.

Fedor Chaliapin is in vain contrite. Gorky's friendship is really unnecessary to him. He can make no profit out of it. This friendship Chaliapin failed to make a full rational use of even in the good old days.

"In the spring months I fairly often came to Capri where Gorky lived. In this home the air was revolutionary. But I must confess only the humanitarian enthusiasms of these people stirred my ideas. When I attempted to glean some knowlede from socialist books I was bored from the very first page and I confess, disgusted. So I scorned socialist lore. . . . Too bad! Were I a little better up in socialist lore, I should have known that in a socialist revolution I must lose all to my hair and I could have perhaps saved several hundred thousand rubles, transferring in time Russian revolutionary rubles into other countries and converting them into bourgeois valuta."

But no, that will do. It's nauseating. Let's close the terrible book. It was written by one who is not even a White guard.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

Ilya Ehrenburg

Thought in a Vise

In Sverdlov Square in Moscow you may observe a fantastic queue—a line of people standing before an empty space: passengers, waiting for a taxi to turn up. In Paris you may see an endless line of taxis—taxis waiting hours for a passenger to appear. In the Sverdlovsk and Stalinsk schools, the children painstakingly write a small, fine hand—their little fingers are still clumsy and moreover, there is a dearth of exercise books. In the warehouse and stockrooms of Paris, tons upon tons of paper lie rotting. There is nothing left to write upon them: their bills have long ago been protested, your lovers know love letters by heart and no advertisements are forceful enough to turn the man in the street into a customer for Citroen's "latest and best cabriolet."

In the Moscow editorial offices, bewitched writers sit idle waiting for a quire of foolscap. The works of Hegel and the poems of Pasternak are snatched up with equal greed. The Parisian bookstores are overstocked with books—everybody carefully avoids them. If, by any chance, a dozen honorable literary gentlemen, seated at an epicurean breakfast, award the Goncourt Prize to a certain novel, then this lucky novel is bound in a cover with a band to this effect and incredible readers, wheezing, buy it in their fear of falling out of fashion and not keeping up with tradition.

In the University of Tomsk, I saw Kazak Tunghus and native undergraduates. Only a few years ago they still visited their Shaman. They used to beat their tambourines and jump around their huts. Some brought their clumsy idols with them. Why, who knows? Now they are studying mathematics, anatomy and chemistry. They have presented their idols to the Geographical Museum. With a strained, concentrated look they watch the world. Their faces convey one thing only: Thought. They have but just commenced to think and have no time to lose. On the boulevards of Paris I saw the latest novelty in toys—"yo-yo." This toy consists of a ball attached to a piece of elastic which one throws away from one's self. Naturally, it rebounds. If you are very bored, you can play for hours with this toy. These balls are made of various materials—of ordinary wood for the ordinary sales clerk and of brilliants (a propos or not—of cheap ones) for the mistress of the inventive barker. The following deeply philosophical sentence decorates one of the windows displaying this toy: "This noble game will relieve you of all necessity to think."

On one side of Negoreloe gates at the Soviet border, people are learning to think, they are learning with clenched teeth and tightened belts—stubbornly and heroically they are learning—to think, think and to think! On the other side of the gates of which foreign tourists susceptible to the exotic are found—people are otherwise occupied. Once upon a time, they used to think—now they are learning another lesson—they are learning how not to think.

From our childhood up, we have been accustomed to revere French literature. Whenever we think of it, we involuntarily bring the past to our mind: Balzac's laborious asthma, Stendhal's scalpel and the waving locks of Rembaud the youth. It is from the novels of Flaubert and Zola that our undergraduates make their acquaintance with Europe. Those of our older specialists who love the "Academia" editions and a dose of irony, do not object quoting one of Anatole France's amorphisms now and again. Our young writers meticulously study Marcel Proust and Andre Gide. Not only in Moscow but in remote Siberia I was given the inevitable question at my literary lectures: "What

do the French writers think of the crisis of culture? Of the social upheaval? Of the fate of humanity?"

I do not know whether French writers play "yo-yo." I do know that Andre Gide is sixty years of age and single. I likewise know that young writers manage to write excellent books about nothing in particular. This is indeed a fine art—you have to write a 300 page novel containing neither characters, plot nor thoughts.

French novelists have repeatedly boasted of their inner freedom. We, who have gone through fifteen years of revolution, are fully aware of the relativity of many conceptions. We are not very prone to buy a pig in a poke. Let us carefully examine their motley commodity.

That large publishing house, which publishes Proust and Gide, is now publishing a set of books under the title of "Kings of the Day." The naive reader might think that this series is a series of biographies of the kings of capitalism—J. Pierpont Morgan, Sir Henry Deterding, or of von Tissen. However, the above mentioned books have a slighly different content—they are neither more nor less than a boost for various firms. The publishers are given their respective orders which they in their turn hand over to the author. Do not imagine that these "made to order" books are written by unknown hacks. No, these are famous authors whose books have been translated in all the European languages, and were one of them to pay us a visit, he would be surely hailed as a "teacher of life," our young undergraduates would commence quizzing him as to his views on The Crisis of Thought and of Human Dignity. Paul Morand wrote a book extolling the greatness of "Sidna"—which is the name of the company playing the Paris, Prague, Buda-Pesth Air Route. This book was written under the guise of a novel depicting the adventures of a heart-sick Russian emigre.

Pierre MacOrlan in his book boosted the Prontain stores. Georges Kessel devoted his book to the International Pullman Sleeping Car Company. Other authors are still writing. For instance Duvernois has been entrusted with the task of extolling the merits of a certain Lyons silk firm.

It would appear to be our turn to triumph! The French press has more than once expressed its indignation at the immorality of Moscow—in connection with the Tsarist loans. Now, they are busy with something else—busy proving to the American sharks that debts are out and out a relative conception. Recently in the *Les Nouvelles Litteraires* I read a lamentation for Russian literature. How could a literature exist in a country which had invented "Social Orders?" Well, then, let them prefer private orders—they are easier to fullfil, and no doubt pay better! Why serve one's people when one can serve the Sidna Air Line?

Yes, we might sincerely rejoice at this pathos and this acuteness. But we feel that we are too closely bound with the fate of the world's culture. We cannot believe that Balzac's descendants are playing "yo-yo," or are selling Lyons' silk. We would wish to believe that even in this blessed thoughtless Paris there is still someone intensively thinking. We are looking for eyes, portraying alarm. We are looking for seekers.

However, drawing room games should not be mistaken for despair or heroism. There is a critic in France by the name of Emmanuel Berl. A year ago he shook France with his revolutionary audacity. He wrote a book on *The Death of Bourgeois Thought.* After thought came morals, and he wrote *The Death of Bourgeois Morals.* Unsatisfied with this, he next wrote *The Death of Bourgeois Love.* He mocked at tradition. He accused his eminent colleagues af adaptionism. He loved to quote Marx. A year has passed. Berl is now editor of *Marianna,* a weekly revue. The sections of *Marianna* bear eloquent headings: "Marianna's Caprices"—that is high politics; "Beauty is my Beautiful Business," Ladies Fashions; "The Wall of Money," Behind the Scenes of the Exchange; "Open All Night," the sacred art! Adaption, it would appear is by no means such a difficult science. Berl now writes that "we are all fed up with Americans and

Russians; it is about time to return to the Parisian fashion." He no longer refers to Karl Marx. He now quotes Maurice Chevallier, the music hall actor.

In large cities, no job ever remains long vacant. During that year, not a few disillusioned snobs turned up. Each according to his own whim reviled "rotting culture." The crisis fosters the development of this trade. It is truly becoming a Paris Fashion and I am afraid that Berl lost out this time—he looked for a new fashion in another place at the wrong time.

Of course, all these denouncers acclaim their rapture over the Soviet Union. One of them said to me the other day, "The Five Year Plan is far more exciting than Parliament." When I questioned him as to his capricious fancy it turned out that he had mistaken the Five Year Plan for a Committee of Salvation.

There are very many and various reasons for this sudden appearance of so many unexpected "friends." One turned "red" because his mistress had thrown him over for a banker not yet broke. Another because a literary prize was awarded to his rival. The third turned red because his phone was disconnected owing to his subscription being a year in arrears. After Catholicism, cocktails, pederasty, Martinique "Biggin" dances and Freudism; after cubist artistic gastronomic competitions, at which rhinoceros cutlets were served; after colonial policy, fascist black shirts and the Bourbon Lilies—these people have decided to "do the revolution" for a certain period. This is not Saul among the prophets. Nor is it the cunning of the Trojan Horse. It is only playing "yo-yo"—it is but a sign of an immense spiritual desolation.

Moscow imports American machinery, translates scientific books and invites foreign specialists. Now, they want Moscow to import disillusion, as though Moscow were a poor house for embittered esthetes.

The tragic position of the French authors is easy to understand. Who is not acquainted with musty rooms and human indifference? But were Baudelaire and Rembaud ever surrounded by understanding and love? Did not Emile Zola hold forth against his society? These were people proud of their ideas. They created wonderful books—their books served as text books for all Europe. Nobody ever expected that the writers of post war France would display a new departure in their consciousness or in their themes. We know very well from our own experience the price one has to pay for this. But we did have the right to expect creative work, incursions in the realm of form, and if not revelations, then at least something new from the younger French writers. The editors of our magazines are overwhelmed with manuscripts. The French possess a great literary "culture." They commence to write almost from their cradles up. Our young soviet authors awaited new models from the West, just as the Kuznetz engineers impatiently waited for freight train loads of machinery.

Pasternak is, with us, a happy "slip of the tongue." People nowadays are busy on hard, laborious work. They are often entirely ignorant of the fact that there are in this world besides blast furnaces, also birds and flowers. One Moscow pioneer with all the irreconcilability of his 13 years said to me, "Flowers are for hygiene." But in Paris, Sans Souci—there, no doubt you will find not only flowers, but poets, too!

The other day I was rummaging in a big book store. I did not find a single volume of poems; nobody in France nowadays writes poetry any more; this demands a spiritual strain and moreover, does not pay. Poets have died out. Only Paul Valery remains—he is a member of the Academy, and therefore an immortal. The sales of his poems during the last five years equal our sales of Pasternak's poems for two days!

Of course France also has her prophets. But they are either senile or minors. That generation which should now be seeking and creating, has refused to undertake thinking.

During my stay in Moscow, I received a letter from a Soviet teacher in a little Ural town. My unknown correspondent told me all about himself, of the new school with which he was busy, of his doubts and his beliefs. In conclusion he reminded me of what is taking place on the far side of the Negoreloe gates: "By the way, please ask Drieux la

Rochelle, the French author, what wicked spirit has whispered in his ear such absurdities as, 'That which once was life is of absolutely no interest. Conciousness is no longer possible, because there is nothing more left to feel?' (from the translation of his book entitled *Will O' Wisp,* published in our *Literary Gazette)* Tell him too, while you are about it that at least one person out of the millions inhabiting that country from which you have returned and who are not unsuccessfully attempting to remodel after a fashion the old life of the universe, that one person assures him, on his honor, that this old life is full of 'absolute' interest, that apart from his sick mind, there still remain untouched treasures of millions of minds whose fortune it is to perceive an infinitely great deal. Tell him too, that in the opinion of his opponent from the far Urals, human consciousness is only just getting ready to carry out that great part which history has determined for it; the role of a literate translator of that great language of feeling, of love, hatred, courage audacity, readiness to sacrifice oneself and so on. . into a new language of its own, freeing it from the knots of dogmatism, for the new life."

I showed this letter to Drieux la Rochelle. I do not know whether he had hitherto come across a reader who could have accepted his least word so seriously and with so much emotion. I remember his words: "Whenever I touch a mossy stone the flesh of my bones begins to rot..... my coffin is even now alongside of me.... this is non existence and I do not believe that this is the void preceding the renainssance. . . ."

What a well of bitterness in these words! Perhaps this is the death wail of humanity? Or, perhaps nothing but high brow art, the fifth or sixth novel, the desolation of a generation? Perhaps it is this very game of "yo-yo"—that game which releases you of the burden of thought? What a naivite and strength resound in this letter written by the Ural schoolmaster, who has taken the French writer and his anathema at his word, and who seriously contrasts it with the young consciousness of his own country!

This letter contains something of which we may well be proud; our deep interest in the fate of mankind's culture. It is not we who destroy coffee plantations, nor do we break machines. We do not in melancholy spit upon "that which was life." They called us *bezprizhorni* (homeless waifs). But see, the sick world has taken to its bed, begun to wheeze, and we are surrounded by emptiness. It appears that we will have to take over the heritage. Who, then, will champion all that which was the best in this old world: Balzac, Notre Dame, and the great cheerfulness of the Parisians—the French writers or the Ural schoolmasters?

Translated from the Russian by Louis Zelikov

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

F. Schiller

Friedrich Engels on Literature

From unpublished material

We publish below a document of enormous significance for the solution of the question of Marxist-Leninist art criticism. This is a letter from Engels of Nov. 26, 1885, to the German writer Minna Kautsky, furnished by the Marx-Engels-Lenin institute to the magazine, *Literary Heritage.* If the letters of Marx and Engels on literature, dramaturgy and criticism published in the first three numbers of *Literary Heritage* have according to *Pravda* (Dec. 22, 1932) an "immense significance for the development of our literature, containing thoughts which may solve many questions connected with working out the creative paths for Soviet literature," this new found letter of Engels to Minna Kautsky can perhaps be considered the most valuable of them all.

Excerpts from the Letter

I have read *Old and New,* for which I am heartily grateful to you. The life of the workers of the salt diggings is described in just as masterly a way as the life of the peasants in *Stefan.* The scenes of Viennese Society are also mostly very good. Vienna indeed is the only German city where there is any society. In Berlin there are only "well known circles," and still more unknown ones, and it therefore offers a field only for a novel on the life of the literary circle, bureaucrats or actors. Whether the motivation of the action in this part of your work does not develop a little hastily is easier for you to judge than for me. Much of what produces such an impression is perfectly natural in Vienna, with its own sort of international character, full of sourthern and eastern-European elements. The characters of this or that medium are drawn with your usual precision of individualization. Each person is type, but at the same time a completely defined personality—"this one" as old Hegel would say. That is as it should be. Only for the sake of impartiality I should find something negative, and here I recall Arnold. In truth he is too faultless, and if at last he perishes, by falling from a mountain, this can be reconciled with poetic justice only in that he was too good for this world. It is not always bad for an author to be in love with his hero, but it seems to me that in this case you have given way to this weakness. Elsa still has traces of personality, although she is also somewhat idealized, but in Arnold personality is entirely dissolved in principle.

The root of this defect is felt, by the way, in the novel itself. Evidently you felt the need of publicly declaring your convictions, bearing witness to them before the whole world. You have already done this, this is already behind you, and there is no reason to repeat this in such a form. I am not at all an opponent of tendencious poetry as such. The father of tragedy Aeschyles and the father of comedy Aristophanes were both clearly outspoken tendencious poets, and exactly the same way Dante and Cervantes, and the main merit of Schiller's *Craft and Loves* is that it is the first German political propaganda drama. Contemporary Russian and Norwegian writers, who are writing superlative novels, are all tendencious. But I think that the bias should flow by itself from the situation and action, without particular indications, and that the writer is not obliged to obtrude on the reader the future historical solution of the social conflicts pictured. And especially in our conditions the novel appeals mostly to readers of bourgeois circles, that

is, not directly related to us, and therefore a socialist biased novel fully achieves its purpose, in my view, if by conscientiously describing the real mutual relations, breaking down conventional illusions about them, it shatters the optimism of the bourgeois world. instills doubt as to the eternal domination of the existing order, although the author does not offer any definite solution or does not even line up openly on any particular side. Your superb knowledge both of the Austrian peasantry and of Viennese "society" and surprising freshness in delimning them will find here inexhaustible material. And in *Stefan* you showed that you are able to view your heroes with that fine irony which demonstrates the power of the writer over his creation. . .—*Friedrich Engels.*

Engels' Letter and Minna Kautsky's Novel

Engels' letter of Nov. 26, 1885 to the writer Minna Kautsky, mother of Karl Kautsky, puts and answers a number of most important questions—by the specific analysis of a literary criticism: the problem of propaganda and party-viewpoint in literature, the depiction of personality in the group, objective and idealized treatment of reality, and so on. These themes are touched in other statements of Engels on literature, but in this letter they receive an exceptionally clear formulation and expand the views of Marx and Engels on literature and art expressed in other works. This letter, although it discusses the work of a non-proletarian writer, and relates to the eighties, and is based on the specific problems then facing the literature of a proletarian party, has present meaning for our times. Engels in the narrow bounds of a private letter, is forced to give brief instructions, but each one, each intimation even, takes on great importance in view of the problems lying in the background. In order to understand them thoroughly, it is first necessary briefly to take up the work of Minna Kautsky in the novel analyzed by Engels, and then go over to the general problems of principle touched in the letter, and link them with theoretical and political questions of Marxist Leninist literary criticism.

Minna Kautsky (1835-1913) was one of the most fruitful and popular writers of the old German and Austrian social democracy. She belonged, as Mehring expresses it, to the "old guard" on the staff of the *Neue Zeit.* Indeed in the eighties and nineties she wrote in the theoretical organ of the party on the most varied themes (sometimes under the pseudonym of Wilhelm Wiener)—on spiritualism, the protection of birds, the new German theater, an exhibition of the paintings of Vasili Vershchagin; she published critical articles and reviews, (on F. Gebbel, Alexander Killand) and in the magazine's literary section she published a number of short stories. She took a particularly active part in the literary departments of party newspapers and popular magazines of the German and Austrian social democracy. Her longer novelettes and novels came out in book form.

Her first novel dealing with social problems was *Stefan Von Grillenhof. Stefan* is her most revolutionary novel, containing a realistic characterisation of the peasantry, their life and struggle. This novel Minna Kautsky evidently sent to Marx and Engels through the young Karl Kautsky, who was in London in 1881. Their reaction to this novel is shown in the present letter of Engels and also a note of Marx to Minna Kautsky of Oct. 3, 1881, with which he sent her a letter of recommendation to his daughter Jenny Long in Paris. Marx writes, "Your son told you the truth, that all my family is delighted with your works." Ordinary politeness of course had some part in this appraisal, but nevertheless one cannot fail to recognize that in that period *Stefan* really had great significance for propaganda of the socialist idea. In 1884 Minna Kautsky published the novel dealt with in Engels' letter, *Old and New.* When this came out in book form in 1885 she sent it to Engels for his opinion. The best parts of the novel are those from the life of the Austrian salt miners, living under the oppression of exploiting employers and the moral pressure of the church, under the eternal threat of discharge for any word of complaint, or for "impertinence" shown by the reading of newspapers or books. In

realistic tones the pictures are brought out of the prosaic life of a workers' village. Each of the workers shown is an individual and at the same time type, as Engels says: these are not model sketches, but people, distinct in temperament, upbringing and conditions of life. Take the old worker Michel, always blindly trusting in God, never resisting anything, hopelessly helpless and taking everything as it comes. There is the young sawyer Franzel, who believes in vengeance in the other world and seeks peace in this "justice." There is the consumptive Frieder, who dares to think, thirsty for justice here on earth, who reads newspapers and books, recognizes the class root of the social question and thus scares away from himself the timid undeveloped workers. There is the advanced class conscious worker George, who knows all the forbidden literature. In a word, we have a picture of a group of workers with clearly defined individuality in various stages of class consciousness, in an early period of the workers' movement. Just as individually drawn are the types from the noble-landlord class (Count Falkenau and his relatives).

But nevertheless for the author the struggle of the old with the new is not a phenomenon of the class struggle, but only a struggle of "two principles"—faith and atheism. The "Old" are all those who share the gloomy ascetic view of life and believe in a better world on the other side: they are fatalists, awaiting death without complaint: they are the great mass of the toiling people, groaning under the double oppression of the material exploitation of the landlords and manufacturers and the fear of eternal torment, which the church tries to instill in them. All "old" ones live without joy, they do not know any sweetening of life. The author also includes with them all her characters who egoistically believe that they alone have a right to happiness, alone can enjoy life's good things. Such for example are the liberal bourgeois baron Reinthal or the "free-thinking" daughter of Count Falkenau, Elena, and also the conservative landlords.

Opposite all these representatives of the principle of the "old," the feudal counts, landlords, bourgeois liberal business men and the great mass of the workers stand the representatives of the principles of the "new," preaching instead of egoism a real love of one's neighbor, instead of faith in another world, faith in the power of science, in a better future for humanity, instead of dreary pessimism, confidence in one's own strength, love of nature, joy of life. But the "old" re-educate the new not in a proletarian view of life, but in the "progress of science" and a Feuerbachian atheism. This tendency—to replace a proletarian point of view with general ideas about the necessity of atheism and the eternal "progress of science" permeates all the works of Minna Kautsky. Not tying up the struggle for this new point of view with the active tsruggle of the workers for their freedom, she develops a "new principle" out of the immanent "progress of science." The struggle between the old and the new in her novel is turned into a struggle of two abstract schematic "principles." In this connection, Kautsky knows the old world well and realistically sketches the scenes from the life of the backward workers, the liberal bourgeoisie and the upper circles of the Austrian aristocracy. But the new world is unknown to her and therefore her characterization of the "new principle" suffers from diffuseness and lack of clarity. Its bearers are bombastic, lifeless, romantic figures. Instead of a specific demonstration of the external circumstances and the class grounds bringing the characters of the "new principle" to their "new outlook," she gives us as motives for their development nature and science and turns their struggle for this new principle into tendencious declamations. The main representatives of the new—the daughter of the free-thinking philosopher Barr, Elsa, and the illegitimate son of Baron Reinthaal, Arnold—are given as the "incarnation of a principle," as prepared models of ideal new people, standing outside society. Elsa we meet already prepared for the reception of the new education, given to her by her philosopher father far from society, on a lonely island. The author describes her to us as "a bright girlish little figure, in a short garment falling in folds, which wraps her like a Greek chiton, bound only with a

belt. She knew nothing of another world. The contemplation of nature, to which her father opened her eyes, colored the world for her in the most joyous hues." Arnold the author also describes as a youth with a point of view already formed outside the social struggle, who worked out his "new principles" in the quiet of the study rooms and libraries of London.

The workers who are class conscious—of course in the intellectual petty bourgeois and reformist conception of Minna Kautsky—also do not go into the class struggle of the proletariat, but into education and science. George, a pupil of the philosopher Barr, who inherits his library, comes to the new outlook through reading and self-education. He is never shown in the process of the social struggle, and when the workers of the salt diggings, hearing of the confiscation of their books by the police start a strike, George is chiefly worried for fear they might take vengeance on the spies or go beyond the bounds of legality in their excitement. The "propaganda of ideas"—that is the other slogan which the author opposes to force. Arnold is a typical model of petty bourgeois ideology. When Count Falkenau tries to draw him over into the service of a landlord "worker-loving" policy and suggests that he give up propaganda for independent workers' organization, Arnold answers: "Your excellency, you demand the impossible and even the unjust, for that which must be accomplished will be accomplished without a forcible revolution, without battle and bloodshed, thanks wholly to the propaganda of the idea."

The force of Minna Kautsky's novel, we repeat, is in the realistic descriptions of the life of the workers of the salt diggings and the upper circles of the German Austrian aristocracy. The representatives of the "new principle" are unrealistic, schematic. Arnold and Elsa do not live: both are loaded with all conceivable virtues and charms of physical and spiritual beauty; they are a sort of fairy-tale good people, and the reader regards them with a sceptical delight, not believing in the real possibility of their existence.

These features of Kautsky's work flow from the vagueness and diffuseness of her petty bourgeois, educational outlook. Not standing at a consistent Marxist point of view of class struggle, she declaimed for "progress of science" in general, "education of the poeple," philanthropy and pity toward the lower classes of the population.

Not analyzing the real live forces of social development, Kautsky ardently strives for the "new" principles by means of declarations, standardized propaganda, extremely boring, but flowing from the development of the situation itself in the combat of social forces, a tendency to idealize the bearers of the "new principle"; she serves only abstract propaganda, she becomes a weapon in the struggle of ideas against ideas, cut off from the specific class struggle, which she ignores, and turns about the opposition of two abstracts—the sharply negative and brilliantly positive "principles."

In Engels' letter to Minna Kautsky a number of the most important problems of Marxist literary criticism are indicated and solved. And here as in all his other statements on literary criticism, Engels concentrates on the question of the role of the point of view and party membership in literature and art. From his first appearance as a Marxist critic, in his work on poetry of "real socialism" until his death, Engels always stressed the great importance of bias. All the greatest creations of world literature are completely permeated with the outlook of various social classes. And the clearer and more distinct the artistic formulation of these creeds in the work, the more valuable that work is. Empiricism, on the contrary, the love of details, the replacing of historicism by arbitrary philosophical constructions, replacing of a realistic depiction of the actual class struggle by fantasies idealizing reality, of party consistency by a noisy subjective tendenciousness—all these features, for instance, in the work of the poets of "real socialism," Engels links with the vagueness and petty bourgeois essence of their world outlook and with the lack of development of social class contradictions in Germany at that time.

Here in the letter to Kautsky one might think at first glance that Engels does not consider party consistency in literature important, and even that he considers that it has a

negative influence on the artistic value of a literary work. But actually it is not so. "Evidently you felt the need," he writes to Kautsky, "to publicly declare your convictions, bearing witness to them before the whole world. You have already done this, this is already behind you, and there is no reason to repeat it *in such a form*" (italics mine. F. S.) If you remember with what a confused petty bourgeois popular educational creed (faith in the "progress of science" in general and in Feuerbachian atheism) Minna Kautsky wrote her novel *Old and New* then it will be clear why Engels begs her not to repeat the setting forth of her party views "in such a form." For according to Kautsky it appeared that the social contradictions and struggle of the social groups of the "old" world should be described with some objective realism and then one should tack on some generalized propaganda spouters bringing in the "new principle," who are to express the party ideas of the author.

The problem of propaganda is closely connected with the question of creed and party views in literature. And this letter of Engels with all its statements on this subject gives perhaps the clearest formulation of his views. Declaring that all the great writers from ancient Greece to the end of the Nineteenth century were all tendencious, Engels however adds: "But I think that the propaganda should flow by itself from the situation and action, without particular indications, and that the writer is not obliged to intrude on the reader the future historical solution of the social conflicts pictured." This again means that the thought which the writer wishes to express should not have the character of a subjective preaching to the reader of a line not arising out of the action itself. In this connection the play written by Engels in 1847 and shown on the stage of the Brussels German workers union would be very interesting. In the words of a worker member of the "Union of Communists," who attended this performance, it showed with amazing clarity the inevitability of the events which came on a few months later, in February 1848. Unfortunately, this piece has not reached us. But from all the statements of Engels on questions of drama which have been preserved, and from all his understanding of the nature of artistic works in general, one may conclude that the play was written precisely in the spirit of depicting the class contradictions of that time, that "the future historical solution on the social conflicts was not served up to the reader in prepared form, was not obtruded on the spectator in any conclusive monologue, but arose from the "situation and action."

Engels considered the writers of the so called "young Germany" pearticularly typical representatives of subjective idealist purpose-writing. Of his many statements on this school we will quote here only an opinion from *Revolution and Counter-revolution in Germany* inasmuch as it is directly related to our theme. It is characteristic in this connection that Engels links their purpose-writings also with vagueness, confusion, the vacillations of their outlook. "The political excitement into which the events of 1830 threw all Europe," he writes, "is also expressed in German literature. Crude constitutionalism or even cruder republicanism was preached by almost all the writers of that time. It became more and more a habit, particularly among writers of the lower order, to supplement a lack of literary skill in their work with political innuendos, with which they assured themselves success with the public. Poems, stories, reviews, drama, all kinds of literary works were full of so-called "tendency," that is, more or less diffident expressions of an anti-government spirit. To complete the confusion, reigning after 1830 in Germany among these elements of political opposition were mixed poorly digested university reminiscences of German philosophy and uncomprehended crumbs of French socialism, particularly Saint-Simonism. And the clique of writers offering the public this potpourri arrogantly called themselves "young Germany" or the "new school." Later they repented of their youthful sins, but their style of writing was not improved by this."

Closely related to questions of creed and party views and purpose is, further, the question of describing the individual in the group in artistic works. The character of the individual in the mass, the one in the general, the ideas of the epoch and their specific

bearers. And regarding these problems Engels in his letter to Kautsky gives a clear formulation of how a proletarian artist ought to depict the individual in the general, the personality and the class type. "The characters of this or that medium are drawn with your usual precision of individualization. Each person is a type, but at the same time a completely defined personality—'this one' as old Hegel would say. That is as it should be." This view Engels,—as Marx too, kept all his life. Most extensively he gave his views on these questions in a letter to LaSalle of May 18, 1859, also in connection with a specific analysis of a play by the latter, *Franz Von Sikingen.*

Marx and Engels stood for great realistic art, with a broad embrace of reality, with objectively realistic descriptions of the various types and characters. And starting from this they took a corresponding orientation on the literary heritage of the past. But does this mean that they rejected the current allusive poetry or did not sufficiently value it and in general the "little forms" of literature on questions of the day? To state the matter thus would be to contradict all the literary policy and practice of Marx and Engels for the whole period of their activity. At the same time as they demanded great realistic art Marx and Engels starting with the first editorial practice of the young Marx in the old *Rheinische Zeitung* (1842-43) constantly demanded of the poets of the workers party and the revolutionary writers who are "fellow-travellers" a sharply expressed struggle with their foes, pointed satire, revealing analysis, tearing the mask off the enemy; they demanded of poets of the party a clear party view and current political subject matter. Both in all their literary practice could not have testified more clearly to their attitude toward such completely "purposeful" poets as Heine, Herweg, Freiligrath and Weert. And not in vain did the central organ of the Party (the *Neue Reinische Zeitung* edited by Marx, Engels and others in 1848-49) have the most biting, the most revealingly satirical, the most up to date feuilleton section of all the newspapers of that period. For Marx and Engels a party newspaper was unthinkable without political poems on the questions of the day and "small forms" of literature. Thus, for instance, when Marx in 1859 began to take part in editing the London German emigre paper *Volk,* and Freiligrath, (who at that time was close to the opponent of Marx, G. Kinkel) was not working on the paper, Marx wrote to Engels on August 13, 1859, "Couldn't your relative Ziebel—though I don't think much of his work—write a short poem for*Volk* only not, pathetic. In order to stir up Freiligrath, we ought at any cost to let loose some sort of a poet, even if we have to choose his meter for him ourselves." And Marx and Engels actually, as we know from the history of their mutual relations with Heine, Freiligrath, Herweg, Weert, E. Johns and others, did bring them up ideologically, and not in the slightest degree to the injury of the artistic value of their work—on the contrary, it is just those of their works written under the direct influence of Marx and Engels which are the greatest achievements of these poets from the artistic point of view. But Marx and Engels did not give up their ideas on "tendency" while using in literature "small forms" and topical political poetry. And here, for instance, Engels draws a clear distinction between revealing revolutionary satire and narrow satire subjectively obstructed by the poet, not grasping the real social causes of the "evil" ridiculed by him. For instance analyzing the poem of the philistine "socialist" poet Karl Beck in 1847, "the Song of the Drummer," Engels writes, "The same theme Heine would make a bitter satire on the German people; but with Beck it turns out to be just a satire on the poet himself, indentifying himself with a feeble dreaming youth. With Heine the dreams of the bourgeois would be developed on purpose, in order later to drop to the level of reality. But with Beck the poet joins himself with these fantasies, and of course suffers damage when he gets down into the world of reality. The first arouses the Bourgeois by his impertinence, the second quiets them with kinship of soul."

Marx and Engels did not put the question in this sense—either great epic realist art, or current political poetry and topical "small forms"; both the former and the latter, in

their view, played a definite role in the class struggle. Nor did they put the question of the literary heritage of the past in a division between a high appraisal of only such writers as Shakespeare, Goethe, and Balzac, and a negative attitute toward Voltaire, Diderot, Heine. No, they valued both, the former more highly, the latter not so highly. Some of these writers came close to their views on the correct treatment of the individual and the type, personality and class purpose-writing and so on;others were further away. Some inclined toward some genres of literature favored by Marx and Engels, others toward others. The clear statements of Engels in his letter to Kautsky on the individual and the type, on purpose and its expression in literature, show once again the error of the creative slogans of the theoreticians of the proletcult, left and literary front groups on contrasting abstract personality with the group, the dissolving of individual persons in "complex of events"; they show the error of the literary front's identification of individuality with a drop drowning in the current (the group), of a schematic depiction of good and bad, they show also the error of the slogan of "the live person," and getting locked in the psychology of the individual; likewise the statements of Engels in this and other letters are incompatible with the "left" idea of "throwing the classics overboard from the modern ship" or a onesided attitude to the great realists (Tolstoy) or a publicist sharpening of views (on Heine and others). In particular it is clear from Engels' remarks on the revolutionary dramas of the young Schiller that a bare contrasting of "romanticism" and "realism" as the creative methods of subjective idealism and objective realism is wrong, not to mention the fact that only *Don Carlos* can be considered fully representative of the early Schiller, but that one cannot by any means indiscriminately identify his creative method of the period of "storm and stress" with classicism.

One more part is worth underlining in the letter of Engels to Kautsky. This is where he says, "In *Stefan* you showed that you are able to view your heroes with that fine irony which demonstrates the power of a writer over his creation." This remark shows that according to Engels the idea in a work is the creed, which gives all things their direction. This remark completely contradicts the contentions of the *Perevesev* school, that there are no ideas in a literary work besides the ideas of the images.

In richness of thought and clarity of formulation of a number of propositions in Marxist literary criticism, the letter of Engels to Minna Kautsky is one of the most important literary-critical documents left to us by the founders of scientific socialism.

Translated from the Russian by Jessie Lloyd

LETTERS FROM WRITERS

American Literary Scene

Just now I am very hard on my book, which I ought to finish in a month or two. It is an interpretation of American literature since the civil war, and I think it's much the best thing I've done. Of course sound Marxists will find all sorts of flaws in it, but the truth is that Marxist criticism is still in its infancy in America, and I have had to go my own blundering way.

You ask about literary conditions here. I think they're in something of a mess. My analysis is that we've reached the second stage of the fellow-traveler movement. The first stage was a wave of more or less emotional enthusiasm for Communism, reaching its climax in the manifesto of the League of Professional Groups for Foster and Ford. Now comes the stage of adaption to the ideas, tactics, and discipline of the CP. And at this stage there is a great deal of confusion. You may have noticed Edmund Wilson's articles on Trotsky in the *New Republic*. To me they reveal not only a rather lamentable tendency, but an extraordinary naivete. (He apparently had no idea that he was taking a definitely anti-CP stand.) Clifton Fadiman is also wavering, and it seems to me that Malcolm Cowley and Waldo Frank though loyal enough to the party, have not carefully enough thought out their position. Newton Arvin is all right but not doing much work. In the situation there are two factors: the bourgeois hangovers of the fellow-travelers, and the dogmatism of certain party members and associates of the John Reed Club type, who cannot disagree with a man's ideas without denouncing him as a social-fascist. This dogmatism not only repels sympathizers but also gives ammunition to their enemies among the bourgeois critics.

For myself, though there are some party policies that I do not understand, and others that I cannot accept, I have in my own mind drawn much closer to the party. I have great admiration for such leaders as I have met, and I am more convinced than ever of the essential rightness of its position. (You may be interested to know that I am not going to write any more for the *Modern Monthly* — unless my mind or its policy changes. I took the ground that, so long as Calverton was acting as an individual, it was possible to co-operate with him even if one didn't wholly agree with him, but now that he is openly taking an opposition stand, I cannot contribute to the *Modern Monthly* any more than I can to the *Workers Age.)*

Of course I have no doubt that the present confusions of the intellectuals will be straightened out. I think a certain group will become Marxists, as good Marxists as they can; another group will remain politically sympathetic to Communism but will not readjust their ideas; and a third group will go back to the bourgeois camp. In the meantime there is an enormous amount of hostile criticism from such people as Krutch and Hazlitt, and also from the newspaper columnists. Most of this is unfair, and a good deal is stupid. However, it is true that existing confusions make criticism easier

I'll write you some time in the next month about the article for *International Literature*. Glad to hear reassuring word about conditions in the Soviet Union. The American papers have been carrying on a campaign of slander such as we have not seen since 1922.

January, 1933

Granville Hicks

From The Darkest South

We are still going very fumblingly here in these southern United States, where "communism" is a word that the great majority misunderstand and fear. And yet if they once understood, there is no people who could be more rapidly swept into the movement. To get them to listen, one can not write as one would where the true way of economic liberation is more generally known. But intolerance is breaking down, and it is a great comfort to me hear from many quarters that my book *Call Home The Heart* is helping in this most necessary step.

I am hoping to go to the Soviet Union before this new year is out.

May I through you send greetings to the great people who have ended the era of antiquity and builded the first modern nation? No matter how discouraged I get, I can always renew my heart by thinking of what you have done, are doing, and will do.

January, 1933

Fielding Burke

American Bezprizhorni

My novel *The Company* (published here in 1930) was written before the present economic crisis broke out above the surface. That is, it was finished early in 1929, when all good Ame-

ricans were sure of a chicken in every pot, two cars in every garage, an account in a bank that couldn't fail, a plot reserved in advance in a nice, respectable cemetary, and a general suffocating boredom everywhere. I should not write the same book, or in the same way, now. But it still can stand as a portrait of what was going on in the mind of our "white collars" at that time — and still does, largely — among those who happen to have jobs.

I am now working on a second novel whose theme is the general breakdown of the American petit bourgeoisie as shown through the corruption of its youth. (Did you know that since 1930 the depression has given this land of "rugged individualism" an army of some 300,000 homeless, wandering boys — our version of the "wild boys" of Russia's yesterday?)

I should like to write for this excellent magazine *International Literature*. I am going to send you a chapter of my new book or a short story I'm working on now. I have some other stories on hand, good ones which the magazines here — the paying magazines — won't print because they say my themes are too tragic.

But we're getting along. — the southern mill strikes have already given us four of the best novels of the past year—this outside of Dos Passos' work—and more are coming. A few more years and American literature will be a powerful revolutionary force — I have absolute faith in this.

January, 1933

Edwin Seaver

The Literary Situation In England

A feature of England today is the mass circulation of twopenny horrors. To see the city-going crowds hugging their cheap twopenny circulating library novels must astonish the most unobservant foreigner. Indeed capitalism has found a large drain down which it hurls vast quantities of junk. The British public is literate, but the critics keep it misinformed, and the greedy writers pander to its insatiable demand.

Literary criticism is largely an affair of literary craftsmen. A feature of one column of the *Liberal News Chronicle* is to poke fun at the literary back-scratchers — to give exaggerated examples of half a dozen writers reviewing each other's books. In this way we get at least half a dozen "literary masterpieces" announced every week! Sordid and horrible. We move in a world made hideous by palpable deceit.

Weeds flourish. They grow amazingly strong. After all it is their nature even if they are neglected. But to be tended carefully is a terrible tragedy. The case demands a new approach.

I am confident that the organizing of a British Section of the I.U.R.W. could go far to rectify this sad state of affairs. There is great need. The tender shoots now showing can be given great strength if we were to persue our task with a good deal of energy. Not so long ago I received a manuscript to read which did astonish me. Actually it contained all the faults a novel could hold. And yet it dealt with a scene that astonished one in its stark simplicity. The author set out to tell the story of a family now half-submerged, a unit in the army on the Means Test. True, our author approached it from the point of view of the young Roman Catholic chaplain just out of college on his first curacy. True he remained a convinced christian in the end. But the sad poignant story of that family of six struggling on about eighteen shillings a week in one room in a dreary slum was sufficient to lighten the flames of revolt in a dead stick. And that this manuscript should find its way to me — who am insignificant enough in the world of letters! — points to the fact that there must be scores of young men and women endeavouring to tell the tale of strenuous and unending struggle in this England.

I definitely assert that reading that novel was an experience I shall never forget, an experience which did not arise out of the poor manner of the telling of the story, but out of the story which it told.

The task of the I.U.R.W. in this country is to tear literature from its present false position. It is a profesion, not a means to an end. The "schools" must be disbanded, and the writers urged to possess themselves of a weapon pointing at the enemies of the workers. The inclusion of the working class milieu in the scheme of the English novel demands this. Writers there are in England who face the fact that in the world there are those who toil and those who do not even spin. H. E. Bates, James Hanley, Rhys Davies, Lionel Britton, these men know the facts. But their manner of approach leaves a great deal to be desired. It is a reproach to the working class movement in England that these writers have not been forced to face the facts of the situation. Their world definitely is not that of the bourgeois world of Aldous Huxley, Beverley Nicholls, and Michael Arlen. They are aware of the struggle, and they write of it — but how strangely untrue is their creation. A forceful criticism would make them strike the tents which they have erected between the barricades.

I speak here in all due respect to these men. Bates, a poet by nature, is a man who cannot be neglected in this country. His novels tell of a sincere and austere mind trying to add to the British novel. But here the tragedy of quality and quantity is manifest. He achieves a position when he is noticed, and the quality suffers. The conservative effect of success in a capitalist state of affairs proves too strong. The same with Rhys Davies. Here is a man seeking to express himself after the manner of his friend D. H. Lawrence, yet with this difference, he has not the innate reactionary approach to affairs of Lawrence. He respects the "coarseness" of Joyce, but each succeeding novel carries him one step further from

the class struggle with which he has come into intimate contact.

Perhaps the biggest tragedy is Hanley. He writers a novel, *Drift,* which carries the spark of genius. Success and failure tend to make his language lurid, and in that his critics hail his metier. So he descends the scale until he touches the depths of *Ebb and Flood.*

The further these men recede from the class struggle the more hopeless becomes their position. They cannot write of the world of Huxley and Arlen. They do not know it. All the cocktail parties of publishers in the world will not give them the soul of the bourgeoisie. Their world is that of the worker and the toiler, and if they drift then their passing will be more tragic than that of Liam O'Flaherty.

Lionel Britton is in a different case. A protege of Shaw, consumed by a vast reading and assimilation of knowledge, he cannot *approach* the proletarian position because he fails to understand it. His fault lies with his lack of sympathy with the proletariat. This is manifest in *Hunger and Love.* It appears in a worse degree in his play *Animal Ideas.* This is curious because Britton has suffered with the proletariat. Could he but emerge from his mood of pessimism and see clearly that which he insists upon viewing indistinctly he might well be admitted to the ranks of the proletarian writers on the basis of a novel supremely well constructed. As it is, he is wasting his valuable time.

February, 1933

Harold Heslop

Art In England

In England the artists, painters sculptors are very badly off. The public is not interested in Art, only in economics as a way out of the present crisis. Most of the artists are living on rent. They sublet as much of their premises as they can and make a big profit out of the subtenants. And they try to make money by teaching pupils. Many painters are trying to sell their pictures in the streets.

Of course not only the shortage of money but the housing conditions are affecting the demand for works of art. There is no space in the new small flats for pictures, and all the large houses that were once occupied each by one family, are now used as tenements. Some of them have as many as thirteen and fourteen seperate tenants. Single rooms are occupied by seperate families and used as a house, which means there is no wall space for pictures. People instead of hanging pictures on the walls ,hang their clothes to dry instead.

With greetings

January, 1933

Huntly Carter

Gide Writes To Soviet Workers

My defense of the Soviet Union has aroused a wild outcry. I have been scoffed at and ridiculed. I have been called a comedian, a fool, and a renegade.... These people have spoken about my 'conversion to Communism.' Had they read only a few of my earlier writings they would know that I have always protested against the comfortable beliefs on which their unjust prosperity is founded.

Young builders of the Sovet Union! With all my heart I was with you, even before you entered history. But I regarded as a Utopia what now, thanks to you, must become a reality. I doubted whether it was possible to realize so quickly that which I barely dared to foresee. That is why I am grateful for all the young, the living and the new which you bring into our old world, for that unstinted enthusiasm of self-sacrifice which gives life its zest again.... Even in France there are many of us who cast glances full of admiration and envy at you, the young builders of the Soviet Union, with envy even for your very suffering, for that heroic courage and patience with which you strive towards emancipation which you, possibly, will not enjoy, but for which those who come after you will be intebted to you.

You are accomplishing what was thought impossible of accomplishment. You have broken the chains of the past, whose heavy burden still lies on us. Young people of the Soviet Union, I thank you for that great hope with which you have filled our hearts and for your wonderful example.

Henceforth we march on with eyes set on you.

January, 1933

André Gide

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

VERA INBER

I

They leave us, the heroes we create, and begin an independent life of their own. They choose their surroundings and their surroundings choose them. They find their depth, so to speak, as soon as they step over the threshold of books, acquire the three dimensions and live. It is sometimes a torture to meet them again.

Not long ago I had the opportunity of listening to some new gramophone records from abroad. The coal black disk swished easily on its way. The needle touched it, and a lisping fulsome voice sang with exaggerated weariness:

Oh, Johnny, oh my Honey,
His palms are hot and funny,
His teeth are almond white!

Fortunately the name of the author of the song was not printed on the record. The listeners did not know him either. But I know him well. My head drooped but I listened right up to the end which sounded prophetic. . .

The weeks went by, already four,
I don't love Johnny any more,
I find his almonds such a bore.
He has to beg from door to door,
And sometimes steal and even more.

Many weeks had gone by. Many years, fifteen years. And now here was my Johnny, born in October 1917, almost during the very days of the revolution. At the present time thrown out of his country in disgrace he has become something worse than a thief or a beggar, sponger of the Paris night clubs. He has changed his surroundings, his air, his social milieu. He can only be smuggled in to us in the USSR. The frontier lies between us. We do not recognize each other nor bow when we meet.

That is how our heroes leave us at times. And it is a good thing they do too!

So *Johnny* was written in October, 1917. And if it is true that the poet's weapon is his pen, I can say with truth that I met the revolution armed.

The tram-car standing at the Arbat Gate was the scene of a conversation between two people, obviously old friends: a military man and a civilian.

"Well, how're you getting on?" asked the civilian.

"Fine, thanks. You'll see what we'll do yet."

"Who are 'we', may I ask?"

"We, the Bolsheviks."

(The tram-car which was full for the most part, of members of the intelligentsia from Arbat, Prechistenka, Ostojenka, and other fashionable streets—the tram-car held its breath. It was a few days after the revolution had broken out.)

"You! The Bolsheviks? You won't last more than a month and a half, at the outside."

"We'll see about that. Well, goodbye, I'm getting out here."

And the military man went towards the exit. The way was cleared for him, nobody wanted to even touch a Bolshevik. He got out and the tram-car drew its breath and spoke.

"You allowed them a bit too long—a month and a half."

"And how long would you say?"

"Two weeks at the most."

I got out at the next stop. Six weeks or two weeks? It would be interesting to see who proved to be right.

In May 1918, I left Moscow for Odessa. I have described this period in *A Place in the Sun*, a sort of lyrical diary. This diary was like a watch that does not keep very good time, now goes slow, now fast but gives on the whole a fair idea of the time.

But the whole book of course was constructed on some strange undoubtedly false and incomprehensible to me at the moment, principle of intermingling of real and imaginary life. Bits of different people's lives are glued together as it were, people are made up of various hearts and heads. The worst of it is that it all turned out much poorer, flatter and somehow less important than it was in real life. I had robbed myself and there was no one to complain to even. I should have chosen either the novel or reminiscences and not this intermediate, hybrid form. But it is too late. The material had been spoiled by inexperience and what was worse, frivolousness. The material, excellent literary raw material of which I am short even now had been spoiled.

The end of the book that told of the beginning of my Moscow life, was the weakest part of the book. This is rather fortunate, it is still so raw that I might try to write it all over again, and that is what I shall do in the second part of *A Place in the Sun*.

But the first! How I regret many of the ruined bits, particularly the description of the Odessa autumn of 1918, New Year's Eve, the evacuation and a lot more.

In 1918 everybody who had believed that the Bolsheviks would only last a fortnight came to Odessa. Then they decided it would be six weeks. The period of faith lengthened and at last the visitors began to believe that they should leave the country altogether. In those days, however, nobody thought much of going away. Everybody was engaged in enjoying the sea air. Friends from Moscow and Leningrad visited the Odessaites. Bunin sat about on Nikolayevsky Boulevard in a white panama.

In a big room looking on to the sea Maximilian Voloshin, stout and affable, sat with a bottle of Chablis and a plate of biscuits before him reading his new poem. The Germans were marching through the stillness of the already autumnal streets. The sea shone stretching away to the warm shores of Turkey where there were no Bolsheviks of any kind. We turned out the lights. Maximilian, silhouetted against the stars read aloud about the islands of the Aegean being "like a swarm of bees round Aphrodite's loins."

At that time battles between the Czechs and the Red Army were taking place on the Volga. Allied troops were being landed in Archangel and Krassnov was laying waste the Don Region.

We celebrated the eve of the New Year 1919 at our home. For many of the people present it was to be their last year in Russia. Numbers of people we hardly knew collected.

It was gay, but the gaiety was evil and forced. We drank a great deal. I read my New Year's poem:

Before the Red songs have drowned our melodies
And while strains of the Blue Waltz are still heard
Kiss our soft hands before they are coarsened with toil.

The glasses were held out to me on all sides: "Beautiful, perfectly expressed! That's just right! 'Before our hands are coarsened' Lord, isn't she sweet!"

Next day as we were putting the flat to rights, we found a young frowsy ensign buried in the cushions of the divan under a fallen tablecloth.

"For God's sake," he stammered, "would you be kind enough to tell me whose house I'm in, your name and so on? And the name of the town too that's the main thing. I can see the sea over there on the horizon. So far as I remember, there wasn't any sea."

We explained things to him and he left. The Blue Waltz was over.

II

"At first I was raging inside, but afterwards I settled down. My fever passed and in its place came the heavy dreamy stillness of a conservatory, where pale, puffy, unreal fruit ripens in January. I began to read a great deal, and this itself was unnatural in times like those, when Shakespeare was sacrificed for fuel and flour was mixed with ground peas.

My choice of authors was an unhealthy one. Of all that had been written I read only Dickens and Anatole France.

The one came with tears of gladness, the other with a mournful smile. One said that the heart was more important than anything in the world. The other held that it was the mind.

Miserable wretches, sick folk, stuttering people, orphans abandoned to thieves to be trained in vice; former criminals, old maids crazy with love, shy clerks, this was Dickens' world. Modest household gods—the singing kettle and the cricket on the hearth, the cosiness of an old torn cloak in the folds of which the criminal, the hungry cur and the street waif found shelter from the winter night—such was the world of Dickens.

Dickens understood the warmth of happiness. He wrote: 'The children gathered one by one around the glowing hearth. Their mother threw on fresh logs: father would soon be home, and father had just exchanged friendly nods with the driver of the stage-coach a good mile away from his farm.'

France asserted that "Time and space do not exist. Nor does it matter. What we call by these names is actually what we do not know, the obstacle on which our senses are wrecked. We know only one reality: our thought. It creates the world. And if our thought had not weighed and named Sirius, Sirius would never have existed.'

Both Dickens and France had such powers of persuasion that I felt myself defenceless before them. But it was not enough for me. I wanted the living truth of life and not the wisdom of books."

What is this? It is a quotation from *A Place in the Sun.*

What was it—this truth of life that I was thirsting for? It was evidently a desire for a new philosophy of life. A desire to know all that lay outside me, time, space, matter, existing objectively, as well as Sirius, the sun, the earth, the Bolsheviks.

The all enveloping cloak of Dickens was insufficient for me. I knew now that the "warmth of happiness" is not easily won in any society, that this "warmth" had to be fought for, was being fought for. And although the class nature of this struggle was not perhaps clear to me as yet, still, even then it could not be said of me, as one of the critics put it, that "What Vera Inber learned from the Revolution was merely that everyone must work." Dear Comrade, I forget your name, I can assure you that I realized that much earlier.

In April, 1925 *(A Place in the Sun* was written later) I thought and wrote:

And coal in the engine booms heavily,
It bridles electricity's impetuous leap
And makes the steam bubble in the boiler,

Vera Inber

It gives humanity warmth and light
And helps man to enjoy
The light and warmth of the earth.

But of all heroes this was the last socially unclassified person with an unknown biography, some sort of a thermotechnical integer, beloved of the constructivists of that time.

Constructivists! Constructivism! It has all receded to such a distance that it is almost possible to speak of it calmly. As far as I was concerned the constructivists formed my first literary group and generally speaking my first literary surroundings.

I visited Moscow again in April 1922. It was a bitter spring for me!

I had not written anything for a long time. I had lost everything, methods of treatment, subject matter, ability, the nerve to work. I felt almost physically the harshness, intractability, hostility of the words I had to put into verse. Everything even syntax, was against me. I had lost the feeling for the language. And worse of all, the feeling for the times.

The first book that broke upon my defenceless head in Moscow was Pilnyak's *Naked Year*. And this right after Dickens. Well!

It was such a terrible wind that blew on me out of that book that I slammed it shut quickly, as one does a window. And I remembered how a man had once remarked to me, "Can you imaging a cosy, warm room, and outside rain and revolution."

I spent the summer of 1922 at Tomilino outside of Moscow. Up to now I love the little river, the Pikhorka. It was particularly lovely when the moon floated in it among the water lilies and grasses. A light fog swam between the moon and the earth. Mushrooms sprouted secretly. For us southerners this northern summer is a terrifying thing.

It was there that I wrote my first post-revolutionary verses:

I no longer call out for France
In the anguish of my soul
But come to the country station
With a print kerchief on my head

It was quite true that I used to come to the station of an evening with a cotton handkerchief bound round my head to keep off the midges. The women from the country cottages were talking about eggs and cream. I thought of my future friends. "They must be somewhere in Moscow," I thought. "There must be some." In the autumn I met Selvinsky and Zelinsky.

Much later, when we were no longer a trio, but had been joined by many others, I described our meetings more or less exactly in a sort of parody. This I read at the constructivist's evening which was held in the hall of the Polytechnic Museum in 1927:

The bell rings again. Great heaps
Of coats and caps in the hall.
And on days when the weather is not too good,

The galoshes collect as well.
Selvinsky comes,
Zelinsky comes,
A little too thin
Agapov comes in
(But Agapov, you know, is a 'hero of toil.'
He cannot come very often.)
Enthusiastic or indignant
In bottle-like breeches
Aduev runs in.
And later, with his military marine gait
V. Lugovskoy appears.

Lean and gaunt
Gausner comes with a friend.
And with a ring that nearly breaks the bell,
Panov and the rest come in.

Further on I described how the coats in the vestibule carry on a meeting similar to ours, although it hardly seems probable. They make sspeeches just as we do:

And, showing his Polar
Walrus tusks,
This is what Selvinsky's
Heavy fur coat said:
'Snow-storms and ice-fields have I known,
I padded along like a she bear
I went to theatre offices.
Though the cold

Gripped me,
I have done such things—
In the State Fur Company—
Eh, brothers mine
What strength I had!
Eh, Comrades mine,
Little coats, ulsters, jackets
And fur coats!'

Gavrilovitch's jacket spoke in tender tones, Lugovskoy's "cloth covering rolled out in a deep bass:

And the meeting goes on
For five good hours
Until the galoshes sigh,
Remembering that they have
Long tramps before them
And make a run for the tram.
Selvinsky goes out,
Zelinsky goes out,
Agapov goes out
(If ever he came)
Panov disappears,
Lugovskoy has vanished
Up Tverskaya.
Eh, brothers all,
How many names among us!
Eh, comrades mine
Little ulsters
Great coats.

True enough, there were plenty of ulsters and fur coats. I am friendly with some of them till now, but not with all.

Some of them, like Lugovskoy, for instance, in describing their "path to proletarian literature" have exclaimed:

You, who, grinding out words and narrowing your eyes,
Smiled like sucking pigs in shop windows.

We, the constructivists, were supposed to be the sucking pigs. Further down he speaks of the "little enemies" the "weasels," the "adaptable individualists" and the "petty bourgeois intelligentsia." He meant us. After he joined the Revolutionary Association of Proletarian Writers, Lugovskoy renounced this. And it is clear that the Constructivist atmosphere would have proved ruinous for the poet if he had not saved himself in time. But I was a tougher weasel than Lugovskoy and therefore did not feel the poisonous atmosphere of the aforesaid creative group so sharply.

Let no one think, however, that I wish now to excuse all our mistakes and mine in particular. I am writing about my fifteen years of literary life. Are there so many faultless literary lives, after all?

It is possible that had I not been a Constructivist, my mistakes would have been less typical, less significant. And sometimes (I emphasize "sometimes") the scale of mistakes is indicative of growth. I can now repeat what I said about myself last year when I spoke to the group of the *Komsomolskaya Pravda. (Young Communist Truth)*

I said that the French artist Corbusier had defined art as "the will for order." As a Constructivist I was obviously in agreement with him. I had as it were, ignored the "Great Disorder" known as the class struggle, without which modern bourgeois society was not only *not* interested in art but also in life.

But it was among the Constructivists that I had grown up. It was there that I had learned to work, a precious attainment without a body to it. I remember my excitement when my turn came to read to that circle of merciless but gentle "constr's" where literary deception was out of question. I remember it all and regret nothing.

III

"My mother had a white silk shawl with roses on it. The warmth of many cosy generations pervaded it, scraps of after dinner conversations and the scent of eau-de-cologne brought by a philosopher uncle from England, sounds of sonatas and preludes played in the dusk of drawing rooms lingered in its folds; scents and sensations that would be hard to find nowadays. And just now this shawl has been torn from my hands like a flag."

That is what one of the heroes of my unfinished tales says. How I would like to repeat it.

Alas! My mother never owned an aristocratic silk shawl with roses on it, I never had a philosopher uncle who came from England. There was no other shawl. But on the other hand no one of my family was so wretchedly poor or suffered so much from the cold as to take the side of the wretched. I had an unfortunate background. Since I was a plant with roots not sufficiently strong socially, I merely proved incapable of drawing out of the soil all that it could have given me.

And that was a pity. A great pity. I think that I might have written a fairly good autobiography if I had had a different childhood and youth behind me. Sometimes it happens that I find in the stores of memory a recollection carefully laid away in moth powder. I look at it in the light, feel its quality; the thing is well preserved, quite fresh, undamaged. But still it is not what I want. And quite near it, alongside it, in fact, go well marked integral lives.

I remember a school friend of mine, Nadya F., the daughter of a rich wall paper manufacturer. Late one winter evening she came running to my room coatless, with no other protection from the cold than the cook's shawl (I would have liked that shawl for myself.)

Even by the blue light of the spirit lamp (there were lamps of that sort then) Nadya looked rosy. She was glowing with the snow, with the night and homelessness, with the action

of what she had just gone through and alarm for the future. She had been turned out by her family. They had discovered that she belonged to a revolutionary circle. Forbidden literature, a revolver too maybe had been found on her. The wall paper manufacturer disowned his rebellious daughter and turned her out of the mansion. He wanted no study circles pamphlets or revolvers.

Nadya sat by my table. On the blotting paper that covered the top lay a history book open at Philip II's struggle with the Netherlands. Nadya gave Phillip one glance and turned away. She was making her own history.

I kept my gaze on her as if I felt that after many years I would recall that evening on the threshold of 1905, those flaming, girlish cheeks and the strand of hair stirred by her breathing.

"What will you do now, Nadya?"

"I'm going to Kazan, I'll stay the night with you and leave tomorrow."

"Why Kazan?"

"I've got comrades there. Kazan is the place."

She was silent. She hadn't a coat to her back, not a penny in her pocket, not a roof over her head, but she had comrades. Her light hearted girlhood passed, her biography began. It contained prison, exile, escape, emigration. Everything that I needed so badly.

IV

Maybe this is all a mistake and that I am not writing what I should. Maybe I should have given tangible events of my life, in orderly sequence, for the last fifteen years. Certainly there has been a great deal in these that is important to me.

I might write of the radical changes in my entire mode of life, the speeches I made, my work in the literary study circles, in the state electric works, letters from readers and my replies to them. I might write of the change in the readers themselves. At first they were of the kind that liked the "unforgetable" Johnny of 1917. Then they retired, left me, and no new ones appeared. I found myself in a kind of "No Man's Land"—a dreary, sterile zone, where not a single blade of attention grew. But this did not last long.

All these even have their importance for me. But they are all only the outward sings of processes that were going on inside me, in my psychology, in my consciousness. And in this, from my point of view lay what was most important. It is here, for example, that the curious history begins of how the eyes of a perfectly blind love were opened. I am speaking of my love for Kipling.

I had loved the Englishmen a long time, almost from childhood. His dark faced India, prostrated in dust before its pale faced conquerors seemed to me the most fascinating of countries. At that time, the peculiar humor of British Colonial law which forbade the natives to carry fowls tied by the legs, head downwards, was incomprehensible to me. On the contrary, I would probably have been just as enthusiastic as Kipling over the consideration shown by this splendid England towards Indian ducks and hens. This law, after all, does actually exist.

At present I read Kipling with just as much pleasure as ever. But unlike the hero of his novel *The Light that Failed,* I find my sight improves. I see more and more clearly how the shining golden magic pen of a real master acts as an instrument of Chauvinism, cruelty, oppression and the slandering of one nation by another. I can see all this and though I still love Kipling as a writer, I condemn him politically. To divide love from politics is not so simple.

Everybody and particularly a writer, has his weak side, a vulnerable spot to which every scratch seems a painful wound and the slightest draught a storm. It is just those spots, those ill-protected places that should receive most attention for the evil starts there.

"Having scrubbed himself in the baths until the last rinsing water was an almost normal color and he was deprived of his usual crust of dirt, Mosska felt so unreal, so weak and frail that he was afraid he would be broken to bits on the stone floor like that false glass fifty kopeck piece that someone had told him about." That is what I said about the former street waif, Mosska, in my unfinished tale.

Leaving aside the bath business I must say that this unpleasant feeling of "glassiness" has always been my weak spot. The feeling of insecurity, of fragility, of the brevity of life and the swiftness with which it passed, had always tormented me.

"I began to write at a very early age, about nine, in fact. My first verses were about the sea. At about fifteen if I am not mistaken, I wrote a poem with the envoi:

Let us drink from the cup of life
For it is short.

Further down I called for desperate passions, for wild feasts and pleasures, my relatives became rather alarmed.

All this was dwarfish, ridiculous, childish but for all that a fairly faithful reproduction of the prevailing mood in the literature of that time. This mood was in its turn the reflection of that sultry hush before the storm that pervaded the bourgeoisie of the time.

"Everything around me taught me that life was short and art eternal ,that any antique potsherd was of more value than a modern vase, that the poets of Alexandria put an end to their lives by breathing the scent of poisoned roses, and that this was all as it should be. Books, pictures and statues all spoke of this. Never had art been such a social danger as then." (From *My Biography,* written for the October issue of *Federation.)*

"I was sitting on the couch and thinking—music is right, everything comes to an end. The

land will become an unpopulated desert. Life is triflingly short: a shred of blue fog in a snowy cloud. Does it matter how we live it, this shortest of lives. Its brevity is the solution of all our problems and a consolation. One cannot be too unhappy in the space of a moment." (From *A Place in the Sun.)*

How did all this arise? It might have arisen from actual physical weariness, from frequent sickness in childhood and girlhood. But the main reasons were those I have indicated in my biography.

Sad Wine, Bitter Joy, Transitory Words the names of these, my first books, express not so much the sense of injury as admiration of it. The wine is undoubtedly sad, the pleasure bitter, and words transitory. Life is short? Fine. Let us make it shorter still. In its brevity lies our salvation." (From *My Biography.*)

This was the kind of equipment with which I entered literature. In spite of its "fragility," the equipment was very heavy. What I had to do was to pick out the valuable bits, separate them from all that was unnecessary, painful and morbid—that was what I was working on all those years.

"Just a short time ago a motor lorry drove into the yard. It bore a legend that was familiar and yet quite new to me: 'No accidents. Life is short, don't make it any shorter.'

Life is indeed, extremely short. But just because it is so I want to live it as well and as completely as possible for the joy and advantage of this, the first socialist country in the world that is celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution this year." (From *My Biography.)*

Just on account of this brevity I must make life fuller, of more significance, of more use to the new society in which I am living and in this way render it more complete, useful and significant to myself.

It often happens that in questionaires, talk and private conversations the writer is asked, "What are you working on at present?" I should by right in a case like this, reply: "I am working on the sensation of life's brevity." But I usually say that I am writing some story or cycle of verses. That is the way one is supposed to answer.

"Murmurings," my last poem ends up with the following words:

He (the poet) though no longer young,
With but a third of life remaining,
Feels less the chill of Death,
And fears less to die.
And dread of the last boundary
Is almost unknown to him.
It is the poet's victory
Over his old soul.
And living a deeper and fuller life,
He of whom I speak
Gives all that is best in him
To the Revolution.

So fifteen years have gone by, a huge chunk out of such a short life. I have learned a great deal in that time. I learned from events, from people, from books. People, events and books have helped me. To pull oneself together, see one's weak spots and work on them, to assert oneself anew under the sun of a new country—this is a complicated and not very rapid process.

And I feel bitter when I think of how little assistance I got from critics at that time. Criticism is the very thing that is meant to be of assistance to the writer. Critics never took the trouble to examine me, and others like me, seriously, attentively. And this made things difficult and lonely for us.

Well, what about it! I managed to get something done without the critics' help. I changed. I broke away from the circle of purely personal emotions, adapted myself to modern life, I am richer and happier. The vast scale of human feelings was revealed to me in a new way.

It was not only music in the major key that I reproduced: let it be so. Evidently this is something in myself I *cannot* alter. There are many things that sadden me. One is the feeling of lost youth. But. . .

You are aging, my generation. Let it be so.
If you use gauges and ruler
You can force even sorrow
To work for socialism.

ALEXANDER SERAFIMOVICH

When I was seven years old (in 1870) my mother one day led me to the window and said, pointing out to the square where in the presence of officers a cossack was being whipped till the blood flowed (my father was then serving in a cossack regiment in Poland) for having run away from the awful conditions of military service:

"Never, never be a soldier."

But was not my father himself a soldier?

All the people we knew were officers, or officers' wives or officers' children and my mother lived among them and paid calls, held "at homes" and had all the interests of a military environment. So I honored the tsar and prayed to God.

"Never, never a soldier."

Strange — and that was the first slender note that found its way into my childish mind.

I was never allowed go into the kitchen where the cossacks were who did our menial work for us.

But I used to go there on the sly and was fond of listening to their tales of army life, and about the officers. It was a quite different kind of conversation to what I heard upstairs in the well kept rooms.

And my mother always very kind to the cossacks, nursed them when they were ill and liked talking simply to them about their beloved

A. Serafimovich, noted soviet writer at a children's study circle

home, and the peaceful Don. And there was something of a double life about all this, strange and contradictory.

So things went on.

When we came back to the Don my father died. Terrible poverty followed. At the cost of ceaseless work and tuberculosis, my mother sent me to the gymnasium and there that deep social cleft widened which was secretly disuniting my child's mind.

The gymnasium with all its vulgarity and its abject and cruel pack of masters only helped to deepen the cleft and bring it to consciousness. In spite of all the spying and bullying of the masters and overseers, of the inspector and the director, the gymnasium in a strange contradictory way awoke in me a thirst for knowledge, a thirst to know the truth and to get some comprehension of my environment. We read the works of Pissarev, Chernyshevski and Dobrolyubov which had been smuggled in by some of the students. A new universe was opened out to me. I began to hate the tsar and was ready to spit on god. I saw in churches and priests mere vestiges of savagery.

Then came the university. Revolutionary clubs. The harsh persecution of the police. The, at first, laborious reading of Marx.

It was the second attempted assassination of the tsar in 1887. I was in prison for writing a proclamation. Through the bars I could see on the opposite wall in the shadow of a deep window the glitter of a fragment of mirror, and I could just catch reflected in the mirror the terrible words "Alexander Ulianov and four others executed." My whole sky became clouded.

Exile. To the very shores of the Arctic Ocean. Mezen — one street and two side streets, and houses black like dead mushrooms.

Fields of ice, the tundras inert under low lying mists, impenetrable forests where there are nothing but wild beasts. The dark blue ocean rising and falling twice a day. And in this distant forsaken part of the world with its blackened houses, the same never ending labor the same exploitation of man by man.

The tiny little seed which had been planted in my heart by my dear mother so far away back in my childhood had grown up into an unbounded hatred for the oppression of the exploiters and I turned to poverty and to hard work and to the hunted ones, to the forgotten, to those whose life-blood was being sucked.

My first novel was *On The Ice-pack* and was written completely under the influence of Korolenko who was all the rage at the time. It is about a coast dweller who hunts furbearing animals on the ice packs but on shore is a crook who fleeces the unwary of their savings.

I started writing in 1888.

When I returned from exile I associated with the working people of the Don, the miners, the factory hands, the printing house workers and the fishermen. I got a number of stories from their lives I had to keep myself in hand and remember the censor at every line, for there was not only the imperial censor but also the editorial censor. And it was difficult to cut

things out here and there and think each point out carefully, for I had to work quickly. My pay was very meager. There was no one near to whom I could turn for advice, to whom I could give my things to read. I was alone.

I lived a tense life in those days.

Eventually in 1902 I came to Moscow.

Among the foremost names in the world of letters of that time, Maxim Gorky, who had already become well known, started to collect all that was best in literature, I. Bunin, Chekhoy, Kuprin, Shmelev, Andreev, Zaitsev, Skitalets, Chirikov were all represented in Gorky's little green editions of the "Knowledge" Series.

Now these writers are all abroad living in emigrant circles full of impotent hate for the Soviet Union. But in those days these petty bourgeois writers undoubtedly played a very important part in the work leading up to revolution.

I wrote in an old fashioned style. My books read like legal documents. But here was a complete break with tradition, quite a new style. These writers exerted a tremendous influence on the artistic side of my work.

But they kept a very reserved attitude to the more radical views on the social and political questions of the day. There arose among the petty bourgeois intellectuals (barristers, artists, school masters, professors, small publishers, doctors and so on) an opposition to tsarism but not to the bourgeois order, and the literary group to which I belonged thought this way.

Although they printed my work they were very cold and reserved in their attitude to it, and critics either took no notice of me, or gave sly cuts when they could. The word "tendencious," so awesome to the bourgeois, kept recurring in connection with my name. I was not able to give a delicate picture of my own personal experiences. My novel *City and Steppeland,* which dealt with the constant unrest among the working masses, was received coldly and in silence. One or two critics said straight out "Serafimovich's works appeal neither to the heart nor to the intellect."

Thanks to the cheap editions of the "Knowledge" series, and the "Language of the Don" series, my books found their way to the working class and country reader. Here it found an appeal.

Thus it was till the revolution broke out. The floodgates of thought and speculation and work were then opened with the struggle of workers, peasants and party men.

I had accumulated considerable experience in writing, and now it found an outlet with the new subject matter that the revolution brought.

The civil war provided a rich supply of fresh material. I was on the eastern, western and southern fronts as correspondent for *Pravda.* And this material together with other observations I put into my work *The Iron Stream.*

The revolution not only gave an opportunity for the production of a great mass of true artistic work, but also straightenend out those inner flaws which could not be reconciled with the Marxist view of things. With the revolution the writer, to a certain extent was born again.

And all around the young blood is creating a new literature which is both revolutionary and their own.

FOREIGN WRITERS GREET SERAFIMOVICH ON HIS 70th BIRTHDAY

ERWIN PISCATOR: German Revolutionary Director

In connection with the 70th anniversary of the brave fighter in the foremost ranks of revolutionary literature, Comrade Serafimovich, I should like to stress the importance and the results for Germany of his literary work, in which battling communism is always interwoven with art, work which has already become the heritage of the class conscious portions of the proletariat.

HANS GUNTHER: German Revolutionary writer, member of the MOPR Secretariat

To us in Germany Comrade Serafimovich is known especially for his novel *Iron Stream* which gave us a vivid picture of the role of the Red Army and its heroic fighters in the civil war and extraordinarily enriched us with necessary knowledge of events of the civil war.

We can assure Comrade Serafimovich that the German workers, and especially the proletarian revolutionary writers are following his literary work with the keenest interest.

The greetings of the German revolutionary press on the day of his birth are expressed in the publication in its pages of the autobiography of Comrade Serafimovich a few days ago.

BELA ILLES: Hungarian novelist and playwright

Dear Alexander Serafimovich: I wish you long life and success in your work and struggles, I admire the great writer Serafimovich and love the good comrade that always helps us, the second generation, in all our problems in fatherly fashion. (Telegram)

EMI SIAO: Chinese poet

Comrade Serafimovich is very popular in China. His *Iron Stream* was published in a deluxe edition with a wealth of illustrations by

one of the foremost Chinese writers Lu sin, translated by Tsao, in spite of the censorship.

Chinese readers appreciate Serafimovich as a great writer and staunch fighter for the cause of the liberation of the oppressed masses.

Chinese writers learn from this great artist of unshakable public spirited activity.

IURW: (International Union of Revolutionary Writers)

Dear Alexander Serafimovich: On this your 70th birthday we, the representatives of the revolutionary writers of the world, greet you, our oldest comrade and friend.

Your *Iron Stream* occupies an honored place in the ranks of those "book ambassadors" which far beyond the border carry on their pages the story of how in exploits, battle and construction the proletariat is winning for a land, mishandled at the bloody hands of the exploiters, a new era of real human relations — socialism.

Long years of health to you!

Long years of work to you, faithful participant of the great unconquerable *Iron Stream* whose name is the World Revolution!

By action of the MORP Secretariat:
Dietrich, Wisliak, Dinamov, Ludkiewicz, Aragon, Tretyakov, Hidas, Wandurski

STANISLAV R. STANDER: Polish poet

Iron Stream was one of the first books that for us writers from foreign countries, opened our eyes to the great epic of the civil war and engendered in us the enthusiasm for the great cause of changing the face of the enslaved Earth.

I press the hand of the young old Comrade Serafimovich, who on his 70th year continues to participate actively in life and building.

SEIKIRO KATSUMOTO: Japanese Writer

Iron Stream by Serafimovich is the basis of the slogan of proletarian realism in Japan. The Japanese Union of proletarian revolutionary writers warmly greets Comrade Serafimovitch, one of the most popular of Soviet writers among the workers, peasants, and intellectuals of Japan.

M. KAKHANA: Roumanian Writer

Dear Comrade Serafimovich: I greet you!

Your readers in Roumania and the Balkans can hardly realize that you are already celebrating your 70th birthday—so new, so fresh, so captivating is your art.

Your books are read by stealth — reading them is severely persecuted.

Your works have taught us not only to love, respect and defend the October Revolution and Soviet power, but to fight with all our strength to the very death for our own October, fight for it by means of our art.

We await your new works with impatience.

ALEXEY TOLSTOY

THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION GAVE ME ALL

Until 1907, being a student of a technological institute I was little interested in literature. Perhaps, as all young people, I then wrote bad verse. The main reasons which brought me to literature were social reasons. After the revolution of 1905, cultural life became still more grey and empty. Our student life was especially colorless.

My first book, an unsuccessful collection of verse (a year after I was already ashamed of it) was written under the influence of Balmont, Byely... A year after I published a book of stories *Magpie Tales*. In 1908 a book of poetry was issued in a "Grif" edition. My fourth book was prose, *The Left Bank of the Volga,* (Shipovnic edition)—a pamphlet on the gentry of the left bank of the Volga. With this book I firmly stepped into literature. *The Lame Baron, Odd People,* were the novels of the same *Left Bank of the Volga* cycle. They were built on tales gathered on the Volga, my birth place, where I passed my childhood.

But the *Left Bank of the Volga* material appeared to be exhausted. Then I came to a crossway. It was the saddest period of my literary work. I possessed neither word nor style... I lived in the narrow environment of the modernists, in a decadent circle of writers. I did not see life, I could not reflect the epoch. The only man who stood out from my surroundings was Blok.

The years of 1912-14 were the years of the crossway. The Imperialist war produced a new arena for my creative work. I was a military correspondent of the *Russkie Viedomosti (Russian News)*. My news articles were bad, but on the other hand, on the front I saw the tragedy of life, the tragedy of people. I got out of the enchanted circle and saw all the historical processes (truth that I could not as yet gage at that time). In the years of war for the first time I wrote plays. *(Swallow-tail, The Evil Spirit,* and others).

The revolution of 1917 found me in this transition period. The first part of the trilogy of *Walking Thru Torments, Sisters,* written by me in 1919, in reality begins the new stage of my creative work. This is the beginning of understanding and artistic inculcation into the epoch. The epoch can be understood through reason, logic and feeling. But an artist must understand the epoch in the finding of artistic images. And my way from *Sisters* to *Peter the First*—is the way of artistic inculcation in our epoch. A dialectical inculcation. I understand the epoch in its motion but not as a motionless fragment of time. And, as one of the critics, remarked correctly I think *Peter the First* is an approach to the epoch from its back door.

Now I am finishing the second book of *Peter The First.* Enriched by the vast experience

of work on the historical novel, I shall begin the third concluding part of *Walking Thru Torments,* which will reflect the year 1919-1920. I was already announced in the press that I shall work on a play about a Bolshevik Commune called *O.G.P.U.*

If the revolution had not taken place, at best the lot of Potapenko would have awaited me: dull, colorless work of the pre-revolutionary average writer. The October Revolution gave me, as an artist, all. My creative work for ten years before October consisted of four volumes or prose; in the past fifteen years I have written eleven volumes—the most significant of my works.

Until 1917 I did not know for whom I wrote. (By the way, the annual circulation of my books was, at the best, 3000 copies.). Now I feel a reader alive, whom I need, who enriches me, who needs me. Twenty-five years ago I came to literature as to a pleasant pursuit, as to some kind of amusement. Now I clearly see in literature a powerful weapon for the fight of the proletariat for a world culture, and as much as I can, I am giving my strength to this fight. This consciousness living in me is a powerful lever for my creative work. I remember how in the first ten years of my literary work I found the theme for my novel and story with difficulty. Now I am musing on how short a time remains to live, and how little strength in one life to cope with the remarkable tempos of our great epoch.

CHRONICLE

RESULTS OF THE FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN

Industry

Out of an agrarian country the USSR has become a highly industrial one. Its industrial output has grown from 48 per cent in the beginning of the Five Year Plan (1928) to 70 per cent by the end of the fourth year of the Five Year Plan (1932).

The industrial output of the USSR at the end of 1932 compared to the pre-war level has grown to 384 per cent and compared with the level of 1928, to 219 per cent.

In 1932 the USSR has taken:

In the building of combines, First place in the world; In agricultural machinery First place in the world; In tractor building, First place in the world; Machine-building in general, First place in Europe and second place in the world; Cast Iron, First Place in Europe and second place in the world; In electric energy, Third place in the world; In the production of oil, First place in Europe and second place in the world; In peat production, First place in the world; In production of coal, Fourth place in the world; In chemistry, Fourth place in the world.

Agriculture

At the present time collective farms embrace more than 60 per cent of all peasant farms comprising over 70 per cent of the entire area under cultivation. Instead of millions of petty individual farmsteads we now have 21 [illegible] lective farms and 5,000 state farms. We have laid a strong industrial foundation to our agriculture.. In 1928 we only had 26,700 tractors most of which had to be imported for valuta; while now we have about 150,000 tractors. The production of agricultural implements in 1932 has grown three and one-half times in comparison to 1928. The sown area for this period has increased by 21 million hectares, and in the cultivation of industrial crops it has grown by 75 per cent. Investment in agriculture for the four years of the Five Year Plan amounted to 9.4 billion rubles. In 1928 there was only one machine-tractor station, only one! And in 1932 their number has reached 2,500.

If before the Five Year Plan the state could receive only from 500 to 600 million poods of bread, now it is able to get as much as 1,200 to 1,400 poods.

The standard of Living of the Working Class

The number of employed workers has grown from 11.2 million in 1928 to 22.3 million in 1932, or just double.

The total sum of wages paid has grown from 8 billion 152 million rubles in 1928 to 30 billion 321 million rubles in 1932, that is, almost four times. The average annual earnings of a worker have risen from 703 rubles in 1928 to 1,356 rubles in 1932. In addition to this social insurance as well as other services rendered to the workers which constitutes an essential part of the material and cultural budget of the working class, has risen from 1.1 billion rubles in 1928 to 4.3 billion, in 1932, that is, four times.

Housing space in towns and country during the four years of the Five Year Plan has grown by 26,700 sq. meters — almost three and one-half times more than during the preceding five year period between 1924 and 1928.

In 1928 public feeding served only 550,000 people; in 1931—11.3 million people, and in 1932 — 14 million, that is, 70 per cent of the toiling population. The number of children receiving hot breakfasts in school is 3,767,000.

Care of Public Health

In 1932, 2.1 million workers have been to the houses of rest, sanatoriums and various health resorts against the 1.3 million in 1931.

In the tsarist Russia of 1913 there were 120,000 hospital beds, in 1927 in the USSR the number has grown to 180,000, and now there are 300,000. During the first Five Year Plan the number of hospital beds has been increased by 120,000 in four years, that is, the number of beds that was had during the entire reign of the tsarist regime.

As compared with 1913 the number of doctors has grown threefold.

Medical Stations in the Country:

In 1913 — 2,741
In 1927 — 5,027
In 1932 — 8,796

Number of medical stations in the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics and 13 National Regions:

In 1930 — 1,000
In 1932 — 2,581

Communication

The number of periodicals mailed in 1913 was 358,000 and 1931 — over 5 million.

The number of broadcasting and radio-telegraph stations in 1925 was 47, in 1931 — 145.

Public Education

Education in the Soviet Union is carried on in 70 different languages. Seventy-two nationalities of the Union have their own alphabet.

a. Pre-school education:

In 1920 — 1921, 245,000 children attended kindergartens, and 453,000 during the first year of the Five Year Plan, but by the end of first Five Year Plan there were over 9,800,000 future-builders of a classless society attending kindergartens.

Before the Revolution the working masses of the Ukraine had no idea of what a kindergarten was. At the present time, 1,330,000 children attend kindergartens.

In Magnitogorsk 6,300 children attend kindergarten.

By the end of the First Five-Year Plan it was planned to create 60 creches (nurseries) for each thousand women in the industrial districts. But even at the beginning of 1932 there were 67 creches for each thousand women, and at the present time, 120.

b. Primary education.

By the End of the First Five-Year Plan primary education has been introduced throughout the Soviet Union.

The number of students in the primary schools in the USSR has increased from 10 million in 1928 to 19 in 1932.

In the pre-revolutionary Tartar Republic there were 80 primary schools, out of which number 35 were Tartar. Now there are 3,206 schools (1,700 Tartar), embracing all children of school age.

Primary education has now become compulsory in the Tartar Republic.

White Russia was the first republic to inaugurate compulsory education. In 1932, 97.9 per cent of all the children of the republic attended school.

Before the Revolution 13,000 children attended school in Kazakstan, in 1931 — 528,000 children.

In Karelia by the end of the first year in the Five Year Plan 7,947 children attended school, in 1932 — 16,838.

In the Crimea out of the 1,024 schools, 300 schools are for the national minorities: Jewish, German, Bulgarian, Greek and Armenian. In 1932 100 per cent Ukrainians, 97 per cent Georgians, 96 per cent Turks, 95 per cent Tiurks, 74 per cent Kirghiz and 64 per cent Tadjiks were stuying in their national languages.

By the end of the Frist Five Year Plan there were more than 300 schools in the tundras and the taigas.

In the Chukotsk Region alone there are now 45 stationary schools, 12 schools which move form place to place, 21 boarding schools, 8 National houses, one school for peasant youth, 15 portable moving picture apparatus.

Middle School

The number of students in middle schools has risen from 1,600,000 in 1928 to 4,350,000 in 1932 (almost threefold). The number of students in Technicums and Factory schools has grown from 164,000 in 1928 to 1,437,000 in 1932 (fivefold).

White Russia has achieved a brilliant success in its primary education. She has fulfilled the Five Year Plan by 233 per cent.

Cinema and the Radio as an aid to the school

In 1932, 38 broadcasting stations had special children's sections.

There were 6,000 schools with radios in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics in 1932; 15,000 in the USSR. The number of children correspondents in 1932 was 1,000.

The number of schools with radios in the various National Regions and Autonomous republics:

Chuvash — 65, Karelian — 75, Bashkir — 212, Buryat-Mongolian — 41.

The number of schools with illustrated slides in the USSR: in 1930 — 585, in 1932 — 2,330.

Higher Schools

The number of students in the national Teacher's Training Colleges in 1932 comprised 30 per cent of all the students attending Teachers' Training Schools.

In 1928 in the USSR there were 18 Teacher's Training Schools with 16,097 students; in 1932 there were 62 Schools with 40,398 students.

The average salary of the teacher has grown threefold during the four years of the Five Year Plan.

The number of students in the higher educational institutions has grown from 166,000 in 1928 to 500,000 in 1932, that is, trebled. There are about 17 per cent of women in the higher technical educational institutions, and 69 in medical schools.

In the Transcaucasian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics in 1928 there were 11 universities and nine factory schools; in 1931 there were 32 universities and 34 factory schools.

One Communist Academy and one Teachers' Training School have been opened in Karelia.

In Magnitogorsk there are four universities, one Communist Academy, and one factory school.

In the Tartar Republics there are 31 university students for each 10,000 people, while in Germany there are only 14 students for the same number of people.

The number of highly trained specialists in the USSR during the First Five Year Plan increased threefold — that is, from 116,000 to 338,000 specialists.

Before the revolution there was not a single research institute in the Ukraine, whereas now there are 1,058.

The Elimination of Illiteracy

About two-thirds of the entire population of the former Russian empire was illiterate. In the land of Soviets there is now a 97 per cent literacy.

Over 58.5 million people were taught how to read and write during the four years of the Five Year Plan.

For the last three years over three million people were taught in the Western Siberian Region. The percentage of literacy at the end of last year was 88 per cent. More than 100,000 workers, collective farmers and students are now carrying on work in eliminating illiteracy.

In the former Kazan district there was a 90 per cent illiteracy among the Tartars and 85 per cent among the Russians. Now 92 per cent of the entire Tartar population is literate.

The Ukraine is a country of 100 per cent literacy.

At the 10th anniversary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, illiteracy among 220,000 Turki women in Azerbaidjan was eliminated. They mastered the new Latin alphabet. In the last elections of the Azerbaidjan village Soviets 8,577 women were elected.

Thirteen national republics and regions reached a 100 per cent literacy in 1932: Chuvash, Bashkir, Karelian, Crimean, the German Republic in the Middle Volga, the Komi Region, the Marrisk Region (which was 100 per cent illiterate), the Odmutsk, the Mordovian, Adygei (which before the revolution had only six per cent literacy), Otroti, Chechnia, Kabardin-Balkarian.

In all branches of popular education (from political education by various enterprises, to courses in raising the qualification of workers in scientific institutes and various study circles) there are now 80,000,000 students in the USSR.

Clubs, Theaters, Cinema

There were 256 theaters in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics in 1932; out of which there were 11 opera houses, 15 musical comedy halls, 218 dramatic theaters. The number of actors in the USSR in 1932 reached 40,000.

During the period of two years from 1929 to 1931 the number of workers' clubs in the USSR has grown from 3,902 to 7,922.

In the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics alone over 817 million people attended the cinema and over 70 millions attended the theater and music halls.

In 1928 there were 9,759 cinema presentations; in 1932 — 27,510.

For each one hundred collective farms there are from 125 to 175 clubs with libraries and red corners.

In 1928 there were 84 theaters in the Ukraine and now — 107. Out of this 6 are Ukrainian opera houses, 40 dramatic theaters, in which are included 32 Ukrainian theaters; 23 theaters of the working youth and 24 — worker and peasant theaters.

In 1928 in the agricultural sections of the Ukraine there was 4,450 cultural circles and 6,707 reading huts; at the present time collective and individual farmers in the Ukraine make use of 8,868 Houses of the Peasant, 5,456 reading huts and 16,698 red corners.

The construction of 400 cinema-theaters will be completed in 1933. New sound cinemas will be built in Chelyabinsk, Khibinogorsk, Prokopyevsk and Buryat-Mongolia, as well as in other industrial and national minority republics.

New theaters are being opened in the Ural region, in Eastern and Western Siberia, in the North Caucasus, in the Central Black Soil Region and in the Far East.

Two new sound cinema-theaters have been opened in the Northern Region — in Eastern Ustiug and Syktykvare (a district in the Komi region). There are five sound cinema-theaters operating in the Northern region.

Twenty Special Cinema-theaters for Children

There were 16 theaters for children between 1920 and 1928 in the USSR, 66 — in 1932 and 88 by February 1933.

There were 28 marionette theaters in 1932.

Millions of children are attending Children's Theaters.

Over 50 special plays for children have been shown in the Children's theaters. The various subjects of these plays are: school life, pioneer organizations, international education, the participation of children in the building of socialism, plays dealing with the defense of the country, historical plays and classics.

During the period of five years the Moscow Theater for Children has made 10 tours to the various places, and presented 1,535 plays in Moscow, 259 throughout the Union, 668 in the village of the Moscow Province, 171 in pioneer camps. Altogether there were 2,755 plays with 1,378,500 spectators.

In 1928 there were no Art Schools for children; in 1932 there were opened in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics 64 schools out of which 7 are located in the national minority regions.

Five hundred and fifty reading huts and 1,500 red corners were opened during the last year in the collective farms of the Leningrad District. The number of books in village libraries increased two and one-half times.

In 1932 there were opened in Moscow:

325 clubs
17 parks of culture and rest
67 theaters
50 cinemas
83 public libraries with
53 branches for children and
4 libraries for national minorities

Libraries

In 1916 there were 12,00 public libraries.

In 1930—31 there were in the Union over 27,000 public libraries, over 16,000 Red Army libraries, (including travelling libraries), about 80,000 school libraries and more than a 1,000 special scientific libraries. Moreover, the travelling library had over 40,000 distribution centers.

The Work of the Lenin Public Library and the Number of Registered Readers:

1914 — 14,130
1917 — 11,385
1928 — 30,963
1931 — 37,591

Number of Requests:

1914 — 221,000
1928 — 1,112,000

The number of books drawn during 1928 in other parts of the world:

Paris — 380,000; Berlin 500,000; London 500,000; Lenin Public Library in Moscow, 1,112,000.

Number of books in Lenin Public Library:
1925 — 1,150,000
1927 — 3,800,000
1931 — 5,500,000

Museums

There are museums in the following national minority regions: Chuvash, Mordovian, Kalmyk, Buryat-Mongolian, Oirat, Kab-Balski as well as on the new construction sites in Karagand, Magnitogorsk and Bobriki.
In 1932:

RSFSR — 392 city museums and 200 district museums

Ukrainian SSR — 160

BSSR — 30

Uzbek Republic — 15

Georgian Republic — 12

Turkmen Republic — 5

There are altogether 250 museums in the constituent republics, excluding the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics, (RSFSR)

Number of visitors to the museums:

Between 1928 and 1932 50,000,00 people visited the museums in RSFSR; 450,000 visited the Museum of the Revolution in 1932; 460,000 visited Tretyakov Gallery in 1932; 475,000 visited the Leningrad Anti-Religious Museum in 1932; 170 excursions each made up of 25 people and 2,000 individual visitors visited the Gorki exhibit during five months in 1932; 195,000 people visited the Udmurtski National Museum during 1931; 127,000 people visited the Chuvash museum during the period of four years; 86,000 — the Ungush; and 6,000 — the Buryat-Mongolian.

Newspapers:

In 1931, 859 newspapers were published in Russia with a circulation of 2.7 million copies. In 1929 there were 1,260 newspapers in the USSR with a circulation of 20.3 million copies. In 1932 the number of newspapers increased to 6,775 with a circulation of 38.8 million copies.

In the RSFSR newspapers are published in 41 languages. Among them: 7 Ukrainian, 5 BSSR, 8 Transcaucasian, 5 Uzbek, 3 Turkmen.

Publication of books by State Publishers in National Minority Republics and Regions:

Autonomous Region of Komi:
1928 — 100,000 books
1931 — 450,000 „
1932 — 1,100,000 „

White Russian Soviet Socialist Republic:
1928 — 700 titles
1931 — 1,500 „

Armenian SSR:
1921—1927 — 150 titles
1925—1928 — 700 „
1929—1932 — 1,700 „

Buryat-Mongolian ASSR:

In Russian:	In native tongue:
1928 — 0	10 titles
1932 — 20	180 titles

Uzbek SSR:
1928—1929 — 300 titles
1932 — 1,300

Kazak ASSR:
1928 — 50 titles
1931 — 300 „
1932 — 650 „

Georgian ASSR:
1927—1929 — 300 titles
1930—1931 — 600 „
1932 — 1,600 titles

Percentage of national minority books in the total book production:

1913 — 8.2 per cent (out of which theological books made up the greater part)
1927 — 23 per cent
1931 — 38.5 per cent

Number of books per head for the national minority groups in the USSR (Number of copies for four people):

1928 11 ½ copies
1932 — 12 copies

Church literature:

1913 — 1,800 titles
1927 — 100 „
1931 — 0 „

Alphabets have ben written for the following regions:

Utelmenski, Evenski, Urguiski, Napaiski, Nymylanski, Dungarski, Kutski and Manseiski.

Number of books for four in the USSR:

1913 — 3 copies
1922 — 1 copy
1927 — 6 copies
1931 — 21 copies

Growth in the publication of books in the USSR:

1913 — 25,000 titles	100 million copies
1928 — 35,000 titles	260 million copies
1931 — 55,000 titles	840 million copies

Production of books in the USSR compared to that of capitalist countries:

In 1922 the number of books sold in the USSR comprised 16 per cent of books sold in England; In 1927 — 45 per cent of books sold in the United States, France and Germany; in 1932 — 100 per cent of books sold in the above countries.

Production of paper in the USSR:

	Imported	Own production
1913	125,000 tons	87,500 tons
1928	100,000 tons	325,000 tons
1932	— —	675,000 tons

Subject matter of published books:

In 1927 Social sciences	15,000 titles
In 1931 Social sciences	25,000 titles
In 1927 belles lettres	10,000 titles
In 1931 belles lettres	10,000 titles

In 1927 applied and theoretical sciences — 7,500 copies In 1931 — 20,000 copies.

Subject matter of children's books:

In 1928 — 70 per cent fiction; 10 per cent technical books; 5 per cent on social construction In 1931 — 35 per cent, 25 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively.

Participation of children in the Communist movement was 15 per cent in 1928 and 20 per cent in 1931.

A collective farm publishing house was opened July 2, 1932. Consultations are now being granted to aspiring authors.

RECENT SOVIET LITERATURE

Soviet literature has grown before our very eyes into the most stimulating literature in the world. It has what to live for, fight, be agitated, and work for. It is charged with the spirit of socialist construction.

The cultural demands of the working class in the USSR are so tremendous and the desire of Soviet writers to serve the cause of this class is so great that both are unprecedented in the history of the world's literature.

The recent decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party having reformed the writers as a cultural regiment has also helped

Revolutionary writers from various countries at a recent conference of soviet writers: (left to right) Antal Hidas, Sandor Gergel (Hungary).Louis Aragon (France), V. Kirshon (USSR), Bela Illes (Hungary)

At a soviet writers conference: (From left to right): Subotsky, Gronsky, Kirpotin, Ivanov, Ibragimov (Azerbaijan) Euli (Georgia)

and continues to help each writer to reshape himself, not excluding the older writers that had grown up under conditions of bourgeois culture. Hence, every writer sets new requirements both upon himself and upon his art.

Unquestionably, all the problems of the cultural revolution, in the words of Andrey Biely, who was once a symbolist of the school of Block and Balmont, "strongly enthuse" the writer as "there is a consciousness that my machine has been socialized by the State, and since that is so, how can I help but fight for it to be in good condition." (From the speech of A. Biely before the enlarged committee of the Union of Soviet Writers.)

Is it not due to this consciousness that we have the recent increase in new works of art about which it is possible and worth while to talk? Is not this the reason that people of the most varied temperament and style, methods and systems, with increasing merit, endeavor to cover Soviet, historical, and International subjects?

Only the past two to three months saw the appearance of all the following books: L. Leonov, *Skutarevsky;* V. Kataev, *Time Ahead;* M. Sholokhov, *Broken Virgin Soil;* Artem Vesely, *Russia, Washed in Blood;* A. Novikov-Priboy, *Zusima;* A. Biely, *Masks;* B. Pilnyak, *O.K.;* P. Pavlenko, *Barricades;* V. Lidin, *Grave of the Unknown Soldier;* L. Kassil, *Sovambranya;* B. Pasternak, *Second Birth;* E. Bagritzky, *Last Night;* and others.

Completed and running serially in the magazines are F. Gladkov's *Energy;* E. Sosulia, *Ownership;* L. Nikulin, *Time, Space, Motion;* O. Forsh, *Jacobin Leaven;* M. Kozakov, *Time Plus Time;* A. Vinogradov, *Black Consul;* I. Selvinsky, *Pao-Pao;* B. Lapin, *Exploit.*

A. Tolstoy, to whom, "as an artist, the October revolution gave everything" to use his own words, is completing the second volume of his *Peter I*; A. Fadeyev is completing the third volume of his *Last of the Udege.*

All these appear on the bookmarket in large editions and are immediately sold out: approximately in a period of from three days to two months — a thing unheard of in Europe or America.

We shall stop first in this survey on the works connected with the Five Year Plan, industrialization, collective farming, the socialist rebirth of man and his new attitude to labor. And we shall touch only upon those books which have already called out responses, debate, storms of opinion and general discussion.

To this category belongs primarily L. Leonov's novel *Skutarevsky,* a doubtful work, powerful in its way, interesting, but hardly one of the best works of this writer. In any event the wave of praise when the novel first appeared serially in the magazine *Novy Mir* receded to give place to dissatisfaction of the critics as soon as it was completed and published in book form.

Skutarevsky is a novel about a very great scientist, of the order of Metchnikoff or Paskal, who placed his tremendous fund of knowledge and exceptional scientific gifts at the service of the Soviet government. A scientist whom Lenin consulted and respected. And this man, completely and long ago Soviet minded, under the influence of difficulties, mostly of a purely scientific nature, begins to doubt the correctness of the course followed by himself and his science.

His doubts are complicated by a belated love affair, collissions with his son, and other episodes, however the figure of Skutarevsky predominates.

The *Literary Gazette* devoted almost its entire issue of Dec. 17, 1932 to Leonov's novel. It

Tairov, of the Kamerny Theater, one of the best known soviet directors

must be said that the author found defenders without reservations except I. Nusinov, who endeavored to show that Leonov's course from Likharev (the vulgar individualist) to Skutarevsky was in a positive direction.

I. Anisimov thinks that in *Skutarevsky* tremendous problems are touched of the rebuilding of the technical intelligenzia, its going over to the proletarian side and taking part in socialist construction. Problems that give promise of broad, clear, and pathetic perspectives to artistic production. A wonderful road opened up before the author of *Skutarevsky* dictated by reality itself. However, he did not take this road. His hero resembles much more the quaint, tumble haired, and dark professors of old Moscow, so mercilessly drawn by A. Biely in his reminiscences, than the scientist that is building socialism.

He gives up almost at the first difficulties and his tremendous scientific brain immediately stoops its head before useful but fairly trivial practice not at all dialectically contrasted to theory. On the other hand, according to I. Anisimov, "Skutarevsky's pasion for research should have been raised on a shield — it is a noble passion, useful to socialism."

Another critic, G. Munblit, also finds that "according to Leonov, Skutarevsky's way is thorny and labyrinthine. Skutarevsky is unhappy in spite of the fact that there are no really worth while reasons for it. On the one side we have a specialist, a master mind in his field, that knows his own worth, a conscious builder of socialism, a worthy citizen of the land of the Soviets, on the other side — a shaky intellectual *with no place in life.*"

What is the reason for Leonov's failure?

"The reason is that Leonov has not thought through his theme — has not developed it — but only mentioned it. There is much that is false in the novel. False people and things, false human inclinations. False in it are the science and revolution, fathers and sons, art and socialism. False also the human relations." (G. Munblit.)

"Leonov has written a novel of sombre coloring, with a crushed perspective, a novel which lacks air and space." (I. Anisimov).

From the newspapers the discussions of Leonov's novel got over to the auditoriums, without however, adding any more favorable comment on *Skutarevsky.*

The last attempt to defend *Skutarevsky* was in *The Literary Gazette* of Feb. 5th by A. Selivanovsky.

"The idea of the novel is that the final transition of the 'fellow-travellers' of the revolution to the proletarian side is accompanied by special inner difficulties. And although Skutarevsky is not a 'fellow traveller but a man in full accord with Soviet policies throughout the entire period since the revolution, he only now is beginning to come over from cooperation to complete identification with the army of builders of socialism. This transition cannot take place without the shattering of many illusions, overcoming of psychological habits, habits of life. This is the idea of the novel."

These reflections are interesting but do not explain why Leonov did not portray the precise, volitional scientific man typical of Soviet Russia today, like Fersman, Vovilov, Joffe.

As distinguished from Leonov's novel, *Time Ahead* by V. Kataev, taking for its title the energetic line from Mayakovsky, is considered by everyone a success.

In The *Literary Gazette* (no. 47, 1932) A. Fadeyev has already succeeded in defending this novel from the carpings of V. Shklovsky and called it " revolutionary and talented work," while as matter of fact Shklovsky's criticism was really harmless.

According to all reviews the novel really justifies its name, it compels Time to run ahead. Like Griboyedov, who in his *Woe to the Clever* showed the land owners Moscow in one Moscow day, Kataev takes a period of twenty-four hours for the action.

"A powerfully constructed novel, in which Time continually intersects the action as the track and trains intersect a construction job." (V. Shklovsky in the *Literary Gazette no. 37, 1932.)*

The action takes place in Magnitostroi. To Kataev the process of production means men — and men means classes.

From this follow a host of most expressive characters, individualizing various social groups that take part in the construction job. Particularly interesting is the treatment of the character of the positive hero — the communist engineer Margulies, stressing his unusual endurance, furious energy, talent, modesty. The anthitesis of Margulies is the engineer Nalbandov. To the latter the most important things are — "I" — "my prestige." The social and the personal problems of both Margulies and Nalbandov are posed and solved. The impetuous rush of the country always ahead, a motion running ahead of Time is the essence of the novel, its fundamental idea." (B. Brainin, *Literary Gazette No. 55, 1932)*

The culminating point of the novel is reached at the concrete mixer where all the brigades compete and to which, as to a compositional center, all lines of the novel concentrate.

"In this respect the leading link of the novel — the picture of the eight-hour heroic attack of the Istchenko brigade which made the American concrete mixer work with Bolshevist tempo — is especially interesting." (I. Anisimov, *Literary Gazette* No. 6, 1933)

What is mainly counted against Kataev, is the overdoing of the "record driving" of the contestants. In the words of I. Anisimov, "Socialist competition is thus turned into something like a thrilling, captivating sport." The novel has too much of the "Enthusiasm of quantity while the enthusiasm of quality is neglected."

However, in spite of its faults, as the critic further summarizes, "Kataev's novel is an excellent example of how the actuality of socialist construction raises the artist, opens up before him new and wider horizons, and removing his previous limitations rebuilds and changes the artist. *Time Ahead* is not only a novel of socialist reconstruction of the world, but also of the creative reconstruction of the artist."

The next important literary event is M. Sholokhov's novel *Broken Virgin Soil* published by Federation in two editions at once, of which one is a popular edition of 50,000 copies. Karl Radek in *Izvestia* of Jan. 17, 1933 characterizes the novel as a "great victory of Soviet literature."

"The birth of the collective farms and the struggle to strengthen them," writes Radek, "are shown by Sholokhov not abstractly but with a richness of individual coloring, individual traits and — what is especially important in an artistic sense — he uncovers all tendencies for moving ahead as well as those forces which hamper development. If one ponders over the aggregation of pauper types presented by Sholokhov, they can be considered an illustration for the prevalent discussions about collective farms and should serve as a warning against uncritical idealization of our best village workers."

Radek holds Sholokhov "in greatest honor for having painted a picture so true and so sober as to answer to the above remarks." The author understood the road taken by the historical process — and this is his great merit.

This novel full of fresh life and well executed characterizations is compared by the critic S. Steinman to Dovzhenko's film *Earth (Literary Gazette* No. 3, 1933.)

"Soviet art knows few works so saturated with this wonderful feeling of life in Dovzhenko's film. There is something in common between Dovzhenko and Sholokhov."

The difference is — "Dovzhenko misses occasionally the social human behind his sunflowers, or reduces him to those sunflowers placing the sign of equality between their feelings of vital existence. Sholokhov, however, notwithstanding his closeness to Dovzhenko, attempts to explain the subjective sensations of his heroes on the basis of their social environment."

Sholokhov's novel is a social novel and is an introduction (the novel will have a sequel) to the later acts of the great historical struggle.

F. Gladkov's novel *Energy* is only now being concluded serially in the magazine *Novy Mir,* but already there is much talk about it. Some blame Gladkov for the highly-declamational base of the novel, for the superfluity of metaphors. (These are used to the extent that one has the impression not of metaphor for defining, but of definition for the metaphor.) Others consider this basis fairly tolerable considering the tremendous ideological saturation of the novel. Among the

Bill-Belotzerkovsky, a soviet playwright

latter is, for instance, such a tried writer as A. Biely on whom the novel, in his own words, has produced an exceptional impression.

Historical works in Soviet literature are really contemporary works inasmuch as the point of view calls for a new valuation of historical events. In this sense the recently published first volume of A. Novikov-Priboy's *Zusima* is a contemporary book.

S. Dinamov correctly says in the *Literary Gazette* (No. 55, 1932), "Is this an historical novel? Of course! But it is a live, throbbing and graphic history, told by a contemporary artist who adds nothing, changes nothing, but gives it a truthful illumination."

Zusima is the shameful history of a Russian Tsarism, which frightened shot peaceful fishermen but could not combat a Japanese fleet. This is the story told by Novikov-Priboy, a Soviet writer raised on the realism of the *Znanye* publications and direct participant of the events in the capacity of a sailor on the squadron sent to its death —

"He tells the story of *Zusima* — and at the same time the story of how people freed themselves from the old blind faith in the Tsar..." (S. Dinamov)

With this novel-chronicle the author succeeded. In the words of Dinamov, "The novel is salted with facts to the point of crystallization, there is no invention, it is historical and strictly documentary, almost like a military report. But, a report juicy and expressive, meaty and imbued with the viewpoint of a proletarian artist."

S. Rosenthal in *Pravda* (December, 1932) gives a similar estimate of the novel, seeing in it the "heat-lightning of Potemkin that put old Russia under fire" and calls the novel "a book of today, an indictment by the class that took power in October and accomplished the social revolution.*Zusima* is a book one reads 'at a gulp' from first to last page. The picturesqueness of the language, the well-knit plot, its social depth, breadth of generalization and imagery assures the novel popularity with the masses."

And as a matter of fact in the navy and in the Red army libraries there is a continuous request for the book. The book has proved popular with the masses.

Then there is the new novel by Andrey Biely, *Masks,* which is the second volume of his epic *Moscow* (there will be four volumes in all) portraying the pre-revolutionary decay of Russian society. Chronologically the novel is placed in the fall and winter of 1916 and is in some measure a roll call of reminiscences of Moscow professors and writers.

The name of Biely is often mentioned lately in connection with his series of lectures on Gogol, a brilliant series full of attractive depth and erudition. Particularly interesting is his attempt, in analyzing *Dead Souls* to trace in Chichikov the traits of the nascent bourgeoisie, of the promoter and speculator, breaking through the deadwood of the rotting world of feudal landowners.

An interesting and vital book about children for grownups is *Shvambrania* written by the young writer L. Kassil touching on one hand the literature of youth (he has an excellent story of the "Conduit" gymnasium of Tsarist times) and on the other, satire. And it will not be exaggerating to say that his satirical writing is on a par with that of I. Ilf and E. Petrov the famous authors of *12 chairs* and *Golden Calf.*

Shvambrania is a description of a presumably fantastic country, actually presenting real provincial happenings in the language of two adolescents.

"What," asks J. Greenwald in the *Literary Gazette* (No. 2, 1933), "was essentially the meaning of this game for the two country boys? The first revolutionary protest against the injustice of the bourgeois world. They wanted to mix with the people that passed in the streets, ran about the yard, in the kitchen, in the doctor's waiting room, but they were not allowed to make 'improper acquaintances.' "

The value of the story of the nonexistent Shvambrania is the "slightly impudent" (as the author himself confesses) but "truthful story of the uninvented, actual revolution."

V. Katanian also comes to this conclusion in his review of *Shvambrania* in *Vetchernaya Moskva (Evening Moscow)* of Jan. 23, 1933: "Kassil's book is a successful hybrid of the memoir and adventure story. It is at once a serious *Childhood and Adolescence* and the impudent Adventures of *Tom Sawyer.* It is a document of our era — a true story of provincial Pokrovsk and a clever and talented book about children and the revolution."

Month by month Soviet literature on international themes is continually increasing. From time to time essays appear but mostly novels are published on historical and contemporary international subjects.

A distinguished book on a contemporary theme is B. Pilnyak's book on America, *O. K.* where actual observations on that bourgeois republic are conveyed in the usual artistic manner of the writer.

The book is only just off the press, which explains the lack of comment. We will only mention the article by S. Steinman in *Vetchernaya Moskva* (No. 270, 1932) in which the critic pays high tribute to the author:

"Pilnyak saw the true nature of American individualism. Such is Pilnyak author of — *O.K.* discovering for the old Pilnyak a new measure — America! — of human relations, that taught him the simple rules of the social struggle.

Pilnyak's new book bears certain proof that he is determined to alter his past stand, and

what he now writes is already a definite turn to Soviet literature without any reservations."

A powerful impression is produced by V. Lidin's new story *Grave of the Unknown Soldier* showing capitalist France in the period of crisis, alarmed and voiceless in depression.

The book makes interesting reading, as it is, to quote L. Subotsky, that of "a realist artist who saw through the pompous legend of exploits and glory to see the dirty 'secret' in which war is born! The Soviet reader who has read the *Grave of the Unknown Soldier* will be much enriched in knowledge of this vicious and horrible enemy."

For Lidin, author of *North* in rhytmical, imitative prose and *Seekers with* its heightened romanticism, *Grave of the Unknown Soldier* represents growth and achievement.

"*Grave of the Unknown Soldier* is a useful and necessary book in our times when beyond the borders of our country busy building socialism, a severe capitalist crisis rages and under cover of the smoke screen of disarmament chatter new wars are being hatched." (L. Subotsky)

A great flood of comment was called out by the short novel *Exploit* by B. Lapin. It is a book taking the "mysterious" veil off the "puzzling" (as the world bourgeoisie thinks) East. It is a story about Japan and its governing class.

The story is about an aviator, captain Aratoki, who by a series of circumstances and lucky accidents became a national hero just when he expected most unfavorable results of his carelessness and even cowardice.

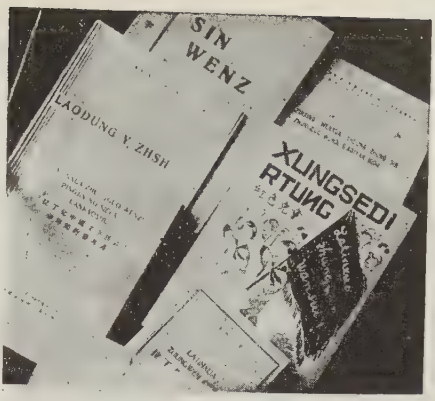
At a literary evening in honor of Lapin, L. Nikulin analyzing the story found that "the author succeeded in putting across the idea of the story — the uncovering of the sham hero of Japanese militarism."

At this evening also, N. Asseyev said, "Lapin's new work is of a high social temperature." However L. Subotsky considered that Captain Aratoki "is not characteristic for Japanese militarism thirsting for new conquest and victories."

In a few days the debate was carried over to the *Literary Gazette* (No. 55, 1932) where V. Vishnevsky and the author himself pitched in.

Vishnevsky wrote: "I consider that the primitive, amounting to stubborn and perhaps well intentioned, desire to 'expose' the enemy by means of a qualitative degradation is the path of least resistance. . . . I think Lapin fell a victim to inertia. He did not risk being daring — break through the inertia and tell the truth about the enemy. . . . One would think that here, tomorrow, all officers of the Imperialist army will turn out miserable cowards."

The author answers: "The aviator Aratoki, character in my story is really no hero. . . . However, you do not think I hope, that every officer of the Japanese army must necessarily be a hero, or that every book about the Japanese army must center attention upon a hero. What I wanted was to show the hidden machinery for organizing public opinion, by means of which the ruling caste has assured the world of the special qualities of the 'Japanese race' and partially, it seems, hypnotized even you. It is bad to 'degrade' another country but neither should it be fetished."



Chinese books in the new Latin alphabet shown at a Leningrad book exhibit

Later *Exploit* was discussed in Leningrad and N. Tikhonov gave a keen characterization of Lapin.

"B. Lapin picked himself for a fellow traveller Merrimee. Both are linguists, both travellers, both mystifiers. Merrimee somehow said: I shall write a tory about Spain and then go to Spain and see. Lapin can say the same of his *Pamir* and *Exploit*."

The discussion still rages. One thing however, is clear, this short novel is a big thing.

"In it his previous contradictions have been overcome and the creative force of the young writer has sounded fully. The new story when considered alongside his other work proves a step into a new world." (M. Zeitlin, *Literary Gazette* No. 46, 1932)

A. Fadeyev writes in *Pravda* (Dec., 1932): "It is no accident that a work giving in artistic characters the true sense of the struggles of the communards of Paris could appear, only in our country, a country that has realized the basic ideas of the Paris Commune on an immeasurably higher plane."

This book is P. Pavlenko's *Barricades* published by Federation. It is laconic, compact and full of internal energy. A. Fadeyev thus characterizes it:

"From the point of view of old literary cannons, *Barricades* is neither novel, nor story, nor chronicle, nor diary. It is perhaps a literary mosaic, extremely fine but integrated with a single basic idea. Externally it is made up of a parsimonious 'factual' relation of a series of events and episodes, portraits and sketches, frag-

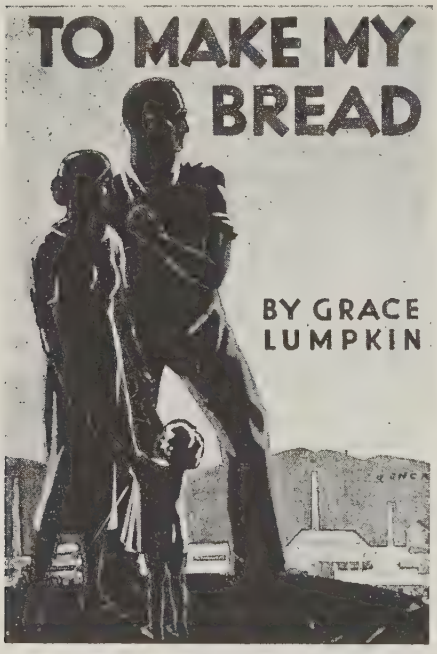
ments from a diary and letters of a fictitious newspaper correspondent Edward Collins; here and there flashes a document, a military report, an ad. The author wants the facts to speak for themselves, and only occassionally his own agitated voice is heard — but only to give the emotional tone."

V. Katanian also regards *Barricades* highly. In *Vetchernaya Moskva* (No. 280, 1932) he writes: "Pavlenko's story is a series of vivid illustrations to a history of the Paris Commune... It is a chronicle of every day during a revolution, of the intervals between battles, between decrees, a chronicle not of events, but of life! The Paris in between events which has fallen out of the field of vision of historians.

Particularly the very valuable experience of the French workers in barricade warfare belongs to the world proletariat and the pages of the story devoted to this experience correctly underline its significance."

Such is the far from complete package of literary works which, one after another, come out in a country where one hundred and fifty nationalities have united forces to realize socialism and where a perfect comradely understanding exists between all of them.

All of these works are animated by a common purpose and a social aim — in this is the great power of Soviet literature. It is a literature which knows its place in the fighting ranks.



Book Jacket of the novel which won the newly established yearly Gorky award given by the Revolutionary Writers Federation of New York

An account of events in the fields of poetry and drama, as well as further developments in literature generally will be given in succeeding issues of our magazine.

P. N.

REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE GROWS

USA

American Revolutionary Theater Organized

"The Theatre Union, a cooperative project of playwrights, actors, theatrical technicians and audience" is being organized in New York city. Its aim is an English speaking permanent revolutionary theater of which there is none in existence in the United States at the present time.

The Theater Union has gathered around itself a group of gifted and experienced playwrights, writers and organizers. On its executive committee are Liston Oak, executive secretary, who is also managing editor of *Soviet Russia Today;* Paul Peters, most gifted revolutionary playwright; Charles R. Walker playwright and author; Manuel Gomez, writer and former secretary of the Anti-Imperialist League; Sylvia Fennigston, formerly of the New Playwrights Theater and later of the Group Theater; Albert Maltz and George Sklar, authors of *Merry-go-round,* the play which drew the fire of the city administration when it was presented in New York last year, and others.

Among the "sponsors" of the Theater Union are prominent figures in the American literary and theatrical world including Sherwood Anderson, Waldo Frank, Dos Passos and Mary Heaton Vorse, novelists; Sidney Howard and Lynn Riggs, playwrights, and the critics Edmund Wilson and Lewis Mumford among others.

"The Theater Union is organized to meet the growing need for a theater producing in a competent professional manner plays of contemporary America, with its violent social conflicts, hunger marches, breadlines, millionaire suicides, revolutionary intellectuals, and its increasingly militant working class."

This organization insists the bourgeois theater is dead and that "significance and vitality can come only from such close contact with the masses as the Theater Union will maintain."

The first play to be presented will be *The Bonus March* written by Paul Peters and Charles R. Walker; the second, a new play by the authors of the *Merry-go-round;* the third *Sailors of Catarro* by the German revolutionary playwright Wolf.

The Theater Union can fill a much needed place in the American revolutionary cultural movement. The New Playwrights Theater tried to do this between 1926 and 1928 and failed. The new group should have not only the benefit of the experiences of the New Playwrights Theater, but also of an objective situation in America

which without doubt holds great audiences for them. The associates of the theater are comrades whose experience in the revolutionary movement should prove of great value in the ideological direction of the theater. And there is already within it the talent and the plays which are attuned to the present day needs of the American revolutionary movement.

The organizational steps taken by this theater are only the expression of a need which can be seen in other parts of the country. In its *Bulletin* of January, 1933, the Midwest Workers Cultural Federation also reports:

"The Workers Theater of Chicago has just been organized . . . The membership now includes some thirty experienced actors, playwrights scenic designers and technicians whose aim is to build the first English speaking stationary workers Theater in Chicago, presenting revolutionary drama with the aid of the most effective methods and technique known to the stage. Casting is already under way for the first play, *Precedent,* based on the frame-up of Tom Mooney."

Also "At the Conference on January 22, plans will be discussed for a Workers Theater School to be opened in Chicago late in January, with courses in the History of the Workers Theater, the Agitprop, Theater, Production, Music, etc in the Workers Theater. Single lectures to be followed by round-table discussions and demonstration, are also scheduled. Such a school, continuing over the period of eight or ten weeks, will meet a definite demand for the training of new forces on the dramatic front. Widespread interest has already been expressed and students elected from a number of organizations."

The Maxim Gorky Award, an annual award by the Revolutionary Writers' Federation for the best proletarian novel of the year, was awarded to Grace Lumpkin's novel of Southern mill workers, *To Make My Bread* published by the Macaulay Company. *Call Home the Heart* by Fielding Burke and *1919* by John Dos Passos received honorable mention.

New Book of Revolutionary Verse

The latest booklet of verse issued by the Rebel Poets group in America is the *Unknown Soldier Speaks* by George Jarrboe.

It is dedicated to "William Hushka, Eric Carlson and William Gunn" and the author says: "It took the murder of these three comrades to make me realize the inadequacy of this booklet. I ask the readers indulgence. Bourgeois born and bred, I have been swinging left, and shall proceed further."

This is the modest dedication of a worker poet who has been a soldier, sailor and manual laborer. His verse is a collection of his work that has appeared in the *New Masses, New Student, Rebel Poet* and other publications including the *Rebel Poet Anthologies* of 1919—30 and '31.

Announcement for the Michael Gold—Ernest Boyd debate on literature held in New York

The introduction is by Jack Conroy, secretary of the Rebel Poets.

The poems of varying artistic quality, some of them unusually well done, are devoted mainly to anti-war themes. They are each dedicated to various revolutionary writers including Michael Gold, Romain Rolland, Barbusse and Lunacharsky, as well as to lesser known worker-writers. The booklet ends with the slogan: "Long Live The Third International."

This is another modest but welcome contribution to the growth of American revolutionary literature.

Two debates were held recently in New York City. In the first Joseph Freeman, editor of the *New Masses a*nd author of the recently published book *The Soviet Worker* debated Isaac Don Levine, author of the Anti-Soviet book *Red Smoke* and one of the notorious Berlin and Riga correspondents. The debate was held under the auspices of the John Reed Clubs of the USA. Repeating all his lies about the Soviet Union, Levine finally rushed off the stage without answering questions after a barrage of facts by Joseph Freeman.

The second debate was between Michael Gold author of *Jews Without Money* and Ernest

A great literary evening arranged in Moscow for the Goethe anniversary

Boyd, bourgeois critic and one of the editors of *The American Spectator,* new American literary monthly. The debate was on the subject: "That the Marxian approach to Literature is the Correct and Scientific one." Dr. Henry Seidel Canby of the bourgeois *Saturday Review of Literature* was chairman. This debate, at which a revolutionary writer scored again, was held under the auspices of the Pen and Hammer group of New York.

Two new revolutionary quarterlies are making their first appearance: *The Anvil* replaces the *Rebel Poet,* former monthly. Jack Conroy, whose novel *The Disinherited* has just been accepted by Covici, Friede, is editor. It will devote most attention to the creative work of the younger worker-writers, who have been contributing to the *New Masses, Left* and other revolutionary publications. First issue appears in April and will be reviewed in the following issue of *International Literature.*

Herman Spector and Joseph Vogel, young American revolutionary writers are among the editors of the new *Dynamo, '33* which is also expected to appear during April, 1933. Both publications hold a great deal of promise.

GERMANY

The Rolling Mill by Hans Marchwitza has just been published by the *Universum Beucherei* publishers. The author depicts the life of the poverty stricken workers in the industrial district of Hamborn-Duisberg engaged in a bitter and hopeless struggle for existence. A procession of proletarian, petty bourgeois types and that of the intelligentsia passes before the reader's eyes. The factory looms before the reader as a chamber of torture, an executor and murderer of the workers, their wives and children.

Comrades by Anna Seghers has just come off the press. This book deals with the drab everyday struggle of the Hungarian proletariat, the active participation of the Hungarian workers in the creation of a Hungarian Soviet republic in 1920, its downfall and the subsequent wanderings of the Hungarian exiles carrying on illegal work in all corners of fascist countries.

FRANCE

Romain Rolland, A. Barbusse, L. Vaillant-Couturier, J. K. Block, Paul Nizan and other writers are taking a lively interest in the work of the first workers university in Paris. The aim of the university is to "forge a spiritual weapon to be used by the proletariat in their great struggle to create a new world." (R. Rolland).

R. Rolland, Cachin and Charles Rappoport are among the teachers of the university. Paul Nizan is the instructor of proletarian literature.

SOVIET PLAY ABROAD

ESTHONIA

Roar China is enjoying tremendous success in the Reval theater (Esthonia) where it has been playing since Dec. 1, 1932.

The play has aroused a great deal of comment from the press.

On the eve of the opening of the play, all newspapers ran a brief pre-review giving the contents of the play and describing certain scenic features.

"This play promises to become the greatest event in the theatrical world."

On Dec. 3 a number of reviews appeared in the revolutionary as well as bourgeois papers.

Rakhva Sena writes:

"The author was right in classifying the play a theatrical report'—a play which portrays vividly an existing fact. This is not the usual drama. It is that part of Chinese life which has already been made familiar to us through the daily newspapers. It is startling in its stark realism. The author tried to depict the struggle between two races objectively, but his sympathy was on the side of the backward Chinese and not with their European exploiters.

Lostimec writes on Dec. 4:

"The method of transforming the theater into the cinema again came to the forefront in connection with the staging of the play *Roar China* by a Soviet writer, S. Tretyakov. This first attempt to bring an actual theme to the stage and showing in it the swift tempo of life, is reminiscent of the cinema.

"On the whole the play deserves attention. The theater was filled to capacity. The applause was generous."

ABOUT THE USSR

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Recently two volumes of Russian revolutionary poetry *An Anthology of Soviet Revolutionary Poetry* edited by I. Veilya and *New Russian Poetry* edited by B. Matesiusa appeared; K. Boretski and the "Sphinx" are the publishers respectively.

An Anthology of Soviet Revolutionary Poetry has been compiled with a certain degree of thoroughness.It deals with the various stages of the October Revolution. Especial attention has been paid to proletarian poetry. Poets who are well represented in the anthology are D. Biedny, Rybakovski, Kazin, Aseyev, Bezymenski, and Lugovskoy. The Translations by Veilya, Bartoshka, Pekarika and others are adequate.

The volume collected by Matesiusa *New Russian Poetry* is more broad in its scope, (1910-1930). It lays special emphasis on the so-called "pure" poetry, (symbolism, and futurism).

POLAND

A novel dealing with the USSR is a rare event in Poland. Therefore, the novel by E. M. Gertner *The World of Strong Men,* published by "Biblion," Warsaw, 1933, deserves all the more attention. The book is divided into two parts: the collapse of the old order and the building of a new life. It is written with deep and sincere sympathy toward the Soviet Union. Too much space, however, is given to erotic and banal anecdotes. But, perhaps, it was due only to these that the fascist censorship passed the book. The critics to this day strenuously avoid all mention of the book. But in spite of that, there is a great demand for it.

USA

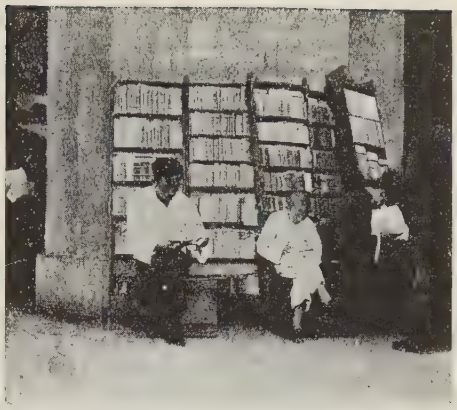
"Under the Soviets the dark races have a fuller opportunity than anywhere in the world" says Langston Hughes, noted American Negro poet and novelist who has just returned to Moscow after a four month trip through Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan where he has been collecting material for a book on the dark races of Soviet Central Asia.

Hughes has traveled in many sections of the world, sometimes as a tourist and at other times as a seaman.

"I know what imperialist exploitation of the dark races means" he said. "I have seen the dark races exploited unmercifully the world over. And now" Hughes added, "I have at last seen a country where the dark peoples are given every opportunity."

Hughes spent about two months in both Tashkent and Ashkabad from where he made trips to all sections of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. He visited factories kolkhozes, sovkhozes, schools, hospitals, libraries and theaters.

"The literature of Central Asia is a vital and growing literature," Hughes says. He has gathered many Uzbek stories and poems some of which he has translated for the American press with the help of one of the leading Uzbek writers. Hughes comes to Moscow with stacks of Uzbek books, gifts of Uzbek writers.



A traveling library of Shanghai where workers can read for the price of one copper

Hughes' own work was already known in Central Asia before his arrival. He found also that Uzbek workers and writers know the work of John Reed, Dreiser, Dos Passos, Sinclair Lewis and others.

While in Central Asia Hughes wrote a number of articles on the Negro in America for the Uzbek and Turkmen press. His collected poems are now being issued in a translation made directly from the English by an Uzbek writer.

His novel *Not Without Laughter* was recently issued in Moscow in Russian. In addition a book of poems translated into Russian is now on the press. He also prepared a series of articles on Central Asia for *Izvestia.* Some of the material now being arranged for his book will appear in *International Literature* in English, German, French and Russian.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BARRICADES

FRANCE

Pierre Benoit, the well-known author of the novels *Atlantida, The Path of Giants,* and other books, on the occasion of his election as member of the French Academy delivered a speech. It was a good example of war propaganda. Enthusiastically he quoted the chauvinist works of the historian Lavisse in which the latter appeals for revenge against the "boches" for 1870. "Lavisse had laways dreamt about war and believed in its coming; his desire for revenge had driven that generation of youth to their graves whose hearts he inspired with his blighting faith," writes Lucienne Poti in *Ecole Emancipeé* on Dec. 18, 1932. But Pierre

Benoit believes that Lavisse has not done enough: "The voice of Lavisse did not ring as loudly as it should have or as loudly as he desired it himself," says Benoit in his speech. He then goes on to exort his audience to be ready to defend France against her enemies: "the enemy is at our gates."

Catering to the royalist elements of his audience in the persons of French academicians, Benoit emphasized repeatedly that "only since the revolution has France been exposed to her external enemies. Before the revolution she had good protection—the king."

Democracy arouses Benoit's indignation. "It has killed much that is precious," he affirms, "and first of all the study of Greek and Latin in the schools."

He next spoke about Portaux Riche, the well known French chauvinist and mediocre poet. Portaux Riche sang in his poetry about the arrow in the Strassburg Cathedral as the symbol of future vengeance. "This proves" says Benoit "that already during the period of a whole century our writers, no matter who they are or what their convictions are, are compelled at certain moments to stop and reflect about the fate of their fatherland. Our life is a battlefield. And a battlefield is no place for dreams." And Benoit once more appeals to his audience to stand ready to defend France.

The response of Henri de Regnée is no less militaristic in its tone. It is full of praise for Foche (Regnee regrets that "the advice of this astute and clairvoyant genius was not heeded"); of Petaine ("who was able to bring discipline into our disorganized troops", and of Joffre ("who withstood the sudden attack with dauntless courage and adamant will";) of Clemenceau and others.

The Crisis and Literature

A Novel on 101 postcards, the original work of the young writer Jean Chretienne, has recently made its appearance. The novel consists of a small collection of postcards. The author himself says: "The purpose of the novel is to concentrate the attention of the reader on its tersely expressed theme, without any stylistic affectations."

"We are tired of books. It is sad but true. We must seek new paths for literature," exclaims one of the Paris critics pathetically.

GERMANY

Proletarian Literature Does Not Exist

A social-democrat journal in Germany published an article by the French socialist, G. Demulin in which he said: "Proletarian literature does not exist. There can be no literature by the proletariat, because art must reflect truth, and the working class remains a working class everywhere—how can truth then be the property of a slave? Art must be 'free', how can we expect free proletarian literature from an enslaved proletariat?" Having thus disposed of the very essence of proletarian art—the powerful weapon in the class struggle of the proletariat, the social-democratic theoretician takes up the question of form.

"We must not confuse worker-correspondence with literature," says Demulin. "Let the worker correspondent write in his crude tongue; colloquial expressions are natural and in place there, but 'faking' the speech of the people in literature, the introduction into literature of the language of the shops and workers districts, will add nothing at all to literature."

Nothing else remains to be added to these few but characteristic expressions of the French socialist which were published in a German socialist magazine without further comments and intended for the sole purpose of completely disarming the proletariat.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

A campaign of calumny against T. F. Vatslavek, leader of the literary section of the "Left-Front" and one of the editors of the journal *Index* has been launched by the National-Socialist newspaper *A-zet* following the publication of an open letter in the *Index* written by the professors of the Masarik University at Bruen. The authors of this letter protest mildly against the catastrophic plight of public education in Czechoslovakia. They point out that the budget for 1933 shows a reduction in the expenditure for public education by 60 per cent as compared with 1932, that the sum apportioned for public libraries barely exceeds the sum that is being spent on horse-breeding farms and that in connection with the increase of students' railroad tickets by 100 per cent, the attendance of schools has dropped to one-half of what it was.

POLAND

The faintest indications of political instability and vacillation among revolutionary writers are always painstakingly sought out and brought to light by the bourgeoisie.

Thus, in connection with the publication of a new volume of poetry, *Care and Song* by Wladislaw Broniewsky, the liberal critic I. H. Miller writes in the central organ of the IPS on Jan. 3, 1933:

"Whereas Stande and Wandurski drawing a clear political line have fully mastered the language and the style of "an agitation leaflet," Broniewski has reached a stage of simplicity in his last volume. The national poet is swayed and dominated by satiation and discontent, by a conflict between reason and emotions; and all this may result in the most unexpected demonstrations."

In other words, Miller expresses the hope that Broniewsky has not yet been completely lost to the bourgeoisie.

The Institute of Social Economy has published a monograph based on the trade union application blanks of Polish writers. This monograph

gives a picture of the material situation of Polish writers. With the exception of a very small group of privileged individuals—those belonging to the fascist camp—the writers are in a most impoverished condition. The Polish book market, which was very meagre even before the war, has become still more limited. The circulation of Polish books is about two to three thousand, that is, less than the most unpopular book in the Soviet Union.

In the union of Polish writers, cliques rule the day. One of the prominent writers writes in his application blank: "Economically it is more important to belong to a group than to a trade union. The groups firmly oppose any manifestations of originality and it is only the most talented and courageous writers who can withstand this unheard-of suppression." The well-known writer, Paul Gulko-Laskowski, who supports the views of the government, writes in the *Literary News* Jan. 1, 1933, as follows: '. . ..The crisis is making itself felt in the most appalling manner. Working from 12 to 15 hours daily, I earn one third of what I used to get two years ago." The plight of those writers who are not protegés of Pilsudski can thus be well imagined.

CHINA

Recently a "Literary Cafe"—a gathering place for Chinese writers—has been opened in Shanghai. The organizers of this enterprise are an anarchist literary group, chiefly composed of students. They hope to make this Cafe the center of literary life in Shanghai for discussions on literature and art.

The writers meet once a week in the Cafe. However, the meetings bear the character of diletanteism and all conversations revolve around the questions of love, beauty and so forth.

Nilo, the newspaper of the group, does not pursue a clear and resolute line.

The Paris Theater, a book written by a well-known writer, has stirred up a lively interest among the Chinese literary circles. The theme (attempts of a young man to understand the psychology of his beloved) and the style (neosensualism) have provoked severe criticism from "left" writers. They condemn the bourgeois character of neo-sensualism for its purely imaginary character which has nothing to do with reality.

Revolutionary Literature Grows

As we go to press, we are adviced that two new American magazines of revolutionary literature are soon coming off the press: *Contact,* a quarterly edited by Norman Macleod; and *Left Front* a quarterly of the John Reed Club of Chicago. Meanwhile we have received two issues of *Storm,* first magazine of revolutionary literature issued in England. All will be noted in coming issues.

The Murder of TAKIJI KOBAYASHI

On February 20, 1933, comrade Takiji Kobayashi, one of the most talented revolutionary writers of Japan was murdered by the Tokyo police. His body was found in police headquarters one hour after his arrest. The cause of his death was given as "heart failure" — the same cause was given for the murder of comrade Iwata, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan, four days after his arrest in October, 1932.

The murder of Kobayashi follows the arrest of more than 100 leading members of the Japanese revolutionary cultural movement since March, 1932 and is part of more than 6,000 arrests of revolutionary workers and intellectuals by the Fascist government of Japan during 1932.

Although Takiji Kobayashi is one of the outstanding Japanese authors he was only 29 years old at the time of his murder. His novel *Crab Fishing Boat* is internationally known, appearing in a number of languages. In a dramatized version it was a tremendous success in one of Tokyo's leading theatres.

An even greater success was scored with a dramatization of his following novel *The Absentee Landlord.*

Despite government suppression 20,000 copies of the novel were sold within six months of publication.

When it was discovered that Kobayashi was the author of the book he was discharged from his work as a bank-clerk at the Hokkaido Colonial Bank in which he had worked since graduating from high school in 1924.

This was in 1930. He then came to Tokyo and three months later was in prison.

His first novel *March 15, 1928,* dealt with the suppression of the Communist Party. It was published in *Senki (The Militant Banner).* As a result of its publication the magazine was suppressed.

Crab Fishing Boat appeared in 1929 and was followed by the novels: *The Supplement to Num-18 of the International Red Aid News, Signs of Storm, Factory Unit, Bound for Hihashi-Kuchian* and *The Organizer.*

Kobayashi was imprisoned for seven months in 1930 for his revolutionary activities and after his release wrote *People of the Transitional Period* which appeared in *International Literature* organ of the Union of Proletarian Writers of Japan of which he was a Central Committee member.

Kobayashi was the son of a tenant farmer. He writes of himself: "When I was four, my family moved to Otaru, one of the largest seaports of Okkaido, as it became impossible to exist any longer in our little village. I lived in Otaru some twenty years. Very often we had no food. I still recall how it took my sister many hours to get her hair washed of lava dust after a day's work in the factory where lava was used for commercial purposes. I also recall my little sister picking coal for the stove, for which we had no money. One of my relatives sent me to a commercial high school and during this time I also worked at a bakery and as an air-pressure pumper for divers. I often dreamed of the day I would be rich. While working as a bank clerk I began to study the works of Marx and Lenin and to take part in the revolutionary movement. No longer did I dream of riches. Now I saw the path clear before me."

With the brutal murder of Takiji Kobayashi, by the fascist government of Japan, not only the Japanese revolutionary cultural movement, but also proletarian literature of the world, has lost one of its most brilliant members.

IN THIS ISSUE

P. Pavlenko — Soviet writer is author of *The Desert. The Barricades,* from which a fragment is printed in this issue is his latest novel, dealing with the Paris Commune.

R. Fraierman — author of children's stories, contributes to this issue a section of his novel *Vasska of the Gilyak Tribe* printed in Moscow.

Harold Heslop —English worker-writer, former miner is author of *The Gate to a Strange Field* and other novels.

Fussao Hayashi — is one of the better known young revolutionary writers of Japan.

V. Stavsky —is author of *Razbeg,* a novel of Kolkhoz life. The dramatized version of this novel presented at the Realistic Theater, was one of the successes of the past season in Moscow.

Langston Hughes — one of the best known American Negro writers is author of the books of verse *Weary Blues* and *Fine Clothes to the Jew,* the novel *Not Without Laughter* and other books of verse and children's stories.

Hugo Gellert — is art editor of the American revolutionary monthly *New Masses,* well known mural painter and political cartoonist.

Panteleimon Romanov — is a Soviet author of many short stories and novels among them the four volume *Russia.*

Marietta Shaginyan — is author of the novel *Hydro-Central, Diaries* and many other books. A Soviet author, Armenian by birth.

M. Lifshitz — one of Soviet Russia's most talented young critics.

Anne Elistratova — young Soviet critic, is secretary of the Anglo-American Commission of the IURW.

Ilya Ehrenburg is author of *Julio Jurenito* and a number of other novels published in America and many other countries as well as in the Soviet Union.

M. Koltsov — is one of Soviet Russia's leading contemporary journalists, author of a number of books of sketches and short stories.

F. Schiller — is a critic and Marxian reasearch worker in the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute.

Editor -in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

C O N T E N T S

N. 3 ISSUED JULY 1933

Editorial Assistant this issue WALT CARMON