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Address all communications to the Editors to Box 850, Moscow, USSR

War *by L. GRIFFEL*

Paul Luknitsky

DYMSKY: Hero of the Pamir

A Story of Recent Struggles on the Border of Afghanistan

This is to be a plain tale. I want to face unarmed the memories rushing down upon me like the wind in the deserted valleys of the Pamirs. I do not want to be strategic and inventive. I only want to get the feel of the spacious breath of the wind. I am going to tell you about Dymsky, because there are a great many legends current in the Pamirs about Dymsky. First of all though, what is the Pamir?

. . . "It is the central point where heaven and earth meet. There is a lake inhabited by a dragon." . . . Ah, but Sun Yung went on his travels long before Hsuen Tsang and his style is distinguished by the greatest economy in words. The learned Chinese, Hsuen Tsang, who returned home in the year 645 after sixteen years of traveling in unknown lands, brought with him six hundred and fifty-seven treatises on the Buddhist law and a quantity of impressions and detailed observations about everything. It was from him that the world first learned of the country—Po-Mi-Lo, which we call Pamir. He had seen this country, he said, on his way eastward from Cambi, when he traveled 700 li through the mountains. The country covered, he said, a thousand li from east to west and a hundred from north to south, lay between two snow-capped mountains, forming the centre of the Tsung-Ling Range. . . . "There is always a gusty wind and snowstorms are frequent summer and winter. Since the ground is hard and frozen, only the poorest vegetation grows there, and very little of that. Grain is never seen. The whole country is a mournful desert, without a trace of human habitation. . . . In the middle of the valley there is a great lake that stretches for three hundred li from east to west and five hundred from north to south. It lies at an extraordinarily high level, in the centre of Yambudvita. From a distance it appears to be a vast ocean, extending further than the eye can reach. Its waters are inhabited by a strange and varied animal life. In the roar of the waves you can hear the noises and cries of the multitude in a great market-place. And in this country birds the height of a chang are to be met with. . ."

A chang is equal to about ten feet.

What are thirteen hundred tardy years for a country like this? The fitful wind still blows, the snowstorms are just as frequent winter and summer. The lake still lies at a level equal to that of the peak of Mont Blanc, but it has now acquired its rightful proportions and two names, Lake Victoria and Zor-Kul. And if you fill in the outlines drawn by Hsuen Tsang, you will find scattered at rare intervals in the broad valleys and creeks the primitive homesteads of the warring Kirghiz tribes, who live there. You will learn that the lake called Zor-Kul—is actually no more than a bullet-hole in the vast desert-space, out of which invisible, but deep and tortuous fissures run, the frontiers of four countries. And although these are great countries and at present inimical to one another, the day will come when the deep fissures dividing them will disappear and there will be but one united country which will have no frontiers. It will have ceased to be a state then and the legend of the Kessek tribe

of Kirghiz will have come true. This legend says that some day a great storm will arise on the lake and the dragons living in it will devour each other. Then the tutek, the rarefied air of the heights, will cease to breed evil desires in the hearts of men and years of quiet calm will pour down benevolently upon the country of Po-Mi-Lo, and never more will tribal feuds defile the pastures of the Pamir. That is what the future holds. Today in the Eastern Pamir there are only Kirghiz tribes and the infrequent outposts of the frontier guards, and countless legends.

I grew accustomed to every kind of legend in the Pamir. The Kirghiz in the yurts along the deserted valleys have a story about everything. Not only the nomads, either, but the people in the trading-stations, the frontier-guards, the doctors. There are those who will tell you of a night about Genghiz-Khan, and the mysteriously lit cave of Rang-Kul, and the riders who descended from the skies on a golden ray, and the highest of all ladders, which is made of frozen corpses and leads to a beetling cliff, where a store of the purest gold is hidden, and the snorting dragons, the weirdest of all creatures that live in the lakes. . . .

The Pamir country is several score years behind the Central Asian Soviet Republics. Stories are the ringing coin with which the traveler pays for the splendid fat plov, for the intoxicating cup of koumiss, for all the delights of nomad hospitality. A few years ago in the Pamir, legends took the place of the cinema, the theatre, a letter from home, a bottle of wine or of eau-de-Cologne,—all the pleasures and luxuries that were beyond the reach of the folk who work in that distant outpost. It is all changed now. The legends are rapidly dying out. Genghiz-Khan has been driven into the background of history and in place of him a film, *The Descendant of Genghiz-Khan* is being shown nightly; and a loud-speaker at Rang-Kul announces that the mysterious light in the cave proved to come from a hole in the rock through which the sky could be seen. The dragons have turned into motorcars that snort along the eastern valleys; the tall staircases proved to be the avalanches of Tanimass, Kashal-ayak, and Garmo Peak, where expeditions go to search for the gold buried in the earth of the Pamir. . . .

I could never understand, though, the legends that arose around Dymsky, a plain Soviet official who lived for six years in the Pamir and who now, like all Leningrad folk, goes to the cooperative store regularly for his supplies and gets his student's stipend every month in the most ordinary way. How were the legends born and why did they never die? When I was in the Pamir in 1930, I sat and listened to the sories of his golden head, of his invisible beard, such as only the Wise Aksakali wear, of his extraordinary fire-arms, of the stones that protected him from evil, of his blue horse that carried him swifter than the wind and lighter than a dream, of his fearless heart, lofty and calm as the shining peak of Mustagata, Father of Icy Mountains. It was not only from the Kirghiz that I heard these tales, but from other Soviet officials who had been his friends.

Well, to cut a long story short, I became very anxious to meet Dymsky. I made up my mind beforehand that I should see a huge fellow, grown wise with the abundance and burden of his years, a muscular giant with a broad, square face and dark beard lying upon his chest like a heavy shield. There was no small number of such giants of that "Partisan" type treading the virgin forests of Siberia. It was probably one of these who had been sent to work in the Pamir.

. . . About 1930 the bassmachi had spread all over the Pamir. The British had been doing a bit of clever work along our frontiers. The robber bands clustered along the border like bunches of grapes, carefully fostered by British agents at Gilgit, Chitral, and the other Indian and Afghan military stations belonging to Great Britain. It was a species of grape that had intoxicated the blood of many a vilayet in Tadjikistan and many a canton in Soviet Kirghizia.

I had only just managed to escape from captivity, and many of my companions had been killed by the bassmachi. I went to the Pamir with a good solid escort, knowing that a lonely traveler was liable to stop a bullet at any moment in any place.

Many people had told me that Dymsky traveled about the Pamir with one or two companions and slept in the Kirghiz yurts. He was organizing the nomad poor for the struggle against the bassmachi. The poor would unite in volunteer brigades, mount their horses and leave their pastures for a while. I could not understand then how it was that Dymsky always contrived to slip through the danger zone, in spite of the traps laid for him and sleep in safety.

Four years have passed since then, but I remember it all as clearly as if was yesterday: the foaming water, pressed down by the stones as I forded the river on my horse. The icy waves splashed the saddle and the horse sniffed cautiously at the water before every new step. On the other side of the river I could see a black yurt. Out of the yurt came three men armed with rifles and dressed in Kirghiz wadded coats. They watched us calmly as we crossed. When my horse reached the shore, snorting and blowing, one of the three came up to me and shook hands, smiling. I dismounted and entered the yurt with the three men. We talked over the news we had brought from all corners of the Pamir. The man who had shaken hands spoke in a quiet but interesting way. He was young, beardless, blue-eyed and rather shy.

"Where are you going now?" I asked him.

"Well, I've a little affair to settle," he said in a weary tone. "We're going after a band of bassmachi. . . . Oh, yes, and by the way. . . ." he livened up suddenly—"do you happen to know what sort of a stone this is? I want to study geology on my travels, and there are a great many of these stones where we are going, the Kirghiz say."

He flung open his coat, fumbled in his pockets and fished out a bit of biotite.

"It's nothing special," I said laughing. "It's only black mica."

"So it's not valuable at all?"

"No you can pick up lots of it about here. Throw it away."

"It seems a pity. I thought it must be valuable—it's such a pretty stone, so black and shiny."

I was looking for a specimen of an "arkhar's" horn at the time and so asked him where the best hunting was to be got.

"What do you want to go hunting for? When you get to Murgab, you'll see whole heaps of these horns in the market. One of them will be mine, we shot some arkhars. Ask any Kirghiz which is Dymsky's pile and pick one out for yourself. Pick the best."

That is how I learned that the man to whom I was speaking was Dymsky. We gave them six cans of food—they had taken no provisions for the journey—and parted the best of friends.

We knocked about the mountains a while after that out at the head of the Alichur valley and pitched our camp there. It was regarded as a dangerous spot. On the way leading from the camp to the end of the valley ran a narrow track to the Kumda Pass, beyond which was the Pamir River that stretched away from Zor-Kul, and formed the frontier of Afghanistan. Here in this spot lived the head of the Khadyrsha tribe of Kirghiz—the old fox, Tshan-Kul, a rich bai.

The Soviet Government came into power in the Pamir in 1920. Tshan-Kul never dreamed that the government would not divide up the Kirghiz into tribes as has always been the case—into Teits, Naimans, Kipchaks and Khadyrshas, but into classes—beys, bais, mullahs, koichi, saanchi and khysmotkori. To him a shepherd—a koichi, a farm laborer—a saanchi and a house servant—a khysmotokor—were simply members of the Khadyrsha tribe of which he was the head. The Shugnantsi would always support him and supply him with bread and work for his farm-laborers, because the Shugnantsi were a poor tribe and he had done them an honor in allowing his own tribe to mix with them and his shepherds to wed the Shugnan girls. He promised his laborer Sho-Kirghiz, the son of a mixed marriage between a Kirghiz and Tadjik-Shugnan girl, that he would give him his own daughter in marriage if Sho-Kirghiz would do as he told him. Tshan-Kul was old and cowardly. He had looked for riches from the government and the title of Soviet Mingbasha. Could a man who was always at war know what the morrow would bring forth? Did not a bullet threaten at every moment to cut off his progress to wealth and power? So it was better that Sho-Kirghiz, who was young and brave and strong, should fight in his place, in the hope of one day receiving the old man's daughter for his wife. Would he ever get her?. . . . An eternity of waiting was more than Sho-Kirghiz could stand, he demanded deeds instead of words and gratification.

It is very hot in Alichur, unbearably hot, for it is the beginning of July. But the wind may rise at midday, and then the snow will fall, and it will be terribly cold. The weather in the Pamirs is very treacherous. And the way of Allah is as incalculable as the snow of July in Alichur. Who would have thought that even Tshan-Kul himself would be unable to circumvent this? His daughter must be given up to Sho-Kirghiz, after all.

If such is the case, however, and if the Soviet Government is so firmly established, there is no point in showing one's anger openly. Better to hide it for a while.

Five years, eight years passed. Tshan-Kul understood that he had miscalculated. The Soviet Government had entrusted nothing to him, had bestowed on him neither riches nor the title of Mingbasha. The Russians who came after the officers were not that sort. They had taken away his cattle and given it to the shepherds. They had not permitted him to trade grain with the Shugnans, and they had not done many other unpleasant and unjust things. Tshan-Kul hated them now.

He still had some power, though. He was the elder of the Khadyrsha tribe and his own folk still hearkened to him and recognized his right to judge them, and honored the Mussulman laws and not those of the godless people. He had still a great many sheep and yaks. There were still the bassmachi, might their days be short in the land, might they perish when he, Tshan-Kul, should die—but not yet, not yet. Tshan-Kul was clever

and when there were more of the bassmachi . . . then, . . . After all, Russians were not the only people who could make rifles: the people who lived beyond the mountains of the Afghans could make them no worse, and they were now the friends of the Mussulman. . . .

In 1930 Tshan-Kul was living by the track leading to Kumda Pass and was, as before, the head of his tribe. In 1928 he had wanted to emigrate to Afghanistan with his people. But not all the Khadyrsha wished to leave Alichur, and others did not like the idea of separation. Then Tshan-Kul took his own family and went to Afghanistan. No one knows what he did there. Everyone knows that there was nothing for him to do in Afghanistan alone, without his tribe, for he was old, cowardly and lazy. Tshan returned and pitched his yurt in Alichur. From that time on he received frequent visits from strangers, who came to him by night and disappeared at daybreak into the mists of the Kumda Pass.

We had pitched our tents at the head of the Alichur Valley, close by the deposits of lead that we had to work. We needed workmen. At Murgab we had been warned against taking on Kirghiz workers: we did not know the Alichur Kirghiz either by sight or by name, so that it would be easy for wandering bassamachi, who often practised that method of attacking expeditions to hire themselves out to us as workers.

We sent riders into Shugnan for workers—local people who were of an easily recognizable type. There had never been a single bassamach among the Shugnantsi. We had a week to wait until the workers should arrive. In order not to waste time, we separated, and leaving three Red soldiers and a worker in Alichur, four of us made our way by a short cut through the Buz-Tere Ravine and Murgab towards the River Pshart, where we were to study the rock formations of the district. In three days' time we learned at Murgab that the bassamachi were plundering caravans on the Pshart, that beyond the river one of the groups of the expedition had been butchered by them, that a British officer disguised as a mullah had come through the Alichur Valley from Afghanistan to visit Tshan-Kul, that the Alichur district was infested by bands of marauders, that one of these, Sho-Kirghiz' band, was hunting for Dymsky and that the price set upon Dymsky's head by the British was ten thousand gold rubles.

"Where is Dymsky now?"

"He and Bogayevsky are together somewhere in the Alichur Valley."

"Who is this Sho-Kirghiz?"

"Don't you know?"

"Well, I know a Sho-Kirghiz who was a chairman of the District Executive Committee at the beginning of the Revolution.."

"That's the man."

"Aha . . . So he can make things rather hot for us in Alichur?"

My companion laughed.

"He'll hardly do anything himself just now. Don't you know he's been taken prisoner and that we've got him under arrest? But his band . . ."

"Who caught him?"

"Dymsky."

I had known nothing about it. We felt anxious now about the men we had left behind in Alichur. We decided to start back to them at daybreak and to do a three days' march in one. It was now evening and I wanted very much to see Sho-Kirghiz. Eventually I did. He was quite a young man with rather thick lips, a fleshy nose, wide-set, narrow but not oblique

eyes, long, tight cheeks like table-spoons and three strongly-marked lines between his brows, which gave his face an obstinate, gloomy expression. He walked with a cautious swinging gait as though treading on a dangerous bog instead of on firm ground. There was no doubt that he was very strong and nimble. He was not at all downcast. When I spoke to him he chuckled and remarked in a light hearted tone that people must be prepared for anything. Just now his luck was bad, he went on, it was the first time he had not been able to outwit the Soviet, but that was nothing, happiness was like the moon, it vanished and then reappeared. He would run away, for certain, yes, everyone could hear him say it if they wanted, he would tell them all he was going to run away and then he would revenge himself on Dymsky and the Soviet Government.

"This is what I'll do—see—" he laughed unpleasantly and drew his thumb sharply down his throat from the chin to the open chest. "I can do it very neatly too. Ay, comrade: I'll do you the same way too, if you like? You're Soviet, too."

And he rocked with laughter, his hands folded on his stomach.

Two months later he was shot as a bandit and counter-revolutionary.

It was impossible to stay on in Alichur for work. There were too many ravines leading straight from Alichur to the Great Pamir of the Afghans. We gathered up our belongings and left for Khorog.

At our first meeting Dymsky had told us of legendary deposits of lapis-lazuli at Shugnan. We had not taken the story very seriously. Now, however, we had time to spare and so we decided to try our luck. A month later we were on the steep slopes of the unexplored mountains of Shugnan. Among the hanging glaciers, on vast, crumbling mountain-sides we found the deposits. We were the first Europeans to set foot there. Now, however, books have been written on these deposits and tons of the blue stones have been carried away.

On our return to Khorog we met Dymsky. The Party-Bureau had ordered him to live in Khorog for awhile and not risk his head for nothing. He was chairman of the Committee of Three organizing the struggle against the bassamachi, but at the moment his place was being taken by someone else.

Sho-Kirghiz' relatives, thirty-four bassamachi in all were scouring the Pamirs for him with British rifles, but in vain.

I stayed with Dymsky in his little room. It was in a terrible disorder: books, films, geological specimens, bits of sugar and rusks, wadded coats and boots rose in piles from the floor, the table, the bed, the window-sill.

The rule was that whoever arrived in Khorog at night, whether he was a member of an expedition, a Soviet official from Murgab or Kala-i-Wamar —it did not matter if he was entirely unknown to Dymsky, the man could not spend the night in the open. He would ride into Dymsky's yard with all his pack-horses, unload them, fumble with the matches awhile, and stumble into Dymsky's room without even disturbing him (for at home he slept like a fish in an aquarium). The stranger would then pick out a felt koshma to spread out under him on the floor, grope about and find a few dry rusks, a tin of meat or fish, wash down his meal with cold tea from the spout of the tea-pot and fall asleep. Next morning, when he awoke he would bump into Dymsky and make his acquaintance.

"Ah, you're so-and-so, are you? Alright. Did you get anything to eat? Were you comfortable?"

"Why didn't you wake me up last night? Didn't like to? There's no sense in being as shy as that."

That is why I came to live with Dymsky. It was like living at a health resort, for Khorog was quiet, as always. There were never any bassamachi in this place, where the sun pours down on the melons and the peaches, where the mulberry-bushes out of sheer idleness scatter their berries on the grass, under the low stone walls, where the oxen go round and round on the beaten-clay floor, trampling out the amber grain from the sheaves of wheat, and the people in the low white houses long for the tractor that is on its way here. As yet it has only gone six hundred kilometers out of Stalinabad and must still make its way under the overhanging rocks along the banks of the Pyandja.

Dymsky proved an excellent story-teller. Those warm, dark nights in Khorog. In the daytime he was dull and listless: He sometimes spoke, too, but he always got muddled up in his wieldy sentences, in an effort to express with his exactitude, the conclusions drawn from the figures he had himself obtained in the various districts. He strolled about Khorog lazily, in his slippers. Whenever he happened to pass a high rock on the banks of the boiling Gunta, he would kick off his slippers, strip off his sack-like jacket and crumpled trousers and drawing himself up taut for a moment dive like an arrow into the icy, roaring waters. There were other people in Khorog who were not afraid of the rapid muddy river, but they were very few.

Dymsky seldom argued with people and never lost his temper. No one had ever seen him the least bit irritated. He was shy and dreamy, and had a great fondness for the songs of the Shugnantsi. He wrote many of them down and translated them. He kept a notebook with descripitions of tribal customs. Once I found on his table a thick wad of writing paper sewn together. It was the manuscript of his book, entitled *Tribes, Tribal Feuds and Tribal Chiefs in Eastern Pamir.* I had never known of it till then. I begged for permission to read it. He gave it reluctantly. Here I found the most detailed information and figures and analysis of the whole economic system of Eastern Pamir, a country that up to now no one had seriously studied. There were sentences in the manuscript that showed evidence of the author's grisly struggle with syntax and grammar, but it was a valuable manuscript. I devoured with an appetite such as I had not felt for years, and begged in the end to be allowed to take it to Leningrad and give it to the Academy Publishing House after having polished it up a little.

It would have been printed, too, if only Dymsky had not taken fright suddenly, and sent me a wireless saying that he did not wish it printed at present, since he intended to re-write it.

Whenever I saw Dymsky he was so quiet and listless that I could not imagine him as anything else, not at least as the person around whom legends had grown up—and this made me furious.

It was as difficult as to imagine a Leningrad room with comfortable furniture, rose colored blinds and quantities of ornaments as the steel walls of an armored car. Or a French loaf as an explosive shell.

There are many things in the villages that are hidden from the ordinary Soviet official. People in the villages still pray and smoke opium and spend their time on scores of trifling ceremonies into which they dislike the curious eyes of strangers to peer.

They demand the proper prices for the sheep, or fowls or bread they sell and if they extend their hospitality they always know the value of the treat and the degree of hospitality is proportionate to the amount spent on it. The women do not like to be stared at either, however innocently, by casual European strangers. From Dymsky nothing was hidden. His visits were a real pleasure and a real honor to them. Everyone invited him and every family offered him its best. The women chatted and joked with him as easily as if the enslaved, veiled women of the East had never existed. And the Tadjik, who caught himself, thinking of his own profit or felt the slightest jealousy or desire to hide anything from Dymsky would have regarded the thought as a deadly insult.

I cannot explain this. I do not know how it came about. But for three years I came into contact with Dymsky constantly and know that it was so. He had enemies, of course. Ruthless enemies. But they were class enemies. If in the course of six years Dymsky never fell into their hands it was only because the Pamir folk kept guard over him often unknown to himself. They followed him on his most perilous adventures, they appeared as if by magic out of the ground itself to warn him of danger. They lay awake while he slept, and listened for hours to the whispering of the wind and the rustling of the grass and the silence of the stones. I did not grasp this all at once. In 1930 I did not even know that such things existed. In 1930 I was just as astonished at the legends about Dymsky as I suppose many people are these days.

Taboos existed among ancient primitive races.

It is my firm conviction that in the Pamir the Soviet Party official, Dymsky, was taboo.

If a conversation or a dispute was going on about some scientific subject Dymsky always brightened up. He used to dream of the day when he would go away to study in the university.

He would ask me endless questions about the universities in Moscow and Leningrad. He had been trying to get away to study for six years, but so far his only trips had been to the mountains. Was there a difficulty at Vancha? Send Dymsky. Was the sowing campaign going badly somewhere? Dymsky must go there. Was the anniversary of the Revolution to be celebrated on the upper reaches of the Bartang? Let Dymsky go and organize it. There was to be a reelection of the village Soviet in Vakhana?

"Listen, Dymsky, couldn't you go up there?"

What, a cattle plague has broken out in Dushangosa? Send Dymsky. . . . Dymsky was what the ambulance and the firebrigade are to the town; these institutions are non-existent in the Pamir.

When I was in Khorog I kept pestering the life out of Dymsky with questions about Sho-Kirghiz. He did not exactly refuse to answer them but gave dry and reluctant replies. One evening however as we lay down to sleep under the open sky, I drew from his own lips the story of how Sho-Kirghiz became a bassamach.

"At one time he was by no means a bad fellow. Later on his behavior grew more and more suspicious, he was evidently dancing to Tshan-Kul's tune. It ended up with his running away to Afghanistan and taking several families with him. He stayed in Afghanistan until 1927. We didn't look upon him as an enemy yet because he hadn't been mixed up with the bassmachi. In June 1927, he wanted to come back, so we let him come and allowed him pasture land. He settled near the Kumda Pass. He was

always looking for a new opening. In 1928 he came to Murgab and announced that he wanted to be made Chairman of the Rural Executive Committee. He was an awfully ambitious fellow. I told him that our Chairmen of the Executive Committees were not appointed like that, but elected by the people, and that while he had not even become a citizen of the Soviet Union, it was no use for him to think about it. I told him all this through the chairman of the village Soviet. Sho-Kirghiz was furious, he bound the chairman hand and foot, threw him across a camel, and made off with him. He made the first raid on our territory, killing several Kirghiz and driving away their cattle. Well, we started after him. Once we gave his band a good lesson, brought back the cattle he had stolen, and shot his best horses in the side. Sho-Kirghiz was wild, and from that time on took to marauding constantly, committing many a bloody deed. He organized his band very well, and provided it with excellent arms. I knew too, that he was a great friend of Tshan-Kul's and that they had met several times on our territory."

"Dymsky, how did you contrive to capture him, the three of you? I was told it was in an open fight? He had over fifty riders with him hadn't he?"

"Whoever told you there were only three of us must have been a liar. There were five of us. And what of it, anyhow? . . . Do you know what?"

"What?"

"I hope you'll excuse me, but I can't keep my eyes open any longer."

He turned over on his side.

"Dymsky. I say, Dymsky."

But Dymsky was fast asleep.

A few days later I started at him again.

"Oh, it's such a tiresome story," he said in a vexed tone. "Alright then, I'll tell you, so's you won't bother me any more. How did it start? Oh, yes . . . that was it . . . A Kirghiz, Tagbash, from Basston Commune—I knew him very well, came to Murgab one day to see me.

" 'Dymsky,' he said to me, 'the thing isn't worth a dog's tail.'

" 'Why, what's up?' I asked.

" 'You must promise to hold your tongue, Dymsky, remember it's the wind told you this, not I. If it wasn't the wind the bai would kill me. Things are going badly with us in Alichur.'

" 'What's the matter, has the bai been stealing your sheep, or what?'

" 'Why, no, it's not the sheep that matter. Things are bad, very bad. Sho-Kirghiz has robbed our Kesseks at Zor-Kul five times. He crosses the river at night, takes all the sheep and goes away. The Kesseks are wailing and crying. They are folding their tents, they want to come over here, and there is no grass here. How will the Kesseks live, Dymsky?'

"So it all began with this Kirghiz. I inquired into the matter and found it was true, what he had told me. The Committee of Three sat in Murgab. Our people insisted on going to Alichur to talk to the Kirghiz poor and persuade them to organize an attack against Sho-Kirghiz. So off I went with Bogayevsky and Kamchibek. I took Bogayevsky because he was one of the best shots and I foresaw that we might have to fight. Kamchibek, who as you know is a Kirghiz and a member of the District Executive Committee, offered to come himself. That was the time that we first met you. Later on our folk at Murgab got worried about us and sent two Red Army soldiers after us as an escort. Pastukhov and Ivashenko they were called. They caught up with us at Tagbash's yurt in Alichur, where we were carrying on negotiations. We had made no plan of action as yet for we

were counting on the Kirghiz poor helping us to make one. The main thing I had to do was to convince them not to be afraid of the rich bais, in other words, I had to destroy their tribal dependence. Tagbash collected the Kirghiz poor and they all agreed on one point: 'Sho-Kirghiz'—they said 'is a downright bad fellow but you can't do anything with him. You can't follow him to the Afghan's country, and besides he's very clever, and strong. How shall we break his strength? What can we do, eh?'

"Well, we sat there thinking awhile. I could see it was going to be a complicated business, Tagbash turned it over in his mind for a long time, discussed something with the other fellows and then said to me:

" 'I will not tell you anything yet, only this: stay with me nine days, and do nothing. Then go to Zor-Kul and you will see there what you should do.'

"I talked it over with Kamchibek. I could get nothing more out of Tagbash, so I decided to stay on and see what he had thought of; who knew, maybe it would turn out for the best? I lived with Tagbash. He never left the place and I began to lose my faith in him. I wanted to go away, but he wouldn't let me. 'Why do you want me to go?' he would say. 'The nine days are not out yet.' So I stayed.

"I used to get into conversation with passing Kirghiz so as to find out how the land lay. Once Atamkul, who was chairman of the Alichur village Soviet, came by the yurt. In the Pamir at that time there were frequent cases of rich bais persuading their people to elect someone to the village Soviet, who would look after their, the bais' interest. Now I knew that although Atamkul was one of the poor Kirghiz, he was Tshan-Kul's own man. That was why I had never gone to him for help at any time. I decided to tell him to his face now all I thought of him, so I invited him into the yurt.

" 'Atamkul,' I said, 'I believe that Tshan-Kul is dearer to you than the Soviet Government?'

"He sat there before me on the felt koshma and said:

" 'No, no,' the Soviet Government is much dearer to me.I would die for the Government. When the Soviet Government gets richer it'll make the Pamir rich, too. I know everything, we shall have a railway and all manner of goods and the caravans will bring grain and other things. Then let Tshan-Kul say but one word to us, we shall not ask your permission, we shall do it ourselves without you; every bad man shall be put under the ground. Where will Tshan-Kul be then? Listen, I shall tell you—we are doing something now on the quiet, something to help the Soviet Government, but I cannot tell anyone about it just yet, not even you. It cannot be said aloud. Ai, ai, what would happen if it came to Tshan Kul's ears. Sit here in the yurt nine days, as Tagbash told you, and do not offend me. Tshan-Kul is my great enemy, but that is only what I think to myself and tell maybe you—softly.'

"So Atamkul went away, and no matter what I did I could get nothing out of the Kirghiz. I sat there in the tent like a fool, unable to understand anything of what was going on.

"On the ninth day Tagbash said:

" 'Go now to Zor-Kul.'

"We saddled the horses and rode off."

"Dymsky. I say, Dymsky. Are you asleep?" Loud voices rang out in the garden. Dymsky broke off his story.

"I'm here. Who's calling me?"

A noisy group of officials from the Khorog Executive Committee burst in.

"We've been looking for you all over the place. We've got to talk something over with you. Get your things together."

"What things? Are you on a spree, or what?" The young Tadjik secretary of the Committee, who wore a wadded white cloth coat over his jacket, sat down on the ground. "What do you mean on a spree? Maybe its you who wants to go on the spree? We're straight from a meeting. It's been decided that you have to go away on business."

To that Dymsky drawled out in a dissatisfied tone:

"That's news. . . . What have you been doping out this time? Can't you manage without me?"

The Tadjik laughed.

"Now don't get mad. It's your job. It's like this, there's some sort of mixup in Goran—"

"Let me tell him," broke in a thin young fellow, from the District Committee of the Young Communist League. "Wait a minute, let me tell. . . . Listen, Dymsky, it's such a silly business: The peasants have come over from Goran to tell us that three horses from Lower Goran were found grazing in Bogush-Dar—in strange pastures, you see. The young folk at Upper Goran decided to play a trick on the Lower Goran people, so they caught these three horses, cut up some reeds, tied them into sacks and loaded the sacks on the horses. On top of the loads they stuck some of that prickly plant, you know the kind I mean, it has fruit like little dry balls with seeds inside them and when you shake them they make a hell of a rattle. Well, then the boys let the horses go, and the rattling startled them so much that they rushed home hell for leather, nearly wild with fright.

"They upset two riders on the way. Well, it might have come to nothing, because the Lower Goran folk caught their horses. Do you know Mamad-Raim? An old chap of a hundred-and-ten? Well, it turns out one of the horses was his and he's raising hell, one of his horses insulted and all that. He's started an awful row—a whole business, see—blames the Soviet Government. The young people are against him but all the old men are sticking up for him. Well, it just boils down to this, you've got to go and see him. We can't let things go any further. Tomorrow morning you'll have to be off.—See?"

Dymsky shook his head in vexation and said gravely:

"What fools. It always starts like that, with some trifle. How stupid. Well, it looks like I'll have to go, there's nothing else to do."

Next morning Dymsky went away. It so happened that I had to go off, too, in a different direction, before he came back, so I never visited Khorog again. I left the Pamirs eventually without saying goodbye to Dymsky.

A large expedition set out for the Pamirs in 1932. I took part in its organization. While I was doing so I often recalled Dymsky, and his dreams of one day taking up science. A wireless message had been sent him to Khorog, inviting him to join the expedition and he agreed to do so. By 1932 things had changed a great deal in those parts. The basmachi had been put down and were now part of the history and legends of the Pamir. The expedition rushed through the valley of East Pamir in motor-cars and Dymsky and I were whirled along to all sorts of places. Dymsky's marvellous knowledge of the local tongues and customs turned to his disadvantage for we, to our shame be it spoken, threw every sort of dirty work on his shoulders. Whenever we came to a village and we needed wood, fodder,

workers, it was "Dymsky, interpret for us, Dymsky, talk to them about it. Dymsky, buy this, Dymsky, hire that one—" for who else but Dymsky could do it all so easily? He did all we asked of him meekly enough, often at the cost of his own research work. He never grumbled, slept less than any one else, ate as he moved about and was burdened down with all the petty cares of the expedition. Some day I shall describe this period of his life in more detail. In the autumn we returned to Stalinabad. We were met there by several members of the Academy of Sciences, before whom the leader of the expedition was to read his report. Dymsky was obliged to show them his ethnographical work. On their recommendation he was sent to a university. He lives in Leningrad now. He is buried in a sea of book learning, he rises at daybreak and goes to bed shortly before dawn; he has grown very thin, and his eyes seem to have sunken into his skull. He has no time to think of the ordinary comforts of all citizens, he freezes in a corner of someone else's room, and forgets to eat. He has to sit for an examination in eighteen subjects in the Spring. Dymsky is studying and all his friends treat him as they would a pregnant woman: he is not to be disturbed or alarmed on any account.

At rare intervals he comes to see me. One evening when the frost was tracing a marvellous foliage on my window and queer flashes of green lightning came from the creaking trams outside, I said to him:

"Dymsky, finish the story you were telling me once of how you took Sho-Kirghiz prisoner."

"Very well," he said simply. "It's ancient history now, but I'll tell you if you like."

I listened once more to the part I had heard already. Then, leaning his elbows on the corner of my table, he told me the rest of the story.

"Ah, this was the part you didn't know. Yes, Tagbash told us to go, so we got out our horses and went. There was Bogayevsky, and the two Red Army soldiers and Kamchibek and myself. We went in the direction of the Kumda Pass, towards the frontier there. When we'd climbed the Pass the horses were quite worked out, what with the snow and the stones.

" 'Let's spend the night here,' says Tagbash to me.

"I looked at him. Is he joking, I thought, to suggest spending the night in the snow on top of the Pass without a fire. But I could see he wasn't joking by any means. I tried to worm out of him what he meant by it, he wouldn't answer. Then we all got fed up with him.

" 'Now just stop this,' I said, 'I'm sick of you and your secrets. What do you think we are? Enemies? Explain yourself.'

"Then Tagbash said:

" 'Listen, Dymsky, I'll tell you this much. Tshan-Kul is down there on the frontier with all our Kirghiz. Sho-Kirghiz is to come to Tshan-Kul today. Sho-Kirghiz—alone, with his wife and no one else. They have had a little quarrel and today they will make peace. When we get there you will take Sho-Kirghiz as easily as a child. Tshan-Kul will not hinder you, our Kirghiz will not let him touch you. There's you and your comrades, count—five rifles. If Sho-Kirghiz comes, he has only one rifle and we have five—who will be the best off? But stay the night here, Dymsky, and we shall go in the morning. The horses are weary.'

"We listened to Tagbash.

" 'Are you telling us the truth?' we asked. 'Does Tshan-Kul know nothing about us?'

" 'Nothing. . . I am speaking the truth. I am going with you myself, so I shall have to answer for it if anything happens.'

"We listened to him and then held a council of war. Looking at the pros and cons of the idea, we decided to descend the Pass at once. When you come to think of it—what an idea it was of Tagbash's to spend the night on the Pass, freezing, and the horses were tired and hungry, too, for we had no fodder with us. If we went down now, we could get close to Tshan-Kul in the dark without being noticed. It was a chance not to be missed. Supposing Sho-Kirghiz was to take it into his head to leave for home that day?

"Darkness came on while we were descending to the upper valley. Suddenly a group of Alichur Kirghiz appeared from a ravine leading into ours. We came face to face. Tagbash caught sight of a friend of his.

" 'Where is Tshan-Kul?' he asked, 'and where is Sho-Kirghiz?'

" 'Sho-Kirghiz has not come yet,' replied the Alichur Kirghiz, 'and as for Tshan-Kul,' he said turning in his saddle, there he is, he's just behind. . . '

"We dashed forwards and surrounded Tshan-Kul. He was evidently terrified. With great presence of mind, however, he summoned a benevolent grin, mumbled 'Amen, Amen' and gave me both hands.

" 'Salamat, Comrade Dymsky, and how is your health? Are you not tired? From where are you traveling? Why have you come here? How is your house? That is a fine mount you have, a race horse, indeed. Greetings to you and to the Soviet Government.' So he rambled on, you'd think butter wouldn't melt in his mouth, but his voice was trembling all the time.

" 'Thanks,' I said. 'Everything is alright with me, Tshan-Kul. We are going on a long journey, to Vakhan. But we caught sight of a kiik and went after it, and missed our way. And how is your health? How long is it since you came to live here?'

" 'I have only come to look for new pastures,' said the old fellow, evasively. 'Soon all the grass will have been eaten from our old pastures and here, Allah be praised, the grass is good.'

" 'Well, I am very glad to hear it. Where is your yurt, friend? We were thinking of going further but it's too dark. We'll have to spend the night with you, if you will permit us.'

"As soon as he heard we were going to spend the night with him, Tshan-Kul was ready to drop. He couldn't get a word out. We settled down for the night in his yurt. His relatives were hanging about there, I could see things looked black for our business, they'd probably go and warn Sho-Kirghiz. However, there was nothing to be done. It was a bitter night, we were frozen. We kept guard by turns. The yurt was snowed up in the storm. Sho-Kirghiz didn't turn up. Tagbash was very down hearted. He whispered to me:

" 'Now, you see, Dymsky, you should have done as I told you and stayed the night on the Pass. Sho-Kirghiz is delayed because the river has risen, he'll be waiting till morning on the other side. Now what shall we do? It's bad, Dymsky. . . and maybe it'll be worse. Ai, ai, Dymsky, and my soul will be lost along with yours.'

"I was feeling rather uneasy myself. I swore a bit and then I thought, well, if it comes to the worst, the first bullet will be for Tshan-Kul. He lay near us grunting from time to time, he wasn't asleep either.

"The night passed off quietly enough. Morning came and still there was no Sho-Kirghiz. We remained there without any explanations. Tshan-Kul evidently understood it all perfectly. He seemed quite calm, though, and

that irritated me. There we sat waiting for Sho-Kirghiz. Midday came. Still no sign of him. We began to lose hope. About three o'clock we said to Tshan-Kul:

" 'Let's go down to the river. Maybe we'll catch a few fish, you can watch us.'

"Tshan-Kul had nothing to say against it. He had no arms with him, or if he had, he must have hidden them earlier. We went down to the riverside. All the Kirghiz stayed up above and disposed themselves there in a camp, as it were. About four o'clock I noticed through my field-glasses a cloud of dust on the Afghan side, near Zor-Kul. The dust rapidly approached us. It was evidently Sho-Kirghiz at last, and not alone, but with the whole gang. I decided on direct action. I ordered Tshan-Kul to stay where he was, and said to my own lads:

" 'Get into that pit here and keep your eyes open. Kamchibek and I'll try to negotiate with him, I'll invent something or other—maybe he'll believe it and come over here without them. And if they start to shoot at me, you shoot at the one that's aiming at me and don't get out of the pit."

"I took a hand-grenade in the breast of my coat, and a revolver and laid my carabine down by my feet so as it woudn't be noticed. Sho-Kirghiz had quite a large company. They split up as they came nearer. Forty or fifty bassmachi rode round about, mounted to the terrace, above where the other Kirghiz were and disposed themselves there. Sho-Kirghiz with eight of his bosom-friends including his henchman, Tashmat, and his best shot, Khan-Kuli (who could kill a kiik with his horse at a gallop), came down to the riverside. The chief thing now that we had recognized Khan-Kuli, was to keep an eye on him, and see that he did no harm. Sho-Kirghiz rode down to the bank, drew up and dismounted. He gave the bridle to Khan-Kuli, and called out to me:

" '*Salaam aleikum, sahib* Dymsky.'

"I was standing there with Kamchibek and I called back:

" '*Aleikum vo-i-selam, cariodar sahib.* I came here to talk to you about the pastures, and ask you not to offend the Kesseks. Perhaps we shall make peace?'

"(*Cariodar* is an Afghan title meaning something like district-governor. Sho-Kirghiz had received it in return for services rendered as a bassmach).

"Then I asked him:

" 'Is it that you have ceased to trust me then that you speak to me from the far side of the river and are afraid to cross?'

" 'Today is a great day for us,' he answered, 'for a son has been born to any friend and we are going to celebrate it. If your Kirghiz wish to join us, let them come over to our side, if not, let them stay where they are and watch us tossing the goat.'

"He made a sign to Khan-Kuli who brought up his horse. Then he gave the signal for the goat-tossing to begin. We could see how strong the men were, twisting about in their saddles, at full gallop to pick up the goat. Gaiuba, the notorious Karatiign bassmach, and his company of Uzbeks in red coats and the rest of the riders joined in. Our Kirghiz were afraid to join them, they stayed on their own side of the river. Tshan-Kul came up to us on foot and stood there, his hands behind his back, his eyes half closed, watching the goat-tossing.

It went on for about an hour. Then Sho-Kirghiz stepped out from the crowd. Kamchibek had never taken his eyes off him all the time. Sho-Kirghiz had taken no part in the goat tossing, but had been holding a

whispered council with his friends. Now he came forward with four other riders to his old place on the bank of the river. Just at that moment the men who were tossing the goat galloped away. As a matter of fact they were just hiding behind a hillock.

" 'Now, Dymsky,' Sho-Kirghiz shouted, 'come over to our side, you see I've sent my people away; there are three of you and four of us, we can talk as much as you like.'

" 'Fine,' I agreed. 'We're coming. I'll come as far as the little island and you come down to meet me? . . .' and I felt the grenade and my revolver. (I somehow couldn't believe the grenade would go off.)

"Tshan-Kul brought me my horse, and Kamchibek ran to get his. I left the carabine where it was, thinking that I'd easily be able to pick it up afterwards unnoticed. So off I went to the pit where my men were. I particularly wanted to tell Bogayevsky to watch Khan-Kuli. I was really afraid that the fellow would shoot me. I had to give my order in a whisper and the men could not catch them and began to ask me questions. Kamchibek was just a couple of paces behind me and when I began to give the orders a second time, he let out a heart-rending cry:

" 'Dymsky, hide. Quick. They're shooting.' (He could see the group that were aiming at us from where he was on the hillock).

"I hadn't time to get my bearings before I heard a buzzing round my ears, and a volley skimmed the cap off my head and knocked Kamchibek off his feet. I just caught a glimpse of his pointed Kirghiz boots kicking the air as he fell and his face streaming with blood and his coat all bloody. I decided that he was done for, and rushed back for my carabine about six paces away. Then my horse took fright and I couldn't catch it. I could hear a lot of wild firing from the pit and Bogayevsky's voice saying:

" 'Dymsky, come down into the pit, trying to stop a bullet up there?'

"I saw two Red Soldiers crawl out of the pit and shoot from the knees, while Bogayevsky stayed in the pit and carefully chose his aim.

"I found myself in the saddle while all this was going on, and started to ford the river towards the island. I only realized what I was doing when the water splashed over my saddle. Bogayevsky was keeping one eye on me and the other on the bassmachi. When he saw where I was, he jumped out of the pit and ran to help me. Then he stood still on the bank, wondering whom he should aim at next? Sho-Kirghiz was on the island too, quite close to me on his horse, trying to catch at my bridle. About twenty armed riders were advancing on us. They landed on the first island, disappeared behind a hillock, showed up once more, dropped down to the water and came riding in my direction.

"Kamchibek was lying dead on our side.

"They had two dead men and three dead horses on their side, on the first island.

"They were coming towards me.

"I hesitated: should I throw the grenade or keep it a bit longer?

"Bogayevsky's voice said:

" 'Chuck it at them, go on.'

"I hardly knew what I was doing, but I flung the grenade at the oncoming men. Sho-Kirghiz was beside me, plucking at my bridle, shouting, 'Come on, come on, they're shooting here.'

"The grenade burst in the river, flinging up water, stones and splinters in the horses' muzzles. They huddled together in fright and four men went down under our bullets. My carabine was hanging by my saddle but I did

not shoot. Sho-Kirghiz kept tugging at my bridle, my horse was in the river already. When he had dragged me to within five paces of the first island, Sho-Kirghiz let go of the bridle and galloped off from me. His horse's tail was right in front of me. When he had got to the island, he had to climb a high bank. I seized my carabine instinctively and fired without taking aim. I hit the horse in the ear and she fell with her crupper on Sho-Kirghiz' stomach, pinning him down. This threw his men into confusion. They turned back, and galloped past me, the Uzbeks in the red coats ahead of the rest, whacking their horses over the heads with their swords or their rifles. Tshan-Kul and Bogayevsky were coming after me. I bound Sho-Kirghiz's hands behind his back and took him up in my saddle. When we got back to the bank, to Kamchibek, he'd already got to his feet; he couldn't see anything, for a bullet had skinned his forehead and the blood kept running into his eyes. Another bullet had gone through his wrist. He started to load his rifle, though, and wanted to shoot Sho-Kirghiz there and then. My problem now was how to keep my prisoner from being killed, and to catch the rest of the gang, who had not yet got to the Afghan side. Bogayevsky and the Red Soldiers were now on the island shooting after the riders. I gave Kamchibek a good cursing. After quietening him down, I left Sho-Kirghiz to him, crossed over to the first island and saw something that pleased me, a great deal. Khan-Kuli was lying behind the hillock, gripping his rifle and spitting out blood. He had three bullets through his lungs. The rest of the bassmachi had cleared out and we dared not follow them to the Afghan side. We collected all the corpses—there were five—bandaged the wounded and laid them in a shady spot. They were taken away to the Afghan side in a couple of hours' time. Then we went on our way with our prisoner who kept telling me, cheekily enough:

" 'Ah, well, you've been cleverer than me this time, but wait, my time will come, I'll be cleverer than you.'

"Tshan-Kul came with us, but all his Kirghiz stayed behind. We went to the Niusha settlement by Zor-Kul, where the Kessek tribe lived. Sho-Kirghiz kept glancing round all the way, for Uraz-Mamed-Bai was to have come to his assistance at any moment with his band.

"We spent the night in the Kessek settlement. It was a terribly nervous night: we were under strain all the time. We knew what was at the back of Sho Kirghiz's mind and were expecting Uraz-Mamed-Bai from hour to hour. He could not but come to Sho-Kirghiz' assistance with his band. We could not leave before daylight, we had no proper convoy for our prisoner, an ambush might be awaiting us around every corner, and—there was Tshan-Kul to keep an eye on, too.

"At the place where the battle was held a whole chain of bonfires burned that night. All the Kirghiz from Afghanistan, about three thousand, had collected. We put mounted sentries around our camp. Kamchibek had recently got married, it was only the second day after his wedding. His wife was living in the settlement nearby, so he went home to her. On the way he caught a shepherd boy, a spy, who told Kemchibek that we must either give up Sho-Kirghiz, or be taken prisoner. I said to the boy:

" 'Go and tell Uraz-Mamed-Bai that if he comes himself with Kasi-Kurban, his secretary, we shall talk to him, but I will receive no one else.'

"We let the boy go.

"About four o'clock in the morning—it happened that I was on sentry duty—they all crossed the river and came up to us on horses and camels. I left Sho-Kirghiz in Kamchibek's charge, and went up the hill with the

three others, thinking that if we were attacked, we could defend ourselves for a while, for we had about fifty cartridges apiece. The bassmachi outnumbered us greatly, of course, but they were a cowardly lot (and we began to be really frightened ourselves). It was quite light, five o'clock in the morning. All of a sudden we saw Asan, Kemchibek's brother coming down the hill side with two armed militia-men. Durdi, a Kirghiz and Farmanbek, a Tadjik. I was awfully glad to see Asan and held a council on the spot. Asan insisted that we should leave the place immediately and take the whole settlement of Kesseks (who were on our side) with us. We sent the Afghans a letter saying:

" 'Sho-Kirghiz and his band opened fire upon us and attempted to cross our frontier with the intention of robbing our people. As representatives of the Government, we could not permit this, and therefore a conflict took place. We have one wounded man, and your Kirghiz have several killed and wounded. Sho-Kirghiz is still alive, but if his band attempts to come over into our territory, Sho-Kirghiz will share the fate of your dead.'

"I sent Sho-Kirghiz with Bogayesky and four armed men into Murgab and went myself together with Kamchibek and Asan, on our work among the nomads. We crossed Kumda, got into Sassyk-Kul, then to Alichur and from there to Lake Bulun-Kul. There was an ambush laid for me on Kumda Pass, but they were too late, I had crossed already. A week later I returned to Murgab, and found that our men had arrived quite safely.

"Tshan-Kul was lying low and saying nothing, of course. He was terrified of being arrested. We wanted to arrest him, too, at first, but afterwards we decided to leave him alone for the present. It was more important to us that he should simply lose his authority among the Kirghiz. . . And that's the whole story."

Dymsky rose and moved about the room. He went up to a big map of the Pamir hanging on the wall, gazed at it a while and sat down again in the armchair. Then he yawned lazily and opened one of the volumes of *The Work of the Pamir Expedition of 1930.*

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Agnes Smedley

A White Episode

A Story of the Struggle for a Soviet China[1]

Down the Nine Level Pass leading to the southeast from Tungku walked a peasant girl and a barefoot peasant boy. The girl carried a small bundle of clothing done up in a large square blue cloth, and over the left arm of the boy hung a basket filled with eggs. The girl was very pretty and could have been no more than twenty-two. She was clad in a fresh blue jacket fastened high at the throat and reaching to her hips. The long black, full trousers reached to her strong ankles. Her head was bare and the thick black hair was drawn back from a broad, smooth forehead and caught in a large smooth coil at the nape of her neck. Through the coil was a long, single-pronged pin of hard bamboo, one end sharpened to a dull point, the other broad and decorated.

There was an undefinable gentleness, even wistfulness in the large black eyes and in the whole body of the girl, and only if one looked closely could one discern the reason. Then one could see that perhaps within her body a new life was taking form, and it must be a life conceived in love, for only such could give to her face that gentle, wistful dreaming.

But it was also clear that she was not just a girl who dreamed and talked within her heart to the growing life within her body. For her eyes were alert and intelligent and her head turned quickly at every noise in the dense forests overhanging the mountain path. And often her hand reached up and unconsciously touched the bamboo pin in her hair, as if something lay concealed there.

Only three people knew the secret of that bamboo pin. One was herself, another the comrade in the Communication Department of the Red Army in Tungku, and the other her young peasant husband, Kung-liao, commander of a company in the Red Army. They knew that within the hollow tube of the pin was a colourless liquid, an invisible writing ink, and within this a very fine brush with which she could write. They also knew of the reason for her trip to Kian, and of the letter she carried in the little bundle of clothing.

That letter would be her passport through the lines of White troops surrounding the mountain of Tungku. The envelope was addressed to her. Inside the letter was dated Kian and read as if her husband was a clerk in the shop of a silk merchant in the White stronghold. "Leave that region of Red bandits at once," it read. "Go to your grandmother in Pi-tan, and after that make your way to Kian. I fear always for your life and honor in such a dangerous Red region."

"You can make it?" her husband Kung-liao and the comrade in the Communication Department asked the girl.

"Have I not worked for two years and come through many bad experiences?" she asked proudly. "Now, more than ever before, they will not trouble me."

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[1] From a new book of sketches and stories of the Chinese Red Army to appear soon, by the author of *Chinese Destinies*.

They knew what she meant. That she was an expectant mother would serve her well.

The girl thought of all these things as she passed down the Nine Level Pass, talking to the boy by her side. She glanced down at him, so thin and brown, padding along in his bare brown feet by her side. His wisp of jacket, open in the front, revealed the lean, hard body of a peasant lad no more than thirteen years of age. The threadbare gray trousers just reached the knees and were held up by a broad cloth girdle. She did not know, but she felt certain that in that girdle was his tiny stub of a pencil and the soft roll of bamboo paper. He was a clever boy and had learned to read and write in the Red Army school in Chintang. For four months he had gone far and wide for the Red Army, selling his eggs, collecting information.

His face was lifted to her as he spoke. A thin, serious face, at times almost solemn. The chin was soft and childish, the cheek-bones high. A pair of very bright, intelligent eyes, oblique and narrow smiled up at her.

"You are never afraid, Di-di?" the girl asked him.

"Afraid, no. Once they caught me not far from Chintang and beat me. I said I was an orphan boy and the Reds had destroyed my home and killed my father and mother. 'I am alone and poor and have nothing to eat and must sell eggs to earn money for rice. The eggs are very costly. but that is because I am very poor . . . brothers, buy my eggs,' I told them.

"I kept saying this and at last they believed and I went among them selling eggs. I was new in the Red Army school then and did not know all the kinds of guns. But I knew the flags of the different White units and I knew some of the makes of guns. I counted the sentries and saw where they were posted.. . . . Now I can read many characters and write down what I see that I may not forget. . . . When I grow older I will know more . . . I will be like Comrade Mau—you know, silent and watchful, but always thinking and planning inside his mind."

The boy spoke solemnly, glancing up at the girl. Their eyes met. bright and enthusiastic, like youth advancing to meet the day.

"You are not afraid?"the boy asked the girl.

"Sometimes—when I meet the officers. Or White soldiers who have been mercenaries of the Generals for many years. They are like animals."

"But we will fight on!"

"Yes, we will fight on!"

Suddenly the boy halted in the path and said: "I will not go to the north around the base of that cliff. Good-bye Comrade Elder Sister."

"Good-bye Di-di," she answered, and stood watching him until he vanished in the thick shrubs obscuring the narrow path at the base of the cliff. Then she went down the pass.

From the base of the pass she could see in the distance the low roofs of the village of Lungfung and the wooden drawbridge over the river. She knew the village was deserted and all the peasants living in the hills or in Tungku. Only White soldiers were in the valley, guarding the drawbridge.

A group of about a dozen soldiers on the drawbridge watched her as she came near. Anxiously she approached. Two more sentries with guns, the others unarmed, squatting on their heels, tossing coppers. They stood up as she approached. Her heart seemed to stop beating for she saw

they were older men with the unconscious faces of mercenaries. The sentry wore three gold rings on one hand.

"Who are you? Where do you come from?" one of the sentries asked roughly.

"My name is Lai-in. I am running away from Tungku and going to my husband in Kian. My husband is afraid of the Red bandits. Here is a letter from him."

She gave a long envelope with red lines on its face. The sentry took it but did not look at it. The other men crowded about, took the envelope and began turning it over and over. They drew out the enclosure and pretended to read, though they could not.

"Are there Red bandits in the mountains?" a sentry asked her.

"I do not know. There may be some. That is the reason my husband wants me to come to Kian."

One of the soldiers began pretending he could read the letter. A broad grin spread over the faces of the rest of the men. He was reading lewd phrases about the intimacies of sexual relationship. The reading became rougher and the girl threw her hands over her burning face.

"That is not my letter!" she cried. "Give me my letter!"

One of the men reached out and grabbed her by the arm. She jerked free.

"Why wear your girdle so tight?" he asked, throwing his arms about her and kissing her violently on the mouth. The men roared and Lai-li struck out and hit the man in the face.

"You would have us believe you ain't been there before!" the men angrily exclaimed.

"Come with me," the sentry said, grinning into her face, "I'll read the letter in the pavilion." He grasped her by the arm and dragged her after him toward a little rest pavillion set back from the path. The other men trailed after him laughing at her struggling. One threw an arm about her, half-carrying her along.

Inside the pavilion they began to argue as to who should have her first. In terror she saw them begin tossing coins to decide. Her throat seemed to close up and her mouth became as dry as parchment.

She began to strike at the man who came toward her. The others laughed while he ripped the clothing from her, stripping her naked. She fought but he grasped her by the arm, giving it a vicious jerk backward. A fierce pain shot up her arm and through her whole body and darkness blinded her eyes. She felt someone tearing down her coil of hair, and instinctively she grasped at the precious bamboo pin. Then complete darkness overwhelmed her.

The men raped her one by one. Then she lay outstretched on the dirty pavillion floor, her tangled hair mixed with the dirt. One arm lay outstretched, crooked, torn. About her mouth was a fringe of foamy blood.

One of the soldiers kept staring down at her naked body and chalky face. His eyes rested on the round mound of her stomach, at something that moved beneath as if in violent protest, then subsiding into quietness as complete as the body.

The sentry reached out and kicked the girl to see if she was dead. Then another man reached out with his foot and kicked her ribs playfully. But she lay stretched cold and still, the foam congealing about her lips.

"Can't leave the body here," one of the men said.

They picked up her torn clothing, tied it about her, and thrust the bamboo pin playfully through the knot. Then one of them carried her to the river bank, heaved and tossed her into the stream. The body splashed, gurgled and disappeared from view. It came up twice near the the water's surface, the long black hair outspread like the dark wings of night.

The men went over the bridge and watched her for some time, and then when the body appeared no more, turned away. The sentries took their places on the bridge, the others squatted on their heels and continued tossing coins.

Beyond, the boy Di-di emerged from the mountain path to the north, and began walking along a bordering hill path. He had taken but a few steps when from the top of the hill he heard a command.

"Halt!"

He glanced up and saw a White officer with a bodyguard of five men approaching.

"Who are you?" the officer demanded with cold ferocity.

"My humble name is Nan-ju. I am going to the market at Siangpu to sell my eggs."

"You came down from Tungku!"

"I went to Tungku to buy eggs. They have good eggs there."

"How many Reds are there in Tungku?"

"I do not know. I did not look for Red soldiers."

"Come with me, you little Red liar! This is the second time this week you've come from Tungku!"

"How can you go up and down the Tungku pass without the consent of the Red bandits?" an officer asked him furiously, reaching out and striking the basket of eggs from his arm.

"I only buy eggs," he answered.

One of the men stepped over and began to search him. The boy's girdle was ripped open. A tiny little stub of a pencil and a thin roll of bamboo paper rolled out.

The officer became livid. "You're a spy for the bandits!" He reached out and struck the boy a blow across the mouth and nose. Nan-ju staggered but caught himself and stood very still and silent. The soldiers in the courtyard gathered in the door to watch.

"Shoot the little illegitimate offspring of a turtle," one of the officers at the mah-jong table in the courtyard remarked, as calmly as if he were placing a cube on the table.

Nan-ju looked about at the faces of the enemy. He saw the soldiers standing in the door. They were peasants—such men desert to the Red Army when they know why the masses fight, he thought. Then he turned to the officers and said:

"It is you who are the bandits! Your are enemies of the people. You murder our parents and burn our homes and our crops. You are running dogs of the landords and imperialists."

"That to stop your mouth with!" one of the officers erupted, smashing him directly in the teeth. For a few minutes the boy could not see, then he felt something warm and salty in his mouth. He reached up and his hand filled with blood. He heard a command given, then someone grabbed him by the arm and he was again marching down the dirt street. Suddenly he found himself standing on a little grave mound right outside the village walls. Before him was a squad of soldiers, their guns pointing

at him. Beyond them he saw the green heights of Tungku. Up there was the Red Army of workers and peasants, his father a commander in the Red Army.

"Ten thousand years to the Red Army!" he cried in a high childish voice.

A volley of shots rang out. The slender brown body jerked from the shock, then sank to the earth as if it were very, very sleepy. A little stream of blood flowed from his body, joined another, and sank into the hungry grave.

The squad of soldiers stood at attention. One turned his head and caught the eye of a man by his side. Something in the looks of each other's faces held them as if spellbound. Another soldier stared at the body of the boy as if transfixed, his throat working convulsively.

Then the soldiers marched down the dirt street again, through the door and into the stone courtyard. They broke ranks and sat down on the stone benches, avoiding each other's eyes, staring at the flagstones beneath their feet. One of the men finally said in a low voice:

"Did you hear what he said?"

"Yes—they all say that."

"He was not afraid to die."

"No—they are all like that."

The other men listened in silence, hardly breathing.

"Why are the Reds not afraid to die—even their children are without fear."

"Because—because—well, you heard what he said. It is we who are the criminals—running dogs of the landlords and imperialists!"

One of the White officers heard the low voices and came to the door and stood staring out. He stood watching with thin hard lips. Then the soldier who had spoken stood up, hoisted his trousers with a defiant jerk, and left the courtyard. Another rose and followed him as if of urgent physical necessity. The officer watched them go in silence, glanced at the other men for some minutes, then returned in fury to the inside room.

In the window the four officers continued to play mah-jong. The little piles of silver dollars were at their elbows and they smoked, tossing the cigarette stubs on the floor.

Paul Nizan

The Traitor

Extract from Antoine Bloyè, *a New French Novel*

The years passed, like unmoored boats which are borne away by the current of a river. Antoine and his wife passed through different towns—all of them having their personages and their usages—but they made only a nodding acquaintance with them, did not stay long enough to be enthralled, captivated by them. They were always living provisionally, they did not settle down; without even taking thought of it, they were squandering the days of their youth. They moved in, learned to know the ins and outs of the new houses in which they were living.

"There aren't many signboards," Anne would say. . . . And they would get used to the proper names, accents, climates of new provinces, and then leave. Anne would always have liked to settle down and take root, stay for the rest of her life; she was a woman of settled habits and this nomadic existence distressed her. At each new city she would say with tears:

"Don't try to persuade me. . . I feel that I shall never get used to it. . ."

But Anne got used to every new life; she regained her composure as infallibly as an insect restores its shattered cocoon.

Antoine Bloyé was always on the move, being employed on the tracks which his railway company was laying in the western part of France. At each move, he went up one step in the hierarchy which the Breton priest had described to him on the day of his marriage; he received promotion, as it is called—supervisor of the traffic division at Paris, sub-chief of the depot at Brives, at Aurillac, at Montlucon, at Limoges, at Angers, supervisor of materials and the traffic division, chief of the depot at Tours. He went through the long inflexible routine of the traffic division. At each post, in addition to the old actions, the old decisions, there were new actions, new decisions which he had to learn promptly; at each post, he could feel the weight of his responsibilities growing heavier—the responsibilities imposed upon him by his chiefs, hidden away in their offices in the Central Power Division, the Engineers of the "Forty-One." This growing weight of responsibilities brought him closer to them, it showed him that he had made his entry into that society which had for a long time been a mystery to him and of which he had often dreamed of old as he paced the platforms of Saint-Nazaire—the society of men who command. Every year a greater number of machines and workers came under his command, and he did not have to answer to those who were beneath him.

As these years fell away into the past, lapsed unheeded into oblivion—and he never noticed their passage, it takes so much leisure to notice how time goes by—his arms, his hands, his body had moments of idleness, but he made more demands on his brain. Time-tables, adding machines, graphs, schedules of routes, reports of tests accumulated in his head. With each year the service extended, the locomotives became more complex, the depots comprised more machines, more brake-pipe and maintenance gangs.

Over all the railway systems of the world the traffic was mounting like the curve on a temperature chart. The onrush of capitalism swept along willy-nilly the machines and men who were working for it.

Without noticing it, the men of Antoine's generation had crossed the border line dividing two epochs; after 1900 the railways had entered upon a new era, coinciding with the shattering advent of the tornadoes of the twentieth century. An era which had opened with the first run of Stephenson's Rocket between Stockton and Darlington gave way to the age of bogies, of compoundings and high pressures. Both the speed and the load of trains had increased in order to keep pace with the new demands in speed and weight. Between 1890 and 1910 the average speed of passenger trains rose by twenty-five percent, while between 1898 and 1908 the dead weight per passenger increased from 350 kilograms to 916. For the AT5 cars on the Paris-Bordeaux line, it rose as high as 1,120 kilograms of dead weight. In 1909 the great expresses weighed 200 tons; a year later, 400. In 1900 the Orleans Railway Company possessed 1,430 locomotives, totalling 692,000 horse power. In eleven years the capacity of large locomotives rose from 1,000 to 1,600 horse power.

The steam pressure of the new types of machines astounded old engine drivers and depot chiefs who were on the verge of retiring. When Antoine talked with his father-in-law, M. Gruyader would question the figures which his son-in-law quoted; he felt these increases as so many insults to which he was being subjected, for they told him that the time had come when he was being deposed, left behind, too slow to keep pace with these new flights. This man, who had seen the old Breton stage coaches vanish before the assault of the trains, would exclaim with a kind of anger:

"Look here, those boilers of yours will burst with pressures like that!"

"Oh no they won't," Antoine would reply, laughing, "they won't burst. . ."

Antoine kept to the beaten track because he was one of the men who had lived through this crisis of growth without ever going beyond the bounds of the railway universe, a universe covered with the soot of stations and depots, as self contained, as unique in its way—among all the other various worlds composed of fragments—as the universe of ports, harbors and docks which sailors never leave. He was one of the agents of this industrial transformation scene, one of the men whose heads are ceaselessly filled with worries about machines, and their drivers, about Movement and Traffic. Following the rapid step of this dance, these people hardly ever thought of affording themselves leisure moments to ask themselves what they were doing on the earth, what they were good for, in what direction they were going, what was the meaning of all this story of life. They enjoyed themselves little, and badly, and seldom; they did not throw the log in the too foamy wake which they left behind them. Antoine did not turn round, did not halt, did not relax, he simply performed his "duty." Men, too, are caught up and swept along in the rotation of these thousand great devouring mechanisms—the banks, the mines, the big stores, the ships, the railway systems—hardly anyone has time to take breath—you need too much concentration to work as swiftly as their cog-wheels, to avoid the driving belts, the motors.

Antoine was caught like an insect in this quivering web of railroads, watched over from afar by scheming abstract spiders; he was bound to these thousands of kilometers of rails, which stretched to the heart of Europe through the loopholes of frontier stations; everywhere there was

this maze of tracks—single, double, quadruple tracks—everywhere these trains on the march day and night, magnetized by the figures of the time tables, with their engine drivers leaning out for the coming of the signals, their black firemen lit up by the blazing mouth of the firebox, their guards taking their turn at icy vigil in the brakeman's cabins—everywhere these glittering points of communication, these regulating stations, lit up by their constellations of arc lamps, these turntables, these traveling platforms, these switch capstans polished as bright as firearms by the friction of the steel cables, these double inclines from which the cars rolled smoothly down to the radiating tracks, these switch points more quick to react than the captain's bridge of a ship, these smoky roundhouses—everywhere these worried men in their dismal offices, which tremble as the express trains rush by with their red, green and blue cars —these thousands of men, living, toiling, dying for the service of the lines, nameless men. . .

Antoine was one among them. He loved the interlockings of all these jobs of theirs, understood them, was at the center of it all, a prisoner of all these ramifying threads. Like many railway officials, he took pride in his profession—a man must have his self respect. He lived surrounded by symbols of his job, he decorated his table with shiny photos of Consolidations, (1) of Pacifics; (2) for paper weights he used broken lamps of metal with the flaws still showing, steel shavings discolored by the blueing tool; for years he kept a reddened fragment of gas suction pipe on his bedside table, laid upon a *Life of George Stephenson.* He hardly ever stopped thinking of his engines, running day and night along the main lines like black steeds, of these high-breasted fire-belching beasts whose outward form had so changed with the years, and he thought of his first job, of his years as an engine driver, when they did not have such a proud and sombre air as these compound locomotives and superheating engines. As the old locomotives—those which used to take the expresses from Paris to Bordeaux in ten hours—were relegated to slow trains and shunting, he felt his youth too, together with them, was being ousted from the main tracks, and he would say, as if to justify his youth:

"All the same, it was those machines that made most money for the company. . ."

Charts of the lines, schedules of the power division, reports from his mechanics, change of cars, emergency engines—all these things revolved in his brain like carefully calibrated wheels; even when at home, he was haunted by the urgency of working against the clock. In the night time, his wife would sometimes wake up and hear the words which he muttered from the depth of his dreams—they were the numbers of engines, of trains. In this era of all too rapid changes, there was often a lack of rolling stock in the depots; the station would send to the depot for machines, not one machine was ready to go, the trains would leave all the same, and they were not five hundred meters from the platform before Antoine was already worrying, always afraid that they would not reach the end of their run; he was in terror lest some mishap might befall the engine, worn out by feebleness and age like an old man who doubles up and collapses all at once. He had the tense anxiety of men who were answerable for human lives, for machinery. What distresses them more—the loss of machinery or the death of human beings? They end by loving metal as much as

man. At lunch time, Antoine would stride into the kitchen and impatiently draw aside the blinds; he would ask the cook:

"Have you seen my Bordeaux express pull in?"

At length the express came into view; he would see it coming down the long curve of the track, like a cyclist taking a bend, its trail of smoke flattened out along the roofs of the cars and its long whistle drawn out as it pulled in. Antoine breathed again. He would say:

"Now you can serve lunch. . ."

On account of these worries of his work, he harassed the men under his command; the under officials on night duty would see him suddenly throw open the door of their office at midnight or at two o'clock in the morning. He would say:

"I've come to see if everything is in order. . ."

He did not pardon weaknesses or slips in the work; there was one temporary sub-chief, a little black haired Gascon, whose small height enabled him to get down into the pits in the repair sidings without dirtying himself, and Antoine used to shout at him:

"Have you inspected the new compounds? Oh, you have, have you? Why do you hunch your back that way? Afraid of getting dirty? Not one drop of oil on your back. . . D'you call that work?"

On some days there would be a shortage of engine drivers; Antoine would take the place of the sub-chief, the sub-chiefs would work as engine drivers. Antoine was left alone with all the cares of his one hundred and fifty machines. The runs grew more frantic, wheels, coupling rods would grow heated, engine drivers at the other end of the line would ask for emergency locomotives, would be waiting for their machine in some strange depot; wives would come to the depot and ask for news of their husbands. Coupling rod caps would fall off when the train was going full speed. Antoine would await the return of his engine drivers, their reports, their explanations; he thought of the questions which would descend upon him from "the men higher up, from the Central Power Division. . ."

In the evening, Antoine, after sixteen hours, seventeen hours of work in the depot, would abruptly drop off to sleep on the dining-room table, his head resting on his arms, as exhausted as a child who has played too long. The men of the traffic division were playing a man's game, a game which did not permit of distractions, of weaknesses on the part of the players. In this way they accumulated a sediment of old age in every corner of their bodies.

M. Gruyader would say to his son-in-law:

"My poor friend, you're killing yourself. I can't understand what makes you so zealous in serving the Company. You know the men on top won't thank you for it. . ."

"And afterwards?" Antoine would reply. "There's never any harm in doing your job well. . ."

In those years Antoine stuck to his profession; he was in full posssession of his vital powers, doing what he had to do without slips or tardiness, capable of retaining all details of his day's work in his head without gaps or omissions, instantly, unreflectingly finding solutions for the problems that arose at all hours—problems of repairing a coupling rod, of coupling cars, of a report, of changing or dividing a train, of bringing up an emergency engine. Trains would be derailed and the track would have to be cleared, there were accidents—men in the cleaning gang killed, their chests crushed between two buffers—requests for help from firemen, from as-

semblers, arbitation of disputes—the problems of a man. At Aurillac the track had to be cleared of snow; he drove the emergency engine through the night in the direction of Vicsut-Cere, of Murat, and a sort of exaltation filled his breast as he drove, because of the snow and the wind which lashed his face, as he leaned out over the track just as in the old days. Every hour you had to win some small victory—against time, against fatigue, against machinery, shortages, men. The great mechanism of the Railway System was less well oiled, less inflexible than it is now; it permitted of one or two inventions by the men it employed. When Antoine explained the difficulties of his job to the inspectors, to the engineers of the traffic division, they would answer with a wink:

"The Company's short of men and materials. We know it as well as you do, Monsieur Bloyé—it's a difficult period we're passing through. . . . What do you expect? We'll soon turn the corner. . . You'll do very well out of it. . ."

This exactitude, this knowledge, forever giving rise to prompt decisions and definite movements, occupied the whole of Antoine's life and prolonged the intense period when he himself had been an engine driver. His speech still retained some of the engine driver's turns of expression; of a man who drank, he would say:

"His scoop functions all right. . ."

Of a pregnant woman:

"She's bulged her boiler plate. . ."

These reminiscences of engine driver's slang were connecting links with his youth; besides they showed the engine drivers who were under his command that he was familiar with the job, that he knew the ropes and couldn't be fooled. Thus the survivals of his youth served to strengthen his authority; everything conspired to aid his success. His long years of practice with machines, his knowledge of the workers who drove them gave Antoine an effectual grip over the men; he got everything out of them which they could give, swept them along in his own activity. . .

His wife, who had no liking for these reminiscences of a past when she was of no account, would say:

"Good heavens, Antoine, can't you talk like the rest of the world?"

But he would only laugh. He liked to laugh in those days, because he was active, because he felt strong, despite hours of weariness. He had no qualms about his language or his mode of life—at any rate he believed he had none. Everything seemed plain and simple. There were his trains; the trains had to run, just as ships have to reach port. Men like Antoine are too simple to ask themselves why it must be so; it seems no stranger to them than the fact that water flows, that night comes after the day. Trains leave, people work; that's how it is, that's part of the scheme of the world, and trains must come in on time, and people must do their job.

Antoine did not seek further afield. He was content with this certainty; it was enough to prevent him from feeling a stranger on the earth. He scarcely doubted in the justice of his world, even at times of the greatest exhaustion—when you long for the warmth of your bed with the impatience of a wounded man—at times when mishaps in his work, or a feeling of despair among people he loved, told him that everything was not going as smoothly as a piston rod. But these doubts vanished amid the too docile promptness and zeal of his daily life, he forgot them, he allowed them to sink unheeded into the background of those half-forgotten thoughts which can afford to wait long years till the day of their victory comes. . .

One night, while he was sub-chief at Aurillac, he was awakened; a train had been derailed. He dressed in the cold of the unheated room, and made his way across the little town. . . The rivulets which came tumbling down from the glistening snow-covered hills flowed with a ceaseless sound of cascades towards the waters of the Jordane, hooting over its pebbles.

The railway station hummed faintly in the night, like an animal dreaming of its daytime movements; these were the hollow hours after midnight when an occasional express rushes through, making the platform roof tremble. Bells can be heard ringing forlornly in the station master's office; the men of the maintenance gang wait for the dawn and can hardly keep their eyes open with the drowsiness of two o'clock in the morning. Beside the first platform an engine was emitting puffs of steam, two railwaymen were running along a string of freight cars, swinging lanterns. The station master, barely awake, passed his hand over the night's growth of bristle on his cheek and gave Antoine the news. It was one of these accidents such as happen every day, one of those little derailments which do not attract the Paris journalists. No special correspondents for the incidents of the traffic division; the derailment of a freight train, of a tank engine, only affects the railwaymen. . .

The engine and emergency car left the depot. Antoine was driving. He only drove now in case of a derailment or if a snow plough was needed, but he could feel that the machines always obeyed him, that he had not forgotten their ways. The accident had occurred not far from the depot. There were four cars off the rails, the locomotive, the tender—wheels in the air. The brakemen uttered shouts for help and ran hither and thither. In the network of tracks covered with a thin coating of snow frozen by the night frost, the engine was overturned; you could see its black belly, the shattered ash-pan from which glowing cinders trickled like fiery blood, the steam escaped with a whistling sound from the suction pipes; the boiler plates were staved in; amid the debacle of metal the smooth straight coupling rods still stood out with a steely glitter; it was like a shapeless corpse whose human form is torn to pieces but where a naked limb, white and intact, still gleams like a fragment of marble in the welter of torn flesh.

The head of the section gang was swearing between his teeth; the accident, it semed, was due to the bad state of the track. But the head of the depot felt no qualms. He was thinking:

"So I shan't always be the only one to get hell. . . It's time they gave the maintenance a bawling out for a change. . ."

And he took down notes in a pocket-book of square-ruled paper, bound in black silk with an elastic band; each page bore the imprint of an oily finger.

Antoine distributed the contents of the emergency car; there was no time to waste. Trains had to pass. Down the line passengers were putting their heads out of car windows and protesting at the delay; they went up to the front of the train to harass the engine driver, the head guard. The screw-jacks, the Stroudlay machines worked by the light of burning torches; one by one the cars were righted. Soon a crane would arrive, would swing out its great probing arm—blind, machine-like—above the debris, like the tentacle of some deep sea monster. . .

The bodies of the engine driver and the fireman were laid out in the balast; some sheets borrowed by the gate keeper covered their smashed faces. The head of the depot said:

"Bloyé, will you go and inform their wives on my behalf?. . . I don't much like doing it. . . You'll excuse my leaving you such an unpleasant job. . . No, no, there's no good coming back, you can go back to bed. . ."

Antoine set off beside two stretchers, whose bearers kept silent. He went on foot; in a depot, at night time, you have to walk carefully, the ground is full of snares, of traps, switch-points, pits—the engines which are keeping up steam glow with warmth, a tiny thread of smoke ascending from the funnel. Antoine was thinking; it was not so easy for him to get used to these deaths. People say "an accident at work," and they would like to make us believe that work is a sort of Field of Honor, and the Company pays a pension to the widow, a niggardly pension, it relinquishes its pennies like a miser, it thinks that death is always too highly paid, later on it takes the dead man's sons, and all is said. . . Nothing is said. Every morning Antoine would see again, in his arm, the scar left there from his engine driver days by the explosion of a water-level; it dated from yesterday—that cut which had severed the radial artery. . . He was "off the foot plate" too short a time not to feel close to men who die at their job, of blows inflicted by their job. Engineers, administrators, those who issue orders from afar, more often die in their beds than do section gangers, firemen and guards. The General Staffs seldom fall at the fighting front. How could you get used to these things? Already there were so many stretchers in his memory, so many smashed chests, so many bodies corroded and shrunken like a handful of ashes. . . He knew the life of the engine driver —his pleasures, his work, his code of honor, and his death—and now he was going, at this hour, to "inform the relatives"—it was a boss' mission, the bosses announce deaths and wounds, the bosses send messages of condolence, the bosses sometimes experience the uncomfortable sensation of being guilty. . .

The stretcher-bearers and Antoine arrived before the engine driver's house, then before that of the fireman. Antoine climbed the dark stairs, muffling his breathing, treading softly, as if to awaken the new widows as late as possible, to put off the moment when he would have to face the cries, the stammerings of women blinded by the pepper of pain, embarrassed in the coils of sleep. But he had to knock for all that, to wait for the woman's cough, the gliding of her slippers, the fumbling of her hand on the door; it would open, and all the warmth, all the security of the room would vanish; he entered this quiet shadowy place like a thief, like a demon. And he spoke at first of wounds, he would say:

"We've brought him home. . ."

Then of severe wounds, then at last—the wife had understood from the start—of death:

"Have courage, madame. . . A fatal accident. . ."

All these cries piercing his ears, these hastily lit lamps, the plates on the oilcloth beside a bottle of wine, these rigid bodies, a stupefied child in a corner, the anger of the wives:

"You take our men away from us, make pulp of them. . . A company of murderers!"

That night, Antoine was discovering death, a kind of death which could not be excused.

In order to lay out the engine driver's body on the bed, he had taken it up in his arms; how terribly heavy a dead man weighs—his weight is not only the seventy-five or eighty kilos of his flesh, his bones, his blood, all

his fluids, there is the weight of his death itself, as if all these years lived by him suddenly conspired to gather together in his body, to make themselves heavy, to coagulate like lead grown cold. A wounded man still knows how to make himself light, he has the wonderful warmth of his breathing, of his blood circulation, but this dead man was as rigid and silent as a slab of soiled marble, this dead man no longer looked like a man, only his clothes were like all other clothes! Antoine held this body tight, embraced it fraternally. Living men do not seize hold one of another like that, their bodies only come into contact through their hands; embraces are decently reserved for hours of love, men scarcely venture to touch one another. So it needed death for him to embrace this man. . .

He wanted to ask pardon, as though he had killed him with his two hands.

How much harder this trade was than that of the store-keeper, of the office worker. . . Its stakes were life and death. Why do men die then? Antoine was proud enough of his profession, of his skill, of his professional honor. But these workers who died? One should at least die for aims that are worth while, but to die because the track was not in good order, because there was a rotten sleeper, because a fish-plate had broken, to die for the shareholders, for unknown men who know nothing of the lines save stations, tickets, firstclass carriages, trains *de luxe*, for the Barons de Rothschild, for the little coupon clippers and bond holders, for the machinations of merchants, of financiers? There was a machine which valued lives a certain rate; and the shareholders thought everything was in order and the bondholders, no doubt, thought it was too expensive. . . If you didn't die, you received, before retiring, a bronze medal or a silver one, the image of a locomotive struck on it, attached to a tricolor ribbon, like a life saving medal. You received a letter:

"In return for your good and loyal services. . ."

To live, to die, for a medal, for nothing. . .

But he, Antoine Bloyé, who commanded others, who transmitted orders from above, like an adjutant—and soldiers can die during peace time too, during shooting practice, on the march, by a stray bullet, by sunstroke—he who was not the enemy of these men, was he then the accomplice of their enemies? In vain did he try to defend himself, tell himself it was the fault of the Power Division, summon official thoughts to his aid; he knew quite well that he had passed over to the side of the bosses, that he was their accomplice; all his endeavors, all his harking back to the past, did not alter the fact of this complicity a jot. He thought of his father, one of those who had to submit to orders, of his father's comrades, of the companions he had had in the Loire dockyards and in the railway depots, who were also on the side of those who serve, on the side of the life without hope. And as he went home in the icy Auvergne dawn, he said a word which held good for all his life, a word which he would force himself to forget but which would only vanish to reappear at the time of his fall, on the eve of his own death:

"I'm a traitor then. . ."

And he was.

Translated from the French by H. Scott

Sandor Gergel

Estate of a Thousand Pohs

A Story of Hungary

The sun was already setting. The purling brook reflected it in broken crimson glints. An evening breeze breathed over a road bathed in a wondrous soft light. The leaves in the nearby wood whispered assiduously.

My dog raised its head; sprawling on the ground it sniffed the air. The trees, grass, air, man, brute—all welcomed the approaching night.

The richly overgrown fields had not yet been reaped. Something stirred in the thick rye suddenly. My dog growled, rising on all fours. From among the rye a young girl dashed out and, not noticing the roadside ditch, stumbled and fell into it. Numbed with fear she kept looking now at the dog, now at me, all the time clasping her apron to her breast. The apron was bulging with something. . .

At last the girl rose to her feet. Her dress was torn. She was evidently afraid of the dog, afraid of me, and figuring how to escape. . . She looked at the dog once again. No sense in running—the dog would catch her anyway. . .

Hesitating the girl came towards me. The dog growled, but quieted down soon and stretched out on its belly.

"Good evening, praise the Lord, Jesus Christ!" the girl sang out.

"Good evening."

The girl stood there before me like a statue. She was evidently embarrassed; her eyes scanned my face. Suddenly, her bundled apron still held fast by one hand, she caught my hand with the other, and kissed it. Then she began to cry and beg me, "the reverend father," not to scold her as this is the first time she went the way of sin: she picked some rye, they have no land and there is not enough bread and then. . . there among the rye she had found a few random peas and some lentils. . .

She stood there before me in the road shedding copious tears.

"But I am not a priest at all," I remarked with a smile.

"No?" She looked sharply at my smooth shaven cheeks and then only noticed my leather trousers and leggings. Her face turned grey and her head fell to her panting, barely formed, breast. The girl sobbed quietly.

"Why are you crying? Did you steal anything?"

She wept silently. The dog got up, stretched and stood on its hind legs. Barking loudly and merrily it shoved its head at the weeping girl.

Slowly we started walking. I led the way towards the wood. On my left the dog, on my right the girl. Now she only sobbed occasionally and then calmed down altogether. At the entrance to the wood her young eyes again measured me up and down. It seemed to me the cut of my garments interested her especially. . .

We entered the wood. Now the girl looked tensely ahead of her. Her shoulders moved spasmodically.

A fresh breeze blew under the oak trees. Leaning against the trunk of a tree I stopped to listen to the chatter of the birds, watching my young companion. She stood looking at me fixedly. Her face changed color now, flaring a poppy red, now turning pale again. She stood there embarrassed,

barely able to keep on her feet, her body seemed to droop. . . All at once she stooped to her knees and began untying her apron. The rye in it rustled. Standing on her knees the girl looked up to me from below. . . It looked as if she were praying. Then she lay down prone on her back while still looking fixedly at me; she lowered her blond lashes and her blue eyes were drowned in tears.

What a beautiful young girl! And no one here under the shady trees besides her and me. . . And there she lies before me. Her breast heaves, she is waiting for me. . .

Again the blue eyes opened; full of fear and confusion they flashed while stubbornly fixed on me. . .

"Well, so come then!" animosity and a peculiar impatience sounded in her voice. And I . . . I stood over her drunkenly not knowing what to do. . .

Again the same words tore themselves from her lips:

"Well, so come then!"

She lay there her lips tight; her angry face trembling nervously.

What the devil!. . . She evidently has mixed me up with someone else: has taken me for another, at first a priest, and now. . . now. . .

"Girlie, who do you think I am?"

"So come and be done with it!"—she evidently did not care who I was.

I lifted her from the ground. Little by little we got into a friendly conversation. The girl, haltingly, told me: she thought I was the new assistant superintendant of the estate, and she. . . Well, if girls go stealing and are caught. . . well, young lords will sometimes look through their fingers. but. . . and she, what could she do now that she already had all this rye in her apron. It is all the same to her now. But really now, is the young lord not the new assistant? Well now, it is all the same to her. That's the way it has to be.

Forgetting herself she was petting the dog. The fingers of her bare feet moved over the luscious grass but in her eyes there were still traces of fear. She finally picked up her apron with its burden of rye getting ready to go. I stopped her. The wood was so wonderful, cool and comfortable; the birds chattered, the ozone saturated breeze gently wafted over my head and through the trees the sun was sinking into a crimson flame saying farewell to the world. . .

Of course it was just a slight attack of melancholy, but a man wants to do a good deed sometimes; here we have a small seventeen year old girl stealing rye to grind into bread; she has a poor mother; they live in a dirty hovel somewhere at the edge of the Estate of a Thousand Pohs. . .

"Listen, I haven't much money, but I can give you enough to buy a pound of meat. . . I have no more." And I press into her hand some bills, but she, in confusion, lets them drop; then I stuff the money into her apron.

"And take these. Give them to your brother. . . You have no brother? Well, give them to someone else!—and I empty my cigarette case—give them to anyone you please, say to your sweetheart. . ."

The girl looks at me wonderstruck. . . I have already reached the brush at the edge of the wood and she is still standing there rooted to the spot. The cigarettes are falling out of her hands on the grass.

"What's the matter? Why don't you go home? I come back, pick up the cigarettes and return them to her.

She is crying. Her strong body is racked by sobs. . . What is the trouble? Is it hysterics, or is it some misunderstanding? . . And suddenly she bursts out. The hate born words she turns into a prayer.

"What do you want of me? O, what do you want of me, young lord? I must really go home."

"So go please, no one is keeping you."

"But I don't want," she sighs, "I don't want . ."

"What don't you want? Are you afraid of something?"

I talk to her soothingly. Slowly she grows calmer. She is afraid I shall come to visit her at home. Her mother. . . her mother will break her bones if such a well dressed man comes. The whole village will laugh at her.

"But I have no intention whatever of visiting you. If you wish it, let's say I have never seen you and don't know you at all."

"So-o-o? . ." Her eyes get big.

"But then . . ." and she points to the cigarettes and the money. "And I thought the young lord was afraid to soil his clothes in the grass . . ."

It is growing dark. My dog races about impatiently. Slowly we approach the village. The girl is silent. Infrequently she drops a word or two. There is hatred in her voice, her expression, cold, reserved; the expression on her face tells me that walking in my company is to her—a hard necessity.

We are approaching the village. The girl stops and says she will turn off by a side path because . . .because she does not want to meet anyone from the village. The entire village will laugh at her if anyone sees her walk with a stranger.

"And suppose it was the estate superintendent?"

O no, God save us. with him neither. . .But what do I think of her? She is not like those city girls. Her voice sounds cold and dry. And I must not even think of coming to see her at home.

"You think then I had better have done it there in the wood?. . ."

"Yes. Lords always do so. They catch a girl unawares . . The superintendent demands it . . ."

"But I did you no harm."

She looks at the village in confusion. She holds the cigarettes in her hand as if ready to return them to me . . .No, there is her mother at home and—who knows, perhaps some tousled village swain.

"Please do not follow me," she cries, "don't do me any harm at home."

What is this, is it my dog or am I running? My legs must have gone leaping by themselves spurred by my emotions . . .

The girl is already far, she crossed by a side lane, on the run, to the other end of the village. She runs with the stolen rye and the gift of money. Tomorrow there will be a feast in the hovel. And all thanks to a superintendent who wanted nothing in return!

The village slept drowsily.

Rudolf Wittenberg

Portrait of the Leader

A Story from Life in Germany Today

The severe red-brick building is girls' school No. 91 Berlin-Wilmersdorf. A large courtyard overspread with dark sand is hemmed in on all four sides by the building. Small slender trees mark its exact quadrangle.

It is quiet now that the noise of several hundred loud voices has subsided. The clock over the main entrance shows ten. Doors slam shut. Children stand up, teachers open text books: school has begun again—the second hour.

Miss Lehmann is teaching the 4A group, ten year old girls. The teacher, an old maid, stands stiffly on her raised dais. A large parcel rests on her thin arms. The girls look at the woman and the parcel on her arms in wonder.

"Dear children. . ."

A girl giggles. Two others poke her in the back. A pen holder rolls noisily down a desk to the floor.

". . . today, before we begin our regular lesson, we shall all together do something very beautiful. . ."

A hand goes up hesitatingly.

"Ma'am. . . I know. . ."

"You know nothing. Anyone that will not immediately keep still will be barred from the celebration."

For a moment it is very quiet. Then a heavy voice of a man is heard from the street:

"Fire-wood for potato peelings."

Fresh giggles, suppressed coughs. Miss Lehmann plucks a handkerchief from her sleeve, quickly presses her nose with it and as quickly hides it away.

"I have here a painting. . ." she says and begins to remove the crackling paper.

The girls sit up, those in the back rows stand up, many eyes bright with curiosity.

". . . it is a portrait of our country's Chancellor. . ."

The voice—it swallows, bows reverently—the paper falls.

". . . of the Leader, Adolph Hitler."

"Oh. . . how sweet. . . what manly eyes. . ."

"How naturally the curl is shown. . ."

Miss Lehmann smiles with puckered lips, she breathes excitement into the little ones.

Now she holds the portrait in her bent arm so that one corner rests on her breast. Her back stiff, cross exposed, the long head cocked with self satisfaction.

A couple of the girls look down at their desks fixedly, at the end of a row two are whispering. They do not dare to speak yet.

"Now then. . ." Miss Lehmann raises her voice without changing her position, "now we shall all together decorate our class room with this painting."

Some of the girls excitedly discuss the place where the picture is to be hung. Eager voices sound. Miss Lehmann is happy and looks down upon the children benignly.

Then a head is slowly raised, two feet scrape the floor, a girl steps out from her desk. Hilda Wagner stands up. She has two braids and her hair is parted in the middle.

"Ma'am. . my father said. . . we should. . we might. . he would ask that the place be heated yet. . it is cold, the thermometer. ."

The tender voice flickers and goes out.

It has suddenly grown very still.

From the next class room singing is heard.

"u. . .ber Al. . .les in deher Wallt. . ." (above everything in the world).

The voice of the teacher sounds ominous: "Hilda Wagner! Stand up!"

Hilda is still standing, her eyes blue and dreamy, the mouth exceedingly small.

"So those are your ideals! And you a German girl? Have you no shame? Right in the midst of our beautiful celebration you think of such sordid matters. This goes to show. . ."

Miss Lehmann interrupts herself. An educational idea has overpowered her words.

"Hilda Wagner! Come here."

Hilda goes up front. The eyes of the entire class like so many projectors upon her.

"Here are hammer and nail. Hang up the portrait there, near the blackboard."

The class room is big. Miss Lehmann speaks very loudly. Hilda is alone. She would like to turn round at Greta. Greta is her friend. Greta's father was at the Oranienburg concentration camp.

He was shot "attempting to escape."

But there are the hammer and the nail and the portrait.

The class is waiting silently. One can hear the air swish.

"Hilda Wagner! Hang the portrait up."

Hilda feels her feet going towards the blackboard, feels her hand rising. In her hand she has the nail and the hammer.

Hilda gets up on a chair. She is hammering the nail in.

"Deeper." "More to the right!" "Higher."

Hilda hammers and hammers. The wall swells towards her. Hilda hammers. Her face is red. The nail is bent, it is crooked.

"It won't go in. . ." The tenseness has abated.

"Aha! So it won't go in. . . Beata von Rubner, you show her that we can hang up the portrait!"

Beata von Rubner throws her head back so that her curls fly up and jumps forward. With enthusiasm she hammers a new nail in. It penetrates into the wall, seems to hold. Then Miss Lehmann calls out:

"Stop! Now Hilda Wagner shall finish the job, hang the portrait up very nicely to the great joy of all of us."

Beata jumps back to her seat triumphantly. She laughs.

Hilda turns round towards the class. Greta is looking at her earnestly. Hilda hesitates. It only now comes to her that she has given herself away.

"Hurry up now, Wagner!"

Then something unexpected happens.

Hilda Wagner bows down her head, presses her hands together tightly and says very softly: "I won't do it."

The entire class shrinks back timidly and anxiously. Greta sits erect, her little body standing out like a flag.

Miss Lehmann grows deathly pale.

"Oh, so!" she says tonelessly.

Hilda Wagner turns slowly and walks to her seat.

The teacher hammers the nail in deeply. Then she hangs the Hitler portrait up herself.

"Copy books out!. . ."

At a quarter past one school ends. Two little girls cross the courtyard diagonally. Greta has her arm about Hilda's shoulders.

A swarm of children follows them shouting. Groups run along at a slight distance looking into Hilda's face curiously. Some point at her. "That is the one. . ."

On the first floor beards and spectacles crowd about geranium pots on the window sills: the teachers' council.

Two days later: a conference.

"I shouldn't have minced matters, Herr Architect Wagner. You would have seen the little one hang the portrait up very nicely indeed." The Rector Kurtz wears a bristling mustache. He plays one hand in his trousers. His subjects are history and geography but he takes part with special delight in the physical culture class.

Now he smiles at his audience—a gold tooth twinkles—and he continues:

"Miss Lehmann has some limitations from. . . before. No, no, for Heaven's sake. The lady has never been Red in her life, even if she now does turn red on account of this suspicion. . ."

The rector Kurtz laughs uproariously, so that the little canary bird that rested on the bust of Zeus flutters up and settles down again on the globe: at the Arctic Ocean. Kurtz loves animals, the bird is a trained one.

The architect Wagner, Hilda's father, looks out of the window thoughtfully. He is big and blue eyed. Wagner comes from Schleswig-Holstein, is politically indifferent, an enthusiastic building specialist, an educated, clever man. He has had to take on several agencies now to make a go of things. Too little building going on.

"What do you think Herr Architect," the rector turns to him, "of reading the Levites to your little girl once in a while? A couple of decent slaps on the mouth have worked wonders before. Think of the army!"

The father looks at the school-teacher calmly.

"I doubt if it will help much, Herr Rector."

"We have gotten first class results this way, as the Herr Rector has said," a young assistant teacher snaps out.

"Those. . . days are over to some extent. . . well, gone forever," a white bearded man puts in, "and thank the Lord. . ."

Rector Kurtz gets up. His face is sinister.

"You will at any rate agree with us that such rebelliousness must be broken down relentlessly. In the interests of a nationally healthy generation!"

Wagner opens his palms enquiringly and is silent.

Then Miss Lehmann turns her head towards the architect suddenly and glares at him angrily:

"You must have no portrait of the Leader at home. . . or any other emblem of the national government. . . since the child showed so little understanding!"

"No, Miss, we didn't get to that yet. The small worries take too much energy. Hilda goes to school without breakfast and yet I work way into the night hours. If it would only get a little easier. . ."

The teachers' council turn eyes towards the chief in concert.

"Well, now. . . to get back to the subject. I must, of course, report this to my superiors. A portrait of the Leader is no bagatelle, you know."

The teachers rise, the architect Wagner leaves. The conference is over.

During the next few days Hilda's desk is vacant.

On the morning of the fourth day Miss Lehmann slams the door as usual. "Prayer!"

Then she stops and forgets to fold her hands. Wagner is here again. Pale and drawn. Eyes weary with crying.

The teacher does not look at her again. The hour drags on endlessly. The Hitler portrait hangs near the blackboard.

From nine to ten geography class with Rector Kurtz. He stands on the dais with feet wide apart.

"We stopped. . . von Rubner?"

Beata von Rubner jumps up and sings out: "We stopped at the Danish islands, Herr Rector."

Kurtz extends his mouth into a grin.

"The Danish islands," the rector rises on his toes, ". . . Hilda Wagner!"

The class holds its breath. Hilda gets up slowly.

"Seeland, Laaland, Langeland, Falster, Mon, Bornholm."

Hilda sits down.

Rector Kurtz falls back on his heels in disappointment.

The girls look at Hilda with timid respect.

A peculiar tenseness holds the class.

At last the bell sounds shrilly in the hallway.

Greta and Hilda walk about the courtyard in close communion. They talk to each other very softly.

". . . when did they take him. . .?"

"Day before yesterday. . . also to Oranienburg."

"To the concentration camp?!"

Hilda nods and bends her head.

The little girls walk about the yard slowly. It is too cold to stand still.

"Listen, Hilda?"

Hilda looks at her friend. Greta presses her arm and whispers: "This afternoon. . . we'll make up some leaflets. . . about heating and breakfast at school. . . and about the picture too. . ."

Hilda stops suddenly. There are tears in her eyes. She rubs her nose quickly.

"What is the trouble. . .?"

". . . I can't go home. . . . my mother isn't there. . ."

Pause.

The stream of shouting and laughing children surges about the two of them.

". . . she does housecleaning. . . at my uncle's."

The tears burst out in a flood.

"But that's no shame, child. . . my mother delivers newspapers. . . she has to get up awfully early. . . at four o'clock, when it's dark yet. . ."

Greta looks around. The courtyard is practically empty. The last few children are running towards the entrance.

The two of them reach the class room out of breath.

"Copy books out!"

Hilda puts her hand down under the desk. There is a package under the desk: an apple and two sandwiches.

This makes her feel much warmer: so I am not altogether alone.

She wonders who it was. It could not have been Greta.

The following periods flew by fast, at last the final bell comes.

Little girls rush out of class rooms, school-bags fly, hats and coats are torn off hooks. Groups of friends, by twos and threes, run down the stairs. Teachers march by soberly. A few of the bigger girls slide down the banisters.

Hilda says to Greta: "I'm coming with you!"

Greta looks at her. Both smile. They are happy.

The stairway empties.

Scrubwomen are coming with brooms and pails.

The old janitor shuts the gate.

Translated from the German by S. D. Kogan

HELIOS GOMEZ

West Siberian Kolkhoz

One of a series of drawings made by this noted Spanish artist while on a trip through West Siberia with an international brigade of writers of the IURW including Walt Carmon (America); Sigvard Lund (Denmark); and Katherine Susannah Pritchard (Australia)

S. Tretyakov

Guards of the Harvest

Youth on the kolkhoz

Three thousand agricultural machinery centers known as MTS (machine tractor stations)—this is the machinery department of Socialist agriculture. Its arsenal consists of tractors, complex machines, like combines and threshing machines, and automobile trucks.

The collective farm enters into agreements with the MTS for the latter to cultivate its land, gives its youngsters to operate the machinery and pays the MTS in natural products, the amount depending upon the harvest.

As long as agriculture was the business of individual farmers the machine was in the hands of the peasant, principally the rich peasant, the kulak.

Now that agriculture is Socialistic, power is in government hands because power not only is the lever of the new economy, it is a lever of tremendous political strength.

An exceptionally tense class struggle raged about the process of collectivization of the village. The kulak, thrown out of his privileged economic position by the collective farm let loose all kinds of active resistance, from organized bands, wholesale slaughter of cattle, murder of collective farm activists, to sermons in church and anti-Soviet propaganda under cover.

Defeated on his front lines where he acted openly, the kulak retreated to rear positions where he began to work in masked fashion. He penetrated into the kolkhoz (collective farm), tried to get hold of the reins of management. It was thanks to him that horses fell dead in stables, fields became overgrown with weeds, people frightened by fantastic ravings buried grain to rot needed so badly by themselves and by the five year plan which was getting out tractors and combines and trucks and superphosphates for the village.

The tenseness of the struggle created the premises for organizing political departments at the agricultural machinery centers.

Stalin has said: "The collective farms must become Bolshevist ones, the collective farmers well-to-do." This means that the firm Bolshevist hand, the unbending Bolshevist will and clear Bolshevist sense must direct the activities of the collective farms united around the MTS, because the MTS is not just a machinery renting agency, it is a point to which the Bolshevists apply the Archimedian lever in order to turn over the land of the peasant and make it kolkhoz land, Socialist land.

The Bolshevist party sent its most tried and tested members into the political departments of the MTS. And the first summer's work of these political departments succeeded in digging up tremendous layers of social energy that lay latent up to now.

Old men and old women upon whom no one at the collective farm had previously paid any attention, turned out excellent inspectors of quality and their experience an excellent school of agriculture for the youngsters.

The kolkhoz children of school age were mobilized to protect the harvest. The children took to this job with tremendous interest. I have never before seen them evince such an intensely businesslike attitude towards the fields of their collective farms as this summer.

They collected millions of rubles worth of gleanings which would otherwise have gone to rot or been picked by birds.

But, mainly, this raised the importance of the Pioneer organizations and extraordinarily sharpened the Communist consciousness of the growing generation.

The episode upon which this story is based, is only a drop of that truly beautiful ocean of popular energy which the Bolshevist party shook loose by means of its ambassadors to the kolkhoz villages—the political departments. *S.T.*

Yasha was guarding the communal garden.

It was a great honor.

Yasha kept in mind where the best apples were and where the green walnuts clustered. He chased away people that stopped too long under the

low hanging plums and collected the windfalls into a basket saying "Eh" in a bass voice incredible for his twelve years, when he noticed a broken twig where only yesterday a pear showed.

Yasha had worked about the farm before. He had even earned fifty workdays. That was for being water-boy for the camp. He also drove the horses hitched to the cultivator, rode the horses drawing away from the thresher the soft bran trod down by the rakers.

But that was ordinary work which any school boy and Pioneer could do. The garden—that was an honor.

Friends came, sat down at a distance and taunted:

"Miser! Didn't you swipe apples yourself before, knock down nuts, and now you turn skinflint? They're not yours—why so stingy?"

Yasha scowls, looks down and answers in a threatening hiss:

"Eh, don't you try!"

Once the chairman of the commune, Andrey Chukhno, came to the garden—he looks seriously, but he's such a card—beware! There was a visitor with him. Andrey asked Yasha to treat them with some of the windfalls from the basket. Yasha looked at the visitor—a military hat, athletic shirt and a belt. But the trousers out.

"The militia man too?" he asked, handing Andrey an apple.

"This is not a militia man," Chukhno said seriously, but you could see the eyes smile, "this is the poldep (political department) chief. That's first. And then I'd like to ask you a question Yasha, what kind of guard are you if you give away apples for the asking without an order from the storekeeper?"

He had hardly finished the question when Yasha had snatched the apples from their hands, picked up his basket and gone behind a tree.

"Ask for some more apples," he sang out in his bass voice. "You won't see one now! You go and eat and then scold me yet!"

"So, I'll pick some myself. What'll you do to me? I am chairman," said Chukhno looking at his visitor.

"Are you a Pioneer?" asked the poldep chief.

"Eh, a Pioneer, what of it?"

Yasha expected some new trick

"Only that you are a darn good lad. In your place I'd not only take the apples away, I'd take him too. Do you know who has said: 'Public propert is sacred and inviolate' ?"

"Eh," answered Yasha, "the Bolsheviks said that."

He liked the militia man: he didn't make fun of one.

The exploit came about like this.

Yasha was running to the pond with the other children. On a hillock a man was sitting, a sack billowing near him. On the other side of the pond shepherds were shouting near cowsheds, kilns loomed where bricks were burned made with last year's straw. The oats glistened and the corn held out its tightly packed ears.

The man on the hillock let the gang run by and called only to Yasha who happened to be last.

"Tss! Youngster! Want to earn a pocketknife? (A fine pocketknife lay in the man's palm.) Bring a loaf of bread from the kitchen and the knife is yours."

It was just before reaping time. The very hardest time. Last year's bread running short, and no new bread yet. Even at the communal dining room where bread was usually heaped up in veritable mountains on the tables, measured slices of bread were laid out.

Yasha thought it over. The man laughed.

"Afraid? Think they'll catch you?"

The knife was a very fine one. A very interesting knife. The other boys far. . . maybe the man is only teasing? What kind of a chap is he? From what kolkhoz? He sits here and exchanges things for bread. And the commune is toiling away at weeding, their backs ache so that the skin cries with large tears of sweat.

"Let's see the knife."

Yasha came over keeping closer to the sack. Suddenly he grabs the sack. Young corn squeaked.

From what fields? The commune's? His, Yasha's commune? He took hold of the sack and shouted. The thief jumped up and shook Yasha. Some pals came up but at a blow with the sack ran off.

"Thief! You shan't get away!" Yasha cried and again grabbed the sack.

"Steal our corn and then hit us with our own corn?"

"Come on to the commune! Come on, you thief, come to the commune!"

He jumped at the man. He grabbed hold of his shirt. He hid his head from the blows but did not lose his hold. The shirt was giving way. The thief kept raining blows with his fists and knees. Threw him down trying to get away. Acted the way one does to get away from an attack of hornets. When the thief succeeded in freeing his shirt, Yasha seized the sack. As soon as the sack was freed Yasha clung to the shirt.

"Come on to the commune! Thief! Come on to the Commune!"

The thief was already retreating but he was being forced in the direction of the commune. Yasha maneuvered him into the yard and shouted into the window of the office:

"Hold him! Thief! To the militia!"

The womenfolk were agog: "Yasha caught a thief!" The other lads, grown bolder, kept feeling the sack of squashed corn. The young man who was appointed guard to take the thief to militia headquarters reluctantly saddled his horse, resentful at being sent away before dinner. Yasha squirmed about nearby giving strict reminders not to let the thief get away.

The young man, sore at having a schoolboy tell him what to do, looked down disdainfully, pothered around swaggering. Older members of the commune, men with beards and mustaches, came over to Yasha and asked him to tell about it. He kept telling the tale, told it a dozen of times. And every time at the end of the story he would add:

"And they (turning his head towards the other youngsters) got scared and didn't help at all."

And then his enthusiasm evaporated. The young man returned and said lazily that the thief had escaped.

"He ducked among the sunflowers. And I couldn't let the horse trample down the sunflowers, could I?"

The thief escaped, but the exploit remained. Yasha had become a hero. Quiet little girls kept bringing in gleanings from the fields. Yasha looked on while they were weighing in and thought about how much they have to

gather gleanings yet to come anywhere near him and atone for their timidity.

Visitors from the poldep now came to ask Yasha about the thief.

The tall writer also came to ask him about it.

The wind is in a rush to count the leaves on the poplars over our heads. It does not succeed. It forgets the count, stops, and begins all over again.

At a bench under a poplar tree 23 little people are in commotion. First, they can't all find places on the one bench. Then, on what grounds do the kindergarten tots inflict themselves upon a meeting of their elders, grown up Pioneers, some of them of four years standing? Maybe the babies from the creche are to be let in too! What do they understand about the solemnity of today's meeting, the agenda of which is:

1) Who stole nuts?

2) Collecting gleanings.

3) Who is to be delegated to the meeting at the MTS?

The meeting is an extraordinary one also because two grownups are taking part in it, Vasya Grigorash, the secretary of the party nucleus, and the tall writer.

They crowd closer on the bench. Their looks at the kindergarteners become sterner.

Feeling their rout imminent, the kindergarteners without a word take themselves off and in a minute a bench, like a wooden caterpillar, comes crawling under the poplars.

They have purchased their right to be present at the meeting. Everyone is excited. Really, who will go?

Yasha is more excited than anyone. He demands that the bench should not to be shaken, not to obstruct his view. His "Eh," repeated in the most various tones breaks into the girls' twitterings with a low hiss. He knows very well whom they will elect delegate.

And at that meeting the question of who is to go to Rostov will be decided. And there one goes by train. And Yasha had never seen a train.

Jennie Volotova is chairman—she is thin and wears shorts. She draws in her shoulders and clamps her clasped hands with her knees. Then she suddenly straightens out and says in a busineslike way:

"Now, who wants the floor?"

Yasha does. He wants to tell about the thief. But they won't let him. Now the question is about gleanings. It is necessary to determine who has gathered most and at the same time discuss the question why gleanings gathered lie all the time unweighed and getting lost in mice holes.

Yasha asks the floor again. He can speak about gleanings if you insist. But it is uninteresting.

"Eh," he pronounces disdainfully, his eyes on 44 bare legs hanging down from the bench. "Eh! You think they care a lot whether they thresh our gleanings? They are more interested in stealing nuts from our garden and hiding them in a pit. Yurik there hid 80 nuts near the barn and hired a kindergartener to split them for him. Artamov took 70, Pogorelov 16." But he, Yasha, uncovered their hiding places.

"And how many did you hide yourself?" a timid chirp is heard.

But Yasha pays no atention to the chirp, his brows gather into a scowl. He fulminates on.

"What good are they? When I caught the thief, did they help me? I had to fight him myself. I had to chase him into the commune yard myself."

"Stick to the gleanings, Yasha."

"I am. So, listen you, Pioneers! Do they get together to go collecting gleanings? To dinner—they are all there. But as soon as they've eaten—try to find them. I have called Marievsky. Others went, but Marievsky, he says, 'Collecting—there's nothing worse.' "

I see Marievsky, his dad's hat folding his ears, open and close his mouth making a soundless rejoiner.

"I sent for Marievsky and they had to force him to come with sticks. But I, for instance when I saw the thief. . ."

But instead of the usual approving nod or smile, Yasha sees the secretary's face has grown glum.

"Stop, Yasha! Is it right to force a fellow with sticks? Is it right to force anyone to go collecting? Do you agitate with sticks? We must send a hero to the meeting, and what kind of hero is it that orders about and shouts?"

"And cusses," confirms a hurt voice.

"And he hit me," someone grows bolder.

"And threw my hat off. . . Calls names. . . Orders about. . ."

The ranks of the children have broken open.

"Did they stop the thief?" Yasha tries to defend himself.

"A little self criticism, Yasha. Own up your mistakes."

"I will not! Before them?"

Yasha's face, pale from malaria, grows even paler.

Own up? That would be shameful! The earth dissolves under him. The children look at him silently and testily. The bench on which the triumphant victor had sat a minute ago, a boy that had captured a grown up thief, has become the bench of one under trial. Those that only yesterday obeyed the crook of his finger now were his grim superiors:

There they sit: Jennie with her business like airs. And Mitya? And he calls himself a friend. He's riveted his eyes to the ground and won't even look up. Resign? Go away from these timid collectors of gleanings? Not go to the meeting? (Such a wonderful thing! A lot I care about their meeting!) But that means to lose all. His friends will go away to the steppe without him. He will not be called to play games. Bad things will be written about him in the wall newspaper, *Pioneer of the Commune*. And if he will start to revenge himself they will ask the cook to make him eat separately.

The secretary is in no hurry He sits there and waits. He keeps quiet, only stemming those trying to break the silence by a low "sh-sh," until he breaks it himself:

"Did you ever see how grown up Communists are cleaned by the Party? No matter how big a man he is. And the more of a hero he is the more discipline he has. They cleansed me too, and I had to give an account of myself. Hard, eh? Harder than to catch a thief?"

Of course it is hard for Yasha. There it was a matter of passion. Here also passion, only worse.

The secretary continues:

"There you didn't retreat, and here you are ready to go hide in the brush?"

Yasha's head dropped with a heavy forehead. He stands on one foot, then on another, to hide the fact that his legs tremble. The meeting is petrified. Even the wind stopped counting the leaves.

Then Yasha begins to speak. He is quiet. Long runs between words.

"I admit. . . I called you. . . bad names. . . I hit Malyshin. . . I called Jennie, 'Jinnie'. . . I ordered you about. . . I made you chase Marievsky with sticks. . ."

"And did you hit Litvinova?" a thin voice from the bench.

Yasha flares up. Well, but Litvinova showed him a fig! Naturally he hit her! This way they'd all begin to stick figs in his face! He looks at the black warty hands of Litvinova. She is small and her lips are drawn thin. It seems to him there the fingers move. There they form into a fig to shame him. . .

But Litvinova's hands remain still. Yasha grows dull and says:

"I hit her."

"And who stole nuts?"

This is easier now? Here he can raise his head. Here Yasha, the prosecutor can speak out, not Yasha, the prosecuted one:

"Yurik took 80. Akentiev 70. Pogorelov 16."

"And you yourself?"

A long pause. The longest. Then Yasha raises his head, looks straight into the secretary's eyes, and says simply and distinctly:

"I—ten. But never again."

There now, that's all. He has nothing more to say. Now he won't be sent to the meeting. Everyone now knows that he who had caught a thief, he himself. . . But now there is nothing they can raise against him. He made a clean breast of it. Now they can get up and talk about him. Now the secretary will shake his head and say: "That's bad, Yasha, very bad!"

But the secretary says instead:

"Now that's fine. What do you say children, can we send Yasha to the meeting?"

"We can," chirps Litvinova.

"Now we can," puts in Jennie Bolotova.

"We can," mumbles Marievsky.

After this the voting is simple. In addition to Yasha four girls must be picked from among the gleaners. All agree that Yagodkina's brigade and Ivashina's brigade are in the lead, while Losieva's lags behind. Only she is not to blame. She herself worked, only her helpers, now Malishkina, now Fesenkina, betrayed her.

The voting is detailed and takes a long time. The votes are uneven. The brigades vote for their brigade leaders. Someone mentions Hakimov as a candidate. The girls clasp their hands in dismay, and shout in one voice:

"The lazy lout? To the meeting?"

In the end the secretary asks:

"When Yasha saw the thief, who was near?"

"Who helped Yasha?"

"No one."

"Who will help him if it should happen again?"

All hands rise silently. The poplar applauds loudly.

The rest of that day there is a busy beating of sticks on bean stalks. Everyone is shelling—into hats, basins, just on the ground, to compare afterwards.

Yasha's stick goes faster and louder than anyone's. Tomorrow he is going to the meeting.

Next day Yasha sits naked in the dining room, a coat about him, his face in his hands and tears running into his bowl of soup. His clothes

are dirty—you can't go to the meeting in such. He begged that they let him wash them himself, but they would not let him, that's not for you now.

But Yasha has no other clothes. He is a sort of adopted child of the commune. A village semi-bezprizorni (orphan) he came to his brother who worked in the commune as a mason. The brother left suddenly and Yasha remained. He slept in the single men's quarters, in the haybarn, in the hallway. Kindhearted women of the commune had washed his clothes. Now he sat there half naked waiting for them to dry.

But Yasha is stubborn, he wouldn't tell the secretary about his troubles right away.

The secretary takes Yasha to the wash women. It develops Yasha had not told them why he must have his clothes in a hurry. The secretary says that Yasha is the pride of the commune and it would not be right to let the pride of the commune go dressed in filthy clothes.

The women take the bundle, put it into the wash bowl and promise to have everything washed and ironed in time. What's more the storekeeper hands Yasha a pair of new shoes, black, with shoe-laces. So new, one is scared to walk in them.

On the road Yasha has his feet hanging out of the truck and he only lets the wind touch his new shoes, he looks at the soles keenly from time to time to see whether the mirrorlike blackness is undamaged.

The little girls on the truck guard the watermelons, tomatoes and the loaf of wheat bread, study their note books for what to say at the meeting, sing in thin voices, *None can take away from us the road already passed.*

They look with wary eyes at every passerby carrying a sack—perhaps it is a thief. They make notes of broken corn stalks and beheaded sunflowers.

Then the outlines of the grain elevator, never before seen by Yasha, appear. The road seems to end at some iron cross-pieces. A man with a green flag lets down a striped gate pole and something black, chimneyed, wheeled and all windows flashes by noisily like a green streak before Yasha.

Yasha forgets to breathe with excitement and fright. He saw a railroad train for the first time. And in this noise and iron (Eh, awful!) he will ride (maybe ride) to Rostov for the regional Pioneer meeting.

The last railroad car grows small in the distance. Now the cossing lets by all kinds of vehicles filled with youngsters. They wear arm-bands. A red flag waves on the first vehicle. Those are guards from various collective farms.

The militia man sat in a narrow closet under a portrait of Stalin. He was making up the outline of his speech before the Pioneers, complaining that it is easier to compose two speeches for Red Army men than one for Pioneers.

On the sheet of paper there were notes:

Remnants of sabotage.

The millet harvested. The corn's ripening.

Sharp Pioneer eyes.

Reap without losses.

Deliver the grain—the first commandment.

Praise the foremost collective farms.

Fight to come out first.

The presidium was sitting high up the stage, near a table covered with red cloth. On one side of Yasha, sitting at this table, was Vania Mytiashov, his feet hanging down from the bench. He was so small he couldn't be seen at all from the hall. Vania was also a guard. He had noticed a man in the potato patch. He waved his hand to the guard and began to follow stealthily. The man noticed he was being followed and ran away. Vania did not run after him. The guard came up to him:

"Did you notice who it was Vania?"

"I did."

"Who?"

Torn shoes and the deep tracks of heavy boots made it hard for Vania to talk.

"My dad. He has brought home potatoes twice already. He stuffs his mouth full and never gives me any."

On Yasha's other side Olia Hofman was sitting, a little girl from the German kolkhoz, "Red Flag," A famous collective farm—22 kilograms for each workday. This is Olia's first time at such a big meeting and the first time she has been so far away from home.

At home she often sang a song about the Christmas tree and read poetry about an angel.

But she had never spoken before Pioneers. A moment came when she also was to greet the meeting.

Olia stands before the footlights, looks out with glassy eyes and cannot open her mouth.

"Olia, *sage* (say)," a whisper from below, "in the name of the kolkhoz Red Flag I greet this meeting of the light cavalry, *Rot Front.*"

Olia turns her sparkling eyes towards the whisper and says nothing.

"*Sage doch,* Olia (do say,Olia). 'In the name of the Red Flag I greet the meeting. *Rot Front.*' "

Olia keeps quiet.

Someone volunteers to speak for her. He is silenced.

"No, no. She mustn't go away without speaking her piece."

"Olia, *sage,* 'I greet the meeting. *Rot Front!*' "

But Olia only looks blindly at the prompter.

"Olia, come on! *Rot Front!*"

Then the lips tremble and by straining their ears the meeting hears: "*Rot Front!*" Olia's first public speech.

Then the poldep chief arose. Gleaners, water boys, cultivator drivers, editors of school wall newspapers looked up to him. He nodded gaily to many of the kids he recognized:

"Now tell us how you helped the harvest in answer to the sabotage of the kulaks? Who will be the first? No one? Well then, I shall begin. Do you know about Frosia Serbina, she is eight, from the kolkhoz "Combine" who got some sacks and together with some friends gathered 25 centners of barley which she brought to the grain elevator?"

"And there sits Vania Mytiashov who caught his own dad stealing. Did Vania do right?"

"Right," answers the hall.

"And here is Lenia Seleshev, an exemplary cavalrist. He stopped a wagon to verify that no stolen grain is being taken away. The driver beat him up with the whip. But Lenia held on to the bridle until the driver threw him to the ground. This driver will be punished severely.

"Now who will tell some more?"

And guard after guard came out, from various collective farms, "Combine," "Magnitogorskaya," "Selmash,"—who can name them all!

"Together with Selesnev we caught the mechanic Samokhvalov. Pockets full of wheat, and he threatens yet. But he didn't scare us."

And then Vasia Nemchenko, from the "Red Tertsa" made a speech:

"Our gang? There! what a gang!. . ." but he got tangled up, it was too dark to read his notes. So he only added, "seventeen centners," and jumped off the stage.

Igor Filipenko came out to the footlights neat and solemn. On one side of his red tie a pocket bulged with notes. On the other side something was suspended, a knife, perhaps a whistle. Their gang had collected 25 centners, 22 light cavalrists received premiums. The cavalrists stopped three smokers at the grain stacks. The smokers cussed. But the smoking and cussing cost them pretty dearly, they were fined and censured.

Igor found two kilograms of grain at the speculator and market woman Troitska's and three kilograms of beans at Shiraev's.

Ania Sycheva from "Magnitogorskaya" spoke collectedly and in a slight sing-song:

"We gather about a pud (36 pounds) of gleanings a day. We have so far caught no thieves. But we are watching and will catch them."

Vania Mytiashov is busy with something else at the presidium table. His feet do not reach the floor. They got tired hanging down. Under the table they find the prompters coop. They press down. Some more. What if he should hold on to the bench with his hands. . .

A sudden crash is heard from under the table. The hall starts. Vania hides his face. Then he climbs down under the table, sits down cross-legged and lifting an edge of the red cloth peeps out into the hall.

The kids are envious. They'd also like to be in the presidium. It must be awfully interesting to be in the presidium.

Tisha Brusnetsov from "Red Tertsa" and Vasia Pshenichny from "Combine" tell how they made smoking places near the threshers. They nailed cards saying "Smoke here." There they placed water barrels and when anyone wanting to smoke came over, a pioneer would take a box of matches out of his pocket and make a light for him.

"We gathered 30 centners of grain," Vasia ended up. And Tisha added:

"We watch carefully and it won't make any difference if it's father, mother or brother."

Future brigade commanders and field leaders could be sensed in some of the speeches.

"As a cavalrist I warned the shocking girls: 'You mustn't stack this way.' They wouldn't listen to me. So as a result they lost five workdays."

"I told the rakers to rake up from under the wagons. But they said: 'It isn't our affair. The horse rakes will get that.' But our horse rakes are broken."

The tall writer was telling the meeting that if only five centners of gleanings are gathered in every kolkhoz in the Soviet Union, making only two centners of bread gained from each, this will also make 500 Stalingrad tractors.

"And do you know what it means when a thief takes only a handful of grain?" he said. "Only one little handful? It means he is taking a small bite from a tractor. Don't let the kulaks eat our tractors."

The kids laughed. They saw the kulak eating iron tractors and the grain crackling in his teeth.

Then the tall writer read a poem to the guards which he had written there and then, at the meeting. The poem was to be sung to the tune of *Pri-Amur Partisans:*

Closely watching field and garden
That no foe or thief shall pass,
Stand the Pioneer detachments
Of Appolia's MTS.

The children repeat the words quietly trying them out to see how they'll go with the melody.

Let the rain come down in showers,
Or the sun burn hot and strong,
No Appolia Pioneer will
Leave his post a minute long.

The children like the idea of having a song about their Appolian MTS.

The young and gay assistant chief of the poldep, Holobaev, all in white as if he just came from the tennis courts, shouts into the hall:

"We have collected 105 centners. We shall collect 140 more until planting time!"

"We shall!" answered the hall.

The assistant chief only missed by eight centners, it proved afterwards.

The auditorium was stretching necks, getting up on benches, because from back stage various things were being brought to the table.

"A cap," someone recognized. "Checkers? No, a pencil box. Copy books!"

"Yasha Avdeyev receives a prize," announces the poldep chief, "A suit of clothes, a book for Pioneers, two thick copybooks and a pencil box."

Yasha accepts everything except the pencil box.

"I don't want this round one. Give me that one."

And he points to a varnished wooden pencil box that is supposed to go with Olia Hofman's prize.

"Mine is a bad one. Eh."

"Not bad at all," said the tall writer, "just look."

He turned the cover and some figures began to jump about.

"This is a multiplication table. That one hasn't got any."

"Well, seeing it's got mutiplication I'll take it," Yasha sang out in his bass voice and took the prize.

Then he ran out into the hall and quickly changed clothes putting his old clothes away disdainfully into a corner and eyeing them like an enemy. Then he tried to make believe the bundle of old clothes in the corner was not his. The new long dove colored trousers stood up like water pipes. The dark coat looked exactly like the one the clerk at the cooperative store wore. But what was most important—it had four pockets into which many things could be put.

Together with Vania Selesnev, Yasha left for the regional meeting that same evening.

Rostov was a great shock to Yasha. He had never seen such a thing. He had never even dreamed such a thing could exist. He even forgot his stubborn habit of putting his head into his elbow, and stopping dead in his tracks when shouted at.

As a matter of fact he did do so once in the middle of the street between the car tracks and he had to be dragged away from in front of a street car ringing frenziedly.

What a lot he had to tell his friends listening with wildly beating hearts:

"The houses eight floors high. We go into a room, a little bit of one, and whew. . . it jumps up! And then they took us to the circus. There was an elephant there and trained horses danced. And then an old pony came running: such a little tiny pony, but you could see it was an old one, and it runs around and around. After a while a girl jumps out plump on back of the pony and rolls around on it now on her belly now on her back. A big guy came out after her with a long whip and wanted to hit her one not to play around but he could never get at her.

Three people were up on a swing under the roof. All of a sudden one of them wants to jump down. How he jumped! But another one caught him by the hands. Then he goes again! But the third one caught him. They didn't let him fall down.

"Then after a while they all climbed down a rope. You could see they were tired. They stood there mopping their foreheads. Then a funny guy comes out. He has a red beard and his pants are terribly wide. He comes over to them and says: 'Let me climb up.' 'Go ahead climb,' they answer. So he started to climb. It was hard for him and he flopped down. You could see he wasn't a very husky guy. Everybody laughed.

"And they took us to a factory where there were so many machines you couldn't look them all over in three hours. 'But that's nothing,' he said, and got up his full height remembering the regional pioneer meeting itself.

Yasha and Lenia Selesnev stood in the electric hall dressed in their newly presented blue shorts and sport shirts. On their chests the medals "For Guarding the Harvest" shone like gold. Your heart stopped beating from the orchestra playing and the clapping of hands, and the speech of the "statesman Herriot" as the boys called the short man smoking a pipe but you couldn't understand what he said. And the "etherèal" light coming from people that stood and turned handles of some steel machines. Then Mitia Gardienko came up on the platform. Guards came up that had caught 10 and 16 thieves. (What is Yasha's one thief?)

The boys handed a loaf of bread to the English Pioneers. Lenia Selesnev made a report and read a song written by the tall writer.

Lenia read and Yasha felt a new pride, not of himself any more, but of his MTS, of his political department, of Lenia, Ivashin and even Marievsky.

Yasha thought of the Appolia grain elevator. It resembled the grey mass of the factory they visited. Yasha was proud. He was not afraid of anybody, he was ready to tackle any enemy as he did the thief near the pond when he heard Lenia and his report.

F. Gladkov

The Incoming Tide

From Power, *A New Soviet Novel*

The first day of the general mobilization of the masses in the crater and the power station was an unheard of success. The first shift laid one thousand one hundred cubic metres of concrete on the supporting walls instead of the eight hundred demanded by the plan. At the sluice on the left bank the plan had been exceeded by a hundred and fifty cubic metres. Down on the dam preparatory work was going forward at full speed. Most of the shock brigade workers on the sluices were busy on the rocks.

That night the dazzling star on the frontal of the concrete works shone out for the first time. The clearing of the stones in the crater had gone on very well; it was finished two hours earlier than the time allowed. Vikhlayev and Fenya worked on the rockdrills themselves when there was a shortage of borers. Kolcha's brigade was transferred from concrete to boring towards the end of the work, when it became obvious that the borers would not get through their work by the time the new shift came on. An hour later their instruments were jarring away deafeningly, eating into the rocks and the bottom of the crater.

Fenya handed her instrument to Kolcha. He examined it, felt it, tested it and even sniffed at it, as if he suspected it of having some secret purpose.

"Well, Fenka, so we are going?" She did not grasp his meaning at first. Then she said:

"Oh, you're speaking about the village? It's not a very good time. The real work is only just beginning."

"Let's go, Fenka."

"I don't know anything about the village and I'm afraid."

"I need a bit of fighting on new fronts now to shake me up. The crater isn't a works, after all, and we did wonders with the concrete. Yes, and we shan't disgrace ourselves on the boring either. But we ought to go together to the same village. What do you think?"

He looked at her expectantly.

With the coldness of an examiner Fenya demanded:

"Just start that apparatus, will you, I want to see how you manage it."

Kolcha turned to his rockdrill and set his jaws. As soon as he felt the waxen surface of the metal he felt anxious. . .

The rockdrill emitted a loud report. The overheated stone smelt of burnt dust. Fenya laughed audaciously in his face.

So she regarded him as a mere boy, a dunce, a fool. She could make fun of him whenever she liked. . . he was just clay in her hands. . . an ordinary working lad, and she was an engineer. No, no, Comrade Fenya: he knew his own value and could stand any test.

"Well, Kolcha, what about it? So you'd like me to come with you?"

"We'll see. Go with whoever you like."

"What are you getting your hair off about, stupid? I shall go by myself, of course, I don't need you at all."

"Well, so that's that. Nothing more to say, is there?"

She turned away and went bounding over the rocks to the people swarming among the stones below. Her head was tilted back. The bright Uzbek cap perched on her curls annoyed him. They both glanced backwards simultaneously and their eyes met. He gave a deep sigh and gripped his drill hard.

What was he in comparison with her? Nothing. A wild uncouth lout. Half of the dam was in her hands. She was the guiding spirit of a vast and almost mysterious scheme. He was just an ignoramus. He had plenty of strength for physical labor, but this girl, who seemed so small and young, was leading the most responsible section of an extremely complicated struggle. To overtake and surpass! The slogan applied not only to the economic reconstruction of the country, but to Kolcha himself. Supposing now, he was an engineer—the builder of a power station and a colossal dam somewhere in Siberia, in the Far North or the Urals. His name was known throughout the whole country and the proletariat in the most remote corners of the Union—not only in Moscow or on the Dnieper, but in Vladivostok, Archangel, the Kuznetsk coal fields and Baku—would repeat it with pride: "Ah, Kolcha? That's one of our own engineers—he came from our ranks and worked up." The quivering drill made his body feel as if taut cords ran though it. Yes, if he could only master this learning. Knowledge was power—and strength. Why did all those people, Baleyev, Kriajitch and even Tcesar crush him so, why did he feel like a chicken before them. His wits would go wool gathering and he could not look them straight in the face. But then their eyes were different, not at all like Vassya's or Senka's, or Makukhi's. No, the eyes of the first three men crushed and bored into even stronger people than Kolcha. Only Miron and Bugayev could withstand them; they fought like equals. But Miron and Bugayev had different eyes, too, they reflected millions of other eyes and were fearless and far-seeing. Like property owners, the eyes of Baleyev, Kriajitch and Schepel looked within themselves. Fenya's and Tatiana's eyes were different again: they were deeper, clearer. They believed in what Kolcha himself believed. But those others, those strange eyes must not be allowed to remain mysterious and grudging, and in future Kolcha's eyes must hold the whole world in them and penetrate to millions of hearts and minds.

He must study, study hard and take the bulwarks of learning by storm, as they had done in the case of the work in this crater, and in the workshop, and during the fire at the works. Devil take it! He had persistence and strength enough for many a long day yet. There it was then, the glorious, irresistible goal, beckoning him on. Four years or five—it was all the same to him. The goal must be reached, knowledge must be won by perseverance and application—everything depended on these two. In five years' time he would be stronger than Baleyev and all his specialists taken together.

No matter which way one looked in this vast ravine one saw swarms of people as thick as ants, moving hither and thither in an incomprehensible maze. The roar and tumult, the shouts and bursts of laughter, the singing, the wailings of the machinery, the whistling and the sneezing of the steam. The green tubs with concrete soared over the gulf—(See! now one was swinging at a dizzy height, while the other was dropping into the abyss) and the cranes were revolving their long arms.

Dotted about the granite rocks, quivering over the perforators were the boys of his, Kolcha's brigade. Over yonder Senka, grey with dust, his gypsy face faded, had thrown himself bodily on his drill. He looked like a great mosquito, probing, searching in the skin of the earth for the depths where its rich, warm blood ran.

The seasonal workers had already ceased to drift away. New forces were flowing in every day.

Fenya mounted to the crossing and made her way between the rails to her office. She had to look up some figures about her section and bring them into order. It was a constant merry-go-round there: technicians, foremen, clerks demanding explanations, instructions, coming to report on things. The telephone forever ringing in her ears. One had to be constantly on the alert, in the swim, resourceful, efficient and capable of giving instructions as quickly and concisely as possible. People were used to her here: they were always demanding her presence on the spot, asking her advice. They all depended on her, knew that she would put her heart into helping them, bring efficiency into the work and distribute the labor properly. Kriajitch thought more of her than of Vikhlayev and always asked her to speak at meetings.

Alongside the office stood a Red soldier with a rifle, one of those who were guarding the dam. A crowd of dirty, half-naked children were carrying on a lively argument with him at the top of their voices.

"Whatcha roaring about? Stop playing with that there gun. . . We're not going away anyhow. No fear! You don't catch us running away. Call the engineers out—we want to talk to 'em. How'd you like it if we just slipped in under your nose—and you'd never even smell us. . ."

"No, you can't, kids—get out with you. . . Nobody's allowed in here without a pass."

"A pass! Ha! Hear that, boys? Imagine us with passes—we've never done any tricks with paper. We're going to fight together with you, you silly boob!. . . Our waifs and strays have always been good pals with the Red Army."

"Clear outa here this minute, I'm telling you! Hope you haven't stolen anything yet and ruined the works."

"But just listen, ole feller—we didn't come for that—I mean, the gang's not up to anything dirty this time. We want to be taken on to work."

Fenya stopped to listen and then went quickly up to the sentry. There was a lightness and assurance in her movements as if she was perfectly well aware of what to do and had the right to do it. The small curly head with the brocade Uzbek cap was tilted backwards. It seemed to express her usual eagerness to enter into all the details of her section.

"What's the matter, comrade?" she asked and without expecting an answer, turned with a look of gay inquiry to the tattered army of boys.

"What did you want, kids?" and stood there with her hands thrust deep into the pockets of her skirt.

The Red sentry did not appear to notice her; he went on pressing back the boys. There were workers and other people passing by on the left bank. They were all familiar enough to him, but his gaze followed them as usual.

"This turnip-head won't let us in." The children were indignant, but in a cheerful, independent, carefree way. One youngster even had the hardihood to give the stock of the rifle a slap.

A lad with a typhus swollen face, who seemed to be the leader, leered at Fenya like a regular scoundrel.

"I'm declarin' to you that as true as I stand here our gang has come to work. We mobilized 'way back on the Volga. What the devil do you think we tramped a whole week here for from Sasatov? You ought to help us, citizeness."

"Let them pass, comrade sentry. I'll be responsible for them."

The sentry glanced at her out of the corner of his eye and, turning his back to her, separated her from the children.

"Can't let anyone in without a pass. Don't interfere, comrade."

"But, excuse me, I'm in charge of the work here."

"Makes no difference, comrade. I have my orders. I only obey the captain of the guard. And I must ask you not to engage me in conversation."

"But this is absurd. . . Don't you see. . ."

The sentry did not see anything. He did not even look at her, but stood before the band of street waifs with his rifle held like a barrier.

"Stay here, then, kids, just a minute. I'll ring up the captain of the guard."

She went to the telephone hidden in a little wooden cupboard at the side of the sentry box. Her voice sounded muffled as though she was talking through her palms. Then she called to the sentry.

"Comrade sentry, you're wanted on the phone."

The sentry took up the receiver and after a moment said into it frowning: "Very good."

The children clustered round Fenya and followed her to the dam.

"Thanks for helping us that time, citizeness. Else we might just have had to skate right back again. You seem a bit raw yet, though, to be a boss. It's easy to see by your nose and the back of your neck that you're a bit green yourself."

"How do you like that! Look again! I'm an old woman already."

"Ho-ho, hear that, kids!"

The leader, who was almost naked and as black as a coal miner, gave her a friendly leer.

"Well, since you've come to help us—choose your work."

"Ho-ho! Well, then let's start working on concrete—or—No! over there on the machines. It wouldn't be bad to go riding on those horses."

"Hey, you, there! Law breakers and riffraff!" The leader straightened himself, grew taller, the puffiness had disappeared, and his face looked drawn, with dusty grey spots here and there. The tousled look of a boy after a fight remained. "People take us for thieves, burglars, tramps—and still we've mobilized, all of us ragamuffins."

"And just imagine, you've come all the way from Saratov! Did you ride under the cars all the way?"

"We know the railways better than the railway men themselves. What sort of a railway would it be without the ragamuffins."

"Yes, you're used to flying about from place to place like birds, but I warn you—it's very strict here. We don't want any birds of passage."

"Here that, fishermen? You'd better tell us who're the folks on top here."

"I'm taking you to another engineer now. She was once a street waif like you."

"Ho-ho! That's the stuff. Let's see what she's like. Down on the Volga there are some of our folks that lead the foreigners about—they're in the 'Intourist'. . . You should hear how they talk English!"

"Yes, and then there are writers who've been just like us."

"Writers—writers are nothing—Every street boy goes and makes himself a writer. . .That's rubbish. But to be an airman—that's the ticket!"

"You'll be trying to fly away from here next."

"Don't you laugh. There they'll squeeze you and beat you like clay and out of the clay they'll make a. ."

"A crow." (General laughter).

"The conqueror of the air. Carrion. . ."

The children went up to the barrier and looked down into the crater. Down in this turmoil among the stones and dust crowds of people were scrambling about in confusion. The excavators creaked and wailed, the derricks sang a metallic refrain, the propellers of the boring machines croaked, trucks clanked, steam engines emitted piercing shrieks. A chain of dump cars and a long string of trucks crawled through the crowd to the tunnels; new ones darted out to meet them with a loud whistle. The movement of the human waves below, the vast arena, the throb of the machinery—overwhelmed the children with its immensity; they stood there stunned, bewildered. They no longer resembled the audacious ragamuffins of half an hour ago. They had become quiet, weak youngsters who knew nothing else but their own small passions and misery, who were blown about in the wind like the dirt of the roads until huddled in heaps by the wayside.

Fenya observed them closely. They were so pathetic and neglected—these wandering children—she felt. There is some sort of a gap in life through which children escape—like seed from a torn sack on to the road and are trodden into the dirty ground under the wheels. Only a few manage, by sheer strength of will, to force their way up and throw out healthy shoots. What tremendous vitality and gifts must be necessary in order to overcome all the obstacles and horrors and afterwards burn with a clear, steady flame. Take Tatiana, for instance. There was no breaking her now. She looked at life and at people calmly, in the light of assured knowledge. Nothing could surprise or embarrass her. She sometimes looked upon Fenya less as a friend than as a young girl who had not grasped the essential in life, without which there can be no real perception of actuality. This attitude annoyed Fenya, but Tatiana only laughed and observed her out of the corner of her eye with a sort of loving condescension and pity. Another thing that astonished and vexed Fenya was that Tatiana would never speak to her about her former life as a street waif, but this she put down to Tatiana's pride: the girl did not want even people nearest to her to pity or sympathize with her.

"Look, look!" cried one of the boys. "They're just like bees in the honey-comb. Isn't that funny!"

The crater was alive.

The stairs quivered with the tramping of the feet. The boys filed meekly after Fenya, a little confused. Down below they huddled together again. Fenya was touched to see that they actually caught at her dress like tiny children. They gazed around them eagerly, but in silence, at the people busy on the stones, the gravel, ropes and trucks. . . The croak-

ing of the excavators caught their attention, the flight of the stones high over the bowed backs (what if that machine was to break just now!), the song of the tubs over the frames that looked like ships. Yonder a huge four petalled flower was dropping slowly on a line as thin as a cobweb, till it rested on a pile of rubble. The workers followed the children with approving glances. A few made ironic remarks.

"Hey, where're you leading your ragged regiment, Fenya?"

"The army's arrived! Now we shan't be long!"

Fenya found Tatiana with the workers at the new section that was being built on the monoliths of the central island and descended to the smooth granite of the crater. Some foremen were speaking to her. She gave them concise instructions quickly and decisively.

"Tatiana. . . These folk have come all the way from Saratov to work with us. You'll understand them better than I do."

Tatiana gave them a quick, casual glance. She caught hold of the fellow who was walking beside Fenya. At first she frowned, then quite unexpectedly, laughed.

"Now then, I can see you've been long on the road."

The boy screwed up his face, raised his shoulders and then shook them. Tatiana did not appear to notice this playful gesture and in a rough, nonchalant tone that Fenya had never heard her use before, asked:

"Well, did you get anything to eat today?"

"Nothing much doing."

"You'll get supper in an hour's time. The dining-room's on the shore. Here, this is to pay for all of you. What are you called? Sych?" She drew out three rubles. "The hostel's on the left bank. There they'll give you soap and you'll take all your lads for a hot shower—that's alongside. I'll be there, too. We'll try and get some clothes for you. Tomorrow come back here. You'll be given metal checks for passes. I'll give you work. You'll be brigade leader, Sych."

Then suddenly her tone softened and became friendly.

"When were you in clink last?"

Sych wrinkled his forehead and played with it as if it was a concertina.

"In Rostov I ran away from it, and just before that, in Novorossisk I was resting in the vineyards, in a colony. . ."

"Any good?"

"Rotten! They wouldn't let us have any drink. We broke into the cellar, drank as much as we wanted and cleared out with this fellow."

"Is that so? Well, now you'll have to deal with me. I was in your shoes once, too. How's that red faced crow in Novorossisk? Still alive?"

"Ho-ho, we ducked her in the sea one night, and then helped her out. She was as dumb as a fish. She lay in bed for three days and we treated her to grapes."

They laughed.

Tatiana waved her hand: "Nakitin!" The foreman, a white wizened looking man with tired shoulders, came running and leaping over the stones.

"Here I am, Tatiana Ivanovna."

"Take these boys—they'll make a strong brigade. Their brigadier is Sych—this one. Put them on to washing and clearing the block. Don't shout at them or order them about. You can trust them as much as you'd trust me."

Fenya hurried back to the stairs laughing to herself. Dear Tatiana, how quickly and well she had transferred herself into her past again without losing her present identity for an instant.

3

In the big wells brigades were working. The tubs descended and ascended smoothly and silently. Down below the workers danced in the green mess which splashed their faces, their clothes. Fenya could hear the voices of girls singing couplets on one of the blocks. Their feet clamped and champed the mealy brew. Just at that moment a tub descended quivering on the rope: it was pleasant to watch how easily it swung over the little figures of the young folks.

"Down!" sang out a girl below and waved her hand.

Fenya glanced upward into the dizzy heights. The steel rope flew like a chip somewhere to the side, towards the cross piece. The long arm of the crane wavered horribly over the gulf, at the bottom of which Fenya was standing. It was a little terrifying. The black basket of the crane, it seemed, was ready to crush down on her and on the bodies of those children.

The tub carefully lowered itself in jerks to the block. The girls and boys rushed over and formed a ring, waiting for it to descend to the centre. Fenya saw one of the little girls in overalls spring up to the tub and whirl round with it. She was small, frail and as tenacious as a cat. Fenya recognized Katyusha Bychkova. Her fair hair escaped from under the red handkerchief around her head, her impudent little nose looked saucier than ever as she leaped a couple more times on the tub. The bottom of the tub opened with a rattle and the concrete flowed out into the green bog. Someone handed Katyusha a spade and she hastily scraped the thickened layers of concrete from the walls of the tub. Then she jumped into the dough. It stirred and spread like something alive. The bottom of the bucket shut up again, and one of the boys, putting his head to his mouth shouted:

"Up!"

The tub soared upwards.

The girls surrounded Katyusha, the boys worked apart.

The spade was going hard.

"Katyusha!"

The little girl raised her head. Her grimy face brightened.

"Fenya, Fenitchka! Tell them up there on the crane that they're too slow. They can't keep up with us. . . It's a shame: we've been ahead all the time and now we're behind. The folk on the next block are ahead of us by one tub."

Fenya looked at these young girls dancing in their rubber boots on the concrete, at this Katyusha, who seemed to have grown up all in a few days, she thought of the persistence with which this valiant child had fought for her place on construction work.

When Katyusha arrived at the dam with her company and demanded to be put on to concrete straight away, the foreman had roared laughing and tried to get rid of them.

"What could you do, with your spindle shanks on the concrete? Of all the comical little dollies I ever saw! Run off home. I've no time to play with you now."

Shagayev who was present could not take his eyes off them, He was touched.

"Oh, now, Kuliabin, give them some work—something a bit easier, perhaps, like washing the blocks. They won't let you alone now, anyhow. Just look at this one: you won't get rid of her, such determination."

Katyusha broke in on Shagayev in a firm voice.

"Very well, foreman, if you can't put us on the concrete, then let us do this washing business. It's no worse than any other work. And from that we can easily go on to the concrete."

"You'd better start by tidying up the chips and scraps at the station. That's nearer your level, I should think. D'you agree?"

"Why shouldn't we agree? Of course we'll go. Won't we girls? Come on. Just map out the work for us, foreman, will you?"

They crept about the blocks and the station for several days. They worked well and never complained. The foreman watched them from a distance. Then he went over to them, completely conquered. He stood scratching his temples and grinning.

"Well, girls——this is what you might call—well—working in real shock brigade style. There's nothing to be said against that. You can go on to cleaning blocks now. You're the most comical little dolls I ever saw! But mind you, you'll have to stew over this—it's a hundred times harder—it's not like sweeping the floor at home, you know. First the broom, then the brush, then the hose-pipe. There mustn't be a speck of dust nor a hair. A very responsible job."

"That's enough, foreman, you don't need to beat about the bush so much," Katyusha flared out at him, her pride touched to the quick. The other girls supported her with a shout of: "You put us on to the work and we'll show you what we can do!"

"Oh, alright, alright. What I was going to say is—you go to the island. Go to Fenya and say Kuliabin sent you."

"Fenya, did you say? Oh, well, we'll manage without you, foreman. . . You've only been bothering us for nothing. We'll get down to business much sooner with Fenya."

They washed the blocks for two days—not only on the island but along the left canals as well. Concrete workers were badly needed. New workers came in singly and self mobilization was at present confined to the work on the rocks. The concrete was only being worked in evenings and nights. Fenya hesitated to put the girls on to this; she was afraid they were too weak for it. Even grown-up men felt worn out after it.

It called for skill and agility and a certain amount of resourcefulness in placing the workers. It was no joke to manage a tub with the capacity of a cubic metre, with a complicated fastening to its collapsible bottom, with its tremendous weight that swung in the air on a rope from forty to fifty metres long. But Katyusha was resolute in her demand that Fenya should put them on this work.

Fenya laughed and hugged the girl as she might a little sister who was jumping out of her skin to be as big as Fenya.

"Alright then. I'll give you a trial. Just to see what you can do; but on one condition, that you don't strain yourselves. If I notice you overdoing it, I'll take you off the work at once and never speak to you again."

"Done! The agreement's carried without voting. We've won girls!"

Fenya drove them off the dam and gave them strict orders to rest till next day.

Next morning she led them to where a brigade of Komsomols had been working the concrete for a month already. The boys greeted the girls with jeers and laughter.

"Why, what do you think we're going to do with these little wagtails? We'll have to look after you all the time besides laying the concrete. Get outa here, snub-nose!"

"Now, don't you show off so much!" the girls retorted. "You think you're little heroes, don't you? Just wait! We'll see who'll be first yet."

The boys regarded it as an insult to be put with the girls. They kept aloof and roared at the foreman and Fenya.

"What the hell sort of a joke is this anyhow? What do you mean by fetching these kids here? Disgracing us before everybody!" High above the workers and technicians were watching and grinning, and the boys knew it.

Katyusha tossed her head.

"Ha, you think you can make fun of us as much as you like? Are you Komsomols, I'd like to know, or just ordinary narrow minded backward folks. You wait, then, my boys, we'll show you what."

"Haw-haw-haw! Ha-ha!"

The first day the girls could not keep up with the boys. They found it very difficult to adapt themselves, became tired out and got in the boys' way. The latter elbowed them about, roared in their faces and glared terrifyingly. One of the little girls burst out crying at last. Katyusha went up to her and whispered indignantly:

"You'll disgrace the whole brigade, Glashka! Stop crying this very minute, else I'll chuck you out. Don't you realize what you are doing?"

The other girl started, wiped her eyes hastily and with a little laugh rushed back again to the rest. But the incident had not escaped the boys' notice and they bawled out triumphantly:

"Oho! Aha! The waterworks are turned on! Clear out of here, you little fleas!"

Katyusha was furious, but she went calmly over to them and began boldly:

"For one thing, if you were really class conscious fellows you should remember that it's only our first day and we've not learnt the work properly yet. When you started I bet you just crawled over those blocks. You've been working a month now. Instead of helping us, you're trying to beat us down all the time. What comrades! Well, never mind, we'll get along without your help, if it comes to that. And I must tell you that I'm not going to let this pass, the dirty way you've treated us girls; I'm going to report it to the bureau of the Komsomols. I thought you might like to know."

The boys were evidenly impressed, but they went on with their teasing out of sheer obstinacy.

The second day the girls worked better and in a week's time were several tubes ahead. The boys had quietened down and began to regard Katyusha with respect and vexation. Unnoticeably they grew accustomed to each other and a friendship sprang up between them. Competition was keen and went on gaily, but it always ended in extra tubs being on the side of Katyusha's brigade. The boys winked slyly, as much as to say—"we won't deny it, we often gave up our turn for the tubs to the girls." In competing with the other blocks they would point out the progress of

their block to their neighbors and Katyusha's name came up more and more frequently in conversation.

"While Katyusha's with us nobody can get ahead of our victorious brigade, we can bet you anything you like."

Fenya saw Osokin's boy, Aleshka, twice, at the crossing. The first time he was standing looking down over the parapet into the crater, and crying bitterly. She went up to him and put her arms around his shoulders.

"What's the matter, Aleshka? What are you crying for?"

He flung off her arm and glared at her with hatred in his tearful eyes.

"I'm not a dog or a kid to be pawed about. I'm no worse than the rest —than Katyusha down on the block. . . that you make such a fuss of and call a shock-brigade worker. The very idea! And the boys and I are treated like dirt. Do you call that fair, eh? Why did you throw us over? We were no worse than her, were we?"

"So that's it? Well, now, where could I fix you up? . . . . Even grown-up people find the work beyond them. You must remember that after all you're only fourteen, and only the fourth form, while Katyusha and the other girls have finished school altogether."

"Go to the devil, all of you!" and he turned away from her and set off along the riverside.

Once she came upon him among the rocks around the power station. He was standing watching the derricks with an expression of anguish and despair on his face. He did not hear her footsteps nor heed her approach. The despair in his eyes brought Fenya to an abrupt halt. She felt a great pity for this child but a still greater astonishment at his obstinacy. She then decided to put him on to some work to which he could grow accustomed by degrees. She would give him a trial.

"Aleshka take your lads and go down to the dam. I'll meet you there. I've got some work for you to do."

The boy stared at her, startled; then he smiled. The smile suddenly gave place to a furious look. Then the smile reappeared and he bounded away over the rocks to the settlement. All at once he stopped and shouted, almost choking with delight:

"Just a minute, Comrade Fenya. We'll be there in two ticks."

Whenever Fenya caught sight of Katyusha or Alesha at work, she thought affectionately of the children working on construction.

A. Yavitch

The Kalmyk Waistcoat

A Story of Soviet Youth of the National Minorities

Baljerma rang me up to say that the League of Communist Youth was sending her up to Moscow to study.

I met the girl, a thin, sickly little thing, at the door of the Kalmyk school in a quiet village that lay drowsy in the scorching heat.

It was evening. The orange beams of the sun pierced the dusty air, and the world was smouldering softly in the rays of a coppery sun and a veil of bronze-colored dust. Baljerma stepped aside to let me pass. She was still quite a child, she even walked childishly, a little knock-kneed.

The delicate lips scarcely parted to let the whispered words through. There was a birthmark on her left cheek. It looked like a crawling fly. Her heavy black plait had a cold gleam like lacquer.

We sat talking for a long time in the schoolroom, leaning on the narrow, low desks.

"Why do you never hear Kalmyk women laughing in the steppe?" I asked. "Why are their songs so wooden, and their dances so like convulsion as if the people were suddenly seized by fits of soundless sobbing?"

She raised her eyes; they seemed enormous in the twilight that was now gathering thickly in the room.

"But it's easy enough to understand," she replied, stroking the hacked surface of the desk. "Just think of the life of a steppe woman. A Kalmyk woman, they say, is her husband's shadow, obedient as his cow.

"Toil, hunger, insults and beatings—that is all her life consists of. That is probably why the girls never dream or long for marriage and a Kalmyk wedding reminds one of a Russian funeral. Our girls are sold to the men. They are never even curious to know who their husbands will be, cattle cannot choose their masters."

Through the window we could see the steppe burning slowly in the vast, dying flame of the sunset. The stone-floored room was cool and smelt of fresh water.

There is a peculiar quality about the outside spaces drowned in the tender haze of evening. People feel drawn together by a vague alarm and confidence. This state, when the forces of nature seem to be huddling together, lasts for about an hour, not more, a wonderful hour of dreamy, mournful stillness that falls like a caress.

Crooked writing made by an inexperienced hand stood out faintly from the dull surface of the blackboard. I went over to the board, picked up a piece of chalk and stood turning it round in my fingers. The chalk dried them, penetrated the tiniest pores in the skin; my fingers smelled of schooldays once again.

Then I said: "Tell me about the waistcoat custom?"

"The waistcoat?" rejoined Baljerma, reddening. "I never sit in an easy, stooping position, I always look as if I was tied up to a pole or something."

A waxen sunset gleamed at the window and faded quickly. Darkness fell in the room. I smoked, my cigarette-end gleamed restlessly. I could not see the girl's face, but her voice came to me deep and even—through the chill of memories.

2

Not long ago,—within the memory of the later generations, a custom belonging to strange tribes was introduced in the steppe. It consisted in binding a girl's breasts so that they would not develop. This savage mode held that stoutness in a woman was a disgrace, and a woman's bust—a deformity. From that time on it became the custom to bind girls of twelve years and upwards in a tight waistcoat that would not allow the breasts to develop. The first revolutionary decree forbade this custom, but the girls continued to wear it in secret.

The evils attendant on the wearing of this waistcoat are incalculable: the breasts of the Kalmyk women are as mutilated as the feet of Chinese women by binding.

The fact that Kalmyk women are dying out, that there are fewer women than men in the steppe and also that the women are old at thirty, is mainly due to the wearing of the waistcoat.

And Baljerma, shy and timid like all Kalmyk girls, put on the waistcoat when she was twelve years old and was as proud of it as she might have been proud of new shoes.

It was hot and tight and she could not get used to it for a long time and often cried.

People used to say about her father that "Ulenchi had jumped out of the saddle." Whenever he was in the yurt her mother preferred to be out of it.

Old Delgr had had eight children. Only two daughters survived, the rest had died off at various ages. The father usually faced the death of a child with indifference, but on the forty-ninth day, the last day of the funeral ceremonies, he would get disgustingly drunk, and begin to weep and wail:

"Why should my life be ruined? Why should a man jump out of his saddle? Because there's nothing in life but vodka and dirt and beggary!" and his dull clouded, trachoma-stricken eyes would brim over with tears and matter.

The mother, on the contrary, would cry the forty-nine days and on the fiftieth quieten down and forget the child.

She was always hungry and used to eat whenever her husband was safely out of the way. She ate greedily and rapidly, biting her fingers in her haste. And when Ulenchi returned to the kibitka, he would always shout at her: "What, you've been gobbling again, you bitch!"

He was rarely sober. He would lounge about the village for days on end, like the other Kalmyks. A whole gang of them would get together to gossip, and boast, tell lies and fight. They crouched down on their haunches, smoking incessantly and carrying on senseless arguments. Whenever the argument got round to the question of whose horse was the best, races were the result.

The years hurried by, monotonously, like the raindrops pattering from the roof.

Baljema's sickly beauty was noticed by the rich, pock-marked Ilda. Ulenchi had once been a herd-boy for Ilda's father. Ilda's legs were so bowed that he could have held the front wheel of a cart between them. People used to make fun of him.

"He rode too long on his mother's side to be a good rider—the best animal for him to ride now would be a cow."

Ilda was nearly forty and Baljerma hardly fourteen. He sent a go-between with a camel-skin full of silver coins to Ulenchi, but the latter happened to be sober and refused to talk to the match-maker. Then the pock-marked man sent another match-maker. On that occasion Ulenchi happened to be drunk, so he took the money and went on a spree.

And Ilda agreed to wait a year.

Ergechke, a Young Communist girl, who was in love with Piurve, the secretary of the Communist nucleus, persuaded her friend, Baljerma, to go to a meeting with her. There were very few members in the Communist League of Youth then but in the life of the village they had become what the hub is to a wheel.

The meeting was in full swing in the space between two kibitkas. The young men were storming against the waistcoat custom. Baljerma was astonished at their daring. She kept glancing about expecting that some terrible punishment would fall on them.

Young Piurve was shouting furiously, with foam at the corners of his lips: "The Soviet Government forbade the waistcoat, but even Communist girls are wearing it in secret. Because the old people make them do it. What did the waistcoat do to Shirke? It turned her chest inside out and she wasted away in consumption before our very eyes!"

Somebody shouted out: "Convert, turncoat, Russian Christian!"

But Piurve flung his arms out as if he was fighting with an unseen foe.

The shouts deafened Baljerma, she could not understand the Communists' rebellious speeches. The wearing of the waistcoat had become a habit with her and she no longer felt it to be such a great discomfort. In those rare moments when she was allowed to take it off, she did, it is true, feel much easier, as if she had been released from a dry, hard hoop. But the old people asserted that a barrel without hoops would swell and fall apart.

Meanwhile Narma had mounted the wooden stool that served as a platform. He was persuading the girls to leave off wearing the waistcoat. He was greatly excited and pronounced his words as if he was trying to get over some obstacle. Baljerma began to be infected by his agitation. She glanced suspiciously at her friend. Ergechka's face wore a strange expression as if she had seen a wonderful vision. She kept unfastening and fastening her bodice. Her fingers trembled. Suddenly the fingers compressed themselves into a fist and Ergetchke gave a great shout, such a shout it seemed as if her mouth had been torn open suddenly:

"We should burn it!"

The words flew out with a clang like brass plates.

The girl's cry startled everybody. The other girls recoiled, huddling together like sheep. Even Piurve was at a loss for a moment, but he soon recovered himself.

"Ergechke is right! Let's burn the waistcoats!"

The words flew at Baljerma again, striking her like stones, and she staggered, bewildered, a little wild thing crazy with fear, though none is pursuing it.

A priest appeared out of the steppe. Some one had given him warning. He leaped over pits in the ground as he ran; his red cloak flapped in the wind and wrapped itself round his legs, hindering his movements.

"Blasphemers all, backsliders, a curse on you and your children and on your grandchildren!" and he yelped, like an angry dog.

But the young people had already set fire to the waistcoat. It lay smouldering in the grass, giving out a disgusting smell. Ergechke came forward and spat upon it viciously. It hissed like a snake, and she kicked it.

"Dog!" and she spat again.

The circle drew slowly closer; someone brought a bottle of kerosene. Baljerma clasped her hands tightly over her chest as if she was afraid that her waistcoat would be taken from her by force.

The bonfire threw out sparks, crackled and blazed up. The priest started forward to stamp it out, but old Muchke pushed him aside.

"Go away," he said. "Stinking smoke comes out of a bad kibitka. The whole steppe is on fire" and he screwed up his brown eyes. The light of the fire danced on the priest's shaven skull and it seemed as if beads of bloody sweat were streaming down his forehead.

More and more waistcoats were being piled on the flames. They cracked like the Kalmyk whips. Tongues of flame rose like sails to the sky, the wind swelled them and flocks of sparks danced madly in the air.

3

Baljerma turned homewards, alone, a victim of doubts and fears and longings. She wandered along looking neither to right nor left.

She wore a pink flowered dress that reached the ground. Time and dirt had stiffened it.

Evening was falling. Voices could still be heard but they melted away rapidly in the thick waves of the oncoming night. The steppe was silent.

There was a light in her father's tent. He was a stingy man, so Baljerma could only think that perhaps someone was ill and he had been obliged to light the tent.

Not far from the yurt her sister was waiting for her. The woman looked much older than her years.

Hunger and her husband's cruelty had aged her. She was picking at her fingers nervously, like a monk at his beads.

When she saw Baljerma she gave a wry smile as if her teeth ached and said:

"Baljerma, don't go in there, stay here with me!"

"Why?" asked the girl, alarmed.

"Stay here! There are strangers in there," she turned away and muttered: "He does not want to wait any longer."

Baljerma understood.

"But the year isn't out yet," she said resentfully.

"What's to be done if Ilda is rich and our father is poor, if he once worked for the rich old man? Where will your father get the money to pay back Ilda for his expenses? He's treated us to so many sheep and so much vodka, he's rich and generous and he's bought you now," and Kishti's moist lips drooped as if she was going to cry.

That night Ilda rode over to look at his bride. He brought plenty of vodka with him, two sheep that had been killed and dressed and one live

sheep. At first all the guests sat round, eating and drinking. There was no sound but that made by their jaws. It resembled the regular slapping of a wet cloth on a board.

Then the father took a handkerchief in one hand and a silver coin in the other. And the mother said:

"Pull! May it not tear when it's pulled nor break when it's beaten. May it be strong like glue, hard like silver, and bright like the sun."

A relative of Ilda's pulled at the handkerchief, but Ulenchi was so drunk that he let his end go. It was a bad omen. At that old Delgr wept as bitterly as she had done on the forty ninth day of mourning for her dead child. But her drunken husband ordered her to stop. Then they threw the bleeding head of a sheep through the hole in the roof to signify that the betrothal ceremony was complete.

Drinking and rowdiness began. Baljerma moved away slowly into the steppe. Then she hastened, her long dress getting in her way and tripping her up. The drunken howls came to her ears fom a long way off.

She slipped down on the damp sand and threw back her head. The steppe rose up like a huge kibitka full of darkness. The parched silence seemed to lose itself in the vastness of time and space. Night wore on. It smelt of feathergrass and mint. The sky was starry; the Milky Way streamed out like a broad misty cataract throwing off a stray spray, it quivered, flamed, smouldered, and went out.

The hours died away like wornout cells on time. Somewhere, through an invisible chink in the night a vague cobweb of dawn crept in. Night was on the ebb; the black yurts lay like great shaggy heads in the lifting darkness.

Baljerma sat still, her eyes fixed, unseeing, on one point. She heard nothing, saw nothing, and thought of nothing; she was simply overcome with a kind of stunned animal anguish. She swayed as if at prayer and babbled meaningless words. She groped at the damp grass and began to pluck it up, first, blade by blade, and then in handfulls. The grass gave way with a tearing sound, as if a horse was champing at it. Then Baljerma smoothed the sand with her hands and wiped them on her dress.

She got to the kibitka as it was getting light. The guests were lying about like dead bodies. Ilda was puffing and blowing and snuffling like a cow. His face was dirty and deeply pitted with small pox and saliva trickled out of the corner of his mouth.

The girl was fascinated by this endless stream of saliva. It never stopped, and at last Baljerma burst out crying. She cried softly for fear of waking the sleepers, and dozed off like a child.

And out of the dark, rushing waves a brown circle formed itself, spun-round and broke up into dazzling stars. Baljema saw the black heap of a folded tent like a huge wheel, on the snow, and realized that they were starting out for new pastures.

A camel was standing there, craning its small head on its curved, quivering neck. Its empty jaws made chewing movements, and its Adam's apple bobbed up and down its throat.

The old mother was laying fires on either side of the track so that the nomads might pass between the cleansing flames as they went. Suddenly she threw a waistcoat into the flames. It writhed and curled like a worm.

Night hung over them like a great black bat. An owl hooted away in the darkness. And Baljerma ran and ran. The sheep's head rattling after her in pursuit. She stumbled and fell into an abyss. Her heart seemed to stand

still. She kept on falling and falling, for what seemed an eternity, then she gave a little cry and awoke.

A mouse-colored light pervaded the tent. On her father's bed lay a sheep skin coat that resembled a man, on the other a man lay sleeping. He looked like a long box. Her mother and Kishti were stretched out silently on the floor looking like carcasses in the twilight. Everything was distorted as if in a dream. Near the door stood dirty earthenware vessels. Not long ago her mother had learned to wash them but she often forgot to do so.

The heavy, close air smelt of vodka, sleeping human bodies and foul mutton. It hung in a dead silence.

Baljerma crept over to her usual place, trembling with cold and anguish, wrapped herself up in the grey felt cover and went to sleep.

4

When morning came Baljerma threw herself down before her father, but he flung her off like a mangy cat.

The habit of the dumb bound her will and she bowed to her mother's tearful prayers. But this submissiveness was only the calm before the storm. A few hours passed through the sieve of time like so many husks of grain, and then she went away into the steppe.

A foamy cloud flecked the clear sky, the steppe had ceased to breathe, a desert silence hung over it in the molten bronze light of noonday. Far away snowy stripes of dried salt lakes glittered and grey salt-marshes gave out false promises of deep pools. Water seemed to dance everywhere. The eyes ached looking at the waxen steppe smoking in the glare. It seemed as if not one, but many suns were pouring their merciless rays on this steppe. A weasel sat by the wayside cleaning his paws. And on the horizon a lifeless mirage glimmered, as sterile as a steppe song, but soon it faded, too.

Baljerma could hear a far off, monotonous creaking. When she had climbed a hillock she could see a cart drawn slowly along by a weary horse. On the cart lay a Russian peasant, bawling out a drunken song. The song floated through the hot spaces for a surprisingly long time. It rang in the still, heavy air long after the man had ceased singing.

A barefooted woman in voluminous skirts strode alongside and swore at the peasant roundly. She swayed a little as she walked pressing down the dust as if she was ironing it, with her large, solid grey feet.

Baljerma dawdled, attracted by the way this woman swore at the peasant like a man. The Kalmyk girl felt a sudden admiration for this healthy young woman who kept wiping her face from time to time with a corner of the handkerchief on her head.

As she came alongside the Kalmyk girl, the woman asked: "And where might you be going, young woman?"

But Baljerma understood very little Russian and could not speak it at all. She only smiled shyly, showing her small, yellowish teeth. Then the woman chatted to her in broken Kalmyk.

The cart went on ahead and the peasant quietened down. Low over their heads a bird darted, cutting the thick air silently and the woman stood there stooping forward a little, her arms akimbo, asking the girl questions.

"I should think you must be squeezed to death in that jacket?" she said dropping into Russian again and grinning.

She was about four years older than Baljerma, big boned and sturdily built. Her clothes hung loose and free on her. She stooped once and Bal-

jerma could see the rosy white, full contours of her breasts. Baljerma turned her face away quickly. She was awkward, uncomfortable; she suddenly felt the clinging weight of her waistcoat binding her chest like the collar on a horse's neck. She made a movement to go. All of a sudden she caught sight of a broad, quiet shadow on the ground: she had never seen a shadow that contained so much assurance and vitality. Alongside it crept a long thin one that looked as though it was flatened on a board, Baljerma laughed aloud at them.

The Russian woman tittered good naturedly and hurried off to catch up with the cart. Its violent creaking rang out over the steppe. The Kalmyk girl gazed after her and the smile faded on her compressed lips. She glanced once more at her angular shadow and her eyes darkened.

When the woman was well out of sight, Baljerma covered her face with her hands.

Everything that had vaguely tormented her suddenly became coldly clear, as it does on the river on a fair autumn day. Baljerma realized that the waistcoat was not simply an object, but a force, a law, synonimous with the pock-marked Ilda, the drunken father and the submissive mother, with the empty, burnt out steppe.

She let her hands fall away from her face and glanced about. There was not a soul in sight. The hot and thirsty steppe kept an exhausted, stupified silence as if it was cracked after an earthquake.

Baljerma rapidly undid her dress and took off her waistcoat. She stood for a moment, baring her dark breast unashamed, to the air and the sun. Then she fastened her dress and stared at the waistcoat as it writhed in her hands. It was wrinkled like an old face; crumpled, wet with prespiration, it now hung limply over her palms.

She remembered how Ergechke had spat upon the burning waistcoat, and the fury of the deceived overwhelmed her suddenly. She tore at it, ripped it, beat it and then threw it in the dust and stamped on it with all the rage of a rebellious slave.

It lay there under her feet, torn, trampled and humiliated. Baljerma kicked it away as her father had kicked her away not many hours before.

She did not notice that a cloud had crept up and now hung over the steppe like a huge rock. Lightning slit it in an evil silence. There was no thunder. Then the sand rose; it whirled and danced madly over the road and was carried away into the steppe. And the enormous sun, veiled by the sandstorm, continued to scorch the earth.

The cloud passed by without melting into rain. The wind rent it, threw the rags of it all about. It floated like a torn sail and the thirsty land, a dried up mummy, never tasted the sweetness of fecundity, never enjoyed the blessing of quenching its thirst.

The shower of sand ceased and the steppe lay exhausted, quiet, dark. With tight lips and the cold cruelty of a rebel Baljerma hurried on with a firm step through wind, heat and sand. Dust and sweat mingled on her brow and temples, and her sunken eyes, shaded by their dusty lashes and brows, glittered with a vague alarm.

She went to see Piurve in the League of Communist Youth and said, looking past him, shy and nervous:

"I'm not going to marry that old pock-marked man and I hate wearing a waistcoat. I want to learn to read and write and I want—I want to have a real woman's shadow," and she choked back her tears.

"You're the fourth girl to come here," replied Piurve quietly.

Pioneers—"Always Ready!"

At the Conference, planning for the future

Tomorrow's Soviet scientists, engineers, writers, poets. . .

A little Soviet citizen of the Don Cossack Region

SOVIET LIFE

I. Rudin

What Shall I Be?

Soviet Youth Tells Its Plans for the Future

In the three ten-year schools, a hundred children of the ninth group, adolescents of 16 years of age, answered this question of "What Shall I Be?" I did not select *wunderkinder*—unusually gifted mechanics, poets or even "best students." The very words, "best student" were foreign to them. I wanted to determine the general tendencies of the children of the older group.

I gathered the group or a part of it and began very indirectly—with a discussion of the subway or *Broken Virgin Soil.*[1] In the heat of the discussion, which excellently brought out the individuality of the children, I gradually directed them towards the question which interested me. Occasionally, I put the question directly. Some of them could not answer for certain what profession in future they would prefer.

One fact was clear, although the conclusions were not based on extensive statistical observations: most of the children want to be,—engineers of heavy industry, machine constructors, electro-technicians, chemists. The two last mentioned specialities appeal to the girls. Most of all auto and aviation construction. Then follows geology, a profession attractive by virtue of the possibility of travel. Then, agronomy. Light industry is not popular. Characteristic was the declaration of one boy of the school over which "Three Mountains" hold *shefstvo*[2] that he would have consciously chosen the textile industry which his classmates did not prefer, but for the fact that he likes history and not technical training.

Biology and particularly literature were the favorite fields. Surprising, indeed, that the girls who write verse and diaries and are considered the "literateurs",—nevertheless decided to specialize in technical fields or chemistry.

Future doctors,—very few; teachers,—not one. Very likely because after the seven year school they went to a technicum. I began to look for "pedagogues." I found one, but even he was uncertain.

The learned sciences did not draw as few as seemed evident from the first glance. They came from the youths who were well read, who loved literature, history, economic geography, political economy; but under the influence of the "engineer" group and the general tendencies of the children the majority were drawn toward industry.

There was not one political or social event which escaped these children, —the engineers, chemists, biologists, the apparent or possible men of letters.

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[1] The novel of collectivization by the Soviet writer Sholokov, part of which appeared in *International Literature* No.6

[2] In the USSR every organization takes patronage over others. This is called *shefstvo*. "Three mountains" is a textile factory.

They knew about the Leipzig trial, Herriot's visit, the treaties with America, the Kara Kum run, the flight of the stratostat, the subway, monorail trains, the raising of the *Sadko,* and so on. I was witness at a heated dispute between the future electrotechnicians and mechanics, wherein they defended with clear logic the advisability or uselessness of electric hauls on railroads. The children amaze one by their self-assurance.

Below are given the statements only of those with whom I managed to have a more or less frank conversation, or of those which I succeeded in writing down.

Pavel Demin

Don't think that we shall all be narrow specialists. You must understand the tremendous attraction of the students to technical subjects. We must overtake the capitalist countries. Construction inspires us. We once had a debate in school. The future specialist must possess a broad political outlook and a Marxist approach to life. I want to be an engineer-builder. I was born in Vladivostok, on the sea. A wood-worker, I helped build boats. Went out to sea to the islands on a sail boat which I built myself. After completing school, I shall go to Leningrad, to the shipbuilding institute.

Tanya Krasnushkina

I want to be a dramatic actress. I intentionally did not go to a theatrical studio after the seven-year-school. I want to get a complete middle education. My parents forewarned me. They said, first be sure of your talent. My friend last year finished the seven-year-school and entered a theatrical studio; now she regrets it. And I have tested myself in the dramatic circle and am sure of my ability.

Victor Shimansky

It would be good if among the twenty-two persons in our group at least one doctor or teacher could be found. Krasnushkina wants to be an actress, —an exception. All technicians. What will happen to the arts. We recently arranged a discussion. We talked it over with school No. 25. Everyone praises that school in the newspapers. It has many lovers of the learned arts. That is all right. But what am I to do if I love natural science and am interested in bee raising. The boys joke about the fact that I want to engage in bee raising in order to get even with the bees for stinging me. But I assure you, and this is no joke,—that the bee's poison has less effect upon me than on other people. I noticed this when I worked as an amateur in the entomological section of the Zoo. There I became acquainted with the habits of the bees. The bee is a working insect. A lot can be learned from the busy life of the small society, concentrated within the hive. Nature gave to the bee that which often is missing in man,—social instinct and mutual responsibility. The law of the hive—death to the drones—reminds me of socialist society where there is no place for the shirkers.

I have read many books about bee raising. *The Life of the Bee* by Maeterlinck is a very good book. The bees must feel my love for them. They practically don't touch me. Their trust amazes me.

I believe that bee raising has a big future in the Soviet Union. After all, it is not so difficult to give an apiary to each kolkhoz. I feel there is much work before me.

Jenia Dobrovolskaya

Our pupils were very much interested in the article by Strogova in *Izvestia:* "A speech in Defense of the Young Person." We know that in school No. 25 over which *Izvestia* is patron many youths are studying. One of the students of the school worked out a project of the city of the future, another learned several foreign languages in a year, and in general all of them are philosophers. We decided that the article was thought up. We invited the students of school No. 25 to come to us for a discussion. Several came.

Some of them will become musicians

I will tell all of the questions touched upon in our discussion. We argued about Darwin, about egoism, about love, about technique. The teacher took part. The representatives of school No. 25 gradually changed their tone, convinced that not only in their school but in others, for example, in ours, there are many advanced youths, well read, well informed. The representatives of school No. 25 accused us of being too zealously fascinated by applied science and technical subjects. I defended our passion. We are convinced that technique for our country has the greatest importance, but that does not prevent us from having two dramatic circles and an art circle in the school, from loving literature.

Some of the pupils want to be engineers, physicists, or chemists out of a feeling of solidarity with the others. There is a group where the majority want to be machine constructors because at the head of the group is a long browed chap who impresses all of them with his construction ideas. I understand that Demin should be a shipbuilder, he built a yacht himself, but the other lad, Kazansky, wants to build ships and icebreakers out of a desire to imitate Demin.

I draw. My close friends assure me that I have talent. But I doubt it. I think it is better to be an average engineer than an average artist. I hesitate between pictures and mechanics. I love mathematics and draughting.

I have read through practically all of the series *The History of the Youth*

of the Nineteenth Century. It is disappointing. I arose on the border of two epochs,—that of the nobility and the bourgeoisie. My century is one, like steel. It is headed towards one point. Because our youth are most of all drawn to industry is a sign of our "monolithic" strength. On the day when the stratostat "U.S.S.R." rose higher and higher above the earth, I ran out into the street, sought the best point of observation, raised my head upward, was excited, was happy. It seemed to me that not the stratostat, but all of us were aiming higher to beat the world record. In case of war, all the youth as one will go voluntarily. We are a unit. We are not divided.

The young person of the nineteenth century did not know what he wanted. We know what we are aiming for. We are robust. How interesting to be alive.

I. Litvin

What I want to be? A serious question. Have to think it over. In about two years I will give my answer.

Vasya Kudishin

My preference shifts. It would be interesting to go on geological explorations. To find a meteor somewhere in Siberia. To roam about from one place to another. From the north to the south. Our union is enormous,—you can't put it in the palm of your hand. Aeromotor construction is also interesting. Motors. And of course, to fly. It would be a shame to work at an aero plant and not fly.

Vera Balasheva

I am interested in literature more than in anything else. Shall I go to a literary university? No, I shall not. I can not. I am above all an organizer. As such I have grown up. I know myself. I need moving, living work. Biology and electricity interest me. Why not be an electrotechnician? Electrify the country, organize light, go somewhere to a small town and bring light to the kolkhoz, to the village,—from the centre, that is, from the powerful electrostations. And at the same time to organize live masses of people, to make myself a thorough cultural mass worker. To be an engineer-mass worker, an organizer, an instructor, a teacher. Wonderful! I couldn't do anything else.

Vsevolod Tsheglov

The boys insist I should take up boxing. I like physical culture and I'm fast. But that has no connection with my future work. In general, I am a middle student, fair, I am crazy about German. I think I shall be an auto construction engineer. Automobiles are beautiful. I know all the names.

Bora Melnikov

I was born on the Volga. I love the river and water transport. The White Sea-Baltic Canal is the greatest undertaking that I know. Now, I am interested in the Volga-Don Canal. What a gigantic scale! To unite river with river, and sea with sea. And to sail on a large vessel all over the Union.

Iura Zapolsky

I have a desire to be an agronom, who will determine new sorts of plants. The students have nicknamed me the rabbit. I am not insulted. In school we have a large rabbit farm. I took care of it. But rabbits no longer interest me. I know as much about them as the teacher does.

"...and there's London... and New York..."

Under my window I have planted a small garden. I wanted to grow new sorts of flowers, but nothing came of it.

I most likely will be a cotton agronom. Until 14 I lived in Tashkent. My father was a tailor. Our school went out to the cotton fields. The local cotton with the short fibres is gradually being replaced by the American and the Egyptian cotton. That is the kind of cotton we need. Amazing how much strength the agronoms put into it in order to produce a new sort of cotton, unafraid of the local climate. That is work! I am fascinated by it!

The open air draws me, as my father all his life sat and sewed indoors. I will be an agronom who will work in the fields, and not in the laboratory.

Sema Berkin

I do not want to be a technician. I want to be a military man. As a chess player I prefer the logical and well planned move to the quick thrust which relies on the stupidity of the opponent. I am the monitor of the group. Last year our group were constant grumblers. This year we won the highest mark for discipline. The entire group answers for any individual offense. It worked immediately. The boys began to study better than last year. Discipline helped study. We are the upper group. In two more years, we'll be in the higher schools.

The group is like a little guild. In the group soviet we have the same sections as in the Educational Committee—a study-production section, mass cultural, management, and sanitary sections. The best discipline springs from the consciousness of the pupils. That is what we strive for. It is no secret that last year we were constantly complaining and we studied poorly. This year it is altogether different.

As a child I dreamed of being an aviator. But when I grew up I saw that it was more interesting on dry land than in the air. On earth there is much to do. Play at chess has taught me how to think consecutively and the

military tactics in the school camp definitely convinced me that I should go into the military.

The last time in the summer camp we divided the entire camp into two armies, the Reds and the Blues, with platoons, divisions, and conducted a war in real earnest. We set up a general staff, studied the locations on the map. In the platoon of scouts and couriers we assigned the younger boy-runners. The fight began. I was the commander of an entire army, and we smashed the enemy's flank.

From an army point of view, my chest and shoulders are rather good, but not unusual. But until I am 20 I will keep growing. I will be tall. The main thing however, is clarity and logic. I am very active in the shooting and physical culture groups. I think this way: first of all it is necessary to discipline myself, since in the future battles, I shall be a Red commander. Today I am the monitor of the group.

Varya Popova

I write poetry. They call me the romanticist. But, I think it is only a transitional period. I surely will not be a poet or a writer, but there occur moments when I cannot avoid writing about my experiences. I shall never forget the day when I was transferred to the Komsomol organization. I wrote a poem about it. I had long dreamed of that day. I felt grown up at once. There is nothing more attractive to me than to be grown-up and work as adults do. School work does not completely absorb me. It sometimes seems to me that we are only acting as grown-ups.

I have not enough patience. I often want to throw all aside and go into production or travel to some far corner of the Union in order to be self-sufficient and work independent of parents. No need to wait to be completely educated. In case of war, I would at once go to the front. The boys say that I am always seeking a great exploit. Indeed, to defend the revolution—is that a great deed?

What do I want to be? The majority of the pupils are certain that I will study literature and especially history. Yes, I love them both. I have read much, both classical and contemporary writers, as well as many books on history. During the celebrations of the October holidays in school, I got excited listening to the reminiscences of the Old Bolsheviks. They tell about the struggle which I know only through books and the cinema. With great interest I look back upon times when I wasn't. And even further back, I see the tremendous historical past, the most ancient epochs, then the more modern, and on the very top the most modern, the best era, the era in which I was born.

I decided I will not discard books on history. I will study archeology. And also chemistry. Chemistry and history compete within me, as in Vera Balashava and interest in literature struggles with the temptation to work in electrotechnics. My country is the best. We are the same age. We are sixteen years old. I sometimes picture myself a grown-up chemist who has made some tremendous discovery, some rays with which a wonderful harvest is possible in the kolkhoz. And I envision how my rays destroy the enemies attacking the Soviet Union. I certainly want to make some great discovery in chemistry.

Vitya Bauman

Recently I was very much disturbed. On the radio I heard that the stratostat had already risen more than 16 kilometers; I could not leave the loud-

speaker. I ran out into the street. The day was like a glass, blue sky, sun, no clouds. Everyone was looking upward. I saw somewhere in the sky, amazingly far, a small object sailing. I could not pull myself away. Back to the loud speaker. Again to the street. Already noon,and I race to the Park of Culture for the finish of the Kara Kum run. I also was at the start and several months during the course of the run I was all excited.

More than anything else in the world, auto-construction interests me. Only not tractors, but automobiles. I am not praising myself, but I am familiar with machines and can repair them, not only theoretically. I am attracted also by the technique of war. My father is a military man.

On that very day, I heard the commander of the run—Miretsky. He was sunburned and scorched in the desert. No joke! The stratostat went dizzily towards Kolomna and was hidden from sight. An unusal day. Both events should have been completed on different days. It was a lot to bear. I almost burst. Nevertheless, the Kara Kum run I consider more important than the stratostat. I argue with the boys. I am an automobilist. I am partial.

G. Mikhailovsky

The boys want to be Archimedes or travelers. My interests vary. I collected stamps. I dissected frogs. Took photos. I have two cameras. I wrote poetry, two of my poems being printed in the *Pioneer Truth*. Now, am busy in the construction of a televisor. I will build the model and take it apart. And build another. All our lads are drawn to technical subjects. I want to be a doctor. That is my work.

Rafael Axelrod

I have read Chwolson's theory of relativity. But I do not think that deserves as much praise as does Varya Popova who has read Spencer. She read him, yes, but I think understood less than I did from Chwolson. We call Varya the romantic yet we consider her advanced. She should be a professor of history, but chemistry bothers her. I believe the significance of technique for our country is immense. We feel it in the class and at home. Mikhailovsky is showing off. He wants to be a surgeon. Alright. But I think he is a deviationist. True! He is a Pioneer, but has suggested that he will not join the organization of the Komosomols. He says that the Komsomol nucleus in the school works badly. And I say that if it is bad, one should join and make it better.

The subway has turned the pupils' heads. In class there is much talk. The railless train has excited us even more. It is all not Jules Verne, but reality.

At the beginning I was drawn to locomotive building. But I believe that electricity will replace the steam locomotive.

Some of the boys dream about geological surveying, in order to travel from place to place. I think it is not romantic but a sound idea. But I shall go into heavy machine construction.

Ina Treyvas

Since the fourth group I have worked in the sanitary circle in school and then in the Red Cross section. We went on duty in the hospital and learned how to bandage and take care of the sick. I like medical work. I have decided to be a children's doctor. I have worked for several years

already with the Octobrists. I am used to the work and cannot live without it. It seems to me that the work of the children's specialist is not limited to remedies, prescriptions and medicines, but mainly, to prophilactories, hygiene, and the training of the worker-mother. Protection of mother and childhood and all other health preserving measures demand a lively activity of the children's doctor. Such work satisfies me

Olya Chelnokova

My mother for some reason or other decided that I should learn languages and be a translator. But literature interests me. Anyway I am not consistent. I also work in mathematics with great joy. I should like to graduate from an institute of mining and travel a lot.

Zoya Fedorova

I have no special secrets. I kept a diary simply because I wanted to write. Like Treyvas I have done much work with children. I love children Last year I organized a children's playground. I should like to finish a literary institute and then be a teacher. But my parents have talked me out of it. My father worked in a factory from which he was sent to study and he has just completed the electrotechnical institute. In his opinion I will be of greater service as an engineer than as a teacher.

Iura Ushakov

My mother lives on a pension so that summers I have to earn some money. I work in an electrical factory. In general this is an electrical age. Clear. I will go into electricity.

Vadim Feldman

Why, I ask the boys, do you think only of the heavy branches of industry—metallurgy and machine construction? Why does not one of you want to go into textiles? I won't speak about rabbit breeding. Is the textile industry so insignificant in our country? "Go yourself," they say. And I would go into textiles, if I did not want to be a historian.

In general I am very fond of technical subjects. I love historical books and politics. I followed the Leipzig trial. I read through the *Brown Book*. Such villains as the fascists the world has never seen. I know the period of the Revolution very well. Marx I am afraid to tackle. I read one volume—on Commodities. Too difficult. I have to wait. I came across a book by Jaeger, *Universal History*. I started to read. Quite interesting. All kinds of Henry's and Louis'. Came to the Paris Commune. A page was given to it. I was surprised. I read further. It seems that the mighty work of the Paris Commune was only a "revolting mob." How I threw that book down on the table! I almost broke the lamp I was so angry.

Too bad I have no time to read. We are on the go all the time here in school. Have to be busy with many things. The school has done much to give us a real world outlook. Here we have the theory of revolution in natural science, social science, and in general a dialectic approach. Leninism will triumph. No other way is possible. I think I shall be a professor of history, writing about the working class movement, and at the same time work in a political section of the Machine Tractor Stations.

Tolya Ionov

The most interesting work for me is to arrange political battles among the pupils. We do the following: we divide the group into two halves. Each one must give the other questions from a list previously drawn up. The battle lasts an hour or two. The pupils get very excited. Each tries to uphold the glory of his division in which he is fighting. I prepare for the battle more than anyone else. I consider the political battle an excellent form of competition.

For a long time I was sure that I would be an engineer in aeroconstruc-ton. I was the most active participant in the aeroclub in school. I built models of aeroplanes, and gliders. I tested my gliders in the lots which are now all built up. I even tried to toss the glider higher than the houses under construction..

But later on I changed. I began to be drawn towards military affairs and lost my interest in aero-modelling. I am now interested in economic geography and in economics in general. What will I do? I think I will be an economist. The national economy needs engineer-economists. But I have to wait and make sure of myself. Maybe in another year I shall lose interest in economic geography and develop an interest in some other field. In any case, it is difficult to give an answer to the question: "What I shall be?"

But no matter what I shall be, the main interest in my life will be to work at top speed in my workers' homeland.

Annushka Gorlenkovo

I have been living for a few years in a workers' settlement but before I lived on Bolshaya Dmitrovka in the house where the Lenin Museum is. I always ran to the museum to look at the placards and pictures of the labor movement. I remember them well. I began to study them and commit them to memory. I became a Pioneer, and then a Komsomol. It seemed to me that I would study the labor movement and in general the revolutionary struggle. But in the advanced grades I became interested in natural science. In particular in Darwin's theory of evolution. Nature slowly changes in the course of millions of years. It is fascinating to learn its laws.

After finishing the ten-year school I will go to work in order to help the family; if possible I shall study somewhere in an evening institute. It is not obligatory to be an engineer. I believe that in a proletarian state. every worker at the lathe should possess a higher or at least a secondary education.

Translated from the Russian by Albert Lewis

E. Mindlin

Origin of Feelings

Conversations of Soviet Youth

I came to the youngest city in the country. Ivan was nine, and he was much older than the city. I stayed with my friend, his father—a doctor of New City. Once some friends of his own age came to visit Ivan. Four excellent little men who went to the same school. They were of the same age, fellow-citizens and neighbors. My presence did not disturb them—they knew I was "not Ivan's papa," that I am "a guest," that I do not live in their city with parks between the houses. No one of the "real grown-ups in this house" was home. The little men utilized this opportunity perfectly, giving all the shining and interesting objects in the glass cabinet a thorough once-over. After which they began to walk about the other two rooms in lively discussion. Passing a large closet with a full length mirror for a few moments, each one felt elated to see himself in real long trousers like a man's. None of them had worn such a year ago. They had all gotten them only recently. Seated in a wicker chair in the dining room I could hear them talk about the circus, the subway, Tom Sawyer, silk worms, aeroplanes, long trousers, thermometers, flying fish, the earth that revolves, school, the war. Two hours passed and they could keep on talking, but . . .

"Mother will come soon," said Ivan, with a sigh.

And they stopped their important conversation deciding that it is not so interesting when mama is around. The four little men were winding up their conversation in the hallway. Here another closet with a full length panel stood, similar to the one in the bedroom.

"What do you need two such closets for?" asked one of them, looking critically at the mirror closet encumbering the hallway.

"Papa says we don't need it. It is only in the way. But mother says let it stay," Ivan answered.

"So you don't need it?"

"No. Look at it stand there!"

The little man thought a moment and said, determinedly: "You are rich!"

Ivan's eyes sparkled with indignation: "Rich yourself! We aren't rich at all."

"You're rich," insisted the little man. "Look how many things stand around. The rich are all like that, one does not need them, but let them stand. I know."

Ivan was freckled, with a turnedup nose like a clown's. Suddenly his freckles disappeared, his face got so red. I saw him through the open door, he was thoroughly insulted. The four little men began to argue: is Ivan rich or not? My friend's son was defending himself with all his might. He could not refute the arguments of his opponents; he had to admit that his father has things he does not need.

"And this only happens to the rich. They are greedy. They collect things."

I came out to the little men and carefully mixed into their dispute. Seriously and at length I showed them that to have an unnecessary closet does not mean at all to be rich.

"But they don't need it!" wondered the lads.

I took them back into the dining room, made them sit down and told them something that happened to me. It was very long ago—twenty-three years back. I was then as old as Ivan is now. I went to school. I had friends. My father was a poor man. We lacked very many necessary things. I used to visit my friends, they were better off than we were. I was ashamed to invite them to our house where all the chairs and closets looked like sad, sick people. Once, on my birthday, my mother baked a cake and told me I may invite five or six of my friends that evening. That day everything in the house was rubbed clean until it shone. But their squalor only showed up the more; the rubbed off corners struck the eye sooner when the places where the paint was still on shone with the fever of poverty.

Amid the fuss of preparations my mother suddenly felt ill, she got up a fever. I had to go to school and tell my friends that the feast was called off, the guests would disturb the patient. And here I could not resist from beginning to describe all the presents I made believe I got from my parents. I tried to make my father appear an important and well-to-do man. I lied that he was rich. "We are rich," I told my friends.

The four little men exchanged perplexed looks as they heard my tale. They could not understand me.

"You told them you were rich yourself?" finally asked Ivan.

"Of course. I was as old as you are. I bragged."

"Bragged that you were rich?"

"Yes."

The four little men panted silently. They were thinking.

I asked them: "And you would be ashamed to be rich?

Then they answered in a chorus: "Isn't it a shame?"

And they told me about Richard, at their school, the son of a foreign engineer. This Richard once confessed that when he grows up he will try to get rich. It turned out he did not know this was shameful. That was because he had lived abroad and there the schools must be like the one I had told them. At first they teased Richard and would not play with him. But then it was explained to Richard how shameful it was and he promised never to be rich.

"He will be an engineer," Ivan added.

My acquaintanceship with the four little men of New City awakened in me an interest for children's conversations. Since then I keep notes of children's conversations. In the words of the little people I seek evidence of feelings which were unknown to us, evidence of sensations unexperienced in our childhood; of thoughts that were not understood by children of my generation. These thoughts, sensations, feelings, belong to the future. It is impossible to forget that these are experienced by little people who will be the "people" of the society that will know no classes. I make notes of their small overheard conversations only adding proper titles to them. These titles characterize the feelings or thoughts of children. Thus the conversation reproduced above bore the title "It's a shame to be rich."

The conception of wealth of Ivan's friends is broad. They are ashamed of being richer than others. One should feel ashamed to own unnecessary things, to feel attached to things, to be greedy. Little Ivan was *insulted* by being suspected of wealth. He denied this supposed wealth indignantly.

S. D.—Houseowner

Among my notes I find another conversation somewhat similar in content to the one "It is a shame to be rich."

"Clean hands before you eat!"

Boys and girls ranging in age from eight to twelve years are gathered on the veranda of a Rest Home around an old billiard table; they are greatly interested in rolling the ivory balls about on the green cloth. Their attention is unexpectedly attracted by a copper nameplate at the edge of the time darkened wood. The plate bears the legend: "Billiard shop. Karl Schultz, Malaya Dmitrovka, corner Sadovaya. S. D.

The eleven year old girl that read off the plate got stuck on the last puzzling letters, "S.D."

"What is S—D?"

"This fellow, Carl Schutz, made billiard tables!"

"Yes, but what does the S. D. here at the end stand for?"

"Maybe they stand for *sam delayu* (I make them myself)," guesses one large-eyed, high-browed youth.

"Is that so! What a guess! You don't know a thing. But I know."

"You do—well what is S. D.?"

"I know. It is very simple. The letters stand for 'Social Democrat.' That's the mensheviks. It was explained to us at school. Once they were with the workers and then they turned against them and they were put to trial when the revolution came."

Two of the older boys agree that S. D. really stands for Social Democrat.

"So it means this Karl Schultz was a Social Democrat?"

"It means he was a Social Democrat!"

"But why did he write about it on the table?"

Perplexity is written on the face of the older boy.

"That's impossible. Under the tsar they put Social Democrats in prison. I know. They were for the workers then."

"So it means Karl Schultz was also in prison?"

"No! What kind of a fool would he be to write down that he was a Social Democrat in the tsar's time!"

Again preplexity.

"So S. D. does not stand for Social Democrat?"

"No, of course not!"

"So then, what does it stand for?"

"S.D. stands for the words *Sobstveny Dom* (own house)," explained a grown up to whom they had turned for help.

"Own house? Are there such things as houses owned by someone?"

"All houses used to be owned by someone before. Even the largest ones. Ten floors and one owner."

"Like our Soviet children?"

"Of course."

"But what use was such a house to him? What did he want it for?"

Then it was explained to him the owners took advantage of their property.

"But if he wanted to go traveling, what then?"

"He traveled and the house remained his."

Next day they had a new game. It was called "Own House." One was the owner of a large house. People came who did not have their own homes.

They rented rooms from the owner. Then the owner would go away. He would go away some distance and be afraid—is his house unharmed? When he came back the tenants would put three questions before him. If he missed up on an answer the house was taken away from him and he had to hop on one leg around every tenant. One thing spoiled the game: no one wanted to be the houseowner. So they changed the game to make anyone that had to pay a fine, the houseowner.

It seemed funny to them for a house to be owned privately, a large house where many people could live. It was easier to think of "Social Democrat" than *Sobstveny Dom* for the letters S. D.

Girls and Tsars

At the end of a long asphalted street gradually spreading into service tracks for the dam, some children have gathered on the square near the carstop. They are attracted by the red and yellow cars moving along the street ringing the bell merrily. The boys look the cars over with wonder and delight. They had never seen anything like it. The street cars began to run last week. Everyone of them had already had a ride in these new cars brightly painted and shining.

But they get tired of looking at the same thing for long and begin to argue about what game they had better play.

The restless, fidgety Dema proposes:

"Let's go to our park!"

"Our park" is the children's park in the inner quarter where all the boys present live. At "their park" it is always possible to think of something. They leave the carstop and all together run across the road to their park.

"What game?" asks Antos.

Dema: "Let's build."

Osya: "Build what?"

Igor: "I propose Dnieprostroy!"

Alec: "That's foolish. On Dnieprostroy, and all of a sudden to play in building Dnieprostroy. It should be something which there isn't."

Antos: "Boys! I thought of it. Honest, I've found it!"

The boys and girls turn to Antos in unbelief. The girls keep on the sidelines. They have only just come over and do not mix with the boys.

Antos: "I propose *(fast)* a subway!"

Alec: (undecided) "Is there such a thing?"

Shura: "I have seen one!"

All: (in wonder) "You di—id?"

Shura: (proudly) "Yes."

Alec: "There is no such thing."

Yura: "There is so. I know there is."

Antos: "They are building a subway in Moscow."

Dema: "That's the Metro. But there's a railroad that goes all the way down to the other side of the earth. That's what I call a subway!"

Shura: (hurriedly) "That's the kind I went on!"

Antos: "All the way through the earth?"

Shura: "I should say so!"

Dema: "The earth is round. So they dug all the way through."

Antos: "That's impossible."

Dema: "Yes it's possible. A boy once told me."

Antos: "The earth is hot inside."

Yura: "The priests invented that."

Antos: "The priests invented a different fire altogether. As if there is some kind of another world where devils fry sinners on an eternal fire. That's very funny to read about. But this is something else. There is a real fire inside the earth. The inside of the earth hasn't cooled off yet. I know."

Dema: "And who has been there?"

Antos: "No one. Nobody can get down there. That's where the fire is."

Dema: "Since no one has ever been there, it's nonsense."

Antos: "Fie! You are a regular savage. What if no one has been there. No one, for instance, has been on the planets, so, according to you, there are none."

Dema: "They have been seen in microscopes."

Yura: "Not in microscopes—in telescopes."

Dema: "Very well then—in telescopes."

Antos: "So there. And with other instruments it's found out that there is fire inside the earth. Scientists found this out. The deeper you dig, the hotter it gets."

Osya: "Boys, let's dig."

The arguments stopped. Armed with spades, sticks, pocket-knives, anything that came handy, everyone is busy digging a subway in the middle of the square. Two little girls hesitated and then also began to dig away, but nine year old Igor threw down his spade and declared:

"I won't play with girls!"

Zena: "You never let us play together with you!"

Igor: "What do we need girls for."

Natya: "What harm do we do you?"

Igor: (importantly) "It's only little ones that play with girls."

Dema: "That's a fact! Let the girls go away!"

Eddy: "Boys! I don't think it's right. Girls have a right to play too."

A discusion arises—is it right for them to play with girls. No one could say in what way the presence of girls interferes with their games. But it seemed to everyone of them that there is something shameful about playing with girls.

It seems as if some biological law of growth was acting here—in this unfriendliness at a certain age with respect to the opposite sex. Let's see how this biological law conflicts with the influence of surroundings in these future citizens of a classless society.

. . . Antos also felt the "shame" of playing with girls. But at the same time it occurred to him that something not at all "Pioneerlike" was taking place. And really, are they doing right refusing to play with girls? Wrinkling his forehead he thought it over.

Antos: (after some thought) "The girls must play with us."

Zena: (triumphantly) "Aha! That's what I said."

Igor: (dissatisfiedly) "But why is that?

Antos: "Because it is prejudice."

Igor: "What's prejudice?"

Antos: (blushing) "That's . . . in a word it's prejudice. . . ."

Dema: "But what does prejudice mean?"

Shura: "I knew, but I have forgotten."

Antos: "Well—it's. . . foolishness. That's what it is."

Igor: (after some thought) "Then you are talking prejudice."

Antos: "Why?"

Igor: "Because girls should not play with us. We are not infants."

Antos: "Aren't grownups sometimes together with women?"

Igor: "But never with girls."

Antos: "And are girls chased out of Pioneer detachments?"

Eddy: "Antos is right. It was only before that women were not allowed anything. They had no freedom."

Antos: "It isn't like old times now to chase away girls."

Igor: "He is for the girls! Boys! He's for the girls!"

Antos: "Of course."

Eddy: "I am also for them. Pioneers don't chase away girls."

Osya: "My father said they did not have Pioneers before."

Dema: "That's a fact. Before they had policemen."

Shura: "I saw a policeman."

All are dumbfounded.

"You have seen a policeman?"

Zena: "You couldn't see one. The policemen were here when the tsar was."

Shura: (sulky) "I saw the tsar."

An unusual silence prevails. All look at Shura.

Natya: "You saw the tsar?"

Shura: (stubbornly) "Yes, I did."

Antos: "You must give your honest word as a Pioneer."

Shura: (undecidedly) "Hon. . ."

Natya: (clapping her hands) "Shura!"

Shura: (confused) "I don't do that for nonsense."

Antos: "You lied. The tsar was dead long before you were ever born."

Shura: "But I didn't see that one, I saw another one."

Zena: "Was there another?"

Yura: "There are tsars in other countries. For instance in Japan there's a tsar."

Shura: (in tears) "I saw him in Japan."

Shura's statement called out the most unexpected consequences. All have forgotten the original reason for the dispute—should they play with girls. Everyone's attention is now concentrated on Shura.

Antos makes a little speech:

"Boys! Shura came into our Pioneer detachment and he dishonors it. He is always lying. Anyone who will ever believe Shura—raise your hands!"

No one does. Antos continues:

"We do not need such fellows whom we cannot believe. I propose that we exclude him from our game."

"I won't do it again!" Shura shouts.

"We know that you always lie," Antos answers. "You say you will not do it any more? But maybe you are lying now? We will not play with you until we can believe you again."

The girls and boys go back to their game. They are digging their subway in the square. The roundfaced Shura with his curly blond hair at first tried unconcernedly to play about the ground with a piece of wood, panted a little, and raising his head, said aloud:

"Boys, I never saw the tsar of Japan! Honest I didn't see him!"

And everyone believed him, although a moment ago no one believed anything he said.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan.

ALWAYS READY: Soviet Pioneers on Guard

> "Remember that the red tie—is not a parade outfit. The red tie on your breast is steeped in the blood of hundreds and thousands of fighters.
>
> . . A Pioneer is not a youth on parade, is not a young girl gaily dressed. A Pioneer—is a fighter." *L. M. Kaganovich.*

No other childhood resembles it.

It is a unique childhood in the history of mankind, unique in the world. Legends and tales are heaped around it—it is the childhood born after October.

The world of the child was limited, much hemmed him in; family, religion, the social position of his parents, fear, and complete inequality before grown-ups.

The child was left to the mercy of his environment,— it bred in him the slave.

The world of the child was the personal life of his parents. It took possesion of him until it grew up to be his own life. The child took no part in life, he only prepared himself for it, and this determined all.

For our children the world is not barred, and their own is the general and not the family's. This defines their world quite differently, giving new qualities, feelings and actions.

The force of social convictions posesses them.

One born after October is not handicapped in his growth,—he comes into life not a child, but a little human being. The social struggle, construction, the birth of the new village, interests of the socialist fatherland, the feeling of duty for the collective,—all this is near to him, and therefore becomes the path of his growth.

Legends and tales do not come to him out of books, but grow out of life, before the eyes of all created by his own hands.

Along this path of the creation of the new man, many young people grow up into the heroes of the country.

In giving a few examples of heroic deeds of the youth, we want to picture the outline of the Pioneer-fighter who looks at the world with Bolshevik eyes.

. . . It happened at the Osetin Machine Tractor Station. Pioneer Kazbek Khumarov together with his comrades received a large task—to guard the kolkhoz crop. Once, while on duty in the fields, he noticed the kolkhoz horse on the railroad track. The train was approaching. The snorting of the locomotive could be felt. A minute and the horse would have been killed. Forgetting about himself, Kazbek threw himself at the horse, and pushed it off the track, but did not himself have time to get out of the way, the locomotive caught him between the rails and he fell.

The train passed over Kazbek, but the wheels did not touch him, and he remained alive.

. . . In the Ukraine, in the Novobug district, the Pioneer Volodya Tscherbina exposed his own mother who was stealing kolkhoz grain. Volodya's mother was arrested, while he himself, for unselfishly guarding the inviolability of socialist property, was brought up by the kolkhoz.

. . . Pioneer Pavel Tchumakov at the railroad station Uvek near Saratov, brought to justice the loader Mironova who was filching from the freight trains.

On the following day, Mironova's brother at the head of a group of hoodlums beat up Tchumakov. The Pioneers Petrov, Mikhailov, and Zakharov were also beaten up for defending him.

The railroad political section awarded the Uvek Pioneer headquarters of which Pavel was a member, a red banner and a library. Tchumakov was presented with an engraved watch, a suit of clothes, and textbooks.

. . . The class enemy anxious to make a wreck of Train No. 46, tore up the rails on the Olevsk-Kiev section. Pioneer Fedor Jigovsky noticed the break in the track. When the train approached the danger spot, Fedor whipped off his red shirt and flagged warnings to the engineer. His signalling was heeded and the train halted.

For displaying splendid socialist consciousness, the management of the South Western Railroad rewarded Fedor.

. . . The young girl Pioneer Manya Namyatova of the Vyazov school exhibited an heroic example of the defense of kolkhoz property. Manya's father, heeding the advice of "friends" killed the kolkhoz calf. Manya informed the kolkhoz authorities and the ministers of justice. When the parents found out that their own daughter had "betrayed" them, they locked her in a room and began to beat her. But they were a little late. The Pioneers, learning of Manya's deed, freed her.

Manya's mother and father were sentenced to one year in prison for stealing socialist property and for beating the best Pioneer, an udarnik in studies.

. . . The Pioneer Mitya Gordenko noticed thieves in the fields of the kolkhoz grain, cutting off the spikes and putting them in sacks. Mitya followed them and caught them.

The district organization gave a reward to Mitya and to his unit for training such a worthy Pioneer-fighter.

. . . In the village of Kolesnikovo, in the Kurgan district, Ural division, the kulak agents, the most destructive enemies of the Soviet power, the brothers Vakhrushev, Sitchev and others were stealing kolkhoz grain.

The thirteen year old Pioneer Kolya Magatin, an active member of his unit and his school, the son of a worker killed by White bandits in 1920, fearlessly exposed the actions of the revolutionary thieves.

These enemies nursed a terrible hatred against Kolya.

On the 26th of October, the drunken kulak agents, the Vakhrushevs, urged their youngest brother to summon Kolya. Kolya refused to come. The Vakhrushev brothers followed the Pioneer, traced his moves, and in the fields one of the brothers shot Kolya with his gun.

Kolya fell wounded in the leg. He tried to take out the lugs from his broken leg. He sat in the field a long time and began to freeze. Alongside of him, sat the youngest Vakhrushev. He wept as he tried to help Kolya clean the wound.

The youngest Vakhrushev ran to the village to inform the kolkhoz of what had happened. His brother Mikhail barred his path and taking the gun, killed the wounded Kolya.

The savage murder of the Pioneer aroused the deepest indignation among the masses of workers and kolkhoz members.

For two days, in the village of Kurgan the trial of the murder of Kolya Magotin continued.

The accused attempted to befog the actual motives of the crime and trumped up a complete tale of an accidental shooting.

Peter Vakhrushev, Kolya's comrade, at the trial exposed his own brothers and the rest of the participants in the horrible crime.

The kolkhoz members of the village of Kolesnikovo made an example of the brothers Vakhrushev, Sitchev, and the other murderers. All of them were kulaks, drunkards, hoodlums, thieves, the most vicious enemies of Soviet power.

They killed Kolya for the fight he was waging against them. About Kolya the kolkhoz members tell of what a splendid new type of young man he was, a fearless fighter against the enemy, an udarnik in studies. The murderers, despoilers of socialist property, enemies of kolkhoz construction, Ivan and Mikhail Vakhrushev, Sitchev, Afanasich, and Tscherbidrin were condemned to be shot. The remaining thieves, drunkards, and wreckers were sentenced to ten years of internment.

. . . On the third of September, 1932, Pavlik Morozov and his younger brother went into the woods for berries. It was a bright autumn day.

The brothers never returned home.

Three days later their bodies were found under fallen leaves.

The proletarian court sentenced the murderers—the kulak, Kulukanov, and his assistants, Danila, Sergei and Kseyna Morozov.

The young Leninists of the entire Union demanded it. Workers, peasants, all the toiling masses demanded it.

Pavlik Morozov perished heroically, aiding the Party in its giant task of building socialism. He fearlessly unmasked the class enemy—fought against those who stole inviolable socialist property. He informed the OGPU of his own father, the chairman of the soviet, who was helping the kulaks. As a witness at the trial of the accused, the fair haired Pioneer Pavel in a voice never trembling, had spoken:

"Uncle judge, I speak here not as a son, but as a Pioneer. I say, my father is betraying the cause of October!"

More than once the kulaks had threatened Pavel with death, more than once they had beaten him. But nothing could stop him. Pavel continued to appear before the branches of the militia and the Soviet power with information about the deeds of the kulaks, as well as where they concealed the stolen grain and hidden arms.

In school Pavel had been an udarnik in study. He was first in social work.

The country honors the memory of the young hero; in the village of Gerasimovko the kolkhoz is named after little Pavlik Morozov.

The Moscow extra-curricular children's combinat in the Krasno Presnensky District bears his name.

Hundreds of detachments and units of the Pioneers of the USSR are named after Pavlik.

The newspaper *Kolkhoz Youth* created a P. Morozov scholarship of eight thousand roubles for the school in which Pavlik studied, and for two other schools.

In connection with the anniversary of the death of Pavlik, in all the detachments of the Urals collections were made to be devoted to perpetuating the memory of his heroic life.

These are only several lives and deaths, but the list of heroes could fill many pages, the deeds and will of thousands of youngsters standing behind the names of Kolya, Fedor, and Pavlik—as the list placed on the All-Union Red Board by the Pioneer organization of the northern Caucasus, will bear witness.

. . . On the 28 of August, 1933, Rostov on the Don was gaily decorated. Flags were flying in the wind.

In the building of the Shapito Circus was convened the first gathering of the Pioneer and kolkhoz youth of the northern Caucasus—pioneers of the protection of socialist crops.

From the mountains of Dagestan and Osetia, from the steppes of Stavrapol, from the Kuban and the Don, from the Ukraine and the Lower Volga, the helpers of the Party and the Komsomols, met in conference—the Pioneers. Four thousand in number. The best of the army of a hundred thousand kolkhoz youth and "light cavalry" of the Northern Caucasus. These delegates had caught upward of a thousand thieves of kolkhoz grain. and had gathered one and a half thousand poods of grain which they gleaned from the fields after threshing.

Delegates of the Pioneers of the Ukraine and Lower Volga greeted the conference. An English Pioneer also greeted the assembly. He said: "We are called to fight for king and country, but we will fight for the Soviet Union, for socialism."

Here different people, different lands, and generations met.

Here the youngest outpost of the Bolshevik epoch shouted and made merry. From here could be seen the farthest and most undeveloped corners of the land.

It was here, in answer to the welcome of four thousand conquerors that Edouard Herriot, the foreign witness of the new world, much touched, said:

"I have seen much that is beautiful in your country. But I can imagine nothing more beautiful than this children's blossoming. I am deeply moved. I love children very much, and I shall carry back to the children of France the story of how the children of the great land of the Soviets even at an early age, together with their fathers take an active part in the tremendous construction of the Union."

The deeds of the heroes are more fiery agitation than words.

There where are raised in work and struggle the hands of those who won the victory of October, there will be raised the small but strong palms of those born after October.

A childhood, marching along the road where banners are waving, where trumpets are sounding, and where the drums are rumbling, can be no other than militant.

The country of the Bolsheviks carefully watches over its youth—it builds schools for them, sanatoria, parks of culture and rest, clubs; it takes care of their health; it gives them books and the experience of its best people. and they in return stand on guard and participate in its fights.

Not in vain do the three knots of the Pioneer's tie signify: one shift takes the place of the other—the Pioneer takes the place of the Komsomol, and the Komsomol that of the Party member.

Ryuji Nishizawa

High Window

I am working upon the highest window
As it is the end of the month today
(The general cleaning of the prison Azlo),
And I am ordered to sweep the cobwebs
And shine the highest window
Of our cage.

Before my eyes
I see the Pacific ocean extending,
The President McKinley *running smoothly:*
Its steam whistle a plume of white
In the air.
The blue sky and blue sea
In the bright light:
A smaller steamer with yellow smokestacks
Drifting long and narrow smoke
Upon the waves.

"Come down! Come down!"
The jailer shouts, but I know
When I come down I'll be again
In the dark behind iron bars.
O, comrades of the sea, have courage!
Comrades who grasp the top of the mainmast
Like the hand of a worker,
I have seen those yellow smokestacks
In the dockyard
And the depth of the harbor.

I was working in a factory
And the atmosphere of struggle
Almost burst its iron walls asunder
I remember what happened seventy days ago
When we nine comrades left the factory
Under arrest.
We saw the burning glance of you,
Our brothers,
Who followed with your eyes
And strengthened in us
The unflinching bravery of the proletariat.

I have lived in this prison Azlo
Ever since,
But in my breast the fire of struggle
Has never flickered or guttered
In the dark.
In the night of rain,

And the night of wind,
The waves from the ocean shake
These walls like fine steel spray.
I have endured like rock in moss,
Preserving the dreary flame.

"Come down! or you shall be dragged away!"
The jailer is shouting underneath.
Grasping an iron bar,
That my muscles derive from its strength,
I expose my face to the burnish of sunlight
And look with bitter weariness
Upon the raging billows
Of the Pacific ocean,
Which are rolling continuously!

Adapted from the Japanese by Norman Macleod and Masaki Ikeda

American Unemployed and Art

The Story of Joe Jones, Revolutionary Artist, and his Co-Workers

The photographs of an American Mural on the following pages are the work of Joe Jones, American revolutionary artist and his pupils, unemployed workers, half of whom are Negroes.

The unveiling of this mural two months ago, brought large groups of workers, and also the police who threatened destruction.

The mural still hangs on the walls of the old St. Louis Courthouse and is probably the largest in the country. It is 37 feet long and 16 feet high. It occupies an entire wall of a second floor courtroom. In fact the painter was forced to design his mural over a doorway through which a well known judge used to enter.

In the picture is a group of unemployed Negro workers, before a pawn shop; others are loading a river steamer. There is also a Negro baptism held in the river, and near it a Communist demonstration with placard slogans, among them "Save the Scottsboro Boys!" "Don't Starve—Fight!" etc. Then there are industrial scenes of St. Louis, and above, a group of unemployed workers on a passing train on their way to Washington for a national demonstration of the unemployed. Typical American scenes of today.

The story of the mural is an interesting one. It was designed by Joe Jones, a member of the St. Louis John Reed Club and his students.

Jones, still in his twenties, is a talented painter whose work has been exhibited in many cities. After a dispute with the St. Louis Art League, he obtained permission from the city authorities to use one room of the building for his art class for unemployed workers. This permission was secured only with the aid of the John Reed Club of that city, many signatures to petitions, and the enterprise of the students themselves.

Tuition was free and the class soon grew from twenty to fifty students. The quarters became too small. Although the original plan called for two lessons a week, Jones was soon obliged to give four lessons a week. Meanwhile students came to work daily from ten o'clock in the morning until eleven at night. Only those seriously interested in art were given attention.

Out of these pupils, Jones selected seven of the most able ones to work with him on the mural. Five of them were Negroes. The mural was completed in three weeks.

The materials for both the mural and the class work were secured by donations from St. Louis sympathizers. Due to lack of finances, it was necessary to make the mural of the cheapest materials. It is done in pastels, on board. The artist is quoted by the press as saying: "Everytime the door shuts, two pounds of chalk fall as dust from the picture." It is expected the mural will last from four to five months

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, reviewing the showing says in regard to the Negro students who worked with Jones: "A rather neat conceit, Jones thinks, that Negroes whose forebears were slaves at the Courthouse should find here the ultimate in freedom of artistic expression."

At the unveiling of the mural, there was also an exhibit of Soviet posters, a donation to the class from a friend in the city.

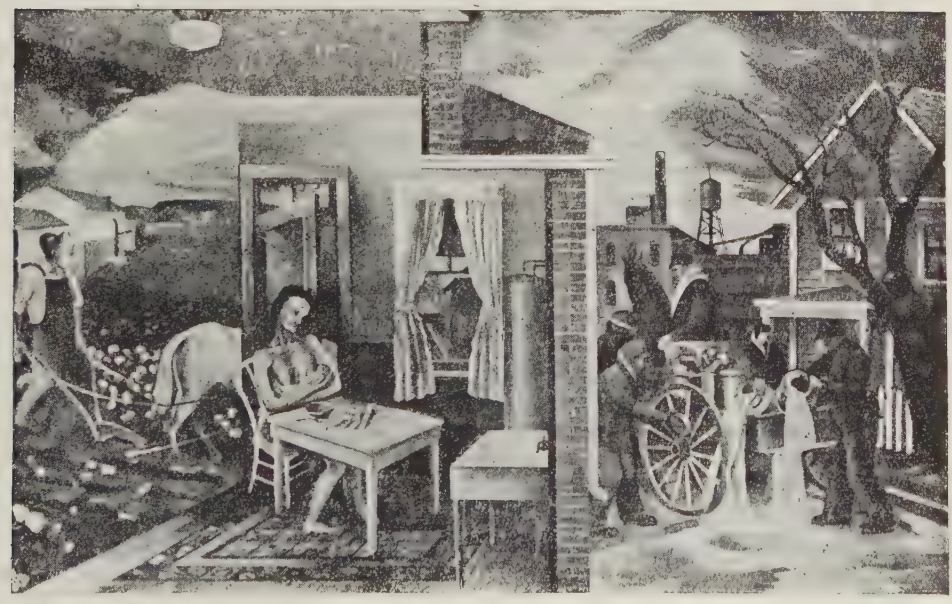
On the following pages, in addition to the reproduction of the full mural, and two of its details, there is also a separate painting, the latest work of Joe Jones, whose art is so closely bound up with the struggles of the American workers.

AMERICAN MURALS BY JOE JONES

The mural by Joe Jones and his students which has attracetd national attention. Note door in center through which a noted judge entered his courtroom, and around which the artists were forced to design the painting which brought a workers' demonstration as well as the police to the opening exhibition

A detail of the panel (right of upper mural) picturing a religious Negro baptism and behind it river workers, and a Communist demonstration with slogans, one of which is "Save the Scottsboro Boys!"

Another detail of the mural (left of upper picture on opposite page) showing Negro workers loading a barge on the Mississippi River



"Food, Clothing and Shelter,"—another mural by Joe Jones describing present-day life under American capitalism: dumping milk to hold up prices and plowing up cotton—while the needy starve

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

M. Bleiman

Jules Romains and John Dos Passos

A Soviet Critic on Jules Romains' novel "Men of Good Will" [1]

We must begin with polemics. The phenomena of Western literature usually come to us torn from their surroundings. Every writer, every book, we perceive as something separate. The reader analyzes the work of a writer without the possibility of making a comparative study. The work of a writer, contemplated without the context of the literature contemporary to him, is not appreciated dynamically.

We can only observe the growth of intellectual breadth of the author from one novel to another. The evolution, however, of the writer, in the light of the general movement of literature, remains obscure.

This leads to a situation where the separately contemplated works do not fit together into any system. It is hard to reproduce the process. The nuances are unobservable, one almost does not see the struggle. Literary works are often juxtaposed according to external features. Misunderstandings arise. The causes of success and defeat remain obscure.

False viewpoints arise.

This is, for instance, the case with the problem of the novel in West-European literature.

The impossibility of analyzing phenomena in motion leads our critics to consider every attempt to break away from the form of the novel traditional to the nineteenth century as due to the same cause.

Shades of tendencies, the aim and direction of innovations are not distinguished. Hence the listing of almost all writers who work differently than the dictates of nineteenth century require in the category of disintegration of consciousness. To this category are relegated Proust and Dos Passos and Jules Romains and the young Americans. They all find themselves on one bookshelf under one label. The diagnosis of the disease is the same for all of them. This is the way, for instance, our critics consider almost all attempts of West European literature. What is characteristic here, is that the nineteenth century form of the novel is taken as a criterion, as a literary canon. Every attempt to deviate from this form is a symptom of the disease, is a phenomenon of disintegration of consciousness. The generalization is made not on the basis of intellectual content, but on formal lines. Differences in world philosophies are not taken into account. Dos Passos on the road to revolutionary consciousness is put on a par with Proust.

Revolutionary literature is put on the same shelf as reactionary literature.

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[1] The general title for the American edition is *Passions-Pilgrims*. Two volumes have appeared to date, including the four volumes of the French edition. The second volume alone of the French edition is titled *Men of Good Will*.

Things must be put in their places. Innovation must be seen not as a quality of literary form, but as an element of world philosophy, as an inner necessity of the work of the writer. Phenomena must be differentiated without limiting ourselves to the establishing of kinships which may in the end prove consideraby less important than differences.

The classical form of the bourgeois novel can therefore not be taken as a criterion, a canon, any deviation from which is incontravertible evidence of incurable disease.

"It is useless or impossible in our times and with our audiences before whom plays are usually performed, to preserve the ancient style and nobility of dramatic poems. . . I performed another function of the creator of a tragedy, let not the absence of full form be held against me. . . I can prescribe better than I can perform," wrote Ben Johnson. An excellent formula—"I can prescribe better than I can perform"—a developed program of innovation of the dramatists of the Elizabethan era.

In another place the same Ben Johnson wrote that he has written a sufficient number of plays to prove that he can compose plays in accordance with the canons. He now wants to show life as he sees it, without taking into account compulsory dramatic canons.

These quotations I bring to prove a thought far from new. Formalism is apparent not only in the isolation of formal qualities of literature from world philosophy. It is apparent also in not taking into account the fact that the movement of social consciousness predicates literary form as one of the means of expressing this consciousness.

The classical novel of the nineteenth century is not considered any longer as an innovation. Stendhal and Hugo are felt to be classically regular. But they were innovators, This has to be explained.

The young bourgeoisie set before literature the problem of depicting life realistically. It introduced new criteria for evaluating phenomena, new standards of relations to it. It is not by chance, for instance, that melodrama took the place of the high tragedy of Racine. Melodrama is not only the market place form of drama. It is—and this much is more important—the concretization in images of new methods of evolving phenomena. It is the transposition of bourgeois moral categories into art.

Writers of the young bourgeoisie, keenly and really experiencing life, setting down the social changes of the period with keen observation, could find no new methods of literary expression. Thus the lexicon changed and the argot of the exchange began to live in the novels of Hugo, Sue, and Zola, and the plot, based on financial operations, in Balzac.

We do not feel now what a colossal innovation this seemed in the surroundings of the pastoral literature of the eighteenth century.

New forms of consciousness, new methods of evaluating human relations, expressed in old literary forms.

And this was full blooded innovation, primarily intellectual innovation of people living with the newest ideas of their time as Stendhal says about this, not without enthusiasm.

There was no intimate contact with reality. New relations to it called for new methods of expression.

Innovation in contemporary literature is fundamentally due to other premises.

The history of literature knows a conception of "Alexandrianism"—a conception involving the decay of antique culture, of such refinement of it that art loses all sense, loses its connection with reality.

A similar process is now taking place in West-European literature.

Realism as the more consistent form of depicting reality is rejected by art of the Imperialist era. This literature disdains reality, creating for itself a mystified reality in which literature instead of a social factor becomes a purpose in itself. It proves the only reality.

Achievement of reality becomes impossible for the culture of the Imperialist era. Hence the terrible gulf between the movement of historical events and the means of their cognition. The art of the bourgeoisie proves incapable of capturing the phenomena of reality.

Here, the limitations, backwardness, reaction of the bourgeois philosophy of the world shows itself fully. The development of social relations runs ahead of the development of thought of social man.

This brings about a refusal to depict reality. Literary experimentation, autonomous development of literary forms, become almost the only way in which literature exists.

This experiment assumes several modifications. Turning to the historical and biographical novel is not accidental. In losing contact with reality literature compensates by attempts at creating its own mystic forms. Such a form becomes history, whose depiction still remains possible within the limits of bourgeois consciousness, such a form becomes the novel of individual psychology, the novel which analyzes the most minute psychic movements of a man isolated from his social surroundings. This is Proust psychologism reduced to an absurdity. Finally a purely literary experiment is possible—forming an object of literature by itself. Thus originates the nonsense so popular in West-European literature.

Thought, and hence literature as one of its forms, is impossible without an object. In order to cognize there must be an object to be cognized. Having crossed the cognition of reality out of its sphere of activity literature frantically casts about for an object. It is sometimes impossible to find one.

This is the reason for the parody art of the best radical petty-buorgeois masters. It is no accident that Chaplin, creator of cinema parodies raised to the level of phenomena having an independent significance, becomes one of the central figures of West-European art. It is no accident that American literature, and following it, the cinema, cultivates parody forms. The parody is a sign of negation that grows up inside a philosophy of life that renounces itself and can find no strength to establish new thought contents, a new relation to reality.

Thus Girardeaux in the novel *Suzanne and the Pacific* choosing the classical scheme of the novel of shipwreck, the novel which in the era of the flourishing of the bourgeoisie asserted to perfection the heroism of the personality triumphing over nature, utilizes a parody of this scheme for the most pessimistic conclusions. The novel is a parody on *Robinson Crusoe*. Only the Robinson of *Suzanne,* does not have to struggle against anything. Her presence on an uninhabited island proves a visit to heaven. Happiness proves to be found in the severance of all social connections. Deeply symbolical is the episode in the book when, according to the traditions of Defoe, the wreckage of the ship is blown ashore. For Robinson this was a new source of resources for his struggle with nature. To Suzanne's island come the bodies of soldiers from a transport ship sunk by a German submarine.

This is the end of literature, Girardeux's gay book unfolds a picture of consistent renunciation of social ties, a complete renunciation of reality.

But within bourgeois literature there are attempts to overcome the rift

with reality, master it, even at the cost of renouncing the philosophy of life of the bourgeoisie. And these attempts are undoubtedly the most interesting instances of West-European literature, alongside proletarian literature.

The problem of reestablishing contact with reality by the writer is obvious always, for instance, in the work of Dos Passos, unquestionably one of the most interesting writers for us.

The confines of bourgeois philosophy become too close for the writer. He feels the connection between the reality which he is trying to reflect in his work and the means of expression, literature, organically. Here a conflict arises bringing the writer to a realization of the closeness of literary limitations. The phenomena of reality prove broader and deeper than the canonical channels for their literary expression. Doubt arises not in the genuineness of the depicted, but in the possibility of expressing this genuineness. Every characteristic, every thematic situation proves already to have been set down in the annals of literature and they are sensed to be false. And the only means of reestablishing the connection of reality with art is—to introduce elements of reality that previously had had no literary treatment in the woof of literature.

That is why Dos Passos mixes his heroes with real people. He puts the fictitious story of Evelyn Hutchins alongside the biography of Wilson. The heroine must be sensed as reality, as a phenomenon of the world of reality on the background of actual biographies. Dos Passos does not trust himself. Instead of describing the social background of what occurs in the novel he gives it in flashes of newspaper chronicle, brings the artist's plan of the tale closer to the elements of actual reality which he brings in as an integral part of the novel. Only thus can art become a document of an era, only thus no doubts arise with respect to the depicted.

Here one cannot forego recalling that Balzac, dying, called for Doctor Bianchon to cure him. To this writer the fictitious character of a novel was no less real than a living physician.

II

"However an author might try to describe the gigantic milling crowd, however the decorations be painted, the poor man does not understand that the ease with which his heroes find one another destroy everything colossal about the picture, do not let me believe for a moment that Paris or London are giants where the individual is lost."

Thus Jules Romains reasons in the preface to his latest work, *Men of Good Will.*

He condemns the established forms of West European literature. The manifold variety of life, to him, cannot be portrayed in a novel "where all the heroes meet on one and the same street crossing."

Romain's work is interesting for its tremendous scale.

"I felt that I shall have to sooner or later begin a work in prose in order to express in motion and variety, in details and situation a picture of the contemporary world."

West European literature has known no such attempt since Romaine Rolland's *Jean Christophe.* True, Romains discards his predecessors. He analyzes *Jean Christophe* in detail showing it also to be the biography of an individual expanded into many volumes. He rejects Zola whose *Rougon-Maquart* series is nothing but the history of one family just as Galsworthy's *Forsyte Saga.*

To Romains the problem of his book is the colossal scale. It is unimportant to him whether the destinies of his heroes cross one another. He wants to reflect the reality before him not in the fictional form of a novel but in the forms of reality itself. It is because of this that the absolutely unusual structure which requires an index of the characters, requires also a summary of the preceding volume before beginning the next one.

If the nineteenth century classics found it possible to give in the forms of their tales a content approaching the content of reality, Romains denies this possibility. He does not attempt to establish regularity, he seeks genuineness of depiction in a maximum of exactness in the reproduction of the external accidents of human destinies.

If Don Passos seeks contact with reality by including reality itself in its raw form into his story, Romains tries to depict not so much the essence of phenomena as their external dynamics, reproducing the form of these dynamics. To this external disorder is due the compositional anarchy of *Men of Good Will.*

It will become evident later why Romains does not succeed in his attempt. This will become clear upon analyzing the intellectual position of the author. But we can at once point out that seeking for means to reproduce the surrounding world completely Romains picks a totally incorrect method.

Striving for reality he does not understand that genuineness of representation lies not in the transposition of the facts of reality into the artistic tale but in the power of artistic analysis and the philosophy of the artist.

Romains may be reproached that, after all, his heroes meet. Entirely unconnected in the first volume they discover that they know one another in the fourth volume. And here it must be said that not traditional fiction form guides Romains but artistic necessity. It may eventually come about in say, a ninth or tenth volume, that Romains' novel will end up in the traditional story form.

The fact is, the artist reproducing reality limits the scale of his picture by the framework of his theme, by the limits of his philosophy and his attitude towards this reality.

Unity of composition against which Romains protests is nothing but a method of concretizing reality. And the genuineness of reality in a book is, in the final accounting determined not by the form of reproduction but by the profundity of conception, which is determined entirely by the philosophy of the artist.

And no matter how much Romains tries to circumvent the regularity of artistic development in his novel, he still cannot avoid choice, selection of material for his tale, which in its turn is determined entirely not by the formal but by the intellectual structure.

Romains' idea moves along a line of picturing separate lives with a total denial of the necessity of uncovering the ties of reality. If, say, Zola tires the reader by an accumulation of detail unnecessary for the proof of his idea, his naturalism is usually due to the fact that the master cannot select with sufficient precision the features necessary for the reproduction of his idea in images. Romains' naturalism is exceedingly peculiar. The writer reproduces not so much the naturalism of every phenomenon in particular, as a naturalistic copy of the scheme of development. This is not naturalism of detail but naturalism of the subject.

If in the tremendous structures of Zola a regularity of analysis is felt of different social strata. Romains, tangling up many different heroes,

refusing them any ties, by that same token renounces all analysis of reality. He seeks genuineness of reproduction in slavelike imitation, and life in his novel, to the consternation of the author, turns out barren and in no way a reproduction of reality.

This comes about because Romains does not know reality and grasps only impressions of it. The innovations in his novel, the problem of its form is determined by the philosophy of the writer.

And if Dos Passos is felt by us to be a real innovator, felt as a writer fighting for an honestly true reflection of reality, Romains appears a perfectly traditional writer, one who does not go beyond the bounds of bourgeois literature.

The genuineness of a writer's knowledge of reality is judged by what the writer selects as its main feature. The problem of truthfulness is a consequence of this. Only thus can the question of the discrepancy between living life and its portrayal in art be solved.

People of different social strata appear in *Men of Good Will*. We find in this work financiers speculating in oil, aristocrats petrified in their immobility, students, workers, storekeepers, thieves. It would seem that all the manifold variety of reality is reflected in the novel. It seems to embrace all social strata, in its pages appear the names of such political figures as Jaures, poets, financiers connected with Standard Oil and revolutionaries swearing by George Sorel.

Even Zola would have hesitated to pile up such a number of characters and events in such a narrow space. Romains' avidity for material is simply unbelievable. And nevertheless, reality in his work is disembowelled, devaluated.

Let us take concrete examples. Let us follow the movements of characters in *Men of Good Will*.

People talk of the growing threat of war, a war that almost flared up six years earlier. The conversations of a teacher and a philosopher are devoted to this. Here we also have a full chapter entitled "Paris Workmen." The workers are drawn very exactly. Their political beliefs are told, their tastes shown. But characteristically enough these workers of Romains' are foremen, workers in mahogany, specialists, worker-aristocrats. They are revolutionary syndicalists, these people, but they are moderates, tied down to their tastes, their habits; the things they have vaguely symbolize their dreams of wealth. They are in fact petty bourgeois.

This does not mean that the revolutionary struggle is beyond Romains' field of vision. A banker comes in conflict with a workers' demonstration. People talk of revolution. They announce their political ideals. Only the revolutionists in the novel are a mixture of freemasons and anarchists, they are portrayed on the background of petty bourgeois conceptions of secret revolutionary societies. They are detached from the workers and the connection of the revolutionary movement with the workers is entirely incomprehensible. The atmosphere in which the events in the book take place is unintelligible.

Romains' method—the method of disassociated destinies, the method of fixing impressions—proves completely powerless in portraying the labor movement about which his characters speak a good deal and which he tries to describe.

And this is to be understood—understood because the writer proves incapable of leaping over the bounds of bourgeois cognition, he not only

understands poorly the concatenation of events but refuses to understand them giving them an entirely arbitrary interpretation.

The fourth volume ends with a pathetic incident. Jaures is speaking in a tremendous hall. He warns Europe of the threat of war, he demands the establishment of peace, he implores the people to save peace and civilization. Jaures had a premonition of death:

". . . while imploring the people with voice and gesture an unusual, somewhat crazy thought pierces his brain, a thought not proud as might be imagined, but one inspired by love and anxiety, a fatherly thought—if they only do not lose me, if I could only be here."

In this talk about love and anxiety, fatherliness, lies the main idea of *Men of Good Will.*

It has already been said that Romains cannot avoid the problem of selection of his materials, that in setting down external and manifold mutations of reality he cannot choose those traits which he thinks essential. The remark about love and fatherliness is not a mere literary description. It is the key to Romains' philosophy, a key to the idea which pervades the novel.

Romains concentrates heavily on sex problems. In *Men of Good Will* in all the characters with which Romains deals directly or indirectly, he is deeply concerned with the sex problem.

There is a characteristic incident in the novel. One of the characters, Havercamp, a petty financier, real estate agent evidently mixed in shady deals, dines at a restaurant. The description of his luncheon takes an erotic turn: "hunger becomes love." The way the man eats is described, the way he chews his food. The man's thoughts clear up from the food, he experiences an erotic pleasure from it. After such a luncheon Havercamp schemes better, thinks better. Eroticism defines his existence. Romains does not insist on this, he does not speak about it directly. One gathers this from the various things in the novel about Havercamp. There are also several parellel episodes. Affairs, financial operations, are constantly mixed with love. The actress Germaine gives herself to an exchange broker in the midst of a conversation about a sale of sugar she was speculating in; a financier falls in love with the wife of his partner in the intervals between business conversations. A statesman is characterized mainly through his sweetheart.

But this is not enough. The function of one of the characters, a Paris gamin, is to dissolve in the Parisian Eros. His main action is to meet a woman unknown to him who, after a chance meeting in the street, gives herself to him. This is his first woman.

For two friends, Jalez and Jerphanion, the social problem is solved but not that of love. And it is characteristic that parallel to the warning of the people of the impending threat of war by Jaures, these young people are listening to a reading of poetry on love. This is an accompaniment of the novel. Jalez' problem is to find a girl he had loved in childhood. He renounces the love of other women. All this about a woman whom he hardly remembers.

Speaking of the evolution of Romains' characters one has to give up any attempt at analyzing their behavior in ways customary to literary criticism. The woof of the tale is torn. The characters in the main are merely indicated. They are picked from the three million inhabitants of Paris by chance. They exist in the novel about on the same basis as the boy who rolls his hoop through the entire chapter on the streets of Paris only in order

to afford an opportunity of describing the small, narrow, lost streets. And the movement of ideas in the book is to be sought not in formulations, not in analyses of characters but in the juxtaposition of separate episodes, as in a movie-montage, where from two details following each other on the film a new idea is born.

III

There is one character in the book however, who with great precision expresses the author's own thoughts. To judge by the attention paid to him by Romains he could be the main hero of the usual type novel.

This character is the bookbinder Quinette. He alone has a more or less connected line of behavior, is characterized in sufficient detail for one to be able to talk about him at greater length.

Quinette's course in the novel is almost a parody. A main theme of the French nineteenth century novel of Stendhal, Balzac, Flaubert, partly Zola, was the awakening or suppression of social activity. Quinette, in Romains' novel, is a man who, from a humble bookbinder becomes a police informer, a man of continually greater social activity. A typical concoction of the petty bourgeoisie, he is one of the main characters of the book. His course begins with a chance occurrence. A man who has just committed a murder comes running into his shop. Quinette does not turn the murderer over to the police. Instead, he pretends to be avenging himself on the police and therefore consenting to help the criminal escape. Quinette covers the traces of the crime, hides the criminal according to all rules of detective fiction, but afraid of being taken for an accomplice, he informs the police about the criminal. After a while, feeling that he is all tangled up in this story, Quinette kills the man he promised to save, and coming accidentally across an invitation to an anarchist affair offers his services to the police as a spy.

The figure of Quinette would be altogether absurd and lacking any psychological verisimilitude, were it not for the motivation with which Jules Romains brings his hero into the arena of life. The forty year old Quinette is impotent. He experiences no sufferings on account of this, but once, his attention called to sexual anomalies, he becomes anxious. He tries every existing patent medicine but not one of them helps him.

And it develops that the active participation in saving the criminal is a substitute for sexual excitement to him. On account of this Quinette begins to feel himself a man. And finally according to all the traditions of literature on sexual psychology, after committing murder, Quinette begins to feel the desire and the ability to be with a woman. His subsequent interest in police work is undoubtedly motivated by the same causes.

This might possibly be a fairly true picture of sexual psychology or rather, pathology, if Quinette would not assume the proportions of one of the main characters of the book.

Quinette is a man that finds escape in social life from the petty bourgeois limitations of his existence.

I have already said that in a novel built on the principles of cinematographic montage it is necessary to operate by juxtaposition in order to discover the meaning of separate incidents. In the person of Quinette, Romains' hidden idea speaks: that the principal motive force in society, in the forty-year old bearded Quinette, in the beardless youth who had his first woman, in the students Jerphanion and Jalez, as well as in the brokers—is sexual life. Jules Romains' novel seems to be an artistic illustration of the

Freudian theory on the mechanism of erotic suppression completely accounting for man's social life.

Men of Good Will does not complete Romains' work. His characters are still subject to many changes. New heroes might appear whose development will have different mainsprings. But the work that has thus far appeared carries these ideas. All the intellectual development of the writer is undoubtedly predicated by these ideas which, by the way, are fairly characteristic for a large section of West European literature.

It is also characteristic that in a novel devoted to the year 1908, the year of impending war, a year of great technical discoveries, these phenomena enter as insignificant details. The main thing is not in these phenomena. The main thing is in that stream of love which permeates all human life and predetermines acts of the individual as well as the existence of human society. Economics, finance, making a career prove to be nothing but transformations of the libido.

And this is why Jules Romains' book is not the book of an innovator. This is why his work can by no means be placed side by side with that of Dos Passos.

The proud declaration of Jules Romains in the preface to his book that he has found a new form of the novel, with a new content, proves nothing but an empty boast.

The novel impresses one as a disorderly mass of occasionally keen observations, but mostly literary platitudes.

The attempt to reconcile art with reality, the attempt to find the lost reason for the existence of literature, the attempt to find a fuller and better means of reflecting realities ends in failure in *Men of Good Will.*

And even the renovation of the formal structure of the novel does not materialize, is not successful.

Dos Passos' genuine innovation consists of his ability by means of the introduction of elements of actual reality into the woof of the tale, to define the development of the characters in his books, to establish, perhaps imperfectly, the social characteristics of phenomena and the connection between social existence and individual consciousness.

The false mystifying idea of Jules Romains leads in another direction. His book remains a collection of short stories, all mixed up in regard to time. This sort of composition has absolutely no justification. Its only reason for existence is extremely unflattering to the author. I have already said that instead of naturalism of detail *Men of Good Will* is built on naturalism of the subject.

And the innovation with which Jules Romains justifies the appearance of his book, the innovation which was supposed to establish complete contact with reality for literature, proves to be nothing newer than an ordinary attempt at transposition of the elements of bourgeois literature. This is innovation within the literary economy and devoid of any positive social significance. It has a fairly long tradition in world literature.

Finally, of the nearer examples, the connection between Romains' innovations and the principles of subject development in modern cinematography can be mentioned. There is only one difference: the juxtaposition, the bringing together of separate elements in Eisenstein's films bring about an accretion of ideas. *Men of Good Will* easily disintegrates into a number of stories, each one having a separate subject. The development of this novel has no regularity, innovation is only a formal feature of the thing.

And this makes the novel a failure. The philosophy of the author remains as of old. It prevents him from affecting a permanent, actual contact with reality. This prevents him from revitalizing literature.

Romains sees more in the novel than it contains. The prewar era is dealt with cursorily, impressionistically, insufficiently, without going into the significance and connection of events.

Having renounced typical depiction of characters in typical situations, having renounced true realism like all bourgeois literature, Romains could find nothing to compensate the rift between literature and life. His book hoes the traditional row. His book gives birth to no new thoughts and in no way defines the development of literature. It is one of the contemporary novels. And no more. Its pretensions to an epocal scale, an epocal sweep of events have proved untenable.

Mystification of reality, characteristic of Western literature generally is not overcome in *Men of Good Will*. Bourgeois limited consciousness is incapable of social criticism, incapable of putting and solving social problems. And without them literature is dead. And so is Romains' colossally projected idea.

Reality avenges itself by depriving the book of any significance.

V. Bonch-Bruevitch

From My Recollections of Lenin

An Old Bolshevik About Lenin and Art

Vladimir Ilyich had no free time to give to the theatre. His political, social, and scientific activities so occupied him that when he did have even a little time to rest he usually preferred to go off on walks, somewhere or other in the mountains or fields.

When we lived in Geneva, I remember one instance when Vladimir Ilyich went very willingly to a workers' theatre. It was the first of May. *The Weavers* by Hauptmann was being presented in the workers' district. It should be added that this play of the German dramatist had been translated in 1895 by Anna Ilyinichna Elizarova-Ulyanova, (Lenin's sister-*Ed.)* and edited by Vladimir Ilyich, and given to print in the illegal People's Will printing house which had published his pamphlet *On Fines,* and from which had issued his *Working Day* and *King Hunger.*

Extremely interesting to note that considering the comparatively small output of this illegal publishing house where every line of type and every page of print had to be carefully economized, Vladimir Ilyich insisted that they put out in separate booklets of about 100 pages copies of this play about the life of the German weavers. Such tremendous importance Vladimir Ilyich attributed to the artistic voice of the stage. . . This play he particularly recommended to be reprinted many times, as was done by us in 1905, and after the revolution in 1917.

"A preface to Hauptmann's *Weavers,*" Vladimir Ilyich once said, "should be added in order to give the proper perspective to the conditions of the weavers among us before the revolution and after."

"We must take advantage," he added, "of every opportunity to emphasize the social meaning of our revolution."

Therefore, Vladimir Ilyich willingly went to see the play in the workers' theatre in Geneva.

Vladimir Ilyich loved, particularly when he was living in Paris during his second immigration, to attend the concerts in the workers' districts, and to listen to the favorite singers of the working class in the workers' cafes. They knew how to reflect in their songs the most keen political incidents of contemporary life, which at that time incensed the French proletariat. And not infrequently they sang the songs of the old poets of the working class who had created their powerful hymns to the accompaniment of the salvos of the Paris commune.

When Vladimir Ilyich, after the February revolution, returned to Russia, he gladly took part often in every kind of demonstration, in the city folk festivals and celebrations. But he rarely managed to get much time to visit the theatre. Nevertheless, several times he visited the Art Theatre, to whose creative activity he attached great importance.

Occasionally, Vladimir Ilyich went to concerts, to which different organizations invited him. He was very critical of the programs which were being presented to the broad masses, and pointed out the worthlessness of certain numbers included in the program which he considered unsuitable for presentation. He could not tolerate at all the cracked decadents, separated from

life, as he termed that type of art, be it in sculpture,—where he positively denounced the cubistic inventions of Bakunin,—or a reading from the stage, or even in painting, depicting people in unnatural poses, incorrect figures, and florid colors.

"What the devil is it!," indignantly exclaimed Vladimir Ilyich, looking at a picture of some modern artist in which was presented an episode from the life of the workers at a large plant—a group of workers performing some complicated manipulations with hot steel dummies.

"Look at those thick necks; they are positively not normal, at least three times longer than the neck of the usual man! And on this neck you see a little head, slanted back like a monkey's, and a skull with the narrow dimensions of a lion. Look at those hands reaching below the knees, and the tremendous fingers, and at those twisted legs with enormous feet, and at all those other incorrect impossible parts of the body. All is out of proportion, inharmonious, repellent! Can you not see in this description of the working masses, the degradation of the artist himself? Perhaps he does not want to, or perhaps he cannot picture workers differently."

"In reality, it is nothing like this. Go to the factory. When I am there, I always admire," said Vladimir Ilyich with increasing intensity, "I always admire the magnificent sturdiness, the special manliness of those who have just come from behind the machines or the lathes. Notice their intelligent, fine, and expressive faces, their particular assurance, that steadfastness of glance, that determination to achieve whatever they have once decided to undertake. What a firm, assured walk in these strong people! Among this tremendous mass, which infects you when you look at them, say, when delivering a talk, you feel there are none of those depolarized people. Here are only those who have mastered with pride, the full seriousness of the new class, definitely creating a new world. Why is not this phase represented on canvas or in marble? Why is it necessary to mutilate him and present him in such a manner that it becomes heavy, horrible and often disgraceful to look at it? Is it really only because the artist cannot and is not able to draw the real, beautiful body af the representatives of this powerful class, and must conceal his inability in angularity?

"At the same time, observe: alongside of the decadent reed piping, which we will not take into account, you will see that the representatives of the bourgeois classes, no matter how dull their eyes, no matter what the expression on their faces, always draw the socalled full image of a man. The artist dare not appear on the market with canvasses which present the bourgeoisie as he presents the workers. Against this we must seriously fight. We need no sweet pictures. We want the truth of life. The kind of truth Kasatkin gave us in his 'Coal Diggers.' The kind of stuff they are drawing now, one can hardly look at.

"I think there will come a time when a new generation of the young will grow up, brave, proud, developed, and knowing. They will not stand for these kind of pictures; they will go to the expositions and as in ancient Greece and Rome will demand the removing of those pictures and sculptures which will not be of great dimensions, which will not answer the insistent demands of a developing taste. Then the artist will feel at once the influence of the broad social masses looking at his works. Our shortcoming now is that the masses keep quiet. Looking at the works of art, they do not give vent to their opinions."

There once came to my apartment in the Kremlin the now well known artist Deni, whose caricatures at that time were just beginning to appear

and which I at once recognized as talented. Talking things over with him intimately, I began to like him all the more, as I saw in him great possibilities, and realized that the difficult economic position in which he was, interfered with the development of his undoubted genius. He had brought many of his drawings. I asked him to leave them with me so that I could show them to Vladimir Ilyich. With great joy, he left the portfolio with me.

At our first meeting, I told Vladimir Ilyich all I knew about Deni, and about his difficult circumstances. I said that he was just beginning to be printed. Vladimir Ilyich answered that he had noticed his caricatures. I then showed him the entire set. Looking over the drawings very carefully, Vladimir Ilyich said:

"Good, quite unusual. . ."

When he came to one of Deni's large drawings in which the representatives of capitalism were breathing heavily, crushing one another in the fight for the dollar, Vladimir Ilyich said:

"It is done very well, but the idea is not his. I remember . . ." and as Vladimir Ilyich tried to recall where, he placed his hand over his right eye, as he always did in such instances. "I remember this drawing. It was done by some artist in England, only I cannot recall his name. This picture aroused the fury of the bourgeois press. It is a good caricature. Excellent that Deni copied it, and perhaps changed the subject somewhat. Only, you see they are not our types. It is too much a European drawing. If he had only drawn it in our shades, if he had only pictured our merchants, nobility, and clergy, it would have made marvelous propaganda for the broad masses. We could then have issued many copies; it would undoubtedly have had a large circulation among us. That would be interesting, a contemporary drawing which for many would supplant the cheap print. Such a picture of Deni's drawn for the masses would be in painting what the poetry of Demyan Bedny is in literature. And we badly need both of them."

"By the way," Vladimir Ilyich asked me, "have you been following the growth of the contemporary political drawing.. We must not let it escape our attention and our influence. It is an important political means of mass education—a good drawing done by such an artist as Deni, with a caption by some good satirist like Demyan Bedny, would produce a decided effect. We must immediately eliminate from everywhere the kind of stuff that Sitinov does, which not only he, but many others, issue in tens of millions."

I told Vladimir Ilyich that the political drawing had already made its appearance, but rarely, and at that not too successfully. The distribution, of course, was not as great as we should have liked. But more attention was already paid to it. K. C. Eremeev had been put in charge of it and one could rely on him to carrry it out successfully.

I related to Vladimir Ilyich how, when doing ethnological research, I had come across a peasant's trunk in which all sorts of pictures had been collected and pasted on the cover. Candy labels, clippings from the papers, soap ads, all had been carefully pasted on. It would have been interesting to see how the peasant women and their children were in delight at these "exhibitions of art."

Vladimir Ilyich was very much interested in my tale.

"You see," he said, "what a tremendous demand, even among the most common readers, there is for artistic creation and artistic drawings. It is an interesting fact, it emphasizes how great is the need for artistic literature, for artistic representation in painting, sculpture, on the stage, in art in general, for the broadest masses. Just imagine what will be when

our schools expand and develop. It will be necessary to reproduce the Tretyakovsky Gallery in millions of copies, and we must do it. We must organize a commission to be on the lookout for the best works of our artists, and we should reproduce them in color. Why is it that I have seen nowhere the portraits of our writers which our artists have done so well? And why do we see nowhere the plastic arts, which as you know are issued abroad in black and white? And do not forget that the next step is the world famous picture galleries. We must show Rembrandt, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Murillo, Rubens, and the other great world classics to the broad masses of the people. It should be done in the best reproductions in color and be widely distributed everywhere."

Again and again he emphasized the necessity of art—of painting, sculpture, the theatre—in the education of the masses, and in the understanding of the highest level of that culture, which is sure to flourish in the socialist fatherland more magnificently than anywhere else in the world.

Translated From the Russian by Albert Lewis

Philip Rahv

Marxist Criticism and Henry Hazlitt

Notes on an American Critic

In his article *The Anatomy of Liberalism* in the *Partisan Review,* Wallace Phelps analyzed Henry Hazlitt's book *The Anatomy of Criticism* from a revolutionary standpoint. His characterization of Hazlitt as liberal, urbane, social, but non-Marxian, in fact anti-Marxian and super-class, is a correct evaluation. All the greater our surprise, therefore, when we find Phelps completely neglecting to mention, let alone to answer two essays containing a direct attack on Marxist criticism which Hazlitt reprinted in his book as addenda. In my opinion these two essays, which originally appeared in the *Nation,* should not only be answered but should be used as a springboard for further exposing Hazlitt's practice of liberal criticism.

Mr. Henry Hazlitt, until recently editor of the *Nation* and at present Menken's successor to the editorial chair of the *American Mercury,* is terribly upset. It seems that things are happening in America, despite the mellow sermons on social peace and class collaboration in which Mr. Hazlitt and his friends specialize. And, in truth, the rapid spread of revolutionary ideas, the collapse of everything the middle class mind holds dear, and the desertion of the sacred groves of middle class salvation by a score of his former colleagues—all these events have had a dire effect on Mr. Hazlitt.

Let it be said at once that in purely technical-literary matters Mr. Hazlitt has often shown himself capable of acute and judicious perceptions. It is therefore, all the more significant, that when he engages in the discussion of questions involving the larger perspectives of social analysis, he succumbs to the worst sort of bourgeois class blindness. His writings on the Marxian approach to art, embodied in the two essays "Literature and Class War" and "Tolstoyanism and Marxism" can best be characterized as a liturgy of old wives' tales, which have their parallel in the favorite atrocity stories of the capitalist press about forced labor and the execution of thousands of peasants in the USSR.

Mr. Hazlitt's polemical methods are interesting but quite ancient. He too wants to instruct the Communists in Marxism, like many a straw conquistador before him. It seems that both Marx and Lenin are on Mr. Hazlitt's side. It also appears that *Marxist and Tolstoyan criteria in art are quite identical.*

Such a prodigious discovery deserves a little airing. Let us investigate the miracle. But first we must trace the route which this literary Sherlock Holmes has taken. Amazed by what he calls "the rapid spread . . . of social standards in literary criticism, and particularly Marxian standards," Mr. Hazlitt concludes that the time has come to submit these standards to a "more critical examination." Mr. Hazlitt is ready for this historic task.

While Marx and Lenin, says our critic, were great admirers of bourgeois culture, the Marxian literary critics of today utterly reject this culture. It seems that Marx enjoyed the literature "of his age." Now what does this literature—"of his age"—consist of? Marx, proclaims Mr. Hazlitt, liked to read Shakespeare, Goethe, Lessing, Dante, Cervantes, and the Greek

dramatists (all "of his age!"). Another item: "He had a preference for eighteenth century authors," particularly Fielding. Lenin admired Pushkin and Nekrasov. Further on, to prove that proletarian literature is a chimera, Mr. Hazlitt proceeds to quote Trotsky at great length.

Accusing the Marxist critics of dismissing "practically all existing culture by the mere process of labelling it bourgeois," he winds up by dubbing them "new barbarians, celebrants of crudity and ignorance." A great writer, Mr. Hazlitt claims, can transcend the barrier of class just as he transcends the barriers of nationality, age or sex. In fact, "the barrier of class is perhaps in some respects less difficult to surmount than the barriers of nationality, age or sex." Mr. Hazlitt invariably refers to Marxism as "the doctrine of economic determinism."

In the second essay Mr. Hazlitt tells us that he was suddenly visited by a nerve-racking suspicion. Perhaps, he brooded, perhaps the literary critics "who have recently come to think of themselves as Marxists are really much closer to Tolstoy?" So he re-read *What is Aart?*

Tolstoy's criteria in art, writes Mr. Hazlitt, "were ethical and quasi-religious." Tolstoy was opposed to the class-struggle, his aim was to unite man with God and with one another. But he opposed upper class art and upper class science. The Marxists also oppose upper class art (Hazlitt fails to commit himself as to their stand on "upper class science"). Tolstoy, dismissed Goethe, Shakespeare, Beethoven and Wagner, and in fact, all the giants of art. He ended "in taking for his real critic the Russian peasant, but Tolstoy's peasant was never the real peasant but an idealization." And now for the *furioso* climax—the real motivation of Hazlitt's labors. Just as Tolstoy's peasant was unreal, so the proletarian writer's *worker* is unreal —"not the actual proletarian, any more than Tolstoy's peasant was the actual peasant; he is merely an idealized creature. . . ."

A Liberal Critic and Marxism

It is patent that Mr. Hazlitt is totally innocent of any knowledge of Marxism. To our critic Marxism and economic determinism, a hopeless vulgarization, are one and the same. Then why does he write about it? In 1920 Lenin wrote that "after the proletarian revolution in Russia and the victories (so unexpected for the bourgeoisie and all the philistines) of this revolution, on an international scale, the whole world has become different. The bourgeoisie too has changed. The bourgeoisie is scared and enraged by 'Bolshevism' and has been driven almost to the point of madness." At the present time, what with the consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship, the successful completion of the Five-Year Plan, and the growth of Communist influence at home and the world over, the fright and rage of the bourgeois philistines has increased tenfold.

Mr. Hazlitt has completely falsified Marxian criticism. Writing two essays on the subject, he has failed to relate to his argument even one Marxian critic.

To our critic the bourgeoisie is an eternal class, static and immovable. The significant years of 1789, 1848, 1917—these do not represent any milestones of time to Mr. Hazlitt. To him all bourgeois art is upper class art, even though the bourgeoisie was once "an oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility," as Marx puts it. Mr. Hazlitt's class blindness prevents him from seeing that in quoting the passages from Wilhelm Liebknecht and Paul Lafargue referring to Marx's literary preferences, he

was inadvertently destroying his own argument. Why did Marx admire the eighteenth century authors? Because the eighteenth century, the century of materialism, atheism, and the revolutionary class rise of the bourgeoisie, saw the development of a dynamic, progressive literature. How, then, can one stretch this circumstance to defend bourgeois literature of today, which has already lost these qualities? To be sure, it would be quite different if Mr. Hazlitt could show us that Marx admired Baudelaire and Gautier, or the German romantics of the Novalis type. But Marx's preferences were indeed Marxist. In a letter to Lassalle,[1] he condemned the romantics, and advised him to Shakespearianize in his dramas. As to Lenin's liking for Pushkin—no Marxian critic has ever expressed any other sentiments with regard to this poet. Plekhanov's praise of him is well known, for Pushkin, also, has his revolutionary side.

Just as in philosophy, so in literature the Marxists draw a line between materialism and idealism. Methodologically proletarian literature derives from materialist writers (the "realists" in literary terminology), whose creative method provides a basis for further development; from the symbolists and the romantics the proletarian writers can learn little, yet they also are subject to critical reworking. It is ludicrous to say that dialectical materialism negates the cultural heritage. If it did, it would cease to be dialectical materialism and become subjective idealism—its extreme opposite.

That literature which, in a general sense, was in step with the unfolding reality of its epoch, which, to a large measure, identified itself with the elements of social growth and combatted the reaction of its period—is a literature solidly incorporated into the proletarian heritage. This is a literature whose creative spirit is materialist. As to the writers who chose the road of reaction, who withheld themselves from history, whose works represent retrogressive aims and ideas in relation to their own time—these are included in our heritage as historical material, but not as living things: for in this realm the idealist world-view holds sway. Notwithstanding, the Marxist knows that in testing the masterpieces of the past no rigid line of demarcation is possible. One cannot, at all times, draw a hard and fast line separating progress from reaction. Frequently the positive and negative exist side by side in the same work. Only the "leftist" philistine, whose metaphysical conceptions are utterly at variance with dialectic, is apt to pose irreconcilable antitheses.

In Lenin's appraisal of several pre-revolutionary Russian writers, such as Chernishevsky, Nekrasov and Tolstoy, the Marxist critic can find a concrete example of class evaluation. Whereas Plekhanov, whose Marxism was frequetly stultified by Menshevik elements, approached these writers with a Marxian yardstick, superimposing on them a modern class relationship which they had not experienced, Lenin approached them from the dialectic-materialist viewpoint. Thus in Tolstoy he bade us see that which belongs to the future, which can be of benefit to the proletariat.

In Nekrasov he revealed a revolutionary urge which Plekhanov had tended to ignore. Writing about the populist authors, Plekhanov contented himself with proving that they were un-Marxian. "Populism is a reactionary Utopia," was his final judgment. Lenin, on the other hand, as V. Kirpotin points out in his essay *Lenin and Literary Criticism*, "was able, on the basis

[1] *International Literature* No. 3, 1933.

of a concrete analysis of the driving forces of the Russian revolution, to reveal the healthy revolutionary-democratic kernel within the reactionary Utopia."

Literature and the Bourgeoisie

During the period of social ascent a class is able to produce powerful works of art that are mainly materialist in conception; during its decline its spiritual production likewise deteriorates, and is transformed into the most rabid forms of idealism. The bulk of contemporary bourgeois literature by reason of the degeneration of its social basis and the duty of defending its class through the varnishing and suppression of reality, is no longer capable of assimilating significant content. Hence the sophisticated bourgeois writers whom Mr. Hazlitt defends attempt to escape extinction by wrenching form out of its dialectic relation to content and elevating it to a unique position in the creative process. Naturally, no sound art can be achieved when significant content is banned. With the truth of life missing, the truth of art slips away. Endless, ideologically barren experimentation and superficial cleverness; esthetic and intellectual dandyism without a breath of life, without love and without hatred—such are the inevitable consequences. Art becomes as absolute, lifeless and indifferent as the Aristotlean heavens.

It is at this point of the analysis of bourgeois literature that it becomes most easy to drop into a mechanistic formulation, and indeed some critics have done so. True, artistic decline is determined by ideological decline; yet this should not be taken to signify that bourgeois literature has already wholly lost its formal effectiveness. The unity of form and content is a *unity of opposites,* not an identity. It is highly schematic to conceive of the degeneration of substance as immediately and directly leading to a corresponding artistic degeneration. The process of decline is, in truth, much more uneven, much more complicated and variegated. Bourgeois literature is by no means powerless as yet, but the conditions for its final *artistic* dissolution (for its physical dissolution we must wait until the complete transformation of its socio-economic substructure into its antithesis —socialism) are already in existence, and the task of the Marxists consists in accelerating this progress through constant attack, through continually exposing the predatory class-visage behind the esthetic veil.

Unwilling and incapable of understanding this dialectic evaluation of literature, the bourgeois critics invent their own scarecrow versions of Marxism for the purpose of vilifying it. Mr. Hazlitt is, of course, a party to all the desperate maneuvers of the knight-errants of private property in the sphere of literature. As we go on to his essay on "Tolstoyanism and Marxism" we find, naturally enough, that his incomprehension of Marxism determines his incomprehension of the social causes of Tolstoyism, since only a class analysis can explain Tolstoy's "feudal socialism" and his repudiation of art, culture, and urban civilization in general.

Tolstoy's quasi-religious negations are a mystery to Mr. Hazlitt. To bourgeois criticism in general these negations have always been a mystery, an intellectual epidemic for which no explanation could be found. Had Mr. Hazlitt really been interested, however, in studying the relations of Marxism to Tolstoy's doctrines, Lenin's writings on the subject could have enlightened him. Despite the fact that he was writing concerning this relation, he did not deem it even necessary to mention Lenin's analysis. Such is the technique of the bourgeois counter-offensive in literary criticism.

Tolstoy's contradictions are stated and explained by Lenin in his several essays on the subject.

"On the one hand," Lenin said, "we have the gifted writer who is not only able to draw an incomparable picture of Russian life, but is able to produce first class world literature. On the other hand we have the landowner wearing the martyr's crown in the name of Christ. . . . On the one hand ruthless criticism of capitalist exploitation . . . revealing the depths of contradictions between the growth of wealth and acquirements and torturing of the working masses. On the other hand—the fanatical preaching of 'non-resistance to evil.' But these contradictions in the views and teachings of Tolstoy are not accidental. They are expressions of the contradictions in Russian life during the last third of the nineteenth century. The patriarchal village, only yesterday freed from serfdom, was literally handed over to the violence and plunder of capital and the State . . . . Tolstoy reflected the accumulated hate, the ripened aspiration for a better life, the desire to throw off the past—and also the immaturity, the dreamy contemplativeness, the political inexperience, and the revolutionary flabiness of the villages."

The disintegration of Russian feudalism and the decline of the nobility determined Tolstoy's doctrines. Turning his back to the West, he acclaimed the East and the patriarchal village—the beatitudes of an eternal Yasnaya Polyana. His social pessimism stemmed from the impotence of his class. Despite his equalatarian teachings, Tolstoy was fundamentally an individualist. His philosophy did not reflect the rise of a new social order, but the collapse of an old one.

Tolstoy's peasant is unreal (but by no means to the degree postulated by Mr. Hazlitt—even in his later phase Tolstoy, the artist in realism, often effaced the philosopher), because Tolstoy could not perceive the real life-process of the Russian peasant, his evolution towards revolution under the leadership of the proletariat. The proletarian writer, however, when he draws the figure of the industrial worker, does not indulge in any "retroactive milleniums." He sees the worker in a definite stage of development, in relation to the real structure of society. He sees in him those forces "which can—and owing to their social situation must—form a power capable of sweeping away the old and creating the new." (Lenin).

Which classes are hostile to culture? I believe the contrast between Tolstoy and Gorky will provide us with a concrete answer. Tolstoy, a genius of artistic perception and sensibility, abandons art and culture; Gorky, the ignorant day-laborer, is moved by an indefinite eagerness to learn, by an insatiable thirst for knowledge. He spends whole nights over his books, he educates himself, he creates literature, he becomes the beloved leader of the proletarian cultural revolution. In his article, "To American Intellectuals," Gorky explains in simple words the attitude of the bourgeoisie to cultural values.

"The bourgeoisie is hostile to culture, and at the present cannot help being hostile to it. Such is the truth, borne out by the facts in bourgeois countries, by the practice of capitalist states. . . . Rotten bourgeois society, mad with hatred and panicky for the future, is producing a rich crop of idiots, who absolutely fail to understand the meaning of what they are screaming about."

E. Clay

STERLING BROWN: American Peoples' Poet

Somewhere a long time ago, I ran across this apt couplet in an old poem, "The Singer:"

> *Thus in his manhood, clean, superb and strong*
> *To him was born the priceless gift of song.*

That fits Sterling Brown exactly: Brown is a singer, a rhapsodos, a singer of his people. The Greek rhapsodos was a reciter of the epic also. Epic poetry is usually great poetry and requires mighty subject matter. There is vast, unmined material for epic poetry in the Negro race and one hopes fervently that Sterling Brown will fulfill the fine echoed prophecy of Stephen Vincent Benet in his *John Brown's Body:*

> *Oh, blackskinned epic, epic with the black spear*
> *I cannot sing you, having too white a heart*
> *And yet some day a poet will rise to sing you*
> *And sing you with such truth and mellowness. . . . . .*

Yes, that is the kind of poet Brown is, a poet who, we hope, is conscious that his is at last the task of singing the Negro as he is and not as he has been written about or sung. And the fecundity with which he endows his explicit characterizations ensures his poetry a well placed niche in the American poetic scene.

Sterling Brown has never written for any special group, black or white. He has no pandering, truculent desire to appeal to the genteel diversion and tradition. That is his real value. He has created new values, or rather transvalued old dog-eared ones. In his indigenous, of-the-earth poetry, there is never any lachrymose piddling. The darts he sends find their destination almost anywhere:

> *They cooped you in their kitchens,*
> *They penned you in their factories,*
> *They gave you the jobs they were too good for*
> *They tried to guarantee happiness to themselves*
> *By shunting dirt and misery to you.*

There are others writing poetry similar to this, but as will be shown, Brown's poetry has somehow struck a newer note in Negro poetry. We have been waiting for this note a long time—a divergence of our racial stream performed by a poet who has his gaze riveted upon the social panorama—a poet whose social sensitivity enables him to draw in his poetry those psychologic, historic and sociologic ideologies so peculiar to American Negro life. He has tried to see his Negro life whole and this in itself is significant. He has sterilized Negro art forms and purged them of their decadent white-washed effusions. He has returned to the dialect form—for much the same reasons as Synge and McKay—and he uses it with a truly novel effect.

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[1] *Southern Road,* Sterling Brown, Harcourt, Brace & Co. New York, N. Y., USA.

There had to arise some day a poet who would be conscious of the social maladjustments of the Negro scene, who could drink in the kaleidoscope of rich and varied living with thirsty attention. Toomer has enriched our poetic vaults with his unforgettable characterizations of Southern life as he saw it. But here we have a poet who has given us the cross-section, country and city, North, South, East and West. None are missing from his canvas, Big Boy, Jack Johnson, Sporting Beasley, Slim Greer, dicties, dudes, Bessie "gaunt of flesh and painted," Ma Rainy, Harlem street-walkers, John Henry, Jewish cabaret owners, convicts, Hardrock Gene, Mississippi and Father Missouri "children," Hambone, the whole gamut is on his page.

To be worthwhile today, an artist must have his roots in the social soil, he must have something new. And Brown's poetry startles us because we see in it a razing of washed-out nostrums into fresh components, a creation of new social values into the alembic of social reality. His poetry makes for discovery because it is socially significant, because his poetic gaze is fixed upon that part of humanity who feel, suffer and produce. He does not romanticize or idealize those he portrays. These people are real to him:

These folks knew then the hints of fear
For all their loafings on the levee
Unperturbably spendthrifts of time.
("Children of the Mississipi")

He does have faith in them and the humanity they typify. He is glad they can laugh and sing even if

They bought off some of your leaders
You stumbled as blind men will. . . . .
They coaxed you, unwontedly, soft voiced
You followed a way
Then laughed as usual
They heard the laugh and wondered
Uncomfortable
Unadmitting a deeper terror
("Strong Men")

Do any escape this fear? Not many, for Brown writes of them all with amazing fidelity, of Long Gone who

Aint never caught you wrong,
But it jes aint nachal
Fo' to stay here long

of Big Boy who

Done shocked de co'n in Marylan'
In Georgia done cut cane
Done planted rice in South Caline

of Maumee Sal, Maumee Ruth, elders, deacons, of handsome Daniel who became a pimp, of Lulu and Jim who "found religion in a chubby baby boy," of Georgie Grimes who murdered his woman, of wise old men and women, of those who must abide by the uncontrollable Father Missouri and Ole Man Mississippi, of those who are victims of destructive tornadoes,

and of those unfortunate children who do not know what is to be their lot in a capitalistic society:

They have forgotten
What had to be endured

He portrays with equal warmth the lot of the sharecroppers who

Buy one rusty mule
We stays in debt
Until we're dead.

He knows well the problems of debt slavery, economic injustice, trials by prejudice, wage slavery, discrimination, segregation, slums, peonage, starvation and he scalpels them all with broad swathes.

Sterling Brown is a product of the Negro upper middle class. This bourgeois heritage has not deterred him in laying bare the surface superfluities of Negro "society." His environment has been the parsonage of educated parents, Williams College, Harvard and university teaching. He has been able to pierce through the vanities, shams and fictions of bourgeois existence. In "Tin Roof Blues" he writes of the

Gang of dicties here, and de rest wants to git dat way
Dudes and dicties, others strive to git dat way
Put pennies on de numbers from now unto de judgment day

There is always an agonized awareness of macabre decadence and revolt, of the ineffable vacuities of middle-class life and of the inevitableness of their social counter-parts. In this quotation from "Sun Down," the poet seems to be convinced that there is no earthly way in which the social directives or class ideologies can be avoided:

Churches don't help me cause I aint got no Sunday clothes
Preachers and deacons, dont look to git no help from those

and from "Salutamus" this:

What was our crime that such a searing brand
Not of our choosing keeps us hated so

Of course there is still noticeable the imprint of his class in his work. This is unavoidable and is not to be wondered at, for the emotional content cannot be entirely done away with nor can an artist immediately resolve the dialectical antitheses of his personal and social life.

There are two very important aspects of his poetry that must be considered—his attitudes toward race consciousness and his ruthless bludgeoning of the American created, fictionized stereotyped Negro. Certainly Brown is very well acquainted with the phenomena of racial pride, "ethnocentrism," oppression psychoses, discrimination and their concomitant incunabla. What one misses in his work, though, is the overemphasis on these American institutions seen in the work of other Negro poets. He has written often of Salisbury Md., of Tuscoloosa, Scottsboro and of other outrages. There is very much the same pent up fury and scorn that so colors the incendiary poetry of McKay and Hughes. And he does display in his poems an intuitive acuity of group consciousness, as in his "Strong Men:"

Walk together, chillen
Dontcha get weary
The strong men keep-a-comin' on
The strong men git stronger
. . . . . .
One thing they cannot prohibit
The strong men. . . . . carrying on
The strong men gittin stronger
Strong men
Stronger.

It seems to me, that in poetry of this stripe, there is a tendency toward an ideological identification with a racial group rather than mere race consciousness. He recognizes all too poignantly the presence of "oppression psychoses." But there is a different kind of defiance in this recognition:

What reaches them
Ill at ease, fearful?
Today they shout prohibition at you
"Thou shalt not this
Thou shalt not that"
"Reserved for whites only"
You laugh

Again there is no fawning self-pity, as in so many poems of the older Negro poets, no pitying his race. Perhaps in the poems "Children of the Mississippi," "Father Missouri," "Sam Smiley," "Tornado Blues" and others, this might seem so, but they seem to be rather a faithful depiction of a deterministic, long-suffering minority. If the charge be proven, then his pity is cool and detached rather than the sickening gush and tearfulness of other poets. There is dignity here, yes, nonchalance, with head thrown back as he writes of the victims of Father Missouri,

Who takes what was loaned so very long ago
And leaves puddles in the parlor, and useless lakes
In his fine pasture land.
Sees years of labor turned into nothing
Curses and shouts in his hoarse old voice
"Aint got no right to act dat way at all!
No right at all!"

Like the other poets, he resents the efforts made to impugn the moral status of the race. He despises any kind of stereotype and in especial the sex and morality fixations. And he is never slow to portray with telling and vital truth the critical facts as to white and black morality as in "Frankie and Johnny," "Slim Greer," "Sam Smiley" and "Cabaret."

Nor is there any personalization of the race as in Cullen's "Heritage" nor any pedestalizing as in McKay's poetry. There is, however, always the unspoken resentment toward the poetry that evokes gaudy plaudits and purple encomia as to the race's greatness. Maybe in "Salutamus" there is a touch of race pride but it is not over-weaning:

And yet we know relief will come some day
For these seared breasts; and lads as brave again
Will plant and find a fairer crop than ours
It must be due our hearts, our mind, our powers. . . .

All in all, "Strong Men," "Salutamus" and "Strange Legacies"—among others—point his attitude unmistakeably. In these he says that he believes in the potentialities of a handicapped minority, and if he must serve this tychistic attitude, fight for it, be loyal to it, he will do it in quite such a way as Claude McKay once did, standing up, going onward.

It is a gloomy path that we must go
We must plunge onward, onward gentlemen.

Brown has torn down another stale concept which had become a cancerous growth in Negro ideology. He has failed to idealize its "great men." Recognizing that this is the malignant weapon wielded by the Negro literati and the weekly Negro press to such a harmful extent, he has reversed the process and told the truth. He sees the ineradicable harm that does arise from this magnifying the great man as a symbolic prototype. He tells us that

They bought your leaders
You stumbled as blind men will.

but

The strong men keep-a-comin' on.

Sterling Brown realizes that there is only irreparable injury in empty idealizing, giving the masses a chance to achieve vicarious existence by needlessly exalting the race. He would rather that his audience listen to the epic grandeur and Olympian humor of his John Henry, Stagolee Bill, Sporting Beasley and Slim Greer.

He is determined to demolish the stereotype Negro and in his poetry and critical work he has accomplished this. In his poetry, there is no special attention paid to the Contented Negro, no unequal emphasis on the Brute Negro, no ridiculing of the Comic Negro. No, he destroys such notions and attacks the cork face comedians, manumitted psychology (that Negroes are congenitally joyous), and all the Nordic accolades as to his gentleness and faithfulness. This from Mr. Samuel and Sam is convicing,

Mister Samuel, he belong to the Rotary,
Sam to de Sons of Rest
Both wear red hats lak monkey men
An' you caint say which is de best.
. . . . . .
Mister Samuel die, and de folks all know
Sam die without no noise;
De world go by in de same ol' way,
And dey's both of 'em po' los' boys. . . .

He wants to create what has been the residue and mirroring of his individual experiences. So often we attribute to an artist motives of which he is ignorant. But in Brown's case, it can be seen easily that his creation

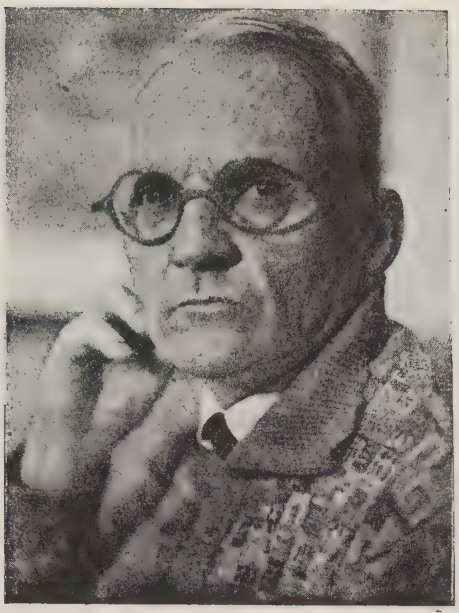
of the worker, lover, street walker, pimp, sharecropper, chain gang convict are not types. They are people whom he has known, people whose lives are known to him. This poetic attitude and social gaze are important. They make all of his objections to classification justifiable. And that is because he is against the attempts to place Negro character into neat bifurcations. Brown felt the need for this overturning of manufactured concepts. It is in this way that he can break through Southern cavalier, bourgeois standards. He replies to the Agrarians, Allen Tates and to all those who so pontifically rant "we know the Negro,"

"that shrapnel bursts and poison gas
Were inextricably color blind."

It might be objected that Brown occasionally falls victim to those very things against which he fulminates. Perhaps he too generalizes. Perhaps he is often the local colorist in his Chicago and New York poems. If this is so, there is something else. He sees in his performers action and release, disquietude, cynicism, and emotional deshabille.

His characters are his friends. And because he is such a humorist, his friends have been endowed with this fun making capacity. In almost every poem, there is rich humor, a philosophy of humor and laughter. He draws in bold gargantuan strokes characters remindful of Lautrec and Hogarth and there is such irony mixed in this mould that his poetry lives gustatorily. The masterpieces he has created, "Ma Rainey," "Slim Greer," "Big Boy," "Sporting Beasley" deserve to be quoted in full, but space forbids. Mention should be made also of the perfect rhythms, blues and Spirituals idioms and craftsmanship in his work. As a craftsman, both in dialect and the purer English form, Sterling Brown has few equals among modern poets.

It is seldom that the Negro poet today brings to his work an understanding of the class struggle, of the social and economic forces which go to make up the pot-pouri conditions of Negro life. Sterling Brown's work definitely heads in this direction. His poetry shows that he is conversant with the social, psychological, biological and economic arguments. And most important, he roots his work in the social soil of life he knows. This knowledge, derived from his varied experience has sharpened his poetic acumen, brought him nearer to his objective . . . and closer to our ranks.



VOGELER: German Revolutionary Artist

What the Hitler Regime Has Destroyed

The following pages are a record of murals which German revolutionary workers enjoyed, but which the Social-Democrats prohibited, and the Nazis finally destroyed.

The murals are the work of Heinrich Vogeler, well-known German revolulutionary artist. They decorated the walls of the Children's home of the Red Aid in Barkenhoff, near Bremen. The house was an old peasant's home where Vogeler himself first worked as a farmer, and later as an artist.

In 1918, the home was turned into a commune which was destroyed by syndicalists in 1923. In that year, through the efforts of Heinrich Vogeler, it was turned over to the Red Aid, who set it aside as a home for workers children. Vogeler completed his murals for the home in 1923.

Two years later, having attracted widespread attention, they were prohibited to be shown by the Social-Democrats. Only a national campaign of protest preserved them for a few more years. They were finally destroyed when the Nazis came to power.

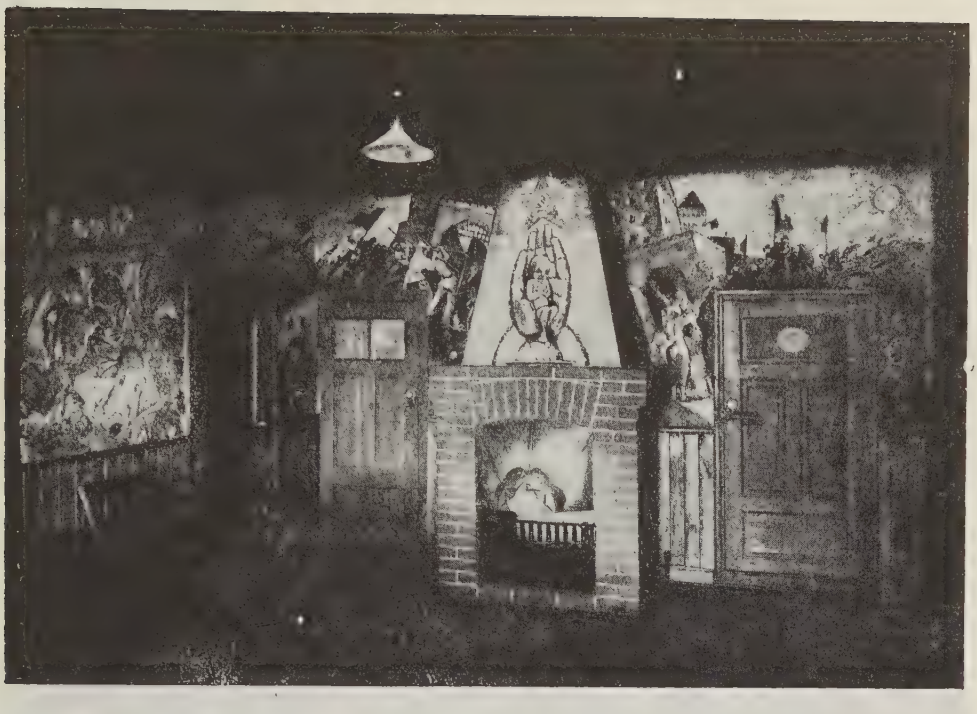
Heinrich Vogeler came to the Soviet Union for the first time in 1923, after the completion of these murals. He returned again and in the last few years has traveled extensively through Tadjikistan, Uzbekistan, Karelia and other sections of the USSR. The results of the travels are paintings and murals which are now in various Soviet museums and on the walls of buildings in Moscow.

Vogeler has recently completed a book of anti-fascist drawings, *The Third Reich,* with captions by the noted German revolutionary writer, Johannes R. Becher.

GERMAN MURALS BY HEINRICH VOGELER

"The Pioneers"—one panel of the mural described on the preceding page

"The Exploited Colonial Countries"—another panel



Fireplace in the main dining hall

General view of the murals which the Social-Democrats prohibited and the Nazis destroyed

"The Kolkhoz"—a huge composite mural now hanging in one of Moscow's leading buildings

Henry George Weiss

Address to Negro Workers

Brothers, Comrades,
the day is not without light
and the night is full of stars,
there is a sun in your sky
and a moon in your darkness.
Why cringe like cravens
under the whips of masters?
The sun is the sun of Communism
and the moon a hammer and sickle
in the hands of those that labor.
In China your brothers in toil and misery
are marching under the Red Flag
against the oppressor.
In Germany they are chanting
the song of steel,
the song of Red Front fighters
surging to the barricades.
You are not alone.
Your cause is the cause of a world,
your strength is the strength of a class.
Brothers, Comrades,
up! upon your feet!
Hear the ringing message of victory
from Soviet Russia:
THE RED ARMY STANDS GUARD!
Brothers, Comrades,
you are workers, you are men.
Down with Capitalism!
Death to lynching!
On to Communism!
ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS!

Letters From Writers

DENMARK
GERMANY
AMERICA

ANDOR GABOR — HANS KIRK - HARRY CARLISLE

ON GERMANY

Chauvinistic Propaganda

In his speech to the 17th Party Congress, Comrade Stalin spoke about the plans for organizing war which exist in bourgeois political circles. He characterized one of these schemes in the following manner:

"The third group thinks, that war must be organized by the 'superior race', we will say, the Germanic 'race', against the 'inferior race', against the Slavonic, that only such a war can be the way out of the situation, since the 'superior' race is called to impregnate the 'inferior' and to rule over it."

Comrade Stalin gave in these words an exhaustive explanation of the "racial theory", one of the most tested means of fascist propaganda.

This racial theory which, according to Comrade Stalin's expression is "as far from science as heaven is from earth," is also the corner stone, the base of the foundation of the fascist theory of Art.

The Germany of Wilhelm tried its best to harness Art and the artists to its imperialistic chariot. German Fascism which has only a short historical period at its disposal for the preparation of a bloody war, has been mobilizing Art for military purposes ever since the first moment it came into power. We will leave outside of German Art, the small fry, all kinds of scientists, doctors, and professors, those petty and middling hands of the propagandists, who play, whistle, blow, fiddle and drum on all instruments about the absolute necessity for a "full-blooded Art," "about the minutest pore of German Art," about the whole skeleton of Germanic Art." It is enough, if we limit ourselves to one whale, the Leader and his two chief armour-bearers, who are "supreme authorities" in the realm of Art.

The greatest and "most significant" speech of Adolph Hitler at the Nuremburg Congress of the Party was devoted to just this very question of Art. This speech at the Party Congress brought out the fascist "world-outlook" from the conception of race and summoned to a "rebirth of the Aryan man in Art." It ends in the following manner."

"Let the German artists be filled with a consciousness of all the responsibility of the tasks which the German people have placed upon them. In an epoch when stupidity and immorality possess the world, we summon them to take upon themselves the duty of the sublimest defence of the German people by the means of German Art."

In so far as the speech concerned "the sublimest defence," we must also call to mind that the favorite aphorism of the Leader is an old proverb which says that an attack is the best form of defence.

Fascism needs the artist not for purposes of defence. It summons him to the offensive. "The necessity for an attack on France will be fully realized only when the German People's will to life is no longer beclouded by the passive tactics of defence." Hitler, *My Struggle*). But his speech is concerned not only with France, it also refers to the "East," that is, to Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, etc., to the "inferior races" and to yet another people. To what people? Hitler also makes no secret of this:

"If at the present time, we may speak about new territory in Europe for the German People, then we have in view in the first place, Russia."

Fascist Art in reality, partially secured concrete material for this theory even before the seizure of power. This consisted in the numerous books about the war, in the East and in the West, numerous war films, battle-paintings and war monuments which were created and attained popularity already under the patronage of Social Democracy. The revolutionary Art of the proletariat, its books, paintings, artistic exhibits, sometimes even separate drawings and pictures of revolutionary contents were pro-

hibited and destroyed by the Social Democracy which ruled during the elapsed decade, while at the same time fascist Art could freely thrive and develop in Germany.

Aryan Supremacy

But perhaps this connection between blood-thirsty chauvinism and Art is only a chance clause, an eccentric thought of the Leader. By no means! Alfred Rosenberg, the fascist theoretician of Art is concerned about the "scientific" basis of the sayings of Hitler. This basis for example looks as follows.

The Aryan people, during the course of the whole world history, produced all that is valuable on earth. Aryan India gave metaphysics to the world, Aryan Persia, gave religion. Aryan Greece gave the ideal of beauty, Aryan Rome gave the stateliest learning about government.

And what did the Germanic people give, that is the Germans?

"And Germanic Europe presented the world with the lustrous ideal of mankind, the doctrine about the value of character, this foundation of every kind of ethics, the song of songs of the supreme values of northern existence, the idea of a free conscience and honor."

Does this have anything to do with Art?

Rosenberg says, yes.

"The consciousness of the creative role of Europe became a theme of European religion and German science as well as of northern art."

But how does this "creativeness" put on the chauvinistic form indispensible for capitalism? Very simply.

"Honor, that most intimate interior core of the German man, has given a new impulse to all our Art, to all our music. And it touches in an identical degree the dramatic songs of Shubert as well as the heroic and even the Prussian military marches."

All these citations are taken from a large book by Rosenberg entitled *The Myth of the XX Century,* which is devoted to theories of Art and abounds with similar pearls.

"The modern myth is just as heroic as the images of humankind two thousand years ago. This has shown itself in the fact that two million Germans perished in the world war for the ideas of "Germany". They have drawn lines across the whole XIX century, pointing out that the ancient myth-making forces are alive in the hearts of simple peasants and honorable workers as well as it was in the hearts of Germanic tribes who never crossed over the Alpine frontier."

Hence, create myths, such is the task of Art. Create a myth that the German workers and peasants fell in the World War not for the sake of the interests of German capitalism, but in the name of the idea of "Germany", and then you will be able to persuasively circulate the notion, that future wars will break out not for the sake of the interests of German monopolistic capital, but in the name of the triumphant "idea" of national-socialism.

One should dwell for a moment on the directions of Goebbels, the minister of propaganda, the supreme ruler of German Art. He prescribed a "new romanticism" for this Art in his directive speech made to representatives of German Art. He characterized this romanticism in the following manner.

"We will no longer say that it is sweet to die, but we will have the manhood to declare, that death is bitter, but when necessary, we will die."

He suggests to Art in this manner, that it must preach the heroism of death.

It is perfectly apparent that the intention of the fascist theory and practice of Art is to stifle the voice of the class struggle in Germany, to shackle the "people" into a single mass with the chains of the "general national interests", to cement the "community of blood" into an armed and inspired mob, who will take the offensive against the revolting proletariat within the borders of Germany and against the triumphant proletarian revolution, against the USSR beyond the German frontiers.

Nazi Art in Practice

But of what sort is the practice of fascist Art? Special periodical publications indicate that plastic arts play a leading role. The storm trooper is the basic theme of German Art; the storm trooper with a banner and without banners, with a swastika, embraced in the arms of "liberated workers" (from whom, however, the fascists have taken all rights), and of the peasants, "the benefacters of the people" (who no longer have the right to dispose of their land.) Pictorial Art lives sumptuously on themes of fascist parades, of storm trooper camps, of mobilized youth.

In respect to Music, that it is possessed by "official ardor" one may judge from the *German Symphony* which is on the road just now in Germany going from one concert hall to another, from one radio broadcasting station to another. This symphony consists of the following parts;—"Part One, German Power; Part Two, German Sincerity; Part Three, German Gaiety; Part Four, German Manhood; Part Five, German Fidelity."

What of the Theatre? During one week, the following plays on themes taken from the soldier's life and war were staged in Germany;—*Hussar Love* in Franfurt, *High Treason in Novarre* in Breslau, *A Soldier's Ballad* in Munich.

The question as to how much literature has contracted the leprous chauvinism of facism, may be answered by the fact that of seven books reviewed in the supplement to the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* five are on war themes. (The World War, certain stages of the Civil War, Germanic Wars of Antiquity)

It is also reported in regard to this, that there will be a new edition of six war novels by Werner Boimelburg and that Hans Fallada, the author of the novel *Little Man, What Now?* is just finishing a new novel with the title *Those who Guzzle from the Tin Pot.* The "social order" of the Fascist Government has already come to this writer. Already, he is writing about the charms of camp life, where the storm trooper "guzzles, but from tin pots." The state of fascist Art is characterized best of all by the following citation from a radio dramatization, which literally reads as follows (an exact citation):

"The final scene of the present play is the climax. There is at this point a demonstration of all the regular uniforms, which have played a role at any time in the life of the province of Grandenburg, from the Potsdam cuirassiers to the brown shirts of this year's 1933 uniform. Numerous banners, fluttering over yellow sands, proudly challenge while the *Horst Wesel* hymn resounds and then Frederick the Great (Otto Geber) rides across the stage on horseback and pronounces the last words from the will of the great king."

Where does all this lead?

Comrade Stalin spoke about this in his speech.

"It is well-known, that ancient Rome looked on the ancestors of present-day Germans and Frenchmen in just the same way as the representatives of the 'superior races' now look at the Slavonic tribes. It is well-known, that ancient Rome slighted their 'inferior races, the barbarians' called to be in eternal subordination to the superior race, to powerful Rome. Besides it should be said among us, that ancient Rome had a certain basis for this, which cannot be said for the present day representatives of the 'superior races.' What was the result of this? The result was that the non-Romans, that is, all 'barbarians' united forces against their common enemy and with thunder overthrew Rome. The question arises, where is there a guarantee that the pretences of the representatives of the present-day 'superior races' will not lead to the same lamentable result? Where is the guarantee, that the fascist-literary politicians in Berlin will be luckier than the old and experienced conquerors in Rome? Would is not be more correct to surmise the contrary?"

ANDOR GABOR

(Hungarian Revolutionary Critic, Novelist) Moscow, USSR

DENMARK

Our Peasant Literary Background

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the large landowners had become the most powerful economic force in Denmark. Through the organization of Cooperative Credit Societies they succeeded in raising capital for a thorough industrialization of agriculture; and if hitherto only large landowners had been able to export agricultural produce then now the middle and large farmers dairy and meat cooperatives were in a position to supply the English market with meat and butter. The prolonged political and economic struggle between the large landowners, industry and the bureaucracy on the one hand and the farmers on the other, ended in complete victory for the latter. During the next twenty years, the fruits of this victory disappeared. By tax legislation and supporting the division of land the farmers attempted to prevent the large landowners from regaining even a fraction of their lost power. Together with this process, however, the enmity between the farmers and the industrial workers became intensified. The farmers, who themselves had been victorious in the struggle with the landowners for the reason that they had united themselves into such powerful organizations, now did all they could to frustrate the organization of the poverty stricken farm laborers. The middle sized farmsteads were now forced to hire outside labor.

The years of the struggle intensified the class-consciousness of the peasants. Their leaders were trained in the Peoples Public High Schools, founded by Pastor Grundvig, the peasants' leader. These public high schools took the platform of democracy and a voluntary religious humanitarianism and they stood in sharp contrast to the academic education which was the monopoly of the reactionary ministry. One may receive a slight idea of the religious character of these public high schools from the picture in which God is depicted as governing the world in the same fashion as a large farmer manages his farm. After the victory of the peasantry, the high schools lost their early activity and with it, their importance to a certain extent. However, this was compensated by the entrance of a number of writers on the literary arena, whose works reflected the mentality of the victorious peasantry. This in spite of the fact that they themselves were not always clearly aware of their connection with the farmers. The more conspicuous of these writers are: Sophus Claussen, Thger Larsen, Jeppe Aakjaer, John Stijoldborg.

and Johannes V. Jensen. It is true that each of these five novelists has a different mentality but they are all of peasant descent and their work is characterized by that optimism, peculiar to a victorious peasantry.

Johannes V. Jensen

Johannes V. Jensen and Jeppe Aakjaer were the most influential. V. Jensen's father was a veterinary surgeon and this writer's first novel is a graphic account of the life of a poor farmer's son living as a student in Copenhagen. Jensen rapidly developed into a farsighted cosmopolitan who very soon orientated himself towards Britain and British imperialism. However, from the artistic standpoint, he is just as conspicuous a lyric poet as a novelist and his earlier work undoubtedly signifies a rejuvenation of Danish literature.

As long as the big landowners, who chiefly raised wheat retained their economic supremacy in the Danish agricultural economy, Denmark's agricultural export passed through Hamburg. It is therefore to be understood that Denmark's cultural import came from Germany. The old Danish novelists were greatly influenced by continental literature. Johannes V. Jensen was the first to turn towards England and his work bears a strong impression of the extent of English influence after the Danish agriculture had completely switched over to butter and meat production for the English market.

Johannes V. Jensen's leading work, *The Long Journey,* is a graphic history of the development of the Nordic tribes. Romance is introduced by a few volumes depicting the origin of the Nordic tribes in the ice age, the Viking period and the immigration of the Cimbric Jutland tribes to the south, where, together with the Teutons, they threatened Rome. Jensen's account of Danish history ended with Christian II—the Reformation period, when the peasants for the last time attempted a rebellion against the nobles but were decisively crushed. The fact that the Danish branch of the Nordic race had by no means distinguished itself as a conquering people since this period, but, on the contrary had displayed a lamentable disposition to lose its wars, grievously hindered him from extolling Danish imperialsm in the same manner as English literature has glorified British imperialism. However, Johannes Jensen overcame this difficulty with royal determination: he glorifies not the nation, but the race. And the Nordic race had mingled their blood with the English and the Spaniards during the ancient Viking period. All the great voyages of discovery, the conquest of India, the colonization of America—all this, you see, is neither more nor less than the product of the Nordic conquering spirit. The Cimbrians, it is true, were annihilated in Italy and the Viking exploits also finally ceased, but an offshoot of the Nordic tree was grafted on to the European stock and —Denmark's history is continued in America!!

Jensen's writings bear no great spiritual message. Jensen is a hazy Darwinist and a cloudy race theoretician. His strength lies in his fresh and intuitive graphic description. His attitude towards the proletariat is quite clear: in Johannes V. Jensen's eyes, the proletariat is a Caliban, who is only watching his opportunity to destroy the culture of the long suffering Nordic people. Previously the slave used to sit covetously and sullenly in the background and snapped up the crumbs as they fell from his lord's table. Our modern lords, in their hunger for expansion and conquests, have created Technique, that humming driving wheel of the world, now the worker—the modern Caliban—has no other aim in life but to destroy the fruits of the mastermen and to replunge the world once more into "Ragnarok." In many places in his novels, Johannes V. Jensen has conclusively and most forcibly proved how far his opinion of the class conscious workers coincides with that of the large farmers. Thus he depicts a Socialist lying phrase mongering agitator who prowls over Denmark on a bicycle in order to destroy that beautiful, old, peasants' life. Jensen's novel, *The Wheel,* describes a strike in Chicago from nearly the same angle: the cultured humanity are represented by the ruling class, while the worker is on a level with an orang-outang of the dark ages.

After the great war, Johannes V. Jensen's world broke up and he attempted to put it together. His opinions and trend indicated a permanent advance. Then he plunged deeper into a romantic nature worship.

Peasant Writers

Jeppe Aakjaer, who died a few years ago, was closely connected with the life of the proletariat. His parents were poor mountain peasants and he had an instinctive hate of the puffed up and avaricious large farmers. In his novels, he paints faithful pictures from the life of the land proletariat, even though at times they be artistically by no means adequate. His weakness lies in his theoretical haziness. He wishes to side with the proletariat in the class struggle but at the same time

sticks fast to his old democratic ideas, that society can peaceably attain social harmony. His social novels have made him hated among the peasants but at the same time his lyrics have made him Denmark's most popular poet. Among his best works belong those poems depicting peasant life, about the father's struggle with heath heather, which threatened to overrun his barley fields, and those poems on the mother's calm and faithful influence on domestic animals and children. Personal childhood adventures in these songs and poems bear the melancholy mark of reminiscences. Aakjaer was strongly influenced by Robert Burns. Aakjaer's lyrics to a certain extent also reflect the farmers' political childhood memories: poverty, discouragement and oppression mingle in a melancholy gloom.

At about the same time when Aakjaer published his agitational social novels, Johann Skjoldborg was pleading the cause of the farmer tenants. The Farmers' Party policy of land division gave rise to an ever increasing class of "tiny farmers," who were closer related to the proletariat than the farmers proper, and whose mode of living differed widely from that of the large farmers. In his earlier books, Skjoldborg did much to awaken the self consciousness of these people. Later on, he was more conciliatory towards the large farmers. It is also to be said of him that his literary works are without theoretical foundation and that he ends up with bourgeois democratic humanism instead of with the class struggle.

While the farmer poet Thger Larsen was a witty and sensitive pantheist, Sophus Claussen is an altogether different nature. His work is far profounder and more forceful. Although it has not attained the popularity of Johannes V. Jensen, Aakjaer and Skjoldborg, he is perhaps after all the only one of the farmer poets who had separated himself from the academic character of the earlier bourgeois literature. His thoughtful but difficult poetry bears sufficient evidence of Sophus Claussen's attitude towards the theory that once the peasants came to power, all classes would be united in sweet harmony in the embrace of democracy. He is a writer whose difficult style has restricted his circle of readers. But though his poetry is bourgeois to a great extent, it does contain certain revolutionary elements. And it is not out of the bounds of possibility that Sophus Claussen will somehow become the teacher of Denmark's future revolutionary literature.

Revolutionary Literature

It was in the seventies of the last century that Denmark's industrialization had reached the point where one could speak of an industrial working class. During the years preceding the world war, the working class had gained economic and political successes which naturally had a decided influence on literature. The bourgeois literature, which developed around George Brandes, was distinctly social humanitarian.

But as the working class began to set up their demands with increasing clarity and vigor, these democratic bourgeois novelists repulsed them. In this period Denmark has produced only Martin Andersen Nexo as a real proletarian writer. His *Pelle the Conqueror,* describing the childhood and development of a young Danish proletarian who becomes the workers' leader in a strike, soon became the bible of the strengthening social democracy.

Under the then existing conditions in Denmark it was but natural that Martin Andersen Nexo was captured by parliamentary illusions. The plot of his novel is a true picture of the development of Danish social democracy. Pelle is a real spotless proletarian but, in the last volume, he becomes victorious with the aid of an old wealthy librarian's money. The Danish social democrats hoped in just such a way with the aid of the liberal bourgeoisie to help the working class seize power. The result of this hope was that the social democrats relinquished their program and developed into a democratic party. Martin Andersen Nexo, however, did not stick to this humanistic dream, the great war opened his eyes and when the Bolshevik revolution broke out in Russia, he broke away immediately and openly sided with Soviet Russia. It is difficult to imagine today what that meant in those days.

The world war gave Denmark an economic chance. Everything could be exported to Germany at enormous prices and the bourgeoisie became exceedingly prosperous. The prices of agricultural produce went up by leaps and bounds and the heavens resounded with the joy of life in Denmark when the guns were thundering on the fronts. That generation of writers which followed the footsteps of the big farmer poets, inherited their optimistic conception of life and, in spite of the fact that the general bourgeois democratic philosophy broke up, optimism grew into ectasy. But none of these war time writers had any lasting importance. The fall in prices after the declaration of peace forced the bourgeoisie to look around for a new philosophy and the religious writers came upon the scene. If it was no longer possible to rely upon the exchange and commodity prices then nothing better remained to a disillusioned bourgeoisie than to hope for a better life.

Crisis and Social-Democracy

The economic crisis swept over Denmark in the form of unemployment, falling values and dwindling markets. The prices for agricultural produce continued to fall, the number of forced auction sales multiplied, every needy manufacturer cried loud for state aid. Seemingly, the governing party, the social democrats, were as strong as ever. They embraced a most significant part of the middle class and all their theoreticians were unanimous in their belief that now it wouldn't be very long before they could commence peaceful socialization. But social democracy in its cooperation with liberalism had years ago lost its socialist character and had become petty bourgeois. Its ideology was petty bourgeois, its press was petty bourgeois and its literature which bore the mark "social" and which originated in social democratic teachings, reeked of the petty bourgeoisie. They had simply donned the cast off literary clothing of the bourgeoisie and wore it until it fell to pieces in rags and tatters.

With the deepening of the crisis the Danish social democrats as did the German social democrats, accepted the policy of "the lesser evil." Afraid that the now national-socialistically inclined farmers' party might be able to seize power, they made concession after concession to the fascist big farmers. Wages were reduced in half by an artificial inflation, and a law prohibiting strikes was passed. This policy was accompanied by an intensified class struggle which had always fermented among the working masses. The writers are, however, silent. They know of no other expedient than to stick their heads in the sand in order not to see the threatening danger.

The young writers who wish to side with the proletariat in the class struggle have here no other way out but to turn their eyes to that land, where socialist work is being carried out and where socialist literature is being created—towards the Soviet Union.

HANS KIRK
Danish Novelist

Copenhagen, Denmark

USA

Red Writers and Red Men

Since writing you last I have come to Santa Fe, New Mexico, high in the mountains, to finish my novel under conditions favorable to recovery of health. There was sufficient interest among artists and writers here to warrant formation of a John Reed Club, which has 14 members. Several preliminary meetings developed sufficient interest for the formation of a class in Marxism, using the *Communist Manifesto* and related Leninist works, attended by 20 members, some of whom will undoubtedly be drawn into the club or another related organization. Like other clubs, it will grope its way to clarity of ideas and objectives; and, being the pioneer organization of the general movement in Santa Fe, will encourage other organizations as conditions warrant.

We face a curious situation here: The population is largely native Spanish-American and immigrant Mexican, and to a great extent is victimized by political demagogues and is mentally bonded to the Catholic church. Industrially, we have a few scattered coalmining communities (Gallup, scene of a bitterly fought strike some months ago, is 250 miles away; Madrid, where fermentation grows among 250 miners living under almost feudal conditions in a company-owned town, is 45 miles away). Much of the population lives in scattered valleys, barely subsisting by means of primitive agriculture. Pueblo Indians in several language groups and widely separated districts give the aborigine character that attracts tourists. Descended from the people who migrated into Mexico proper and founded Toltec and Aztec civilizations, the local groups remain in the (approximate) middle stage of barbarism, with strong primitive-communist survivals, nature worship ritual and dance, and pottery and weaving crafts, somewhat corrupted by the successive waves of Spanish-priestly feudal conquest, then pioneer, and now purely capitalist ruling class.

Capitalism and Religion

After generations of stupid religious, political and economic coercion, the "liberal" administration of the Indian Service is to grant almost complete self-rule to the Indians. This will likely become a palpable fraud. However, here is an absorbing problem of a small nationality (or rather a series of them) requiring careful and sympathetic analysis which sooner or later some club member will undertake from the Marxist viewpoint. It is evident enough that these pueblos, little islands of barbaric resistance to the vulgar aspects of capitalist property relationships, will be made progressive only by Socialist relationship, the handicrafts being preserved and adapted, the methods of tillage being revolutionized (also for poor farmers locally) and the problem of religion and superstition being tactfully dealt with. Though the idea of being well-to-do meets with no response—it has come from capitalist sources hitherto, and was overlaid with bricks and follies—the younger genera-

tion is affected by outside life to some extent. The religious forms and dances are almost purely aborigine, the "compromising" Catholic priests and the blundering, puritanical Protestant ministers being regarded as the white man's imposition on the pueblos, and merely tolerable. "We don't take them seriously," a young Indian told me. I attended Indian dances performed in a Catholic church immediately following midnight mass. The pueblo priest looked on, actually sharing the barbaric emotion! "We regard them as children," he said. "And have no objection to their harmless, non-evil ritual. I care only about saving their souls, which they entrust to me as a representative of God."

Time and patience will be required to devise a new approach of the white man to the red man, and to build a nucleus to accomplish preliminary work. Another nucleus is necessary to reach the Spanish speaking people on their specific issues, and research is being conducted along these lines. However, there is a dearth of Spanish language press and literature for our purposes.

Principle accomplishments of the club have been: attracting people to Marxist-Leninist study, cooperation with coal miners (speeches, leaflets, etc.) whose conditions are forcing them towards strike, development of a united front effort to give aid to a state wide unemployed conference in Sante Fe, a class in fresco painting, and investigation of the conditions of poor farmers in surrounding valleys.

Greetings to the IURW.

Comradely,
HARRY CARLISLE

(Author of the novel *Darkness at Noon*)
Sante Fe, New Mexico, USA.

A. Stetsky

About Gladkov's "Energy"

The new novel *Energy* by F. Gladkov (an excerpt appears in this issue—*Editor*) is a great event in Soviet literature. Socialist construction is the theme of the novel. The author unfolds this theme on a large canvas with skillful craftsmanship. One can say, point blank, that *Energy* is the first important artistic work which strikingly and powerfully reflects the enthusiasm of construction in the USSR.

This work is valuable, first of all, because it is based on a close acquaintance with the actual life of construction, and an understanding of it. One feels that the author has studied this life fixedly, attentively, for a long time, has studied the people, their relations on construction work, while accumulating and reflecting on the material which he has cast into artistic forms. Just because of this, his images have such lifelikeness and clarity; this also enables him to grasp the new features, to render the new character and the birth of new relations in an artistic and truthful manner.

The reader guesses without difficulty that the book is about Dnieprostroy. It seems to him somehow, that in the figures of Myron or Balaev, Katush or Bugaev, one gets momentary flashes of the traits of close acquaintances. But *Energy* is not a photograph, not a naturalistic picture of Dnieprostroy and the images of the novel are by no means copies of living people. In his novel, the author has raised himself to a high standard of artistic generalization, he reincarnates both Dnieprostroy and its people in an artistic image of the construction, the struggle, the labor enthusiasm of the USSR.

Passing before us in the new work of Gladkov are Myron Vatagin, the Secretary of the Party Committee, the chief character of the novel; and Balaev, Chief of Construction, a foremost proletarian and Party worker; the old technical intelligentsia, Strizhevsky, Kruazhish, Mitrokin; the young Soviet engineer, an enthusiastic Komsomol , Kolcha, and the organizer of the shock brigade, Katusha Buechkov, the ditch diggers, "Yokels" Matvey and Nikita; the wrecker, Bublikov and Khablo the traitor who worms himself into the Party. For each of them, the author was able to find clear traits, to exhibit their individuality, to escape schemes and patterns. He was able to render them in action, in the labor and collisions of the arduous and fiery struggle for construction—a struggle which modified the people themselves.

What is especially worthy of attention in the book of Comrade Gladkov is this ability to show not only the masses and their representatives but also singular relations on construction. The author also pictures before us the life of organizations, their mutual relations, the complexity and difficulties of organizing tens of thousands of people, workers, seasonal laborers, technicians, engineers. The Party organization of the construction work and the worker masses, the Party committee and the district committee, the Party organization and the management of construction, proletarian and seasonal workers; this whole mechanism in action is reflected in the novel in a live and truthful manner. By artistic touches, the author tried to disclose the heart of these mutual relations, the significance for construction, for victory in the struggle. This is new in artistic literature. Our criticism has not paid enough attention to this, possibly because in this respect the book is one with seven seals for many critics. To perceive and to feel our new reality, one needs to know it closely below there in the factories, on construction, in the collective farms, where it is being created.

The Role of the Proletariat

The scarlet thread which goes through *Energy* is the role of the proletariat as the organizing vanguard with the ability and property to attract other workers to itself and to infect them with enthusiasm for struggle and construction. A superb scene in this respect is the one in the dam foundation during a break in the work. The dam sinks, the seasonal workers leave the construction. Vatagin runs against this group who are not working, the muzhiks are sitting indifferently. "The quarry men sucked their pipes, and dully looked at their feet. Above, a rigger howled an indistinct song dreamily. Myron felt helpless, alien here, by accident among these people. They did not want to work, spat saliva and furtively glanced at him with inhuman eyes. Long drawn out amiability is no way to fight these people. Vikhlaev acted on them in his own way—he plays and becomes accustomed to them, but he is himself ground down and helpless. Not he, but they are the decisive force here. Our system of labor must be

F. Gladkov, noted Soviet author of Cement, *and the recently published* Energy *(part of which appears in this issue) with V. Bakhmetiev, Soviet novelist, author of the popular novel* Martin's Crime, *at a literary meeting in Moscow*

made like *an iron law, whose provoking influence should infect like a mass passion.*

The author draws with several legible touches, relating how by special means, seasonal workers who seemed indifferent to everything are awakened to a pride in labor.

This is one of the episodes. This is an artistic touch, by means of which the author reveals the "resmelting" of people, reveals how this Nikita and Matvei, themselves ignorant and unnoticed at first, infected with labor heroism, by their example of acting as foremost proletarians, became later heroic shock workers.

Virtues and Faults

Construction is mass work, led by the Party, by the foremost proletarians. This is a fact, which is felt with full force throughout the book. In this lies the author's art. The fact, that he was able to show the *mass in action.* Not the impersonal, ignorant mass which is pictured in the works of bourgeois literature. No, the workers mass in the Soviet country,—the mass which sparkles with individualities, which wins by its high-strung enthusiasm, heroism, which is hardened by failure and the blows of the enemy, which is able to display its initiative. The scene at the fire and the heroism of the Komsomols; the struggle against damage, the fulfilling of the counter-plan;—these are mass scenes and they are the best in the book. We see in *Energy* a great human stream in all its variety,—here are the workers in the machine shop, and the stone breakers from the village, and the Komsomols and women and the green working youth, the representative of which is Katusha Buschkov. The author shows also, how the old barriers between people, raised by centuries are broken down in the process of creative labor; the representatives of the intelligentsia, with torturing doubts, going into the blind alley of personal isolation, how they also cast off from themselves the decrepit old man and are born anew in this great crucible of socialist labor. The author, by no means falls into simplification. With fine artistic strokes, he depicts the class struggle on construction, the steps and blows of the class enemy.

The question of the leadership of the masses and of the construction itself, is raised before us in this connection, not as a narrow technical task, but as the greatest enterprise of the working class which is battling for the consolidation of socialism.

One must note that in *Energy,* apart from those enumerated, the author poses a number of other most important problems, personal and social, problems of the family under the new conditions, of relations to women, the problem of Art.

The book, to our regret, contains also a number of weak spots: the ornateness of language, a style which simply interferes at times and gives no assistance in understanding the work, rhetorics, a tendency to permit his heroes to occupy themselves beyond measure with philosophical effusions which sometimes fatigue the reader, etc.

But despite all these defects, the value of the book is great. *Energy* is the most significant artistic work devoted to socialist construction. In comparison to *Cement,* the author has taken a great step forward in artistic craftsmanship. *Energy* is both an artistic production and a political handbook. In art form, the book reveals to every Party worker, to every activist many aspects of the relations between people, of organization and leadership which are indispensable for every Party worker to know in order to lead correctly and conquer in the struggle.

Yuri Olesha

MEYERHOLD: Soviet Director

On His Sixtieth Birthday

It was in Odessa. I was a student in the gymnasium. I sat in the moving picture show "Urania" and looked at a film entitled, *A Portrait of Dorian Grey*. The motion picture was then called "Illusion." The word "film" did not exist. The picture was shown in a small premise. They had selected for some reason or other an oblong hall. It is strange that the first appearance of a new art, an industrial art, connected with the technique of a new century, was surrounded by a style which had nothing in common with the new century. I remember the clay decorations, the staleness. Ventriloquists came forth with dolls in the intermissions between shows. The dolls were frightfully painted, impersonating French sergeants and chambermaids. They sang couplets. This was all very old fashioned and related somehow to ancient Paris, the Paris from which Maupassant ran after being frightened by the Eiffel Tower.

Meyerhold played a part in the film. He was thin, bent, smoked a cigar. There was a monocle over one of his eyes, from which a tape hung over his face. He was in a dress suit with orchids.

This was my first meeting with Meyerhold.

The second meeting took place in Moscow. I stood on the corner of Tverskaya and Chernishevski Alley, at the building of the Moscow Soviet. It was a day of celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution. Demonstrators passed by. Among them, at the head of a group of actors was Meyerhold, dressed in a short fur-coat, in boots, a grey, lamb-skin cap cocked over his eyes.

"Meyerhold," I thought. *The Death of Tarelkin*. An innovator. No curtains. Honorary member of the Red Army. How proudly he holds Moscow. I am in Moscow. October Revolution. This is October. The poet Meyerhold. The red banners of the demonstrators, workers. Workers and actors. Moscow. Meyerhold passes by. What a nose he has. A strange nose. A big round bone of a nose. The big-nosiness of heroism. It often figures in stories, in fiction.

At the third meeting, I made his acquaintance. After the opening night of *The Conspiracy of Feeling* at the Vakhtangov Theatre, Meyerhold gave his opinion of the play to the actors, to the stage manager and to me, the author. This was customary at the Vakhtangov. After a new play, they invited Meyerhold to a discussion and he gave them his opinion.

Some time later, Meyerhold staged my play. I am proud of the fact that my ideas found a response in this talented artist. When he began to work over the play, I understood above all that he is a poet. During the rehearsals, he suddenly whispered in my ear, "This is Cinderella." That is to say, he saw in my conception that which had escaped me, which I had wanted into the plot but could not. I think that the play *The Roll-Call of Blessing* did not turn out well for me. I created a very difficult role for the star actress. Zinieda Reich played the role with distinction, but it seems to me, that if I had understood earlier that the plot on which I built the play was the plot of Cinderella, then perhaps the play would have been better.

Phrases are bandied about that Meyerhold disregards the playwright. I think that Meyerhold belongs in the front ranks of those who judge the good and the bad in art and that the author, even the most arrogant can believe in him. I doubted, I felt like protesting more than once, but there never was a case that I finally did not say to myself, "No, he is right and I, most likely am mistaken."

I remember how Mayakovsky felt towards Meyerhold.

"Are you not tired of this, Meyerhold?" he asked the master. (Guests asked Mayakovsky to read his poetry.) Several times he interrupted the reading, "Are you not bored, Meyerhold?"

A conversation took place about Edgar Allan Poe. Someone said that the American playwright Sophie Treadwell *(Machinal)* had a play about Poe. I asked what the play was called. The title was not liked. (I do not remember it). They began to think up a title for a play about Edgar Allan Poe. Meyerhold said:

"Simply, Edgar."

He said this with unusual tenderness.

"Edgar."

And I agreed with him in spirit at once, that a play about the sorrowful life of the poet should only be called by a

simple name, which appeared very tender and helpless. Some kind of business appointment was made for this poet, the result of which might promise security for him. He set out for the appointment, but along the way he saw a girl jumping rope. He also began to jump rope. It happenend that he tore off a heel. He could not appear at the important appointment with a heel torn loose and in this manner good fortune slipped away from him.

Meyerhold related this incident to us.

He spoke with the same kind of tenderness about Lermontov.

The Man in Action

He takes off his jacket during rehearsals. He wears a striped sweater. His hairs stand on end. There is powder on his shaven checks. He goes out to the end of the hall. He looks from there. If the work of the actors pleases him, he shouts:

"Very well!"

From the darkness, he quickly goes to to the footlights. He rushes onto the stage. He goes over the stage, bent slightly.

Then he "demonstrates."

It seems to me that this is a peculiar theatre, this Meyerhold exhibition. It is a theatre which captivates, which is fantastic. And if the rehearsals of Meyerhold were accessible to spectators, the spectators would see the most astonishing actor of our times.

Igor Ilinsky once said to me:

"Sometimes, I do not agree with the suggestion of Vsevolod Emilevich. It seems to me that it would be better not to do it as he says. I try the opposite. And I usually find I'm wrong."

Ilinsky said this!

The director appears in the theatre in the evening. A play goes on. The director leans against a door. A sheen of light, radiating from the stage scarcely touches him. With crossed arms, his profile to the public, he stands elegantly, manfully.

If a friend sits in the hall near by, then Meyerhold, breaking his attention, turns his face to his friend and winks at him. This means, "Well, and what do you say? Very well?"

The Sixty Year Old Youth

I was at the rehearsal at the Art Theatre. During the rehearsal, Stanislavsky entered the box. He did not want to cause the least disturbance by his appearance. A man of huge size, he began slowly, with great pains to sit in a manner that would make him appear shorter. He sat down very slowly, with extreme care, fearing he might make the seat creak, and although the seat did not creak, the expression of concern did not leave his face until he had sat down. He sat down as easily and noiselessly as a butterfly.

After this he watched the actors.

All the feelings which the actors exhibited were reflected in his face. He grimaced like a child. One would have thought that this great innovator of the stage had come to the theatre for the first time.

Youth is an indispensible quality of a genuine artist. Meyerhold is full of it. Teacher and pupil alike. He is above all, simple.

Meyerhold is a connoisseur of music, painting and architecture. He loves music passionately. Among the young composers he has encouraged are: Shostakovich, Shebalin, Gabriel Popov.

Meyerhold loves youth. When he entered the ranks of the revolutionaries, he joined with youth forever. He is on intimate terms with young people. Aviators, sailors of the Red fleet enthuse him.

If a new Art arose after the October Revolution, an Art which at present enthuses the world of Soviets, then it can be said, that the first years of this Art were called, "Meyerhold."

He invented all that with which others are so familiar now. The whole style of contemporary Soviet performances proceeds from him.

He continues to invent, furiously and untiringly. It seems absurd to think, that this man, who wrangles with attendants because of their smoking during rehearsals; this youthful, happy spirit so inspired by Communist Youth; this artist who can speak all night long about Art and in the morning go to a rehearsal as if nothing had happened; that he is sixty years old.

The youth of this sixty year old man is one of the wonders of the Revolution. He dreams about a new theatre. On the day of his sixtieth birthday, we expressed the wish that the theatre about which he dreams would be quickly built. We wished for the new theatre on Triumphal Square, with the new stage invented by Meyerhold. A remarkable man will confirm the fame of Soviet Art.

CHRONICLE

FRANCE

AEAR

Battles Against Fascism

The Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists of France (French section of the IURW), participated in the huge demonstration held by the French proletariat on the 9th and 12th of February. The association issued a *Red Leaflet,* entitled "The General Strike," with an appeal for joint action of the intellectuals and the proletariat against fascism, in defense of the working class. In the *Red Leaflet* is printed the declaration of the AEAR, signed by Vaillant Couturier.

"Today, in the name of the General Strike, the writers and artists will participate in all the actions of the proletariat. At this stage of the struggle we want to be only rank and file fighters. It will be an honor for us to be among those whom tomorrow the bourgeois press will not hesitate to call 'a pack of ruffians' and 'shady elements' from the workers' suburbs.

"Events of the last few days have served as an eye-opener to those who still had some doubts. And they perceived the naked reality of the fascist danger as well as the heroism of the proletariat, which is alone able to prevent the realization of fascist plotting and the plotting of the fascist elements in the government which are hiding behind the Jacobin mask of 'Rescue of Society.'

"The class struggle is making relentless demands and the Revolutionary Writers and Artists will comply with them in full.

"There is no room for compromises and reconciliation which tend to disarm.

"The struggle is on! It is possible to prevent the coming of fascism. Its defeat depends entirely upon the solidarity of proletarian strength, on the basis of a definite program.

"AEAR declares that it will strive to its utmost to attain this solidarity.

"Long live the active participation in the General Strike!"

In this same issue of the *Red Leaflet* are published statements by leading scientists, writers and artists against the onslaught of fascism in France.

Professor Rene Monblanc: 'The place of all honest intellectuals, even of those who are very cautious, is among the working class, in the ranks of the trade unions of workers and office help in order that they follow the former and push ahead the latter. It is the duty of the intellectuals to participate in the general strike on the 12th of February for the General Strike will show whether France is ripe for a fascist dictatorship or is ready to erect, on the ruins of parliamentarism, a new system of a workers' democracy, a soviet system. The General Strike must be a success!"

Paul Signac, noted artist, member of the AEAR: "A whirlwind of madness has risen over Paris, over the entire country. All freedom is in danger. There is only one way out: immediate unification without phrases, with no limitations—of all proletarian powers, of all defenders of human thought, against the fascist onslaught. For a stronger and wider United Front!"

André Malraux (writer): "In Germany and Italy the bourgeoisie has succeeded in uniting against the proletariat which theatened them. And now, the proletariat of France must unite in order to resist fascism which is theatening them. Otherwise the proletariat will be defeated."

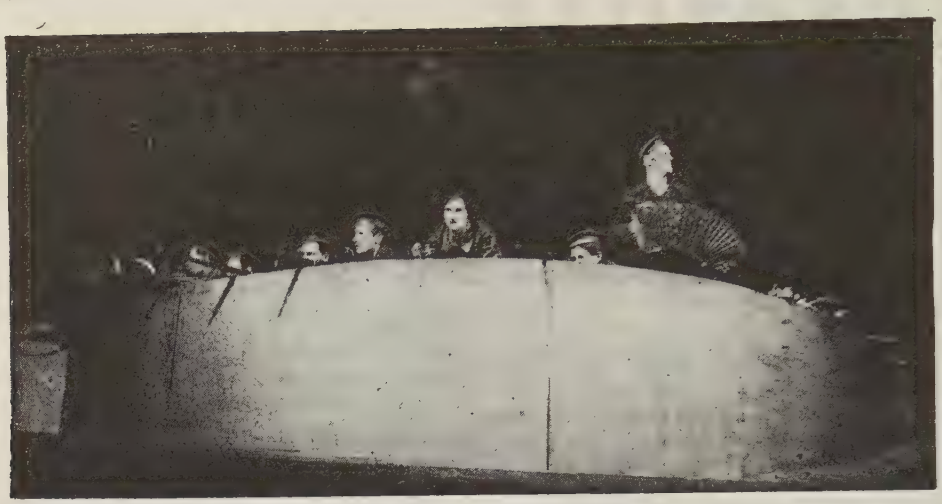
Ozenfant (artist): "You who are called intellectuals, people of art! I am horrified to see you waver at this critical moment! I am not a Communist and I have some slight personal objections, some deviations, merely in terms. But today I am leaving them behind. Be quick! We must hurry! I am a revolutionary because I know that the decrepit system which has lapsed into idiocy can produce nothing great. If we do not stop the onslaught of fascism then tomorrow it will issue a decree on compulsory cretinization. Let us demolish those who want to stop thought!

"We do not wish to play the idiotic game of fascist underlings who have joined the apache and provocateurs for a war with lamp posts. We wish to fight for a system which will create a new world in order to adjust such a system to the needs of our country. We want to fight for a system in which hope and happiness exist not merely as museum relics.

"All toilers, arise against the fascist offensive!

"Toilers! You—you are all of France!

"You will be unconquerable if you stand together. You merely have to raise your little finger and the social revolution would occur. But any discord among you may enable the coming of the fascist dictatorship. You will either have to fight or be



A Scene from The Optimistic Tragedy, *by V. Vishnevsky, one of the great successes of the past season in Moscow, presented at the famous Kamerny Theatre under the supervision of Tairov*

subjugated by a government of idiocy, a government of boot and beast. Then what are you waiting for?"

Paul Gsell (theatrical critic): "The bourgeoisie is falling; its feet are skidding in blood. It soon must die. It is stupid; it is base. It understands nothing of the new system which humanity so ardently desires and on which it bases all its hopes. The bourgeoisie is capable merely of murder, murder and murder. It is only capable of creating wars and to send whole nations to be slaughtered.

"The people are ardently demanding a rational and just organization of society in which they would be able to work in order to live. The bourgeoisie, however, instead of granting these demands, continue stubbornly, absurdly, and criminally, to hold on to this ugly system under which swindlers and their accomplices are the all powerful, while the workers die of starvation. The bourgeoisie is only capable of shooting down those who ask for bread.

"Damn such a system! Long live the soviets!"

M. Prenant (Sorbonne professor); "Fascism in France has thrown off its mask. An attempt to seize power has already been made. Other attempts will follow. Fascism will indeed succeed if the workers of physical and mental labor do not form a united front which would direct all its power to resist fascism. We must join in with this united front, if we do not wish to be victims of a system copied from Hitler's Germany; a system characterized by unequalled barbaric violence, murder, economic depression, growth of poverty, preparedness for war, and humiliation of the intellect. I want to declare my solidarity with the heroic participants in the battles of February 9th and the strikers of February 12th."

Anti Fascist Meeting in Latin Quarter

A public meeting organized by the Association of Fevolutionary Writers and Artists and conducted under the slogan "We do not want fascism in France," was held in Paris on March 8th, at Pale de Mutublite. "Over 1,000 intellectuals, students," writes *Humanité,* "answered the call of the AEAR. The audience consisted of unusually stirred up, impassioned, ardent young people."

The meeting was conducted by the noted writer Jean Kassou who declared that from now on it is quite clear to him what road every honest, self-respecting intellectual must trod.

"The intellectuals must join the working class and together they must struggle and create a new world which is just as necessary for people of mental labor (if, of course, they want to remain what they are) as well as for other categories of labor."

The well known scientist, Professor Lanjeven, declared his complete and unrestricted solidarity with the working class which is struggling against capitalism. "The fight is on. It's either we or they—it is up to the youth to make the choice."

Professor Prenant spoke of the difficult moral and material conditions awaiting the intellectual under a fascist government and contrasted fascism—weapon for repression —with Marxism—weapon for liberation.

At this meeting also spoke Professor Marcel Kon, R. Moblanc, Marsau Piver, Dabit,

writer and critic Ramon Fernandez, writer Texenko, critic Leon Pier Kan, the German writer Kestler, and others. All of them declared their solidarity with the struggling working class. "We are ready to put down the pen to take up arms," said one of the writers.

In conclusion, Vaillant Couturier addressed those students, writers and artists who were present with an appeal for organizing a united revolutionary front, "not only for defense but for an offensive as well."

The AEAR Red Leaflet

Members of the Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists of France participated in the mass demonstration at the funeral of the workers murdered by the police during the February events in Paris. For this demonstration the AEAR issued a leaflet "Revolutionary Writers and Artists in Commemoration of the Murdered Heroes."

The declaration of the AEAR is printed in this leaflet:

"The AEAR in the name of the writers and artists who during the class struggle consider themselves soldiers of the proletarian army, is paying tribute to the victims of police bullets."

In the same issue of the *Red Leaflet* are printed: an appeal to the masses by Romain Rolland and J. R. Bloch, an article by Aporar, a statement by the famous literary critic, Ramon Fernandez, and the well known writer Jean Jiono. (It should be noted that in this leaflet Fernandez and Jiono are for the first time acting with the AEAR). Jiono has since become a member of the AEAR.

Ramon Fernandez: "Under these serious political conditions in which we are now living there is no room for political nor theoretical shades of meaning. There is only one source of republican energy and freedoom left—the working class. Only they—the workers—due to the very condition of life they are living under as well as to their moral discipline, possess an active means of defense against all the crooked trickery of capitalism. He who does not make common cause with the working class, whether he wants to or not, joins the forces which he perhaps considers hostile."

Jean Jiono: "There is no time now for speech making. Now is the time for action. One must resolve to sacrifice himself. Now we are fighting real enemies. There is only one thing which can save our freedom—physical force!"

The Magazine La Jen Revolution

The French revolutionary youth magazine *La Jen Revolution (The Young Revolution)*

A Communist bookshop in Paris, one of a number in the city

which is meant for young workers and students has lately been attracting much attention. The magazine is published twice monthly. Its contents have considerably improved. Along with the literary and critical works of French authors the magazine also prints a great deal of information on Soviet culture—the life of Soviet workers and students, etc.

The French section of AEAR established contact between the magazine and Soviet students' organizations as well as with the magazine *Young Guard* which has now taken patronage over the magazine. In connection with the magazine a dramatic group and a club were organized. They frequently hold literary evenings, make reports and show Soviet films. Recently *La Jen Revolution* has taken patronage over the German underground students' magazine *Der Rote Student (The Red Student).*

Exhibit of Revolutionary Art in France

In February an art exhibit by revolutionary artists, members of the Fine Arts section of AEAR, took place in Paris.

This exhibit is the first important attempt at displaying revolutionary art in France.

The exhibit was attended by a great number of workers, office workers, intellectuals, artists, and according to *Humanité,* even

Sandor Gergel, Hungarian revolutionary writer whose story is included in this issue

by some bourgeois elements whose curiosity was aroused and who are somewhat uneasy.

Jean Jiono on How He Entered the AEAR

A noted French writer, Jean Jiono, (author of a number of novels on peasant life) has sent a letter to the editorial staff of *Commune* stating the reasons which urged him to become a member of the AEAR.

"Hitherto I have struggled feverishly against war. I was mistaken in believing that I could carry on this struggle remaining outside of any party, acting individually and relying entirely on my own ardour, patience and daring.

"A discussion I have recently had with a friend—a discussion about those who refuse to go up for military service, because their conscience does not permit them to fight, brought me nearer the truth.

"And just because I dealt delicately with my opponent I tried to approach the question as closely as possible and even if I did not convince my friend, I personally gained a great deal by it.

"If you resolve to sacrifice yourself you must do it firmly, couragiously. The struggle against war is not merely a struggle against war. There must be a program, definite rules and regulations, a party, rigid discipline; one must know what he wants and really want it.

"From the moment you join the ranks of a party you must give yourself up entirely. And the common readiness of all to sacrifice themselves is the source of the party's strength. Conquests are not made at once. But no matter how little is gained each time, it is all due to strength. Our opponents fear strength. They respect it. We must make them respect us. Saints are not respected unless they forcibly demand respect by resorting to physical or moral force.

"War is one of the weapons of politics. It cannot be done away with by laws or arbitration. Other means must be applied. Care must be taken that the valiant elements struggling against war should not be misled—it should be quite clear what direction their valor should take. War cannot be separated from a bourgeois form of government. And the notion that the former can be abolished and the latter remain intact is a fallacy. Strenuous fighting is going on. Forces are already being spent. Our opponents know it.

"War means not only dead bodies. That's what it means to us. But those who make and declare war—for them it is a political weapon. I know that to us they personified tenderness, friendship, our own flesh and blood. I know that to escape death the only thing left is the desert and despair. We must convert into arms of struggle that void, that misery which we inherited, from the war. During four long years we were bleeding to death. We suffered an enormous loss of blood. We are now bloodless, just like corpses. Nothing touches us any more. And this is precisely what we want to make use of. We are capable of cruelty which knows no mercy.

"Having arrived at this conclusion I want to join the AEAR so that together we can decide how to act best; to feel that this action is directed by a party; to learn more than what I already know."

Eugene Dabit's New Book

The new novel *A Very Recent Corpse (Un Mort tout Neuf)* by Eugene Dabit is off the press. Here are the contents of the novel as given by Ramon Fernandez in *Marianne*. A certain Alfred Singer, a merchant of the middle class, suddenly died at the apartment of his mistress Paula. She notified Singer's relatives of his death. His relatives are all bourgeois and of various gradations of wealth, beginning with very wealthy and ending with a quasi-proletarian.

The story may be divided into two parts: 1) the death of a middle bourgeois merchant from the moment his death is certified up to his burial; and 2) the analysis of the different characters of the book and their relation to the deceased.

Fernandez points out that the novel has high artistic merits.

Activities of the Workers University in Paris

The functioning Workers' University in Paris has an attendance of about 1,460. In

Exhibition of revolutionary drawings and posters held in Amsterdam, and arranged by the Revolutionary Writers and Artists of Holland, section of the IURW

January, lectures were regularly attended by 875 persons. In February, due to the political events, the university was closed for a while.

The cultural role played by the workers' university is very important.

In 1934 the university organized courses by correspondence for out-of-town workers. 655 persons have already registered for these courses. The program includes a number of courses answering the actual needs of the class struggle such as: The Class Struggle and Various Forms of Society, Religion from the Materialistic Point of View, The History of the Labor Movement, Fascism in France, etc.

The Bourgeois Press on the Book Workers Write.

A collection of short stories and poems by worker authors, *Workers Write* with a preface by Eugene Dabit has appeared. It is a collection of work by those who participated in the contest of proletarian literature organized by *Humanité*. This collection has called forth much interest from the French readers. The story "One of My days" was reprinted by *Lu*.

The magazines *Marianne* and *La Republique* gave very favorable reviews of this book which has particularly attracted attention in the days when the French proletariat poured out into the streets of Paris.

Ramon Fernandez writes in *Marianne:* "I am extremely glad that my attention is drawn to the collection of tales and poems written by worker authors, by real workers to whom literature by itself is not a profession. And therefore we can by no means demand of these authors naive tenderness toward subtleties, but instead we find in them the direct expression of absolutely pure and unpremeditated feelings. Furthermore, these authors are revoluionaries, *i.e.*, people who say, 'we've done enough.' "

HOLLAND

Committee of United Action

A Committee of United Action of Writers, Artists and other Intellectuals has been organized by the Cultural Federation, including the AEAR, Workers Theatre Federation and other revolutionary cultural organizations. The Committees purpose is chiefly to secure unemployed relief for professional workers.

An anti-fascist exhibit called "Two Worlds" was held in Rotterdam during March. It was organized under the auspices of the "Links-Richten" group of revolutionary writers and artists, the Social-Cultural Circle and the Society of Friends of the USSR.

Illegal publications: brochures, pamphlets, newspapers, etc., from China, Japan, Italy, Esthonia and Germany were shown. These included a booklet advertizing a motion

Boris Lapin, Soviet journalist and Lev Nikulin, novelist, at a literary meeting in Moscow

picture on the back of which was printed a report of the 13th Comintern Plenum.

The work of German revolutionary writers in exile was also exhibited, including the books of Alfred Döblin, Heinrich Mann, Heinz Lipmann, Ernst Toller, Johannes Becher; and also the various German revolutionary magazines and newspapers being published abroad.

Included were a number of books by the revolutionary writers of Holland: Jeff Last, Nick Rost, Heert Groob and others.

A part of the exhibit was devoted to the graphic arts, photographs, placards, illustrations with quotations from Stalin's speeches, by Dutch, French and Soviet artists. This section of the exhibit was limited because much of the material to be shown was confiscated by the police.

A large section was occupied by the books and pamphlets of German fascist writers, published in Holland, and a group of fascist photos, showing clearly the contrast between the two worlds of fascism and revolution.

AUSTRALIA

The Sydney Workers Art Club has conducted literary meetings which have attracted a great deal of attention among workers and intellectuals.

For lack of finances, their publication *Workers Art* has been suspended during past months. A mimeographed weekly Bulletin has taken its place, printing information of the club's activities as well as the work of club members. The last numbers have included an article on Poetry and War by its editor; A story "Odessa Girl" by R. N. Sparks; an article on the performance of Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armored Train* in Sydney. In addition to this material, other items are reprinted from *International Literature.* There is also a section devoted to letters from readers, chiefly on the clubs activities.

CHINA

A new publication, *Literature and Art* has appeared in Shanghai, the organ of a young group of writers. The magazine devotes major attention to Soviet literature and recent issues have included a story by Yakovlev, poems by Mayakovsky and Demyan Bedny, and articles on Soviet literature.

Literature, a new magazine which also appeared during 1933 in Shanghai, in addition to close attention to both Chinese and Soviet literature, devotes a great deal of space to the work of revolutionary writers in the international field. Recent issues carries items on Gide's turn to Communism, Ernst Gläser's new novel, the work of the French revolutionary writers and an article about Langston Hughes' trip to the Soviet Union.

The Shanghai magazine *Society and Education* describes the confiscation and destruction of many books found in Shanghai bookshops dealing with the class struggle.

USSR

Most Popular Plays

Maxim Gorki was the favorite playwright during the 1933-34 theatrical season in the RSFSR. His play *Yegor Bulichev* ran to 788 performances. Next in popularity was Pogodin's *My Friend,* with 716 performances. Schiller's *Love and Intrigue* was shown 579 times and was more popular than the newest plays *Intervention* by Slavin and *Mstislav the Brave* by Prutt, which ran 406 and 381 performances respectively.

Anglo-American Commission Meeting

At a meeting of the Anglo-American Commission of the IURW the British revolutionary student movement was the subject of a discussion led by David Guest, former student of Cambridge University.

While before 1931 English students showed but little political interest, Guest reported, since then a revolutionary group has come to life in every leading university of England. At Oxford the October Club alone has a membership of over 300. At Cambridge, as at other universities, hundreds of students turned out to welcome the Hunger March, and accompanied the unemployed workers out of the city as a mark of solidarity.

Strong anti-war spirit, and widespread sympathy for the Soviet Union has developed among English students. At Cambridge, despite a wave of chauvinism raised about

the Metro-Vickers case, at large meetings held by the students, supporters of the USSR were in a two to one majority.

While fascist groups have also appeared in British universities, the speaker pointed out that these are of very recent origin and are weak as yet, born after the revolutionary students had already gained a strong foothold.

Revolutionary literary groups are also coming into existence, and the *Student Vanguard,* organ of the revolutionary student groups, has become so influential, that it is now being prohibited by university and police authorities.

At a previous meeting of the Anglo-American Commission the six issues of *International Literature* for 1933-34 were discussed after a report on the magazine by Wall Carmon.

Exhibit of American Artist

In April an exhibit of 60 paintings, drawings and woodcuts, by Albert Abramovitz, artist of the New York John Reed Club, were shown at the Museum of Western Art, in Moscow.

Comrade Chernovitz, director of the Museum, presided over a short meeting held in opening the exhibit, at which brief talks were made by Bela Uitz, secretary of the International Union of Revolutionary Artists (IURA); Fred Ellis, staff artist of *Trud (Labor)*; Walt Carmon of *International Literature* and Gronson of the *Museum* staff.

The meeting was well attended by both Soviet and foreign art enthusiasts.

USA

Michael Gold vs. Ezra Pound

Sender Garlin, American revolutionary journalist, who temporarily conducted Michael Gold's column "Change the World!" in the New York *Daily Worker*, prints a letter from Ezra Pound, and Michael Gold's answer.

Ezra Pound asks Gold why he does not answer his questions, and that among other things he was instrumental in having Louis Aragon's poem *Red Front* printed in England.

Gold replied: "I am amazed that you write to people like myself. Personally I cannot feel friendly to anybody who is a Fascist and who spreads the confusion you do. What in hell is it all about anyhow!

"How can you say you had Aragon's poem printed in London when Aragon would like nothing better than to blow everyone of you Fascists off the face of the earth. Are there no principles in the world anymore?

Walter Snow, American worker-writer, author of a forthcoming first novel The Magnificent Marchetti, *part of which appeared in* International Literature *in the past year*

"You say that Communists don't answer your questions. There are so many books that answer all your questions and you have read them all. What more can anyone do? You are a Fascist and to hell with Fascists."

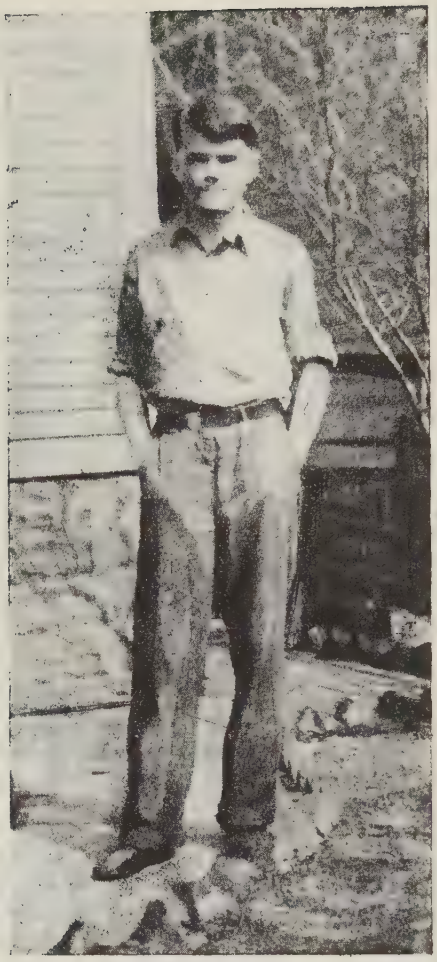
Sender Garlin writes of Ezra Pound that he "deserted the United States many years ago, because he found bourgeois America inhospitable to the creative life, is one of the demi-gods of the 'super-class' writers. For some time now he has lived in Rapallo, Italy, a defiant expatriate. He has now become a fervent supporter of the weird 'social credit' schemes of Major Douglas of England, whose engaging slogan is 'make the poor richer, and the rich richer.' There are a number of these 'super-class' literateurs in the United States, who too have become ardent advocates of Major Douglas' monetary program. There are, for instance, Gorham Munson and Archibald MacLeish, in whose six poems *Murals for Mr. Rockefeller's City* Michael Gold was the first to find the literary seeds of American Fascism."

A New Book on Fascism

Murder—Made in Germany, by Heinz Liepmann has been issued in the U.S. by Harper and Brothers and is receiving a favorable press.

In the New York *Herald-Tribune Books* of March 4, George N. Shuster, author of *The Germans,* writes:

"Heinz Liepmann is a German Jew, Communist, theater director new style, social



James Steele, American worker-writer, author of Conveyor, *a first novel which has just been published in Moscow by the Co-Operative Publishing Society for Foreign Workers in the USSR*

problem novelist and refugee. He has therefore been nearly everything good Nazis do not like, and he has spent some time in a concentration camp. It would hardly have been difficult to predict that, given a good chance, Herr Liepmann would write a scorching dissertation on Germany gone mad; but few would have ventured to surmise that this book would be as good—let us say at once as badly needed—as this one is."

The critic writes that Liepmann's "realism has something of the tenseness of a nervous collapse." He adds: "But there is a great deal of genuine culture and amity in Liepmann's point of view. His book is by no means merely a by-product of a first-hand course in current events. It has a rhythm deal of genuine culture and amity in Liepconcern with universal human fate. . ."

Philip Sterling, reviewing the book in the New York *Daily Worker* finds that "Above all Liepmann has given an inspiring picture of the revolutionary forces under the leadership of the Communist Party which are growing daily more powerful in their progress towards the armed destruction of Fascism."

While the critic in the *Herald-Tribune Books* agrees with other critics that a comparison of this book with *All Quiet on the Western Front* is permissible, Sterling writes in the *Daily Worker* that "The comparison is unthinkable. Heinz Liepmann's book contains no aimless sentimentalism, no heroics, no directionless *Weltschmerz*. It is realistic and purposeful. It inspires to thought and action. It is literature as a weapon in the class struggle."

U. S. Cultural Notes

Two new books by John Dos Passos have been published this spring by Harcourt, Brace & Co: *In All Countries,* short articles, sketches and comments about Spain, Mexico, America and the USSR; and *Three Plays,* including two earlier ones, "The Garbage Man" and "Airways, Inc.", and the new one "Fortune Heights" recently produced in two theatres in Moscow.

The March choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club is *Robber Barrons,* a study of the fathers of some of the largest American fortunes by Matthew Josephson who recently visited Moscow.

Harry Hansen, literary editor of the New York *World-Telegram* asks which of today's writers have a chance by 1936 to hold the position in American letters now held by Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis and other leaders. He suggests eight possible candidates, four of them definitely on the Left: Erskine Caldwell, Jack Conroy, Josephine Herbst, George Milburn.

Chicago revolutionary artists have taken leadership in the artists "Equity", growing rapidly, attacked bitterly by the local press. These artists protested the official reception given to Hans Wideman, Nazi painter and Hitler representative to the World's Fair. They are now leading the fight of the unemployed artists.

In New York, revolutionary artists demonstrated against favoritism practiced by the Whitney Museum, administrators of the government Public Works of Art Project which hired artists from the "Whitney List." (The demonstrators got work.)

Significant: 180 leading Canadian and U.S. papers are serializing *The Life of Our Lord,* unpublished story by Charles Dickens writ-

ten for his children. Small papers will also run the serial until May 15, when Simon & Schuster will bring it out in book form. Dickens denies the Immaculate Conception, calls Joseph the father of Christ. *Time Magazine* reports "that few churchmen in these days of crisis, took offense." S. McCrea Cavert, general secretary of the Federal Churches of Christ said the publication of the book "could not be more opportune."

Revolutionary Literature in American Prisons

As a result of the campaign of the International Labor Defense and the Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, and the visit of a joint committee of the two organizations to the warden of Sing Sing prison in New York state, the prisoners will again be allowed to receive the *New Masses, Labor Defender* and the *Daily Worker.* A campaign is now being conducted by these two organizations to secure this privilege in all American prisons, as well as to receive a status of "political prisoners" for all those imprisoned in class war activities. They are now regarded as "criminals."

Ninth American Revolutionary Publication

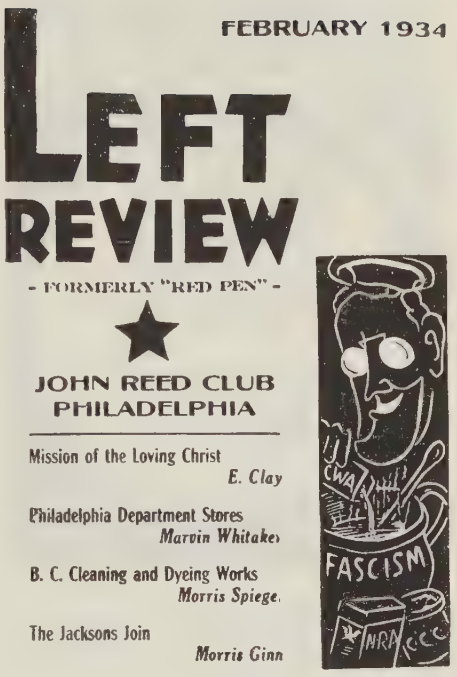
The John Reed Club of New York has just issued the first number of the *Partisan Review,* a literary bi-monthly, which is the ninth revolutionary literary publication now being issued in the United States.

The first number of 64 pages carries stories, critical articles, poems and reviews, by Grace Lumpkin, Joseph Freeman, Granville Hicks and others. Philip Rahv, (whose article appears in the next issue of *International Literature)* is managing editor.

The magazine has received a good reception. Writing of the first issue, Isidor Schneider, well known critic and poet writes:

"The appearance of *Partisan Review* is a cause for celebration in the revolutionary movement." He praises highly the poem by Alfred Hayes, who he says is "taking a place among the outstanding contemporay poets." He also rates highly the stories by James Farrell, Ben Field and others and the poems by Joseph Freeman and Edwin Rolfe.

Other organs of the American John Reed Clubs are *Left Front,* of the Chicago John Reed Club, *Partisan,* of the John Reed Club of Hollywood, and *The Red Pen* (Now *Left Review)* organ of the John Reed Club of Philadelphia, which has just appeared. Other John Reed Clubs issue mimeographed publications.



First issue (under new title) of the American monthly publication of the John Reed Club of Philadelphia

American Writers at Work

John Dos Passos has gone to the West Indies to complete the third book of his trilogy of which *1919* was the second.

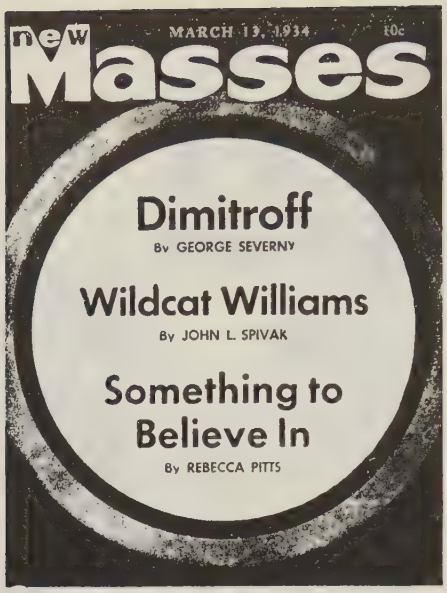
Michael Gold is now at work on a new novel dealing with unemployment.

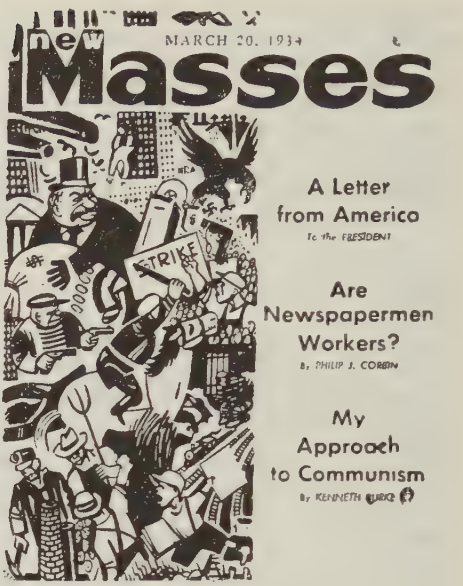
Langston Hughes has completed a volume of short stories and a book of verse, both to be published soon. He is now at work on a book about the national minorities of the Soviet Union for which he gathered material during his visit last year to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

The recently published novel *Pity Is Not Enough* by Josephine Herbst, who attended the Kharkov Conference, is the first book of a trilogy which takes an American middle class family from the days of the American civil war to their complete disintegration during the present crisis. Josephine Herbst is now at work on the second volume.

Jack Conroy, author of the widely discussed first novel *The Disinherited* is at work on a second novel, the action of the last half of the book taking place in the Soviet Union.

Moe Bragin, contributor to all revolutionary publications, has completed a volume of stories on the American farmers.





Covers of the New Masses, *American revolutionary literary journal which since becoming a weekly at the beginning of 1934, has within a few months taken a leading position among American publications*

Grace Lumpkin, author of *To Make My Bread,* novel of the southern mountaineers and textile workers, is at work on a second novel dealing with the same people and locality.

Robert Whitcomb, executive member of the Unemployed Writers Association, is completing an autobiographical novel dealing with a worker's life in various sections of the country.

Walter Snow, young worker-writer, is completing his novel *The Magnificent Marchetti,* dealing with the bank crashes in America.

Norman Macleod's first book of verse, *Horizons of Death* is being published in New York. The verse deals with western themes, where his youth was spent, and with eastern industrial subjects.

H. H. Lewis, whose third book of poems, *Salvation,* was recently published, will have another book of verse published this summer.

They Shall Not Die! John Wexley's play on the Scottsboro case has been published by Knopf, publishers.

American Books on Jugoslavia

The Native's Return by Louis Adamic is enjoying a wide success. It is the February choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club and is already being translated into 12 languages.

The book is an account of a visit to Jugoslavia by the author, after leaving that country 19 years before. It is a warm, human book, describing the life of peasants and workers with deep sympathy. It is also an account of the political situation there, and the prevailing White terror.

The author has also translated a story called *Struggle,* by an anonymous Yugoslav writer. This is published in a separate brochure and is a remarkable human document giving a personal account of his arrest and tortures suffered for Communist activities. It is beautifully written.

Louis Adamic has written a vivid introduction to the brochure.

Both *The Native's Return* and *Struggle* are reciving a great deal of attention in the American press.

U.S. Writers and Unemployment

While writers and artists in European countries have long ago formed organizations to fight for their interests, American writers, have only now taken the first steps in this direction.

After the crisis, magazines folded up, others drastically cut prices on new material, many dusted off the old material on the shelves—stories and articles purchased long before and since discarded." "The pent-house, limousine age" for writers had come to an end. Suddenly American writers found themselves in the pitiful situ-

ation of other middle class businessmen—or on the breadlines.

According to government census figures the increase in writers, authors and editors between 1920 and 1930 rose from 40,000 to 62,000 in America. Over half of them are totally unemployed at the present time.

Out of this situation has arisen the Unemployed Writers Association including writers who are willing to fight for improving their conditions. The organization now includes some 500 dues paying members and is growing rapidly.

In addition to the active membership it has secured the endorsement for relief of such nationally known writers as Heywood Broun, columnist for the New York *World-Telegram,* Franklin P. Adams, of the N. Y. *Herald-Tribune,* the writers Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson and others, the publisher Albert Boni, and some 200 more.

In addition to individual support the Unemployed Writers Association has secured the official and unofficial endorsement of such leading organizations as the Authors League, the Authors Club of New York, the Newspaper Guild, the Poetry Society of America and many more.

An interesting feature is the fact that the Authors League of New York, of which President Roosevelt is a member, is one of the organizations supporting the fight of the Unemployed Writers Association. Ellis Parker Butler, nationally known humorist, is a supporter of the program of the U.W.A.

The Unemployed Writers Association demands a 30 dollar a week minimum for writers for a period of one year to be put into effect at once.

Their program is as follows: 1) Recognition of the profession of writing as socially useful and worthy of public support; 2) The right to secure existence as writers; 3) Wages or relief for ALL unemployed writers without discrimination. 4) Right to craft subdivision, novelists, poets, etc.; 5) Complete literary freedom and the right to artistic integrity; 6) Support of unemployment insurance legislation.

Their further demands read: "We make a special demand, in that the government should recognize the profession of writing as one of the fine arts, that the projects of writers, as such, should be included in the work of the Fine Arts Committee of the Treasury Department, and that representatives of the Unemployed Writers Association cooperate with this government committee immediately."

Of interest also is the U.W.A. definition of a writer. They say a writer is any one of these classes:

1) Any person who has been employed as a writer in any capacity; 2) Any person who has been printed in a publication of professional or literary standing; 3) Any person who can produce manuscripts judged worthy by a committee which includes elected representatives of the Unemployed Writers Association.

First issue of the organ of the John Reed Club of New York. Largest publication of the oldest John Reed Club in the United States

Fanya Foss is secretary of the organization; Robert Whitcomb, novelist, executive member; and Sam Putman, journalist, author and editor, heads the Project Committee.

Recent meetings of the Unemployed Writers Association in New York have been well attended and widely publicized.

Revolutionary Theatre Grows

Peace on Earth, the anti-war play by Maltz and Sklar, the first production of the Theatre Union, new American revolutionary theatre, despite the bitter opposition of all bourgeois critics, completed over one hundred performances. It was one of the biggest successes of the past season in New York and was witnessed by more than 75,000 workers from trade unions, political and fraternal organizations.

The second play given by this theatre is *Stevedore,* a new anti-lynching play dealing with Negroes around the wharfs of New Orleans. It is also written jointly, by Paul Peters and George Sklar, the latter one of the co-authors of *Peace on Earth.*

They Shall Not Die a play on the Scottsboro case by John Wexely, author of *Steel,* who was in the Soviet Union last year, was produced by the Theatre Guild, leading New York theatre. Its reception by the critics, was similar to the reception given to *Peace on Earth.* The critics damned it, the workers filled the theatre.

About 25,000 workers have already seen the production of Gorky's *Yegor Bulichev* at the ARTEF, Jewish Workers Theatre in New York.

As a part of the growth of interest in the American revolutionary theatre, the *New Theatre,* monthly organ of the League of Workers Theatres, appears in larger size and more attractive format. The last issue includes a symposium on the "Prospects for the American Theatre" in which some of the leading American playwrights and directors took part including: John Howard Lawson, Lee Simonson, Paul Green, George Sklar, Emjo Basshe and others.

MEXICO

Writers Protest

Thirty well known Mexican writers, members of the Mexican League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists, have addressed a protest against the legal lynch verdicts passed on the Scottsboro boys, to the American Ambassador in Mexico. The writers signing the protest included:

P. Mendoza, P. Zenteno, Pine, Leopoldo Arenal, Lyon Rouge, Perfecto Palacios, Santiago R. Martin, M. Lebato and others.

IN THIS ISSUE

L. Griffel—is a Hungarian artist whose work, and biographical note appeared in *International Literature* No. 6, 1933—34.

P. Luknitsky—is a Soviet journalist and short story writer.

Agnes Smedley—contributes to this issue from a new forthcoming book of stories of the Chinese Red Army. She is an American, residing for the last few years in China, and is author of *Daughter of Earth,* and *Chinese Destinies.*

Paul Nizan—French revolutionary critic and novelist, is author of the recently published novel *Antoine Bloye,* part of which appears in this issue, and other books. He is editor of the French issue of *International Literature.*

Sandor Gergel—Hungarian novelist, is author of *The World* and other books.

Rudolf Wittenberg—is one of the more prominent young worker-writers of Germany.

Helios Gomez—Spanish revolutionary artist, appeared in *International Literature* No. 4, 1933 in a series of drawings and biographical sketch. He is now exhibiting drawings in Spain, made in the Soviet Union in the past year.

Sergei Tretyakov—Noted Soviet author of the play *Roar China,* active worker in all arts, literature, cinema, photography, journalism, phonograph records and the stage, is author also of the bio-interview novel *Den Shi hua,* issued in many countries including the United States where it has just been published under the title of *A Chinese Testament.*

F. Gladkov—One of the best known Soviet writers, author of the internationally known *Cement,* contributes to this issue from his new novel *Energy.*

A. Yavitch—is a young Soviet journalist, frequent contributor to many publications.

Ryuji Nishizawa—is one of the better known young Japanese worker-writers.

M. Bleimann—is a young Soviet critic, connected with the Communist Academy.

V. Bonch-Bruevich—is an old Bolshevik, for many years a close co-worker of Lenin's.

Philip Rahv—young American poet and critic, is editor of the *Partisan Review,* organ of the John Reed Club of New York.

E. Clay—was on the faculty of Howard, leading American Negro university in Washington, D. C. He is now one of the editors of *Left Review,* organ of the John Reed Club of Philadelphia, a contributor to the *New Masses* and other revolutionary publications.

Heinrich Vogeler—appears in this issue with reproductions of his well known murals and a biographical sketch. He is a German revolutionary artist, now working in the USSR.

Henry George Weiss—American worker-poet has contributed for years to the *Daily Worker, New Masses, Anvil, Left Front* and other revolutionary publications.

A. Stetsky—is a leading Soviet critic and theoretician.

Yuri Olesha—Soviet playwight and novelist is author of *Three Fat Men* and other plays, and the popular novel *Envy.*

Editor-in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV

REVIEWS AND LETTERS ABOUT INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

THE REVIEWS

USA

"Always indispensable because it was the only international organ of proletarian literature, the magazine has within the last year come closer to doing justice to the extent, the power, and the distinction of that literature. Its improvement is significant of the international spirit of the revolutionary movement in its cultural expressions.

"The only complaint I have to make against *International Literature* is that, as yet, countries other than the Soviet Union and the United States have not been adequately represented. What we in America want to know is what Russian, French, German, South American, Japanese and Chinese proletarian writers are doing, and *International Literature* is almost our only way of finding out. . . Whatever the possibilities for improvement, however, *International Literature* is indispensable for everyone who is seriously interested in proletarian culture."—Granville Hicks, author of *The Great Tradition,* in the weekly *New Masses.*

"*International Literature* is rapidly acquiring in this country the esteem and popularity which is its due as the central organ of revolutionary literature. Time and again the writer has observed workers discussing the contents of this magazine. He has seen them coming into bookshops inquiring whether a new number of the magazine had arrived. The magazine is also read by writers and artists in search of theoretical guidance and contact with their comrades who are at work in the same sector of the class struggle in other lands."—Philip Rahv, managing editor of the *Partisan Review* organ of the New York John Reed Club, in the New York *Daily Worker.*

"The last numbers of *International Literature* show even greater improvements in contents and format. Live criticism and historical material, many fine short stories and sections from novels and plays, several excellent poems, and a collection of international notes and letters, make these issues invaluable to the critic and to the artist as well as to the general reader.". *Left Front,* organ of the John Reed Clubs of the middle-west.

"*International Literature* maintains its consistently high standard. This admirable journal has made itself indispensable. It publishes regularly the best and newest work of the best revolutionary writers and artists of all countries."—*Pen & Hammer Bulletin,* New York.

USSR

"To all those English-speaking people in the Soviet Union this journal is, or should be indispensable. To those in Great Britain and America who want to keep abreast of the world-wide development of a revolutionary working-class literature it is equally indispensable. Each of the issues published this year has shown a tremendous improvement. This improvement has been twofold in character, both as to appearance and to content." Roy Black in the *Moscow Daily News.*

"I salute Comrade Avdeyenko, the locomotive driver of Magnitogorsk, who is still at work at his job and who 'attends evening classes in literature at the local university,' but who is already able to convey to one reader at least, the authentic joy with which one reads a great master. (Story "I Love" in No. 6-1933-34). . . In the same issue there is a remarkable article by R. Kim on 'Japanese Literature and Revolution' which demands a whole article of comment to itself. Articles like this make *International Literature* indispensable to every student of world affairs." H. O. Whyte in the *Moscow Daily News.*

USA

THE LETTERS

"You are certainly putting out a fine *International Literature,* an excellent magazine. Everybody is struck by the improvement of the English edition."—Joseph North, one of the editors of the weekly *New Masses* of New York.

"*International Literature* has taken on a new atmosphere, both editorially and mechanically. It has 'overtaken and surpassed' every other publication, and it's still going. The literary material, too, is rich and varied."—Jack Conroy, editor of *The Anvil,* and author of the recently published novel *The Disinherited.*

"I think *International Literature* is the most stimulating and advanced magazine that we see in America. We need an *International Literature* for this country."—Her-

man Spector, editor of *Dynamo*, new magazine of Revolutionary poetry.

"I've been reading *International Literature* for some time, and with great interest. I think it's a very good publication and I certainly wish you all the highest success with it. But I hope you begin to pay attention to the Balkans: Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Roumania."—Louis Adamic, author of the newly published book, *The Native's Return.*

"I am writing this letter primarily to congratulate you on the new format of *International Literature.* The type is much more easy to read and the general appearance of the magazine is much improved. There seems also to have been a change in the tone of the articles—they are more solid and cool than those I have read in previous issues. Besides I am glad to note that there is quite a little space devoted to English and American writers."—James Steele, author of the new novel *Conveyor.*

SCOTLAND

"I must congratulate you on an excellent publication. I have read it through from cover to cover with great interest and enjoyment. Truly, it is the best magazine that has come my way for a long time. It is an inspiration in fact."—Joe Corrie, poet, novelist.

AUSTRALIA

"We have been reading *International Literature* with great zest. Let us say at once that its format is excellent; there is only one improvement we would suggest—the paper cover should be of linen texture or something of like serviceability—the better to withstand a busy time in the club library."—The Workers Art Club of Sydney.

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

WHERE WE STAND

A. Symposium

Three questions: What has the October Revolution meant in your work—What you think of Soviet Literature—What problems interest you most now answered by *THEODORE DREISER—MALCOLM COWLEY—GRANVILLE HICKS—LOUIS ADAMIC—JOSEPH FREEMAN—JOHN STRACHEY and others.*

Concerning One Philosophy of Imperialism

by *G. ZINOVIEV*

Mr. Calverton and his Friends

by *A. STARTSEV*

Andre Gide Comes to the Revolution

by *PAUL NIZAN*

Stories—articles by *BORIS PILNYAK—N. POGODIN—YURI OLESHA—ROBT. S. CARR—and others.*

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

C O N T E N T S

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Editorial Assistant WALT CARMON

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

ENGELS ON MECHANICISM AND THE VULGARIZATION OF MARXISM IN LITERARY CRITICISM

Stories L. RUBENSTEIN, C. FEDIN, MAO-TUN, Articles by A. LUNACHARSKY, and others and French and Danish writers in the symposium "WHERE WE STAND".