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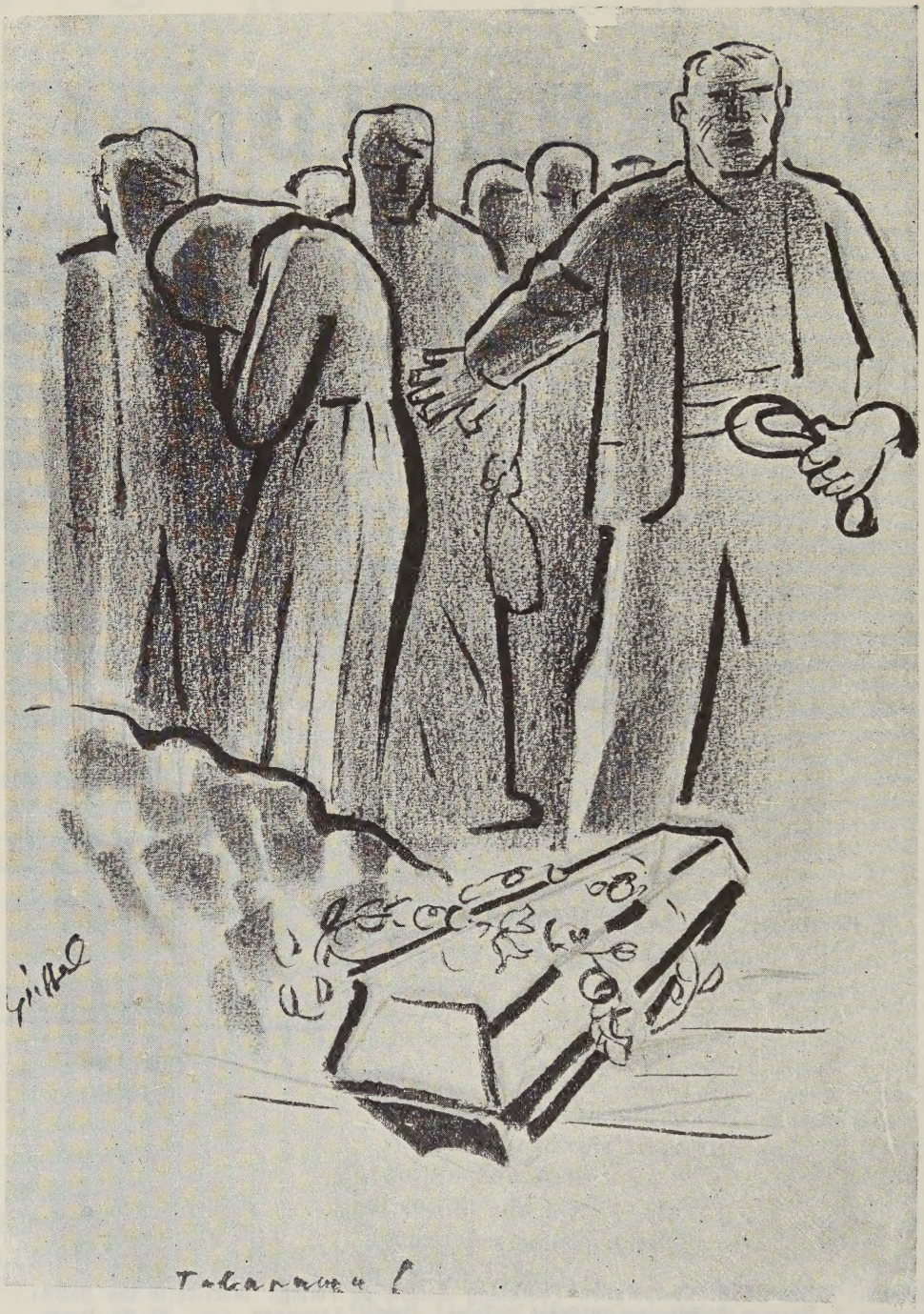

"We Won't Forget!" — L. GRIFFEL

L. Rubinstein

The Path of the Samurai

From a Novel of Present-Day Japan

At first the aeroplane flew under the grey canopy of clouds. It got as far as the ridge of snow-hazy hills and dropped somewhere, only to reappear a moment later on the other side. Now it flew very low, alert and suspicious. The toy wheels of the chassis and the red circles on the wings were now visible.

A penetrating hum mixed with the booming roar of wind came from above. The village street was empty. No smoke arose from the tiny blindfold fanzas, which in Eastern Manchuria is considered an ominous sign.

The aeroplane swung sharply round and again sank behind the hills. Then some people appeared on the street.

They crowded together, stood about a moment and then scattered rapidly. The aeroplane appeared again high up in the clouds. It sank, rose again, and now it was roaring through the air right above the fanzas.

"Yah," said Tian Shao-chen contemptuously, "birds we are not afraid of. Eggs are different. Eggs we are afraid of."

Tian Shao--chen was the village elder and had served once in the personal guard of no less a person than Marshal Chjan, in Mukden. He has seen wars and knows everything that pertains to the gentle art of self-preservation. Birds in themselves are of no harm to the Chinese. But if the bird lays eggs then there is only one thing for a Chinese to do—lie down flat on the ground, calling to Guandhi and wait until the bird gets tired. Because a bird cannot fly long, it has to eat. And a Chinese can lie flat for a long time.

"It's better to run," said Lou-Sia, "running is the main thing in warfare."

Tian Shao-chen spat angrily. He did not like to be taught military matters.

"A woman could say nothing more foolish," he muttered, "I am an old soldier and I know how to run. But you will not run away from the Japs. Who ever heard of a man being able to run away from a bird? You are the youngest son of my cousin."

This was an insult, but Lou-Sia did not reply. He really was young and had never seen a war in his life.

This time the bird got tired quickly. But it had hardly vanished from the low grey sky when scouts came galloping down the street.

No, this time the village of Chjentaiadang did not escape war. The incense burned before the colored picture of Guandhi (printed in Harbin) was of no avail. The sly golden face of the god, covered with roaches, continued to wrinkle indifferently even when some grey shadows crept into the garden among the pig-pens. They jumped fences and crept along the ditches of the frozen rice-fields.

Then infantry appeared on the dead street, their faces crimson with frost, wrapped in rags. The wind continued to rage. The grey steel helmets were white with a film of frost. An officer in a goat-skin vest marched with a revolver in his outstretched hand. The soldiers carried round hand-grenades that looked like lemons.

They asked information of none and did not even shout. They entered the village silently and only afterwards began to enter the fanzas.

"Is it long since you have seen Hunhuzes here?" the officer asked from a book.

"No, sir," answered Tian Shao-chen, folding his hand into a fist as a sign of the highest respect, "there haven't been any here at all."

"Is it long since Chinese troops passed this place?" asked the officer.

"No sir, no Chinese troops passed here."

"Were there many of them?"

"No, major, there weren't any at all," the elder replied humbly.

"Where did they go?" the officer continued.

"There were none, colonel, none whatever."

"Did they take this road or that one?" the officer would not desist.

Tian Shao-chen was already silently offering his prayers to the gods. He was an old soldier and knew that such conversations do not end easily. He was already thinking over the politest phrase by which to give the officer a hint that the village will not refuse to give up as many hogs as will be necessary for the regiment. But at this point another officer on horseback rode up and began to speak at once in Chinese.

"Eh, you, young snake, where are you hiding the Hunhuzes here?"

Everything became simple and clear at once. Tian Shao-chen drew himself up from old habit and reported. The scouts searched the fanzas—true there were only eight and there were only four grown-ups, eight children, one pig and one goat in each.

"What's that on your nose?" asked the officer on horseback.

"A disease, caught from a woman," gaily reported the elder.

"Where is the woman?" the chief was interested.

"In Mukden, general," smiled Tian Shao-chen. "I used to hire out for work there in my youth."

"And what are those white spots on the little boy's neck? Let's see! And this? Was the little girl born blind?"

Manchuria is yellow even in winter. The angry monsoon sweeps up the snow from the fields and carries it in heavy clouds over the wild hills, beggarly fanzas, over the yellowed ice of the Sungary, through the dry mountain oak coppice, over the frozen marches and rocky cliffs—eastward where it melts in warm streams.

The Manchurian winter does not lie on the fields, it hovers up from the North, from the hills, from the mainland, day and night, like a heavy icy curtain. The dry mountain oak shivers, the hills are hazy, the roads stretch motionless, hard as rock and light-yellow, the wind watches every crossroads, grabs one by the chest and squeezes one's throat.

Infantry finds a lulling rhythm in its march. After the second day the marching isn't felt any more. The feet walk automatically after the rattling machine-gun cart. In two days the muzzle of the Hotchkiss in its cover, the sweaty pony, the narrow white band of the back of the collar of the man ahead and his high knapsack with the pot in the center, are thoroughly fixed in one's mind.

"Say, will they give us some whiskey?" asked private Kawamura.

"They will," muttered private Morita confidently.

"During the halt the cook came up," volunteered private Tanaka from the left flank, "and he said there is no more whiskey but that there's pork in the soup."

"I'll bet it's nine below," began Morita.

"Who was talking?" angrily demanded corporal Setsu from the rear. "Student!"

"Not I, corporal."

"Did you talk? Isikawa!"

"I did not talk. . . ."

The corporal goes back head down. Lieutenant Sagawa, who was on horseback, his shoulders back, straight as a yardstick, wore no gloves and had on a goatskin vest. He fixed the corporal with his frozen glasses and said, barely moving his jaw:

"Leave the soldiers alone, Setsu."

"Never mind, he got it," whispered Morita. "This morning I heard the mail came in."

Isikawa Takudso, nicknamed "Student," had really been a student in Tokyo once. His parents did not have enough money to keep him and he entered the machine-gun company for two years, together with peasants from Toyama and fishermen from Kumamoto. The first three months were hard, then he got used to it. The hardest to serve were the "Juniors," especially the youngest corporal—Setsu. The student had to wash the corporal's linen every day because Setsu had the reputation of being the cleanest corporal of the regiment and was always held up as an example to the other corporals on every possible occasion. Setsu guarded his reputation and stuck to his cleanliness. It earned him first the three yellow stars of the lance-corporal and then the gold bar of the corporal. With the arrival of the new colonel his position became uncertain. He was serving his fifth year but was a mediocre shot.

"They say we'll soon halt for the night," Kawamura began again, "Tomada went for the mail with a mounted platoon. He was sent by the new colonel. They say the new colonel is a fine fellow. If it were not for the new colonel we'd wait for our mail till we got to the railroad. The new colonel. . . ."

"They say the new colonel. . . ." interrupted Morita.

"As soon as we get to a village, they say, if there are no Chinese there or leprosy,—we'll get lodgings," Isumaya of the third section chimed in. "Rub your ear, it's getting white."

"Whose? Mine?" Isakawa asked, scared.

"Rub it! Rub it with your glove! Oh, you haven't any!"

There were no gloves because the 71st Himedseyan Rifles were marching through the hills in summer uniform. Winter uniforms came when the division was stationed along the railroad. But the Himedseyans did not get them. They were rushed off to the hills at night in response to an alarm, and there it was already winter. Goatskin vests were a sweet dream to the ranks. The vests awaited the Himedseyans at the end of their march, when they finally laid their hands on the elusive Yan High-tsin, hovering somewhere about the hill roads with his Hunhuzes, invisible and yet continuing to retreat.

"They say nine degrees below is not much here," said Morita. "They say it even gets to be fifteen below."

"Who said that?"

"The doctor. Isikawa, can there be fifteen degrees of frost at once?"

"Even more," said the student, trying to smile with lips frozen stiff.

"So why do they write on the posters that Manchuria is a heavenly country?"

"Rub it! Please rub, because your cheek is freezing."

"Thanks. It would be good with a handkerchief. . . ."

"Who was talking?" a voice asked from the rear.

"Corporal, there is a village below," Tanaka from the left reported.

The blare of the Japanese military bugle sounds long and mournful. It never changes its strange melody—over the tiles of low barracks, on parades of the guard, in yellow frozen rocky Manchuria.

According to the articles of war it should "recall the bliss of dying."

Retreat. Bugler Murayama, the calmest person in the regiment, dispassionate, like the calls he sounds on the bugle, wiped the mouthpiece covered with grime and put the bugle back into its case.

The village of Chjantsiadang was occupied by the short-statued, swarthy, heavy laden infantry. Ranks of yellow shoes, precise silk and wool puttees and white ribbons of collars, filled the village from end to end. No outsider would have noticed that Simada's company had lost forty men. With immobile faces, heads up as per regulations, rhythmically swinging their steel helmets and short rifles, the infantry marched as if on parade. The machine-gun carts rattled; the little sub-lieutenants with their rosy pancake-like epaulettes, marched stiffly as if every one of them had followed a yardstick. No disorder. Evenness. Precision. Punctuality. No lagging. Parade. Drums. After three minutes, privates Kawamura and Tanaka were already smoking in the back garden, and the village was surrounded by sentries.

The regimental staff galloped by. And the colonel, dismounting at the fanza of the elder, did not even look at the glorious flag of the 71st Himedsi Rifles which the platoon on duty was setting up at the fanza. The colonel fixed his eyes on the doctor.

"Well? Anything?"

The doctor stood at attention.

"No leprosy, colonel. I beg to report. . . ."

"What's that?"

"Seven frozen."

A Letter From Home

The wind tore at the long fringed sheets in private Kawamura's hands. They bore the marks of the soullessly precise brush of the village scribe and were embellished with a border of red lines.

In the distance the hills were dim in a haze of snow.

"Kawamura Iotara senior sends greetings to his son Kawamura Kihati in the ranks of the Emperor's army. . . . May this despatch be an omen of long life and eternal happiness to the children of the country of a thousand autumns and long five hundred autumns. . . ."

This was the scribe's introduction. Further the monotonous voice of old Kawamura Iotara senior himself could be heard.

"We inform you that the rice from the last harvest was already sold at the end of the time of summer rains."

"As there were driving rains and water spouts in the days of Nihyakutoka and Hassaku,[1] and the rice was blossoming then, the harvest was less than last year. We sold the rice at sixteen sen as prices have fallen in the entire district and not a sen more could be gotten. Now we have to buy rice ourselves. . . ."

[1] The 210th day of Japanese Spring and the first day of the eighth lunar month of the agrarian calendar.

Kawamura looked at the distant hills. The wind continued to rage. Heavy snow clouds filled the sky. The dry brush on the desolate hillsides was bent low.

". . . and so the rent is not paid yet, and what we saved went for food. The rent, as you know, amounts to two-thirds of the harvest and last night Mr. Otani's bailiff came and declared that if the rent is not paid we will be evicted in the spring.

"So taking into consideration these circumstances, we arrived at the decision, that to save our family from extra mouths, we must sell our daughter Yueko to Mr. Oyata, the owner of the tea-houses in the city of Asaka, at once, for the price of two hundred yen in cash and fifty yen each month for three months of the great cold. As you see, the terms of the sale are not as good as last year when we sold our daughter Hanaka, and we have offered our prayers and are making a pilgrimage to the altars of Inari, praying for help this winter. . . ."

The wind tore at the long sheets in the hands of private Kawamura. The hilly ridge on the horizon was turning blue. The snow was still swirling in the biting air and cut like razor blades.

". . . and we pray for aid at the altars of Inari and Hengedsit because now we have no more daughters and only the bicycle can be sold on which produce is taken to the market. This day all electric lamps in the village were dark, as the bills for electricity have not been paid and the company turned off the curent."

Further there were seven lines marked out with India ink by the regimental censor.

". . . and so, having made our offerings at the temples of Rengedsi and Seisun, we hope that our daughter will return to us after some time will elapse. Our son Kawamura Kihati, who, under the glorious flag of Himedsi, is fighting thus in the land of the Manchus, we pray that he may quickly complete the conquest of China and return once more as the controller and the bailiff have said the farm must be vacated by the spring. We beg you to serve the Emperor with all your might so that you will be made a policeman and we shall live happily. . . ."

"How is the rice in your parts?" asked private Tanaka who found a place for himself between two neighboring vegetable beds and was reading similar long sheets.

"Bad. The rice is sold."

"The commission has blotted out almost the whole letter. Look, what mark is this?"

"This is 'Yakuso'—holy grass."

"So-o. . . . Then they must be writing that they were deprived of the farm and are eating grass sanctified in the temple. It is said that helps against swelling."

"Where is that?"

"In the northern part of the prefecture of Toyama."

Toyama. . . . Private Kawamura was not interested in Toyama. . . . He was interested in the eastern limits of the prefecture of Nagano.

"It is terrible they do not give newspapers," Tanaka said. "I saw the lieutenant read a newspaper yesterday, but I know less than four hundred symbols and could not read what was printed in the back. There was something about peasants and a picture of the Minister."

System

From his place Lieutenant-Colonel Fudsinami could only see the broad back of Captain Simada and the hooked nose of the Aide-de-camp Otakura. The lieutenant-colonel never did the examining himself. He preferred to be a silent witness, standing somewhere in the back, in semi-darkness; his smoked glasses looked out of the fox collar of his fur coat.

The examination was conducted by Simada. The orange light of a "bat" lantern fell on the straight parting of the hair and the slanty slits of eyes of a comparatively young Chinese. His sneering smooth-shaven diplomatic face was ill-suited to the silk kurma,[1] such as are worn by the sons of small traders in the little towns on the Sungari. Water fell in drops from his fox-skin hat which lay on the table.

The examination was being conducted in Japanese, which was peculiar and against the rules.

"Their staff headquarters were at the Lianshagow farm," the Chinese was saying. "I can vouch for that because my number six is located there. Last night they left for the south."

"South," repeated Simaca, "oh, south—that's impossible."

"Why?"

"There is not a foot-path through the hills in that direction. Be more exact."

"I submit the information I gathered this morning. Half a division of horsemen raced through Siaoerdy this morning with two machine-guns. Following them my agent discovered that they took the Mudansian bridge. going due east straight to the woods. They evidently intend to forestall the brigade at the crossing of the Mudansian."

"Very well. This we know. About the fodder. . . ."

"Yan High-tsin is getting his supplies from the surrounding villages. He obtains his supplies in Erdagow, Lianshagow, and the Dalianshang impagne." [2]

"When did they leave Lianshagow?"

"Before sunset, that is about five o'clock. Some of his Harbin agents must have come to the impagne because about three o'clock number six saw two new ones come riding into the impagne from the west and return that way in about half an hour."

"Did he see their faces?"

"No. He saw them from behind."

"Sure they were not here?"

"Where? In this village? I already said. They made a circuit."

"Good. Mr. Aide-de-camp, what do you wish to add?"

"About the farmstead, can your agent tell nothing more?"

"He was not allowed to go in there. They did not let anyone go out of there all day. He says there was cooking and baking going on there to judge by the smoke. Then he discovered some empty hanshin[3] bottles. He counted the geese."

"How many?"

"Twenty-two."

"Note that, captain."

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[1] Kurma—a Chinese jacket.
[2] Impagne—a farmstead.
[3] Hanshin—Chinese whiskey

"They evidently killed some pigs."

"Many?"

"A few."

"The servants?"

"It is impossible to come to any understanding with the servants there. I have already reported to the aide-de-camp that number six has exhausted all his supplies of opium."

"Make a note of this impagne, captain. I have no more questions."

Otakura turned to the lieutenant-colonel.

"I have a question," said Fudsinami.

The Chinese raised his head. A fox-skin collar and smoked eye glasses peered out from the semi-darkness.

"Why do you appear at staff headquarters personally when you have been given definite instructions?"

"I have reported to the lieutenat-colonel. Your reconnaissance squad in the next village has shot my agent. I could not run the risk of relying on people I do not know."

"And why do you say you were in Siaoerdy this morning when you were with the field brigade."

The agent looked at the smoked glasses intently. The water from the hat dripped to the floor quietly.

"I was not with the field brigade."

"We are checking it."

"I was in Siaoerdy. I have already reported to the lieutenant-colonel through our network. The lieutenant-colonel's information should be investigated. The connection should be checked."

"We are checking it."

"I have already remarked that for the sake of the agents and your own intelligence service it would be more advantageous to act differently."

"How, differently?"

"Destroy all villages along the way."

"We have definite instructions on this point."

The agent lowered his head and was silent.

"I think that will be enough for today." said the measured grating voice of the lieutenant-colonel. "You will have to spend the night here, although this is very inconvenient. You must leave in about three hours, before sunrise. I strictly forbid you to go about among the lines. Your next report will be expected at the brigade. . . ."

The agent started.

"You will remain here?"

"That's uncertain. You will get your instructions on the line. In any event, if we see you personally, we shall be compelled to adopt measures. . . ."

"Lieutenant-colonel," said the agent, "I call your attention to the impossibility of conveying notes. Yan High tsin is a product of the General Staff Academy in Tokyo—and he knows perfectly well. . . ."

"I know all this," Fudsinami continued, "but just the same a system is a system. We are dealing here not with army intelligence. We are dealing with a staff intelligence agency. I am sorry but these are the conditions of work on the Manchurian arena. We are compelled to split up the system. But I am opposed to the adventurous tricks invented by the English. A system is a system, and war is war. You may go now."

"I wish. . . ." began the agent.

"No," said the lieutenant colonel, "in this respect I can only refuse."

"But then. . . ."

"This is no good either. You will get your instructions."

"Lieutenant-colonel, in that case could you tell me. . . ."

"I can tell you nothing. I do not know yet myself."

"I understand, lieutenant-colonel," murmured the agent. "So I can leave?"

"You may." The captain detailed a man to take him through the lines.

The captain and the Chinese left. Otakura rose and carried the lamp from the table to the window sill.

"To judge by this report we have already let this general slip by us," he said.

"Do not judge by him," calmly answered Fudsinami, opening a book that was lying in front of him.

"He is one of our oldest agents of the first category. Chjao has been working for us for twelve years. He has been serving the Kwantung army all the time.

"I know him," the lieutenant colonel nodded, "I have made a study of Chinese agents. He is breaking the system. And in such business the system is everything."

"You know him?"

"I doubt every Chinese agent. This is also part of the system."

"Ye-es. . ." said Otakura respectfully, understanding very little of the lieutenant-colonel's explanations, "but just the same if Yan High-tsin didn't go east, so we have driven him south into the wildest places. . ."

Fudsinami looked at him and bent to his book.

"Remember, Mr. Adjutant," he said after a few moments of silence lifting a dry little finger, "that an officer is an officer. An agent is an agent. A soldier is a soldier. There must be no mixing up of these categories. One must never confuse soldiers with civilians."

The door opened and pushing his broad shoulders through with difficulty into the hut, bringing with him a great deal of frosty steam, a tall man in a bear-skin coat strapped with a leather belt and a camera slung over his shoulders, entered.

"Greetings, lieutenant-colonel," said the man, clicking his heels in a military manner, "greetings to the adjutant. Has the Chinese run away again?"

"This time he will not escape us," said Fudsinami drily, turning a page.

Otakura gave a friendly smile, showing his horselike teeth.

"How about frozen men?"

"There are none."

"But they carried away two before my very eyes!"

"Oh, Mr. McKenna, we know nothing about this," said Otakura with a polite hiss.

The correspondent smiled.

"It is amusing though that soldiers freeze much oftener than officers."

"This depends on moral culture," Fudsinami remarked.

"I'd say it rather depends on the food," said the Englishman, sitting down at the table. "In our army we'd have a much tougher time with the soldiers. Try and put the officers on the soldier's ration. . ."

"That's impossible," said Fudsinami, "an officer cannot sit down at the same table with a common soldier."

"What is most surprising is that your soldiers consider this an immutable truth."

"They are brought up that way from childhood. That is what a military education does."

"And they freeze with a smile on their lips. In other armies it is considered that the last piece of bread is for the soldier."

"Oh, no," said Fudsinami, "an officer is made of other material than the soldier. The officer is the father of the soldier, a higher being. 'The last piece of bread' as you call it belongs to the lord and not to the slave. It is this that keeps the army together. Our ethics. . ."

"Your ethics. . ." the correspondent sighed. "It seems to me the book I was going to write about the Japanese officer will turn into one about the Japanese soldier."

"Our soldiers are the best in the world. They cannot be corrupted. . ."

"No, but tell me about the Chinese," the correspondent interrupted, "I have the impression that you want to kill a cootie with a cannon-ball. Where is Yan High-tsin now?"

"Oh, Mr. McKenna," said Otakura politely, "we know absolutely nothing about this."

"The best thing, in my opinion," gaily continued the correspondent, "would be to use the old Arabian method."

"Arabian?"

"Yes, destroy the villages."

"We have no right to interfere with the peaceful population," said Okatura, even more politely, "and so your Arabian method will not do for us."

"But you have. . ." the Englishman began and cut himself short. He recalled that there are things about which it is good form not to guess.

The door creaked again. The officer of the guard entered with a revolver in his hands leading a man all wrapped up in a gown and wearing a big fox-skin hat that covered half his face. He came out into the middle of the room and took his hat off with both hands.

"Chjao," said Fudsinami sharply, slamming the book, "what did you come back for?"

The Chinese bent down and whispered something rapidly into the lieutenant-colonel's ear. Fudsinami rose. His big cheesy yellow face, was not at all in proportion with his small spare figure.

"Mr. Aide-de-camp," he said, "report to the colonel. You may go, Chjao. Conduct him beyond the lines. This time you did well, Chjao."

The correspondent remained alone. He pulled over the book left by the lieutenant-colonel. It was *The History of the Great General Moltka.*

Private Kawamura did not hear the bugle. He did not wake. Private Tanaka shouted into his ear:

"The alarm! Kawamura!"

It was just beginning to get light. Corporals were scurrying about the back gardens with lanterns, waking the tired men with kicks. The horsemen were dragging out unwilling horses.

In less than five minutes Kawamura was marching along a mountain road, his feet buried in powdery snow. Tanaka yawned wearily, trying not to open his mouth.

"Chinese?"

"No," said Tanaka, "nothing was heard. Some have been left. The artillery is sleeping. Moritu and two others were called to staff-headquarters. This is some kind of operation."

"Double march!"

They ran up the hill.

"The colonel said," continued Tanaka, out of breath, "an operation. This is the operation. The colonel spoke beautifully."

Over a high plateau the hunched backs of the cliffs loomed up purple. Dawn was breaking.

The batallion was split up. The machine-gunners were led off to the right into the hills.

In another quarter of an hour Kawamura was entrenched in the snow, his hand on his Hotchkiss. The sombre Setsu was lying a little way off to the side with his binoculars. An unruffled silence brooded all about and, if not for the wind, it would have been nice to rest one's head in the snow and go to sleep.

"What is that below?" asked Kawamura, pointing to the toy fanzas on the opposite slope.

"Lianshagow impagne," said Tanaka, "this is the operation. The colonel said so."

It was growing brighter. Further away the hills were already lit up like brass. The pains in the body were gone. It was good to be lying down, even warm.

"Look there," Tanaka suddenly woke up, "look to your left, please."

A group of horsemen came out on the slope. The stocky horses pawed the ground and shook their heads. The dull rumble from the sky was disturbing them. Under the grey canopy of the sky two aeroplanes were soaring gracefully. Behind them came a bombing plane, heavy and massive, like a soaring hawk.

"That's the regimental staff," whispered Tanaka, "you see, an operation."

The colonel and his staff occupied a position of vantage as if on a parade. He evidently expected no resistance. The aeroplanes described a wide arc over the impagne. The bomber sunk perceptily lower.

"Attention," howled Setsu, lowering his binoculars. Lieutenant Sogawa looked out from behind a bush, adjusting his glasses nervously.

"Aim number one,—the crossroads. Range 2,000. Dispersion plus minus 0-10. Ring 28-30. Two hundred fifty rounds. Load!"

"What are we shooting at?" muttered Kawamura, clicking the lever.

"There's no one on the road."

"Silence. Oh look, please! (Tanaka was breathless with delight). An operation!"

The storm planes soared slanting upward. The bomber hovered right above the impagne.

A blanket of flame blazed up among the group of fanzas. As if out of the air, a white-brown mass of smoke rose with long curling edges. The ground trembled and a dull rumble rolled over the hills.

"I know," Tanaka sang out happily, "that is Yan High-tsin hiding in the impagne. Look!"

Small little figures came running out of the fanzas and began clambering up the hill.

A second column of smoke. Rumbling. The dull metallic grumbling of the

motors. Another column. Slanting tongues of flame licked round the impagne. The fanzas were burning.

Fudsinami sat still on a stocky Mongol horse, his chin high and his shoulders raised so that the back of his head and his cheeks were sunk in the fur collar. He tood up in the stirrups, his eyes riveted on the impagne. To his left, the mountain defile was getting rosier every minute and a piece of turquoise sky even showed over one snow cap.

"They're running this way," said Tanaka. "Oh, look! They are coming towards the road."

Through the lenses of the aiming mechanism Kawamura could see running figures. Several women were among them carrying household things on their shoulders.

"They are running away from the impagne," said the student, Isikawa, from behind, "These are not Hunhuzes, you know. They are Chinese."

The fugitives came closer. The foremost seemed to see the machine guns and run straight towards them. His tossing figure flashed before Kawamura in the precise rectangle of the aiming frame. Behind him others came with sacks on their shoulders. The fingers of private Kawamura lay on the trigger. From habit he held his breath.

"Fire!" barked Setsu.

Kawamura's fingers pulled the trigger almost mechanically. The Hotchkiss shivered and barked.

The black figures jumped and scattered to all sides as if by a strong gust of wind. Three rolled down the slope, one floundered on the roadway, howling wildly, several plastered themselves on the ground. Someone with a bundle hung on a bush and the bundle rocked for almost half a minute before it crashed down to the valley snapping some dry oak sapplings on its way.

"Fire!"

"Fire!"

The machine-gun company was doing excellently. The cheesy-yellow face of the lieutenant-colonel peeped out from the fur of his collar. From the impagne not one shot came.

"Mr. Lieutenant-Colonel," said the colonel, without moving his head, "your agent was mistaken. There are no Hunhuzes here. These are peasants."

"Fire!" commanded Setsu, glancing at the bush. The machine-gunners were puting in their third ribbons already. The impagne was burning like a candle and the smoke broke away from the straw roofs in fluffy cotton whiffs.

"There will be no one here in the spring to plant rice," said a voice behind him, and Kawamura guessed it was the student Isakawa.

"Fire!"

Private Kawamura's fingers slowly pulled the trigger. This time he was a few seconds late in answering the command. Kawamura was always very accurate and the word "fire" somehow brought a mechanical movement of the fingers—those hardened, knotty, yellow fingers which during the past year, had gotten quite accustomed to the gun metal of the Hotchkiss. Because Kawamura was going through his term of military service and wanted to do well.

The Hunhuz fired frequently and inefficiently. The bullets tore up the snow on the hill tops. The observers moved almost in the open.

"This is only covering up. I think they will explain the operation to us today. This is what I call war!"

"Well," said the student, "this is not a war. This. . ."

"And what is this, in your opinion?"

"Extermination."

"Well," Tanaka was offended, "please do not talk that way. They watch us at every step. The colonel said, the operation. . ."

"And what is this, in your opinion?"

"And you think they know anything about tactics?"

"Stop talking. Get ready."

"Change positions!"

From the new position the entire valley of the Mudansian opened up before the first files. Below, on the road, the armored cars defiled at long intervals. The Hunhuz were silent.

"Upon my word, Student, they're retreating!"

"I should like to know how they'll get away. We have cut their way off to the river. That's their only escape. We shall shoot them down like partridges in a trap. It's disgusting!"

"It is not disgusting to me," Kawamura said, "they wanted to cut off our transport column."

"And we have cut off their rice. Which is better?"

"Rice!" Kawamura clasped the handles of the machine-gun. No one would cut off his rice. He would fight for it. He would crawl on the snow. It was all the same—China, in America, to the Bolsheviks. Only a madman would try to take away private Kawamura's ration and epaulettes. He is a good soldier. Punctual. Efficient. Loyal. Intelligent.

"Attention!"

"Oh, look, please! He has spied them!"

It was a storm plane. It was falling in a straight line from the grey sky to the tops of the fir trees,—small, agile, gay, one wing raised—soaring down sideways, like a fighting cock. And almost brushing the tops of the firs, it rose again, describing a complete loop. The wind carried the sound of the machine-guns' clatter to the infantry.

"Now they can't escape! Cleverly thought out. . ."

The opposite slope grew black. The column of Chinese horse, taking to the cover of the woods, scattered in all directions. Several horsemen raced down right on to the road vainly trying to control the maddened horses.

Corporal Setsu eagerly scanned the neighboring bush with his eyes, waiting for the signal. At last!

"Fire! Cease fire! Fire!"

Again, dancing figures in the aiming square. Again the precise sight of the Hotchiss goes smoothly from left to right and reverse, making a beautiful arc of 45 degrees. The rifled barrel vibrates. The Hotchkiss jabbers, it clicks like a sewing machine, it shakes on its tripod.

"I have never seen such fools," grumbles Kawamura, pressing the trigger, "they don't even know how to run."

"That's the end,' says the student, "the armored cars will pursue the rest of them. Ugh!"

"Cease fire!"

"Look, please!"

The storm plane was doing tricks. It made another dive downward.

"See that? He is playing straight for their heads. Not more than fifteen meters!"

"I know who that is," Kawamura suddenly remembered, "this can only be one flier. . ."

"Who?"

"Takayanagi! The famous Takayanagi!"

"Did you see? He'll get it for this! Playing straight for the bushes!"

Takayanagi! "Flying fire!" The same Takayanagi that played for the division commission on manoeuvres and made them drop flat on the ground, for which he got six days' arrest at home and censure for "aerial rowdyism!" Takayanagi! The holder of six prizes for record setting! The pride of the air of Japan!

"Student! Look! He went lower yet! Some more! Look! He. . . he. . ."

"Fell!"

"No. You can't see fom here. He's on the other side of the hill."

"No, he fell."

A suppressed curse on the part of Setsu. They must have shot the storm plane down. Caught his tail! His foot!

"Now if the armored cars will rescue him. . ."

"Forget it! That's on the other side of the hill. . ."

"Change aim. Range 2,500. Two naught left. Fire! Cease fire!"

"That's it. The armored cars have started. No, it's hopeless. He's in the wood. Dropped right in the thick of it."

"Stop talking!"

The long melancholy strains of the bugle were heard. The infantry deployed.

"Looking for a needle in a haystack! Chasing cavalry on foot! The man's lost. Damned bandits!"

"That's the bugle. Retreat!"

"Lieutenant-Colonel. Permit me to report—a letter."

"Who brought it?" asked Fudsinami, feeling the thick pink envelope covered with pretty Chinese lacing.

"Private Morita. First platoon, machine gun company. On guard since morning."

"Private Morita. Come here. Where did you get this letter?"

"A Chinese brought it, sir."

"What Chinese?"

"The one that spent the night at staff headquarters, begging your pardon, sir."

"Spent the night? What news is this! Come closer. Where did you find this?"

"The letter or the Chinese, sir?"

"The letter of course! Blockhead!"

"I was standing guard on the northern flank, sir. This Chinese came over, pointed to the letter and shouted: 'This is for the lieutenant-colonel, personally,' begging pardon. . ."

"Well! Come closer."

"I pointed my rifle at him, but he laid the letfer on the ground and ran away. . . "

"Is that all?"

"Yes, sir."

"You'll get six days when we get home. You may go."

Fudsinami unhurriedly opened the envelope and adjusted his glasses.

"A thousand pardons for troubling you. I can give you most exact information. General Yan High-tsin proves to be no one other than I yours truly, your

miserable agent Chjao.' I beg that you forgive my poor handwriting. Iflatten myself thrice before the lieutenant-colonel. A thousand pardons."

II

Home Again

The barracks are silent and empty. The incense candles before the Daikoku altar glimmer. The corporal on duty, Nogutsi is going through somebody's trunk. Hearing steps, he quickly snaps the cover shut.

"Who's there? Tanaka? Why do you walk about the barracks during exercises?"

"By leave of the lance-corporal."

"Go. You have nothing to do here."

Private Tanaka returns to the class room and whispers into Isikawa's ear.

"Fragrant Salmon is working over your trunk. I came in. He got an awful scare."

"He is on duty again?"

"Again."

Isikawa shrugs his shoulders.

"Let him look. He will find nothing there."

"Tanaka and Isikawa! Silence! What do you think upon hearing this. . ."

The bugle. "Intermission!" Tramp of feet and suppressed hum of voices.

"Batallion, attention!"

(The cheerful clear voice of Nogutsi. He is reporting.)

"What's that again? Oho, a whole commission!"

"About bugs again, I suppose . . ."

"No. The regimental aide-de-camp. That's. . ."

"At ease!"

"What can it mean? Hygiene again?"

"That's. . ."

"At your cots!"

"There's a case! This time it's about the correct folding of blankets."

"And I didn't measure mine today. Sudzuki swiped the meter stick."

"You'll get it!"

"Don't touch the trunks!"

"No, it's not blankets. Hygiene again. . ."

"Attention!"

"Oho! It's beginning!"

"Private Kawamura! Open your trunk!"

"That's it. Hygiene!"

"Close it. Private Morita! Open your trunk!"

"Close it. Private Tanaka! So. Close it!"

"Private Isikawa! Open your trunk. Private Isikawa! Private Isikawa! Can't you hear? What's that? You will not open it? Whom are you talking to?"

Silence.

"Officer on duty!"

"Here, Mr. Aide-de-camp!"

"Open the trunk."

The commission crowds about the trunk of the student Isikawa. Silence.

"Captain! Write down. A book by Sen Katayama."

"What's this? Careful! Give it to me, corporal."

Silence. Crackling of paper.

Private Kawamura sees a small package wrapped in newspaper being slowly opened by the sure hands of the regimental aid-de-camp. A smiling girl strikes his eyes. The paper reads

Every Japanese must have good eye-sight,
Every Japanese will be a hero.
By using 'Menedorin' eye drops.

"A package of leaflets of odious content. Private Isikawa! Where did you get these leaflets?"

"I see them for the first time, Mr. Adjutant."

"The first time? Orderly!"

"Call the military police patrol."

"I did not put these things there. . .This is. . ."

"Silence! Private Isikawa!"

Private Isikawa is led away between two soldiers. The fixed bayonets sound dully. Private Isikawa lowers his head. He looks at the ground. The barracks are silent.

"Next! Private Isumaya! Open your trunk!"

An hour after the inspection a deep silence reigned in the smoking room. At last Kawamura spoke up.

"The student did a bad thing. And this is very strange. . .We all know Student. . . We fought together in Manchuria. . . And he . . . We. . ."

"Yes," said Morita, pulling at his ear vigorously, "fought . . .A bad business. . . . Yes. . . Strange."

Then Tanaka spoke.

"I saw the fragrant salmon today . . .Of course, maybe I did not understand again. . ."

"What's the matter?" Morita asked angrily.

"When I passed through the barracks this morning during the study hour I saw . . . oh the pig—a useful animal!"

'Don't be afraid. He is going the other way. He's gone. Go ahead."

"That fragrant salmon Nogutsi was going through the student's trunk. When he saw me he jumped up. I am not a very learned man . . .It cannot be. . . But . . ."

"It can't be?" Morita argues, "are you sure? Have you ever been in Tokyo? No. So keep quiet. Oh, I knew it was something like that! . . ."

It wasn't two hours since retreat, when Kawamura was awakened by a sharp push in the shoulder. The yellow glare of a lantern hit his eyes. The officer on duty was in the passageway. On the next cot Morita was pulling on his clothes, winking his sleepy eyes rapidly.

"Dress and follow private Morita," said the officer on duty. "Take your rifles and pouches. Got regulation bullets?"

"Yes, sir."

"Don't dawdle."

The square before the barracks was flooded with moonlight. The barracks were asleep.

"Where to?" asked Kawamura, pulling his strap tight and turning politely aside to yawn.

"To the regimental commission," said Morita glumly. "How do I know, I know as much as you do. To the regimental commission at the order of the company commander."

A light was burning in the building of the "regimental commission for the struggle against harmful thoughts." For the past week this happened every

night. At night automobiles came here from the city. They stayed there till morning, and then, just before daylight, they noiselessly stole away. Morita went and returned in two minutes.

"Orders are—to wait."

"Who's there?"

"A whole session. The adjutant, the lieutenant-colonel. Bawled me out and told me to get out."

"What's it all about?"

"About bad weather, I think. Have you any tobacco with you?"

"It's good at night," said Kawamura, "no one chasing you about. It's April already, I think. The rice is up by now. In the village snow they're going about with rattles."

"I'd like to spit at April," Morita grumbles, "I should like to sleep nights. It's only five hours to the morning bugle. Tomorrow, or rather today, you will be nodding sleepily all day. . . . Aha, they're coming!"

The regimental aide-de-camp with a folder under his arm and Captain Simada came out the of the building. Spurs rang. Officers saluted. The adjutant went away.

"Who's here?" asked Simada. "Why two from the same platoon? Who sent you? The officer on duty? I told him a dozen times. . . .Follow me!"

They walked for a long time. They passed the bath-house and the cemetery of the heroes of the Russo-Japanese war. Passed by the stables of the artillery where the horses could be heard treading heavily on the boards. They passed the garage of the auto company where Fords and Kawasakis were being washed with a hose by moonlight accompanied by a lot of cursing. They came over to the very edge of the military encampment.

"To the shooting grounds, it seems?"

"Looks like it. . . ."

"Walk in the shadow. Faster. Follow me, follow me. Stop! Here!"

A hunchbacked little white bridge with stone lanterns and turtles. Thick leafage of cherry trees. Here some duke revenged himself on another for something or other, or some faithful wife drowned herself.

From the dark a figure approaches and reports to the captain. It is Corporal Setsu.

"Ready?"

"Right, captain!"

"About face! Lie down! Load!"

"How many bullets, sir?"

"I asked for the best shots, lance-corporal."

"These are the best shots, sir. Private Kawamura and Morita."

"One bullet each. You should understand. Aim—that white object."

The shooting range is covered with a silver screen of moonlight. The captain's hand points to a formless white target tied to the fence.

"Sight four," mutters Morita, "I know this fence. What is that? It's moving."

"Yes, it's moving, sir. I beg to report."

"That's not your business. I give you a minute. I shall count. One."

"Two!"

"Three! Fire!"

Pause. An uncertain shot.

"Scoundrels! Pigs! Is this shooting! Kawamura! Did you fall asleep? Wretch!"

"Missed fire, sir. Slanting bullet."

"Idiot. Give us your rifle. Filthy thing. Get out of here. Look how one shoots."

(It is definitely moving! The rifle falls from private Morita's hands.)

"Get off the firing line, stinking cattle!"

The captain lies down himself. The private looks dully at the glistening leggings and the broad back of the captain.

"Lance-corporal, give the command."

A shot. Another shot.

Noise of the lock.

"A ringer."

A shot. Again. Again.

(It is not moving any more. Dust is rising over the road in a thin stream.)

"March back! Best shots! Fools!"

A Soldier's Sleep

A soldier's sleep is uneven and alert. The white moonlit band at last touched the lacquered boxes over their heads. The home country glistened.

The officer on duty passed with his round lantern looking over the faces. Then private Morita opened his eyes.

Night is the best part of the soldier's day. The barrack's machinery stops. The brass bugle—that conductor of the company's time—sounds during daylight hours. It shines and together with it shine the lacquered boxes in the moonlight and the small portable, packet size, army man's homeland that is packed away in it. No one can prohibit private Morita to open his eyes. He turns in his cot and meets the wide open eyes of private Kawamura.

At first they are both silent.

"You know," whispers Morita, "that was the student."

Kawamura is silent, but he evidently knows very well.

"Something is wrong," continues Morita, "we fought together with him in Manchuria. He was the only one of the company that never received a single letter for the whole year . . . and now forty-eight of us are left. . . ."

Kawamura is silent.

"I can understand our going against Chinese bandits. . . . Enemies of our country. . . . But the student Isikawa. . . ."

Kawamura is silent.

"I must express my foolish opinion that when he lent me some tobacco yesterday, I could never think, that I personally. . . . I shouldn't have taken it. . . ."

"It was the captain that did the shooting," answers Kawamura.

"He was shooting for you, I didn't miss fire."

"Orders . . . I say . . . that is, the lance-corporal says, that a soldier must fight the enemies of our country at the first command of the officer. That is military service."

"Fight? According to you,then, the student was in a conspiracy with the Chinese bandits."

"No. I will say that outright. I don't think so."

"This is the first Japanese I ever shot," says Morita. "I had never thought that Arisaka's rifle can turn against a Japanese. Isikawa was an enemy of the country? After that business with the corporal . . . you understand?

Eh? The corporal—principally . . . was monkeying with the trunks. . . ."

"I understand. . . . Our country—it is . . . it. . . ."

There it shines, this country, in the lacquered box, those pictures of wrestlers, geysha girls, the famous Sessue Hayakawa. It is really a beautiful country—from the fishermen's tents, the dried fish hanging from sticks along the Hakkaido shore, to the tents of the lumberjacks and gatherers of tree sap in the camphor forests of Kuisium, from the bamboo forests on the Inner Sea to the green drug store balls in the stepped streets of Yokohama, from the sulphur springs of Nagoya to the paper lanterns of the movies and the blind factory windows facing the dirty canals of Osaka. A beautiful country with its volcanoes, sun and rice fields. The student was its enemy. Corporal Nogutsi . . . fragrant salmon . . . a patriot. . . .

"Great events are coming, do you hear, Kawamura? What are they telling us about the soul when we are nothing but machine-gun triggers in the hands of a shooter. . . ."

Kawamura is silent.

"And what would you say if you were ordered to shoot down private Tanaka or . . . say the lance-corporal. . . . You said, country . . .

"Who is talking in the first platoon?" the officer on duty cries.

Silence. The round paper lantern is rocking about in the hands of the officer on his beat. The officer turns over on their side those that lie flat on their backs or on their stomachs. The beam of moonlight has shifted to the right. The homeland has gone dark and now the moon lights up the round shaved head of private Kawamura. His open eyes look up to the sky.

His Home Village

Growling dully, the auto trucks were climbing the hills. With the headlights darkened, the road stretched deathly white. The wind tore at the men's caps. The trucks used all their power, they squeaked heavily on the turns. They held back for a moment at the blue and white signals at crossings and plodded on along the white roads of the prefecture of Toyama.

The prefecture danced about them with its telephone poles, the network of thin wires, mulberry trees, low white little temples with their bent gates and mournful squares of rice fields on which the water rippled in the moonlight.

Kawamura and Morita were thrown from side to side. There was a sort of madness in this impetuous night drive over the white glazed, lustreless roads, deserted and silent. The company was quiet, tossed about as they raced. The privates would not have been surprised if the trucks had suddenly left the ground, flying through the air like a water-spout over the white road, over poles and posters and filling stations.

"War?"

"An earthquake?"

"The path of the Samurai! Path of the Samurai. Remember?"

The Samurai company was again roused at night. This time trumpets sounded grimly loud.

Alarm. Officers with stop watches in their hands. Piercing screeches of sirens. Figures crawling over the wheels and sides of the trucks like ants. A machine gun rolls in the air over people's heads. Attention! Everyone to his numbered place.

The captain makes a short vague speech.

Enemies of our country. Dangerous bandits. Oder of the command of the Samurai company. You must justify the name. Forward—march!

At the head of the column the commander's light Ford started. It soon disappeared in a silver cloud of dust.

The automobile column, looking in the distance like bedevilled matchboxes, stretched a kilometer long.

Orders were to keep silent. Not a sound.

The mad race continued till daylight. Only at dawn did the Samurai company dismount on the outskirts of a forest where it divided up into platoons. At the crossroads a battery of six machine guns was placed.

It was not another planet, but the same world only somehow strange. Morita gloomily stroked his nose. It looked like trouble. Short-legged Kawamura, squatting, was absent-mindedly cleaning his shoe with a stick. Morita was smoking .Silence. Waiting.

From afar some kind of noise could be heard—a cross between howling and wailing. The noise came in fits and starts with the gusts of wind. From time to time short cracking sounds.

It was growing lighter. Morita smoked dispassionately. Lieutenant Sogawa walked about the road with long strides, his hands behind his back, his head down.

"Rugusaki," suddenly said Tanaka in wonder as he scanned the neighboring hills.

"You have been here before?" asked Kawamura.

"This. . . ."

"Stop talking!"

Hoofs sounded. A patrol of mounted police passed.

"How goes it boys?" one of the men asked the riders.

"You have a job ahead of you," said a good-natured policeman grinning from ear to ear. "They have stoned two. This is the second day."

At six o'clock orders were received to change positions.

From the hillside everything became clear at once.

A large crowd, grey in the early morning light, stood on a rice field immersed up to their knees in water.

A long police chain stretched on the borders surrounded the crowd. A flock of motorcycles stood on the road. Here there were excited consultations going on by twos and threes. Someone was fussing about the horses of a yellow provincial gig.

The crowd sighed and began to buzz all of a sudden. A long red rag appeared above their heads. It fluttered and waved in the wind.

The wind brought the sound of a command. The police chain stepped and went into formation. The motorcycles raised a racket. Someone on horseback came out on the border between two parcels of land and shouted something to the crowd waving a whip.

The crowd answered in a chorus. The wind carried the short "Down with the police!" to the machine gun squad. The red flag trembled and fluttered. The gig rode over to the machine-gunners. A small stout man, in checked trousers and yellow shoes climbed out. With mincing steps he came over to the captain and drew himself up, military fashion.

"For two days, now, Mr. Captain, two days!" It could be seen he had really slept little lately. His round face had grown long. The little mustache was wet and hung over the upper lip like a sponge.

"Mr. Matsuda attached the fields by order of the courts. They are only tenants. We must have justice!"

The captain smiled politely and said: "Union."

"Union! Committee! We have never had such things in this prefecture before. We wired the Governor, Mr. Matsuda is quite ill, in bed."

"And the police?"

"The police! We called out the mounted patrol. There are too few policemen. Do you know what happened in the prefecture of Nagano? We were anxious for the fate of the farmstead. They drove the court bailiff off with stones and here I haven't closed my eyes for two days. Farmer's Committee! I assure you it never happened before in our section. I can't stand it any longer!"

"I think you should go home," said the captain.

"I am going. It is such a disgrace, Mr. Captain. Mr. Matsuda is quite ill. You know,—people have turned into veritable tigers. . . ."

"It will all turn out alright in the end," the captain said soothingly.

"You . . . that would be fine. Talk them over. Convince them. They are debtors. Justice must prevail!"

"That's so," the captain said in a bored manner putting his hands behind his back.

The supervisor stretched out erect and marched to the gig. It clattered away.

"What a woman," the captain said scornfully after the receding gig. "Two days! Faugh!"

Policemen passed. Horsemen sped by. A gendarmerie inspector—a dandified dry old chap in spectacles bending over from his horse, spoke to the captain.

"You try talking to them. Perhaps the military uniform. . . ."

"Yes," said the captain in a still more bored bass voice,—"Lieutenant! We can start."

"Get ready!"

The crowd, seeing the police recede, got into motion. Someone in a torn flapping gown stepped forward and shouted something, waving his hands. After him several others sprang forward.

The grey mass moved forward. They came over to the road. They moved silently, without any noise, a red poster waved on a pole.

Captain Simada suddenly made a determined step forward, came out upon the road and stood there, his legs wide apart, straining his short neck. Behind his back his fingers were rapidly moving up and down.

The crowd came closer. The captain stood there.

"Rugasaki," said Tanaka in a sing-song voice.

"You know this place, Tanaka?"

"It is my native village," Tanaka was saying in the same bemused tones.

The crowd was coming nearer. The captain did not move.

The foremost ranks hesitated.

"Halt!" shouted the captain.

The front ranks stopped, then the rear ones did too.

The captain took a step forward.

"Who is your chief?"

Silence.

"Who is the head—come forward!"

No one came forward.

"Disperse!" roared the captain, taking another step forward.

The people crowded together. The red flag fluttered out and with it the symbols stood out:

Don't die like dung worms! Fight for land!

"You don't want to disperse?"

Silence. In the quiet at the machine-guns only Tanaka's whisper is heard importunately:

"Justice. . . ."

"Justice. . . ."

"My village. . . ."

Morita looked around. Tanaka was pale. His head on one side. He whispered shaking with his entire body.

"You will not disperse? You won't obey the law? I shall count three: one!"

Morita frowned and spat. Kawamura digging the ground with his finger, was looking at the captain's shining leggings.

"Villain!" said Morita.

"Tanaka! Lower your rifle! Where are you shooting?"

"Tanaka! Lower your rifle! Where are you shooting?"

"I am counting: two!"

A shot came from behind. Captain Simada took one step backward, turned to face the machine guns and suddenly, without opening his fist, fell heavily on his back.

The telephone rang long and insistently. It woke the staff officer on duty and demanded the officer-orderly of the regiment. The aide-de-camp was sent for. The aide-de-camp sent for the lieutenant-colonel and the telephone still continued to ring insistently on the wall among the blue maps all lined with red marks. Spurs clanged at staff headquarters, paper screens slammed. Some horseman at the window asked where the hospital was.

Adjutant Otakura brought Fudsinami. The lieutenant-colonel slammed the partition door. The adjutant froze. The conversation on the other side was an unusual one.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Fudsinami. Hello. Hello. How's that? Ruga? Oh, Rukasaki! . . . Certainly. What?"

Pause.

"What platoon?"

"Name?"

"Tanaka? Don't know."

"Captain Simada?"

"No. Don't know."

"Why?"

"Bullet army standard? Repeat."

"I'll come to the hospital."

"I'm coming."

The conversation ended. The telephone rang off.

Otakura tarried for at least another five minutes. When he came into the room the lieutenant-colonel was standing at the telephone straight as if for inspection.

"Desertion in Simada's company," he said. Otakura's hooked nose rose in wonder.

"Who?"

"Some private Tanaka."

"During the expedition?"

"On the return trip. The captain is wounded."

"How? The rebels?"

"No. In the back with a standard army bullet."

Suddenly he turned around on his heels and pushed his open palm forcefully into the blue map as if he wanted to press it into the wall. With his other hand he tore off his glasses.

The lieutenant-colonel had beautiful young eyes, narrow and somewhat swollen from the glasses.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

Constantine Fedin

The Abduction of Europa

From A New Soviet Novel

The first volume of Constantine Fedin's new novel *The Abduction of Europa* has just been published in *The Star* a literary magazine and will appear shortly in book form. The novel treats of the relations between the Soviet Union and the West. The action takes place in Holland, Germany, and Norway during the years 1929 and 1930. The second volume will deal entirely with the Soviet Union. In this number of *International Literature* we give two chapters from volume 1.

A Description of Society

The director of the M.B.V. engineering works at Gorlitz was no ordinary engineer and had no ordinary degree. He was a "Doctor." This title had been conferred on him in recognition of his services. He was called, formally, "Herr Direktor—Dr. Ingenieur Kaspar Krieg." In everyday intercourse, however, he was simply called "Herr Direktor" or "Herr Doctor." But what was everyday intercourse after all? Take the case of the elderly pensioner, a retired army doctor who sneezed and coughed in the attic of Director Krieg's mansion. He had two humps, tuberculosis, and a pair of round, penetrating brown eyes like those of some tame beast—and was sometimes alluded to (behind his back) as "our Bechmann." But this person had his own title—"General-Ober-Arzt—that opened many very respectable doors to him. The first part, it is true, merely signified the scope of his work; it was used in the same sense as it is used to designate general representatives of insurance societies or firms like "Odol." But that did not matter; it sounded the same as "general" in the military sense. So whenever the tenant of the attic was introduced to anyone, more emphasis was laid on the "general"—"Herr *General*-Ober-Arzt Bechmann. It always produced the right effect.

Herr Direktor Krieg invited some friends for the middle of May. One was a Swiss named Casti, the consulting engineer for a big firm at St. Gallen. The two engineers had known each other as students. Casti was passing through Gorlitz on his way from Moscow and Herr Krieg wanted to arrange for Herr Pieck and Herr Mese, the two biggest shareholders in the M.B.V. to discuss the Russian question with Casti. The meeting might be a useful one, since Krieg's father-in-law, Philip van Rossoom, who had a long experience in dealing with the Soviets, was staying with him at the time.

Casti and Krieg did not regard the quiet pursuit of their own profession as their mission in life. They were above the usual run of professional folk who, like eternal pupils, never look beyond the task of the moment. Casti had travelled in Europe and Asia and had opinions on other subjects than the organization of engineer works. Krieg was not a traveller, but his sedentary nature had given him something of an advantage over Casti; he knew more about the theoretical side of things, had read a great deal on economics, and studied languages all his life. English he knew well, since it was the language of the more advanced industrial countries, he could speak Italian, since Italy before the war, had been one of the Allies, had been growing stronger industrially and promised to become a reliable source of

income to Germany. Then Krieg spoke French, of course. France had always been an enemy and the enemy must be known and studied thoroughly—or so he had been taught at school. Last of all, he had learnt Russian, since Russia was an insatiable market, and a knowledge of the East had been one of the commandments of the Prussian genius, Bismarck. Herr Krieg studied by the Tussain-Langenscheidt method. Neat exercise books selected from *Oblomov* and their translations, were lying in the writing table drawers when the Revolution was at its height. They came to the surface once more when the Bolsheviks renewed trade relations with other countries. Three times Herr Krieg learned by heart the passage describing how Oblomov's feet found their way into his slippers and pondered on the eccentricities of the Russian character.

The principal engineering works of the M.B.V. had not been going at full capacityfor about a year now. Equipped as it was with the last word in lathes, it was nevertheless, suffering from lack of orders. Textile machinery was turned out here. The firm had supplied the weaving districts of Lausitz and Silesia, had re-equipped the whole of that deserving industry, had had time to transfer a mass of machinery to Baden, in the south of Germany, secure friendly relations with the north of Italy, and the Yugo-Slavs—when it began to go downhill. The descent went on without a single break, giving a chilly breath of death—a warning of catastrophe. Then the brakes began to give way. That was the most terrible moment of all. Herr Krieg spent hours with the shareholders, the customers, and the creditors—in the works-offices, in restaurants, banks, private studies, drawing-rooms, and reception-rooms—counting, counting, counting. Then that stage was passed, too. Everyone made up their minds to wait for what would happen next and, to all appearances at least, ceased to worry.

Some customers declared themselves bankrupt with epic simplicity. Herr Jenseit, for instance, a wealthy debauchee who owned a textile mill in the Neustadt district in Baden, and was the M.B.V.'s biggest customer, shut down his works altogether and sent Kaspar Krieg the following letter:

Dear Sir:

I regret to inform you that my mill is now closed down. The workers have been dismissed and the employees also. All payments have been stopped, the stores of raw materials and finished products sealed up, my own personal belongings distrained and my bank account seized.

Hoping to meet your representative at the future meeting of the creditors of my firm,

I remain,

Yours respectfully,

Jenseit.

This same Jenseit appeared in Gorlitz for the purpose of clearing up his affairs with regard to the works, and was duly invited to tea by Krieg. Jenseit was at bottom, a decent fellow in spite of his unfortunate inclination for getting into scrapes which was forgiven him on account of his wealth and the mildness of his character.

He arrived some time before the rest, accompanied by a ginger dog—a Great Dane. The latter sniffed the hall thoughtfully, selected a likely-looking corner, turned round three times and lay down. Herr Jenseit chose an armchair in the drawing room with something of the same care, and sat down. He suffered from puffiness of the face, which made him look older than he was and did not tone in with his way of chattering in a high, childish voice. His whole face was a mass of tiny fresh, pink scars. It was with these scars

that the conversation opened as soon as Herr Krieg came into the drawing room with the short brisk steps of a host who desires to show his guests that he is hastening to apologize for keeping them waiting.

"I assure you," squeaked Herr Jenseit, fingering his cheekbones, nose and chin, "it's these politics, I can assure you. Well, and of course the Mumm. I don't usually interfere. If it's Mumm, it's Mumm, and if it's Asbach, well then, let it be Asbach. In this case it was Asbach Uralt first and then Mumm. And of course, in cases like this I generally sing. It was at Feldberg where we went to look at the sunset. I was singing away merrily when suddenly a young man came up to me—not on two legs but, as it seemed, on one-and-a-quarter—there was something very uneven about his gait, I remarked. It turned out that he was one of your Nazis,HerrKrieg—you're a Nazi, aren't you? Not quite? Oh, well, he was—quite. He announced it at once. He came up to me and asked me who I was and I told him to go to the devil. He ordered me to stop singing. I went on singing louder than ever. He picked up my glass of Mumm like this between his finger and thumb and smashed it on my face. The glass was broken to smithereens. I stood up. I was dripping with champagne and blood. I took the bottle of Mumm out of the ice and hit the young brave over the ear with it. He dropped down like a log. I stepped over him and went into the lavatory to wash. There you are—politics for you."

"And what about the young man?" Herr Krieg asked in a business-like tone.

"He knew what he was doing, I suppose. He had a good hard head. He got over it alright. I respect those sort of political opponents."

Herr Jenseit was prepared to go on shouting for a long while yet, but the other visitors prevented him.

Herr Pieck appeared. He walked with his right shoulder well forward. The left hung back somehow, with a lifeless arm attached to it. Herr Pieck had been wounded at Verdun, at a time when faith of the whole country was centered in Verdun as the beginning of a great advance, when the Social-Democrats, of whom Pieck was a staunch supporter, believed firmly in Verdun. He had belonged to that glorious cohort of Socialists who had risen to the defense of their black-white-and red fatherland at the summons of the "parlementaire," Dr. Franck. Pieck had been wounded and after that, found a place in the local branch of his party. During the halcyon days of the revolution he had flourished his pen boldly, hurling curses at the heads of the bourgeoisie, who, he alleged, were overthrown. In the following March he disgraced the members of the Spartakusbund with the same pen. Then the story of Social-Democracy became his story. He got into the Landtag and then into the Magistrature. The title of Statrat suited him to perfection, and he held on to it. His ardor for speaking in Parliament had already cooled, especially since he only got the chance to speak on committees there. Something happened to him, or rather, people began to say that something had happened to him, just as it had happened to his party comrades, who tried to plant a sort of Socialist Paradise around the safes of the magistratures. But nothing could be established. Little by little Herr Pieck grew accustomed to everything, to the bows of the secretaries of the magistrature, to the everlasting, tedious gossip, to the fact that the government must of necessity, be firm, to the fact that the children were growing up, that his wife was demanding a fixed day for receptions, that at some factory-meeting or other the workers had called him a tin god as they called all Social-Democrats who had forgotten the past and were dozing in comfortable official positions.

For a few years Herr Pieck had been growing accustomed to all this and when he was at last quite used to it, and had among other bonds and papers almost a third of the M.B.V. shares in bank-safes and other reliable repositories, then Herr Pieck decided that it was now possible to retire as an invalid on pension. Did he recall his party career in the past? If the Social-Democratic party had given out uniforms with gold braid to the tin gods perhaps they would have remembered the fatherland on state occasions. But the Socialist on retiring wore a cut-away coat with a black-and-white ribbon in the buttonhole—the Iron Cross, class II. And what could the Iron Cross remind him of save Verdun?

Herr Mese followed Pieck into the drawing-room. He wore no Iron Cross in the buttonhole of his coat. If he had, it could only have been for the year 1870—for Sedan—and not Verdun because Herr Mese was an old man. He was one of those old men that you can put your clock by. Perhaps their only service to humanity is the experience of their years, the secret of everlasting youth. Herr Mese lived with such cunning and mathematical accuracy that no one could guess how old he was nor why he went on living, nor even how many shares he had in the M.B.V. Some said a good half, some a quarter. There was no doubt he had a good many, because it was so easy for him to cause the M.B.V. anxiety or the reverse on the stock exchange, without altering the even tenor of his own life in the least. Herr Mese employed only one word to describe his political sympathies; he called them, *definite* and no one, as a rule, cross questioned him about them.

After the shareholders Herr Schulerat Runde was announced in the drawing-room. He was a distant, but very pleasant connection of the host's, a man of solid and educationally-valuable views.Then came General-Ober-Arzt Bechmann, who was immediately introduced to the guests as *General*-Ober-Arzt. He entered softly, carrying his head under his hump, his wise brown eyes shining with tears like an animal's. Among the many ills that tormented the silent man, there was one which was particularly exhausting and cruel. Fifteen years previously he had been wounded in the shoulder; a tiny splinter of metal had penetrated the lung and passed through the tissues, bursting the blood-vessels from time to time. Herr Bechmann had to be prepared for the end at any moment and this was probably the reason why he was so quiet and silent.

The Schulerat occupied himself with the stereoscope, through which he could see instructive views of Monte Carlo. His little finger was streched out delicately as he moved the stereoscope. Pieck and Mese lit their cigars. They were waiting for Jenseit to speak; he was, after all, partly responsible for the falling dividends of the M.B.V. Jenseit supposed that either Pieck or Mese would speak: after all, they were more interested in his payments than he was. In order to prevent any awkwardness, Herr Krieg drew his guests' attention to a small nursery of cacti, which were kept under glass frames heated by lamps. But just at that moment the door of one of the inner rooms opened and Herr Casti entered the drawing-room.

In appearance he differed very little from the average Swiss of a remote mountain canton. He came in with a waddling gait, his head well down and his hands out-spread, as if he was driving a herd of cattle and trailing a stick behind him. Whenever he turned his head he turned his whole body with it as if the head was glued to the shoulders. He spoke only after thinking hard. But his face and eyes were impregnated with the colors of life, like those of people who drink a great deal and can easily stand the good wine they have chosen once and for all.

The conversation went well after his arrival and tea was served. Jenseit, by the way, inquired in a loud voice:

"Do they keep any other kind of drinks in this house?"

So little by little everything acquired an appearance of solid worth.

Philip van Rossoom remained for some time with his daughter and the other ladies. Mese's wife was there, too. She had a hard profile and black hair that gleamed as coldly as oil-cloth. She sympathized with the militarisation of the party, an idea which was now very much in vogue at the elections and promised to lead the weary fatherland out on to some particularly bright path. Frau Mese probably imagined this path as a species of toboggan-run with music. After her dull, mechanical life with an old man full of his shares, Frau Mese thought of a jaunt along this new path in the light of a sweet reward. She was sitting beside Frau Runde, the wife of the Schulerat, who was distinguished by a stomach of no ordinary dimensions. A little distance away sat Fraulein Bareiss—a plump person with a charming dimple in her chin and an enigmatic smile. She was an inexhaustible storehouse of information on the medical practices of the cameroon Negroes, Freud's interpretation of dreams, curing by auto-suggestion, the value of a certain kind of massage, the newest form of love (excluding violence), and the cult of nakedness. The hostess paid particular attention to this charming lady, whose piquancy was not confined to her attainments.

The ladies were busy over some sewing. It was a circle of mature people who were convinced that labour is the fundamental principle of our earthly existence. The conversation drifted leisurely over harmless questions of silk and wool, of combinations of yellow with red and yellow with black, of ribbing and drop-stitch and to a certain extent, of the Pan Ideal.

One could think, slowly and lazily, to the accompaniment of gentle cooing —like the drone of an old nurse's persuasive voice—and Philip van Rossoom was in no hurry to join the men.

He was thinking about last winter. It had been a strange winter, he said to himself, full of alarms, something like the worst years of the war, when even one's instinct had refused to work, not to mention one's powers of calculation, of organizing and one's business foresight. Work, it appeared, might suddenly bring one the most unheard-of wealth. But what was more likely it might hurl van Rossoom to ruin. Work had practically ceased to be work, and resembled the pure speculation of some Schallitt or other. How often Rossoom had recalled that name? Three generations of them had worked in the timber-export trade in Russia, and the last of them was degenerating into a group of international profiteers before Philip's very eyes. Schallitt had acquired an ancient mansion in London and was in the habit of giving dinners *avec un petit jeu*. Schallitt was going to Moscow at the head of a British delegation. As the representative of a foreign power he would carry no negotiations with the Soviet Government. But the fate of a speculator dogged his footsteps. A difficult year was coming. The colossus fell, swept off its feet by the bulk of timber floating from the east. Very simply and swiftly the staff of Schalitt's international "timber ministry" was dissolved. It would be absurd, of course, to suspect Philip van Rossoom of any inclination to speculate. But it was a difficult time, too difficult, in fact! It was difficult enough in his own country; the markets of the Netherlands were overstocked with timber and the demand was shrinking rapidly. It was difficult in Russia, where, on the concessions, the cost of obtaining and transporting goods was increasing and the Soviet exporters were suggesting, with something like a smile, that the concessionaires should give up timber-felling and export

the products of the Russian saw-mills. It would be much more profitable, they declared! Poor Franz! He must be having a pretty hard time as a result of this Soviet attack on foreign capital . . . and all this was, of course, taken into account by the multi-millionaire, Eldering-Geiser, a slippery old toad who sat rolling his eyes at the world from the depths of his stinking oil well. Lodovic was clever, Lodovic was right about everything. It was a pity that the old man's health had broken down completely last winter. He might have had a chance of fighting Geiser. Geiser was revenging himself on Russian oil in every possible way. With a sense of repulsion Philip became suddenly conscious of the chilly dampness of the toad somewhere near him. So van Rossoom! And to the long list of difficulties still another was added—the most alarming of all—a difficulty with credit.

Yes, it was past and gone now, that terrible winter, but its evil breath still lingered about Philip. The steamers were waiting for cargoes. And there were no cargoes. The banks were waiting for their interest. Everything was mortgaged up to the hilt. No one wanted to buy anything, anywhere. The whole world seemed to consist of sellers. There were no customers. God! God! How sick he was of loneliness. There wasn't a soul to whom he could turn. He wanted to complain to someone, for the first time since his childhood, he wanted sympathy, he needed someone who would take his mind off his affairs. He had once met a person like that—Claudia—but she had left him, left him, he was sure, in a most indecent way, to follow Rogov! God! God!

"Do you hear, papa?" Maria was saying. "Kaspar is calling you."

"I'm just going," said Philip, without attempting to rise.

"And then," Maria continued, glancing at each of the ladies in turn, according to their social standing. "The teacher of the Pan-Ideal appeared out of the murk of confusion—a guiding light. His life-path was beset with unheard-of sufferings: poverty in boyhood; want in youth and a tormenting disease in maturity. He overcame them all through his ardent sympathy for suffering humanity. His task was to assert when everyone was denying, to uplift when our modern world was crumbling to ruins."

"I've heard about this Pan-Ideal," Frau Mese observed, clicking her large bone knitting-needles busily. "The spirituality of Halzapfel's ideas appeals to me. I must say. But his methods are too soft. Indeed it seems as if he actually believes in democracy. A leader is what we want!"

Frau Mese ceased knitting for a moment; her frosty gaze rested on Philip.

"And then as regards the upbringing of children," Frau Runde began. The work she held on her stomach started and stirred like something alive. "My husband thinks that boys over seven should be beaten. Does the Pan-Ideal allow for this?"

"Just one question more," Fraulein Bareiss said in an insinuating voice, with a lingering look at the hostess from under her thick eyelashes. "I must speak against beating. At that age, anyway. A little later, perhaps. . . . But it would be interesting to know how Holzapfel's teaching applies to other methods and systems of child training? The cult of the naked body, for instance, which is so widely practised in England, is only the harmonious expression of exalted spirituality and trains the individual for life in the new society. I quite agree with you Frau Mese that a leader is what we need. Maybe a naked one, what do you think?"

Philip rose noisily. The ladies were suddenly reminded of his presence and seemed slightly flustered. Herr Krieg entered at that crucial moment and, with apologies to the ladies, led his father-in-law away.

The men in the drawing-room were laughing. Casti was telling them how he had driven round Moscow one night in a droshky.

"We turned on to Kuznetsky Bridge. This, I must explain, is not a bridge, but a street. It is very steep and smooth. The horse lost its footing. His legs slipped to one side and he went sliding down the hill as if he was on skates. Then a most incredible thing happened. The phaeton ran on to the horse's back and the shafts pushed the animal forward; he flung up his head wildly and then the play began. The traces broke, the collar came loose and the saddle-girths were undone and the next thing I saw was that the shafts and the collar and the Russian bow were all on the pavement. The horse, with its girths all twisted, stepped over the shafts in utter amazement and at last stopped the phaeton with its body. I sat there ready to jump out as soon as the thing turned over. The driver was much more terrified than I was. He clung to his seat and yelled at the horse for all he was worth. When we stopped, he flung down the useless reins and jumped to the ground. And there we were! Just imagine! It was daybreak in the center of one of the world's capitals, not a soul in sight, the unharnessed horse was standing beside the phaeton whisking its tail about. I was waiting for the next move. The driver walked round the harness, looked at the horse a minute and tugged at his cap. Then he gave a gesture of despair and said to me, "Well, that's all there it to that, sir!"

Dr. Kaspar Krieg's guests laughed. Jenseit roared. The General-Ober-Arzt sniggered soundlessly. The Schulerat boomed and the boom rushed to his shaven head. Herr Mese squealed with delight and Herr Pieck's one healthy shoulder heaved powerfully. Even Philip van Rossoom gave a good natured smile. He could well imagine Kuznetsky Bridge and the phaeton spinning like a swan on a merry-go-round and the miserable hack whisking his lean sides with his tail.

"And you mustn't forget, gentlemen," Casti went on, "that before the Revolution there were more than thirty thousand cabs in Moscow, and that at least several thousand of them were much more luxurious than anything we had in Europe."

The visitors shooks their heads, either to express sympathy with the luxurious cabmen or with modern Moscow, shorn of its cabs ,or perhaps, to reproach the Revolution that had not spared even the cabbies in its ravages.

"But," Casti persisted, "that last despairing Moscow cabman, the last of the Russian cabmen, was, I might say, profoundly symbolic of modern Russia."

The guests said nothing, but looked expectantly at Casti.

"I am firmly convinced," he said slowly, in his ceremonious Swiss way, "that this last cabman is a symbol of Soviet Russia. For Soviet Russia will ride in motor-cars for the future."

The guests were beginning to talk and laugh, when the host held up his hand for silence and, addressing them all, said:

"I suggest that we ask my friend, Herr Casti, to give us a detailed account of his impressions on his travels in the East."

Naturally all were agreeable. That was the very thing they had come to hear.

And so the conversation commenced.

Modern Doctrines

From time to time Herr Jenseit took a good gulp of cooled white wine and burst into chuckles. The General-Ober-Arzt kept him company. He sat

holding the glass in long trembling fingers and squinting with pleasure through its crystal-green bowl at the window.

Casti wiped the perspiration from his brow. He had finished his speech and now he wriggled more comfortably into his chair and puffed loudly. According to him, it appeared that the Bolsheviks' plan was a vast one, and that if even three-quarters of it should be fulfilled, the Soviets would transform Russia from a backward agricultural country into a modern industrial-agricultural state. The formation of new and re-equipment of old fuel and metallurgical bases would make it possible to found an engineering industry, and thus solve the main problem of the mechanization of agriculture. This would be accompanied by the entire re-equipment of the light industries which now were run on cheap water-power. While the Bolsheviks were developing on the principal industries accounted for by the plan, they would require the assistance of technically advanced countries—The West and America. The factories he had seen in course of construction on the Volga, in the Ukraine, and Siberia, astonished him by their size, their admirable up-to-date equipment and the sort of super-American speed at which they were being built. Casti dwelt longest on the construction. He foresaw the inevitable technical question that would arise and went on to speak of the problem of trained workers, the most difficult and—in his opinion—the determining factor in the whole Soviet business. Twenty per cent, he said, should be added to the total cost of projected construction for the education and training of the workers. In other words, a fifth of the costs were apparently, to vanish into thin air.

The industrial West and Europe had had to make up their minds to this expenditure long ago and it had been going on over a period of centuries. Yes, construction in Russia would be by no means cheap. But he had observed that the Bolsheviks were ruthless and exacting in their selection of a body of trained industrial workers, and he was convinced that this problem, which was natural enough in the backward East, would be satisfactorily solved by the Bolsheviks. Casti had come to the conclusion that never before had better opportunities been open to certain sections of industry in the West for selling to the East. It was with this conviction that he, Casti, was returning to St. Gallen to urge his native industries to give up their futile, improvident and unbusiness-like policy of ignoring the Soviet market..

He talked with a liveliness that went oddly with his shy, clumsy figure. He wiped his forehead, neck and face heartily with his handkerchief and attacked his cup of cold tea with relish. His hearers were silent. Each one was trying to draw from Casti's speech some lesson that would be useful to himself alone; each was trying to think of some question that would be from his own point of view the cleverest, most practical, or the trickiest. Herr Krieg was the first to speak.

"You say that the Bolsheviks need our technical assistance while they are carrying out their plan. Well, and what then?"

"Then they'll throw us out," said Casti simply and with great conviction.

"Well then. . . ."

"Why help them?" Casti completed the sentence his friend had begun. "It's an old trick, of course. In all activities we start from our own and not from other people's needs. . ."

An explosive burst of laughter came from Jenseit:

"You're worrying so much about Bolsheviks abroad," he spluttered, coughing and wheezing. "It's about time, I think, that you worried about your own. They'll be starting to murder you soon, you'll see."

The other men waited for the paroxysm to pass, but when he could speak again, Jenseit continued with relish:

"They'll murder you, he-he!"—and even made a gesture in the direction of Mese's and Pieck's stomachs.

The General-Ober-Arzt nodded the head between his humps in affirmation and raised his glass. Jenseit winked at him as he filled his own delightedly.

"We read a lot in the press," said Mese, "and we hear a great deal too, in certain circles, about the construction-work going on in Russia. Herr Casti has been very kind in sharing his extremely valuable impressions with us. But this cannot be all. They hope to subordinate us, perhaps? But that is the object of all competition, so that cannot be all, either. Perhaps they want to destroy us? Then we must think of our defences at once and of nothing else. For the enemy is at our very gates!"

A flush rose to Mese's smoothly gleaming, clean-shaven chin and his cheek-bones.

Casti replied in a respectful tone that he had not studied either the political or the other aims of the Soviet plan. He was merely interested in knowing if it was possible to carry out the plan under Russian conditions. And then he had been deputed by his firm to find out whether it would be possible to look to the Soviet Union for orders and upon what scale.

In spite of the respectful tone in which the answer was given, it contained an affront. Herr Pieck, who regarded himself as the perfect peacemaker, on the basis of his experience in the Landtag and Magistrature, decided that the time had come for him to take up his position as conductor of the orchestra.

"Herr Casti is right," he said, "we ought to be interested in the narrow, business side and not the political side of the Russian problem. We might go on talking endlessly about politics. Allow me to ask you one question: has the Soviet Union got a good material basis for its plan?"

"Have the Russian Bolsheviks got money, that's the point?" shouted Jenseit admiringly. "Our local Bolsheviks haven't got a penny to their names so far, thank God!"

"Will the Russians pay for what they order, and when?" the Schulerat inquired cautiously.

"At the day of the circumcision of Our Lady, if you know when that is!" roared Jenseit.

"What means have the Soviets at their disposal?" demanded Herr Pieck in a tone that plainly rebuked Jenseit.

"I can't tell you that, I'm afraid," said Casti. "I only know one thing: there's never been a single case yet of the Bolsheviks failing to fulfil their obligations. Their purchasing capacity, so far as I can see, is determined by the nature of their balance of trade."

"Oh!" grunted Mese. "There you have it: the balance of trade, export! What sort of an export trade can there be in the conditions of the Soviet trade monopoly?"

'Excuse me," Pieck broke in. "Herr Casti calls the balance of trade the source of the Soviets' ability to pay. But what will Herr Casti reply when his firm wants to know the size of the orders they may expect to receive? Then he will need to know not only the balance of trade but the size of the securities offered by the Soviets."

Casti smiled and, glancing shyly around at the businessmen who were methodically preparing an ambush for him, he remarked that the art of commerce was unfortunately, always connected with a certain amount of risk and that Mercury was, if they liked, no less daring than Mars. When the whole world would at last be convinced that the Soviet Union was a species of hospital for the ailing currencies of Europe, then the Soviet problem would cease to exist.

"The fires of our industry are getting low for want of usage; we must give them something to work on. We must try something new, gentlemen, we must decide."

"But—wait a minute! What have we to decide on, exactly?" cried Mese, starting as if he had been stung. "What are you offering us? That is—what I want to say is, what are we being offered by the supporters of trade with the Soviets? We are to give credit to the Soviets on what I should call—the craziest of conditions. We are to supply them with machinery, organize their industries for them, and then they will flood our markets with goods at less than cost prices. Trade with the Soviets is a kind of slow poison, and if you are going to swallow it, then you are deliberately committing suicide. Isn't that so? Don't you understand that you're committing suicide? Then you're acting without realizing what you're doing? Aren't you? You persist in following your own line of thought? But only agents of the Soviets could ignore the obvious. . . ."

"At any rate, Herr Mese, I absolutely," Casti began, turning together with his chair and lowering his head as if about to attack his opponent.

"Oh, excuse me, but you shouldn't interpret this as in any way. . . ."

"I absolutely decline," continued the Swiss, "there is some irregularity."

"I object to such comparisons and I would request you. . ."

"But Herr Mese was thinking of. . ." Pieck broke in.

"I would request you in future. . . ."

"You shouldn't do that," said the host, endeavoring to smooth things over.

But Casti went on stubbornly, lowering his head still more and fixing a bull-like gaze on Mese.

"I would request you in future to choose your words more carefully."

"I could not possibly have been alluding to you, Herr Casti," hissed Mese and then shut up for good.

Herr Pieck began softly like a singer: "Gentlemen, a very valuable suggestion has been made. The course of historical events has placed both sides on an unequal footing. We do not know yet what will be the effect of economic planning on Russia itself. I, personally, am convinced that the sum the state will acquire will be less than the loss of the private firms they have exterminated. The Soviets will never admit this, however. Here we come up against politics. But in the field of foreign trade economic planning has no doubt, its advantages. Our opponent has done away with the middleman in trade, and surplus value in production. These two alone, not counting the possibility of fixing wages, make it quite possible for them to demoralize our market with their low prices. You are right, Herr Mese: dumping will be the natural and inevitable consequence of our efforts to trade with the Soviets. At the same time, Herr Casti is right too, when he says that we start from our own demands and must find some way out, even if it entails taking a greater risk than is usual in these cases. But, gentlemen. . ."

Herr Pieck wiggled forward on to the very edge of the chair. He was beginning to feel a touch of the weakness resembling the excitement that used to come over him and give a peculiar flavor to his party speeches and their

repetitions in the committees of the Landtag. Just as a perfume awakens memories of the dear, bygone past, so the terminology of leading articles in the newspapers and two or three words, faintly remembered now, from economic pamphlets, aroused in the former deputy the titillating fermentation of worn-out feelings. It was all intangible, all very feeble as yet—like the false restoration of fading powers, but still, it was good in that it reminded him of something youthful—it might have only been his duty as a citizen, or it might have been respect for reform, or perhaps—glory, or even passion.

"There are risks and risks, gentlemen. Whoever has been in the trenches," here Herr Pieck moved his damaged shoulders as if pointing out the tuft of black-and-white ribbon in his button-hole, "whoever has been in the trenches knows that only a really well considered risk is ever crowned with success. What can we place against the centralized trade of the Soviet Union? What about the divided ranks of the exporters, the disharmonious action of the customers, who are often at war with each other, striving to—er—yes—striving for narrow, personal profits? What have we to set against—to be exact—what would be the best thing for us to set against—the trade monopoly of the Soviets? The organization of representatives of export and import directed from the center; an organization spread throughout every country and carrying on a considerable trade with the Soviets, an organization not only equal in elasticity to that of the Soviet monopoly but even surpassing it. Our industry and trade must show plenty of initiative of this kind if we want to deprive the enemy of the advantage he has gained by cunning and usurpation—and put an end to dumping; if we want to take risks such as only bold but wise people take, and lastly, if we are going to put deeds before words in the defence of our principles."

Herr Pieck nodded his head as a sign that his speech was over and settled himself deeper in his chair. An almost unnoticeable flush had crept over his cheeks. It was a different flush to the bright, healthy color that lay in very definite patches on Mese's cheeks and indicated the lively quality of his tendencies at a difficult age. Herr Pieck's blush was a timid one. The faint rosy tinge in his cheeks was merely a shadow of life, but hardly the life itself. It was the flush of a now far distant past. Oh God, how good it had been to be young, after all!

No one responded to Pieck's appeal, probably because no one had expected quite so much state ceremony in such a very private conversation. Pieck's conclusion was too sudden: an appeal for deeds instead of words was regarded as the prerogative of parliamentary orators who repeated it in something the same manner as the clergyman closing his sermon with, "And now to God the Father, God the Son, etc." Possibly Herr Pieck understood that his speech had been a little out of place; possibly he saw himself again in a new light—as a shareholder who had long since given up his political career. Or possibly, he was thinking ruefully of the false awakening of non-existent feelings. Who could tell? Herr Pieck tried to break the awkward pause.

"I thing," he said, "it would be a very good thing if Herr van Rossoom, who has had so much experience in dealing with Moscow, would give us his opinion on the questions we have been speaking about."

They all turned eagerly to Philip like a theatre audience for the star actor's appearance. He was standing by a bookcase behind Krieg. When they appealed to him and watched him in expectant silence, he moved forward to the table and rested his knuckles on it, just as an actor might have done in his place By this one gesture he betrayed a certain amount of dramatic

feeling. He spoke and behaved very simply, and if his manner and appearance might have led some to compare him to a cabinet minister, certainly the rest of the people in the room looked like department chiefs under his orders. At first they all listened to him as clerks might attend to their chief until the moment arrived when they would scurry away into their respective corners like animals of different species herded together in a common pen.

"Excuse me, gentlemen, but I do not think you were speaking of what you had in your minds. You produce textile machinery, therefore, you want to know whether it would be profitable to sell this machinery to Soviet Russia. Nothing else could possible interest you. Otherwise you would turn from merchants into newspaper-vendors. In all the years that I have been working with the Soviets I have looked upon and still look upon my work in this way. I deal in timber. Is it profitable for me to export timber from the Soviet Union? Today it may be profitable—and I'll export it. Tomorrow it may be unprofitable—and I shall stop exporting. Anything further than that, I don't want to know. If you shared my point of view, everything would be perfectly clear to you."

Philip paused, evidently waiting for hearers to agree with him. Herr Jenseit, who had grown blissfuly quiet over the remains of the wine, suddenly burst into stormy life once more.

"I don't produce machinery. I don't produce anything at all just now. At one time I produced textiles. But they were seized and now they're all lying in the store-rooms. No one is buying them. Maybe Russia will buy them? I'd like to see her do it; But Russia sells, she doesn't buy. She sells to Persia and Turkey. The Bolsheviks know what is required of merchants. In Turkey they worship the crescent, in Persia they are ready to slash themselves with knives along with the Shiites. And my textiles are lying on my hands. You want to sell your machinery to Russia? Bravo! You are building the road for Soviet expansion in the East. The Soviets have always robbed Europe of the Orient. And my textiles will lie on my hands."

"Maybe we should ask Herr van Rossoom," Herr Pieck observed.

"Of course," exclaimed Jenseit, "I only wanted to say that you'll never get your debts from me that way. Well, here's to your health!"

He raised his glass and bowed to Pieck and Mese with a little chuckle.

"There you are!" Philip smiled. "There you have a thoroughly business-like estimate of the textile problem. The attitude of the problem of textile machinery should, of course, be different. Therefore, if we act independently in each economic field, we may hope at last to establish with regard to the Soviets an economic policy that will restore Russia to the family of European nations."

Then from some far corner—as if from behind a door hung with a heavy carpet came a voice that had not been heard hitherto.

"May I ask for what purpose you think it necessary to restore Russia to the family of European nations?"

General-Ober-Arzt Bechmann sat up very red in the face. A glass of wine dithered in his long fingers. His humps were more prominent than ever.

"Russia has always belonged to that family," replied Philip.

"And I always imagined," Bechmann objected, hoarse with excitement, "that Europe ended where Poland began."

He was obliged to set down his glass and grip his hands between his high sharp knees. His round eyes glowed like lamps. He was boiling with indignation.

"I prefer to avoid disputes of this sort," said Philip. "But if you like, I

shall answer you. Russia must be restored to the family of European nations, because there is no other way of turning her from her madness. She will be bound, in her business relations with us, to alter her economic system, to modify it so that it resembles ours more closely and, in time, to restore the old economic system. A rebirth of Russia on these lines would be extremely good for the general situation in Europe. Therefore our task is—to extend our connections with Moscow. This problem must be solved by our methods of free competition, refusing to countenance every sort of union that is alien to the nature of capital. In what Herr Pieck had just said I can hear echoes of those Utopias against which Herr Pieck would like to arm his capitalist monopoly of trade with Moscow. We must remain practical. Personally I have never been anything but practical. It surprises me to find that our conversation today is somehow so—so—rambling. Here you are discussing whether one should or should not trade with the Soviets, while the question has been decided by your country long ago. Germany has a trade agreement with Moscow and your government guarantees credits granted to the Russians, If I were in your position there is only one thing I would like—that is, more Soviet orders. Let us be practical to the end. But you have not been able to secure Soviet orders, have you Kaspar?" Philip turned to his son-in-law. Herr Krieg jerked his shoulders and glanced at Pieck and Mese in turn, as if suggesting that they should speak. But they said nothing and he had to thing of some objections for himself.

"There can be no talk of failure yet. The steps that I took were merely to acquire some information that I needed. I got the impression that new models of machinery were required that was all. Russia is learning to build her own machinery and has no scruples about copying other people's patents. Things have gone a long way. The Soviets are exporting more than textiles, they are exporting machinery. We shall have the Soviets to compete with in equipping the textile factories of the East. The Muscovites act as if they knew as much about engineering as the English, at least."

"Another step forward," smiled Philip. "Now we know how things stand with textile machinery. To hear you talk, Kaspar, one would think it impossible to count on trade with Moscow. But your friend, Herr Casti, has brought other impressions from Russia."

Herr Krieg smiled.

"Impressions and orders are quite different things. . . . And then you must remember that it's much easier to buy in Russia than to sell."

"It isn't only in Russia that that is the case."

"That explains why we don't understand each other. You, for instance, don't want to understand Herr Pieck's observations on the advantages of the Soviet monopoly."

"If you will allow me," said Philip, "I should like to expand that observation. The advantages of the Soviets do not lie in the monopoly itself, but in the fact that Moscow has united finance and trade capital and therefore hasn't to contend with the contradictions that hinder us at every step. We are not in a position to get rid of these contradictions entirely. We must. . . ."

Herr Schulerat gave a loud sigh. He was sitting in a far corner of the room where his presence had been practically forgotten. In the foreground quivered Herr Bechmann, who could hardly control his desire to speak. Herr Jenseit reacted to the windings of the conversation by thoughtfully sucking in his wine, and pulling at his cigars, and his movements attracted as much attention as Bechmann's restlessness. Both of them turned at the sudden sight

of the Schulerat, and thus an unexpected pause ensued. Van Rossoom glanced towards the corner and asked:

"You were about to say something, I believe?"

"No, no," said the Schulerat hastily.

"Do, please!" persisted Philip.

Herr Schulerat coughed, politely covering his mouth with his hand. He was not quite sure of himself. He was striving to arrive at an understanding of these people with the help of the rather scrappy knowledge he had gleaned from the commercial columns of the newspapers. It seemed to him that something was being hidden from him, that the clearness and accessibility of their talk was merely a cloak to cover some secret. Being one of the modest uninitiated he regarded commerce as an extremely delicate and ticklish business and finding himself face to face with real live business men, suspected every word of containing some extraordinary cunning. But he had his own convictons, hard as asphalt, and now they were panting for an outlet.

"Well, come on, shoot it out quick!" urged Jenseit with affected roughness.

Then the Schulerat began a little huskily:

"As regards the contradictions of capitalism—there has been too much said about them already. But where the contradictions lie, exactly,— this is kept a secret from us. And now—er—we've been hearing of them again. But if the capitalists themselves see the contradictions, why don't they get rid of them? It only remains for us to conclude that they do not see any contradictions at all and are merely repeating mechanically the assertions of socialism."

"I hope you don't regard me as a socialist?" said Philip playfully. "Aren't the contradictions that have been discovered here enough for you? Maybe you would call them simply a disagreement on some particular question? A difference of interests? You would like to see the principal flaws in our system would you? Alright. I'll give you one example that really would do credit to a socialist, I believe. I'll take this example out of my own sphere. There is a bank in London which finances the timber trade. There's no necessity for us to know the name of it. It finances Finnish export firms, and at the same time it finances the importers in Engand who are buying timber in Finland. The bank is interested in the sellers exporting their timber at the highest possible price, and in the customers buying the timber at the lowest possible price. But since a commodity cannot be both cheap and dear at the same time, some third party must be the gainer."

"And of course there is no necessity for us to know his name, either," put in Herr Jenseit.

"Are you satisfied? Or does it still seem to you that our contradictions have been invented by the socialists? But I can extend this example to a whole host of people who support planning systems, monopolies and so on. I remain faithful to the idea of freedom of trade and freedom to struggle with its contradictions."

"Because you are helpless to cope with them," cried Bechmann.

"Not because, but in spite of the fact that I'm helpless to cope with them. Just as I'm helpless to cope with the sea. I can't prevent the risk of accident, but I go on building boats."

"Yes, yes that's it!" croaked Bechmann, controlling his agitation and his breath with difficulty. "You're incapable of fighting with evil and therefore you give into it—join forces with it, sign agreements with it. I detected this

long ago in your talk, and in everything that's been said here. The spirit of the times—sown by politics. Yes, that's it."

He attempted to rise, clinging with shaking fingers to his chair for support. But he needed all his strength for the work of his lungs, for his heavy, wheezy breathing that tore his speech into shreds. He had to give in to his lungs. He wanted so much to speak, so he remained seated in the armchair. His great head, like that of some large-eyed, wise old bird, rolled about under his humps as if in a nest. He could not finish off his words; they were too long for him and tripped up his breathing. He forced them out, whistling them through his teeth. Every word was a torture to him, but he could not stop.

"Nature is bound to assert itself. You did'nt want to hear anything about politics—and you're talking of nothing else. Politics will assert themselves—that's how you should have paraphrased it. Smoothing things over. . . . agreements, concessions—that's the spirit of your politics. . . . It's a survival of parliamentary system, that's all. The parliamentary system started the cult of persuasion. It is to this system that we owe the liberal vogue for the Soviets. Yes. The parliamentary system with its notion of peace-making, of friendship between different social systems. This mania for a parliamentary system leads to compromise with anyone and everyone. The capitalists are cooperating with their worst enemies—persuading the Bolsheviks to return to the family of European nations, ... bringing them into fashion."

He paused for breath. His cough racked him after every two or three words, his face glistened with perspiration.

"I can't understand why the parliamentary system should have been brought up here," Herr Pieck hastily remarked in a slightly offended tone.

"Because we are at its death-bed," said the Schulerat with unexpected daring. "The real parliamentarians are laughing at the parliamentary system. As Lord Hartington once said: 'I dozed off while I was making a speech in Parliament, and when I woke up I found I was still speaking!' "

"Oh, that's charming!" laughed van Rossoom moving away to the bookcase. "Who did you say made the joke?"

"A friend of Winston Churchhill's no less."

"Very nice indeed," repeated Philip and turned to examine the bindings of the books before him.

"Our duty," Bechmann continued with an effort, after his fit of coughing was over, "our duty is to fight against this fashion for Bolsheviks and foreign ideas and the foreign spirit. Yes. 'Down with everything foreign!' that's what we should say. It's our duty to think of ourselves. Because we have reached the limit. You're laboring under a decision, gentlemen. You ought to be thinking of how to make our economic system independent. And what are you doing all the time? Thinking of how to enslave it still more? Yes."

"Well, but what would you suggest?" Herr Pieck interposed.

"Autocracy!" shouted the Schulerat. "It's the only way out of our disgrace at present—out of the beggary we are heading for. A self-supporting state—economically independent of every other, isolated and free. A state like that could be brought into order once more."

He smote his knee with his fist and looked around as if he wanted to give each of them a good thrashing in turn. The General-Ober-Arzt had another fit of coughing. The noise threatened the stately order of the room. Herr Krieg and Herr Casti began to make vague objections without addressing

themselves to anyone in particular. Mese, who had subsided long since, suddenly growled out something. Herr Jenseit rose and tipped his empty glass into his mouth in a disillusioned way.

"We've got to think of building up a new economic system," cried Bechmann. "We've got to keep a tight rein on the machine that works senselessly. We must revive the handicrafts, yes—and restore men their work. And you. . ."

He began to cough again. It was as if someone had jumped on to his hump and was shaking him mercilessly. He could not get his breath.

"You shouldn't upset yourself like that, Herr General-Ober-Arzt," said his host anxiously.

But Bechmann continued to force indistinct crumpled words out of his whitening lips.

"—Must replace—helplessness, patience—liberalism—by heroic deeds once and for all,—yes. Heroic deeds. It is our duty to our humiliated fatherland."

"And to break the bonds," shouted the Schulerat from his corner, "the bonds of our country."

Herr Jenseit strolled leisurely towards the door. He seemed to be imitating van Rossoom's pose of not desiring to mix himself up in an argument ruled by weak nerves and party passions. The difference between him and van Rossoom, however, lay in the fact that no one noticed Jenseit's retirement from the scene, while Philip drew the guests irritated attention all the time. Pieck and Mese directed dark looks at his back. This slow, big-boned Dutchman who seemed at once close and comprehensible to them and yet distinct, cold and superior, was evidently flourishing blissfully where they, in spite of their wide experience, were groping awkwardly for a footing and clutching like blind men at the air for support. They were fascinated by this Dutchman's back and his insolent, fearless treatment of them and of the rest of the guests, and they did not notice Bechmann's efforts to speak.

Herr Jenseit opened the door into the hall. The Great Dane rose from his couch at once and thumped his tail on the wall with delight.

"Come here," Jenseit called. He took the dog by his collar and dragged him towards the door.

"You're afraid—of dumping of goods," Herr Bechmann was gasping. "It's the dumping of madness that's threatening us now."

"Go for it!" repeated Jenseit.

"The dumping of ideas—of the poison of revolution. . ."

"Go for it!" repeated Jenseit.

The dog gave an uncertain bark. The collar was choking him. He could not understand what his master required of him. One was not supposed to bark in strange houses. But his master kept squeezing his throat and egging him on.

"How many years have we been importing—the poison of revolution? In quantities," croaked Herr Bechmann.

"Cheaper than costs of production!" the Schulerat took up the strain.

"Go for it!"

The dog began to bark. Herr Jenseit roared laughing. Herr Krieg, bewildered, rose from his seat at the table and with an effort moved a huge, throne-like armchair out of his way.

"This is wanton mischief!" he shouted. The others jumped up. Herr Casti moved fearlessly towards the dog. Another door opened and Frau Director peered into the room. The cynicism and ugliness of the scene horrified her.

With a sort of dull persistence like that of an animal, the Swiss was pushing the laughing Jenseit out of the room. The dog was barking, furiously and scratching at the parquet. Herr Krieg was waving his arms about. Herr Bechmann who had scrambled out of his armchair, was standing, shaking, perspiring and deadly pale, helplessly trying to get his breath.

Frau Maria rushed up to her father with outstretched arms.

"Keep calm, my dear," said Philip, putting his arm around her. "They're only discussing a question of foreign trade."

At that moment the noise abated.

Herr Bechmann dropped limply on to his armchair. He fell on his side so that his humps took up almost all the space, and his head was crushed against the corner of the soft back. With great difficulty he turned his face upwards and rested his chin on his shoulder. His deformity at that moment was both pitiful and frightful. Frau Maria, her husband and the Schulerat rushed up to him. Herr Bechmann held out his hand to them; they raised him and settled him comfortably on his back. He covered his mouth with his hand.

Thin streams of blood trickled through his white fingers. Then the blood came quicker and quicker and ran down his chest inside the jacket that was crumpled up around his head.

Frau Maria gave a cry of alarm and closed her eyes.

"What should we do?" asked Herr Krieg, stooping in alarm over Bechmann.

Bechmann took his hand away from his mouth to get his breath. The cough came in short convulsive gasps forcing out bubbling, dark-foam from his lips. At last he drew in some air and managed to hold it in his chest. Several seconds passed in silence. Then he beckoned to Frau Maria. Terror stricken, she bent over his face. It was covered with blood.

"Salt—and—water," he whispered faintly.

"Our dear Bechmann," Frau Maria sobbed tenderly. Then, remembering that there were strangers about, she corrected herself: "Our dear Herr General-Ober-Arzt."

The sick man could not be left in the armchair a moment longer: he was hanging half in and half out of it, with his heels digging into the carpet. They decided to move him to the couch and began to discuss the best way of doing it. Philip said that it would be better to move the couch over to him first of all, and started to set them an example.

Jenseit had appeared in the rooms once more. He moved to let Philip pass in a bewildered, ashamed way as if he felt guilty. Philip asked him to help with the couch, and he rushed over to it eagerly and began to struggle with all his might. But Casti and Krieg had to be called upon before it could be moved. They all talked in whispers for some reason or other and the moving of the couch caused a great deal of excitement.

Frau Maria appealed to Fraulein Bareiss, who knew everything and could do everything in the world. That young woman came in radiant and took charge at once. In less than no time Bechmann was lying on the couch covered with a rug, his head resting on a low, comfortable pillow. His face had been sponged clean of blood, a towel placed under his damp shirt, and he was sipping salt water from a spoon. His eyelids drooped gratefully when they told him that ice was being crushed for him in the kitchen. He beckoned to Frau Maria and, taking her hand, whispered something in her ear.

Fraulein Bareiss clasped her plump hands in horror but the sick man persisted in having his say out.

Frau Director straightened herself and turned to the men.

"Herr General-Ober-Arzt begs you to excuse him for interrupting the conversation. And then. . ."

She glanced round at Bechmann. He blinked his great eyes, glittering and full of terror like those of a wounded bird.

"He wants you to shout 'Long live Germany' for him."

The visitors gazed out of the window or studied the cacti, and cast significant glances at each other. Then, since the sick man needed quiet, they took their departure as quietly as they could. Only Herr Schulerat saluted Bechmann dramatically.

Philip was to leave for Berlin that evening. It was a little inconvenient; one of his son-in-law's cars was under repair, and the other was unsuitable for long distances. So it was a question of choosing between the evening and night trains. Philip had asked them not to see him off at the station. When he had slammed the door of the car, he threw himself back in a comfortable corner with a sigh of relief. He longed to doze off. The scene at his son-in-law's house struck him as extremely melodramatic, the conversation had been unnecessary and tedious. He had always regarded the Krieg couple as hopelessly provincial.

The direct route to the station was apparently closed. Philip glanced out. A line of mounted police blocked the way. Foot police were sorting the cars and directing them into side streets, flourishing their white batons. Beyond the line of mounted police, more riders, like monuments come to life, were dashing about among the crowd, which stirred slightly.

The motor-car went by a roundabout route which though much livelier than usual was nevertheless gloomy. Philip understood that the main street had been lighted earlier than usual to facilitate the work of the police—that was why the riders stood out so sharply.

When he came out in the station square Philip saw a line of Red Cross ambulances were drawn up there. The chief street led out into this square, too, and the end of it was blocked by police. The door of one of the ambulances was open; the First Aid men raised a stretcher over their heads and pushed it inside with all their might. Something dark and shapeless—it could hardly have been human—was jolted about on the stretcher, which seemed extraordinarily short to Philip. He glanced down at his legs and thought to himself that he would never fit on one of those stretchers.Yes, and then, the ambulance men would never be able to raise him so high over their heads; he weighed a hundred and two kilograms in his underclothes.

Philip started and tried to shake off his mood. What strange things came into his head after that idiotic argument at his son-in-law's house!

And as he was getting out of the car, he sighed almost wearily:

"My God, when will we come to an end of this business?"

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Spring Silk

From a New Novel — A Story of Working Class China

Old Dun-Bao is sitting on a rock at the edge of the Tanlu road which runs parallel to the canal. His long smoking pipe is slung on his side. The days of Chi-min[1] have arrived. The sun is already very warm. Dun-Bao's back burns as if he were carrying a bowl of fire. The barge-haulers working along the Tanlu from the Pines are dressed in blue denim shirts only, the bottoms blowing wide; the backs of the barge-haulers are bent and from their foreheads the perspiration pours to the ground in streams as they pull, pull. . .

Looking at the hard-working men old Dun-Bao feels even hotter, his body itches with the heat. He has on a ragged cotton-lined jacket—his spring clothes are still at the pawn-shop. Chi-min has only come and already it is so hot.

"The sky has changed, too!" old Dun-Bao says to himself as he spits out the thickened saliva. The water in the Grand Canal[2] is green. A few boats pass in both directions. The mirror-like surface of the water is wrinkled here and there in flowing circles. The wavering reflections of the clay banks and the rows of mulberry-trees growing on them are broken into a turbid mass. But not for long. . . Soon the trees show straight again in the water, rocking drunkenly. Another minute and they are still again as before. The twigs open their little fists and unfold their fingers: they are thickly overgrown with green leaves. The rows of mulberry trees lining the canal stretch on endlessly. The fields are still covered with dry-cracked clods of earth, the mulberry trees reign supreme. Behind old Dun-Bao's back there is a grove of mulberry trees, low and still. It looks as if under the hot sun the young leaves on the mulberry bushes grow visibly.

Not far from where Dun-Bao is sitting, some distance off the Tanlu road, stands the whitish building of the silk mill. Some ten days ago soldiers were here and several short stumps of trench can still be seen. It was said then the "Army of the Eastern Ocean"[3] would soon invade the place. The rich men of the canton left. Now the soldiers have gone but the factory is still closed, waiting for the Spring cocoons to appear on the market when it will again begin to hum gaily. Old Dun-Bao has heard from the young nobleman's son Chen that there is trouble in Shanghai—all the silk mills are shut down. What if the mill here will also remain closed! But old Dun-Bao does not want to believe this. He has lived for sixty years and has known some troublous times, but he has never seen the green shining mulberry leaves grow in vain, to dry out as fodder for the goats except when the coccoon harvest failed. But that is the will of heaven. Who can foretell without an oracle?

"Chin-min has only come and so hot already!" the old man thinks to himself as he looks with joy and anxiety at the rich growth of green leafage on

[1] The third day of the month on the old Chinese calendar—the Spring festival April 5-6 on the European calendar.

[2] The Grand Canal cuts through Central China from the Yangtse to Pekin, built in the XI century. Its main function is the carrying of rice from Central to North China.

[3] "Army of the Eastern Ocean"—the Japanese.

the mulberry bushes. He remembers one year: he was himself a strong young lad of twenty then, Chi-min had already clothed the Earth in its Spring garb and the "silk-worm blossoms" were already in full bloom. That year he got married. It was a time when the family was prosperous. His father, like an old ox, pulled everything, did everything, even the grandfather, the chief of the family, in spite of the hard years spent in the region of Tsamaotsi[1] occupied by Tai-ping troops also seemed to be getting stronger and wiser with the years. Those days the old master Chen had only just left this world, and the young master Chen had not yet taken to opium smoking. The family of the master Chen was then not what it is now. Old Dun-Bao believes that the fate of his family and the family of master Chen hangs on one thread although they live behind a high gate and have a spacious yard while he is only a poor peasant. During the Tai-ping uprising the grandfather of Dun-Bao and old master Chen not only were prisoners together and wandered about together in Tsamaotsi but escaped together from the camp, stealing there many bars of gold—so people say to this very day. When the old master Chen got rich out of silk farming, the family of Dun-Bao also began to prosper and harvest more silk cocoons from year to year. In ten years the family of Dun-Bao bought 20 mu of rice field, more than 10 mu of mulberry grove and two more one-story houses with three rooms in each. Everyone in the village envied the Chen family which was one of the foremost in the canton. Later both families were impoverished. Dun-Bao now has no land of his own and, quite the reverse, is 300 dollars in debt; the family of master Chen is also ruined. People say the spirits of the Tsamaotsi in the other world went to court about it and God made the Chen family pay back for the gold bars old master Chen had stolen, that is why the family disintegrated so rapidly. Dun-Bao is inclined to believe this, because if not the judgement of God and the curse of the spirit why should the young master Chen begin to smoke opium?

What Dun-Bao could not understand at all is why the disintegration of the Chen family should affect his family. His family did not make use of the gold stolen from the Tsamaotsi. True he had heard from the elders, now long dead, that when grandfather escaped from the Tsamaotsi camp a guard suddenly attacked them and they could not help killing him—that is their sin. In order to appease the spirit of this lad the Dun-Bao family prayed and bought offerings, burning paper money. Ever since he began to understand what goes on around him he saw the family do this an untold number of times. That unjust spirit should have been reborn long ago. Although Dun-Bao does not remember the grandfather, he had seen the industry and justness of his father with his own eyes. He is quite a decent man himself. Son Asi and daughter-in-law Sy-Da-nian are industrious and frugal. Only the younger son Ado is green yet, he does not know the hardships and griefs of life. But all children are like that, this is no crime.

Raising his emaciated, yellow, wrinkled face the old man looks sadly at the canal, the boats, the mulberry trees on both banks. It has all changed

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[1] Tsamaotsi literally means long-haired. The nickname of those who took part in the Taiping rebellion in the Middle of the XIX century. Up to the Manchu dynasty the Chinese wore no queues. The head was shaved except for the crown from where the queue was grown. The Tai-ping was the custom before the coming of the Manchus, as a sign of protest. The rebels were principally peasants that rose against the Manchu dynasty and the landowners. In 1853 the rebels took Wanking and their leader Hun Su-tsian declared himself the founder of a new dynasty of "Tai-ping" (great serenity). The rebellion was subdued by the English.

very little since he was 20. But the world has changed, just the same. The family has to eat pumpkin instead of rice and owes more than 300 dollars.

From behind a distant bend in the river a whistle is suddenly heard. A second silk mill stands there. The neatly laid out stone of the wharf can barely be distinguished in the distance. From behind the bend a tug-boat appears importantly towing three big barges towards Dun-Bao. The silent water now begins to gurgle and waves begin to splash against both banks. A small village boat quickly makes for the shore and the people in it grab the reeds; the boat and the people in it rock like a swing. The splash of waterwheels and the smell of oil spread over the peaceful green valley. Dun-Bao looks at the tow-boat with great hatred, following it with his eyes until it disappears again behind the next bend after blowing its whistle several times. The old man hates the goods of those oversea devils as he hates the tow-boat although he has never seen those oversea devils. His father told him that master Chen had met oversea devils: they had red eye-brows and green eyes, and they walk without bending their knees. Old master Chen also hated the oversea devils and would often say: "Those oversea devils cheated us out of all our money." Dun-Bao was only eight or nine years old then. Now he only knows about old master Chen from hearsay. However, when he remembers the words "Those oversea devils cheated us out of all our money" he seems to see old master Chen pluck at his sparse beard and shake his head.

Old Dun-Bao has no idea how oversea devils cheat one out of his money, but he believes that old master Chen spoke the truth. Didn't he see for himself how oversea's denim and cloth and kerosene and similar oversea's goods appeared in the canton and tow-boats began to ply the river. The products of the fields drew a lower and lower price from day to day while those goods got dearer and dearer. The inheritance left by his father came to nothing and now he is in debt! The old man's hatred of the oversea devils is not without its cause! His firm opinion is well known in the village. Five years ago they told him the government had changed again, the new government is preparing to destroy the oversea devils. Old Dun-Bao did not believe them. He saw young people that came to the canton and shouted: "Down with the oversea devils" although they themselves were dressed like them. He is sure those young people are secretly connected with the oversea devils and only came there intending to fool the peasants. Soon they really stopped shouting "Down with the oversea devils." Things at the canton became even dearer, and taxes on the village population also became heavier. Old Dun-Bao is firmly convinced that these are the doings of a secret compact with the oversea devils.

But what made the old man really angry and almost sick last year was that cocoons of oversea's variety were priced higher ten dollars the dan. Although he had lived at peace with his daughter-in-law till then, he began to quarrel with her about this. The daughter-in-law took it into her head since last year to raise cocoons of oversea's variety. The younger son is of the same opinion as the daughter-in-law. Dun-Bao could not hold out and had to make a concession. Now they have three sheets of them at home, two native ones and one of the oversea's sort.

"The world has really gone to the dogs. In a few years, I suppose, the mulberry leaves will also have to be of an oversea's kind. I am tired of life," the old man thinks to himself as he looks at the mulberry trees. Taking the pipe slung on his side, he knocks it against the ground angrily. The sun is directly overhead. The short shadow lies there like embers. Dun-Bao is still

wearing his ragged cotton lined jacket and he feels the heat in his whole body. Unbuttoning it he lifts an end, fans himself a few times, gets up and goes on home.

Behind the mulberry grove there is a rice field. The greater part of it is plowed and covered with even, dry, cracked clods of earth. Here and there other grains show. The golden blossoming of the vegetables breathes spicy odors. In the distance there is a hut—that's where their three generations live. White smoke rises over the roof—they are preparing the meal.

Dun-Bao comes out from the mulberry grove, stops on the division strip, turns round and looks at the green bushes. At the other end of the field a little ten year old chap appears. He shouts from afar:

"Grandpa, mother is waiting with dinner."

"A . . . a . . . a . . ."

Dun-Bao recognizes his grandson, Siao-Bao and answers mechanically continuing to look lovingly at the mulberry grove. Chi-min has only begun and the leaf-ends are already spreading out like fingers,—he sees that only the second time in his life. The mulberry trees are promising a good harvest. How many cocoons will they get from three sheets? If last year's trouble will not come again it may be possible to pay up one's debts.

Siao-Bao has already come up to his grandfather. He also raises his head and looks at the green velvet leaves of the mulberry bushes. Suddenly he begins to jump about, clap his hands and sing:

Chi-min days
The leaves are like fingers.
The women that raise the worms
Clap their hands.

Joy spreads over the wrinkled face of Dun-Bao. It is a good omen. He pats the shaved head of Siao-Bao and a new hope flares up in the old man's heart grown callous from want.

II

It is getting warmer. Under the hot sun the young shoots open their tiny fists and spread their fingers. They are the size of a new born baby's hand. The mulberry grove near Dun-Bao's village is coming to life. From a distance it looks like a green silk cloth stretched over the low close-woven grey wicker fence. Hope grows strong in the heart of Dun-Bao and the peasants generally. The call to labor sounds everywhere. The worm raising implements that had been stored away in the barn are now brought out, cleaned, mended. The edge of the pond that cuts through the village is dark with women and children working, chattering and laughing.

All these women and children look weak—they have been half starving all Spring. They wear rags. They have it little better than beggars, but their spirits are not low—they have plenty of patience and their dreams are rich. Although their debts keep mounting they think, in their simplicity: as soon as the flowers of the silk-weaving cocoon will blossom everything will be alright. They imagine to themselves the shining green leaves of the mulberry turning to snow-white cocoons in a month, and then—into jingling coins. Their stomachs growl with hunger, but they cannot keep from laughing.

Dun-Bao's daughter-in-law is one of these women. Sy-Da-nian has her ten year old Siao-Bao near her. Mother and son, having washed the sieves, are resting on a stone near the pond. She wipes the perspiration from her face with the hem of her robe.

"Sy-Da-nian is also raising the oversea's sort now?" a twenty year old girl on the other side of the pond cries out. That is Lu-Bao, the younger sister of Lu-Fu-chin whose house is close to theirs near the pond. Sy-Da-nian wrinkles her heavy brows into a frown for a moment as she recognizes the girl and shouts back as if beginning a quarrel:

"Don't ask! Father is the boss! Siao-Bao's grandfather won't go in for that if you kill him, so we only took one sheet of the oversea's sort! The old bull-head—when he hears the word overseas—it is just as if he would spy a mortal enemy of the seventh generation. The dollar is also from overseas—but catch him refuse that!"

The women at the edge of the pond laugh when they hear this. At this moment a strong lad comes walking from Lu's rice fields towards the other shore of the pond. He comes over to the pond and crosses the bridge knocked together from four logs. Noticing him Sy-Da-nian stops talking about oversea's worms and shouts to him:

"Brother Do-do come help us carry this stuff. These sieves are wet and heavy like dead dogs."

The lad comes over and, without saying a word, picks up five of the sieves, puts them on his head and walks away reeling a little, balancing himself with his empty hands. When this lad Do-do feels good he can do all sorts of things. If the women tell him to carry some heavy things or dive into the pond to fish up something that has been lost there, he does it. Today he wasn't feeling so good that's why he only put five of the sieves on his head and didn't take anything in his hands. The women look at the pyramid of sieves on his head like some strange hat and the way he walks shaking his hips imitating the school girls and they again burst out in laughter. Dun-Bao's near neighbor, He-Hu-a, the wife of Li-Chen-shen turns her head, laughing:

"Eh, Do-do! Come back! Take some of my things too!"

"Call me something tender and I'll carry your things too," Do-do answers laughingly and walks on. In a jiffy he had reached the hut and, taking off the sieves, put them on the door sill.

"Then I'll call you step-child," He-Hu-a shouted still laughing. She has an exceptionally pale, disfiguringly-flat face. One could think this face consisted only of a large mouth and two slits of narrow eyes. She had been a slave and it is less than six months since she was given in marriage to Li-Chen-shen, a silent, emaciated, always sombre, semi-old man and her flirting with the men folks had become the talk of the village.

"Hussy!" some woman on the other shore said in a half-whisper. He-Hu-a's pig eyes grew wide as she shouted angrily:

"Whom are you calling names? I dare you to do it to my eyes, what are you hiding for?"

"What business is it of yours, when one kicks a casket only the dead one in it feels it, and I am calling the right name."

Names flew over the pond. That was Lu-Bao and another sly girl known by the whole village. Then they began to splash water at one another, mischief makers mixed in egging on now one side, now the other; the children laughed themselves to tears. Sy-Da-nian, like a modest woman, picked up her little Tsan-da and calling Siao-Bao, went home. A-do stands at the door and laughs. He knows whom Lu-Bao and He-Hu-a are quarrelling about. He sees them pitch into the poisonous Lu-Bao and feels happy. Dun-Bao brings a triangular little ladder out of Tsan-tay's house. It is worm eaten in places

and he is afraid it is not very sound any more, should be repaired. Seeing A-do smiling as he watches the women quarrel, Dun-Bao's face darkens. His younger son Do-Do is a shameless lad, he knows it. He is particularly grieved that Do-do is exchanging smiles with neighbor He-Hu-a. Yes, "This bitch—she is of the constellation of the white tiger," and anyone having to do with her is inviting trouble to his house. And how often Dun-Bao has warned his youngest:

"A-do, what are you gazing at empty-handed? A-sy is preparing the cho-for the cocoons in the backyard—go and help him!"

Dun-Bao barks at his son like a mad dog, his fiery eyes look straight at A-do. Only, after A-do goes inside does Dun-Bao pick up the ladder again and, inspecting it closely, begin to mend it. The carpenter trade Dun-Bao has learned long ago, but he has grown weak, is not what he was. After fussing a little with the ladder he looks up, panting, at the three sheets hanging from bamboo poles in the house.

Sy-Da-nian in the doorway is pasting paper about the Tan-tsa.[1] Last year, trying to save a few pennies, they had bought some old newspapers for this purpose. Dun-Bao is still grumbling:

"There you see, using newspapers, no respect for learning, that's why the cocoons came out so bad." This year the whole family ate one meal less and for the money special paper was bought for this purpose. Sy-Da-nian made a smooth job of pasting the stiff yellow paper about the Tan-tsa. Then she pasted on three pictures bought together with the paper, two a little lower, one high. On one a horn of plenty and on the others a horseman with a spear were printed. It is said that is the patron of the silk worm.

"Sy-Da-nian, by your father's help I borrowed thirty dollars but I only got twenty dan[2] of leaves for it. They will be eaten up in a couple of days, and then what?"

Dun-Bao, panting, raises his head, stopping his work and looks at Sy-Da-nian. Those thirty dollars were gotten at the rate of two and a half percent a month and then only thanks to the intercession of Tsan-Tsai-fa, Sy-Da-nian's father. The creditor, her father's boss, agreed to two and a half percent only out of goodness of heart. Payment of the loan with interest falls due when the cocoons are harvested.

Sy-Da-nian sets the Tan-tsa out to dry in the sun and answers angrily:

"All spent on leaves. . . And again there will be leaves left like last year."

"What are you talking about? What are you foreboding evil for? 'Always like last year.' We have three sheets and will ten dan of leaves be enough for that?"

"He. . . You are always in the right . . . I only know one thing: if there is rice I cook a meal, if there isn't we shall go hungry."

On account of the oversea's sort she is always quarrelling with her father-in-law these days. Dun-Bao gets purple with rage and they both stop talking.

The time of gathering the hatched worms is getting closer from day to day. The village of thirty houses feels tense and is determined. It is ready to struggle and full of high hope. People forget their hungry stomachs.. Dun-Bao's family borrows money right and left living on pumpkin and potatoes. Thus the days pass not only for Dun-Bao. Who in the village has any reserves of rice? Although last year's harvest was really good, the landlord, the usurer,

[1] Tan-tsa—a hexagonal network pyramid into which the worms are collected as they hatch out of the eggs.

[2] Dan—sixty kilograms.

the government tax, the local imports took off one skin after another and nothing was left of the harvest. Now the only hope left is the Spring silk.

The Kuii[1] days are coming closer. The mulberry leaves are barely showing green in the thirty yards of the village. When the women meet in the rice fields they tell one another with joy and anxiety in their voices:

"Lu-Bao is beginning to set out the sheets. He-Hu-a says they will begin tomorrow. Isn't that quick?"

The Taoist[2] priest, Huan, foretold from the reading of hieroglyphics that green leaves this year will rise to four dollars. Sy-Da-nian observes her three sheets. Something is wrong. The black dots are still black like poppy seeds and there is not a trace of green. Her husband, A-sy, takes up the sheet and looks at it in the sunlight but there is not a sign of green. Sy-Da-nian is very much troubled.

"Begin to set them out this way—that's a Yuban sort, perhaps the worms will hatch a little later."

A-sy pretends to be unworried. Sy-Da-nian purses her lips and does not say anything.

Dun-Bao's long dry wrinkled face is sad. He says nothing feeling something untoward in his heart.

Happinesss came a day later when Sy-Da-nian picked up the sheets. Aha—it got green in several places and it is a light green. Sy-Da-nian told her husband about it immediately, told Dun-Bao, Do-do and the young son Siao-Bao. She took the three sheets, put them on her bare body under her breasts as a mother puts a suckling babe and sat down quietly without moving. She sleeps with these sheets about her at night. She made A-sy go to sleep with Do-do. The thickly speckled sheets are close to the body making it itch. Sy-Da-nian feels happy and apprehensive. When she got pregnant for the first time and felt the child under her heart she experienced the same sort of anxiety and joy.

The entire family except Do-do is all agog waiting to collect the worms. Do-do says:

"The cocoons are bound to be good ones this year. But this does not mean that we shall get rich."

Dun-Bao scolds him for empty chatter but he keeps on.

The place for the caterpillars has been prepared long ago. On the second day of the worm hatching Dun-Bao took a big head of garlic, covered it with clay and buried it in the corner of the rearing-house. This rite is repeated every year and this year Dun-Bao performs it with particular faith so that his fingers even tremble. The omen last year was very correct but the old man is afraid even to think of that.

Now all the families in the village are hatching the worms. Women have disappeared from the rice fields and from about the pond—as if a "state of siege" had imperceptibly come into force. Even old cronies stopped visiting each other. People and visitors may cast an evil eye on the spirit of the worms—that's no playing matter! In extreme cases people exchanged a few words across a rice field and went their way. These are the holy days:

[1] Kuii—festival days falling in the second half of March according to the Chinese calendar (April 20, new style). According to the belief of the villagers silk worm harvesting must not be done on that day but either before or after.

[2] Taoism—one of the three official Chinese religions. Its founder Lao-tse was presumably born 604 B.C. Taoism is the more "popular" of Chinese religions, resting itself mainly on the multitude of superstitions and ignorance of the plowman. The Taoist priests occupy themselves principally with spirit communication, fortune telling, "chasing out the devil," etc.

The black brood began to stir on the three sheets and the atmosphere in the house became tense. It is exactly a day before Kuii. Sy-Da-nian thinks, "The day of Kuii can be left out—the sheets don't have to be hatched any longer." She puts them carefully into the rearing house. Dun-Bao looks at the garlic in the corner. His heart gives a twinge—there are only two shoots. He could not look any closer, and only prayed silently that the day after tomorrow at noon there should be a good many green shoots.

At last the day for gathering the worms has arrived. Sy-Da-nian washes rice, cooks the gruel and watches the pot anxiously—how will the stream of steam come out? Old Dun-Bao has devotedly placed joss sticks and candles before the images of the spirits of the hearth. A-sy and Do-do went to gather field flowers. Siao-Bao helps cut up the wick-grass and flowers into shreds. When all is ready the sun is already at high noon and the steam bursts out of the pot in a column. Sy-Da-nian jumped up mechanically, put a paper flower and a couple of goose feathers in her hair and went into the rearing-house. The old man took the scales, A-sy, the cut-up flowers and grass. Sy-Da-nian opened up a sheet, took some grass and flowers from A-sy's hands and sprinkled it over the sheet, took the scales from Dun-Bao and set the sheets on it and with a feather from her hair carefully swept the brood together with the flower petals and grass into the Tan-tsa. One sheet, the next sheet. . .and the last sheet—the oversea's sort, into a separate Tan-tsa. Finally Sy-Da-nian took the paper silk worm flower from her hair and together with the feathers fixed them to the edge of the Tan-tsa.

This rite is thousands of years old, and is as holy as the oath taken by an army before the march. Then begins the thirty day ceaseless battle day and night with the weather, with evil fate and unknown influences.

The black brood crawls about the Tan-tsa. It looks healthy. Its blackness develops regularly.

Sy-Da-nian, Dun-Bao—all breathed more easily, felt reassured, only old Dun-Bao would come in secret to inspect the garlic and his face would change—only three-four shoots! O, ye gods! Is it possible it will be like last year again!

III

The garlic omen of fate did not prove right this time. Dun-Bao's worms were good ones. True, during the first and second moulting periods there were constant rains, the weather was colder than during the days of Chi-min, but these bao-bao (worms) were evidently very sturdy ones.

The bao-bao in other families are also not bad. A tense joy permeates the village. The gurgling of the water in the pond sounds like laughter. An exception is the family of He-Hu-a, they had only one sheet. At the moment of "flare" [1] it weighed only twenty tin.[2] People had seen the silent, sad Ken-shen throw out three Tan-tsas of bad worms into the pond just before the great moulting.

On account of this all the women folk in the village declared themselves in a "state of siege" with respect to the family of He-Hu-a: they purposely picked round about ways so as to avoid passing the door of He-Hu-a. On the mere appearance of the woman's or her husband's shadow people hastily

[1] Flare—the third stage of the puppa when the lethargy is of very short duration.
[2] Tin—1¼ pounds.

sought cover. These happy folk were afraid of being infected with her misfortune by a mere look or the exchange of a word with her.

Dun-Bao categorically prohibited Do-do from talking to He-Hu-a.

"You allow yourself to talk to this wretch. I shall lodge a complaint against you in court for insubordination!" Dun-Bao shouts this very loud purposely so that He-Hu-a should hear.

Little Siao-Bao also got strict orders not to go near He-Hu-a and not to talk to them.

A-do, as if he were deaf, pays no attention to the old man's grumbling day and night, and laughs in his sleeve. Out of the entire family he alone does not believe in all this deviltry. But he does not talk to He-Hu-a because he is all absorbed in work.

During the great moulting the silk worms weigh about 300 tin. Dun-Bao's entire family ,including the ten year old Siao-Bao did not close an eye for two whole days. The caterpillars are of a rare quality. For all his sixty years Dun-Bao remembers such caterpillars only twice: the first time the year he was married, the second time, the year A-sy was born. The very first day after moulting the bao-bao consumed seven dan of leaves. Every worm is green, round, healthy—but Dun-Bao's family has grown correspondingly thinner. Little red veins have covered the whites of their sleepless eyes.

Before the "bao-bao crawl up the mountain" it is easy to figure out how many leaves they must eat. Old Dun-Bao consults his son A-sy.

"There is no hope of getting a loan from young master Chen, we'll have to ask Tsai-fu's boss again!"

A-sy answers that he can't hold out any longer—his eyelids are heavy as if they weighed several hundred tin, they drag downward. The old man waxes angry and cries:

"What sleepy talk is this! The caterpillars have to eat only another two days! That is without tomorrow. Altogether three days. Thirty dan of leaves yet, thirty dan!"

At this moment a human roar is heard suddenly outside on the rice field. The conversation between Dun-Bao and A-sy is cut short. Everyone goes out to tear leaves from the twigs. Sy-Da-nian comes running rapidly from the hatchery. The Lu family from the other side of the pond had raised very few worms so Lu-Bao came over to help in a free moment.

Evening. . .The sky is full of brilliant stars. A light breeze is blowng. Broken calls and laughter are heard all over the village.

A rough voice stands out:

"The price of leaves jumped up a lot—this morning at the town a dan was four dollars.

Dun-Bao had to hear this. He got terribly excited:

"Four dollars the dan. . .For thirty dan a hundred and twenty dollars are needed. Where can one get such a sum? But one can harvest five hundred tin of cocoons and get fifty dollars a hundred tin and that will bring two hundred fifty dollars,—" and he was a little easier at heart.

A weak voice rose from among those busy stripping leaves:

"It is said they did not have much luck with worm raising in the East. The price of leaves will hardly rise much."

Dun-Bao recognized the voice of Lu-Bao. This eased his heart even more.

Lu-Bao was working at the end of the basket together with A-do. In the dark she was very close to A-do. Suddenly she felt someone's hand under the twigs pinch her hip. She knew who it was that pinched her, but she kept

quiet—she neither laughed nor cried out. After a minute she felt the same hand under her breasts and screamed:

"Ay—ay!"

"What's the matter?" asked Sy-Da-nian who was standing right near also stripping leaves as she raised her head. Lu-Bao blushed, she looked reproachfully at A-do from the corner of her eyes and keeping on tearing leaves, lowered her head as she answered:

"Nothing. I suppose a caterpillar bit me."

A-do laughs to himself biting his lips. Although he has been starving for several weeks, slept little and got very lean, he has a cheerful look. He never has had that sad feeling which Dun-Bao always has. A-do does not believe that one harvest of silk worms or one harvest of the fields will permit them to pay off the debts and acquire their own land. He knows that by working diligently only, even if you break your back, you cannot straighten things out. But he nevertheless works gaily and finds as much joy in it as in the playing about with Lu-Bao.

Next morning Dun-Bao went down to borrow money for leaves. Before leaving they had agreed with Sy-Da-nian to mortgage the mulberry grove which gives fifteen dan of leaves. That was all they had left.

They bought the thirty dan of leaves. When the first ten dan were brought the bao-bao had already gone hungry for half an hour and were twisting their heads right and left with proboscis out. Sy-Da-nian's heart hurt. As soon as the leaves were spread out the hatchery was filled with the sa-sa sound which drowned the human voice. When the sieves emptied another thick layer was put down. The people hurried, did not have time to rest, as they spread the leaves. But these are the last minutes. Two days more and the bao-bao will "crawl up the mountain." People squeezed their last ounce of strength out of themselves in heartbreaking toil.

A-do had not slept for five days, but he shows no signs of weariness. That night he took care of the rearing-house by himself the first half of the night so that old Dun-Bao and A-sy with his wife could sleep a little. The moon shone and it was slightly chilly. A small fire burned in the rearing-house. A-do stood watch till deep into the night. After spreading leaves for the worms the second time he squatted on his haunches near the fire listening to the noise of the worms eating the leaves. His eyelids began to lower. Hearing a faint squeak of the door A-do started. He looked about and again closed his eyes. The soothing sound of the leaves being eaten stayed in his ears. Suddenly his head fell forward and hit his knees. He awoke and at that moment heard the reed screen in the door open and saw a human figure flash by. A-do jumped up and ran out. The door was open. Under the clear light of the moon someone was making for the pond. A-do swooped down on the figure like a hawk and before seeing who it was threw it to the ground. He was sure it was a thief.

"Do-do, kill me, I shall not complain against you, only don't make so much noise!"

It was the voice of He-Hu-a. A-do's hair rose. In the moonlight he saw a pair of pig eyes on a monstrously flat face and eyes were looking at him. But there was no fear in those eyes. A-do cried out:

"What did you steal?"

"I stole your bao-bao."

"What did you do with them?"

"I threw them in the pond."

A-do's face changed. He understood the evil design of the woman, to cast an evil eye on the bao-bao.

"You are a regular snake! We had no quarrel with you."

"No? I should say, yes. Suppose our cocoons are no good, whom did we harm by it? You all have good ones. Why do you all look at me like a white tiger? You turn away from afar when you see me. You don't think me human!"

Speaking this way, she rose. Her face was horrible. A-do looked at her long and then said:

"I shan't hit you, go your way."

A-do ran back home to watch the hatchery without looking back. His sleepiness was gone. He looked at the bao-bao—they were good. He felt neither hatred nor pity for He-Hu-a, but her words he could not forget. He was thinking—why is it they can't live in peace, but he couldn't get it clear in his mind what the trouble was. In another minute he had forgotten all about it. The bao-bao were strong, they kept on eating and eating and never had enough as if they were charmed. All was well. . .

When white streaks began to show in the East, Dun-Bao and Sy-Da-nian relieved A-do. They looked in the light at the bao-bao that were beginning to get gradually white and pinkish. The heart was clamped with joy. When the sun rose from behind the mountains Sy-Da-nian went to the pond for water. Lu-Bao came up and with a very serious face said softly:

"Last night after midnight I saw that poisonous creature run out of your house. A-do ran after her. They stood and talked for a long time. Sy-Da-nian what are you staring at me for?"

Sy-Da-nian's face changed color. Without saying a word she picked up the pail and went home. At first she told her husband, then Dun-Bao. This creature got so low that she breaks into other people's rearing-houses. Can that be tolerated? Dun-Bao stamped his foot and called A-do at once for questioning. A-do would not confess and said that Lu-Bao saw a bad dream. Lu-Bao insisted it was no dream. Dun-Bao did not know what to do. He went home, looked at the bao-bao, they looked as healthy as ever, one could not tell anything bad by them.

The fullness of their joy was disturbed by this incident. They believed that Lu-Bao's words were lacking in a foundation. Their only hope was: maybe the creature had only played with A-do at the entrance.

"But the garlic only showed four shoots!"

Dun-Bao feels that the future is dark as he thinks all this over. They had eaten an enormous amount of leaves. True, everything was going well so far, but when they begin to "climb the mountain" they might burst. That happens. But the old man cannot bear to think of this: it is sinful to hold such thoughts in one's head.

IV

All the bao-bao have "climbed the mountain," but disquiet still throws the Dun-Bao family into a sweat. They spent all their money, exhausted all their energy, but there is still no certainty of reward. They keep on working persistently. A light burns under the plaited roof covering the cocoons. Dun-Bao and A-sy crawl around the cocoonery on their toes with bent backs. They can't help laughing joyously when they hear a noise inside. After a

while it is quiet again in the cocoonery. The heart is disquieted. They do not dare look inside. The yellow secretion[1] of the worms suddenly drips on their heads. That is unpleasant, but brings joy. They wish it to drip more.

In secret A-do had already opened the reed curtain and looked in. Little Siao-Bao spied him and asked catching A-do's robe:

"Did the bao-bao turn into cocoons yet?"

A-do makes a face at him, sticks out his tongue and doesn't answer. Three days after "climbing the mountain" the light was put out. Sy-Da-nian could also bear it no longer, opened an edge of the curtain and looked in. Her heart began to beat wildly. White snow inside, even the walls of the cocoonery are covered with it, fine "silk worm flowers"—such as Sy-Da-nian had never seen before. Happiness at once took possession of the Dun-Bao family. Hearts were calm. The bao-bao did not fool them, did not eat so many leaves at four dollars the dan in vain. The heavens see all.

All over the village such happiness reigns. The goddess of silk worm flowers had taken under her protection the little village of thirty families—the harvest will be seven or eight-fold. The Dun-Bao family is ahead of all and they are figuring on a twelve-fold harvest.

The women and children are again to be seen at the pond. They have all grown very thin during this month, their eyes sunken, their voices weak, hoarse, but all animated. When they talk noisily of the thirty day struggle they often see before their eyes heaps of snow-white coins. Their calculations are happy ones: the summer and fall clothes are all at the pawn shop, that must be attended to first. And maybe one will be able to afford some yellow fish for the Tuan-yang holidays.

The night escapade of He-Hu-a with Do-do is also the subject of talk in the village. Lu-Bao spreads the news that He-Hu-a is shameless, she goes to the houses herself. The men folk laugh rudely when they hear it and the women sigh: "Holy Buddha," scold and say:

"Those Dun-Baos are lucky, no evil eye takes them. They have the protection of Buddha! Wonder of the elders!"

Then every family "listens to the cocoonery." Relations and friends come visiting congratulating on the harvest. Dun-Bao's kinsman Chjan-Tsai-fa with his younger son A-diu bring presents from town—cakes and noodles, fruits and salt fish. Little Siao-Bao is as happy as a young puppy at the first snowfall.

"Will you sell your cocoons, Dun-Bao, or reel the silk yourself?"

Old Chjan draws Dun-Bao to the pond with him and, sitting down under a willow tree, begins to talk to him softly. Old Chjan is well known as a jester. At the square in front of the temple of the town patron he had heard all kinds of things from the story tellers. He knows many of the tales by heart: how the rebel duke fought on eighteen fronts; how smoke and dust rise to heaven in seventy-two places and so on. He is a jester—Dun-Bao knows it, which is why he answers his questions carelessly:

"Of course I'll sell."

Chjan sighs, slapping his knee. Then he rises and points at the blank wall of the silk mill at the edge of the village beyond the leafless mulberry grove.

"Dun-Bao, the cocoons have been harvested, but the silk mill is tightly closed. This year the mill will not open its scales. The rebel duke on eighteen fronts has long been born again. Only Lis-men has not shown himself in

[1] Yellow secretion—before opening the cocoon, the silk worms exude a yellow secretion.

the world. The world is quiet. The silk mills are closed this year and will not work."

Dun-Bao could not restrain himself from laughing. How could he believe it? How is it possible for all the mills to be closed at once, stop working, when there are mills every few steps, more quickly than outhouses in the village? What's more, there is a rumor that they have come to an understanding with the Eastern oversea's people, so they will not make war and the troops which were there are already gone.

Chjan also changed the subject, jumping from one thing to another, telling the town news, sprinkling the conversation with various cock and bull stories heard from the street story tellers. Towards the end of the conversation he reminded Dun-Bao of the debt in the name of his boss—as he is the intermediary.

Old Dun-Bao was disquieted however. He hastened to the edge of the village, looked at the nearest factory that stands at the edge of Tan-lu—the gates were really shut tight, and not even a shadow of a person was to be seen. In other years about this time the shining scales were long before arranged in rows on the open counters.

Dun-Bao became uneasy, but when he got home and saw the white shining solid cocoons people will not buy? No—he can't believe that.
And such cocoons people will not buy? No—

He hurries the harvesting of the cocoons, one should thank God; imperceptibly the thought of the silk mills flies out of his head.

But the atmosphere in the village changes from day to day. People have only barely had a chance to smile when again dark clouds cover their faces. Rumors that silk mills are closed everywhere come from town, come from Tan-lu. Previously about this time the cocoon buyer would run about the village like a shadow on the screen of a magic lantern. This year there is no buyer, and instead, creditors and tax collectors swarm. When they are asked to take cocoons in payment they turn their eyes away and don't want to hear about it.

Curses and sighs of disillusionment fill the village. People can't imagine at all how it is that with such a harvest their lives should get worse than in other years. It is like thunder out of a clear sky to them. The more they resemble the Dun-Bao family, the more worms they have raised, the bigger the harvest, so much the harder is their lot! The world has really changed! Dun-Bao beats his chest, stamps his feet, does not know what to do. The cocoons cannot lie for long, something must be done quickly; since they cannot be sold they must reel the silk themselves. Many families in the village have already brought out and put in repair the long unused silk reeling looms. They will unreel the cocoons themselves and then there may be some change. The Lu-Bao family is preparing to do likewise. Dun-Bao confers with his daughter-in-law:

"We'll not sell the cocoons, we'll reel the silk ourselves. Selling cocoons is an oversea's trick."

"We have more than 500 tin of cocoons, how many looms will we need!" Sy-Da-nian objects. She is right—500 tin of cocoons is a great deal. To reel it all oneself is too much, and to hire somebody means money. A-sy is of the same opinion as his wife. A-do complains that the old man was wrong from the start:

"If you had listened to me you would have raised just one sheet of the

oversea's sort on the fifteen dan of our own leaves and everything would have been well with us."

The old man was so angry he could not bring out a word.

In the end a new ray of hope appeared. A countryman of the Taoist priest brought the news that the silk mill near U-Sy is buying cocoons as before. The Taoist priest Huan is a peasant, he is not of those who will fool the whole region. He and Dun-Bao have always understood each other. After getting all the details from Huan the old man conferred with A-sy whether it would not be best to take the cocoons to U-Sy and sell them there. Making a serious face he shouts as if quarreling:

"By water it is thirty times nine li! There and back will take six days! That's like going into exile! But what else can you propose?" and he cursed rudely. "You can't eat the cocoons and besides the creditors demand that we pay what we have borrowed to feed the caterpillars.

A-sy consented. They borrowed a boat, bought a few reed mats. The weather happened to be good. They took along A-do and set out on the long journey.

In five days they returned, but did not let go the boat. One basket of cocoons was still in the boat. It developed that the silk mill—that same mill that is thirty times nine li away, was terribly exacting. Every dan of oversea's cocoons they priced at thirty-five dollars and the native ones at twenty. Thin cocoons they didn't take at all. The rest of Dun-Bao's cocoons which did not make up a full basket they wouldn't take although they were the best of the lot. They only succeeded in selling 11 dollars worth. After meeting the expenses of the trip only 100 dollars were left, not enough to pay back what was borrowed to buy leaves. The old man got sick on the road from aggravation. The sons helped him to the house.

They brought with them eighty tin of cocoons and Sy-Da-nian had to unreel them herself. She borrowed a loom from Lu-Bao and worked continuously for five days. The family again consumed their entire stock of rice. They sent A-sy to town to sell the silk but no one would buy it. He went to the pawn shop—there they would not take it either. Only after long persuasion was it possible to sell it for one dan of rice.

And the mulberry grove which yields fifteen dan of leaves was lost. Just as the thirty dollars borrowed on it were lost.

Egon Erwin Kisch

Bath in Healing Waters

A Noted Reporter Sees the Church in Action

I wanted to fetch my bathing suit and a towel as I left the house. It was good I did not.

The holy bath-house is right near the Masabille grotto where, in the year of our Lord 1858, Mary, mother of God appeared eighteen times to a young girl of fourteen, as is known from her own mouth.

The third time Mary said: "Come to this spring to drink and to wash yourself." With this she pointed to a corner where a spring played. This is the way it is told in the book of legends. And millions of the well and the sick make their pilgrimage to Lourdes to drink this water and to wash in it.

For the harder cases this is not enough. They must also bathe in the holy water. For them there is place in a triple pavillion. One each for the women, for children and for men. I wanted to take along a bathing suit and towel when I left the house. It was well I did not. For a visit to this holy bathing establishment is by no means like a visit to any other. One cannot simply go in, buy a ticket, be shown to a booth and get into a freshly filled tub or step into a basin, let oneself be massaged, dried—nothing of the kind.

The one who hopes for the holy, healing waters to take away all the ills from his body, must first of all learn to be patient. The foremost bathing prescription here is the proverb: "To hope and to wait, is. . . ."

One waits in a yard which is separated from the path to the grotto by a fence. At the entrance there are men with belts to help transfer the sick from stretchers to wheeled carriers. These wheeled carriers, iron boards on wheels, belong to the miracle-healery and are decorated with thanksgiving tablets.

For those that come on foot there are three rows of benches. When one party leaves another one enters and the public on the benches move up. For the present we are not yet advanced to this stage. First come the pilgrims in the narrower sense of the word, that is those that come from afar. There is a continuous stream of newcomers. The yard is full. Not another wheeled carrier or any carrier could get in.

On the other side of the fence the army of pilgrims marches to the grotto. From all corners of Catholicism they come and march, regiments from far and near, in habits of all lands and ranks, shawls and hats, top hats and fur caps. Before them, among them and behind them, holy males and females dart about. These are the corps of officers and subalterns of this army which they serve with cult for culture, slights for enlightenment, promise miracles instead of attempting to help. For eighty years this march has continued.

An endless army of volunteers and converts that get no pay but themselves pay. They are the ones that built the Basilica of gold and marble on the hill, they paid for another one at the foot of the first, for mosaics and statues and

chapels and a gold crown ten meters in diameter, they covered the costs of a third church under the second, of a great dome, they paid for the via triumphalis, the park, a bishop's palace, the rectory and the panorama of the Passion with its monstrous bronzes. The fortunes of entire peoples were used up and put into structures at Lourdes, and still more money goes to Rome via Lourdes. Here is a veritable miracle, to be sure.

The army of pilgrims passed before us, campstool under arm, crown of roses and prayer-book in hand, the emblem of the particular pilgrimage group on the breast. They all looked at us for whom the prayer in the grotto and the drink from the fount do not suffice but who need a complete bath for relief from our pains. Many stop to look—perhaps someone will come out waving his crutches, tearing off his false limbs crying, "I am cured, I am cured!" and hear the shout of the people *"un miracle,* a miracle!"

Three padres here in the yard keep praying for such a miracle. The one in the middle, bareheaded, is the preacher, an orator of great parts. He addresses the crowd at the fence. The suffering of others is no spectacle. It is the duty of all that pass to join in prayer that the Virgin may descend and accomplish the miracle of grace. Then he lets his two colleagues, repeat the credo, the Gloria, the Paternoster, the English salutation. The crowd speaks the chorus.

On the other side of the fence the relatives of the bathers or of those waiting to bathe, join in prayer with more passion than the other pilgrims. (For me also someone was waiting there to tell me afterwards that a German couple passed by and said: "Look, the second one on the second bench—looks like Kisch to me."—"That's just like him.")

At the feet of the priests the sick moan and whimper with prayerful moans and whimpered prayers, if not an altogether shouting, commanding prayer. A child cries incessantly, louder than all of them. Its wheel chair stands right near the priest in the center, near the one that speaks so ably and affectingly about the mercy of God and the duty of kindness without, being in the least disturbed by the desparate shrieking of the child. As it infringes upon the pious mood, however, one of the porters wheels the chair out of the yard.

Louder than the shouting ones are the silent ones, their white eyes see nothing. Stretchers are carried by on which only bundles of sheets and covers can be seen and there seems to be nothing there but those sheets and covers. But there must be people inside these bundles. Are they alive yet?

I wanted to fetch a bathing suit and towel! What a grotesque idea to bring such earthly utensils into a world where the dying are carried about and the dead bathe while the public waits for the water to call them back to life.

We that come on foot have already been waiting for two hours and still the stretchers are coming from the bath-house. Those that whimpered before, whimper still, those that moaned keep moaning, no color has come to the deathly pale faces, no meaning has entered the vacant eyes staring at vacancy. Lips move tremblingly and nothing moves in the bundles on the stretchers. Relatives of the sick rush at them, call and look at them searchingly, hopefully. Nothing. . . .

But everything is not yet lost. In front of the grotto the Holy Virgin may still descend in grace to the sufferers who obey her command and come from far to drink of this water and wash in it. So after the bath the sick one is brought to the holy rock, the porters pray loudly, relatives follow the stretcher praying.

We that are still waiting for the bath, cannot see the grotto which is around the corner about fifty steps away, but were a miracle to happen we should hear the shout of joy of the healed and the echo of the crowd.

But we hear nothing.

Those that come on foot and sit waiting now move up one seat. Soon we shall advance from the waiting room of the Mother of God to her Ordination chamber. My neighbor on the left stays at the same hotel with me. He is a treasury official in Paris. Last evening we played chess with him. He suffers from a crooked spine since birth, his body bends almost 45 degrees to the right and no specialist has ever been able to help him. So he decided to try Lourdes. It is for the sake of the ladies, he confessed to me yesterday, one looks so ridiculous to them this way.

For the long-legged Irishman I served as interpreter on the train. Now he keeps looking over at me. It seems he wants to ask me something but lets it be, this is no time for conversation.

My third acquaintance walked alongside me bravely on his crutches on Sunday in the procession to which half of Portugal with the arch-bishop and all the bishops came. It was one of the evening processions of Lourdes and the equipment used is very refined and costly. They gathered in front of the grotto. A branch in the rock fissure moved, perhaps it was only the uncertain light of the candles, then again it may have been due to the murmur of many thousands of voices.

With the sounding of the bells the pilgrims lit the torches, formed in ranks and raised their voices in the *Ave Maria.* The refrain had hardly been finished when it was echoed from the top of the rock wall like a chorus of angels. The church singers of Lourdes were posted there. As we turned the corner and the dome came in sight its contours became illumined as if inflamed by the singing. Doors and bowers and windows and rosettes glowed under light clusters. The bells sang

Ave,
Ave,
Ave Maria,

and the column of flames and voices ascended the ramp. At the feet of the Mother of God a rosebush was burning. At her head, the crown was aflame. Loudspeakers threw back the song at us and the column of flames and voices descended the other side of the ramp.

The bishops stood before the Church of the Rose-garland and the snakeline of the procession wound its way towards them through the vast square. A chorus director on the stairway conducted by turns the church chorus and the singing of the crowd. The *Ave Maria* was followed by the Credo and the Portuguese arch-bishop with his bishops distributed blessings to the kneeling crowd repeating the sign of the cross.

The man that was now waiting alongside me for the bath had hopped along on his crutches all the way. His crutches clamped tight under his arms he held the songbook in his hands and not satisfied with joining in the refrain of *Ave, Ave Maria,* he threw all the verses at the crowd in his clear baritone voice. From time to time he would glance at me walking alongside him with a look as if begging recognition—now he does not look at me. Here there are no neighbors only oneself. Hoping and waiting is an absorbing activity.

At last my turn comes. A curtain bearing the initials of Notre Dame des Lourdes opens and together with three others I enter a small chamber. The

flagstone floor is wet and filthy. Sitting on a bench we take off our clothes. Near me a man who has had his bath seems unable to help himself on with his clothes. His body twitches in spasms, his hands cannot manage the buttons. A menial is helping him.

There are three basins in the floor, but only the middle one is filled with water. One of the bath attendants, a stately man with a hawk-nose looks more like an Alpine game-warden. His younger assistant, more worldly, tells us to take off everything except our shirts. The tall Irishman turns to me. "What did he say?" Before I could translate the directions the bath attendant himself repeated them in English. Will we enter the water wearing our shirts? I should perhaps have taken the bathing suit and towel along after all?

Over the basin there are two copper faucets, but they are shut tight. I must get into this stale water in which all the sick, maybe leprous, the clean and unclean have bathed today (at least today) those on stretchers, on wheelchairs and those that come on foot, into this water I must now sink my body.

The spring in the grotto has a debit of 122 hectoliters a day. Thousands drink it daily and fill their campflasks with it. In addition the holy water is shipped to all parts of the world. Charges have long been current that the miracle-cure guests are served with the water of the river Gave de Pan instead of that from the holy spring. The church-officials, however, declare the excess water comes from the reservoir at the church of the Rose-garland at the entrance to which hangs the sign: *"Entrée formellement interdite."*

With all respect to the reservoir—it is nevertheless difficult to believe there is enough to change the water in the basin after every bath. So the water remains and we must all lave in it, the well and the unwell, the clean and the unclean. Those suffering of infectuous diseases, broken out skins are supposed to be admitted only at the end of the day while the tubercular and those with heart diseases are not allowed to bathe altogether. But that is true of those brought here from hospitals. Those that come direct undergo no inspection. I was not inspected by anyone.

Medallions glisten on the chests of my neighbors. I was my fault. I should have thought of a medallion instead of a bathing suit and towel. The tall Irishman is the first to approach the basin. Bath attendant game-warden and his worldly assistant approach him from the right and left, but he suddenly utters a loud "No!" and turns away. "No!" His face, his entire body weave an expression of repugnance. It is hard to imagine the profound distaste those two letters "No!" can express.

He stops for a moment, thinks of the fact that he has come from such a distance only to take this bath—should he not overcome his disgust for a moment? "No" he groans in answer to himself. . . "No!" This protest, this "No" has a much more paralysing effect in the little chamber than the shouts of the crowd in the yard.

The Virgin Mary's bath attendants shrug their shoulders. They seemed inured to the last minute attempts of guests to escape and motion for the next approach. That is myself. I come over to the basin in my shirt. I am handed an apron which I wrap around my limbs. It is wet. How many sick have worn it before me, what sick? Oh, my bathing suit, it is home. Now I may take off my shirt—modesty to the last—it is thrown on the stool on which the apron lay.

"Vous êtes Francais?"

"Non, monsieur, je suis Allemand."

"Say the prayer there on the board", the worldly attendant tells me in German and points to one of four posters on the board. At the same moment two pair of arms take a firm grip of me and while the men say the prayer on the right (to the left there is a Spanish, in the center English and French texts) they pull me down three steps into the cold, dreary water and throw me down so that it reaches my mouth. They stand on either side in the empty basins and hold my body down, my chin up, praying with me while I stare at the poster on the right and move my lips.

Blessed be thou, Holy and Immaculately Conceived.
Mother of God in Lourdes. Pray for us!
Have mercy on us, my mother!
Dear Lady of Lourdes, heal us out of your love
And to the glory of the Holy Trinity!
Healer of the sick, pray for us!
Aid of the sick, pray for us!
O Mary that Conceived without Sin, pray for us!
Blessed Bernadette, pray for us!

Then they put me back on my feet. One of them fetches a small figure representing Mary, such as one gets at the stores of Lourdes for one franc. Without giving me time to think of why they do not get a bigger one, say for two francs, he pushes it at my lips. All the sick must kiss this statue after the bath. The two of them help me ascend the steps. One grasps my shirt,—alas, my towel at home, no towel—one dipped in holy water may not be dried, you must understand! The shirt is thrown over me and now that my shame is shamefully covered, they take the apron off.

"No!" murmurs the tall Irishman. His face is still distorted, his lower lip hangs down with disgust, his eyes muster me trying to read whether death or healing will ensue. The "No" becomes softer: His horror gradually abates, and after the other two of our group come out of the water, he lets himself also be dipped in the miraculous water.

Our naked dripping feet step over the floor where we had walked in our shoes before. Wet filth clings to the toes. No towel—holy is holy. Socks over the filth, clothes over the wet garments and out. Many others are waiting. The three priests have already gone. For the lighter cases there is no need of intercession. The crowd at the fence has also dispersed.

We walk towards the grotto. There the final act of the water-ceremony is performed. Patients on the stretchers come to meet us. They are being carried from the grotto back to the place they come from—to the sick-depot, the Hospitalité. Their faces have become still yellower, paler. The bundles do not move at all.

Those that die in the Hospitalité are either taken home by their relatives or buried here at the cemetery—the only public place about which no fuss is made, to which no pilgrims are taken. They might too easily get the impression that the Holy Mary has shown her favorite place a great deal of disfavor. The victims of individual pilgrimages lie there in common graves. And above, on the Passion road, there is a monument to the Catholics of Bourbon, that lost their lives in a train collision on August 1, 1922 while on a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Even the holy grotto has not been spared. A flood in the month of June, 1875 covered it with water, destroyed the altar, the picture of Mary and all the roads to it.

Business Is Business!

At all corners and posts there are warnings: "Watch your pockets!" "Look out for pickpockets!" The church warns you to guard your money for worthier purposes. You may buy a Mass, bear the costs of the Eternal Lamp for nine days, buy blessed candles. These are the terms of absolution.

The all-powerful Mary cannot stop thievery in her own domain, cannot even enforce Sunday among the merchants that make a living from her. The posters asking people to buy only from those that keep closed on Sundays are a mere formality. On Sunday the folk from Pyrenees come down in force and everyone needs something—a torch for the evening procession, a candle for the altar, a picture card for a relative, a psalm-book, a Holy picture to hang on the wall, a medallion as a souvenir, a rose-garland as an offering, a picture of the grotto for the children, a group picture of early Mass one partook of, a blue enamelled flask for a supply of Holy water, votive plates *"Merci à Marie"*, statuettes of Mother Mary in plaster or three-colored prints or statuettes of the Holy Bernadette Soubirous. Hotels, drug-stores must keep open. Also the Moniteur of the Church, the *Journal de la Grotte* must be made up on Sunday.

I crowd into the human chain that presses on to pass the grotto. I am still wet from the bath, the underclothes stick to the skin. A couple of rows ahead is the crooked treasury official, right behind me the tall Irishman, who is probably praying forgiveness for his blasphemous "No". At a separate fenced in place the stretchers stand.

From the vaulted roof crutches hang down like staloctites, the candles rise up to them like stalagmites. The crutches are old and black. The candles new and white or made of colorful flowered wax. To the left the rock is also covered with wooden limbs, leather and plaster corsets, various instruments of torture which modern orthepedic science no longer knows. Were these hung up here because the patients got new ones? Or are they the heritage of those whose suffering the holy Mother Mary assuaged by letting them die in Lourdes?

The almanachs and grotto gazettes, the bulletin of the Medical Society of Our Lady of Lourdes, the sermons of all Catholic christendom assert miraculous cures basing themselves on the thanks giving plates hung all over the walls of the church of Lourdes. But these prove nothing. Many of them are just placards in memory of those fallen in the world-war, others give thanks for the favorable outcome of some affair (one priest gives thanks for his conversion from the Russian-orthodox to the Catholic faith). And if an occasional inscription does refer to a cure it is not one recognized by the church as miraculous since the church only recognizes as miraculous the healing of the incurable!

The church is emphatically opposed to the liberal interpretation that cures are effected by means of suggestion. Several years ago a balneologist made an investigation of the miraculous water in the course of his duties. In order not to rub the church-officials the wrong way by questioning the healing powers of the water altogether he added to his report that it was ordinary water the phrase "the spring possibly contains mineral elements so far undetermined that have a therapeutic effect."

But that did not make a hit with the clergy. First of all the Mother of God has no need of using fluids of therapeutic power, secondly a cure effected by healing waters would not be miraculous and thirdly (and most important!)

upon such a report the municipal authorities have the right to take over the spring of Lourdes.

The matter was finally referred to another official physician who testified without any reservations to the effect that the Lourdes water contained absolutely no active substances of therapeutic power. This satisfied the church. It is just ordinary water that cures cancer and blindness and defects of the spinal column and grows missing limbs back.

The eyes of all supplicants are prayerfully directed at the grotto asking the original of the statue erected there to appear as it did to Bernadette Sourbirous. But not one of the millions of pilgrims had ever been able to see the living Virgin Mary.

The Making of a Saint

Several months ago the brother of Bernadette died. That was her last blood relative. Immediately the canonization of Bernadette was carried out in Rome. Her family was not very prominent in her community. Bernadette's father had permanent quarters in one of the cells of the community prison and as to the daughter herself, seldom have so few good deeds been ascribed to a Saint as to our Bernadette, and only a few of her sayings have come down to us which show her to have been a "beautiful vixen."

How did she happen to have visions? As she with two other children were gathering wood, they came to the grotto Masabielle near a small mill stream. Bernadette did not want to take off her socks and put them on again on account of the couple of steps in water and asked her barefoot companions to carry her across the stream. They had no desire to do this, called her a lazybones and ran ahead. On the way back Bernadette did what children are wont to do in such cases: she teased her companions by telling them that while they were away she had seen something wonderful. The rest was already the work of the priests and the villagers.

In the Bernadette museum there is a death-mask of the historical vicar of Lourdes—a sly fat face. Abbé Peyromale was probably not so fat when the child of his vicarage come upon the Holy Vision, but he was crafty enough.

He never went near the grotto himself but talked things over with Bernadette and with his bishop.

Several years previously the Mother of God had suddenly appeared in the village of La Galette to hold speeches against the spreading ideas of Socialism and strike movements: "If my people will not submit in humility, my Son will draw his protecting hand away from you. . . I have commanded you to work for six days and the seventh is dedicated to God."

These were utterances of a definite position and the political parties reacted accordingly to this interference of the deity in things earthly. The church was worsted in the dispute which ensued. Two shepherd's children, a boy and a girl, were the crown-witnesses to the revelation. In jealousy of each other, however, they contradicted each other as to where the vision came from, where it disappeared to and what it had said. The girl was taken to a convent and the lad, who took to drink and told unpleasant things in the various taverns, was sent to a regiment of Zouaves. Soon thereafter two abbés of the region, P. Deléon and P. Cartellier, were excommunicted and disrobed for some private misdemeanors. These thereupon revealed that the whole thing was a staged comedy and even mentioned the name of the lady that played the role of the Holy Virgin.

There was only one witness in Lourdes—Bernadette—and she had to be made sure of. The Mother of God should by no means talk politics, the recognition of the miracle must be demanded by the populace and the church grant it only "unwillingly".

On Abbé Peyromale's birthday Bernadette was sent to the grotto for the last time. It was the most important meeting with the "Lady".

Pope Pius IX had just finished with an old church dispute with his "Ineffabilis" bull. This established the dogma that Mary was immaculately conceived in the marriage of the Holy Joachin and to the Holy Anna. There were however as yet no places of worship to honor this immaculate conception. It is no wonder therefore that the Vision not only pointed the grotto out as a place for pilgrimages, but also announced itself immaculately conceived. The words "I am she" it said in the Basque dialect so that the Lourdes child may understand, but the next two words could not possibly have been understood by the child. She said: *"Que soy eta immaculada concepcion!"*

After this the child was not to see the Mother of God in the grotto, however much she desired it. The abbé forbade the girl to ever go there again. She was taken to the Nevers convent and even when she fell ill with tuberculosis of the lungs she was not permitted to visit the miraculous spring although there was then as yet no prohibition against tubercular patients visiting it. Bernadette died young with the words: "I am a great sinner" on her lips.

But her discovery flourished. Almost every grotto in the Pyrenee mountains has served as a place of worship either heathen or christian. Why should the Masabielle one not to be so utilized? (Later a prehistoric squarely hewed block was found in it, an altar to Venus!).

The bigotted mountain folk believed from the very beginning that it was more likely that the Mother of God appeared to the child Soubirous than that she saw nothing. So they followed her to the grotto and although they did not see the "lady", they saw Bernadette eat grass with ecstatic motions and moisten herself at the spring. At this sight they made the sign of the cross and went into religious ecstasies while others began to dance and climb the rock walls which proved clearly that they were possessed of the devil who wished to disturb Mary in her house. There was great ado on the holy grounds and it did not help when Bernadette was enclosed in the Nevers convent.

The Tarbes chief of police (the son of this gentleman, Foch, was not even a military student yet,) was compelled to prohibit visits to the grotto but the children of the vicarage of Lourdes and surroundings paid no heed to the prohibition and threw down the barriers erected. Since then those in search of cure and the joy of sacrifices from all the Lord's countries flow towards the miraculous spring.

Step by step the endless chain of humanity makes its way through the grotto. An iron tree serves as chandelier. Thousands of candles are burned. A mighty basket serves as the mailbox for the other world and letters to the Madonna are thrown into it which reach their destination surely by means of burning; at the exit from the cave the toll is paid and the offering post stands there solidly like a crossing gate.

The candles crackle, the wax oozes and the smell of it mingles maddeningly with the smells of incense and sweat, as some of the pilgrims follow the precept not to change their clothes for six weeks before completing their pilgrimage. Monotonously the litanies sound throughout.

Here those that wish to exchange their happiness on Earth for a better lot

in the other world pray and vow to submit to their superiors, regard culture and science as works of the devil and thus hope to attain eternal bliss.

Here it stands, this world. Happy? No, bowed, anxiously prattling, miserable. Their arms are stretched out eagerly to receive the miracle which would not come. Their eyes are wide trying to see what no one has ever seen and no one will ever see. The lips move in a prayer that no one hears. They mail letters which are burned unread.

My undergarments are now quite dry. My way home lies by the Hospitalité. At the gateway the stretchers are stalled, the line of the sick and dying.

Liberalism shrugs its shoulders: "Let every one seek happiness, as he may." Truly, these here will soon be happy. But in their own way? In a way forced on them by those that benefit by this way. "Religion is a private affair," declares Reformism condescendingly. Here the "private affair" has become a very public affair—the masses pay for the battles of the militant church with their money and their lives.

I go home as if under the weight of a mountain. Bathing suit and bath towel lie there on a chair. I wanted to take them along but didn't. Come bathing suit and bath towel. Let's go now.

Translated from the German by S. D. Kogan

AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY PAINTINGS

Oil painting — "Struggle of Negro and white toward freedom". Foreground figures act out in pantomime the action in the rear in four sections: 1. Common exploitation; 2. Toward unity; 3. Terror to smash unity; 4. Common revolt

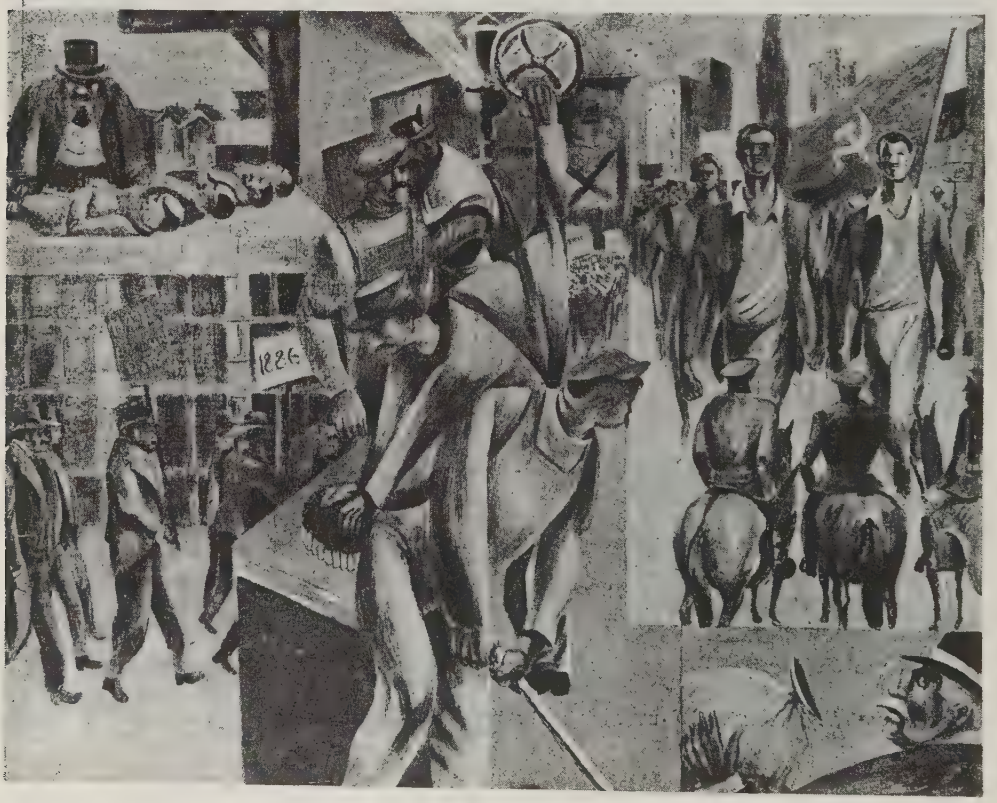
Tempera Sketch for mural for workers club: "Negro revolts before and after civil war".

BY WALTER QUIRT

Easel painting in tempera: " The future belongs to the workers" — strike and terror; funeral and resentment; barricades

Tempera sketch for mural for workers club: "Ludlow Massacre

Oil painting: "Humanitarians"



Tempera sketch for mural for workers club: Haymarket victims; general strike 1886; origin May Day; Communist Party inherits true traditions of May 1st

Where we Stand

In the last issue of International Literature we printed the answers of American and English writers to three questions submitted to them by the secretariat of the IURW. These questions were:...

1—What influence has the October Revolution had upon your work?

2—What do you think of Soviet literature?

3—What problems interest you most at this time?

The following answers come from some of the most prominent writers of France. In coming issues, we will print the answers of the writers of Spain and other countries.—Editors

FRANCE

Romain Rolland

My Path to the Proletarian Revolution

Allow me, in the answers which I shall write to your questions, to follow a slightly different order. I would like to retrace the road traversed by a young bourgeois individualist of the end of the XIX century, and how this path led him to become an old companion in arms of the proletarian revolution.

My natural instinct, since childhood, has always been an enthusiasm for life—the fundamental force. I was always attracted by the periods and the groups (or personalities) in history where this force expresses itself with the greatest vigor. And all my energy, all my work have been devoted to it, not merely to the singing of its praises but in an effort to widen and accelerate its course.

Now, since its development is constantly hindred by its own residue, by the heavy chunks which its stream breaks from its banks, in order to cut itself a channel through past prejudices and errors, piled up by dead life—it is ever necessary for it to revolt to break them down.

I have constantly been, at the bottom of my heart a rebel. And it is for rebellion that I have looked in those periods of history for which I felt a preferance.

Like all little Latins I was started off with a classical education, with Greece and Rome. But everyone chooses what he likes best from what is offered to him. From the Greece of the heroic age I chose the freeing of the spirit, the rejection of the dogmas and the deities in order daringly to found the laws of reason and make the first scientific advances: the Prometheus who measures up to Zues.

For analogous reasons my adolescence was taken up with the Italian Rennaisance: that explosion of new life, productive of energies in rebellion against all the moral and intellectual restriction of medieval society in its decline and productive of incomparable beauty.

At the same time I lived in the tradition (the elements of whch I had absorbed from family memories) of the French Revolution and of the great

movement of intellectual liberation which preceded it, the philosophers of the XVIII century—particularly Diderot.

For a young bourgeois intellectual of the last third of the nineteenth century, a free, wide and vigorous individualism was the highest human value and the vanguard of humanity. His mission was to bring the rest of the army on to the road of progress and to oppose the encumbrances of the powers of reaction: the State, the Church, even the teachings of the Universities, the gilded ferule of the Academicians, in short all the brakes which retarded the march.

The individualism which I conceived was rather akin to an anarchistic egoism. From my youth Spinozist convictions gave me a sharp, profound and very real feeling of being the integrated part of a whole of human beings. And extremely early I conceived my mission as a writer as being in the service of the community: art and the theatre for the people and by the people. (*The Theater of the People* is the title of my book of articles written before 1900.)

I lacked all knowledge of Marxism, just like the most cultured young bourgeois of my generation. We could only find our bearings by instinct. But around us in Paris public life had repercussions and the lessons we received from direct contact were our best text book.

First the echoes of the Commune of '71 which reverberated in my infancy; and which was discussed in my small town republican surroundings without much comprehension but without (Even a book hostile to the Commune like *The Convulsions of Paris* by Maxime du Camp brings out the grandeur of the epic in spite of the author, and reproduces its fascination) antipathy as of a convulsion of wild but epic heroism. Then as a young man barely arrived in Paris from the country I flung myself into the seething cauldron of the chaotic masses, in the two successive periods of the heated excitement over Boulanger and then the tempest of the Dreyfus affair. These experiences provided rich material for my *Theatre of the Revolution.*

It is not surprising that the workers' audiences of that period, when brought face to face with my Loups or my Danton recognized their own selves, their leaders and their enemies. At length the world war of 1914 precipitated my emancipation from all the prejudices of the bourgeois nationalist and capitalist period, from which I was not completely free. By taking upon myself the role of an impartial judge of the conflict, isolated, hated and repudiated by the opinion of my country and especially by my own caste of prominent university intellectuals, champions of the national ideology, the proof clearly revealed to me all the murderous lies with which the democratic culture of the West is infected. My attitude of opposition and rebellion became rapidly more defined, and quite naturally when the Russian Revolution broke out, I was among the first to hail the event. As a writer I found myself between 1917 and 1918 on its side, just as in January, 1919, I defended the Spartacist revolution and its heroes.

Nevertheless I did not give up my hope in a great individualism of the spirit, independant of all nations and all parties which held to a disinterested objectivity, and was somehow a kind of scientific observatory, where clear vision clarified the march of humanity. It naturally followed that the parties which were moving forward and, before all the others, the Revolution, would be the first to benefit. Furthermore, I did not intend that this observatory should be a tower of ivory, but an advance post, from where the observers would take part in the battle, whoever sees injustice and

crime, and yet abstains from fighting against them becomes their accessory All thought which does not agitate is either an abortion or a betrayal.

I had little trouble in 1919 in grouping certain intellectuals around my *Declaration de l'Independance de l'espirit.* But when it came to putting this little body of the elect to the test by practical tasks and political and social duties, I no longer found anyone. The vast majority of intellectuals interpreted this "Independence of the spirit," as a favored position, sheltered from all risks, where a few hundred of the privileged intelligentsia would enjoy special advantages for themselves and their works, without owing any duties to the Community. This was for me—(and I shall tell it as such) —the intimate drama of the years 1920 to 1930: a succession of forceful and irritating blows against this egoism and this treachery of the privileged intellectuals, up to the day when I realized there was nothing to hope for, outside of some few very rare exceptions, one or two personalities, who, like myself, had been caused suffering by this spirit of caste, and who, like myself decided to break away from the parasitic *intelligentsia*, every day more completely drawn in to the orbit of the capitalist and fascist bourgeoisie.

This decisive rupture occurred around the years 1927-28. It coincided with the first big trial endeavors of the international fascist reaction to mobilise the moral and intellectual forces of the old world against the USSR, whose constructive strength was asserting itself.

It was no longer possible to sit on the fence. It was necessary to choose. I expressed myself vigorously, in a series of articles, in which the apex of the tradition is marked by *l'Adieu au Passe* (Farewell to the Past) and the later *Europe, élargis-toi, ou meurs!* (Europe, broaden or die!) of 1931. And I have tried to express the evolution and spiritual conflicts leading from integrated individualism to the proletarian revolution in the last volumes of my cycle of novels: *L'Amo Enchantée* (1933).

To your second question: What is your opinion of Soviet literature?—I shall now answer briefly:

I am not well acquainted with Soviet literature (*See concluding note).* The thing about it which interests me is its general line:—as opposed to the idolatry of art for art's sake, the esthetic narcissism of the West, vain and childish, absorbed in contemplating in its mirror, its own faded and sham beauty, without giving any scope to the treatment of broader currents, to the life of the world, its torments and its struggles. I like the fact that Soviet literature is both art and action at the same time; that the latter (action) is reflected in the former (art) and that the latter projects the action reflected, that it reproduces the same vigour which in turn stimulates and disseminates.

But it goes without saying that the art should not, on account of this, lose its specific qualities, its precision and its perfection of expression. In this I agree with the stern warnings, recently published in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (*Literary Gazette*—Moscow) by Gorki who calls attention to the negligence of certain writers and their careless neglect of form. The art of writing is a craft, a technique like all techniques. It requires a period of apprenticeship and conscientious labor. One of the greatest artists of the past, the musician Bach used to reply to those who asked him where his genius came from: "I have worked hard." The most gifted person must work ever more than the least gifted because his gifts incline him to keep from exerting himself, and lack of exertion is all too often the sister of carelessness and banality. I still remember the remark of a famous poet to another poet equally famous— Boileau to Racine, who naively boasted of writing his verses without effort.

"You must learn," he told his friend, "to write effortless verses with difficulty." The perfection of art requires long labor. The new proletarian art must apply itself to this work, and all the more so since it no longer can be a show-case art, like that of other periods, but must become a fine, steady, well-tempered weapon, a worthy reliable weapon for action.

Note on the answer to the second question: Among the Soviet novels published in French, I was most greatly impressed by those of Babel (*Red Cavalry)* Vsevolod Ivanov, Constantine Fedin (*Cities and Years*), M. Shaginyan *(Hydro-Central),* Leonov, Fadeyev, Serafimovich, Gladkov, Seifulina *(Virineya), Tashkent, City of Abundance* by Neverov and *The Second Day of Creation* by Ehrenburg. (American title, *Out of Chaos*—Editor). Among the most recent publications, I was very much struck by *Kara Bugaz* by Paustovsky, and the play by Tretyakov *Roar, China!* I also greatly enjoyed a new comedy by Amaglobel, the translation of which was read to me. The extracts of *The Desert* by Pavlenko and *On the Trail of a Hero* by Lavrukhin made me regret not yet having the French edition at hand.

I should like to call attention to the importance of a wise choice of translators. Some novels, like Sholokhov's *Broken Virgin Soil,* although carefully translated lose much from the rather flat and monotonous style of the French version. I never would have suspected the force of its dialogue and the feel of the soil, if the book had not been read to me directly from the Russian.

René Arcos

Writer, editor of Europe

1. When the Russian Revolution broke out I was in Switzerland. I also was able to witness the departure of Lenin and his companions for Russia. I even remember having sent off to the American papers with which I was at the time connected, a copy of the first letter of "Farewell to the Swiss workers," of Lenin's. But the censor was watching the borders and this copy never reached those to whom it was addressed.

If my friends and I failed to understand immediately the real import of the Russian Revolution, which was very difficult at the time, we at least realised that it was in the nature of a major event the consequences of which would soon be deeply felt by all humanity.

Abové all the Russia of Lenin was for me the first country which dared to say no (here I would like to use a stronger word) to the hideous imperialist war. Her refusal to continue to take part in the abominable slaughter at any cost, filled me with an enthusiasm which I cannot yet forget. He who can only defend himself with gun and cannon fire doesn't deserve to be defended. I wrote this at that time. I still write it today.

It's impossible for me to tell you specifically if the Russian Revolution has influenced my writings and my attitude. The books which I had published at that time: *Le Sang des autres, Caserne, Pays du soir,* were above all cries of revolt. But it is certain that we were all involved, either willingly or by compulsion, in the tremendous event. It quickened the flow of our blood and the air we breathed was charged with it. Millions of men had succeeded in freeing themselves from the most sinister lies. We no longer were alone.

2 My knowledge of Soviet literature is imperfect. But it would seem to me already rich with young and vigorous forces. I have read some works of Babel, Pilnyak, Ilya Ehrenburg (who impressed me very much), *Virineya,*

by Lydia Seifulina, some works of Serafimovich, Gladkov, Fadeyev, etc. It made me conscious of the poverty of our French bourgeois literature. Our writers, save for a few rare exceptions, are, you know, nothing more than shrewd mercenaries. Among us no one writes any more except in order to win a reputation, a decoration, a literary prize and an income. There is no lack of talent, but character has utterly vanished.

3. When I published my first poems, over thirty years ago, symbolism was in its last throes. Some of my friends and I were nevertheless not immune to it during its last days. And it was through this that we made the acquaintance of the Russian poets of that period. Valerian Brussov gave us proof of his sympathy by collecting our verses in his anthology of French poetry published before the war.

But symbolism didn't hold us for long. The rough realities of life were soon made known to us, all of us were poor. I don't believe that there had ever been seen before in France a literary group all of the members of which, without exception, were so utterly penniless.

We formed a phalanstery under the name of the "Abbyae de Créteil" to live there in common on our work. This adventure was both painful and wonderful at the same time; its history has never been told. Our little communist colony was obliged to disband at the end of a year and a half or so. Today, in the perspective of the years, the reason for our failure appears clear: we lacked experience and above all we lacked discipline.

Eugene Dabit

Author of Hotel du Nord, Parisian Suburb and *Other Books*

Here are my answers to your three questions; answers which I cannot set forth in questionnaire form, and the second of which relates particularly to my line of work: the novel.

1. I was still a soldier when the particulars of the events of October first reached us. I well remember our surprise. And the uneasiness of our officers who took pains to discover whether or not soviets were being formed in our ranks. Since I must answer whether or not the October Revolution influenced my ideas, and to what extent—at the time I hadn't yet begun to write—I shall set forth the following: The news of the revolution brought hope to our horizon, which the war had failed really to clarify. This hope has grown with the years and has been changed to certainty by seeing the USSR triumph over all obstacles. Also there can be no question of a change of attitude as regards something that in my case has followed a natural course of development.

2. The latest books I have had a chance to familiarise myself with are: *The Second Day of Creation,* by I. Ehrenburg; *I Love,* by Avdeyenko; *Broken Virgin Soil,* by Sholokhov. In these books and in many others I have liked the absence of non-essential literary embellishments, the care taken to be accurate, comprehensive and understanding and to aid in the construction of a new world. These works strike me as providing detailed sensitive recordings. Perhaps that is all, but it is a lot. Perhaps, because of the numerous difficulties and perpetual change they could not be otherwise. Perhaps the very conditions which give them their warmth, color and actuality, impose certain limits on them. They pose many questions regarding the future of man which remain unanswered.

I think that some writers from among those who are barely beginning to write will develop, and even one would suffice, who will know how to blend and unify this formidable mass of scattered rich materials—as Leo Tolstoy did for another age in his *War and Peace,* and whose names will figure besides those of Gorky and Chekhov. The present works and thought trends of the Soviet writers make me feel sure of this future.

3. I have lived with the proletariat. Up to the age of thirteen I attended what we here call "primary school." It's impossible for me to talk about capitalist culture because I never was where it is handed out. Living in Paris I have naturally taken whatever it was materially and intellectually possible for me to take from this culture, whatever appeared to me to be the best and the most human. But the factor which has moulded and influenced my spirit, which has impelled me to become a writer, is the existence of the proletariat, its hardships and its struggles.

René Maublanc

Philosopher, University Professor

1. I became a Socialist around 1913, I was then 22 years old. The war strengthened me in my opinions. But it was the October Revolution which finally proved to me that I was not mistaken. It did not change my opinion, it rendered it unshakable. Up to 1917 communist society was subject to the weakness of being non-existent, except as an ideal, and to those who maintained it was impracticable, one could only reply with an act of faith of the hypothetical probabilities of reasoning. Soviet Russia supplied the proof of the fact. She demonstrated the possibility of socialism by bringing it about. She had the opportunity to show its superiority to capitalism, and the demonstration is so dazzling that it commences to sink into even the hardest heads.

I have tried, since 1917 by the written and spoken word, to popularise and defend Soviet Russia. Sometimes directly, for example by explaining the trial of Ramzin and the saboteurs, sometimes indirectly, by exposing, that is to say by hastening, the decomposition of the capitalist regime and of the parliamentarianism with which it cloaks itself. Sympathy and antipathy for the USSR seem to me today the only way of distinguishing my friends and my adversaries, whatever their party may be.

2. I haven't had the time to keep myself up-to-date on Soviet literature and to read all the French translations of it which have appeared. What I do know of it strikes me with the sincerity, the frankness and the breadth of its subjects. This militant literature is a direct contrast to our hacks. But I believe it is yet too early to judge the replenishment of inspiration and of art which a new society must necessarily produce. I believe specifically that the new writers who will create the proletarian literature have not yet emerged, and that the Russian language in the course of the past fifteen years has had to undergo too many modifications and has been corrupted by too many innovations to constitute for the moment the perfect instrument necessary for a great literature. I further believe that we shall have to wait a bit for the birth of original literature among all peoples whose language has just been committed to writing—tremendous awakening of backward nationalities, which is one of the most fruitful and impressive undertakings of the Soviet regime.

3. The course of my studies has lead me to read especially the French

thinkers of the beginning of the 19th century: St. Simon, Fourier, Auguste Comte. There is a richness of thought here which did not escape Karl Marx and which can be utilized in the light of Marxism. The criticism of capitalism in them is fully as striking as the illusions of utopian socialism. I particularly emphasize the immense advantages to be gained by reading Auguste Comte, much closer to reality than a St. Simon or a Fourier.

Paul Gsell

Theatrical Critic

This February I had published a book *L'Urss et sa Foi Nouvelle,* where I record my observations gathered in the course of a trip to Moscow and Leningrad in 1933. I shall not neglect to send you this book.

Here I show that the greatest beauty of the Republic of the Soviets consists of its magnificent social faith.

The Russians of today have what the bourgeois governments lack, namely an ardent faith in principles, the lack of which is the failing of all societies condemned to decadence.

The Russians believe that the aim of society is to provide for the material and spiritual life of all those who work.

The Russians believe in the continuous progress of science and the applications of science.

The Russians believe that man is on earth to aid his fellow men and his descendants to be more happy.

That is what I call the new faith of the USSR. In my opinion there is no nobler example for all modern mankind.

Soviet literature glories in serving this admirable credo. It couldn't have a more generous ambition. And it cannot go wrong by following the watchwords of its honored prophet, Maxim Gorky.

I saw many plays in Moscow and in Leningrad. And I was the first to proclaim the striking merits of the Soviet theatre to my compatriots. The most stirring seemed to me *Fear* by Afinogenov.

As for telling you what has most pleased me in other literature, nothing is simpler. In western literature I like only those truly human ideas which in Russia motivated the October Revolution.

Iuc Durtain

Author of Fortieth Floor *and other books*

My trip to Russia, seven years ago was a fundamental part of my experience. After this contact with the Civilization innovated by the USSR, I have hundreds and hundreds of times compared with the Russian example the facts I have gathered in the course of the general investigation of the world which I later conducted in South America and North America, in Africa and in Asia. Not only did I write, on my trip to Russia, my book *L'Autre Europe: Moscou et sa lin,* but all my works after this period were influenced in their ideas.

Soviet literature of the present period is full of force and of novelty.

In capitalist culture, North America has engaged my work and my atten-

tion the most. I have projected a novel series—four volumes—on the great events and principal forms of American civilization. It is something to conjure with. But justice and organization are too frequently wanting there.

Paul Signac

Noted French artist, member of the AEAR

1. The triumph of the October Revolution revived me with new courage. It has made reality of that which had been my ideal since youth. It sent a ray of hope into the shadow which enveloped us. It is towards this lighthouse that we steer our course.

2. Contemporary Soviet literature has found new motifs and new forms of expression in this momentous event.

Its influence will spread towards infinity throughout the ages.

3. I have never held a brief for capitalist culture. Since my youth I have had the liberal and revolutionary writers for my guides. Having read Valles I didn't want to be like him. Zola was my friend. Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky as well as Kropotkin have contributed to my intellectual growth.

M. Prenant

Professor at the Sorbonne.

Having always been socialist in my aspirations, I never clearly envisioned socialism till after the October Revolution. From the moment when, piercing the lies of every variety, I was able to learn something of Soviet achievements, I unhesitatingly ranged myself among those who seek to popularise them and win them support. In the struggle which we carry on here, the successes of the building of socialism are our greatest source of reassurance.

From the scientific standpoint, I owe much to the Soviet scientists. It was through the writings of some of them that I was led to develop my study of dialectical materialism in relation to my scientific specialty, biology.

For here I had never had anything but the most general confused ideas. Dialectical materialism has given me the means of truly understanding biological problems. That also I owe to Soviet science and construction.

DENMARK

Martin Anderson Nexo

Noted author of Pelle: The Conqueror *and many other volumes of world fame*

1. The mere fact of the existence of the victorious proletarian republic—Soviet Russia, is of tremendous significance to me as man and writer. It was due to it that our Utopia, which in the face of evil reality had to necessarily seem madness, has become a beautiful palpable reality. And the achievements, the building going on, the uninterrupted progress ahead and upward on the background of a West Europe that is wasting away! The outlook in the old world today is bad enough. How would it look if the glowing fact of Soviet Russia were not to exist!

To me, personally, this fact has been a source of courage in moments of

weariness and hesitation. The triumphant October revolution and the Socialist construction that followed affected my initiative primarily with propagandistic stimulation. I have found the main thing to be to bring courage to the discouraged West European proletariat and this—by their learning as much as possible about proletarian Russia: which means to oppose the propaganda of lies and stem its flow while reporting the gigantic accomplishments! It has been my experience that nothing has such a revolutionary effect on the Western proletariat as the mere telling them of life and work in Soviet Russia. That is what I, therefore, concentrated on.

2. Soviet literature has taken over the best that the older period had to offer in that the great Russian poets do not find pride in "taking walks with kings" but in coming along with a peasant on one arm and a ragged proletarian on the other. The young Russian literaure, based on this heritage, could develop its work both in the breadth and depth of mankind unaffected by soul-corroding individualism and lewd sexuality of West European intellectual life.

3. If evidence should be required ot the fact that West European culture is dying out one has only to contemplate the fact that in Western literature sterility and lewdness—those two earmarks of senility—are dominant. The West European as a man of deeds is dead; it has become a necessity to him to witness as an observer the most elementary of all acts. This is the reason for the dominance of the sexual in the theatre, movies, literature.

Translated from the French by A. Stevens

THREE DRAWINGS BY JOHN GROTH

Some months ago, John Groth, American revolutionary artist, arrived in Moscow with a small collection of his drawings. These were immediately accepted by the International Union of Revolutionary Artists (IURA) and shown at the Moscow Museum of Western Art. The exhibition received a great deal of attention in the Soviet press, with special notice being taken by the five-day weekly *Soviet Arts*, the popular *Evening Moscow* and the English language *Moscow Daily News*, as well as other newspapers and critical art journals.

John Groth had previously exhibited in Mexico City, Chicago, Washington and New York. His drawings hang in the Metropolitan Museum as well as in many other American art galleries. A member of the revolutionary Chicago John Reed Club, he is also art editor of *Esquire*, an American monthly of wide circulation.

John Groth's drawings are also a regular feature of American revolutionary publications, especially *Left Front*, organ of the Chicago John Reed Club, and the *New Masses*, leading American revolutionary cultural organ.

Milk Strike

Police Victim

Hunger

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

Engels Against Mechanicism and Vulgarization of Marxism in Literary Criticism

Correspondence of Engels with Paul Ernst

Foreword by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute

Engels' letter to Paul Ernst was written in connection with the discussion in the magazine *Freie Buhne* between two young writers, exponents of early German naturalism, Herman Barr and Paul Ernst, who had recently joined the ranks of the Social-Democratic Party.

The subject under discussion was the woman question in Ibsen's dramas. The letter in answer to a question of Paul Ernst's with regard to the polemic is one of Engels' best analyses on the basis of concrete literary documents; it deals first of all with the *mechanistic* literary conception of Ernst and exposes his vulgarly-eclectic treatment of the social category of "philistinedom." How aptly Engels characterized Ernst's methodological confusion, according to which historical materialism is transformed into its opposite —idealism—is shown by the later evolution of this "Marxist": during the years 1889-1893 Ernst occupied an unstable position in the Party, sympathized with the petty-bourgeois, anarcho-individualist leaders of the "youth" opposition, then he left the Party to become the head of the "neo-classical" idealist school of literature and is now one of the Fascist writers. His opponent of that time, G. Barr, also turned nationalist and mystic.

Engels' letter has not lost any of its timeliness even now when all kinds of mechanistic and eclectic "theoreticians" come out in opposition to Marxist-Leninist literary criticism.

Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute

Engels to Paul Ernst

London, June 5, 1890.

Dear Sir:

I regret that I cannot comply with your request to write you a letter such as you could utilize against Mr. Barr. This would drag me into open polemics, the time for which I should have to literally rob myself of. What I write here, therefore, is intended for you personally.

In addition I am not at all acqainted with what you call the Scandinavian woman's movement. I only know some of Ibsen's dramas and have absolutely no idea how Ibsen can be held responsible for the more or less hysterical (ambitions of more or less mature Norwegian maidens) doings of bourgeois and middle class women careerists.

Besides, the whole complex of what is usually called the woman question is so vast a field that it is impossible to give, within the limited space of a letter, any exhaustive or even to some extent satisfactory treatment to the matter. One thing is, however, certain—Marx could not "hold the point of view" ascribed to him by Mr. Barr. He should have had to go quite mad to do so.

As regards your attempts to analyse the question materialistically, I must first of all say that the materialist method is turned into its opposite when used, not as a guide-line in historical investigation, but as a ready template to which historical facts are stretched and recut. And if Mr. Barr thinks he has caught you with the goods, I am afraid he has good reasons for it.

You include all of Norway and everything that happens there in the category of philistinedom and then, without qualification, you attribute to this Norwegian philistinedom, everything you consider characteristic of German philistinedom. But there are two stumbling blocks here.

In the first place, while the victory over Napoleon meant for the whole of Europe a victory of reaction over the revolution, and only in its homeland, in France, did the revolution inspire enough fear to wrest from the hands of the re-established legitimist power a bourgeois-liberal constitution, Norway was able to gain for itself a constitution more democratic than any then existing in Europe.

In the second place, Norway has for the last twenty years experienced such a flourishing of literature as no country, except Russia, could pride itself upon. Whether they be considered philistines or not the Norwegians at any rate are creating more spiritual values than any other nation and put their stamp on other literatures as well, including German literature.

If you will weigh these facts you will be obliged to admit that they are not altogether compatible with relegating the Norwegians to the category of philistines, particularly philistines of the purely German brand; in my opinion these facts oblige us to define more accurately the specific peculiarities of the Norwegian lower middle class.

And you will undoubtedly find that here a vast difference reveals itself. In Germany philistinedom is a product of an unsuccessful revolution, of an interrupted, delayed development; it got its peculiar and clearly outstanding nature of cowardliness, limitedness, helplessness and incapability of showing any initiative whatever, as a result of the Thirty Years War and the ensuing period when all other great nations experienced a stormy growth. German philistinedom persisted in its nature also later, when Germany was again carried into the stream of historical development: it was strong enough to put its imprint on all other strata of German society, a general German type, until our working class at last broke down these narrow limitations. German workers are the most fervent "deniers of homeland" in this, that they have cast aside the limitations of German philistinedom.

One should therefore regard German philistinedom not as a normal historical stage, but as a caricature drawn to an extreme, an example of degeneration (as the Polish Jew is a caricature of Jews. It is a classic only in the extremely circumscribed and exaggerated petty-bourgeoisie). The English, French, etc. petty-bourgeois is not at all on the same level as the German one.

In Norway, on the contrary, the petty-peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie, together with a small admixture of the middle-bourgeoisie—such as for example in England and France in the seventeenth century—represents the normal condition of society during a number of centuries. There can be no question here of a forced return to old stages of development on account

of some unsuccessful great movement and a Thirty Years War. Due to its isolation and natural conditions the country lagged behind, but its situation always corresponded to the system of production and on this account was normal. Only very recently do sporadic beginnings of large scale industry appear, but there is no room here for the most powerful lever of concentration of capital—the Exchange; a conservative influence is also exerted by the great overseas' trade. While in all other countries then the steamer supersedes the sail-boat, Norway increases its fleet of sail-boats and owns, if not the greatest, then the next to the greatest fleet of this type of boats belonging mostly to small and medium ship-owners. One way or another this brings movement instead of the old stagnation and this movement is evidently reflected in the flourishing literature.

The Norwegian peasant *was never a serf* and this—as in Castilia—sets its imprint on the entire development of the country. The Norwegian petty-bourgeois is the son of a free peasant and as a result, he is a *real man* compared to the miserable German philistine. In the same way the Norwegian woman of petty-bourgeois surroundings stands immeasurably higher than the German philistine woman. And whatever the defects of Ibsen's dramas, they nevertheless reflect a world, although petty and middle-bourgeois, yet one that stands immeasurably higher than the similar German one; reflect a world in which people still possess character, are capable of initiative and act independently, although occasionally also oddly to the eye of an observer from another land. I consider it essential for one to make a study of all this before venturing an opinion.

Returning to what I began with, i.e., to Mr. Barr, I must say I am amazed how seriously modern Germans take one another. Wit and humor must have become more tabu than ever in Germany (even Jews seem to make supreme efforts to hide their natural wit more profoundly) and dullness has become a civic duty. Otherwise you should have considered a little more attentively Mr. Barr's "woman" who lacks all "historically developed" features. Her skin has developed historically as she is white or black, yellow, brown or red—there can consequently be no generally human one. Her hair has developed historically—into curled or wavy, kinky or straight, black, red or light-colored. Consequently she has no just human hair. So what remains when we take away from her together with hair and skin all that came historically and we have " before us woman as such?" Simply a monkey, anthropopitheca, and let Mr. Barr take her, "easily palpable and transparent to the bottom," together with her "natural instincts" to bed with him.

F. Engels

F. Schiller

Engels and Mechanistic Literary Criticism of the Nineties ...

Engels' letter to P. Ernst of June 5, 1890, is, as far as we know his last special and developed utterance on questions of literature: it is directed against mechanistic and vulgarized Marxism in literary criticism. The methodological expressions in this letter, which have not lost their significance to this very day, will be more intelligible to us if we investigate the questions under dispute which called out this letter and uncover the roots of the erroneous propositions against which Engels wrote.

First about the dispute between Ernst and Herman Barr which was the occasion of Ernst's appeal to Engels. At the end of the eighties the then young German imperialism tried to secure for itself sales markets on the parcelling out of the colonies, it was a period when Germany was undergoing a transformation from a small scale production to a large scale capitalistic, imperialist power on one hand and on the other when the many millioned army of the proletariat was growing rapidly and organizing itself into a powerful Social-Democratic Party. For all the time the anti-Socialist law was in effect—it expired in September 1890—the Party did not break up as Bismarck had hoped, but, quite the reverse, came out strengthened and more powerful from the struggle. The growth of capitalism caused the weakening and ruin of the petty-bourgeoisie and artisanry. And so the ideologists of these ruined sections of society, the hungry rebellious intelligentsia in the cities, part of the so-called early German naturalists, recognizing that the petty-bourgeoisie is doomed, joined the Social-Democratic Party seeing a "New Testament" in Socialism for saving "humanity." Organizationally these writers grouped themselves about the theatre "Free Stage" and the magazine of the same name *(Freie Buhne)* established by Otto Bramm and others in Berlin in 1889, while the naturalists of a trend more to the left, after entering the Social-Democratic Party organized in 1890 the the "Free People's Theatre" with Bruno Wille and Wilhelm Polsche at the head. It is characteristic for these petty-bourgeois, anarcho-individualistic, anti-authoritarian intellectuals that the predominant place in the program of the "Free People's Theatre" was occupied by such dramas of Ibsen's as *Pillars of Society, Enemy of the People,* which expressed the ideology of these groups to perfection what with their elevation of the individual above the masses, their disdain for the "herd," the "party man," organized into a strictly centralized workers party. And it was therefore a logical consequence that almost all the leaders of the anarcho-individualistic confused rebellion against the Party leadership in 1890-1892, were representatives of these writers' groups that had gathered about the "Free People's Theatre" (B. Wille, K. Wilderberg, T. Teistler, G. Landauer, etc.).

The then still quite young men, Barr and Ernst, belonged to these "early naturalists." The first had only recently (1890) come to Berlin from Paris and he introduced the German naturalists to the "latest style" on the banks of the Seine—the French salon impressionists; his naturalistic dramas *New People* and *The Great Sin* that had previously received scant notice now became the rage. The young twenty-seven year old Austro-German writer rapidly made his career in Berlin and became, together with Bramm, co-editor of the magazine *Freie Buhne.* Barr was at that time flirting with Marxism and, as all of Ibsen's old plays and certainly every new one were being translated into German those days, and the social problems raised by that great dramatist evoked lively discussion, it is no wonder that a polemic arose between Barr, the representative of the ideology of the Free Stage and P. Ernst, then already a fairly well known Social-Democratic publicist and almost the official Ibsen interpreter of the principal theoretical Marxian Party organ the *Neue Zeit.*

In his critical articles and reviews Ernst approached the analysis of creative work, particularly that of Ibsen, in typically mechanistic fashion. In the first place he traced literature directly to economics in spite of the fact that he himself went hammer and tongs at others who erred in this way: he put the sign of equality between the socio-economic development of a "period" and "ideas of the time." He further conceives the relation of writer

and class completely mechanistically: the writer is organically incapable of going beyond the limits of his class ideology, he is fatalistically doomed to stay within the circle of his class conceptions. Thus Ibsen also cannot get outside the borders of the ideology of an extremely tritely conceived by Ernst category of "philistinedom." "The dialectics of philistinedom," he writes in one of his reviews, "is a kitten biting its own tail: the tail belongs to the kitten—the kitten to the tail." *(Neue Zeit,* 1890, p 43) Ernst conceived "philistinedom" entirely unhistorically and abstractly: He had his own idea of German philistinedom of 1890 and this view, worked out for all eternity, he applied simply, like a ready templet, to the criticism of the Scandinavian, Russian, French lower middle class and their writers whose works he reviewed in the *Neue Zeit* and the foreign central organ of the Party the *Social Democrat.*

The direct occasion of the polemic between Ernst and Barr were the articles of L. Margolm in the *Freie Buhne* on "Women in Scandinavian Literature" (based principally on the works of Ibsen and Strindberg). These articles called out a great discussion begun by Paul Ernst's article "The Woman and the Social Questions." Objecting to the excessive attention paid to the purely biological elements in Margolm's articles, Ernst correctly emphasized the social nature of the woman question and views the feminist movement (not only in Scandinavia) as a product of social development. At the same time, however, he includes the entire problem of the Scandinavian feminist movement and its expression in literature into the category of German philistinedom and sees the solution of the woman question in the purely passive development of industrial relations. "There is no doubt whatever," writes Ernst, "'that the woman question, like all other "questions', will solve themselves with the development of industrial relations." Thus Ernst completely negates the value of ideological struggle, particularly in literature.

Herman Barr came out in sharp criticism of this article of Ernst's with his "Epigones of Marxism." He considered the point of view taken by Ernst "typical of the disruption and degeneration" of the epigones of Marxism who transform, in his opinion, Marx's "critical method" into a "dogmatic axiom." He compares Ernst to an automat which, when one drops a coin into it, drops an irreproachable, long chapter of Marxist wisdom. Barr draws a contrast between such "Marxistists" (so Barr dubs Ernst and company, as distinguished from "genuine Marxists" among whom he does not, however, include himself) and the methods presumably of Marx himself. "I do not remember," wrote Barr, "whether Marx ever wrote anything about the woman question, but I have a very clear idea of his approach to this question." According to Barr Marx would establish traits characteristic of every woman and by comparing these traits aduce the typical for all women; he would establish the surroundings in which such a type and no other would and should develop and in the end he would, by means of his materialistic method, find the "original causes" in economics, would discover "the eternal connection between the material basis and its ideological reflection." Thus Marx would "detect" in the bourgeois woman, the middle class woman and the work woman "the woman" out of whom economics has developed the three different types. And Barr goes on: "To Marx, as to Taine and Zola, man is—a lump of meat. This lump of meat has its expression—the spirit. This spirit is subject to influence from its surroundings which forms it and fills it. Thus every person, taken individually is *natural* man as he came from the womb of his mother, inheriting the physical traits of his ancestors, plus economic man, as he was formed out of his relations to nature. Economic

man always forms natural man." This, according to Barr, is Marx's view, while the epigones of Marxism deny "natural man" and only recognize "economic man." Barr himself does not agree either with "Marx's views" which he has himself invented, nor with that of the "epigones." He thinks that in addition to the "influence of surroundings (economics) and "ancestral heritage" one must also take into consideration the "third woman"—the purely female. This "third woman" is, according to Barr, the real woman, "woman as such," she is not subject to any influence economic or historical, and "here is where the woman question, that puzzling and killing problem begins. . . ." Hence Barr demands that in "analyzing woman" a clear distinction should be made between "natural instincts" and "historically acquired" traits. Only by deducing the last can "women as such" be revealed. Barr comes to the conclusion that: the woman question will remain "an eternal problem between men and women" as they "will never understand one another and will always struggle."

Barr's article appeared in the *Freie Buhne* of May 28, 1890. Then Ernst appealed to Engels in the following letter of May 31, 1890.

Dear Sir,

Pray forgive me, totally unknown to you, for taking the liberty of imposing on you with a request.

I also take the liberty of forwarding you two numbers of the magazine, *Freie Buhne*. In one you will find my article on the Scandinavian feminist movement, in the other the polemical article against it of Herman Barr. Barr accuses me of an incorrect application of the Marxian method in this instance and of many other things.

I should like to know, for many reasons, whether Barr is right in his claim and whether Marx thought otherwise on the woman question or rather, what were his views on the subject. First of all because I defend my views also in other publications (for instance, the *Social Democrat*) and such matters, if correct, are a bad influence; secondly because Barr, as you will see from his article, attacks me shamelessly.

I am of the opinion that Barr's views are altogether erroneous and he turns the woman question into a sex problem. If the verbose thesis at the end of the article is correct, I think he talks about something which has existed at the time of Adam and Eve. I consider this only the personal experience of the author. At any rate it has no relation whatever to the woman question which arose only under definite social conditions. I am not at all arrogant as Barr tries to make out: I only wish to act as practically as my powers permit. So much the more insulting are such insinuations.

You should oblige me exceedingly if you would kindly grant my request to tell me in a couple of lines whether my views coincide with those of Marx or not. And furthermore, if you would permit me to use your letter against Barr.

With the profoundest respect, your devoted.

Paul Ernst

In answer to this request Engels wrote the reprinted letter in which Engels points out two fundamental methodological mistakes made by Ernst: 1) his mechanistic method and 2) his unhistorical, abstractly-trite, vulgar, approach

to the investigation of the class-determindedness of the work of such a writer as Ibsen.

Ernst's first mistake Engels formulates as follows: "As regards your attempt to analyze the question materialistically, I must first of all say, that the materialist method is turned into its opposite when used, not as a guideline in historical investigation, but as a ready template to which historical facts are stretched and recut. And if Mr. Barr thinks he has caught you with the goods, I am afraid he has good reasons for it." In thus stating Ernst's method Engels of course had in mind, as was later confirmed, not only the article in the *Freie Buhne* forwarded by Ernst. Engels, who read the *Social Democrat* and *Neue Zeit* regularly, himself collaborating in them, was acquainted with Ernst's literary-critical articles and came to this conclusion from the known work of this writer as a whole.

On the second point Engels gives, as opposed to the unhistorical mechanistically-trite and vulgar transposition of Ernst's ideas of German philistinedom to the Scandinavian, i.e., to the social roots of Ibsen's works, a profound historical analysis of the specific peculiarities distinguishing the Scandinavian lower class for the German one of the time or the social category which was then called philistinedom in Germany. This analysis of Engels is a classic example of how a Marxist should approach such a complex phenomenon in literature as Ibsen's work was, how the specific situation which resulted from a definite socio-economic trend of development of a definite class should be revealed in the real relations of class forces. This analysis of the social roots of Ibsen's work clears up a great many things that are still confused by bourgeois and pseudo-Marxist investigators. Summing up his analysis Engels writes: "Whatever the defects of Ibsen's dramas, they nevertheless reflect a world, although petty and middle bourgeois, yet one that stands immeasurably higher than the similar German one, reflect a world in which people still possess character, the capability of initiative and act independently, although occasionally also oddly to the eyes of an observer from another land. I consider it essential for one to make a study of all this before venturing an opinion."

Engels' letter, though written for him "personally," Ernst utilized in his answering article to Barr in the following manner: "I should have replied to Barr's article "The Woman Question" at once, Ernst writes, "but as he bravely set up Marx's views—as Marx would have thought on this question—against the views of the "Marxistists". . . . I applied to Engels with the question . . . how Marx would really have viewed this question. Engels was kind enough to reply and he confirmed, in a detailed letter, that *my understanding of the question is very close to that of Marx.* (!) (Italics mine, F. S.) Engels does not wish to have his letter published so as not to be drawn into polemics with Barr of whom he is very much afraid. So I alone must pick up courage. . ." Then Ernst insists on his views on the "woman question" and he defines Barr's interpretation as that of the "sex-problem." His dispute with Barr evidently ended on this.

But how did Ernst react to the general directions given him in Engels' letter as a member of the Party and a young publicist showing, according to the opinions of many, much promise? He reacted very peculiarly: when, after a while, the then already existing opposition of "youth" against the Party leadership of Bebel, Liebknecht came out in the open, Ernst, although not in complete solidarity with all the demands of the ultra-left leaders of this opposition, nevertheless joined it and even became the editor of the *Berlin People's Tribune* of opposition sympathies. And when Engels in the London

Social Democrat called the action of the opposition leaders of the "youth" a "mutiny of students and writers," Ernst repeated his mistake, applying the same *mechanistic* and *unhistorical* method to the *evalulation of a political situation and the disposition of class forces in the country* as he did in literature: the right-opportunist elements were announced the *majority* of the Party which had presumably degenerated into a petty-bourgeois party from beginning to end. But if the Bebel-Liebknecht center of that time was not free from a number of mistakes to consider it downright opportunistic was to incorrectly attribute the errors of the right wing to the entire Party, meant to ignore the *real* struggle of the factions within the Party. And so in answer to Engels' letter and the latter's article on the "youth" Ernst comes out with an article of his own in the opposition organ *Magdeburger Folksstimme* (September 16, 1890) in which he writes: "And if Engels now calls our opposition 'a mutiny of students' let him please explain in what our views differ from his own and those of Marx. . ."

In answer to this challenge Engels came out with an article "Answer to Paul Ernst" in which he points out that Ernst's mechanistic method is common to the entire confused, unstable, anarcho-individualist opposition of "Youth" and writes: "With respect to Ernst himself there is no need of repeating. I have told him this four months ago and must now will-nilly bore the public with this 'serious' correspondence." He then tells how Ernst applied to him on May 31 by letter, quotes the most important parts of his answer: ". . . . clearly and definitely pointed out to Mr. Ernst wherein exactly (he differs from Marx and Engels,—F. S.)—and in the very article in the *Freie Buhne* he sent me. And when I explained to him that he uses the Marxian method as a ready template according to which he cuts his own historical facts it was exactly the example of the profound lack of 'understanding' of that method with which I reproached these gentlemen (i.e., the "youth", F. S.). And when I further showed him on his own instance of Norway how his application to Norway of this template of philistinedom prepared on the German model clearly contradicts historical fact, I by that same token, laid at his own door that 'crass ignorance' of the decisive historical facts in every question of which I also accused those gentlemen. Does Mr. Ernst want to know some more 'where'? Well, take, for instance, the article in the *People's Tribune* on 'Dangers of Marxism' where he adopts without much ado the odd statement of the metaphysician Duhring that according to Marx history presumably goes on entirely automatically without the interference of people (who make it) and that economic conditions (themselves the work of human hands) play with these people as with pawns. And when a man (Ernst—F.S.) can mix up Marxian theory with the distortion of that theory by such an opponent as Duhring—let others help him—I refuse." Pointing out again the erroneousness of the "youth's" estimation of the situation within the Party, Engels emphasizes the political danger of the method of these "writers" particularly "if they are unable to use their eyes for the simplest things and in estimating the economic or political situation cannot weigh dispassonately either the relative significance of definite facts or the magnitude of the forces involved."

So we can see that the criticism of Ernst's mechanistic method in Engels' letter is really a criticism of a whole system of mistakes not only in literary criticism but also in politics, not only of Ernst himself but also of the entire group of anti-Party oppositionists; the views of this group on politics and literature are inseparably connected. And just as this "youth" persisting in their mechanistic method logically came (after secession from the Party in

1891) to liquidation in the political field (part of them became the arch-opportunist right wing of Social-Democracy, part turned to anarchism) standing for an exclusively economic struggle,—they also became liquidators in literature.

Paul Ernst never overcame his mechanistic errors: his political evolution of 1890-1894 not only did not tend to this but on the reverse, brought him also to the "ultra-left" liquidation views on literature. His Party position during those years was unstable, his ideology—the expression of the eternally vacillating elements of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia within the Party. He continued to collaborate in the Social-Democratic press but, in addition to the mistakes pointed out to him by Engels he made many new ones, and when a discussion on Art opened in the *Neue Zeit* in 1892 he, although he took exception to the complete liquidation theory of G. Landauer, nevertheless tended, himself, to liquidation and "pure art," propounding the theory of the "disinterestedness" of art and its complete segregation from politics. It is also known that he came out in the *Neue Zeit* in 1892 with a very confused, and essentially as mechanistic as ever, criticism of Mehring's *Lessing Legend.*

This liquidationalism in literature was a logical consequence of his liquidationalism in politics, inherent in one form or another to all the unstable petty-bourgeois opposition theoreticians among the "youth." The discussion in the *Neue Zeit* mentioned bears witness of this. Thus Gustav Landauer, the then editor of the *Socialist,* organ of the "youth," writes in his article in the *Neue Zeit* in 1890 (entitled "The Future and Art"): "For some reason everyone expects a new renaissance of art, a new genius like Goethe; I do not cherish any such hopes or rather, no longer cherish them. I do not think the immediate future will bear the imprint of art and should be sorry if it were so First of all we no longer have any time for art. Art requires peace; we require struggle. At its highest stage *broucht Abgeklarheit* we need fermentation. Art . . . leans on the past and views the present serenely; we worship the future and try to decipher it. Art must be satiated; we are hungry and wish to awaken the feeling of hunger. Art is subjective, it observes and absorbs: we live and act, hope to become the objects of art of the distant future; we want to be the Achilles; art—the Homer. We must take energetic measures to get rid of the morbid mania to apply criteria to things which are not appropriate to them; to talk about development and the laws of development when there is nothing that could develop. Art and literature are abstractions, nothing more, which do not have their own development. . . The one who, today and in the near future, bothers about German poetry cannot be considered a true descendent of our great men of genius. In our times Goethe would be, perhaps, a statesman of genius or a prophet like Nietzsche—it is difficult to say which; while Lena would overcome his world sorrow and become, perhaps, a Socialist agitator of great passion."

And so literature and art are only mechanistic, calm, passive reflections of the social process and the best conditions for their development are times of peace and balanced forces but not revolutionary eras when militant young classes rise; hence the Socialist movement, the working class in its struggle for liberation do not need literature and art at all, they are harmful to them and will logically arise again in the Socialist society when it will be possible to calmly observe and contemplate the past. In this article Landauer preaches the liquidation of art in a most consequential form. But Ernst also, coming out against Laudauer in the *Neue Zeit* of 1892 declares that art exists only "for giving pleasure:" artists must give us pleasure." And if before, in 1889-

1891, Ernst still recognized the political function of art, he now writes: "Many artists undoubtedly went beyond this task (i.e., "giving us pleasure" —F.S.) and Ibsen, for instance, wishes not only to give pleasure to his hearer, but also to instil definite social views." And for this purpose, in his opinion, it is best to turn to some special investigations. Ibsen, so to say, is mixing into what is not his business. Here Ernst's Kantian conception of literature, which soon took the upper hand in his further development, already comes out clearly.

We meet with this conception of art also in other polemical articles in the *Neue Zeit* by authors from among the "youth." Art as a mechanistic "reflection" on the evolution of the social process has no problems or aims and is "simply a phenomenon"—this is the view held by these "ultra-left" liquidators. Thus, they explain, a proletarian art can only come after the working class has built the Socialist commonwealth. Here the "ultra-left" liquidators join hands with right opportunist art theoreticians of the nineties. Some of the official theoreticians of Social-Democracy of the time generally, particularly Kautsky, were not far from a similar conception. Later these views were the basis of the esthetics of the Second International. In Soviet literature these views were propounded by Trotsky who thus tried to stay the development of proletarian literature.

And so, the mechanistic errors which were a result of the entire world philosophy of the unstable temporary "fellow travelers" of Marxism of the nineties, errors of which Engels warns in his letter to Ernst—namely, that the materialist method turns into its opposite when applied mechanistically—brought Ernst and his followers to idealism. Paul Ernst left the Party and became an esthetizing idealist, the founder and chief of the socalled neoclassical school of writers and a well known dramatist. And after the war he became a fellow traveler of Guggenberg's "moderate" Fascism, wrote a book on the "collapse" of German idealism as well as Marxism and in his latest work (1930) preaches a return to God. His opponent of 1890, the Austrian impressionistic, esthetizing writer Barr, after passing through all the stages of development of bourgeois decadence literature, from naturalism through symbolism to expressionism, also came to mysticism and nationalism. And if Ernst claims that he could still pass an examination in Marxism—so well did he presumably master the methods of historical materialism during his sinful days of youth—this only confirms the estimate of his views given him by Engels in the letter to him— namely, that Ernst considers Marxism a template, a mechanistic interpretation of the social process. Where such a conception of Marxism leads in the end—this is best illustrated by the evolution of Ernst himself.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

John Strachey

Fascism and Culture

A Lecture delivered before the John Reed Club of New York[1]

I do not think it will be necessary to spend very much time in demonstrating the profoundly anti-cultural character of Fascism. The dramatic anti-cultural outbreaks of the Nazis are fresh in our minds. The public burning of the books of nearly all the greatest authors of Germany, the exile and robbing of Einstein, the exile of many of Germany's best musicians, actors and actresses, the ruin of the German cinema, and the prohibition of all modern, rational architectural methods[2] are all events which cannot be denied, but which must be understood.

"We are not, and do not wish to be, the land of Goethe and of Einstein," writes the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* (May 7th, 1933). Less literate, but even more explicit was the peroration of a Nazi street corner orator recently overheard by a friend of mine. "Whenever I hear the word 'Culture' I reach for my gun." shouted this honest barbarian.

"The greatest achievements in the intellectual world had never been accomplished by race-foreign elements, but by strictly Aryan and German intellectuals,"—Hitler's speech on April 7th, 1933.

The Führer was no doubt thinking of Heine, Einstein, Freud, Marx—to mention a few names which the outside world once thought of as the "glories of German culture."

Of far more lasting effect, however, than the dismissal of Jewish scientific workers will be the conciously anti-scientific policy which has been imposed on all institutions of learning.

In full accord with the theories of Fascism, the teaching of Science in German Universities is being increasingly displaced by a return to meta physics. An attempt is made to dress up the Nazi mythology into a presentable philosophy. The result is a sort of Spenglerian mysticism. (Is it not significant that the one intellectually considerable figure who supports Fascism, Oswald Spengler, himself explicitly predicts, and apparently approves, the decline of the West into barbarism?) The Nazi view of human culture as at best a luxury which must unhesitatingly be dispensed with if it hampers the sacred cause of natural expansion by War was well expressed by Professor Nauman at a recent teachers' conference in Cologne.

It may sound barbaric, but nevertheless it is true: Germany has an abundance of beautiful poems, splendid grammars and philosophical systems. Even if nothing new were to be

[1] Note: I have added passages to this lecture.

[2] Hitler tells us in his autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, that he considers that the British Houses of Parliament are one of the architectural masterprieces of Europe. As a some one time denizen of that building, I can appreciate to the full the abyssmal barbarism of that judgment.

added to it, we would have a treasure on which we could live for hundreds of years to come.

But of Danzig or Vienna, or of the Saar District of Eupen there is a great lack at present in Germany. For all that Danzig and Vienna are at the moment more beautiful to us than a beautiful poem and more valuable than a clever book—especially if the beautiful poem or the clever book were such that they could have been made as well in Paris or Poland. (*Berliner Borsenzeitung,* December 20th, 1933).

But not only are the highest achievements of German mathematics and physics (and there were none higher) being pushed aside by mystical metaphysics. All forms of university education are being drastically curtailed. The number of students in the universities has been cut down to one half by governmental decree. The output of books is also rapidly dropping in sheer quantity as well as in quality. The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (April 22nd, 1933) reports that the publishing output for the first quarter of 1933 was 30% below the previous year.

Finally, the teaching of a rational biology or anthropology has been made impossible by the imposition of the race manias—it would be to dignify them impermissably to call them theories—of the Nazis. Some of the numerous empty windows of the shops which are to let in Berlin are, for example, filled with pictures of heads representing the various "racial types" of the now officially imposed Gobinean, Houston-Chamberlain, Rosenberg delirium of nonsense which constitutes Nazi anthropology. The fair upstanding—if somewhat "dumb" looking—Nordic is contrasted with various "lesser breeds without the Law." The unfortunate Professors have to teach their still more unfortunate pupils that environment (such little facts, for example, as whether children get enough to eat or not), counts for nothing, and heredity (whether or not your maternal great-aunt had a long head or a broad one) counts for everything.

A few examples:

"Formerly the history of the world began in India. But now we are compelled to transfer it to the North. The Nordic race was the carrier of culture. The intellect of the world hails from the North. An absolute change has taken place in the records of the world's history and no longer can we retain the fiction about the German barbarians. The old Greeks are of German origin and so are the Indians." (*Berliner Börsen Zeitung,* 7th December, 1933).

"All the genealogists of Thuringia have been incorporated by the authorities in a Geneological Council, and are now compiling geneological tables which go right back to sixteen great-great-grandparents, for all Thuringians living at present." (*Volkishe Frauen Zeitung,* 3rd February, 1934).

Here are "The Fundamentals of Anthropology"—a learned work by Professor Hermann Gauch:—

"The non-Nordic man's teeth roots are more diagonally set than those of the animal, owing to the prominant snoutish character of his upper jaw. The Nordic man chews his food with the mouth closed by a grinding movement of his jaws, whereas the other races tend to chew with a smacking noise like the animals, owing to the pressing movement of the jaws.

"But the Nordic mouth is able to do still more. Just as real colour is of an enticing nature, so is the light red mouth of the Nordic; it entices by kissing and through that to wooing. Whereas the broad thick-lipped mouth of the non-Nordic expresses sensual lust, malicious and false grinding and pleasure yearning. The non-Nordic occupies an intermediate position between a Nordic man and an animal, he comes next to the man-apes. He is not, therefore, a 100% human being; he is, in fact, not a human being at all, if compared with the animal, but merely an intermediary, a link."

As to the French:—

"Frenchmen are not human beings and must under no circumstances be dealt with as such. If a German, nevertheless, lowers himself to treat a Frenchman humanly, he is only doing it in order not to come down to the Frenchman level.

Examples of the profoundly anti-cultural, anti-rational character of German Fascism could be multiplied indefinitely. But the facts surely are not in dispute. What we have to discuss is the reason of the deadly enmity of Fascism for every form of culture. For anti-cultural activities are by no means confined to the German Nazis. Italian Fascism, too, in a much more subtle way has proved itself utterly inimical to cultural activity. A friend of mine recently visited Italy with the object of making a study of Italian literature. My friend is not a Communist or a Marxist: she is not primarily interested in politics. What was her surprise when she discovered that there was no modern Italian literature to study.

She could obtain in the Italian bookshops no works of any importance or interest. When she asked for modern novels, belle lettres or poetry she was always given reprints of French, English, German or American books. Thus it appears that, while culture was murdered in Germany, it has slowly died in Italy. The difference in the violence of the two processes is, no doubt, accounted for by the fact that German culture was a much more powerful, much broader, a much deeper thing than Italian culture.

Capitalism and Culture

It is Fascism in general, then, not any peculiar characteristic of the Nazis, which kills culture. But why should this be so? What is there about Fascism which impels it towards every form of barbarism? What is the explanation of this organised revival of every kind of superstition and illusion? On first sight there seems to be no necessary connection between Fascism and mystical, anti-cultural activities. Why is it, then, that Fascism undeniably attempts by terror, torture and every form of violence, to break off the continuity of human thought, to end that vital cultural tradition which has come down to us through the centuries?

I do not think that the answer to this question is in doubt: the tradition of human culture, the slow, cumulative development of human thought in every field has now reached a point which must inevitably lead the mind of every man or woman, which is seized of this tradition, to certain conclusions. And these inescapable conclusions are extremely inconvenient to the most powerful interests in the capitalist world today.

Now Fascism, it can be shown quite conclusively, is a last desperate attempt to maintain the present capitalist system. It is, whatever illusions the rank and file of Fascist parties may harbour about what they are doing, an attempt on the part of the greatest capitalists and biggest bankers to maintain their power, their rule over society, at all costs. In order to do this, Fascism has, of course, certain primary tasks. It must, and does, attempt at all costs to break to pieces the political and economic organisations of the working class, *viz.,* the working class political parties, the co-operatives and trade unions.

But this, it soon turns out, is not enough. For the system which Fascism has to defend, the capitalist system, becomes every day more irrational, more inexplicable to human reason. This is what we mean when we speak of "the contradiction of capitalism": and the main and central contradiction of capitalism is the fact that our power to produce wealth increases in almost direct ratio with our actual poverty and starvation. This fact stands out more and more starkly and inescapably. The more "advanced" and "progressive" a capitalist government is, the more we find that its actual activities consist in

the organised, deliberate destruction of wealth: the ploughing in of cotton, the burning of wheat, the throwing of coffee into the sea, or in buying up an industrial plant in order that it shall never be used again. And all this destructive activity goes on while there is a great and bitter lack of commodities among vast sections of the population.

Not even the simplest mind baulks and reels before such facts. You cannot begin to find any rational explanation of why corn is being burnt in one place while people are starving for lack of it in another. The mind rebels against such a situation. And the rebellion of a man's mind is the beginning, though only the beginning, of the rebellion of the whole man.

We begin to see why it is necessary for the Fascists, whose object it is to perpetuate our more and more irrational capitalist system, to assail in every conceivable way the supremacy of human reason. You will remember the famous edict of the semi-Fascist Government of Japan which makes it illegal for the Japanese people to entertain "dangerous thoughts." It has remained for the European Fascists to take the obvious next step. They have realized that, from their point of view, all thoughts are today dangerous thoughts. They have grasped the fact that all logic and reason is dangerous to the continuance of the capitalist system. For once you begin to think about that system and its present consequences you will be driven into opposition to it.

Hence, the Nazis, both in propaganda, and by practical destructive action, attempt to prevent any mental activity which can be dignified by the name of thinking. Nazi propaganda reiterates a hundred times that cerebration is an unimportant, contemptible activity; that good Nordics "think with their blood"; that only inferior creatures, such as Jews, non-Arians, pacifists, Marxists and the like, attach importance to such logical conclusions as that twice two make four and not five. If Nordic blood tells us that two and two make five then they do. For this "blood-thinking" is superior to "brain thinking" and we should base our actions upon it. I do not think that there is any doubt but that this is the explanation of why Fascism attacks every form of culture.

But if it is thus necessary for Fascism to assail every form of human thought, human feeling and human creating, how much more must it attack what is today the one adequate synthesis of human cultural development? An immense amount of the culture and thinking which Fascism destroys is itself extremely muddled and inconclusive. A very great part of human culture is today itself in a very parlous condition. It had already got into a blind alley before ever the Fascist thugs set upon it. Accordingly it is proving easy game.

One part of human culture is intensely alive, however; it is confident, vital, and effective; it does offer an adequate clue to the situation of the human race today. We should expect, therefore, that Fascism would direct its most violent assault upon this cultural system; and this is precisely what we do find.

Now this new synthesis (I refer, of course, to dialectical materialism) is by no means discontinuous with pre-existing human culture. On the contrary, it is the direct product of that great cultural tradition which was elaborated in the last five or six centuries, that cultural tradition which came to birth in the Renaissance. This culture—which was the characteristic culture of the Western bourgeoisie,—was, on the whole, the most brilliant, if by no means the most lasting, cultural system which the human race has so far

achieved. The Western bourgeoisie in its rising, productive, progressive period did make (and I do not think we should slur over this fact) an enormous contribution to civilization. A vast, many-sided, rich culture was developed. It developed continuously without serious set-backs, without any fundamental crisis, without revealing any insurmountable contradictions within itself, up till about a hundred years ago.

What happened then? In two fields, at any rate, in the field of philosophy and in the field of economics, we can see very clearly that there occurred a decisive break. (An analogous process can, I think, be shown to have occurred, though not necessarily at exactly the same time, in other cultural fields, in religion, in painting, and even, thought not until own own day, in science.) Indeed we can choose, though, of course, somewhat arbitrarily, two men whose work marked the close of epochs in philosophy and economics. Hegel is the last of the classical philosophers: Ricardo is the last of the classical economists. Hegel in his wider field of philosophy, Ricardo in his narrower field of economics, each made an attempt to create a synthesis of all that mankind had hitherto learnt. Ricardo, for example, gave the best explanation which the human mind had up till then been able to offer of the way in which men were living, the way, that is, they were producing and then exchanging the means of life.

Ricardo is a figure to whom history has done less than justice. It was not so with his contemporaries. You will remember how Marx quotes Lord Brougham as to the effect of Ricardo's speeches on economics when he was elected to the House of Commons. Brougham said that Ricardo was so far ahead of everyone else in his economic thinking that "he appeared to have stepped down on to the floor of the House of Commons from another planet."

Ricardo was not only far ahead of the whole economic thinking of his time, but his theories have remained far ahead of all the capitalist economic thinking which has come after him. You have only to study the whole style and manner of post-Ricardian economists to find an increasing lack of something: to find a growing sense of frustration. There is, it is true, no lack of talent, of ingenuity, of subtlety. You will find more of these qualities in many of the present day capitalist economists than you will find in Ricardo; and yet you will not be able to avoid the feeling that something queer, something questionable, has crept into their thinking.

I am even less qualified to judge of philosophy than of economics, but in this field too we are often told that Hegel was the last philosopher who dared to create a system. After him eclecticism, dubiety, inconclusivness grew greater and greater. In their respective fields, Hegel and Ricardo were the last capitalist thinkers who spoke with clarity and authority. It certainly looks as if culture had there reached some sort of limit. Something in the nature of a break, of a decisive leap on to a new level, seems to have been necessary if any further advance from that level was to be achieved.

This leap took place. Marx and Engels appeared. At the beginning they worked independently, yet they came to the same process. Each of them had made a thorough study of both classical German philosophy,—culminating in Hegel, and of classical British and French economics, culminating in Ricardo. What they did was to marry these two great cultural streams; and the child or this marriage was dialectical materialism. It was by this great creative union, of which Marx and Engels were the midwives, that a way forward out of the cul-de-sac into which the rest of human thought had wandered, was found.

This advance was achieved, however, only on one condition, and that was that human thought became revolutionary. The essence, as Marx says of dialectical materialism is that it accepts nothing permanent, that it is critical to the bitter end. It puts capitalism in its place as one of a long line of social systems under which man has lived. It gives capitalism both a beginning and an end.

But it is obvious that a philosophy of this character was not going to prove very attractive to the majority of bourgeois thinkers. It is true that this new road offered a way out of the dead end into which human culture was getting; but it offered this way out only at the expense of a head-on collision with capitalism. And this was far too high a price for the great majority of the bourgeois thinkers to pay. They proved that they were bourgeois first and thinkers only a long time afterwards. Thus it was inevitable that from that day human culture, which since the Renaissance had been a unity, should break into two streams. The stream of orthodox bourgeois culture has flowed on into the sands of agnosticism, and is now fast disappearing into a more and more reactionary mysticism. The second stream, dialectical materialism, has preserved the integrity and vitality of human thought by stripping to the bone the contradictions of capitalism and openly calling for its overthrow.

It is vitally important that supporters of dialectical materialism should assert their undeniable claim to be heirs apparent to all that is best in traditional culture. It is vitally important to show that the theories of Marx and Engels did not fall from the sky; that, on the contrary, they are the only possible deduction from the pre-existing body of human thought. It is modern bourgeois culture which has broken that tradition. For bourgeois thinkers flinched from the conclusions which were logically inevitable from their own theories; for these conclusions were revolutionary.

This split into two of culture did not take place in the fields of philosophy and economics alone, although in these fields the process is most obvious. Literature, too, is an integral part of the tradition of human thought, and in this field also it will be found that about the same time, about a hundred years ago, that is, a decided change began to come over the work of representative writers and poets.

Marxist and Bourgeois Criticism

Now Marxist critics are accustomed to describe the writers of the past fifty or hundred years with two adjectives, "bourgeois" and "decadent." Both these epithets cause, I am afraid, a great deal of annoyance. We are told that they are meaningless terms of abuse; that it is grossly impertinent to apply political standards to the sacred and delicate field of aesthetics, and so on, and so on.

The American critic, Mr. Henry Hazlitt, has recently been expressing views of this sort. He adopts an attitude of calm superiority. "The greatest danger," he writes, "in short of so-called Marxist criticism in literature is that it may become infinitely boring. When we are told that Emerson, Poe, Mark Twain, Proust and Thomas Mann were bourgeois, we can only reply that this may be all very true, but that we knew it in advance and that it tells us nothing."

Mr. Hazlitt's strictures remind one of the story of the typical Englishman's reaction to any new fact. The first reaction is to say that it is all nonsense. The second reaction is, "that may be all very clever, but it is contrary to scripture." The third reaction is, "Oh yes, that is quite true, but I knew it all the time." Mr. Hazlitt has reached the third stage.

It is important for us to define exactly what we do mean when we call a writer bourgeois. For most anti-Marxist critics take a different line from Mr. Hazlitt. Mr. Hazlitt agrees that it is true that the famous writers of the past decades have been bourgeois, but claims that this fact is quite unimportant. The majority of anti-Marxist critics deny, however, that there is any such thing as a bourgeois writer. Now I think it is important for Marxists to make it clear that when they have defined a writer as being bourgeois, or as being decadent for that matter, they have by no means dismissed him. When we say, for example, that Proust and Joyce are both bourgeois and decadent, as we certainly do, we are far from denying that they were, and are, writers of genius. What we mean when we say that certain writers are bourgeois is quite simply that they are writers who wrote for and about the bourgeoisie. In most cases they were born into that class. In exceptional cases they were, like D. H. Lawrence, born into the working class, but rapidly left it and assumed the life and associations of the bourgeoisie (or, in Lawrence's case, what is left of the British aristocracy).

I shall try to show that this definition, the establishment of this category of bourgeois writers, is not, as Mr. Hazlitt thinks, an empty one. What, however, do we mean when we call recent writers decadent? We are, I take it, referring to a quality in their work which is rather hard to define briefly, but which anyone who has a grain of literary sensitiveness in him cannot fail to notice. We are pointing, for example, to such things as the enveloping waves of mysticism, the retreat into talk about "blood-consciousness," and thinking with your thighs, which always tended to mask and botch the genius of D. H. Lawrence. (The parallel between Lawrence's terminology and that of the Nazis' has often been pointed out. Lawrence was a typical—indeed, the architypal—member of the school of "the Fascist unconscious," another example of which we shall discuss in detail in a moment.) We are pointing to the narrowness of the range of Proust's field of vision. We are contrasting the unparalleled depth and comprehensiveness of his analysis of one dominant, but extremely small, part of the French population, with his perfect indifference to anything outside the ken of this particular sub-division of the French bourgeoisie and aristocracy.

What we mean when we say that these writers are decadent is that such work could only be done, for good or ill, in the closing stages of a culture. Such work always has been done at the very end of each period of civilization. The very word byzantinism, which has been coined to express it, reveals this fact. That is what we mean by the epithet decadent; but when we call them decadent, we certainly do not mean that Proust and Joyce, for example, were not, or are not, great artists. For decadence may have positive qualities of its own. It produces degrees of analytic intelligence and sensitiveness which are hardly paralleled in other epochs. The Owl of Minerva, as Hegel said, takes its flight in the evening. The sunset colors of a civilization are among its most lovely.

It would, however, be a dolt indeed who could not distinguish the differences of kind between the work of Proust, Joyce and Lawrence, and the work of Racine, Goethe and Shakespeare, for instance. The modern writers are just as intelligent, just as sensitive, and have, of course, a far wider and richer tradition of culture to build upon than the older. Yet undeniably something has gone queer, has gone strange, in their work. Non-Marxist criticism is quite impotent to tell us what that something is. It hardly even dares to mention the existence of this strange, questionable character in

even the very best examples of modern work. It is only in the light of dialectical materialism that this phenomenon can be explained.

These writers were, or are, a part of existing civilization; existing civilization is a bourgeois civilization; and bourgeois civilization is in headlong decline. This fully accounts for the peculiar characteristics which we notice in its greatest writers. When we call these writers bourgeois, we are, of course, very far from suggesting that they are conscious propagandists for the capitalists or for the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, these writers do not think of capitalism or the bourgeoisie as categories at all. They are too much part of capitalism for that. They are so entirely within the bourgeoisie that they cannot even for a second get outside and look back at the system or the class as a whole. They reflect the characteristics of their epoch automatically, unconsciously, and therefore with perfect fidelity. This is what we mean when we say that they are bourgeois artists. We are not using the term bourgeois as a term of abuse, we are using it as an indispensable term of definition. We are setting up the categories by means of which alone the present condition of culture is explicable.

Moreover, it is vitally important that we should do this. Mr. Hazlitt, for example, is quite wrong when he suggests there is no need for Marxism to make these definitions because everyone already accepts them. On the contrary, nine conservative literary critics out of ten (including Mr. Hazlitt himself on other occasions) deny the very existence of the categories bourgeois and non-bourgeois as applied to literature. They represent art and literature as an enormous and sacrosanct unity, unrelated to anything else in life, uncontaminated with the dirty, nasty affairs of man, floating somewhere aloft, not perhaps in the air, for that would be too material, but in a kind of beautiful vacuum.

I notice that in America this attitude is being maintained by conservative literary critics with increasing difficulty. In America there exist very lively controversies on literature, culture and politics. These controversies are very much livelier and better than anything we have in Great Britain, I can assure you. Serious inroads have been made into the complacency of the American critics. In Great Britiain we have achieved no such progress. There every respectable literary critic, not excluding some who have the insolence to call themselves Communists, such as Mr. Middleton Murry, would rather commit suicide than apply a rational, political and economic critique to literature. I should now like to attempt to exemplify some of these general conceptions by considering one or two particular examples of present day literature.

The Fascist Unconscious

The first example I should like to take is that remarkable poem by Mr. Archibald Macleish entitled, *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City*. I shall spend what may seen a disproportionate amount of time upon this poem, because it is, I think, more satisfactory to analyse in some detail one striking example of a given school of thought than to mention several inadequately.

Now it is obvious that both in this case and in our examples of other schools of contemporary writers we shall be mainly occupied with adverse criticism. But this fact does not mean that the works under our discussion are bad. On the contrary, it would obviously be a sheer waste of time to talk about Mr. MacLeish's poem, for example, unless its author had had the skill, imagination, and talent to make a true poem. Unless the thing existed as a

poem—and that is more than can be said of nine-tenths of modern verse—we would not waste a moment upon it.

It is, as a matter of fact, precisely because Mr. MacLeish is a writer of a high order of ability that it is worth while to point out what he is writing about. From the very outset our method of criticism must depart from the established methods of bourgeois criticism. Bourgeois criticism is in the main an attempt to establish a hierarchy of works of art, to say that this poem is better than that, but not so good as a third, etc., etc. We are not primarily concerned with this question.—Obviously we shall only discuss works that do succeed in expressing adequately what their author meant to express. But what we are here and for the moment concerned with is the thing expressed. What we want to find out is what Mr. MacLeish is saying. Nor shall we be deterred from this quest by the fact that the author of the poem himself may not be wholly aware of what he has said. He will, we shall find, retreat into the position that his poem did not mean anything in particular, that it was just "art." But we shall have to examine the poem for ourselves, and see whether, perhaps by mistake, it has not got a meaning.

As a matter of fact, of course, *Frescoes for Mr Rockefeller's City* is chock full of meaning. Mr. MacLeish does himself a gross injustice when he suggests that it is not. Mr. MacLeish has made articulate a particular and very characteristic mood of the present day, and has done so most effectively and fully. Now my chairman (Michael Gold) has already given the right name to the thing which Mr. MacLeish expresses; he has called it, "The Fascist Unconscious." When Michael Gold said this in his review of the poem in the *New Republic* he caused something of a sensation. The allegation was strenuously denied. Let us, however, see for ourselves.

Now you will remember that the first of the six sections into which *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City* is divided is entitled, "Landscape as a Nude." This section consists of an eloquent personification of the American continent. The "she" of the poem is America, whom Mr. MacLeish conceives as a mighty female figure—lying prone upon the American continent,—a sort of heroic Epstein statue. And very well he conveys the image. Here is a stanza:—

> *She lies on her left side her flank golden:*
> *Her hair is burned black with the strong sun:*
> *The scent of her hair is of rain in the dust on her shoulders:*
> *She has brown breasts and the mouth of no other country.*

Now I would be the last man to object to the expression in poetry or anywhere else of a man's natural love of his own country. We must, and should, all of us, have deep roots in that particular part of the earth upon which we were born. (You remember Lenin's strong expression of his pride in the Great Russian race). Moreover, nobody could suggest that this section of the poem has anything jingoistic about it. There is no taint of Kipling here. Yet despite this, and despite its considerable beauty, the section, even at first reading, causes a certain uneasiness. One cannot help feeling that Mr. MacLeish is somehow being a little busy about being an American.

This feeling is confirmed when one comes to the fourth section of the poem, "Oil Painting of the Artist as the Artist." You will remember that this is an amusing piece of satire on the American esthete ex-patriot—much in the manner of Mr. Elliot. The plump Mr. Pl'f has gone to Pau because *There is too much of your flowing Mississippi: He prefers a tidier stream with*

terraces for trippers and. . . This section semed to me to provide the key to a certain unsatisfying quality in Mr. Mac Leish's idealization of America. It suddenly made one realize that his mood is, to a certain extent at any rate, merely one of reaction against Henry James: that Mr. MacLeish is himself an inverted Henry James. Naturally a reaction against the absurd tradition that American artists have to fly to Europe because no art could exist in America is entirely justified. But surely at this time of day Americans should have done both with that original flight and with the reaction against it? At any rate, until they have they will not produce very satisfactory poetry expressing a love of country.

These sections of the poem give us a suspicion that there is something wrong with Mr. MacLeish's patriotic verse, however cultivated its expression may be. But it is not until we come to the last section that we realise whither patriotism, even of Mr. MacLeish's esoteric type, must lead to today. The last and sixth section of Mr. MacLeish's poem is entitled "Background with Revolutionaries." This section is a satirical attempt to show that the Jewish, or immigrant, revolutionaries of New York City, who speak in broken English, or with an accent, can have nothing to do with America or with American culture. It is composed of alternate stanzas in which (somewhat mechanically) the objectionableness, futility and general "untouchability" of New York revolutionaries is contrasted with the "great open spaces" of America, which are, it seems, all that matters. Here are typical stanzas:

Also Comrade Levine who writes of America
Most instructively having in 'Seventy-four
Crossed to the Hoboken side of the Barclay Street Ferry...

"Ain't you read in d'books you are all brudders?
D'glassic historic objective broves you are brudders!
You and d'Wopps and d'Chinks you are all brudders!

Havend't you got it d'same ideology? Havend't you?
When it's yesterday in Oregon it's one A.M. in Maine
And she slides: and the day slides: and it runs: runs over us:

And the bells strike twelve strike twelve strike twelve
In Marblehead in Buffalo in Cheyenne in Cherokee
Yesterday runs on the states like a crow's shadow. . ."

The more one thinks over this section of the poem, the more unbelievably caddish it seems. It is really an astonishing piece of work for Mr. MacLeish to have written. It shows the ungovernable strength of his class dislikes. For I am sure that, except when expressing those dislikes, he would never have dreamt of writing this kind of thing. Mr. MacLeish, no doubt, has a strong, though perhaps unconscious, belief in what are called the standards and traditions of a gentleman, in the tradition of the old American stock. Now if the term "a gentleman" means anything at all, it must surely mean precisely the kind of man who would never conceive of making fun of the fact that other people had received a less good education than himself: that they talked the English language with an accent, for example. We are here faced by the extraordinary fact that the appeal which Mr. McLeish makes

in this section of his poem to the gentlemanly tradition of the old American stock is, in fact, a violation of all that is best in that tradition.

Now let us look at the poem as a whole. You will remember that the other sections are concerned in describing, often in effective imageries, the heroic conquest of the American continent by plain Americans—workers and peasants as we should say—and then the filching of the land from these, its real makers, by the great capitalists. There is some effective satire at the expense of Mellon, Morgan, Harriman, Vanderbilt, and the rest:

You have just beheld the Makers making America:
They screwed her scrawny and gaunt with their seven-year panics:
They bought her back on their mortgages old-whore-cheap:
They fattened their bonds at her breasts till the thin blood ran from them:

Men have forgotten how full clear and deep
The Yellowstone moved on the gravel and grass grew
When the land lay waiting for her westward people!

Well, you may ask, what is wrong with this? Nothing is wrong with this. But what we have to do is to put together the two emotions which Mr. MacLeish has expressed in these two different sections of the poem. On the one hand there is this perfectly genuine emotion of revolt against the great bankers, and on the other hand, in the last section of the poem, there is expressed an equally strong revulsion against the actual masses—against the urban masses in particular. For these masses are largely either Jewish, or ill-educated or foreign born. Moreover, they *are* apt to insist that "Wops" and "Chinks" and all sorts of foreigners are also human beings, with perhaps as good a right to exist as the old American stock.

Now where have these two emotions of revolt—of revolt against the bankers, of the revolt against anything foreign—appeared together before? The answer is that they have appeared in the rank and file of every Fascist movement in the world. These two emotions are precisely, as Michael Gold has said, the unconscious background of Fascism.

These emotions are being spontaneously generated by the present social situation in the minds of certain types and certain sections of the population all over the world,—just as they have been generated in the mind of Mr. MacLeish. This is the mental soil out of which Fascism grows. The fact that there are many Mr. MacLeishes amongst the middle classes of the world, many men, that is, who feel the necessity for some revolt against the existing situation, but who also feel that it is quite impossible to identify themselves with the only people who can, in fact, undertake that revolt, with the working masses, is the crucial fact which gives Fascism its chance.

For, of course, if this mood is the emotional subsoil of Fascism, it is far from being the finished flower. The complex and contradictory emotions which Mr. MacLeish makes articulate in this poem are only the raw material. This raw material is seized upon by far more clear sighted, if far less sincere, men than Mr. MacLeish. A Fascist Movement which at the beginning appears to express both strands of emotion comes into being. The Movement appears to be equally anti-banker and anti-Jew, anti-Communist and anti-Red. But then, by a now familiar and quite inevitable transition, each Fascist movement, under the leadership of ambitious and practical men—such as Mr. Lawrence Dennis in America for example—makes its peace with the great bankers and monopolists. It will not even be necessary for the

Fascist leaders to suppress altogether the anti-big banker propaganda. Mr. MacLeish, for example, will be allowed to continue to write his sarcastic comments on the way the House of Morgan has secured the title deeds of the American continent. For the House of Morgan will be quite willing to finance a movement which is expressing effectively in action its hatred of the urban revolutionaries,—of the only people, that is, who can bring consciousness, intelligence, and direction to the revolt of the American masses—even if the poets and the propagandists of such a movement let off a little steam now and then!

In the section in which Mr. MacLeish is satirising the revolutionaries, he writes:

> *For Marx has said to us Workers what do you need?*
> *And Stalin has said to us Starvers what do you need?*
> *You need the Dialectical Materialism!*

It has evidently never occured to Mr. MacLeish that it is just possible that dialectical materialism is precisely what the American masses *do* need in order that they should cease to be "starvers." In an earlier part of his poem he idealizes the "hunkies," good honest fellows who built the great transcontinental railroads, and then had them filched from them by the rich:

> *But there's nothing good in the world but that the rich won't buy it:*
> *Everything sticks to the grease of a gold note—*
> *Even a continent—even a new sky!*

Does it not occur to Mr. MacLeish that the workers have had the world filched from them just because they lack an adequate conscious grasp of what is happening? Is it not possible that dialectical materialism, which is, precisely, an adequate synthesis of all the facts of the modern situation, is what alone can set them free? Is it not rather convenient for the Morgans and the rest that there should be a Fascist party encouraged by the gentleman poets, which will pogromise and murder the revolutionary intelligentsia, who are the people who can bring this essential knowledge to the workers? Would it not be well for Mr. MacLeish to reflect on what has been the result in Italy and in Germany of the very mood which he is expressing?

The last line of his poem, however, tells us that *There is too much sun on the lids of my eyes to be listening.* It is all too probable that there is. But there is little enough sun on the lids of the eyes of the vast majority of the American people. And they will sooner or later listen to the only knowledge that can make them free.

The controversy which the poem and Michael Gold's review of it excited in the American Liberal reviews was revealing. Mr. MacLeish replied, it will be remembered, to both Gold's review and the comments of Malcolm Cowley, that really his poem did not mean anything at all; it was just pure art. He denied, for example, that he had expressed any anti-semitic sentiments in the poem. This was remarkable. Mr. MacLeish was reduced to the really childish argument that, because the particular word "Jew" does not occur in his poem, which instead gives a satirical imitation of the Yiddish accent, he had made no mention of the Jewish question!

Mr. MacLeish goes on to say that Mr. Gold is evidently afraid—afraid of being persecuted. Now one is tempted to become extremely bitter when men like Mr. MacLeish, who live in the perfect security of being on the side of the seemingly overwhelming force at the disposal of capitalism, accuse us,

who are on the other side, of being frightened. I cannot, of course, speak for Gold, but I speak for myself when I say, "Yes, of course, I am frightened." Anyone who sees the necessity of fighting capitalism and realizes what capitalism will do, who sees what capitalism has done in Germany, and who sees the approach of war, would be a lunatic if he were not frightened. It is easy for those who are at the breach end of the capitalist machine guns to accuse those who are at the muzzle end of being frightened.

Finally, there was a delightful postscript to the MacLeish-Gold controversy. Carl Sandburg, to whom *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City* is dedicated, wrote to the *New Republic* to tell us that he had gone round his Jewish acquaintances showing them the poem, and that he had discovered several Jews who could see nothing anti-semitic in it. That seemed to me to dispose once and for all of that horrid libel that all Jews are clever.

When one reflects on the whole emotional position which Mr. MacLeish has expressed in his poem, one sees that its author's predicament is analogous to the predicament of Byron. You remember how Hazlitt (I mean the early Nineteenth Century essayist, not Mr. Henry Hazlitt, whom I have quoted above), summed up that predicament when he said that Byron could not bear a lord who was not a wit, or a wit who was not a lord. In the same way, Mr. MacLeish cannot bear a Harvard man who is not a revolutionary, or a revolutionary who is not a Harvard man. Naturally, it would make the world a much easier place to live in if all the revolutionaries were perfectly educated, had had every advantage, knew how to put the revolutionary case in the most tactful, effective, and neatest way possible. It is, however, in the very nature of things that the working class, which is emerging to overthrow capitalism, emerges without a Harvard education, without the advantages (but without the crippling disadvantages either) which only centuries of secure and leisured living can give: that it emerges rough, and often clumsy and tactless; that we who attempt to be its spokesmen sometimes express ourselves pedantically and ineffectively.

I am going to say something which may be difficult to believe. And that is that when we have expressed all our legitimate bitterness against the point of view of Mr. MacLeish's poem, we should remember that its author is probably blissfully unconscious that he is a Fascist. I do not believe that Marxists always allow sufficiently for the political illiteracy of their opponents. They sometimes mistake ignorance for vice. Lenin, you remember, when he was asked, in April 1917, what was the main duty of the Bolshevik, replied "patiently to explain."

It may be worth while to contrast Mr. MacLeish's poem with another modern poem which also deals with the love of country. I would like to do so in order to try to establish a line between poetry which is on the side of the workers, and poetry which is on the side of the capitalists. (We must, of course, unhesitatingly place Mr. MacLeish's poem, in spite of, I daresay, of its author's intentions, on the capitalist side of that line.) I take a poem by Stephen Spender, to show that there is nothing incompatible between the expression of tender love of one's country and being upon the side of the working class. I may myself be accused of a subtle form of chauvinism in in thus favorably contrasting an English poem with an American. May I assure you that what makes me do so is not chauvinism, but ignorance? I am sure that there are many, and very likely superior, American revolutionary poems I could have taken had I known them. I would, however, like to read you this poem by Stephen Spender. It is called "The Pylons," by

which the poet means the masts carrying the wires distributing electrical current—masts which are at present being built all over England:—

The secret of these hills was stone, and cottages
Of that stone made,
And crumbling roads
That turned on sudden hidden villages.
Now over these small hills they have built the concrete
That trails black wire:
Pylons, those pillars
Bare like nude, giant girls that have no secret.
The valley with its gilt and evening look
And the green chestnut
Of customary root
Are mocked dry like the parched bed of a brook.
But far above and far as sight endures
Like whips of anger
With lightning's danger
There runs the quick perspective of the future.
This dwarfs our emerald country by its trek
So tall with prophecy:
Dreaming of cities
Where often clouds shall lean their swan-like neck.

Well, it is a slight thing by a young man. But it does, I think, show that love of country is not incompatible with love of the future instead of love of the past: that it is not incompatible with Communism. As a matter of fact, Mr. Spender is not, I understand, a Communist by any means. But his work does, whatever confusions there may be in it, seem to be definitely on our side of that line between the camp of the workers and the camp of the capitalists which I have attempted to draw. He, and the group of young English poets, (of which Mr. Auden is perhaps the best known) who are associated with him, have crossed some essential border line. They have definitely broken the bonds which constrain all literature which remains within the framework of the existing order. They have crossed a rubicon and come out upon the side of the new world.

The World-Weary School of Writers

I now want to say a little about another school of bourgeois writers of today. I would call this school, in contrast to the Fascist school, the world-weary school.

Now this school of writers are the heirs, though, to my mind, the degenerate heirs, of a very great tradition. They are the heirs to what has been perhaps the greatest tradition in human culture, the tradition of the tragic view of life. Certainly this stream of human thought and feeling has produced the greatest writers and artists who have hitherto existed. From Shakespeare to Pascal, to Dostoyevsky, there is hardly a giant of literature who must not be placed in this category. (Though I think Tolstoy, in spite of the almost unlimited tragedy of his life cannot be so placed). In the present day representatives of this school, however, a sad decline is apparent. A sense of tragedy has degenerated into a sense of despair; and a sense of despair has been succeeded by a mere sense of depression. The burning

insight into the nature of the universe, possessed by the masters of this tradition, has now become mere ingenuity. There are many representatives of this school in Great Britain. You have here in America a very considerable artist, Ernest Hemingway, of whom I want to speak in a few minutes, who belongs to the school of despair. (He, however, has escaped a great deal of its degeneracy).

As a first example, however, I should like to take that well known book, *The Modern Temper,* by Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch. It is a useful book because it is a work of literary theory and criticism and, therefore, states explicitly, instead of implicitly, the world view of this school. Mr. Krutch voices the main issue which interests us here with very great clarity. He states, in particular, more specifically than any one else has yet done the view which lies behind the world-weary school's criticism of the revolutionary position.

You will remember the passage in which he tells us that the revolutionary school of writers may be all very well in their way, but that, of course, they are simple-minded, primitive people, who entertain all sorts of utopian hopes about the prospects of the human race. He ridicules us for believing in such things as the possibility of the human race becoming happy: for holding illusions which no really cultivated man of the world could entertain for a moment. Here is the sort of thing I have in mind:—

> Communistic Utopianism is based upon the assumption that the only maladjustments from which mankind suffers are social in character and hence it is sustained by the belief that in a perfect state all men would be perfectly happy. Fundamentally materialistic, it refuses to remember that physical well being is no guarantee of felicity and that, as a matter of act, as soon as the individual finds himself in a perfectly satisfactory physical environment he begins to be aware of those more fundamental maladjustments which subsist, not between man and society, but between the human spirit and the natural universe. And though, for this reason, it must seem to the cultivated European essentially naive, yet in that very naivete lies its strength as a social philosophy. Thanks to the fact that the perfect Communist is not ware of the existence of any problems more subtle than those involved in the production and distribution of wealth, he can throw himself into the business of living with a faith in the value of what he is doing and he can display an energy in practical affairs not to be equalled by any one incapable of a similar belief in their ultimate importance.

It is difficult for us to remain calm under the air of patronage which Mr. Krutch assumes. The short answer to this particular passage is to say that "communistic utopianism" may well do this—whatever "communistic utopianism" may be. In other words, it may be quite true that if there are utopians amongst Communists (and I daresay there are), no doubt they fall into this error. But for Mr. Krutch to suppose that real communists, real Marxists, people, that is, who have even a general acquaintance with dialectical materialism, could conceivably take up the position he describes, merely reveals his perfect ignorance of the theory and practice of Communism.

For what does Mr. Krutch's paragraph mean? His implication is that we believe that in a perfect state men will be perfectly happy. (I will let the word "state" pass, though Mr. Krutch's use of it reveals once more his lack of knowledge of even the first elements of Marxist theory). He alleges, that is to say, that Communists believe that a Utopia of perfect happiness can be created simply and easily by solving the present economic problem.

Now there is not one word in the works of Marx, Engels or Lenin, which gives justification for any such view. What the masters of dialectical materialism did conclude was that it was now possible, on the extant technical

basis, to create (though not without the greatest difficulty), a society which would be able more or less rapidly to solve the economic problem, to create, that is to say, universal material plenty, and so produce a classless society. But I do not know of any single word in the writings of any authoritative Marxist which suggests that in such a society man would be perfectly happy.

Presumably, indeed, a perfectly happy world would be a perfectly static world, and, as I understand dialectical materialism, that philosophy demonstrates that no such society will ever be created. Dialectical materialism, I take it, teaches that when the present contradictions in human life—the contradictions inherent in our present antagonistic social order, composed of the opposites of luxury and starvation—have been overcome then indeed a new kind of society will arise. But in this new society the dialectic will still be working. The new world order will not be static. It will not, on the other hand, contain those contradictions of class which have characterized human society so far. On the contrary, it will contain new contradictions of its own. What these new contradictions will be neither Marx, Lenin nor Engels revealed. And they did not do so for the excellent reason that they did not know.

Neither they nor we know anything of the problems, the difficulties, the agonies perhaps, through which the human race in that future time will be passing. But that does not mean that we fall into the silly error of supposing that humanity will then have reached some static utopia. All that Marx, Engels and Lenin did believe was that the struggles, problems and contradictions of that new Communist society would be different, and would be higher, in the sense of more developed, than are our struggles, contradictions and problems.

These are the simple facts which reveal the ignorance and irrelevance of the strictures of Mr. Krutch and his school. The truth of the matter is that Mr Krutch has lost his way. He sees that within the confines of his form of society—of capitalist society, that is to say—there is no way of preventing the destruction of human civilization. Being a sensitive man, he is haunted and appalled by this fact. He can see that on his premises there is no way out. And, therefore, he supposes there is no way out at all.

All the world -weary school are very fond, you will notice, of one particular phrase. They talk of the "permanent human predicament in the universe." But they commit the error of supposing that man's predicament, man's "problem," as Mr. Krutch puts it, will always be the same. Truly man will always be in a predicament; that we can believe. But we certainly cannot believe that it will always be the same predicament. For what does this phrase "man's predicament in the universe" mean? Presumably what is indicated by this phrase is that group of painful problems which arise from the relationship of man to the universe as a whole.

Now I believe that when people use this concept, they are really thinking of one particular and pressing problem which is, consciously or unconsciously, in the minds of most men; and that is the problem of death. The knowledge of the certainty of the extinction of our own consciousness is a knowledge which is in the sharpest contradiction to the whole of man's wishes. And now that the older, religious way of dealing with this problem, the way of wishing it away by systematically cultivating a belief in survival after death in heaven, has fallen into disuse, this problem, and the subjective conflict which it raises, is becoming even more oppressive.

For it has never occurred to most cultivated people of today, since they

are usually quite uninterested in Science, that if the older way of securing, if not the reality of immortality, yet a belief in that reality, has failed us, a new and real possibility of what almost amounts to immortality, if not for us, then for our descendants, is emerging. I would like to give you an example of what I mean. One of my books contains a sentence in which I imply that the question of human survival is not a fixed and definite one. The sentence contains the words "death might be definitely postponed." Now it has interested me to notice that all non-scientific people who have commented on this sentence have ridiculed it. Several of my friends have told me that it was really too absurd of me to suggest that science would ever be able indefinitely to postpone human death. On the other hand, all the scientists to whom I have spoken on the point take the suggestion entirely seriously. They do not know, of course. Nobody knows whether death can be indefinitely postponed. But responsible modern scientists will tell you that equally certainly nobody can be sure that it will not be. There are, it seems, rather serious scientific reasons to suppose that it may be.

Now I have taken up this question of death as a very extreme case. I have instanced it to show that even in this extreme case it is no longer possible to take man and his relation to his environment as a fixed quantity. I have taken it to show that large scale, serious changes in that relationship are now taking place, changes which are radically altering man's relationship to the universe. This does not prove, of course, that they are not altering it for the worse rather than for the better, but it does make nonsense of the idea that there is a permanently fixed "predicament" for man *vis-a-vis* the universe, a predicament which has never altered and will never alter.

The criticism of Communism put forward by Mr. Wood Krutch and the world-weary school is simply this. Communism is no good because at best it only solves the economic and social problem. But the real problem is not the problem of man and society, but the problem of man and nature. And this problem is static, eternal and insoluble. The truth is, however, that man's relationship with the inanimate part of the universe is being changed even more rapidly by science than his relationship with his fellow men is being changed by revolution.

Ernest Hemingway takes, in a way, the same point of view as Mr. Krutch. But Hemingway expresses the emotions which Mr. Krutch merely describes Moreover, it would be grossly inadequate to call Ernest Hemingway world-weary. In him the tragic tradition has turned to frenzy rather than to depression. He is an artist of very considerable stature. In some of the stories of his last book, called characteristically *Winner Takes Nothing,* Mr. Hemingway has expressed more adequately than ever before his ferocious despair at the condition of the world.

He would, of course, insist that this despair has little or nothing to do with the decay and oncoming break-up of the present social order; that it expressed nothing which is not permanently true of all ages and civilizations. The facts of history, however, do not allow us to accept this view. Certainly men felt at all times what Freud has called the burden of civilization. But it is only in epochs like the present, when an extant form of society has exhausted all its possibilities of development, that this burden has become universally intolerable. These are the epochs of the great nihilist writers. And Mr. Hemingway, at his best, bids fair to rank with them.

You will have read what seems to me the most perfect of all his short stories, the little piece of only a thousand words or so, entitled "A Clean,

Well Lighted Place." The story consists of a conversation between two waiters in a Spanish cafe. These are the parting reflections of one of them:

"Good night," the other said. Turning off the electric light he continued the conversation with himself. "It is the light, of course, but it is necessary that the place be clean and pleasant. You do not want music. Certainly you do not want music. Nor can you stand before a bar with dignity although that is all that is provided for those hours. What did he fear? It was not fear or dread. It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order. Some lived in it and never felt it, but he knew it all was nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada. Our nada, thou art in nada, nada be thy name, thy kingdom nada, our will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee."

More explicitly political is the conclusion of that other, less perfect, but still extremely effective story, "Gambler, Nun and Radio." Some Mexicans, one of whom is a revolutionary, come to visit Mr. Hemingway in a hospital.

The revolutionary is represented as pedantic and absurd. He will not drink because wine "mounts to his head." Religion, he tells Hemingway, is the opium of the people:—

Religion is the opium of the people. He believed that, that dyspeptic little joint-keeper. Yes, and music is the opium of the people. Old mount-to-the-head hadn't thought of that. And now economics is the opium of the people; along with patriotism, the opium of the people in Italy and Germany. What about sexual intercourse; was that an opium of the people? Of some of the people. Of some of the best of the people. But drink was a sovereign opium of the people, oh, an excellent opium. Although some prefer the radio, another opium of the people, a cheap one he had just been using. Along with these went gambling, an opium of the people if there ever was one, one of the oldest. Ambition was another, an opium of the people, along with a belief in any new form of government. What you wanted was the minimum of government, always less government. Liberty, what we believed in, now the name of a MacFadden publication. We believed in that although they had not found a new name for it yet. But what was the real one? But what was the real, the actual, opium of the people? He knew it very well. It was gone just a little way around the corner in that well-lighted part of his mind that was there after two or more drinks in the evening; that he knew was there (it was not really there, of course). What was it? Of course; bread was the opium of the people. Would he remember that and would it make sense in the daylight? Bread is the opium of the people.

Hemingway has at length made perfectly clear his real objection to the revolutionary position. Revolution and Communism are no good because they preserve life. They do give people life and bread, and life and bread are no good. The only thing which is not the opium of the people, it is clear, is death. This is certainly a novel criticism. But it is a perfectly logical one from the nihilist point of view.

The American Revolutionary Writers

We have spent a good deal of time criticising our opponents, so it is perhaps necessary that we should, at any rate, say a word of criticism of ourselves. You in America are fortunate in that you are developing a revolutionary literature which is worth criticising. You have the beginnings here of what promises to be a rich school of revolutionary thought and feeling. Now we are all very good at criticising our opponents, or even our friends. I am thinking of writers in the position of Stephen Spender or Auden, the poets I have been speaking of. These writers have been very severely taken to task for their lack of insight into the social and political theory of the

working class movement. And no doubt they are by no means perfect masters of Leninism and Marxism. But it would be a mistake, I think, to suppose that on that account they are bad poets. It would be indeed a blunder if we tried to pretend that a man was a bad poet because he was a bad Marxist, and a good poet because he was a good Marxist. If this were true, it, also, would make the world a nice, simple, easy and tidy place to live in. Unfortunately, however, reality is not of this character. And I would put in a plea for a certain tolerance to writers of merit who are, in the broadest sense of the word, on the right side of the fence. The Russians have found a very good word for these writers. They call them fellow travelers. And I believe that we should do ourselves no harm if we showed an understanding of the problems and the difficulties of our fellow travelers, of people who are definitely not of us, but who are with us. It is not, of course, that such writers should not be criticised. But would it not be well if we criticised them tolerantly, if we emphasized those parts of their writing in which they approached the Marxist position rather than those parts where they leave it most behind?

On the other hand, it does seem to me that there is a field in which we cannot too strictly criticise the work of our own writers. Their political thinking, their knowledge of Marxism may be beyond question; but that, surely should not free them from the sternest attempt to evaluate their work as literature. We are some times a little apt to pretend, to wish, to suggest that such writers are necessarily better writers, because they are more politically correct, than are our fellow travelers. Surely we should be on our guard against this natural desire? Surely we should apply our strictest standards to our own writers? Let us take an example.

The American revolutionary movement has just had the signal good fortune to have been endowed with a large scale work of literary criticism from a fully Marxist writer. I refer to Granville Hicks' *The Great Tradition.* Let me say at once that the American revolutionary movement should be immensely proud of the fact that at this early stage in its history it has been able to produce a work of such scope and maturity. Certainly no comparable work of literary criticism has been done in Great Britain.

The supreme merit of Granville Hicks' book is his irrefutable demonstration that American revolutionary writers are the heirs to the essential tradition of American literature: that they are, to put it paradoxically, political revolutionaries just because they are cultural conservatives! That they have grasped the simple but central fact of our epoch—namely, that today everything of value in human culture can only be preserved by revolution. Granville Hicks writes:—

> On the one hand lies repudiation of the best of the American literary past. On the other, the fulfilment of all that was dreamed of and worked for in the past, and the beginning of struggle for more than the past could ever have hoped.

One side, at any rate, of the cultural task of the revolutionary is today eminently conservative in the strictest sense of the word. For he has, as I have tried to demonstrate, to conserve human culture from the vandalism of Fascism. But this "revolutionary conservatism" cannot possibly be devoted to attempting to prop up the threadbare sham of capitalist democracy. It can only be devoted to providing a new and solid basis for human culture in the form of a working class dictatorship.

How strong, too, is Mr. Hicks in his account of the development of the American tradition. He has just the right blend of shrewdness and generos-

ity, as, for example, when he says of Thoreau, "Nothing in American literature is more admirable than Henry Thoreau's devotion to his principles, but the principles are, unfortunately, less significant than the devotion!" How excellently, also, he sums up the dangers which must confront a writer with a defined political standpoint. He says of the writers of the pre-war American Socialist Party, of Sinclair and of London in particular:—"Their work, unfortunately, shows that official allegiance to a theory and the development of a way of looking at life are two different things."

And yet does Mr. Hicks quite escape himself from some of the dangers which he points out? He ascribes Upton Sinclair's worst faults to "his failure to undergo an intense intellectual discipline." This is both true and illuminating. But on the same page he accuses Sinclair of writing for the middle class. Is this quite fair? Who else could Sinclair write for? Who does Granville Hicks write for? Does he expect the mass of the American workers, excluded as they have been from access to American culture, to appreciate his books? And does he think that they could afford them, in any case? Of course he does not. He, too, writes for the intellectual middle class and for individual worker-intellectuals. Until the workers have won power and free access to the good things of life there is no one else to write for.

The real trouble with Sinclair is not that he writes for the middle class. It is precisely that he is not equipped with that "intense intellectual discipline which can alone prevent an author, himself springing from the middle class, and necessarily writing for a section, at any rate, of that class, from becoming "a middle class author"—from writing, consciously or unconsciously in the interests of the middle class. It is in his scathing, but always measured, denunciations that Granville Hicks is at his most effective. I wish I had time for his "immense" passage on Cabell, beginning: "This Virginia gentleman and geneologist." In dealing with the young bourgeois writers of the present day, however,—with Faulkner and with Hemingway, for example,—Granville Hicks seems to me less satisfactory. It was certainly brilliant to call Faulkner "the Sax Rohmer of the sophisticated." But was it an adequate description? What Hicks says, in essence is that Faulkner does not give a genuine description of the horrors of present day life in the South. That, instead of a realistic account, he makes up a lot of artificial horrors in order to give his readers a thrill. Now it cannot be denied that Faulkner's books are far from realistic. But could "Marxist realism" actually convey to the reader the impression of frenzied decay which Faulkner, somehow or other, and in spite of all the melodrama and cheapness, does get across?

For my part I do not think that a Marxist writer could do this particular thing: for he would stand outside and describe the horrors of the South. The strength of Faulkner's books is that they and their author are obviously, in many senses, a part of the thing which they describe. That is why Faulkner writes unrealistically, indirectly and symbolically. Truly his symbols are often melodramatic. (And were not Dostoyevsky's for that matter?) But yet Faulkner does often succeed. Perhaps his very unconsciousness of what it is all about helps him to do so. (It is true that Erskine Caldwell has shown how much can be done by the method of direct, simple and realistic description).

Then again take Granville Hicks' devastating four pages on Hemingway. No one can possibly deny the accuracy of his charge. No one can pretend

that Hicks' sharp intelligence has not pierced through Hemingway's blustering defence for his own terror and impotence before the world. All the same, as Granville Hicks passed under review each of the more prominent writers of our day, and deals with one more devastatingly than another, a certain doubt begins to rise in our minds. He tells us so much about these writers; and yet there seems to be something left out. It is as if Hicks were to give you a long, detailed and accurate description of two sisters. He would tell you that one was fair and the other dark, that one had red hair and the other black. He would give you their precise facial measurements; he would inform you, with unimpeachable accuracy, that one had a nose of so many centimetres and the other eyebrows of so many. He would give a far more accurate description than is contained in any passport or police record. And yet you might still feel that something was lacking in his description. And when you met the sisters you would discover what it was. You would discover that Granville Hicks had forgotten to tell you that one was beautiful and the other plain.

To drop the analogy, it does seem to me that Granville Hicks falls sometimes into an error which, as I was suggesting above, is a tempting one for Marxist critics. He hardly seems to pay enough attention to the merits of writers as writers. There is a slurring over, for example, of Hemingway's power to create adequate images for his own nihilism, an attempt to belittle what cannot be belittled. And yet, as Hicks shows in a dozen places in his book, he has a most sensitive and genuine appreciation of literature. It would be a thousand pities if his strong sense of his responsibility, as the foremost Marxist literary critic of America, which he certainly is, should force him to stifle his aesthetic sensibility.

It is indeed of vital importance that Marxist writers and critics should have mastered the very highest achievements of the art and literature which has been developed in the four centuries of the bouregois dominance of the world. For, as I have attempted to show in the first half of this lecture, that culture is now destroying itself with unparalleled rapidity. This puts an enormous responsibility upon those artists and writers who have accepted the new world. For these revolutionary writers are, in fact, the sole means by which the great heritage of human culture can be passed on, can be transmitted from the old world to the new. Fascism and the spirit of Fascism will more and more rapidly destroy what remains of bourgeois culture. Already in Italy and Germany cultural life is impossible. It will rapidly become so everywhere else in the capitalist world. All those writers who refuse to accept the necessity of the working class revolution will find themselves utterly frustrated. Some of the unconscious Fascists will, no doubt, become conscious Fascists. But they will find that Fascism provides no possible basis for their work. Fascism, with its cronic civil war against the worker at home, and its periodic cataclysms of international war, provides no possible society for creative work.

The school of despair will, no doubt, find plenty of justification for their attitude. But once they have uttered, as they are now engaged in doing, their often eloquent lament over death, as they see it, of human culture, they will have nothing more to say. The writers and artists who are on the side of the working class will of necessity, during the revolutionary period, find that they have to forge of their art a sharp sword for use in the struggle which they cannot avoid. It will be only after the triumph of the workers that their work can become less concerned with pressing and desperate social issues.

A. Lunacharski

The Role of the Proletarian State in the Development of Proletarian Culture

Comrades, Comrade Yudin in his interesting report [1] gives a clear definition of the Marxist-Leninist conception of the very term of "culture." This definition appears to me to be entirely correct and the only acceptable one. All I want to do is to look a little deeper into this phenomenon—culture, to examine some of its individual aspects and their inter-connection.

Comrade Michin in speaking here on Comrade Yudin's report touched upon a very interesting question, the relation between politics and economics. He pointed out that true Marxism never denied the counter-effect of politics, which naturally grows on a definite material foundation and its movement, upon economics. He spoke chiefly of the inter-relation between economics and politics at the socialist stage. The attempts of capitalist politicians to introduce order into economics, to bridle the elements, to direct them along channels desirable to the ruling class, to safeguard themselves against the logic of things which is developing against the interests of this class, and is fatal to it, cannot, of course, lead to results desirable to the capitalists. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the only political form which powerfully, consciously and planfully influences economics. Planning of economy is one of the most essential aspects of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Indeed, the policy of the proletariat after it captures power, after it becomes the dictator, develops into a true process of shaping the elemental processes by the organized human consciousness, by the organised human will. This represents the beginning of that process of transition from necessity to freedom, of which Engels spoke (those words sometimes appeared paradoxical and even non-Marxian to people who do not understand the true meaning of Marxism).

The organized proletariat which builds up a party in its midst, which captures the power through a revolutionary process establishing its own government, its own governmental machinery which becomes deeply rooted in real life, can and must regulate the economic processes. It is of course in some measure dependent on the object, on the objective conditions, on certain objective forces which it cannot at once convert into soft clay that readily lends itself to its pressure. Nevertheless it already invades economics as a very important, determining factor.

Some followers of capitalism also talk of a plan, also dream of creating in their own countries something akin to a plan by overcoming the chaos and competition, by the growing "organization" of individual branches of capitalist economy, by the attraction of the state which is a disguised or open dictatorship of the imperialist bourgeoisie. But they cannot, of course, do this.

Economics and politics belong to the sphere of culture. Culture cannot be counter-opposed to politics if these terms are to be used in the scientific

[1] Stenographic record of a speech delivered at the session of the Institute of Philosophy of the Communist Academy on Comrade Yudin's report. Owing to the illness and death of A. V. Lunacharski the stenogram was not corrected by him personally and was merely subjected to editorial corrections.

Marxist-Leninist meaning, since culture embraces politics. Nor is it possible to set up culture in opposition to economics, since the one includes the other. We naturally pay attention primarily to material culture. This culture is very closely related to what we call economics and what is an elemental process independent of the will of man, right up to the time of the victory of the proletarian revolution. Spiritual culture—an ideological superstructure—might appear to be possessive of more human traits. But we know that the development of all ideologies down to the most refined and lofty, is also legitimate, also does not depend on the will of an individual or of any movement and is subject to pressure of social laws, primarily to the development of this material base, of material culture.

But is it possible in culture to detach the objective, elemental aspect from the conscious aspect? Here again if strictly scientific terms are to be used this is perhaps impossible. For instance, can the dictatorship of the proletariat influence culture, influence its tempo, direction, the character of its development? I may be told, from the viewpoint of the Marxist-Leninist definition of culture: no, the dictatorship of the proletariat is itself a form of culture, it itself enters the sphere of culture. This is true, but one must not be pedantic and draw from it the conclusion that we must not even raise this question. It should be explained perhaps that we are using these terms in a somewhat special sense. The question may be raised in the same for politics to have a counter-effect upon economics. Essentially the thereby general way as Comrade Mishin raised the question of whether it is possible raised the question of the extent to which the organized consciousness of the united proletariat is capable of counter-affecting the development of economy itself. To this question his reply was: yes, it can and in a much larger measure than any other state. This is the way we must put the question to ourselves: can culture whose development depends upon the pressure of the material process and in its highest spiritual spheres has its own laws, be regulated by one of its parts, namely by organized human knowledge in the form of the state and again in its acutest manifestations, in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat? This is not at all an idle question since all bourgeois and semi-bourgeois thinkers used to say: first the state as a form of human consciousness, hence state pressure, legislation cannot change anything in culture, particularly in its highest forms; second, even if the state attempts to influence this elementally developing culture, its influence is always harmful. As a matter of fact the essential feature of bourgeois liberalism consists precisely of the doctrine that the state has nothing to do in the realm of culture, that it is not its business to butt in here, for on the one hand hand it would deceive itself if it were to imagine that it possesses the power to create cultural values or determine a cultural direction, and on the other it would only injure the cause. It is known that bourgeois liberals say the same thing about economics: they fear that the state might get the notion that it is capable of regulating economics. It is in fact very weak in this field and can do nothing but evil here. Retain the duties of watchman, attend to your political affairs, but don't dare interfere in the subtlest relationships of individuals, in the manner in which they are building up their economics. The less the state interferes in this business the better for economics.

It goes without saying, of course, that this was a pure and brittle form of bourgeois liberalism: Very soon the bourgeoisie passed on to more complex conceptions of the relations between the state and economics. But even now we see, for instance, how in reply to the proposal of the state planners who dream of state capitalism we hear the echo of the eighteenth or begin-

ning of the nineteenth century such as the following: if only you take up this path you will ruin capitalism completely, for the very essence, the noble essence of capitalism is that it spontaneously develops on the basis of free interplay of economic forces and individual business men. In the same way bourgeois liberalism has attempted to treat the questions of culture taken as an object, such as art, literature, science, philosophy, which characterises the given society and the given age in their relation to the state. Buckle is a classic example of this. Buckle regarded as an unquestionable truism that in the realm of high ideologies (in this case we are referring to the highest forms of culture) the weight of the state is extremely negligible and its influence highly fatal. He cites many examples to show that where a government did not interfere in the life of society, science, philosophy and art flourished. Where the opposite was true these forms of culture either withered and became stagnant or there was officialdom, lack of sincerity, a very deep internal perversion of cultural values.

A similar doctrine exists at present. Even in this country one meets with its representatives who maintain: this is a delicate business and if you get censorship into it, regulation by the state apparatus, supervision, interference or what is still worse, state encouragement and, God forbid, state planning, you will get something in the nature of Schedrin's pun: there will be plenty of order but plenty will disappear. This is terrible, it may be skilfully disguised but in the end it is tyranny, it is oppression of the free-spirit by the state. Culture exists only where the spirit is free. Freedom evaporates generally within the approach of the state. There are perfumed states, states in white gloves, liberal states, but a state daring to call itself a dictatorship is such a monster that its approach causes the entire free cultural spirit immediately to disappear like a bird startled out of its nest.

Here is a little interesting illustration which I came across recently. In one of the issues of *Vechernaya Moskva (Evening Moscow)* there was published an article by Comrade Katanyan dealing with a book by a certain Guidoni. If I am not mistaken Guidoni had at one time been a lieutenant of Plekhanov who was then nearing his grave and had turned completely Menshevist. Guidoni published some wild book on art in which he incidentally cited a letter by Courbet, an artist who was in many respects close to us. This was a proud letter by which Courbet replied to a decision of Napoleon III to decorate him with the Order of the Legion of Honor. Courbet wrote that he did not recognize the right of the state to interfere with art and did not want to be in any way related to the state: he was a free creator, a free artist, and would not accept any trinkets from the hands of the state. After this Guidoni writes: "Comments are superfluous." But, Katanyan remarks, Guidoni did not notice that a few years afterwards, during the Commune, Courbet joined the Committee on Art, on the art of the Commune. So you see there is a difference between one state and another, and here he not only had no fear of besmirching himself with some medal but served himself as an active agent of the state in influencing art.

The bourgeois state is a more or less disguised measure of violence by a minority over the exploited majority. The bourgeois state at a certain stage of development becomes a force retarding cultural progress, since cultural progress begins to serve the interests of other, non-bourgeois classes in the development of their independence, in their struggle against the bourgeoisie. The state art of the bourgeoisie is detrimental to culture. And even when the bourgeois state encourages art, it only harms it, only falsifies it. We have an entirely different situation where the power is controlled by the pro-

letariat, in the proletarian state which constitutes an organization of the majority against the exploiters. The proletarian state seeks to elevate to the level of socialist culture the backward toiling masses, to raise them spiritually to the level of full-fledged citizens, to the level of builders of culture, seeks to open before them new prospects, to create for the first time an opportunity for a truly human culture. The effect of the proletarian state on art is beneficial.

I would like to explain this contradiction by several examples. A certain young German student once told me: "The spirit of the German students has been completely perverted. There were times when the university youth was a vehicle of progress in the sense of protest, in the sense of opposition. As regards the fraternity boys and the other pampered sons, they did not have a deciding influence on the trend of thought nor did they constitute even 50 per cent of the student body. But as time passes our students are becoming state minded, as time passes they are pursuing tendencies not only of the existing state, say of the state of the Weimar constitution, but much worse tendencies, tendencies of the absolutist state. They are becoming genuine advocates of the absolutist state. This is terrible because a student body that supports the existing power is something that is really bad. Youth must storm, youth must doubt, youth must be in opposition, youth must demand something, youth must never be an agent of what is a power today." This same student, himself a bourgeois liberal, said: "I fear things are somewhat different in your country. I frequently hear and read that your students think communistically, in the Soviet manner. A Soviet body of students sounds bad. I do not say that they must be bourgeois, but had they been anarchists it would sound better. . . ." (*Laughter*).

This student does not understand that the bourgeois absolutist state is death, that the bourgeois absolute state is oppression, disintegration, the last thing, degradation. Here we have quite a different situation. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a serious and hard fact, as Lenin said. But it is a revolutionary state which marks progress, a struggle for culture, for the highest forms of culture. The proletarian state is an instrument of the greatest liberation of the toiling masses, while the reactionary forces fighting against it are an instrument of violence against the masses.

I have already once quoted in the press a highly interesting and illustrative conversation which Lenin had with Gorki in the days when the latter wavered between his deviation from us and return to us. Gorki complained to Lenin about a search in the house and, I think, even arrest of a certain prominent liberal professor and said: "Now then, Vladimir Ilyitch, doesn't your heart ache? Didn't you yourself once take refuge in the house of this man?" Lenin replied: "Yes, of course, he is a terribly good-natured person. In our time we used to hide from the Tsarist gendarmes in his home, and now he hides Socialist-Revolutionaries from us. And it is well that they searched his place." *(laughter)*. It is quite clear that Lenin never ceased to be a revolutionary and that this liberal is neither cold nor warm, neither red nor white, but just a generous man who doesn't understand what's what, and such men are sufficiently harmful.

A bourgeois militarist is an ugly thing. I remember how Lenin once came to the Council of Peoples Commissars—this was at the very beginning of the revolution—all smiles and glee, saying: "I had a remarkable incident today, really an historical anecdote. I heard one old lady say to someone: 'Now a man with a gun need not be feared, now a man with a gun is for the poor.' " This simple phrase of the old lady really has the greatest significance, for

the whole point is that in this country the man with the gun is for the poor and the state is for the poor and its significance on culture is on behalf of the poor rather than against them. For this reason its influence on culture is extremely beneficial. All the aims of the Soviet state and of the Soviet state alone are creative aims, emancipative and constructive aims in the widest sense of the word.

From this point of view the talk of authors and artists to the effect, for instance, that freedom is necessary for creative work must not in the least trouble us. We cannot but hurl repressions against those authors and artists who use their great weapon of art, science or philosophy for a counter-revolutionary struggle against us. Freedom of the press in the bourgeois sense is an erroneous and false thing, an internally contradictory thing. Had it been applied in this country it would have been equivalent to giving our enemies the right to wear arms and sell poison.

The situation is the same when we are accused of unkindly criticism. Criticise, if you please, the way I put my commas, the sort of color I am using, but you probe much further and want to know to what class I belong *(laughter)*, you smell the kulak and so on. This is not criticism, it is detective work; this is not criticism, it is denunciation to the police.

Of course, in some cases this thing is being overdone. It is wrong, of course, to defend criticism which begins by searching whether the man's mother-in-law had not been married to a General *(laughter)*. Such criticism leads nowhere. But what sort of Marxist-Leninists would we be, what sort of scientific critics would we be, if while asserting that in any work of art or literature we must see the threads of class relationships and class struggle intertwining with it, we would be unable to detect them.

The same applies to the stimulation of art by the state. At the very beginning when proletarian authors put forward the demand for official support, the Party said: go ahead and fight your own battles, establish your dictatorship and hegemony in the field of literature by your works, but at the same time our state, particularly in lean days, when everyone individually found it rather difficult to create for himself conditions of elementary comfort, helped the authors and supported them. The state cannot treat all authors alike. It would have been altogether wrong for it to say: "I am the sun which beams at both good and evil; I am rain which pours on good and bad alike." Of course this is wrong. And if we have an opportunity, as yet a small one, to render assistance to this or that artist or author, to send him abroad to study, it is natural that we will seek to direct our still meager means where we expect good results. We want to sow and will sow not on a stone, not on a swamp, but on more or less fertile soil.

The liberals are particularly enraged over our attempts to organize art, something we are doing still very weakly. In science we have just tackled the business but have done it rather well. I can note with pleasure that some members of the Academy of Science who only recently still used to say: "God's spirit is omnipresent, science is a very delicate shoot, put your iron heel on it and you will immediately destroy it," now understand very well that science has begun to grow healthier, that it is beginning to develop muscles and that its problems have become more vital, since we established a transmission belt between our construction, between our vital needs and the scientific tasks, the scientific work. A mass of problems that had not been invented, that had not been taken out of the air, but of a most vital nature, has begun to face science and to study it.

Replying to Stirner and his claim that an artist is such a creative individual

that he is indispensable and represents an absolute unit, Marx and Engels stated that even great geniuses can be replaced and that it is untrue that any creativeness is creativeness because it is individual. Creativeness, they maintained, can be collective and everything we now have in the field of artistic work is a trifle compared to what we will have under socialism.

Now that we have colossal requirements not only of a scientific but of an artistic order, it is of tremendous importance to formulate the requirements of the population even if they should be known by such an unartistic name as state order. To point out the direction in which the artistic forces, the artistic attention, the artistic talents should be directed is a natural conclusion from our entire system of planning.

We thus are very well aware of the fact that we have the right to interfere in the development of culture, beginning with the development of machinery in our country and electrification as part of it, and ending with the direction of the subtlest forms of art.

Can we achieve anything in this field?

Here the semi-bourgeois Pereverzev theory succeeded in enticing very many people in our own midst. One of the methods of the struggle of the bourgeoisie against us is to fight under a Marxian mask. Essentially all the known deviations constitute such an unconscious struggle of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie against us under a Marxian mask. The Pereverzev case presents a remarkable instance of this struggle. Pereverzev said: I am the only true, genuine scientific Marxist, for I make the artistic forms of creativeness directly dependent upon economy and sharply, firmly uncompromisingly determine the whole creative work of an artist, down to its forms, down to the subtlest characterisation of his works, upon his class character. Many people said: "Indeed, this is a Marxist without bragging and without wiles, he will pin an author to a class so hard that the author will no longer be able to breathe" *(laughter)*. Hence there is something Bolshevist, something rock-like about it. But if you only take a whiff you discover that it smacks of a real repudiation of any policy on art. It then appears that essentially every author is defined once and for all from the point of view of his class character. What this means it is difficult to understand. By the year 1916 or later a man becomes a bourgeois or petty bourgeois and thereafter there is no chance for him. In all his works he begins to portray himself in the form of a stylized class ego. And some of Pereverzev's disciples said that if a poet describes a horse, for instance, then if you probe a bit deeper you will find that the horse is also this stylized class ego *(laughter)*. In reality the thing was as follows (Pereverzev kept it in the dark as much as possible): an author cannot be changed, an author cannot be influenced, he cannot escape from himself, and if you tell him: I don't like you, we will interfere with you, you are hostile to us, we want you to write this way or that, he will cease to write altogether or he will be lying, and this will not be art, it will be spurious art.

Thus, according to Pereverzev, it would appear that art—and if this is to be applied to the entire field of culture or to spiritual culture—then even culture grows by itself and there can be no organized influence of a powerful class over the progress of events. It would appear that governmental measures designed to nip in the bud the development of a poisonous art, or promote an art which is beneficial, which helps the revolution, are something that leads not to good, but to evil. This is a Menshevist, liberal and in any case a counter-revolutionary tendency. As I have already said, all those measures which we are employing to regulate creative art, both pro-

letarian and the art of those following the proletariat, and to put a stop to artistic work among the direct enemies of the USSR—this entire school of influences, from repressions to the greatest care of the artist, to comradely concern about him, to giving him support, to penetration of his laboratory—all of them are good and necessary. And just as at the stage of development which we have now achieved our state is powerfully influencing economics, just so can our proletarian consciousness powerfully influence the tempo and direction of development of the spiritual culture of the country. This requires, of course, certain conditions. That this is a delicate matter is beyond doubt. In order to direct the fine forms of culture, the ideological forms which are most remote from the base, the state itself must possess a high culture.

Lenin said: What do we lack in order to build our socialist state? Our land is vast and rich, the power belongs to us. What we lack is culture, culture among the leaders, culture among Communists. Even the more so can this be said of the narrower but more decisive and more subtle task of direction of science, art, etc. We ourselves require greater culture. Do we have it already among us? Let us not be Communist braggarts. Let us not maintain that we already possess it. We ourselves feel that we are often unequal to the task, that we must hasten to arm and rearm. It is necessary to make a careful investigation of questions of the theory and history of these high ideological forms. It is necessary first of all to master, as Lenin said, the sum total of cultural values previously acquired by humanity and critically revise and understand them. It is necessary to determine our own approach to this question. If we were to say: once we have power everything else will come of itself, the main thing is to have power, it would be merely displaying a lack of culture. It would show that we are poor Leninists. On the other hand, if we were to fold our arms and say: it is not for us poor fishes to tackle such a refined task, these bourgeois authors are such supermen, so refined, all their questions are so rich while we are workers in felt boots and we may say something ridiculous, may use the wrong terms, can not understand their refined souls and will appear boors, we would only show that we are slaves to the petty bourgeoisie, that we do not understand the entire fruitful power of the class to which we have the good fortune and pride to belong. We must draw the following conclusion. for Bolsheviks everything is possible providing they work hard and rationally over themselves and others.

Our criticism must be very sharp and at the same time very subtle. Our self criticism, our mutual comradely influence must consist not of stopping people short by shouting at them, not of deafening one another, but of the most careful concern for every comrade working side by side with us in the sphere of culture, of a passionate active desire to teach him and learn from him whatever can be taught and learned. And the more we work as a collective, the more we will achieve of this truly comradely collective method of self-arming and growth. We are in any event on the road to this, we have already done something important and tangible in this respect in some ways. We know where to go and we shall be going over more and more from awkward experiments to perfectly precise methods of influencing culture in this special sense of the word, at this higher form of culture.

Translated from the Russian by A. Pevsner

G. Brovman

Leninism and Art

Throughout the entire historical development of the revolutionary struggle, Lenin and the Party paid a great deal of attention to questions of culture and art. Following in the footsteps of Marx and Engels who based culture on the material processes of production and who often pointed out how the spiritual is closely interwoven with the material, (in *German Ideology* and elsewhere) Lenin, always in his comments on culture analysed the economic situation based on concrete tasks and demands of the revolutionary working class. In his criticism of literature and art Lenin was always guided by these principles. Hence, just as Leninism is the continuation and deepening of Marxism, so the Leninist theory of art and literature is a further unfolding and development of the aesthetic views of Marx and Engels, a working out of the general Party policy of Bolshevism in the specific field of artistic creation. The most complete expression of Lenin's views on literature and art, their development and social significance may be found in his well known article "Party Organization and Party Literature", 1905.

Written two years after the Party Congress, after the formation of Bolshevism, "rising on the most firm foundation of Marxist theory" this article with unusual clarity formulated the basis of the tasks of the revolutionary proletariat and its Party in the class struggle on the literary and art front.

"Leninism is a unified theory, born in 1903, tested in three revolutions and ruling to-day as the militant banner of the world proletariat" (Stalin) received in this historic document its first ideological characterizations in the complicated sphere of literature. Here are indicated the first principles of the policy in art of the Communist Party.

The basic principle of Bolshevism in its literary policy expressed by Lenin in this article is the principle of the Party nature of literature.

"Of what does this principle of the Party nature of literature consist?" asks Lenin. "Not only in that for a socialist proletariat literature cannot be a means of gain for an individual or a group; it cannot in general be an individual affair, independent of the general proletarian interests." And further, Lenin coins the famous slogan. "Literature must be a part of the general proletarian development."

All later activity of Bolsheviks in the field of art completely depends on this demand of Lenin—"Literature must be a part of the general proletarian development."

Many years later, after the October revolution, Vladimir Ilyitch in a conversation with Clara Zetkin, again expressed this idea as follows: "Art," said Lenin, "belongs to the people. It must with its widest stretching roots go out into the very thick of the broadest masses. It must combine the feelings, thoughts and will of the masses, and uplift them." It should be mentioned that the first years after the revolution indicated that the importance Lenin had ascribed to art was not in the least exaggerated. The revolution swept into art the widest masses of the people. The theatres were filled with thousands of completely new spectators, literature had new readers. The new audience presented to the theatre and literature new demands.

The proletarian masses brought to art a revolutionary program the first

point of which was the demand to place literature and art at the service of the people.

In the program of the Party adopted by the VII Congress in 1919 we find a ruling on the necessity of "Fullest governmental assistance to the self-education and self-development of the workers and kolkhoz members in their creative work," incidentally, "a network of motion picture houses, studios, etc." (point 7, par. 12) And in point 10 of the same section we read: "In equal measure it is necessary to unfold and make accessible to the workers all the treasures of art, created on the basis of the exploitation of their labor and until now in the complete possession of the exploiters." *(Program and Regulations of the Communist Party)*

"Art belongs to the people,"—these words of Lenin have become the standard in Party policy in the field of art for the Communist Parties of all countries. And not merely casually do we find in the program of the Comintern in the list of necessary measures for the dictatorship of the proletariat, "the nationalization of all large cinematographical enterprises, theatres, etc." since only the transfer of all the means of art into the hands of the proletariat can hasten its complete mass and decidedly revolutionary utilization, and hence encourage the flourishing of artistic creation. The program of the Comintern points out further the necessity of availing oneself of "the nationalized agencies of spiritual production for the broadest political and general education of the toiling masses, and for the construction of a new socialist culture on a proletarian class basis." *(Program and Regulations of the Communist International)*

Literature and art, "spiritual production", according to the expression of Marx, has always been regarded by Lenin and the Party as a powerful weapon in the class struggle. In his articles on Tolstoy and particularly in his letters to Gorky, Lenin often points out the tremendous activating and educational role of art. In Lenin's views, it is the most powerful weapon in the political education of the masses. Art functions in conjunction with the formation of social consciousness and influences the socio-economic relations of society.

The VII Congress of the Party adopting the above quoted program of the Communist Party, in its resolutions developed the basic ideas of Lenin, in questions of art and literature.

"General education," we read in the resolutions, 'On Political Propaganda and Cultural Educational Work in the Village'—both in schools and out of schools (here is included art, theatres, concerts, motion pictures, exhibitions, pictures, etc.) attempting to spread the light of learning to the backward village, and more important to develop a self-consciousness and a clear world outlook, must be closely bound up with Communist propaganda. There are no forms of art or science which cannot be connected with the magnificent ideas of Communism and with the infinitely varied task of creating a Communist economy." *(Communist Party and its Resolutions,* Moscow, 1932.)

After the VII Congress the Party in its practical work of leadership more than once has been concerned with questions of art, gradually deepening and intensifying the tasks placed before Soviet art.

In the resolutions of the XII Congress (April 1923) we find instructions about the importance of the Party leadership in art. In the 24 points of the resolution, "On questions of Propaganda, Press and Agitation" we read: "Whereas in the last two years, artistic literature in Soviet Russia has grown into a powerful social force, spreading its influence above all among the worker-peasant youth, it is necessary that the Party place on the order of

business in its practical work the questions of leadership of this form of social activity."

The question of leadership and guidance by means of artistic creation Lenin took up in the above mentioned article of 1905. Lenin connected this question with the immediate task of literature to become the most important element in the general political struggle of the proletariat. But for literature and art to occupy this position it was necessary for art to take the lead, that is lead by taking into consideration the specific characteristics of artistic creation.

"The literary side of Party activity," Lenin pointed out "cannot be merely identical with other sections of the Party work of the proletariat," and indicating the danger of such an identity Lenin particularly worked over the specific character of Party leadership in literature and art. "There is no doubt," writes Lenin, "literary work, least of all, lends itself to a mechanical levelling by standardization, to the leadership of the few over the many. There is no doubt, that in this work, it is absolutely necessary to provide for the widest expanse of individual initiative, of personal inclinations, of a wealth of ideas and fancy, of form and content . . ." (*Vol. VIII* p. 387.)

In the above small quotation, particularly concise concerning artistic activity, we have in fact a full definition of the nature of the attitude of the Party to art workers . . . Referring to this topic in the previously mentioned conversation with Clara Zetkin, Lenin said that "every artist whatsoever, who so considers himself, has the right to create freely . . . but, understand . . ." Lenin immediately added, "we are Communists, we cannot stand with our arms folded and permit chaos to spread where it will, we must definitely guide that process and formulate the results."

This brilliant remark of Lenin's about controlling the art front was subsequently brought to remarkable actuality.

Following the XII Party Congress, the question of guiding art was considered in the famous resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, "On the Policy of the Party in the Field of Literature" adopted in 1925, which possesses an enormous significance in the growth of artistic creation in the land of the Soviets. This resolution for the first time formulated the point of view of the Party on separate questions of the condition and development of art and literature. Concerning the Party control of writers from the intelligentsia, the socalled "fellow travelers", who in those years formed the basis of the cadres in Soviet literature and art, the resolution declares:

"The general policy should here be one of a tactful and careful attitude towards them, i.e. such an approach which will hasten all the conditions making for the possibility of their rapid transference to the side of Communist ideology. Sifting out the anti-proletarian and anti-revolutionary elements (now almost negligible) fighting against the formulated ideology of the new bourgeoisie among sections of the 'fellow travelers', of the slow changing type, the Party must have a patient attitude towards the intermediate ideological forms, patiently aiding these unavoidably numerous forms to die out in the progress of closer and closer ties of comradely cooperation in the cultural forces of Communism." And a little further on, "The Party must by all means eradicate the attempts of unofficial and incompetent administrative interference in literary work."

The following years of industrialization and collectivization of the country, of the enormous development of the cultural revolution, and of remarkable progress in Soviet literature and art fully testifies to the correctness of the

Party policy in this matter. At the same time these years indicated that the organizations of proletarian writers, artists, musicians, and others, did not completely understand this most important Leninist decree of the Party. The 1925 resolution warned the proletarian artistic organizations of this: "This Party must constantly fight against non-serious and disdainful attitudes towards the old cultural inheritance, and also towards the masters of the artistic word." "Against compromise on one hand, and against Communist swaggering on the other,—such should be the slogans of the Party." (*Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party,* July 1, 1925.)

This slogan was not put into effect as a living policy directing the workers in proletarian writers' organizations (RAPP and others), in organizations of proletarian musicians (RAPM), of artists (RAPA) and others. Exerting at a certain stage a great positive role in the development of literature and art, and in the growth of proletarian artists, these organizations by the end of the first *pyatiletka* began to be a serious check to the burst of artistic creation.

In a speech in June 1931, Comrade Stalin speaking about the turning of the cadres of the former technical intelligentsia towards socialism, called for a hastening of supplying normal conditions for their work, giving them aid, and having capable Party guidance for them. The majority of the cadres in Soviet literature and art, the intelligentsia of art, likewise turned its face towards socialism and the working class. During the dismantling of the as yet not completely destroyed forces of the bourgeoisie and kulaks in literature and art, a process which it was necessary to carry on to a definite finish, the basic mass of the artistic intelligentsia overcame their characteristic hesitations and in connection with the widening of the attack on all fronts came over to the side of the construction of a socialist society.

All these vital events and occurences escaped RAPP, RAPM, and others, which continued in their attitude towards writers, artists, and musicians from the intelligentsia their policy of bureaucracy and conniving, thus creating group intolerance, stifling self-criticism, etc.

All this was creating the danger of "transforming these organizations from a means of greater mobilization of Soviet artists and writers around the tasks of socialist construction, into a means of cultivating closed groups separated from the contemporary political tasks, and from the valuable groups of writers and artists in sympathy with socialist construction."

Thus, by the decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the 23rd of April, 1932, all these organizations were liquidated, and instead of them were created single unions of writers, composers, and artists, with Communist fractions in them.

The Party more than once before this had pointed out to the leadership of RAPP and similar organizations of the proletarian art front the necessity of definitely reorganizing their work so as to draw nearer the tasks of socialist construction. It pointed out that these organizations were not administrative but ideologico-educational, it pointed out the necessity of the encouraging of self-criticism and of socialist art competition. All of this was not carried out. This is why the decree of the Central Committee liquidating these organizations was so timely. This decree created conditions which made for the understanding of literature on the highest level, for the understanding of art on the level of those demands which a socialist country was putting forth.

In its fight for the correct Bolshevik line in questions of art, the Party in the entire course of its historical path had to crush bourgeois, idealistic views

in art, with considerable resistance, and war against counter Bolshevik tendencies, deviations, and groups.

Menshevism, attacking Lenin and the Communists in all fundamental questions of revolutionary policy and struggle, also came out against the Bolshevik Communist policy in the realm of art. By means of Plekhanov and the "Plekhanovists" Menshevism went counter to Lenin and the Party in their views on all literary problems. The work of Tolstoy and other writers, particularly Gorky, were condemned as anti-Communist through the writings of Plekhanov. For example, Plekhanov condemned Gorky's *Mother* as a non-Bolshevik work, criticising it for its journalistic character, and stating that "very little service was being given to him (Gorky) by people who urged him to assume the role of a thinker and preacher: he was not made for such a role." History has cruelly smiled at Plekhanov, and as Lenin indicated, a true Marxist philosophy has aided the ripening of Gorky both as an artist and journalist.

The anti-Leninist views of Bogdanov and his group, against whom the Bolsheviks were forced to wage a relentless struggle are well known. The Bogdanovists preached "a proletarian culture which substituted for a Marxist philosophy a theory of revolutionary class struggle."

"As a matter of fact," Lenin wrote: "—all their phrases about a proletarian culture conceal their struggle with Marxism." In the first years after the revolution, Bogdanov renewed the attack against the Marxist policy in art with a clearly defined Menshevik position, about which Lenin in the introduction to the second edition of *Materialism and Emperio Criticism* in 1920, wrote: "here, under the guise of proletarian culture, Bogdanov gives voice to a bourgeois and reactionary outlook." Later Bogdanov advanced the Menshevik counter-revolutionary idea of the isolation of workers' cultural, Party, and Soviet organizations. Lenin conducted a definite struggle against these organizational strainings to create, as some Menshevik proletcult workers, expressed it, a "new fourth form of the workers' movement." The roots of this Menshevik conception of Bogdanov lies in his subjective, idealistic philosophical conceptions, as a result of which follows the self-existing role of culture as a pure spiritual product independent of the entire struggle of the working class. At one time, Pletnev urged the negation of former culture, the inacceptability and destructiveness of the classical inheritance in art, which completely opposed the ideas of Lenin that "only through an exact knowledge of culture, created throughout the entire development of mankind, only by reworking it, can we create a proletarian culture."

An undoubted enemy of Bolshevism in art, naturally, is the Menshevik Trotsky. Not accidentally, he became the leader of those opposed to proletarian culture and proletarian art, since this arose from his Menshevik political conception of the denial of the possibility of building socialism in one country. As a clear enemy of Bolshevism, Trotsky even definitely denied the very Leninist term "proletarian culture", vulgarly attempting to mask this over with Marxian-like phrases.

"Has the proletariat enough time for the creation of a proletarian culture?" asked Trotsky (*Literature and Revolution*, 1923, p. 136) and answered. "in the period of the dictatorship, there is no use talking about the creation of a new culture, that is, building it up on a tremendous historical scale . . . there is not only no proletarian culture but there will not be." (p. 137.)

Thus, Trotsky is no other than a defender of the rulers of bourgeois culture during the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Left phrases cover up in Trotsky a complete reactionary content. A believer in the non-

existence of a proletarian culture, Trotsky is at the same time encouraging the further development of bourgeois culture and bourgeois ideology in the land of socialism. And even openly against Lenin are directed through the Menshevik assertions of Trotsky, the words that "it is naively suggested that the proletariat should critically rework the bourgeois inheritance." The anti-Marxist, counter-revolutionary advances of Trotsky on questions of culture are evident in the light of his basic formula,—"the methods of Marxism, —are not the methods of art." (p. 161) On this very point many followers of Trotsky insisted, in particular, Voronsky, who gave rise to the idealistic theory of the non-ideological nature of creative art, its independence of a world philosophy, its dependence on immediate, primitive sensations, and so forth.

A complete lack of the understanding of Bolshevism in literature and art is displayed in right opportunism and its theoretician Bukharin. Bukharin's views on culture arise fully from his mechanical philosophic conceptions and his opportunistic political program. Culture to Bukharin, as to Bogdanov—is a purely spiritual process, perfecting itself independent of the socio-economic conditions. Therefore if according to Bukharin, in economics and politics during the dictatorship of the proletariat there will take place a gradual slow elimination of the class struggle and a general peaceful penetration of socialism, then in art and literature the class struggle is completely non-existent. From this follows, the compromise of the opportunists with theories in the field of art harmful to the proletariat, in particular, with formalism.

Formalism equipped itself with the extremely dangerous anti-Leninist tendency in art, fighting against the Marxist understanding of art as a process of thinking in images, as a weapon of the class struggle.

Insisting on simplicity in art, on its accessibility to the broadest masses, the Party and Lenin warred against formalism which was leading art along the path of virtuosity. In the first years of the revolution, in his conversation with the students of the Higher Art and Theatrical Studios Lenin boldly spoke against the spreading of a formalist viewpoint in painting, sculpture and literature. Lenin demanded realism in art, and more than once stood out against the petty bourgeois, idealistic, aesthetic tendencies among which formalism occupied the leading role. Later, formalism became transformed into an open reactionary idealistic theory waging an active war against Marxism. But even in the study of separate, that is, formal, aspects of art, in the studying of color in painting, line in sculpture, language in literature, formalism as an anti-Marxist and unscientific direction proved to be completely fruitless. Formalism to-day remains the main right danger, on all fronts of art, against which we are waging a ruthless war.

To all these anti-Bolshevik attitudes in questions of art, the Party has posed the Leninist slogans of art as a weapon of socialist education, of art, joined to the masses, of art as a means of understanding and remaking the world.

"Art," says the Party, "is that field of the cultural-political activity of the proletariat in which it can and will create most valuable artistic works." The future of art and literature during socialism was foreseen by Lenin more than three decades ago.

"It will be," wrote Lenin in his article "The Party Organization and Party Literature," "a free literature, because not gain, not personal career, but the idea of socialism and the feeling of the toiling masses will recruit newer and newer strength into its ranks. It will be a free literature because it will serve not the satiated heroine, nor the bored, 'upper ten thousand' suffer-

ing from obesity, but the millions and tens of millions of workers who compose the glory of the country, its strength and its future. It will be a free literature, germinating the latest word of the revolutionary thought of mankind by means of the experience and living work of the socialist proletariat, creating a firm mutual connection between the experience of the past (scientific socialism, achieving the development of socialism from its primitive utopian forms) and the experience of the present (the real struggle of the workers-comrades)."

This brilliant prediction of Lenin is even today being realized. New hundreds of thousands of workers and collective farmers are being joined to proletarian culture, including a score of nationalities of the Soviet Union. They are building a culture nationalist in form and socialist in content.

Comrade Stalin has thus characterized this process: "We are building a proletarian culture. True, but it is also true that proletarian culture socialist in its content assumes different forms and means of expression by different peoples."

Thus expanding the ideas of Lenin about the literature of socialist society, Comrade Stalin further points out that "general human proletarian culture does not exclude, but demands and nourishes national culture, just as national culture does not substitute, but furthers and enriches the general human proletarian culture." *(Questions of Leninism.)*

The literature of the socialist land is growing as the literature of a socialist society, and the art of the Soviet Union with the construction of a classless socialist society will be human art, because the proletariat is the bearer of the advanced, revolutionary, socialist, social relations, which in the future will have the character of all mankind.

Translated from the Russian by Albert Lewis

J. Fried

Surrealism—and Louis Aragon

About the Growth of a Noted French Poet

Surrealism. It would be easy to explode it by telling a tale of pornography, of the demagogic antics of the Surrealists, of their literary manners, their innocent pastimes—say their symposiums. To understand Surrealism, however, one must understand its literary theory and practice.

The socalled "Surrealist revolution" in literature consists of propaganda of irrationalism—an irrationalism, however, distinguished from others in being of a Freudian nature. The aim of the "Surrealist revolution" is to "conquer" for poetry, for humanity, the depth of consciousness whose brilliant scintillations are revealed particularly during sleep and compared to which the mind is "barren and dry." "Recording of dreams," "thought dictation without any control of the mind," "psychic automatism," "passive mind existence,"—these fundamental forms of Surrealism are the slogans of the "revolt" of the "lowest strata of consciousness" against the "usurping mind." (Against the "bourgeois mind" as the Surrealists sometimes explain provokingly.) The Surrealists are so indomitably "left" that, leaping over all intermediate stages, they are already, don't you know, prepared to initiate the classless society. As the leading spirit of the orthodox Surrealists, Andre Breton, has it, they consider it their duty to free the "chained forces of the subconscious:" as without such liberation the arrival of harmonious man, man of the classless society, is impossible.

It would be absurd to deny the role of intuition in the creative process. The Leninist formula of "'locomotion," "spontaneous development" gives us the only correct method of understanding the nature of the creative process as the dialectic unity of contraries. The theory and practice of Surrealism attempt to infringe upon this objectively existing dialectical unity of contraries by staging a "revolt" of one and the "overthrow" of the other. "Superrevolutionary" Surrealism vulgarly transfers the laws of the class struggle into the psychic field and makes a parody of them.

Surrealism, delving into the "logic of dreams," the logic of delirium, occupying itself specially with the mechanism of the involuntary cropping up of associations during the creative process, imagined it "found" some kind of poetic violin and proceeded to improvise, play the virtuoso! Surrealism falls victim to the stream of mutually contradictory of analogies like a chip of wood on a river. It swells with collected associations without any regard to selection: a fetish is made of the mechanism of the cropping of associations which assumes a predominating significance; play upon this is the principal content of poetry.

Genuinely Surrealist poetry is not only incapable of rising to generalization—but on the reverse, the entire surrounding world crumbles, distintegrates into the poet's associations, loses corporeality, proves to exist only to the extent to which it is registered in the psychology of the poet. This refers to the most distinctly Surrealist things and fragments.

Compared to Surrealism, Cubism seems earthly, corporeal. The rift between modern French poetry and life which has gone so far in Surrealism, had not yet been effected completely in Cubism. Some Dadaist creations even seem direct and concrete as compared to Surrealism. "Direct?" I seem to hear: "Does not Surrealism claim absolute directness?"

Surrealism cannot be separated from its literary relatives. There is an indubitable connection between Surrealism and Valerie's poetry—that "highest of mathematics in poetry" most completely aloof from life. You may wonder again: Valerie's classically corseted poetry is emphatically intellectual while Surrealists' poetry is based on a negation of intellect. But how is one to account then for the closeness of Surrealism to the analytic art of Joyce who almost declared himself a Surrealist a few years ago? We should verify to what extent the Surrealist "revues" are made up, to what extent the choicely negligent coincidences of "absolutely involuntary" association come as a result of intense (though perhaps not very lasting) labor. The attempts to break up the objectively existing dialectic unity of contraries in the creative process results in the following: the mind plays tricks, acts like a conspirator; the results of poetic labor prove artistically imperfect, chaotic, impoverishing reality. The Surrealists make the "Associative motor" of poetry run idle. The screw of the steamers turns madly in empty space.

The Surrealists raise a constant clamor about the experimental, scientific, significance of their labors. Beating their breasts they urge us forward—they urge upon us for instance, to extend the confines of poetry to embrace "simulation of weak mindedness, mania, general paralysis, various forms of madness." (A Breton, P. Eloir). Instead of dead Socialists—live idiocy!

Do you think this Superrealist "steamer" can be useful to the healthy, vital part of humanity today or—as the Surrealists hope in the classless society?

And what did they themselves, after promising so much, come to? Their social pessimism, their opposition to the bourgeois (in the broadest sense of the word) seemed, in 1925, say, a promise to grow out into a revolutionary attitude towards life. Their social pessimism has increased, but its quality is the same even now in 1934. There is an icy feeling of loneliness in P. Eluare's triply refined last poems. "Man's sole invention—the grave" (Eluare). That's how they extend the confines of poetry.

In his book *Head Foremost,* L. Moussinac gave a typical image of a modern poet-bourgeois intellectual who, afraid to react to life, avoids all action. The avoidance of action by Surrealism is incomparably more absolute, universal and reactionary: it avoids not only action but actuality, runs away from it shouting demagogically about its "revolt." Thus do the Surrealists "surmount" the evils of life. And this is what the private chamber of the subconscious is required for—not for "laboratory investigation" purposes: the labyrinth of semiobscurity, the cocaine fumes, hallucination. A subtle, intoxicating blossom, born out of a decaying culture. Surrealism now shines alongside Fascist irrationalism, Fascist spiritualism which is also trying, in its way, to drive "everybody," every philistine suffering from crisis shock, into the single cell of his "inner world" (in order to turn him into a blind instrument in the hands of the Fascist organizer.)

Then take Surrealism's Trotskyite aspect. The attacks on the USSR (in the magazine *Surrealist Revolution,* for instance) alongside quotations of Lenin on Hegel, alongside Breton's quotations of Engels and Lenin, we find ravings on the "breeze of cretinization systematically blowing from the USSR." These libellous attacks are masked according to the demagogic recipes of the Trotskyites who, in their own newspaper, also find it possible to reconcile oaths of "fidelity to the cause of Communism" with USSR baiting. From link to link—a curious chain. Surrealism's "political neighbor"—Trotskyism, its "philosophical neighbor"—Fascist spiritualism.

This makes the portrait of Surrealism complete.

II

The Surrealist Aragon. He was once one of the most rabid leaders of Surrealism—isn't that so, Comrade Aragon? He always tried to give an extreme expression of his experiences. That is why his work never gave the impression of incompleteness—Surrealist relativism, Surrealist social pessimism came out with extraordinary keenness in his work. It was this very keenness of despair, poignancy of sorrow that, coming to a head in 1929, propelled him ahead. A further stabilization of only potentially-revolutionary social pessimism, further immobility, would have been tantamount to retrogression, a long step towards counter-revolution; and such was the step of Breton and Eloir due to their immobility. But your frenzied despair of the Surrealists led you, Aragon, even then, in 1929, not to a sensation of mortal frigidity, not to morbidity (as happened to P. Eloir), but to protest.
test.

In the Surrealists' avoidance of reality you saw the same old ugly bourgeois reality. And this was a great deal—it was the beginning of your break with Surrealism. But it was only a beginning—the strength had to be found to rise from the continually more fruitless social pessimism of Surrealism to the social optimism of genuine revolutionaries that really reject bourgeois reality.

For this purpose it is first of all necessary to break with the Surrealists completely and merge with the revolutionary milieu, with the vanguard of the proletariat.

The first stimulus in this direction was your first trip to the USSR after which you wrote the poem *Rot Front*. Its agitational character, with the subject taken intentionally from the "outer world" was a direct challenge to Surrealism. As a result you were overwhelmed with lampoons, branded a traitor. You did not have it easy: your old friends and colleagues became bitter, irreconcilable enemies. But this was not your main difficulty: the trouble was—you were yourself still a Surrealist poet. The poem *Rot Front* is a transition work, there are powerful portions in it and the still considerable rationalisticalness and rhetoricalness had their value as points of departure from Surrealistic passive vacancy.

The Surrealist of only yesterday had to work out an organized, nonmechanical, poetic form. one must not minimize the difficulties that were in your way. It was really not necessary for you to cease to be Aragon and become some other artist in order to break with Surrealism and keep the full glamor of your talent. It is only literary "smartness" which declares that revolutionary writers, writers of the Socialist society, must necessarily lose their identity, that they cannot step out of the uniform of strictly established themes and a generally enforced style (in the narrow sense of the word). You had to remain the same Aragon, only free, untrammelled by the Surrealist private chambers of the subconscious, Aragon on a much higher stage. Only thus could you proceed on your road towards the revolution from "within" and remain with your profession, with your art—only thus could you find that the revolution has saved you as an artist.

It seems to me that now, after your repeated visits to the USSR and the years of work under conditions of Socialist construction you are on the difficult but right road for any artist.

Your book *Hurrah, Urals!* is written not by a Surrealist but there is Aragon in every line. Instead of the Surrealistic irrational grotesque ravings—a satirical grotesque. Instead of Surrealistic recording of associations, analo-

gies—the direct opposite—Whitmanism, only actively aimed at the surrounding world. There are still some traits of the past in the book: the play of assonances often sounds automatic: it sometimes seems that the assonances evoke images mechanically. But it is impossible to get rid of the past all at once (you will remember how you, after you had broken away from the Surrealists, still insisted upon the "scientific value" of the Surrealistic experiments). On the whole the book is by no means Surrealistic and gives joy in its craftsmanship.

The harmony of most of the poems, which fall into cycles naturally, is proof of the fact that you are mastering your new form. The first poem in the book—"Tourists in Ural Air" is a beautiful grotesque. You saw overhead, above the barocco of the cloud masses a "masquerade of the thunder clouds." The clouds pass before you in the shape of a priest, a colonial official, in the shape of a "baby with gold teeth," trust officials—in the shape of characters from the capitalist world which must really appear sufficiently fantastic on our Ural mountains. In another poem these cloud masques converse:

—It was I owned the Ural copper—says an elegant old man.
. . . . . .
—But I don't even know your name
—Urquart,—
he says
and the ring of this name,
like a six-inch gun,
through the Urals sounds.
Urquart,
Echoes the horizon
Urquart.

Great expressiveness, a perfect mastery of the gamut of intonations. The massed Urals remember their enemies. Can a Surrealist feel himself so sure in space, see the real relations of forces like that?

The younger Soviet poets could profitably learn something about inventiveness from the author of *Hurrah, Urals*!

And from whom are you, the author of that book, learning? Mostly from Mayakovsky—his role in your growth of late years is very great. You are particularly learning from him the art of the satirical grotesque. One could trace the influence of individual Mayakovsky images: "cloud carnival"—this is, so to say "clouds in trousers" turned inside out. Your work confirms the thought: Mayakovsky will be a beacon light to a great portion of the world's revolutionary poetry in its growth in the near future. Your work proves the leading role played by Soviet literature in world literature.

You literary work cannot now be held up against your other activities. When the French Association of Revolutionary Writers and Artists organized J. Politzer's lecture on Freud-"Marxism"—the Freud-"Marxist" Surrealists staged a debauch during the lecture. Such a demonstration is truly more appropriate to the Surrealists than their vows of super-revolutionariness. You, Aragon, were arrested for calling encouraging slogans to the striking taxi drivers of Paris. This demonstration is fitting to your literary work.

Now that French literature has split into two camps, when every writer not connected directly with the oligarchy of bankers and manufacturers, when every writer not corrupted by the bourgeoisie, not intoxicated by Fascist demagogy and Fascist irrationalism, is involuntarily drawn to the prole-

tariat, to the class that will save humanity and human art—now your way is an example for many others.

It is a joy to write about a great, a real world, of a land being transformed by the Bolsheviks, of a land for which, in the struggle for its happiness, fell on the streets of Paris on the 9th and 12th of February the workmen: Perez, Lochen, Taier, Maurice, Bouden and others to whose memory you have dedicated your book.

It is a joy to hear your strengthened voice.

Hurrah, Urals!

Comrade Aragon.

E. Krlger

MOSCOW: Proletarian City

Have you ever noticed that Autumn comes at different times to the different parts of Moscow? First of all it yellows the leaves in the meagre little square-quardens on Myasnitskaya street, where the seasons of the year seem to be spurred on by the mad race of automobiles, tram cars and people, where the premature slumber of the trees seems to be caused by the barrenness of the structures, the absence of air, the narrowness of of the thoroughfare. You may have noticed that on Sverdlov Square, a distance of not more than 200 meters away, Autumn sets in just a little later. If you have time, betake yourself on the same day and at the same hour to Petrovski Park or to the young blue townlet of Fili or the new workers settlement at Dangauerovka. You will find that as you approach these sections of the city, the vegetation seems more green and dense, the earth richer and the carpet of dead leaves more threadbare.

Corbusier, one of France's most talented architects, once remarked that trees in Paris lose their bloom as early as June. "The trees suffer terribly," he says. "On May 9th half of the avenue of chestnut trees on the Champs Elysees bear blackened leaves. Flower buds have not yet opened. Puny leaves are shrunken like a wrinkled hand. Our lungs breathe poison gases winter and summer. We do not notice it. But the tortured trees cry 'Beware' ".

This sad wail of growing things may be heard by the careful observer in all the large cities of the world. If he is honest and just, if he is endowed with common sense, he will realize that people perish in the debris of a leviathan city sooner than plants, and the vision of their death is more terrible. True, not all people in a capitalist city are doomed to slow death from suffocation. This, another Frenchman—Balzac, understood.

"In Paris," he wrote, "there are streets that are degraded as a man can be degraded who has committed a base deed. There are noble streets too, streets that are just, honest, young, then there are wicked streets, respectable streets, streets that are always dirty and streets that are always clean. Streets of the working class, the toiling merchants. And is not the Traverse St. Honore a bare street? It has horrible two-storey hovels where vice, crime and poverty abound. Narrow streets facing northwards where the sun filters in not more than three or four times a year belong to the category of wicked streets where murders go unpunished; present day justice does not attempt to interfere."

The revolutionary "interference" of justice in Moscow, as in all other cities of the Union, made itself felt during the post-October years in the following manner: in the multitude of once wicked, base and degraded streets, autumn is beginning to set in later and later. We have in mind that conditional autumn which comes to different districts at different times and has no relation to weather or climate but depends on the amount of open space, clear air, honest and just distribution of greenery, the cutting of new streets throughout the density of the city, streets which are ready to undertake their share of the burden of city traffic.

The retreat of autumn from Moscow is most noticeable somewhere on Smitovski street or along the Mozhaisk highway, or in the Usachevka settlement or the Bitch's Swamp. Do not begrudge the time for a visit to these

spots. Remember the famous German film *The Symphony of a Great City.* Morning there began in a whirl of paper slips, dust and rubbish, yesterday's cigarette butts, bill stubs, billet-doux and death messages. Morning in the blue city of Fili dawns like a sunrise in a forest or garden with the rustle of leaves, the waving of grasses and the sparkle of dew-drenched flowers.

This is a garden city. The workers, members of the district soviet—brought this garden on trucks and injected it into their new city, as a surgeon injects new life into an ailing body. Autumn sets in late here, for the builders, prompted by love and respect for their fellow men, have laid out the houses at a comfortable distance from one another. Autumn comes late not only for elemental reasons—cyclones, winds or temperature—but also because of the factory kitchen which eliminates the poison of individual stoves in the workers' houses. The leaves on the trees retain their freshness for a long time, because not far from the town runs the "forbidden zone" a green belt of forest land, woods, meadows, gardens and lawns, where no one is permitted to settle.

Together with the autumn of plants, the new Moscow is gradually postponing the autumn of human life. In the green city—and Moscow will be, nay, is already becoming green—man feels his autumnal years, the years of failing strength and greying temples, much later. And need we show what effect the beautifying of Moscow has on the productivity of her factories and workshops!

City of Trees

One of the wise ancients once said that every man must plant and rear at least one living green tree during his life time. It is hardly likely that the members of the Moscow Soviet referred to the sayings of the ancients when during the first five years of their activities they planted 1,106,000 trees and 2,642,000 bushes in Moscow.

Just think of this figure, try to visualize it in myriads of leaves, rustling with the sun filtering through the boughs—three million seven hundred and forty eight thousand trees and bushes.

Moscow was a gigantic knot of meandering streets, alleys, lanes and byways—a maze of stone and brick—when the Bolsheviks came into possession. Corbusier recommended razing the old Moscow to the ground and starting afresh to raise a new city. That would have meant wiping off the face of the earth a living unity in which every street, every factory holds memories of the struggle of the Russian proletariat for their liberty and for the freedom to build a new society.

Moscow did not listen to Corbusier. It is being transformed into a new city, continually changing without for a moment stopping the tempestuous stream of life. The old city's stoop is being straightened out, new squares, avenues, gardens are being set up, ground is being cleared to provide breathing space for people and plants alike, all this is being done without an anaesthetic like an operation performed by an expert surgeon.

Moscow did not lose consciousness for a moment. Yet observe how she has changed. Take the Arbat Ploshchad, the Smolensk market, the Manezh Square at the mouth of the Gertzena street. What has taken place there? Down have come the rubbish heap of crazy houses, hovels and grotesque churches, no longer are the alleyways and backyards permitted to meander at will. Squares have shoved them aside. The wide open spaces have tri-

umphed. Tree-lined boulevards throw their shadows over lakes of asphalt.

Flights of architectural fancy are bounded by but one thing—the general plan of the new Moscow. Moscow is capricious, almost shrewish. Five plans for the new Meyerhold Theater, none of them bad if taken individually, were turned down because they did not fit in with the plan for the new Triumphalnaya Ploshchad. Not a single house, not a single floor is attempted until the architect's imagination has visualized how it will look in the ensemble of squares and buildings of the future Moscow.

Before very long summer will linger even on the torrid geyser-like benzine-smelling Myasnitski. A new Myasnitskaya street will be laid, another Arbat as well. The Prospect Ilyitch, flanked by gay gardens and parks will run from the Lenin Hills right to the Palace of Labor. The "city" with its trams and autobuses and motor roads will be confined to the Kuznetski Most and the "A" circle, so that the circulation of transport will not be impeded even during the greatest of demonstrations.

Is such a titanic operation possible without a temporary anaesthetic, if not of the entire city at least of certain districts? We will not argue. We will lead the doubters to the shafts of the Moscow Subway. Here is an undertaking, the very thought of which made our heads swim but a year back. What, we cried, incredulous, lay a railroad line under our muddled city, under the houses where we sleep, study, work and play? Yet in a few months from now and our first underground train will move from the Sokolniki to the Smolensk Market.

The hardworking but much-abused tramcar will be relieved of its five-million burden of daily passengers. Every two minutes another eight-wagon train will shoot from the station into the mouth of the tunnel, carrying 1,600 passengers. It will stop for 20 seconds. The doors will open automatically. The whistle will blow. Within eighteen minutes the train will fly through eight stops from the Krimsky Square to the Sokolniki.

This is how it will be in a few months time.

But have you Muscovites noticed the preparations being made for this thrilling moment? At almost every corner you may have observed a neat fence, painted blue or green. All is peaceful and quite. But what is there behind those fences? Forty shafts of the Metrostroi. An army of miners who have swarmed to the Moscow underground from the Caucasus, the Far East, the Donbas mines and even from the United States and St. Gotthard, Switzerland. Old men who have worked on the famous Simplon tunnel in Switzerland and brawny-fisted workers from Georgia. Ten thousand Komsomols wielding sledge hammers. Caissons pneumatically squeezing out of the underground passages the ancient swamps in the basin of the Neglinki River. Artificial cold, transforming the underground rivers into stone. Sections of the finished tunnel—cool, smooth, wide tubes under the earth. Who can hear how the tunnel is growing under the ground, how two million cubic meters of stone and clay are being brought to the surface, how 7,120 steel piles are being driven into the earth, how in the bowels of the city, work is being carried on that by its scale and magnitude surpasses even the world renowned Dnieprostroi?

Facts and Figures

More. For the year 1932 alone 16,000 Moscow houses were remodelled. But 16,000, you say, that is a solid provincial town in itself! And yet it was accomplished in one year. Since the Revolution 5,300 new large houses

have been built. 400 new floors have been added to old houses. This also represents a town with 6,400,000 cubic meters of living space. The mass of figures blinds you, you cannot see the circumference of the figures, their depth, their material significance. Very well, let us lead you by the hand to the figures. We will pay a visit to the new house on Kalayevski where 29,400 workers and their families are dwelling. The house has its own garden, cinema and club. A boiler room with five boilers. A regular army of stove tenders and janitors. Two and a half kilometers of pipe lines for central heating. A dining room for 2,000 meals a day. A communal kitchen which distributes dinners to the individual apartments. A mechanical laundry, a drying room, bath-houses.

An army of 90,000 families invaded such houses for the year 1933 alone. About 400,000 Muscovites received apartments during the first Five-Year Plan. An entire city has migrated from one place to another.

Thus is the new Moscow rising out of the old. Oftentimes the work continues during the night. Only yesterday a nocturnal stroller was obliged to pick his way carefully over mountains of upturned pavement outside his door. The next morning as he emerged the aroma of fresh tar would greet his nostrils and before him would lay an expanse of freshly laid asphalt. That is how many of Moscow squares lost their cobbles overnight. In 1931 the entire Sovietskaya Square was asphalted in two days. In one short night, Vorovsky street was transformed from a cobbled lane into a smooth, modern thoroughfare.

So changed is the appearance of the streets that pedestrians hesitate to spit, or drop a cigarette butt; shamefacedly the unaccustomed Moscovite will carry his butt in his fist until he reaches the next waste can. And the extent of the territory which the Moscow pedestrian is now reluctant to besmirch in any way reaches 2,315,000 square meters. That is the area asphalted in Moscow since 1931.

At the same time Moscow has not stopped growing. In 1910 the average length of her streets was 690 kilometers. By 1932 Moscow's streets had had grown in length to 1,100 km. There is a crooked and zigzagged street in Moscow whose length is equal to twice the distance from Moscow to Leningrad. And are you aware that in 1933 Moscow's tramcars transported 1,763 million people—as many as populate the entire world. You had better learn to respect this electric vehicle. If every person on our planet were permitted to take one ride in Moscow's tramcars this could be accomplished within 12 months. As compared with 1913 the number of trams has doubled and the capacity of new cars has increased two and a half times as compared with 1928.

Yet all this has taken place quite imperceptibly. Certain cells of city economy are replaced by new ones just as naturally, organically and continuously as cells are replaced in the human organism. We are told that every seven years a man changes his body cells from head to foot. What then can we say of Moscow's cells. While tramcars were busy groaning under their undiminishing load, Moscow was producing her first trolleybus. With startling rapidity, trolley lines were strung and one fine day down the Leningrad Chaussee rolled a marvellous machine, a hybrid, part trolley car part autobus. Guided by electric wires and rail-less, 150 such trolleybuses will traverse Moscow's streets this year. It is possible that the tramcar will have to be removed from the main thoroughfares.

And what about light? Light is beginning to flood Moscow with the same sure inevitability as an artificial rheostat sunrise unfolds in a theater seat.

In 1910 but 322 electric lamps shed their sparse light over Moscow's streets. In 1928 there were already 9,309. In 1934 Moscow's evening sky reflects the brilliant glare of 35,000 electric lights. Whereas in New York, Chicago and Berlin light is diffused to the extent of 11 to 27 lamps per kilometer, Moscow is illuminated by 33 for the same distance.

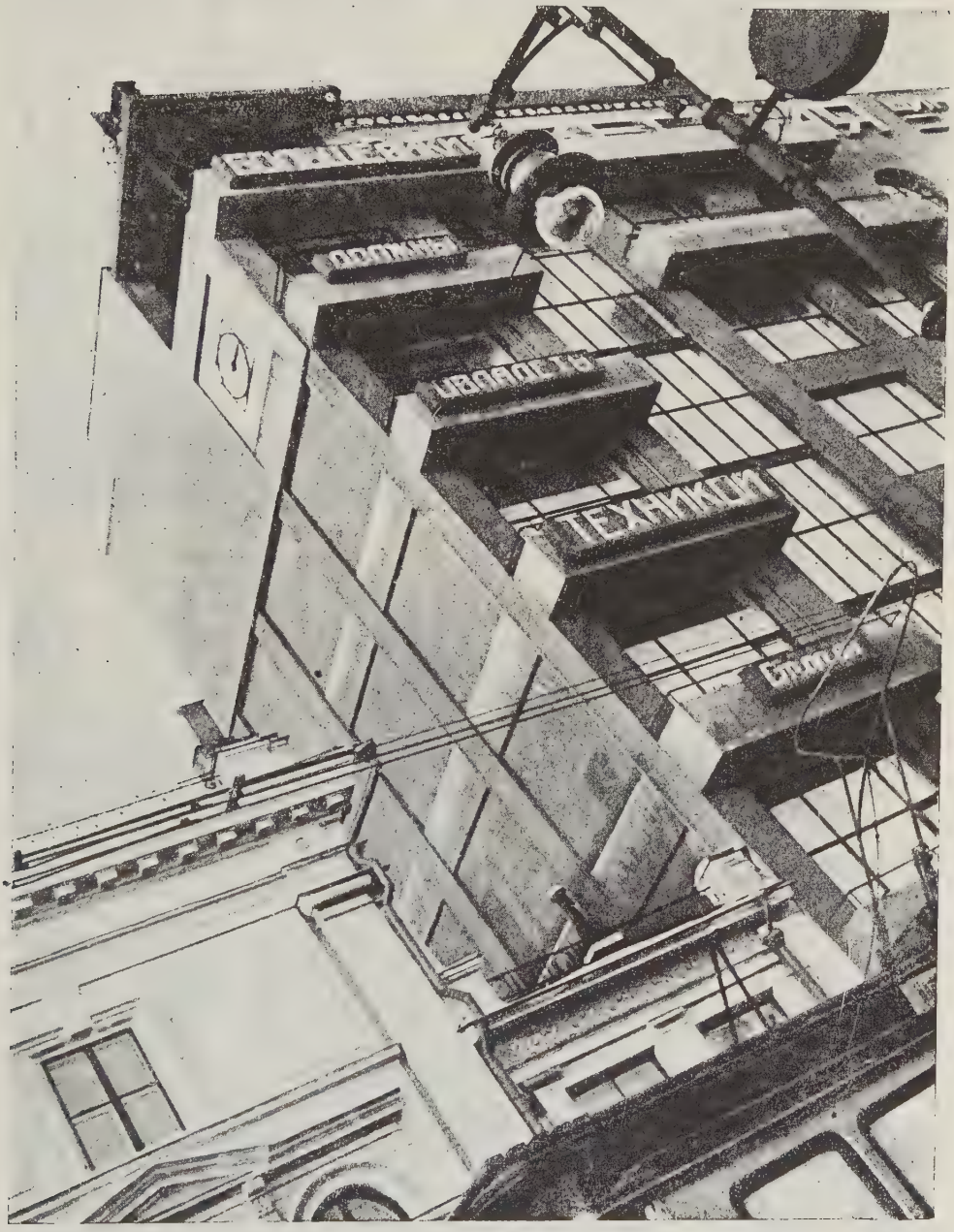
Enough of figures. Let us turn to water. With the installation of water mains, the creaks and groans of the village pump in such Moscow suburbs as the Blagushi, Vsekhsvyatsk, Cherkizovo Ostankino and a host of other formerly decrepit hamlets, will be heard no more. Five years ago two million people lived in Moscow. For each person, Moscow pipe lines provided 94 liters of water daily. Now there are three and a half million people in Moscow and each has an average supply of 126 liters per day. What does this mean? It means that the Moscow river is fast becoming exhausted and that very soon the Muscovite will have a taste of the water from the Volga.

And what have we to say to the architect Corbusier? He is a bold man. He hates old cities where plants blacken in early spring, where leaves shrink and dry up like the hand of an aged person. He suggested destroying the old Moscow and building a new Moscow on its site. But the proletarians of our city are bolder than this French dreamer. They are accomplishing that which no city in the world is capable of accomplishing. They are building a new, Socialist Moscow in the womb of the old Moscow, renewing its cells, laying new squares and streets, clearing breathing space for men and plants alike and gradually lowering mechanical movement into the bowels of the earth.

Man is beginning to breathe anew. He measures the rejuvenation of the city by the same measure—the postponing of the autumn of Moscow's trees in the heart of the city, the postponement of the hour of his own weariness in the dead of the night. A breath of pure oxygen is wafted from the gardens. The blood pulsates with fresh youthful energy. Thus from the womb of the ancient city, the new Moscow, the city of Socialism, is emerging.

Translated from the Russian by Rose Prokopiev

SCENES FROM PROLETARIAN MOSCOW



Offices of the Newspaper IZVESTIA

Pushkin square

Factory kitchen No 1

S. Ludkiewicz

On Polish Literature

An Estimate of Reactionary and Revolutionary Forces

The present article is intended to be only of an informative nature and refers only to the present stage of Polish literature. There is a discussion going on now as to the attitude to be adopted towards the old Polish writers that were the protagonists not only of the Polish literary movement but also of the aspirations of the various strata for an independent Poland. This discussion raised the question primarily of Sienkiewicz with regard to his book *With Fire and Sword.*

The young professor of literature, Gurka, came out with a series of articles and finally in a special debate at the Cracow Institute strenuously opposing the inclusion of this book in the list of recommended reading for High Schools as, according to him, Sienkiewicz's book is crudely nationalistic, deepens the differences between the Poles and Ukrainians and, what is more important, distorts the historic truth of the Polish-Ukrainian wars of the past.

Professor Gurka accuses Sienkiewicz of simply falsifying historical facts and not, as some apologists of Sienkiewicz would have it, permissible adaptations of these historical facts as they passed through the artistic "prism." Professor Gurka's "revisionist tendencies" are undoubtedly called out by the exceedingly sharpened class conflict in Western Ukraine—between the Ukrainian peasants and their Polish landlords—coinciding with the struggle for the national liberation of the Ukrainian people. The hundreds of gallows on which so many Ukrainian peasants, workers and students perished in the year 1933 alone, unquestionably awakened in the Polish bourgeoisie a feeling of alarm as to the possibility of further continuing the occupation of Western Ukraine,

The discussion now developing about Sienkiewicz portends a revaluation of this most reactionary, but gifted Polish writer who was the recipient in his day of the Nobel Prize and was for a long time the protagonist of the socalled National Democratic Polish movement.

The discussion now raging in Poland also affects the "great trio" of the Polish romantics: Mickiewicz, Slowacki and Krasinski. Under the blows of the Polish revolutionary camp the romantic legends of the Polish uprising of 1830-31 are also shattered. The biggest blow to the "romantic basis" of Polish poetry of the first half of the XIX century has undoubtedly been the book of the young revolutionary writer Leon Kruczkowski, *Kordian and Cham,* published the latter part of 1932.

But before taking up the question of contemporary Polish literature we cannot ignore the literature of at least the latter years of the XIX century and that of the entire camp of the socalled "Young Poland", particularly the pre-war period of Polish literature—before the reestablishment of Poland.

Polish literature of that period has all the earmarks of social literature, because the literature of even the "sixth art" in Poland was vividly political and social for 150 years due to the nationalist, political and social questions that arose on account of the loss of independence.

The most prominent writer of the first quarter of the XX century was unquestionably Stefan Zeromski who reached the heighday of his literary career after the revolution of 1905 in which he took some part as a strong adherent of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.).

Zeromsky is the most prominent representative of the variegated intelligentsia of Poland who, fighting for the national liberation of Poland, realized that only the laboring masses of Poland, and the proletariat primarily, can exert the decisive influence in this struggle.

But the revolution of 1905, drowned in the blood of the workers of Lodz, Warsaw and Dombrowa, had placed before the Polish workers the question of fighting for their own social freedom, for the overthrow not only of the Russian Tsar, but also of the Polish capitalists and landlords. It was «necessary» to guide these deeply ingrained sentiments of the masses of Polish workers into the channels of petty bourgeois utopian illusion, shifting the solution of social problems to a "later date" and ardently arguing that an independent Poland will solve all problems of capital and labor "justly, as befits the Polish people."

The Revolutionary Worker

The works of Zeromsky, Strug, Danilowski, did not at all evade the social problems of the labor movement. They frankly advocated the idea of subjugating the class interests of the Polish laboring masses to the "interests of the entire Polish nation."

We have no intention of discussing in detail the work of Zeromski, that greatest of Poland's bourgeois writers. We shall only cursorily look into his latest book *The Eve of Spring* which evoked so much discussion in the camp of the Polish bourgeoisie and even among the more revolutionary minded intelligentsia.

For the first time in Polish bourgeois literature this book, written in 1924, a year before Zeromski's death, has as its heroes Communists and communistically inclined representatives of the Polish intelligentsia.

Zeromski, for the first time in Polish bourgeois literature, spoke of Communism as of a great intellectual force, raised a hot protest against the inhuman tortures at the Polish *ohranka* (political gendarmerie—tr.), nailing the executioner of the Lvov *ohranka,* Kaidan, to the pillar of shame as he "immortalized" him. Although a number of Polish critics, even from among those of the revolutionary camp are inclined to say today that the end of one part of the novel where he has the Communist intellectual Baryka head the march of the revolutionary workers on the Belvedere (then the residence of the President of the Republic), is an anticipation of the march, not of the laboring masses, but of Pilsudski in May 1925, we are inclined to think that Zeromski reflected in this last book of his the bankruptcy of the best elements of the Polish intelligentsia—the bankruptcy of his own National-Socialist ideals. Like many another great writer, Zeromski, perhaps not altogether consciously, nevertheless gave a bit of real life in the already independent Poland, showed the dissatisfaction of the broad masses disillusioned in the new Polish government and the awakening of the revolutionary movement.

Zeromski spoke of himself as a "radio-receiver" of the motive thought and ideas of the Polish intelligentsia—and with his *Eve of Spring* he has proved this. Zeromski is dissatisfied with modern Poland, he clearly sees the storm brewing; endeavoring consciously to safeguard the Polish bourgeoisie against the danger threatening it—the great artist nevertheless feels the cleansing power of the revolutionary movement and the Polish proletariat. It is interesting to note that after Zeromski's death in 1925, there were persistent rumors to the effect that Zeromski had written a sequel to *Eve of Spring* but, in view of the extremely revolutionary character of this sequel, the manuscript had been confiscated. We might not have mentioned this if it were not for the fact that recently, in January 1934, several writers addressed a statement to the Polish authorities that on Zeromski's death the then Minister of Arts and Culture, M. Przesmycki, took possession of a Zeromski manuscript. Thus Zeromski, the herald of an independent Poland ended his career with a work of doubtful advantage to the Polish bourgeoisie.

Fascists and Academicians

The well known ideologist of Fascism, A. Skwarczynski, writes in the editorial article of the first number of the literary social magazine *Pmon* in October, 1933: "The new highroads opening up before the Polish writer or poet are empty." And these roads will remain empty, we could boldly continue. All the attempts of the Fascists to create an intellectually perfect Fascist work are doomed to failure in Poland more than anywhere else because the idea is contrary to contemporary reality, with the developing revolutionary movement and its tremendous success, the active Communist Party that has been working underground for 16 years —contrary to that "real reality"—to use the expression of ex-Premier Bartel himself—which does not permit the Polish Fascists to even call their own regime a Fascist one.

Even the creation, recently, of an Academy of Literature with much pomp and circumstance, into which the most important contemporary Polish writers were admitted, will avail them little in this respect.

To talk of the work of these newly baked Academicians is really not worth while—these writers are at the same low level as Polish literature. The most tendacious and also the most talented writer of these is undoubtedly Julius Kaden-Bandrowski who has gone along with Pilsudski and his Polish legions. For a long time Bandrowski's fame rested on his descriptions of the life and military adventures of the Polish legions. They were mostly of an autobiographic nature, like *My Mother's City,* etc. We shall, however, turn our attention to his later works: the two volume *Black Wings (Lenora*

and *Tadeusz)* and the three volume book of the same series *Matthew Bigda,* with which Bandrowski entered the field of the social novel.

Bandrowski's new novels seem to continue the traditions of Zeromski, whose influence on Bandrowski is evident. The latter tries to minimize the effect of Zeromski's *Eve of Spring* and answers the questions put by Zeromski in this novel in a positive manner. But even he—an officer of the Polish legions—with a definite political axe to grind cannot become the open herald of Polish Fascism, even he cannot sing the praises of the present regime in Poland. In order to achieve his ends he had to rely on "subtle" tactics - discredit all the bourgeois parties in Poland so that the reader is left to draw the conclusion that the Pilsudski camp is the only unblemished intellectual haven which sanitates the predatory parliamentary system of government.

The novel *Black Wings* is primarily political. In it he exposes the full mendacity of the slogans of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) whose leaders are most intimately connected with the loathsome representatives of Polish and foreign capital and take an active part in their swindling operations.

On the background of the struggle of the miners of the Dombrowski basin, Bandrowski shows, in *Black Wings* how the French capitalists manage the Dombrowski basin. Taking into consideration that a majority of the workers in the Dombrowski basin are Communist and that even under the difficult Polish conditions the Communists have always received there in parliamentary elections a much greater number of votes than any other Party, Bandrowski does not openly attack the Communist movement.

The Dombrowski basin is considered a citadel of Communism having a rich tradition of revolutionary struggles and a revolutionary present. To write about Communists disparagingly means to reveal oneself a Fascist.

The most attractive characters in the book are undoubtedly the Communist Duz and his sister Lenora who is under his influence. This "objective" treatment of Communists by Bandrowski embarrassed a great many in reviewing the book.

Although the novel *Black Wings* is written in florid style, in imagery it is still Bandrowski's best book and is deserving of attention. But basically it was the first attack on Pilsudski competition: foreign capital and the Polish Socialist Party.

But Poland is a country with a predominantly peasant population and Bandrowski devotes his later books to peasant parties and their leaders. The three volumes under the general title *Matthew Bigda* are proof of a great decline on the part of the writer.

Matthew Bigda is the kulak leader Witos, an old antagonist of Pilsudski, now practically exiled from Poland. In the past Witos was also a Pilsudski supporter but the latter's turning towards the landlords, aristocrats—headed by the Radziwills, his close connections with the Vilna group of large landowners, estranged the broad masses of the peasantry from Pilsudski. The agrarian crisis in Poland reached such proportions that it not only doomed to starvation millions of poor and middle peasants but also shook the foundations of the Polish kulak farms.

Witos played a prime role in the political life of the reestablished Poland. Beginning with the Polish-Soviet war in 1920 he was a number of times President of the Council of Ministers, the continuous leader of the kulak peasant parties, leader of parliamenary fractions, etc, etc. Following the precepts of French politicians he was the organizer of all kinds of manipulations of his friends with the treasury, gave posts and money to the members of his party.

Bandrowski's camp came into power by means of demagogic, seemingly anti-capitalistic slogans, primarily the slogan of "sanitation of the morals of the Polish nation." Hence the name adapted by the Pilsudski-ite camp "Sanitation."

Bandrowski has really shown in *Black Wings* and *Matthew Bigda* the whole abcess of Polish parliamentarism, the abcess of Polish government administration but only until Pilsudski in 1926.

The third volume of *Matthew Bigda* had hardly been published when, in answer to it, the novel of Dotenga Mostowicz under the title *Nikodem Dyzma* appeared. Mostowicz's novel shows life and manners under the present Fascist regime, people of the present Polish administration. Mostowicz recounts the career of a provincial dancer, crude, ignorant, uneducated, who had become a prominent politician in contemporary Poland, a Minister and even President of the Council of Ministers of Fascist Poland—the "Savior of the country."

Mostowicz exposes the venality of the Polish Fascist regime, the baseness of the Polish aristocracy, the corruption in the the Fascist governmental apparatus, of the higher dignitaries of the police, as of the entire Fascist system.

Bandrowski and Mostowicz supplemented each other. As a result of a too

great political ardor and the "keenness of the political conflict within the Polish bourgeoisie" we got a terrifying picture of the rottenness of all sections of the Polish bourgeoisie, the leading cadres of the Polish peasant parties, the Polish Socialist Party—all the pillars of the present regime in Poland.

Art For Art's Sake

„Some will perhaps doubt: is it possible there is no other bourgeois literature in Poland meriting more attention from a purely artistic point of view, except these novels, true by the best Polish writers, but still in effect political pamphlets?

Yes there are today also other books by other Polish writers that do not touch upon political or social themes. But what do they write about? Let us take "the best of the best" the first laureate of the recent contest of young Polish writers Michael Choromanski.

In an article on Choromanski's stories, (in *Wiadomosci Literackie* No. 8 of February 25, 1934) the well known Polish critic Leon Piwinski thus begins his enthusiastic appreciation:

"The themes of these four stories turn within a vicious circle of physical diseases and passions of a diseased nature. The first story shows the death of a consumptive in the most ticklish circumstances; the second story occupies itself with the morbid events of a "family triangle" that lead to crime; in the third a passion for cards leads to suicide; in the fourth the events are placed at a lunatic asylum and amount to, mainly, a very complicated transfer of incurable narcotic fiends into the department of the violent insane. Sombre, obscurantist or criminal eroticism, drunkenness, tremens and the mystic fervor of hazardous games, the euphoretic condition of the tubercular or narcotic addict, lunacy, scissophrenia, nymphomania, these are the leading themes of these otherwise excelllently composed and extraordinarily expressive stories."

There is your epigone of "art for art's sake".

But if this is the state of Polish bourgeois prose,the situation of the drama is even worse. The only dramatist of any talent is Carl Hubert Rostworowski — an ardent Catholic — whose work is full of Middle Ages, mysticism and a reversion to Polish messiahnism. But even he is compelled to take up "social themes." His latest play deals with the life of Polish peasants but fatalistic predermination lowers the value of this, his best play.

The situation of Polish poetry is slightly better due to the undoubted talent of severals poets, mainly Julian Tuwim. But even this poetry, that began in its youth with the Mickiewicz recipe of "eagle flights" now reflects the grey tints of Polish humdrum from which it tries to escape into egocentricity.

Even the vividly pacifist notes that once sounded in this poetry (Tuwim's well known poem "To the Ordinary Soldier") have long been silent. Polish Fascism demands the "clang of swords" from its poetry not mystically but realistically.

The Polish intelligentsia which is rapidly being revolutionized has brought out a number of new writers, notably Adolf Rudnicki, Helena Boguszewska and many others, particularly essayists, who have won full "citizenship" in Polish literature. The book of the young writer Rudnicki, *Soldiers,* instead of the "hurrah patriotic" sentimental Polish "soldier boys" of "our own army," shows the full horror of the life of the Polish soldier that victim of the frequently sadistic lusts of Polish sergeants and lieutenants that drive these victims to suicide which has become frequent lately in the Polish army. True, Rudnicki has not yet gotten rid fully of nationalistic ideas; true, there are stories yet of the good-hearted Polish officer who comes to the rescue of the soldier whose personal bitter fate he has noticed. But even in Rudnicki's book the officers know very little of what is going on in the "regiments entrusted to them." This desire to shift the burden of responsability for the nightmare of the soldiers from the shoulders of the Polish officers is so primitive, that despite the desire of the author, the horrible truth about the Polish barracks, completely at the mercy of the most evil sadists, produces a terrific impression.

Boguszewska's book *These People* tells somewhat sentimentally about the frightful condition of the unemployed but strikes an excellent chord of class consciousness when the governess of the factory owner's children, herself a daughter and a sister of workers, meets, during a walk with the children, a demonstration of the workers from that factory and she sends the chidren home while she joins the demonstration.

These class chords resound in the works of many other young writers like, Szemplinski, Chuknowski, Got, etc.

It is not to be doubted that what affects these writers as well as the Polish

intelligentsia as a whole, is the keenness of the class struggle in Poland which, in 1933 alone, led to a number of strikes in Warsaw, Lodz, Dombrowa, to considerable rebellions in Western White Russia and Ukraine, with drum courts and executions.

The Revolutionary Writers

It was in 1933 that, for the first time in the history of independent Poland, considerable uprisings of Polish peasants took place, in which tens of thousands of peasants participated (August 1933 in Central Galicia).

This rapprochement of the Polish proletariat and peasant for a decisive struggle for power has found expression primarily in Polish revolutionary literature and its representatives. The latest collection of poems of the most talented Polish poet, Wladislaw Broniewski, of the revolutionary writers wing, *Cares and Songs* and some of his latest separate poems carry a great certainty of a final and near victory. Thanks to the revolutionary poetry of Broniewski and Stande, Polish revolutionary poetry occupies a prominent place in Polish literature.

The most important event, however, in Polish revolutionary literature is undoubtedly the publication of the first book of the young Polish writer Leon Kruczkowski, *Kordian and Cham.*

Unlike poetry, Polish revolutionary prose writing is very weak and until recently nothing worth while was to be found among the works of Polish revolutionary fiction writers. So much the more remarkable is the success of Kruczkowski whose work has been acclaimed by Polish "public opinion" as the best work in Polish prose of recent years. In his introduction the writer states: "The diary of Deczynski (a Polish peasant who took part in the Russo-Polish war of 1830-31) was the source of the plot and the basis of the action developed in this novel. I confess that what attracted me most was the definitely expressed *class consciousness* of the author of the diary. This is the connection between *contemporaneity* bridging the gap between today and the "historical subject of the novel."

Polish romantic legend has the uprising of 1830-31 a rebellion of the entire Polish nation, of all sections, when under the leadership of the Polish gentry the peasantry also joined the fight. Kruczkowski has shown the real attitude of the Polish village of the time, the age-old class differences between the feudal landlord and the peasant, the whole flaming class struggle in the village. On the wealth of factual data which served as the basis of his artistic work Kruczkowski has shown the full mendacity of the "gentry peasant unity" even on the question of Tsarism.

On the background of the events of 1830-31 Kruczowski has succeeded in producing a most concrete Polish novel in which the revolutionary struggle of the peasantry against the landlords leads to the present stage of this struggle, only now already under the leadership of the proletariat.

Kruczkowski's novel touches upon all phases of Polish reality of that time, all sections of the Polish people including the priesthood and officials so that in reading this "historical" novel we get a most actual picture of modern Polish life, of the struggle for the overthrow of landlord and capitalist.

Kordian in the similarly named play by Slowacki is an ideological participant of the conspiracy for the execution of Nicolas I and is an entirely invented character designed to inspire Polish nationalists.

And here Kruczkowski comes out with a Kordian as a mean and soulless scion of the gentry ready to fight for officer's epaulets for himself and his colleagues with arms and demanding that the "masses" support this struggle.

This challenge thrown by Kruczkowski to Polish romantic tradition placed him in the first ranks of revolutionary Polish literature because no revolutionary prose writer has been able to combine such political purposefulnes with such a wealth of artistic imagery.

Kruczkowski whose novel is the best artistic work of Polish literature *as a whole* in recent years has shown that there is still "powder in the horn" of Polish revolutionary prose.

A. Sellvanovsky

BELLA ILLES: Novelist of the Hungarian Revolution

Notes on the Three Volumes of Tissa Burns

The Soviet Republic established in Hungary in March 1919 lived only a little more than four months. It was betrayed by the Hungarian and International Social-Democrats, and crushed by the Roumanian army and Horthy of the White Guards, proteges of the international bourgeoisie. The experience of the heroic Hungarian proletariat, the achievements and mistakes of the Communists, remain as a subject for careful study by Communists and the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

The third and last volume of *Tissa Burns* completing a series of exceptional novels has recently been published.

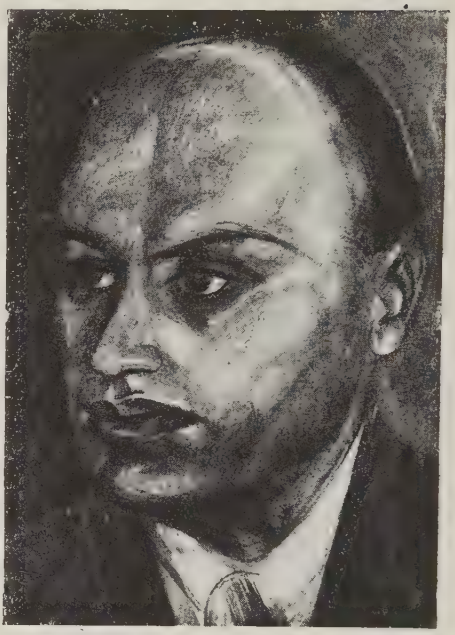
This series originally called *Stages of the Revolution in Central Europe,* have been translated into nineteen languages. They present realistic pictures of the 1919 revolution in Hungary, the emigration of the Communists to Vienna, and their activities in the Trans-Carpathian Ukraine during 1920.

In them Illes combines the pictures of a heroic revolution with Bolshevik self-criticism, thereby enriching his work.

The third volume deals chiefly with illegal Communist work in Hungary in 1921.

It is a chronicle of the various stages of revolutionary struggle, from the organization of a dictatorship of the proletariat to Communist work carried on illegally under the Horthy regime.

The strength of the story lies in its honesty; it portrays not only the supreme heroism of the Communists but also their mistakes; the treachery of "fair weather" sympathizers after the victory of Horthy, the deep factional struggles in Communist "illegal" and emigrant branches. The greatness of the revolution can be seen not only in victory but in defeat, in the struggle for the thorough Bolshevization of the Party.



Bela Illes, Hungarian novelist—from a painting by Bela Uitz

A Gallery of Heroes and Rogues

Peter Kovatch, a metal worker and hero of the story, is drawn realistically. The birth of his class consciousness is well portrayed, taking him step by step into the Communist Party. Beginning from elementary revolutionary protest to fighting fearlessly in the ranks of the revolution itself, sharing its mistakes and disappointments, the hero passes through phases of pursuit, arrest and torture, becoming daily more experienced in Party work, a true Bolshevik-Leninist.

Illes also portrays the leaders of the Hungarian Party, Bela Kun and Landler, contrasting the growing courage of the active Party workers, with the despicable behavior of these "heroes" who, in spite of "left" phrases became opportunists and betrayers after the downfall of Soviet Hungary.

The author presents a whole gallery of working class enemies, from social betrayers to Hungarian magnate-landlords.

Budapest and the Hungarian provinces, Vienna, Czecho-Slovakia and the Trans-Carpathian Uknaine form the background of the story. In spite of unevenness, for some parts of the story are not sufficiently developed, readers of many countries will be able to draw from *Tissa Burns* an inspiring picture of the heroic Hungarian revolution.

The Soviet government was set up in March 1919, at a moment of severe crisis. Unfortunately, however, the total amalgamation was formed between the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties. Bourgeois Social-Democrats were allotted responsible government positions, and even installed in Party leadership. Their treacherous activities and those of their protegé commander-in-chief Burm prepares the ground for Horthy and brought about the downfall of the courageous Hungarian Red Army which fought against great odds.

The first volume shows Communists continually stumbling against counter-revolutionary sabotage by Social-Democrats in the government, municipalities, the army and factories.

The Hungarian Communists made another important error in failing to distribute to the peasants the land they had nationalized.

The dissatisfied peasants provided excellent material for counter-revolutionary agitation, and masses of the peasants deserted the revolution. Illes skilfully portrays the counter-revolutionaries playing upon the dissatisfaction of the peasants and the army.

The revolution of 1919 perished. What is to be done in the future?

A Novel of Bolshevism

In all three volumes the author draws characters new to the revolution and easily discouraged at its failure. One of them, Antalty, convinced that the failure was permanent, became a cunning speculator in arms.

The author also shows with startling clarity how petty bourgeois sympathizers were attracted to the proletarian revolution in its victory only to turn traitor at its downfall and become its enemies.

In these volumes we meet the "lefts" those who, losing their heads in failure, performed reckless acts of desperation and adventurism; with heroes, old and young, who grew stronger despite the failure of 1919, and overcoming Social-Democratic traditions became the Party's keenest supporters. They did not immediately become thorough Leninists in theory and practice. The story shows us, in a very human manner, their tactical and organizational blunders, and how they reached true understanding only by perseverance.

In the second volume much attention is given to factional struggles in the Party, the basing of the Party on industrial units.

Illes was the first Western proletarian writer to find courage and ability to make Bolshevism the centre of his attention.

Throughout all three volumes the relationship between the Hungarian and Russian revolution runs as a central motive.

The third volume is mainly devoted to the Bolshevization of the Hungarian Party, its enrichment in Leninist theory and with the example of the Russian Revolution before it, the complete victory over Social-Democratic traditions.

Illes also shows clearly how any attempt to limit the international nature of Leninist theory and practice diverges into Social Fascism.

In *Tissa Burns*, a Communist, Serkeresh, says: "Ah Peter, if we had only had a Party then! Honestly, we wouldn't have perished. But, anyhow, if we can in the future have a Party like the Russians, I'd like to find the power able to prevent a second, victorious Soviet Hungary."

J. Dobranov

About Fedin's New Novel

Concerning The Abduction of Europa

Europe and Soviet Russia, the crisis and Socialist construction, Fascism and Communism, twilight of a decadent culture and the burning urge for knowledge on the part of tens of millions — this is a central theme, occupying the minds of an entire generation.

K. Fedin's entire creative career led to this theme. Fedin, more than most others, has felt what Europe means to Soviet culture. It is for this reason that he so persistently returns again and again all through his literary career to the subject of a comprehension of Europe, of its great past and its tragic, critical present.

In *Years and Cities, Brothers* and now in *The Abduction of Europa* he looks closely at the face of Europe with eyes, now loving, now condemning, now with an ironical smile, now with involuntary respect.

Throughout his creative career K. Fedin has been interested in the problem of the birth of culture and its preservation.

In *Years and Cities* he wrote in romantic and somewhat sentimental tones of Europe, but in no novel, least of all in *Brothers,* did K. Fedin speak of the class character of this culture, nowhere did he show its "normal", constant reverse — poverty and slavelike, stupefying labor.

The war with its terrible "machine-like necessities" its cynical disregard of the beauties of "humanistic" culture was shown by K. Fedin in *Years and Cities* as a catastrophe and not as the continuation of "normal" bourgeois policies.

In *The Abduction of Europa* K. Fedin has taken a tremendous step in the direction of proletarian world philosophy.

Without any exaggeration, in bold, frugal strokes he shows the exploitation of man by man, of class by class.

Fedin hits at the varnished, culture-covered beast of prey of the species about which Lenin wrote in the article on Count Heyden.

His previous somewhat lyrical attitude towards Europe has changed to open, although restrained, irony.

In *The Abduction of Europa* there are no such peculiarly imposing figures as the margraf von Schonau. This belated scion of the knights of the Middle Ages has been replaced by the author's satirically drawn business men — from the conservative Lodovic Van-Rossoom, still preserving his burgher dignity to that international adventurer and grand speculator, Sir Eustace Eldering-Geyser.

The chapter, "The King", in which a venomous portrait is given of one of the mighty ones of the capitalist world, our old acquaintance Sir Henry Deterding (he is Eustace Eldering-Geyser) is one of the most brilliant ones in the book.

Philip Van-Rossoom is given with somewhat softer but no less profound irony. His courting of Claudia Andreyevna, his elegant liberalism with the frequent breaking through it of the "atavistic feelings" of the private property owner, now in crude anger (scene with the chaffeur William) now in abject fear (the final scene with the seaman Breyver), lower the figure of a clever, cultured and grasping bourgeois.

But one can be ironical so calmly only about things one observes from outside, things that do not hurt, that one does not care for. This proves that K. Fedin has at last freed himself from his "occidentalism" of many years standing.

Organized heartlessness permeates the culture of contemporary bourgeois Europe — this is the fundamental idea of the first part of the book.

Heartlessness in everything: in the Englishman cooly snapping a picture of the boy over the precipice, in the mixed German-Norwegian company for trading in German deserters, in the gossips of the little German town, in the full-blooded plentifulness of Holland the reverse of which is Black Amsterdam, and finally, in the very core of the novel — in the old, cultured respectable, haut-bourgeois family of the Van Rossooms. In this family all live emotions that once animated the bourgeoisie have atrophied: patriotism, family feeling, religion. Philip Van Rossoom is a typical example of a bourgeois that lives for himself and himself only.

There is nothing left in him except the urge for gain and thrills which he collects as assiduously as he does pictures of the old Dutch masters.

The Bourgeois World

K. Fedin has shown excellently how constant thought of property deforms all the feelings of the bourgeois.

A ship sinks (insured, of course), the cash balance grows to seven figures, a brother dies—one must think of the will, the last chance of love disappears — one can buy something similar.

Here K. Fedin carefully and skilfully strengthens with every new page the feeling of alarm which grips the capitalist world, even such strongholds as the world known firm of Van Rossoom in that most stable Holland. A feeling of instability weighs on Van Rossoom, a still vague feeling of the doom of the capitalist world and its hierarchy which has seemed so invulnerable in its technical and military power.

In provincial Norway this alarm sounds somewhat dampened, but in Holland, strongly: strike of chauffeurs, strange Russian affairs...

The alarm breaks out in the open in Germany.

Endless ranks of unemployed, rowdy Storm Troopers and those passionate quarrels among the bourgeoisie seeking salvation. The passion for oddities, always peculiar to Fedin, makes him pick a consumptive hunchback for the preacher of Fascism. Was a picture of someone intended? Is it a hint about the mystic passionate orator of Fascism in Germany? However it is, the whole scene at the home of the manufacturer Krieg, in which the upper spheres of German society of the pre-Hitlerite period are shown is very aptly done.

On the whole the first part of *The Abduction of Europa* is a very significant beginning of an important work.

The pieces in it are only indicated, not yet definitely placed, probably not all have yet been introduced into the game. It is not yet altogether clear whether Rogov is the hero of the novel.

This is however, entirely immaterial. What is important is, that in Rogov there is no longer that duality, the division between old and new, between the world of bourgeois individualism and proletarian solidarity which is so characteristic of Fedin's previous heroes. They vacillated — Rogov has chosen. Their Hamletism had to be shaded off by some hatchet hewn Bolsheviks. Rogov needs no such shading.

The others faced the problem of how to make the revolution—Rogov appears before the reader as monolithic with the revolution.

But Rogov has "birth marks" of capitalism and it is these "birth marks" that tempt some critics to hasty and unfounded conclusions on Rogov's kinship to the "young man of the nineteenth century."

Rogov's loneliness, his estheticism, contemplativeness — are all traits inherited from his predecessors: Nikita Karev and Andrey Startsev.

K. Fedin has not yet matured, judging by the first part of the novel, to a final clear assertion of the inner justice of the proletarian revolution. He still cherishes the "birth marks" of bourgeois individualism. He has not been able yet, in the figure of Rogov, to give an image of the victorious proletarian, the fighter for the cause of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, instead of the perishing one.

His conviction of the justice of Communism has not yet been clothed in the flesh of unbending will to win.

Hence the compositional weakness, the structural unclearness of *The Abduction of Europa,* the lack of a clearly defined plot, completeness of description. All this lends the novel a static quality, makes it resemble a long introduction to a novel, weakens its effectiveness.

The wealth of precise and imaginative language, brilliance of depiction based on a conscientious study of his material and great powers of observation, the jewel like filigree work in details — are excellent, but the book lacks the final touch of a work of art — dynamics.

Such dynamics are particularly important to Socialist realism which rests on Marxian-Leninist world philosophy.

The dynamic quality only those can find who have completely identified themselves with the idea of the Socialist Revolution. K. Fedin is on the road to such identification.

DRAWINGS BY CHILDREN OF

"Coming from Work" — by an anonymous girl, 12 years of age — TURKMENISTAN

"Session of the Soviet" — by Donat Chabayev, 12 years of age — BURIAT-MONGOLIA

SOVIET NATIONAL MINORITIES

"German Lesson" — by Nikolai Naumenko, 12 years of age NORTH — CAUCASUS

"Where We Live" — by Dodin Beka, 10 years of age — FAR NORTH

CHRONICLE

What Berlin Reads In 1934

The kiosk on the Donhoffplatz is vividly colored with all the different magazines plastered on its sides. From a distance one would think the Berlin public, hungry for reading matter, could find here all the variety of stuff it once enjoyed. This proves very soon, however, to be an illusion. All these volumes, large and small, yellow and red differ only in color and shape. Their contents — but no, let us not be too summary. There are differences — nuances of color. Let us pick up the microscope!

We are "workers of the forehead" as they say in the Third Empire, although goodness knows that out of all living creatures only oxen are wont to work with their foreheads. So then, let us begin with a most serious periodical: *Geistitge Arbeit. Zeitung der Wissenschafllichen Welt (Brain Work. A Magazine for the Scientific World.)* What does it contain? Only the most timely articles, one more interesting than the other. For who will admit himself lacking in enthusiasm for such subjects as: "A Short History of Montenegro," "Fertilizer Problems," "Vulgate and Esthetics," "Structure of the Meaning World," "On the Fortifications of the Etruscans." The authors are all professors of German universities and, as the titles of the articles faintly indicate, opponents of the Third Empire. As a matter of fact this is one of the few remaining hotbeds of opposition. Here we shall not find a word about Hitler or any of his "heroic deeds." These are the last charred remains of the once so vital and "free" bourgeois science.

For the "workers of the first" there is the magazine *Arbeitertum (Workerdom).* About the name of this magazine there was a prolonged and bitter struggle. It was first called *Arbeiterochaft* but as this indicated too clearly the class existense of the proletariat, the name was prohibited. Now then there is, on paper, no more proletariat, but only "workerdom" as one speaks of a kingdom or churchdom. That is how the workers are taken care of.

There is an endless number of propaganda magazines. You may take your choice of *Neues Deutschland (New Germany), Volk im Werden (A People Growing), Geistige Erneuerung (Spiritual Renovation), Deutsches Volkstum (German Folkdom), Rass und Volk (Race and People), Volk und Heimat (People and Country).* etc. There is not a subject between Heaven and Earth, from the amoeba to dental treatments which does not find its "scientific" straitjacket there.

The assiduous young authors are, of course, holier than the Pope himself. They out-Hitler Hitler. Thus when the new criminal law is announced providing for the sterilization of those convicted of crimes against morality these handmaidens of culture immediately demand that this effective and economical means be extended to include all criminals, but particularly those "sub-normal" Communists. "Historical" articles, inflicted upon defenceless epochs and peoples are also great favorites; only, of course, there must be complete agreement with current foreign policy. Since Dolfuss, for instance, will not submit to elimination, it becomes a cultural task of the utmost importance to show that, contrary to the opinion held for two hundred years, it was not Poland and Austria that defeated the Turk near Vienna, but German soldiers in the employ of both these armies effected this decisive victory.

One sidewall of the kiosk is covered with magazines of organisations which are only partially represented here. Nazi football, the compulsory-labor servant, the theatrical N.S.B.O., or member of any organization in fact — each is a compulsory subscriber to some sheet that gives him the necessary brown light on his specialty.

A head appears in the paper tower.

"Morning, mother Lehmann. Haven't seen you for some time. How is the news business? Must be fine with such a variety?"

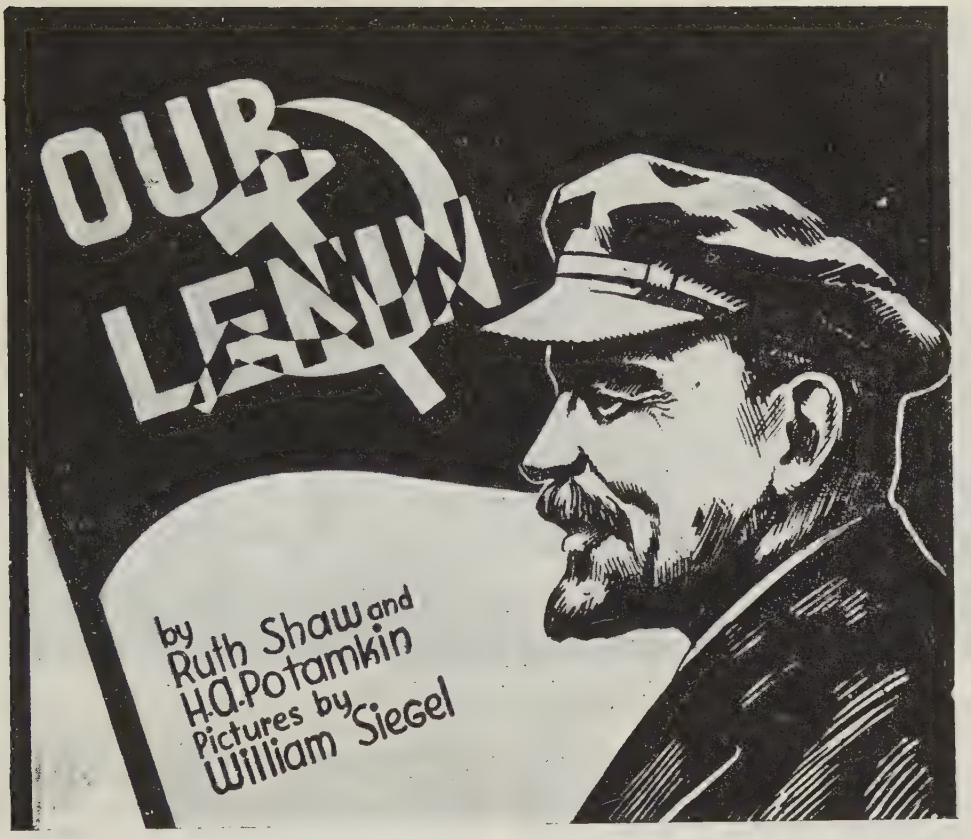
"Fine? You have no idea! The blamed things rot..."

"That so? Once?..."

"Well, well that was long ago. Who has money now to buy the stuff? And then it's such a terrible bore. I don't read it — thank the Lord."

"Well, let's have a *Vossische.*"

"*Vossische,* mercy, that died yesterday. The *Berliner Tageblatt* is also due. Take



Cover of a new book for children issued by International Publishers, New York

a *Volkischer Beobachter!* They all contain the same stuff."

II

So, daily newspapers and *Völkischer Beobachter.* They are all the same and yet not altogether. True all newspapers have to take what the "Deutsche Nachrichtenbureau" (German news agency) gives them and their columns are therefore uniformly barren and under one brush. In one respect, however, Hitler's paper beats them all.

As is well known, the circulation of the newspaper could not be increased for a year after Hitler's accession to power. The bourgeois public, notwithstanding its having elected Hitler, could not stomach the fishmonger shouting and bloodthirstiness of the *Volkischer Beobachter.* It held on to its old newspapers much more firmly than to the old Constitution and remained true to them, so to say, beyond the grave.

It was different with the workers. Its manysided mass newspapers were prohibited. What were they to read? Every newsboy, every newspaper trader answers: since January 1933 daily newspapers and weeklies have disappeared altogether from the homes of thousands of workers. They find solace in the bitter truth that there is nothing worth while in them, anyhow. But Goebbels sensed danger in this situation. "We must create a new workers' press," he proclaimed more than six months ago. The proletariat, however, would not buy. So he solved the problem this way:

The official organ of the Nazi, the *Volkischer Beobachter* is to be transformed into a " Workers Newspaper." How many evenings did Goebbels spend poring over old volumes of the *Rote Fahne?* This is a secret. But what one can see now are the results of his study. Since some time ago the amount of worker correspondence in that exceedingly meager department of the *Volkischer Beobachter* is on the increase. Notes on shortcomings are appearing, as, for instance, about the

A scene from the Tairov production of Dos Passos' play Fortune Heights *at the Kamerny Theatre in Moscow*

farm where workers received their portions of fat in old used envelopes. (Otherwise there is nothing to complain about.) On the title page, however, which is usually filled with the utterances of "the Leader" there now appear every other day or so copious reports modelled exactly on the way it was done in the Communist newspapers. The one of the 14th of April dealt with the "Struggle of the Miners in the Ruhr." The shamelessness of the imitation is such that they were not abashed to entitle one paragraph "Daily Wage Only 7.71 Marks!" And even the deductions and charges mentioned. Then follows, of course, the glorification of the "heroic miners," a description of his unshakable devotion to Hitler which was not be emphasized by appropriate group photos. There is no doubt many workers will be taken in by this but this new "left" maneuvre of the *Volkischer Beobachter* must not be ignored. It is directly in line with its usual social demogogy as can be seen, for instance, in the holiday buttons for the Ist of May, 1934. In order to have the workers wear them they simply put the proletarian symbol of the hammer and sickle on them!

Let us also make a short survey of the advertizing section of the *Völkischer Beobachter*. Here the Nazi blossoms out in his real self and his noble Nordic spirit produces such gems as the following:

"*Fighters.* Energetic gentlemen of means with good connections in national-socialist organizations have an opportunity for unlimited earnings by selling very valuable articles (field binoculars). Only steel hardened men of unshakable energy need apply . . ."

Or that fortright ad of the champagne manufacturer:

"Champagne is the joy of life! Since the German government has given the champagne industry its assistance you may grant yourself this perfectly legitimate joy. You will not rob anyone of anything but quite the reverse, you will also help in the great work of building our Fatherland."

III

A bookstore in the university quarter. The vast store is empty. Armies of books and not a single reader. From all corners clerks come running towards me as if by magnetic attraction. A customer at last!

"New books? Certainly, anything you may wish. Four tables full. Please! Philosophy? Sorry, nothing new has been published this year. Psychology—neither.

Sex-research? Neither. But if you should care for something brand new in natural science, please, here is *Biology of Wholeness and Ethics,* by Dr. Arnim Mulber".

Biology of wholeness? So be it! The very preface already puts the question of *German* research. And the contents, of course, answer positively. Here on page 11 it says distinctly that the newest researches have discarded Darwinism and its theory of Natural Selection and instead presents us with the brand new theory of "Conservative stock." This should presumably be the "most vital phenomenon" in biology. With the accession to power of Hitler, named "the renaissance movement of the people", this conservative stock, this "primate of all that is truly German" has again come well to the forefront. That's how the "objective" researches of 1934 look! What can one expect from the next table breaking under the load of black-white-red bound volumes on world philosophy?

Here the biographies of Nazi leaders are heaped, books on race theory, revelations on the true nature of Germany, women's letters to Hitler and triumphal hymns on the mighty deeds of the Third Empire. Thick volumes, pamphlets, photo albums — everything in one tone — endless praise to Hitler, glorification of Barbarity as culture.

Numberless are also the newly baked histories of the world. There is one very solid volume. I pick it up. The manager, with the Nazi emblem in his lapel, stretches his hand out deprecatingly: "Frankly I cannot recommend it. It is written with the pen a little too hot." Five hundred pages for 7.50 marks. For that history is transformed according to the imperialist dreams of monopoly capital, trimmed with race theory. There is no lack of "primal German urge for conquest in the East" or the march of triumph of German kultur in the colonies. "Has the book a large sale?" "Private people seldom buy it. But on orders of the Minister of Education it must be included in all teachers' libraries."

"How about fiction?"

"Here we have a number of new books."

"Traven's *Ship of Death?* No, this we do not carry any longer. But here is a modern novel: Christiana is enchanted with her compulsory year of work. That's why all school libraries must include it. It is the first of a series. The sale has been rather poor. It is only six weeks old... The reading appetite of the public has clearly fallen off. Our turnover has fallen 30 percent since 1933." A remarkably talkative salesman, regardless of all he leaves unsaid.

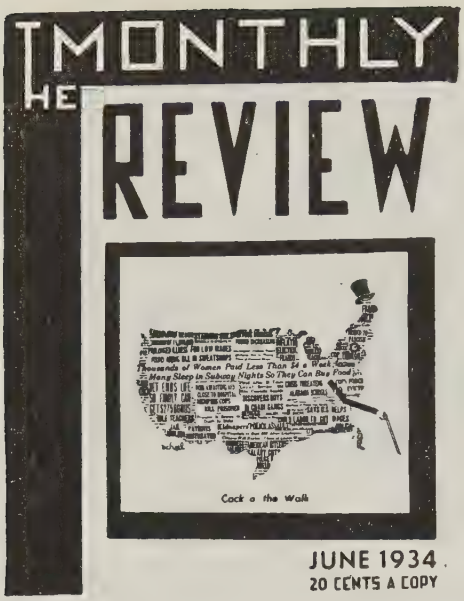
Eric Weinert, German revolutionary writer

But let us take a closer look at Fascist entertaining literature! Here is the book *Praise the Land* by Paul Alverdes. A very timely book. The author describes the Schwabian landscape very carefully. Man with his wants would only mar the beautiful picture of the woods and mountains and so spoil esthetic contemplation. So they had better be left out. Thus the end is sooner reached: "the feeling within us, so rare, of also partaking of the peace of God, which is higher than all reason."

Some three or four books of this sort appear monthly. Now someone discovers the glorious swamps of East Prussia, now the chalk island Rugen is spread in hundreds of photographs. Or they take up animals. Mountains of books pile up on plover, wild geese, elks (Nordic animals preferred). Every motion of the insects is listened for, photographed. As if the lense cannot even stand man any more in the Third Empire.

But then again a favorite of the camera is the German race type shown in many different forms and editions. Also the themes "Mother and child", "old German peasant house", "German workmen at work" fill dozens of books with picture and text. They do not, of course, give anything new either in material or thought. It is typical escape-literature that passes as clever and timely for business reasons. It fills two-thirds of all the show windows of the better book shops.

The remaining third, the novels, are up to the same standard. Thomas Mann's



Cover of the first issue of a new American revolutionary publication

new book leads a still tolerated, neglected existence in a corner. But the *Village Teacher, Une Karsten* by Felacitas Rose has created a shool. Once upon a time, before the war, this false sentimental tommyrot was never even mentioned in any history of literature and only served for confirmation presents in the country. Today it is the example of the popular village novel. It is republished, filmed and imitated. It is a glorification of primitive, impoverished peasant life, a renunciation of the city and its industry with its vice laden enlightenment. Such pious peasant stories now blossom in all parts of Germany. True they do not have a syllable on the actual conditions of the small farmer, but instead they give us a picture of the ideal peasant that has never existed but who is at the basis of the national-socialist folk-theory. His chief traits are: four-hundred years on the same farm and therefore "closely rooted in the soil", hatred of all city culture and degeneration, dissinclination to amassing money, also he is wise, unselfish, faitful, readly submissive to authority and so on. One can see that the peasant is making rapid headway in fiction.

A variation of this theme we find in the historical novel as, for instance, in Paul Ernst's *Luck of Lautenthal.* The incredible contents are, concisely, as follows: The inhabitants of the Hartz mountains in the seventeenth century were pious folk and "free from the problems of civilization in their natural conditions." When things are particularly bad with them — the mine is exhausted and even the stream has dried up — like "a higher being into this lower world" the young Lady of Luck appears. She is of princely descent but wants "to live among the people." This fabulous being immediately discovers — inspired by the devotion of the people — a fresh vein of silver in the mine. With this the well-being and endless harmony are reestablished in Lautenthal.

Here we have the wishes of the "Third Empire" transferred to the Middle Ages point by point. That is why the German press is full of the highest praise for this "masterpiece of popular poetry." And the government goes a step further: it makes the author, of whom no one has taken any notice for seventy years, a member of the Academy of Poetry, honors him with personal autographs and recommends him to the poets of the nation as a paragon. Rarely has the role of literature as a weapon in the class struggle been so apparent as in this case. Hitler, the "God-sent Leader" demands faith and uncritical trust. Quickly the novel appears that shows the people possessing these desired traits.

This sort of fiction differs from the propaganda pamphlet only in that it has ludicrous pretensions of depicting life. It is no wonder that even the easily satisfied Nazis despise such a sterile Nordic standard dish.

IV

The hunger for reading matter of the Berlin public that finds nothing to satisfy it in this discouraging grave of the once living poetry and culture is, however, still alive. It tries to get what it wants as well and as cheaply as it can in the *Public Library.*

An old store in the Weding district. In the window the covers of Hitler's *My Struggle,* of H. H. Ewers' novel *Horst Wessel* and von Schenzinger's *Young Hitlerite Quex.* I approach the owner, a lean individual who shivers with the cold. He says: "New Books? Yes, please! Here — *Seaman's Bride,* or *Fall of Countess Lisa.* You don't want these? S. A. novels? Yes, that's right. Last summer I took in a couple of them. *Tonne, the S. A. Man, Red Murder Around the Corner* and such. But these are never taken by my customers. So I sent them back to the publi-

shers. Better a couple of detective stories instead. That can always be sold. More serious literature? I don't carry it. Yes, it is read. You know — it is the former Reds that read the serious literature like Balzac, Shaw, Zola, Dreiser, in translation. Lord, the censorship didn't leave much. . ."

He is right, the good fellow, about serious literature and intelligent workers. But more desirable to them than all classic fiction is still the illegal revolutionary press. Witness is born to this by the bits of paper worn almost to shreds after passing thousands of hands: the completely worn out copies of Party newspapers and the organs of cultural clubs issued in tiny photo copies.

For only there can the knowledge-hungry worker find an objective analysis of reality instead of the stupefying stuff prevalent and there only is he shown the way out from the barbarity of the Third Empire.

Trude Richter

USSR

First All-Union Soviet Writers Congress

As we go to press the first All-Union Congress of writers of the Soviet Socialist Republics has opened at the Hall of Trade Unions in Moscow. Over 500 delegates are present from all sections of one-sixth of the globe including over 170 million people.

The interest in the Congress can be seen from the fact that although the hall seats only about 1,000 Guests in addition to the delegates, five days before the opening over 18,000 applications were received by the Organization Committee for tickets for the sessions.

Posters in the streets and banners on public buildings greet the Congress. Every newspaper in the Soviet Union prints full reports and photographs daily. The radio carries every word spoken to all sections of the land. Motion pictures and talkies bring the proceedings to all theatres. It is the greatest event of the moment in the Soviet Union.

The Congress chose Maxim Gorky, beloved Soviet writer as chairman. The presidium includes the most prominent Russian writers as well as those of the various national minorities.

In opening the Congress Maxim Gorki made the following statement:

Dear Comrades:

Before opening the congress of men of letters of the Soviet Socialist Republics, the first in the long history of literature, I will permit myself, as chairman of the organization committee of the Union of Writers, to say a few words on the meaning and significance of our union.

The significance lies in the fact that the literature of various tribes and languages of our republics is appearing as a united whole before the proletariat of the Land of the Soviets, before the revolutionary proletariat of all countries and before the men of letters, who are friendly to us, throughout the world. We are of course demonstrating not only our geographical union, but are demonstrating the unity of our aims, which, of course, does not reject, does not limit, the diversity of our creative methods and aspirations.

We are appearing in an epoch of the general savagery, brutality and despair of the bourgeoisie, despair called forth by a feeling of its ideological impotence, its social bankruptcy, in an epoch of its bloody attempts to return, by means of fascism, to the fanaticism of the fuedal middle ages.

We appear as judges of a world doomed to destruction, as men who affirm the true humanism of the revolutionary proletariat, the humanism of a force which is called upon by history to emancipate the whole world of toilers from dependence, greed, vulgarity and stupidity, from all the monstrosities which have distorted the labor of men for ages. We are enemies of property— the terrible and vile goddess of the bourgeois world, we are enemies of the true

Ramon Sender, Spanish Revolutionary writer whose story appears in the next issue

individualism which is confirmed by the religion of this goddess.

We are appearing in a country where the proletariat and the peasantry, led by the Party of Lenin have conquered the right to develop all their abilities and gifts, and where the workers and collective farmers are proving daily in various ways their capacity to utilize this right.

We are appearing in a country, illuminated by the genius of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, in a country where the iron will of Joseph Stalin is working untiringly and marvelously.

This is what we have to remember firmly in our work and in our declarations before the whole world.

It is with pride and joy that I open the first Congress, in the history of the world, of men of letters of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which embraces within its frontiers 170 million inhabitants."

Then Gorky delivered a long analysis of pre- and post-revolutionary Russian literature and its problems. The speech was discussed following reports of the various national minorities, from: White Russia, Ukraine, Kazakstan, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and other sections of the Union.

Among the foreign guests present were writers from many countries. From Denmark: Andersen-Nexo; from Germany: Theodore Plivier, Oscar Maria-Graf, Johannes Becher, W. Bredel, Friedrich Wolf and others; from France: A. Malraux, Louis Aragon and Paul Nizan; from the United States: Ben Field and Robert Gessner; from England: A. Williams-Ellis; from Spain Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon; and other writers from China, Sweden, Cuba other countries.

During the early proceedings the Congress was greeted by representatives of the Government, the Party, the Red Army and Navy, the Pioneers, and delegations from the farms and factories who brought not only gifts and words of appreciation for the work of various writers, but also requests that all writers concern themselves with their lives and problems.

Karl Radek reported on international literature followed by a discussion including most of the foreign writers present. A report was given by Bukharin.

Full details of the Congress will be given in future issues of *International Literature.*

Growth of Soviet Literature

Five billion books, the bulk of which are literary works, were published in the USSR during the past 15 years. In tsarist Russia in the last 30 years of its existence only two billion books were published.

Books by Maxim Gorky have the widest circulation in the USSR—19 million copies were published during the last five years. Those by Sholokhov had a circulation of 2,106,000; by Serafimovich, 2,048,000; by Gladkov, 1,289,000, Panferov, 1,291,000; by Novikov-Priboy, 977,000; by A. Tolstoy. 912,000. About 7.5 million copies of the works of Demyan Bedni were issued during this period.

The literature of the national minorities has developed tremendously. Books are now published in the USSR in 104 languages. In 1933 alone 9,240,000 printed sheets (each sheet 16 printed pages) were published in the national languages.

The mass character of Soviet literature may be judged from the fact that 2,666 titles with a circulation of 125 million were printed in the last six years.

Ltierature for youth is in great demand. In 1933 alone 75.4 million sheets of literature were printed. From October 1933 to July 1934 6.4 million children's books were published.

What Soviet Children Read

The publication of books for Soviet children is closely linked with the school programs.

The emphasis in children's books is laid on literary as well as on technical subjects. Moscow's bookshops for children are showing paper-back reprints of contemporary Soviet classics: Ilyin's *Story of the Great Plan;* Kassil's *Conduit* and Gaidar's *Civil War Tales;* as well as Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe;* Longfellow's *Hiawatha;* Dickens' *Bleak House;* L. Tolstoy's *Three Bears* and others.

Twenty-two books on technical subjects in editions of 50,000 each will be published for children of the middle and upper grades.

Many books on travel and expeditions, as well as of geography are on the list.

Seventy-four titles have already been published this year in editions running from 50 to 200,000 each. Because the demand in the schools is so heavy, some titles never appear in the bookshops at all, but are subscribed before the book leaves the press.

The plan for Detgiz (Children's Publishing House) calls for the publication of 180 more titles before the year is over. The number of books published this year will approximate 25 million, more than one new book for each child in the Soviet Union.

Writers and the Cinema

A large number of Soviet writers are preparing motion picture scenarios. Babel, Pavlenko and Pogodin are among a list of some twenty authors who have written or

are about to write for the Vostokfilm Studios.

Babel is to write the scenario for *Land of the Sun,* a film version of a book on Karbadino-Balkaria, which he is now writing for the Leningrad Children's Publishers.

The Far East provides material for two films: *The Partisans* in which Pavlenko is co-author and *The Path of the Samurai* by Leo Rubenstein. (A part of which appears in this issue of *International Literature.)*

The authors will work on a scenario for children called *Five Minutes,* dealing with the adventures of a boy who is always late for school, as well as on a film version of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace.*

In view of the forthcoming 40th anniversary of the Georgian classic writer I. Ninoshvili, the People's Commissariat of Education has suggested that the administration of the Georgian State Film Industry include in its 1935 plan a picture based on one of his books. Three previous films were based on this writers work.

Norman Macleod, American poet whose book of verse Horizons of Death *has just been published*

FRANCE

Rolland Writes to Soviet Workers

(Some time ago a literary evening was organized in Novosibirsk at the Stalin Club. The evening was devoted to the work of Romaine Rolland. At the end of the affair a group of those present put several questions which the lecturer of the evening, Comrade Vyatkin was unable to answer and which had to be referred to Rolland himself. Comrade Vyatkin therefore wrote to Romaine Rolland greeting him warmly in the name of his Novosibirsk readers and asking him to answer the questions given.

On July 10th Comrade Vyatkin received Rolland's answer from Switzerland. The letter is unquestionably of literary and social interest. Part of the letter is here published. The italics everywhere are Rolland's.)

I am heartily grateful for your letter of April 26th. It is affecting to have such warm friends in Novosibirsk. . . . I wish I were able to come and press their hands! But I am compelled to struggle against an illness which prohibits my taking long trips. Should I succeed in overcoming it, believe me, the first trip I shall undertake will be to the USSR. My most heartfelt sympathies and hopes are there with you.

I shall answer your questions as briefly as I can.

What fundamental advice is to be given beginning writers, principally from among workers and peasants.

a) The first advice: never write unless you feel persistently urged to do so by social duty and by your conscience or by an inner necessity. It is not only useless, it is even harmful to increase the already exceedingly great number of writers only because of a whim or vanity. Everything that one writes must be or at least seem, *necessary.*

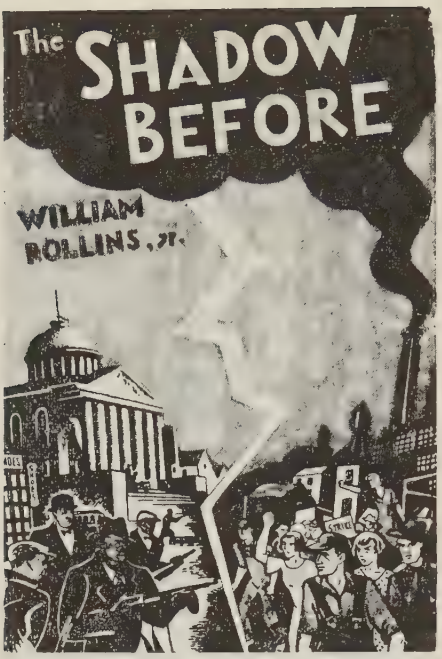
b) When writing... be sincere. One must write only the truth, write what you think, see, what you believe.

c) One must labor to tell this truth with the *greatest accuracy, precision, directness possible and in the most concise form. In this lies the whole secret of style.* When one has achieved that one writes well. But this is very difficult, because most frequently one has to work hard to free thought from its shell, from its soil, from all the dark, confusing and unnecessary matter that enfolds it.

d) Such labor one must do oneself, alone, because everyone has to struggle against shortcomings peculiar to himself and these shortcomings one must know well, everyone must be one's own judge. But such work for the purpose of achieving strength and clearness of expression will be greatly facilitated by reading some of the great and beautiful books of one's native "classical" literature. One should make a study of their general composition, the structure of the chapters and within these chapters the structure of the sentences, the logic of thought and value of words.

All that went before is preparatory work, technical work, necessary in order to forge the instrument and learn to use it.

After this the really creative work begins. One stands before various artistic tendencies: realism, naturalism, romanticism, etc.



The new revolutionary American novel by William Rollins, now being published in the Soviet Union

First one must choose the trend which best expresses one's own nature. Because if one can and should develop and perfect one's nature, nothing good can be achieved in art when one goes against one's nature.

But so far as I am concerned, I, as a general rule, follow the behest of the great Goethe who embraced all the forces of the spirit: *Dichtung und Warheit* (Poetry and Truth)—lyricism and science (knowledge): "The spirit of reality—this is the true ideal."

Let us try to penetrate into the "spirit of reality," not only into its crust! Let us penetrate deep! We must reach the powerful subterranean forces of reality and force them to play on the surface. You—workers in and witnesses of the greatest transformation of the world—must not be satisfied with describing the superficial and confused surface motion! More into the souls, the collective souls, as for a well! Let the great waters of hidden energy feeding all the USSR burst out like a fountain and innundate the land! The trouble with most of the present literary productions of Soviet writers is that they limit themselves to superficial description of the facts of construction. It is necessary to challenge, stir, it is necessary to radiate the hot spirit of enthusiasm, rapture, devotion and strong faith which rules this construction and sways the brigades. To realism of observation must be added the lyricism of the heart which warms it. This equilibrium is hard to realize. Here again the example of the great masters can enlighten the beginner.

I heartily press your hand, dear comrade, and pray give brotherly greetings to all my unknown friends in Novosibirsk.

ROMAINE ROLLAND

Ville-neuve (Canto Vos, Switzerland)
Villa "Olga", May 12, 1934.

ENGLAND

The Writers International, British section of the IURW will publish a new monthly journal, *Left Review,* beginning in September. The magazine is to include "short stories, poems, literary criticism and comment on affairs. The aim of this magazine will be to group together the growing body of writers who are working for a revolutionary change in the present order of society."

Amabel Williams-Ellis and T. H. Wintringham are among the most active writers in the publication of this journal. Associated with it will be Ralph Fox, author of a recent life of Lenin; James Hanley, author of the novel *Boy;* Allen Hutt, author of a new book of working class life; Hugh McDiarmid, Scotch poet; John Strachey ,political writer, author of the *Coming Struggle for Power;* (Whose article appears in this issue of *International Literature)* Charles Ashleigh, author of *Rambling Kid;* and others, including the noted translators Eden and Cedar Paul. Among the artists associated with *Left Review* will be Pearl Binder, Mischa Black, James Boswell and C. H. Rowe.

USA

Revolutionary Poet Wins Contest

Robert Gessner, who attended the Soviet Writers Congress held in Moscow, was the winner of a prize poetry contest conducted by the liberal weekly *The New Republic* for the best poem dealing with the Reichstag fire trial. His poem was entitled *Cross of Flame.*

Gessner is the author of *Upsurge* a book of revolutionary poetry published last December. He has also written a book about the exploitation of the American Indian called *Massacre,* as well as a motion picture based on it; also a novel of Indian life called *Broken Arrow,* which is being published in the Soviet Union.

The New Republic says of the Contest: "More than 140 poets entered the contest, many of them offering two or more poems each, as they were permitted to do by the rules. The quality of the average contribution was high, showing that the contest

had been taken seriously by persons who themselves deserve to be taken seriously. About four percent of the poems were written from a pro-Nazi point of view and a few showed a strange anarchistic glorification of van der Lubbe, although as was perhaps to be expected, most of those that were centered around an individual chose Dimitroff."

New Revolutionary Novel

Philip Rahv, poet and critic, managing editor of the *Partisan Review,* organ of the John Reed Club of New York, writes as follows about Robert Cantwell's new novel *The Land of Plenty* in the *Daily Worker:*

"The publication of *The Land of Plenty* makes it plain that in the realm of the novel revolutionary literature in America is fast outstripping anything that the bourgeoisie can still lay claim to as its own.

Robert Cantwell's first novel, *Laugh and Lie Down* though striking a distinctly original note, was a statement of despair. Had he adhered to the anarchic world-feeling of his first book, Cantwell would have gone the way of Faulkner and Hemingway. But together with a number of other writers he turned his back on the past and its confusions. Since then his writing has reflected a mounting realization of the meaning of the revolutionary movement. His critical articles and reviews extended firm support to Marxian ideology in literary criticism; and now, with the publication of the novel of a western factory town, he emerges as one of the major revolutionary novelists in the counfry.

The book is full of original conceptions shaped to express class insights... It is alive with a multitude of characters, both proletarian and bourgeois... Cantwell's style is peculiarly his own. He has assimilated the best that modern fiction methods have brought to the fore in literary technique. He manages to imprint upon the reader the environment, the mind and the fellings of his people...

What with Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited,* William Rollins' *The Shadow Before* and now *The Land of Plenty,* revolutionary literature in America has reached a higher stage of development this year, setting new standards for the army of proletarian art."

American Writers in the Class Struggle

Sender Garlin, American revolutionary journalist writes of some of the recent activities of American revolutionary writers both black and white:

"Word comes from California that Langston Hughes, famous revolutionary poet and novelist and president of the League of

An artists version of the leading character in Stevedore *successful play of the revolutionary Theatre Union in New York*

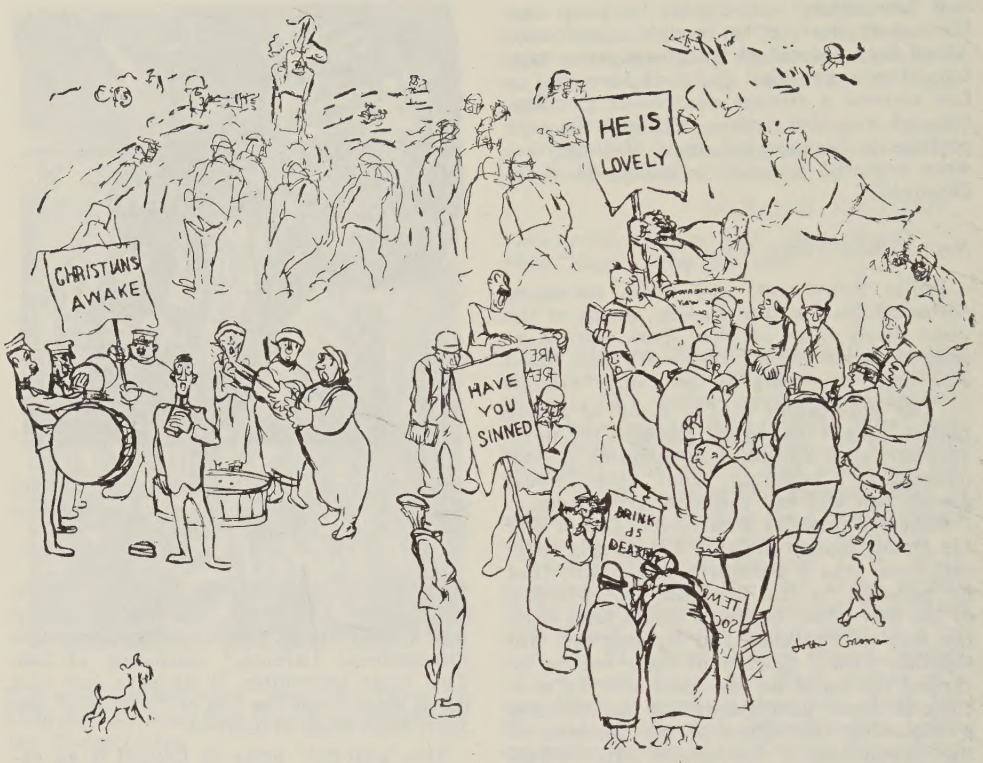
Struggle for Negro Rights, has been driven from Carmel, California, by a vigilante group which calls itself the "Citizens Committee International Defense," consisting of 200. This same committee, it appears, has also taken upon itself the job of "watching" the John Reed Club of Carmel.

The "anti-red" drive in Carmel is an extension of the attacks upon workers' organizations in San Francisco and all along the Pacific Coast which began as part of the campaign to break the General Strike. In the arrests which which followed hundreds of militants and rank-and-file workers were seized in a general dragnet. Among these was Tillie Lerner, a 21 year old Communist organizer and writer.

Robert Cantwell, author of *The Land of Plenty,* in a review of "little magazines" in *The New Republic,* had singled out Tillie Lerner's story, *"The Iron Throat"* which had appeared in *Partisan Review,* organ of the John Reed Club of New York, as "the work of early genius." Cantwell selected this piece out of 200 stories published in the magazines covered in his survey.

As was to be expected, publishers, ever on the alert for "early genius" that can be exploited commercially, began to flood Cantwell and *Partisan Review* with letters and telegrams in a frantic effort to locate Tillie Lerner. The mystery of her whereabouts was finally solved by the receipt of a letter from her to *Partisan Review* which revealed that she had been arrested in the raids on workers' headquarters in San Francisco.

The novel which Tillie Lerner is now completing deals with the life of coal miners, and, judging by the excerpts already published, it promises to be an original and



Hyde Park, London, a sketch by the American artist John Groth

imaginative contribution to proletarian literature.

In recent months especially, members of the various John Reed Clubs have found themselves in the front ranks of the workers' struggles, and many of them have landed in jail in the process. Right now, Jan Wittenber, an outstanding artist of the Chicago John Reed Club, is behind the bars in Hillsboro, Illinois, for helping to organize the unemployed. Readers of the *Daily Worker* are already familiar with the valuable work of John Howard Lawson, noted playwright and member of the New York John Reed Club, whose trial for "libel" is soon to come up in the Birmingham, Alabama courts. Lawson's "libel" consists in his having sent dispatches to the *Daily Worker* on the ore miners' strike and on the treatment accorded Angelo Herndon and the Scottsboro boys."

Editor-in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV

IN THIS ISSUE

L. Griffel—is a Hungarian artist whose work has appeared in previous issues of *International Literature.*

L. Rubenstein—is a young Soviet journalist and short story writer. He contributes to this issue a section of his first novel which has attracted a great deal of attention.

C. Fedin—Leningrad writer, is a prominent Soviet author of *Brothers, Cities and Years* and other books published in various countries as well as in the Soviet Union.

Mao-Tun — one of the best known Chinese revolutionary writers is author of *Twilight,* and other novels and volumes of short stories.

Egon Erwin Kisch—author of many books is an internationally known German revolutionary writer and reporter.

Walter Quirt—is one of the most active members of the Art Group of the New York John Reed Club. He is a contributor to the *New Masses, Daily Worker* and most American revolutionary publications.

John Strachey—noted English writer, is author of *The Coming Struggle for Power* and *The Menace of Fascism.*

A. Brovman—is an old Bolshevik, for many years a co-worker of Lenin's.

A. Lunacharsky—noted Soviet critic, author, academician, died early this year.

F. Schiller—Well known critic and research worker in the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute in Moscow, contributed other articles on Marx and Engels about literature to various numbers of *International Literature* issued in 1933.

E. Kriger—is a young Soviet journalist.

S. Ludkiewicz—Polish writer, is assistant editor-in-chief of *International Literature.*

A. Fried—is a young Soviet critic, member of the French Commission of the IURW.

John Groth—is a young American revolutionary artist, member of the John Reed Club of Chicago. A note about him appears in this issue together with his drawings.

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

C O N T E N T S

N. 5 (11) NOVEMBER 1934

FICTION

A SYMPOSIUM

SOVIET WRITERS CONGRESS

LETTERS & DOCUMENTS

ARTICLES & CRITICISM

Editorial Assistant WALT CARMON