Workers of the world, unite!

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL
UNION OF REVOLUTIONARY WRITERS

№ 6

1934

Distributors in the USSR: Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR Nikolskaya 7, Moscow. Distributors in Great Britain:—Martin Lawrence, Ltd., 33, Gt. James Street, London, W. C. I. Distributors In the U. S. A. International Publishers, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, U. S. A.

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

UNITED FRONT. *by ANDRES*

Constantine Paustovski

Kolkhida

From a New Novel of the Soviet Tropics [1]

"You cannot build Socialism without imagination." (Lenin)
"Whosoever killeth a cat, shall be punishable by death." (Ancient Mingrelian law)

The wind blew handfuls of dust and dried rose petals through the window of the restaurant. The young palms in their agitation counted their leaves with long green fingers, making a sound like the gritting of teeth. The smoke from the chimneys swept through the flat streets of Poti, carrying with it the scent of the fading blossoms of the tangerines. The frogs in the square ceased croaking.

"It's going to rain," remarked the young Communist, engineer Gabunia.

He looked out of the window in vexation. Across the glass—*You'll always find a snack here*—was written in smugdy chalk.

The rain was sweeping in slowly from the sea. It hung over the water like heavy smoke. Sea-gulls swooped through the smoke—white tufts uttering mournful shrieks.

"For two hundred and forty days out of the year the rain never stops here," Gabunia added.

"The fiery Colchian land!" muttered Lapshin. "An English scientist named Murray has calculated that ninety cubic kilometres of rain fall on the earth each year. It seems to me that practically all of it falls here."

His words made no impression whatever upon Gabunia.

The keeper of the restaurant was a stout, asthmatic Gouri. He was indifferent to everything—to the engineers dining there, to the old man with the staff—Artem Korkia—who was sitting staring at the empty table before him with a down-hearted air, to the vagabond, self-taught artist, Becho, and even to the threatening downpour. The inn-keeper was exhausted with the stuffiness of the atmosphere and his own depressing thoughts: he chased the flies languidly from the glasses, sticky with wine, and from time to time clicked the heads of the abacus.

Becho was painting an extraordinary picture in oils on the walls of the inn. The subject had been suggested by Gabunia. It portrayed the Colchis of the future, when in the place of its extensive, stifling swamps, orchards of oranges would grow. The golden fruits gleamed like electric lamps through the dark foliage. The rosy mountains seemed about to burst into flame.

---

[1] The title *Kolkhida* is a transliteration of Колхида, the Russian form of the Greek *Κολχις* usually rendered in English as Colchis. All represent the name of an ancient country east of the Black Sea between the Caucasus Mountains and Armenia, whither Jason and his Argonauts sailed in quest of the Golden Fleece.

In bestowing an English title upon this literary work, the editors have been guided by the consideration that variously-pronounced Colchis is somewhat too obscure a word to serve as a recognizable translation of the title, whereas the phonetic transcription Kolkhida identifies the book without confusion. The favorite classical allusion of Russian writers in referring to parts of the Soviet Caucasus, Kolkhida has and will in the future tend more frequently to pass over into English translations in its Russian rather than its Greek form.

The territory of classic Kolkhida is now occupied by those parts of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic which embrace the flowering, subtropical Black Sea littoral.

Dazzling white steamers sailed among luxuriant lotuses and boats containing gaily dressed women. In the gardens, Mingrelians in very puffy riding-breeches and huge Caucasian sombreros were feasting heartily while an ancient with long flowing hair and bearing a striking resemblance to Leonardo da Vinci (except that he was dressed in a wide-skirted Caucasian coat) stretched out his hands towards a landscape that might have been painted by a child.

"Where'd he get the portrait of Leonardo?" Lapshin asked.

"I gave it to him," Gabunia admitted, coloring.

Lapshin gave a shrug.

Heavy drops came pattering down on the pavement. The restaurant filled rapidly with people, anxious to escape the rain. Since they were not intending to order anything, but merely making a convenience of the place, they greeted the keeper with some embarrassment, and, one after the other, turned to examine Becho's work attentively.

The buzz of admiration spread from one table to another. The people made little sounds with their tongues expressing astonishment and marvelled greatly at the craftsmanship displayed by this mild young man.

The restaurant keeper, sensing the general enthusiasm ,slapped some cornmeal mush angrily on to a plate, added a bit of fried fish, poured out a glass of dry wine and handed these victuals to Becho. It was the artist's daily payment for the work he was doing.

Becho rinsed his hands with the wine, ate the fish, closed his eyes and sighed. He was resting now. He listened to the whispers of praise and thought to himself that although the restaurant might be run by a cooperative, the manager was certainly cheating him and feeding him much worse than had been allowed in the agreement.

But now the rain drowned the conversation of the people in the inn. The water gurgled in the drain pipes and hissed on the window panes. There came a hasty tapping of rain drops against the wooden walls and the sign-board, as if thousands of little tinkers and carpenters were competing merrily with each other.

A south-western monsoon was blowing up that drove the clouds before it like a herd of grey sheep pressing them against the wall of the Gourian mountains.

The Colchian forests stood knee-deep in water. The roots of the trees could hardly find a foothold in the slimy soil. It was easy work for the workers to pull out a tree by its roots after fastening a chain around its middle. But it was regarded as dangerous work. The trees never actually fell, but hung on prickly lianas the thickness of a man's arm. There was a thick undergrowth of yellow *oblepikha* berries, bramble berries, clematis, and fern.

The richness of the vegetation was astonishing. The clematis wound itself about the trees and bent them like blades of grass. The bramble bushes seemed to grow up as one watched them. They had grown two metres in the course of the summer.

Whenever the wind blew, the dark tone of the forest suddenly changed to quicksilver. The wind swept through the alders and showed the glimmering grey backs of the leaves.

For days, months, years—the forest roared and swayed in waves of tarnished silver; Gabunia understood Vano's indignation then, and was sorry for the woods himself. Vano was a research student from the Fur Institute, who was studying the fur-bearing fauna of the Colchian forests.

Engineer Kakhiani, the director of the work of draining the Colchian bogs, looked upon things in a much simpler way. He cared neither for the forests, nor the lakes covered with water-lilies, nor the numberless rivers, forcing their way through the green tunnels of the thick vegetation. It all had to be destroyed. He felt it merely as a hindrance.

Kakhiani regarded Vano as a silly young chap. To all Vano's heated speeches in defence of the jungle and the nutria, Kakhiani only made a careless gesture of contempt and grunted. His face wore a permanently bitter grimace. People said it was because he took too much quinine. Kakhiani chewed quinine tablets slowly, without even washing them down with water.

The idea of grieving for the past, and of sparing the virgin forest was foreign to him. He believed that Nature, if left to herself, must of necessity degenerate. With an expression of intense boredom in his eyes he proceeded to prove this by references to the works of well known scientists. The subject, to his mind, was not worth a moment's consideration.

He regarded Gabunia as a rather clever but dreamy engineer. He was called "a Romantic of engineering," and was annoyed whenever he found in Gabunia's room a copy of Bagritzki's poems or of Alfred Musset's *Confession d'un enfant du siecle.*

"Mathematics!" Kakhiani would say,—"that's the real classical stuff. All the rest is rubbish!"

Strangely enough, the only person who sympathized with Vano was old Pakhomov, the author of the vast project for the draining of the Colchian bogs. He sometimes sighed as he sat over his blue-prints:

"I'm glad when I think I won't live to see this work finished. Downright glad! It's a pity, after all, to destroy nature."

And he would proceed with a tracing he was making of a network of canals through the virgin forests over whose destruction he had just mourned. Then he rapped on the table with his pencil:

"Another two thousand hectares under citrus fruits! Not bad!"

He was an eccentric old fellow, altogether. It was he who had persuaded Becho to introduce the figure of Leonardo da Vinci into the landscape on the walls of the restaurant:

"What's this? You're going to paint the Colchis of the future and leave out the man who was the first meliorator in history, Leonardo da Vinci?" he reproached the artist.

Becho looked at him mistrustfully.

"But he was an artist!"

"That was only one of the things he was—There's no doubt whatever about his being a great painter, but he was a good meliorator, as well."

After this conversation Becho begged a portrait of the Italian genius from Gabunia.

Pakhomov's name was linked nowadays with the magic word "colematage." People spoke of this method of swamp draining as of a flight to Mars or the transformation of Sahara into a sea. It certainly sounded fantastic.

Gabunia was in town for two days. He had come from the Chaladid forests, where he was directing the building of the main canal. He wandered about the port in search of Captain Chop, the port inspector, whom it was necessary to consult about sailors for the dredgers on the canal.

Over the town the clouds were piling up again, lit by the dull reflection of the street lamps. The frogs were croaking their loudest in the swamps.

Gabunia skirted the iron warehouse, came out on the broad wharf and halted. The motor-ship *Abkhazia* was just coming in. It had come from

Batum. Blue stars alternately contracted and spread in the water at her sides, and intermingled with the reflection of the white lights of the ship, which resembled a crystal, lit from within.

Suddenly she sounded a low, indignant blast on her siren. It struck the heavy cloudy sky and died away in the distance, like slow circles rippling the surface of still water. The Chaladid forests responded with a mournful echo, followed by another, scarcely audible, from the Gourian mountains.

The *Abkhazia* turned like a dull black carcase, filling the port with the noise of shouting, of pouring waters, children's laughter and the creaking of winches.

Then the old men who fished there hastened to wind up their lines, spitting heatedly and shouting that those damned motor-ships didn't give a fellow a chance to live.

The Slime of Rion

Paleostom began on the outskirts of the town. The green waters of the lake were forever veiled in fog, which lay in a thin film just over the surface and allowed the dark tops of the plane-trees to be seen and the sea-gulls that circled and cried above it all day long.

Nevskaya hired a boat in order to cross the lake to the section where colematage was in progress.

The boat reached the section at last. It smelt of oozy slime. The water gurgled in the sluices. Behind low banks overgrown with willow, the new soil of Colchis was being slowly laid.

For a longtime now Nevskaya had not been able to find time to come and see what was being done. Today she had determined that no matter what happened she would find out all about this colematage from Pakhomov.

She asked the boatmen to stop near the sluice, and sprang lightly out on to the bank. A smell of warmed sedge hung in the air, which could only be compared with that of a bath-house.

Nevskaya caught sight of Pakhomov from a distance and went to meet him. The old man was standing by the neighboring sluice and frowning at the water that streamed through the wooden gutter. He looked like a wizard —so small and grey was he.

"You promised a long time ago to tell me about your work," said Nevskaya with a little, embarrassed laugh.

Pakhomov gave her a melancholy look.

"The water's running clear again," he said vexed. "It's the devil's own job, this!"

Nevskaya could not understand. She only saw a huge, shallow lake, surrounded by low dykes and a thick wall of reeds. The water was running slowly from this lake into the Paleostom, through wooden sluices. But what was actually taking place here? Why should Pakhomov be upset by the clearness of the water.

"Don't blame an old man, then, if you find it boring," Pakhomov murmured. "Nobody really knows yet what Colchis is; not even quite well-read people. Some think Colchis is in Greece, and are awfully surprised when they find out it's part of the Soviet Union. It's positively disgusting! I always liked Pushkin because he knew so much about it. Do you remember his verses? *From the cold Finnish crags to the fiery Colchian land.*

He made a gesture as if waving all this aside.

"Well, alright then. This flat maritime country is the Colchis he wrote

about. It's a young country, too, only two hundred and fifty thousand years old. Formerly there was a bay of the Sarmatian Sea here. The rivers bring down masses of mud and rubble from the mountains, especially during the melting of the snows. The river Rion pollutes the sea for nearly two kilometres from the mouth. Every year it sweeps away ten billion cubic metres of fertile land.

"The sea is retiring from the town before our very eyes. Every year the shore increases by at least six yards. Have you noticed the old Turkish fortress in the park? It was built by the Sultan Murad in the sixteenth century. It stood right out on the sea-shore then and the water came up to its walls. Now it sticks up three miles inland.

"The whole country is a mirror of swamps. Where have they come from? In the first place there is no natural drainage. In the second place, there are the everlasting rains and the rivers overflowing their banks.

"The country is as flat as a plate, except that at the foot of the Gourian Mountains, where it rises about two metres above sea-level; here at Poti, it is hardly one metre. We're practically sitting in the water, as you might say.

"The bogs are responsible for the lack of variety in the vegetation. You can see that for yourself; it's just alder, alder, alder all the time, damn it. With here and there a witch-elm or a beech. If it wasn't for the mountains on the horizon, the landscape of Colchis would differ very little from the Pinsk Marshes.

"There are swamps here where even the sundew grows. Yes—that very same plant that can only be found nowadays in the Arctic tundra. How do you like that—in the tropics?

"Why should there be such a lack of variety in the flora of these parts? Well, you're a botanist. You know better than me that all trees—except alder, of course—need not less than a yard of dry soil for growth. And where are they to get it, this yard of soil, when the country is covered with bogs. So nothing but wild bog plants grow here.

"Colchis enjoys the same climate as Southern Japan and Sumatra; there's plenty of warmth—while at the same time it's a malarial desert in the fullest sense of the word. Something like New Caledonia Island in the tropics, where they send convicts to penal servitude. If it wasn't for the swamps we'd outdo Java and Ceylon with their luxuriance and wealth. Well, then, what we've got to do is to drain the swamps.

"Splendid! That's exactly what we're doing. For instance, near the mountains at Chaladid, where Gabunia is working, there is some slight natural drainage and the swamp can be drained by an ordinary canal. To prevent the rivers overflowing their banks, dykes are built along them. This is all elementary stuff. It's feasible in Gabunia's section, but impossible here.

"Natural drainage here is almost negligible and you can't drain anything by canals—except perhaps, the very topmost layer of soil, some twenty useless centrimetres. That means we need another method of drainage. Which? This very 'colematage.' "

Pakhomov glanced at Nevskaya out of the corner of his eye and rolled himself a cigarette in a leisurely fashion.

The shores of Lake Paleostom delighted Nevskaya. Fogs and sunshine transformed her surroundings into a silvery, transparent land. The wind was like a playful child blowing light quick puffs in her face.

"What is this colematage then? It is a method of draining swamps by flooding them with the waters of silt-laden rivers. A sort of technical paradox,

one might call it. Colematage both drains the swamps and at the same time deposits a thick layer of fresh fertile soil.

"Here's an example for you. We surrounded this swamp with dykes, dug a canal leading in to it from the River Rion, built sluices and waited until the Rion thickened to liquid mud. Then we opened the sluices and flooded the swamps with the Rion river-water. And on the opposite side we built a series of sluices, so as to let the water, after it had stood a while, into Lake Paleostom. Sounds simple enough, doesn't it? The silt settles, the purified water is drained off, then we flood the swamps again with muddy river-water and repeat this process. That's the whole story. The soil increases practically without any expenditures on our part. It would be impossible to grow sub-tropical plants here without this new soil. Under the bog-water lies young turf and sphagnum moss and nothing will grow on the swamp but alder. Colematage gives us an excellent soil, splendid deposits of slimy clay. Break off a branch of a fig-tree, stick it in the soil and in four months' time it'll bear fruit.

"There is twice as much silt in the River Rion than in the Nile. Until lately the Nile was regarded as the muddiest river in the world; it has a kilogramme and a half mud to a cubic metre of water—but the Rion has three kilogrammes! If such a splendid civilization as the Egyptian could arise on the lands flooded by the Nile, then here we shall produce a vegetable wealth such as the Egyptians never dreamed of. There's twice as much phosphorus and azote in our silt than in the Egyptian.

"That's about all. There's nothing else to say. In five years we've collected a layer of soil a metre and a half deep, and we're going to grow oranges and lemons on it."

"I can't understand yet," said Nevskaya, "why you were vexed that the water was clear just now. It should be alright; it means that all the silt has settled."

"No, it's bad," Pakhomov objected. "There should be a stronger current on the section where colematage is being carried on, so that only the coarse deposits should settle, and the finer pass away to the Paleostom. Fine silt is harmful; it forms heavy soil."

Every day was bringing some new and unexpected discovery to Nevskaya. Now Pakhomov had told her a little about colematage and the world seemed full of such a multitude of fascinating and significant things that she would have liked time to stand still to give her an opportunity to examine them properly.

She was a botanist and well accustomed to disciplining her mind; but she had a fondness for vague, suggestive, exciting information. Colematage was for her something more than a new method of draining bogs, it was a proof of man's supremacy over nature, and his ability to create incredible new landscapes.

She smiled at Pakhomov. Her voice as she hailed the boatman, rang out distinctly, without disturbing the silence of the warm lakes. When she ceased speaking, the drone of the bumble bees could be heard. It seemed as if they had sounded the lowest note on the violincello and held it for half an hour.

"Take me to town with you," said Pakhomov. "It's time for me to be going, too."

They tramped through the outskirts of the town for a long time. The streets were paved with sea pebbles. Hairy pigs with spiked collars roamed

about freely. The collars were to prevent the pigs breaking through the fences into gardens.

Someone called Nevskaya's name. It was Kakhiani. He was sitting over his plans on the terrace of a wooden house. His mother, an old woman wearing the old time headdress of Georgian matrons, a black cap with a muslin veil, was busy in the garden.

"Hello, comrades!" shouted Kakhiani. "Wait a minute, will you? I heard an extraordinary bit of nonsense today from Shaliko, the old cabman who was driving me into the port. And what do you think he said to me? 'You know what I think, Comrade Kakhiani,' says he, 'in about ten years or so the ships will find their way into our port—not by the lighthouse, but by the smell of the lemons.' No getting away from it. Even the cabmen have turned poets! Hafiz is not in it with them. Come in, won't you, for a minute?"

Nevskaya went down the garden to help the old woman who was drawing water out of the well. She was washing bunches of huge leeks.

"What fine onions!" said Nevskaya, sniffing the juicy white roots, "These must be very tasty."

The old woman smiled but made no reply; she spoke very little Russian.

After they left Kakhiani, Nevskaya went to the Experimental Station for Sub-tropical Plants and then returned home. Dusk was falling, the dusk of Poti, when it seems as if the lights hang in the air, apart from the lamps. For two days now there had been no rain.

She went along streets that looked like dark avenues of trees. The white flare of electric lamplight gleamed from the frame houses built on piles. Crumpled roses lay about on the road. The buffaloes, with their heavy horns laid back, dragged creaking two-wheeled carts over the roses.

Blue evening rose over the sea and glimmered in at the windows of the houses. The light-house beacon penetrated the gardens, the hazy street crossings and the hedges. It looked like a prickly planet caught in the black network of gardens.

When she was nearing home Nevskaya caught sight of Christoforidi. He was busy catching the bunches of leeks that were flying out of the kitchen window. Ellochka was taking them away to the shed. Chop flung down the leeks and swore roundly.

"Congratulations!" he called out to Nevskaya. "You've got a stock of leeks now that'll last till the next crop comes up. Halt! Don't go into that house yet. Let's air it first."

"What's happened?"

"What's happened is this:—that you ought to learn the customs of every country. Did you praise these onions to anyone?"

"Yes. I was praising them to old Mother Kakhiani."

"Ah, that's it, is it? I thought so!"

Chop told her that a couple of hours ago the cabman Shaliko had driven up with ten bunches of leeks and dumped them down in the kitchen. There was no one home at the time but the children. To all Christoforidi's inquiries the cabman had replied:

"Don't bother me! It's a present from old Mother Kakhiani."

Nevskaya was embarrassed. She had forgotten the old custom obliging the Mingrelians to present a guest with whatever he happened to admire in their houses, and had incautiously praised these excellent leeks. And this was the consequence.

"Well, it's nothing, anyway!" said Chop, trying to console her. "That's an innocent enough mistake. Sometimes worse things happen. In tsarist

times Mingrelia belonged to the Princes Dadiani, who were all first-rate drunkards and idlers. They drank everything they had; didn't even leave themselves a bed to sleep on. But whenever visitors came, and the Dadianis wanted to make a bit of a show, they gave away the peasants' horses to their visitors as presents. They hadn't any of their own, you see. The peasants said nothing and waited till the guests had gone. Then the peasants waited for them on the borders of the Dadiani property, took back their horses and beat up the guests so as to cure them of any fondness for visiting the Dadianis again."

For supper they had fried mutton with such quantities of onions that if Sioma had not turned up they would never have been able to finish the stuff.

Sioma arrived from Chaladid for the day, and reported that Gabunia had set him to work on the excavator already.

Herewith he gave a lively representation of how an excavator works—whistling, clacking his tongue, and clanking imaginary chains. Ellochka could not take her eyes from his face, and kept laughing all the time.

That evening it was discovered that Sioma's real name was Jim Birling, that he hailed from Scotland and that once he had been almost killed during a disaster on the steamer *Klondyke.*

As a proof of all this Sioma pulled down the neck of his vest and showed them three blue marks on his chest. They resembled huge exclamation marks, but what they might really mean no one was able to ascertain. Sioma fell asleep at the table, as usual, and no one touched him till morning.

The Bust of Lenin

Gabunia was reading Hippocrates. In his spare time he was writing a scientific work on Colchis and for this purpose was studying not only contemporary geographers but the ancients—Strabo, Hippocrates, and Homer.

Gabunia declared that the *Iliad* contained a brilliantly worked out chart of the weather at the time of the Trojan War. With a solemn exactitude Homer described day by day the movement of the winds and clouds. One of our greatest scholars, on reading Homer, compiled a chart of the atmospheric pressure in those legendary days and discovered that a cyclone must have passed over the Archipelago and washed away the Achaean ships.

"The people of the shores of the River Phasis (now Rion)," Gabunia read, "dwell in a hot, swampy land, covered with woods and full of moisture. Heavy rains afflict the country almost all the year round. The people spend their lives in these swamps, building themselves dwellings of twigs in the midst of the waters. They travel by the rivers and canals in which the country abounds, using for the purpose canoes hollowed out of logs of wood. They drink rain-water, which is warm and has been standing a long time and is therefore spoiled from the heat of the sun. South winds are prevalent in that country, but at times there comes an east wind which is very strong, hot and unpleasant: it is called the *kenkhron.*"

"So—they use the rain-water that has been standing and is spoiled with the heat of the sun," Gabunia repeated, and swore. He knew the soda flavor of that water right well. He believed that the water had been responsible for his fever.

He went over to the window and threw it open. The air was stifling, with a scent of vanilla that always pervaded it before heavy rain.

"There's thunder about somewhere," Gabunia thought to himself as he turned a page.

Mikha, the foreman, came in. His eyes glanced about restlessly as he tugged his ragged Circassian coat. Then he moved softly over to the barometer and tapped the glass with a yellow fingernail. His eyes narrowed and the brightness left them: the barometer was going down steadily.

"There's going to be a regular downpour. Did you notice how strong it smells," said Mikha with a wry chuckle. He had a habit of smiling even at the most awkwards moments. "The water will come down from the mountains and wash away everything."

Gabunia said nothing.

"The red-haired Englishman hasn't come back," remarked Mikha, looking at himself in the glass of the barometer. "I've gone as yellow as a canary with that fever."

Gabunia raised his head. At the fifth section, the dykes along the canal had sunk a whole metre. They would have to be strengthened at once. The men could not cope with it, of course. The most important part was missing from the only excavator on the spot. Sioma had gone to town for it and had not returned.

"What will the folks do when they've all got malaria?" Mikha muttered, wiping the perspiration from his face.

The air of this accursed place hung as thick and stifling as in a Turkish bath. Mikha spat out viciously.

"You said it," Gabunia muttered. He was thinking. The forests beyond the windows were wilting in heat and poisonous miasmas. The sky hung over them like a great leaden cupola. Thunder could be heard in the distance.

"Well, now," out of sheer habit Gabunia made a rapid calculation on the margin of his Hippocrates. "In two hours' time the downpour will begin. In three hours' time the water will come down from the mountains. We'll have to make this missing part of the excavator in the traveling workshop. But what we shall make it out of, hell only knows! What shall we make it out of, I say? Bronze is what we need."

Gabunia realized that he had an attack of malaria coming on. His blood felt as if a mosquito was droning in it. He wanted to lie down and pull the clothes over his head and forget everything.

The first gust of wind troubled the forest and a deathly stillness followed.

"All hands on Section Five!" said Gabunia hoarsely. "We'll want all the workers and even the women must help! A lump of bronze has got to be found at once wherever you like!"

"Correct as hell!" Mikha assented. "It's seven miles to Chaladid, where there's a bronze bell on the station. Just give me leave to go, and I'll get that bell for you without anyone noticing."

"Don't talk rot!" said Gabunia. "Call out all hands on Section Five quick! Come on!"

Mikha jumped up. Almost immediately Gabunia heard a hasty ringing and shouts. Mikha was beating with an iron rod on the buffer that served as a gong and emitting piercing shrieks of:

"Section Five! Section Five!"

Next minute the Mingrelian workers were running out of the barracks towards the canal. They had thrown sacks over their heads. The lianas plucked at the linen rags wound around their legs like puttees, and cut through their boots like razors. Their spades rang against the tree-trunks.

Gabunia sprinkled some ragged crystals of quinine on his tongue, washed

them down with water and began slowly to pull on a canvas coat as hard as wood. His face burned.

He glanced out of the window. A cloud like a black wall was drifting over from the west and already covered the sun. The edges of the cloud smoked and the smoke resembled tufts of dirty cotton-wool.

The forest was silent. Gabunia seemed to hear the graveyard stillness in his head, like heavy clotted blood.

"It must be from the quinine, surely," he thought to himself and wiped his brow as if hoping thus to clear his languid malarial thoughts.

"What's to be done? The people won't be able to manage even half the work. I've no assistants except Mikha. Abashadze has gone out with the workers and Goulia to examine the swamp along the banks of the Turkish canal—the Nedoard. If they get caught in the rain, they're done for."

Just two men remained to take charge—he and Mikha. Mikha was a coward. Mikha had made his reputation by firing a rusty "Smith and Wesson" at the German cruiser *Goeben.*

The cruiser had come to Poti and opened fire on the town from a long-range gun. The bazaar where Mikha sold tobacco had been thrown into confusion.

Then Mikha had pulled out his revolver and let the armored cruiser have seven bullets. They did not reach anywhere near the *Goeben,* which stood a cable-length out from the shore. Then Mikha went crazy with terror; he had imagined he was defending himself.

It so happened that directly after Mikha's shots, the cruiser ceased firing and went away. From that time onwards Poti regarded Mikha as a brave fellow, but Gabunia knew perfectly well that he was a coward, and not to be depended upon. He had offered to steal the bell from the station merely in order to escape from the woods to a higher spot. The station would not be flooded.

And that damned red-haired Englishman must have got drunk in the town and had never turned up with the missing part of the excavator!

"What am I doing?" Gabunia froze suddenly. It seemed to him that an hour had passed, although it was really only a couple of minutes. "I've got to go to the workshops and find some bronze."

A protracted pain seized the bones of his legs and a shiver ran down his spine. He staggered out on to the steps.

He glanced towards the west. An impenetrable haze hung over the forest; the woods seemed to have turned pale with fear. The green of the alders was lighter, almost silver. The earth shuddered and gave vent to a hollow, distant rumbling. An evil, booming sound came nearer and nearer as if oceans were advancing on Colchis. Wild white flashes of lightning scourged the swamp.

Gabunia's teeth chattered; his head rolled about on his shoulders. A sensation of icy cold crept inside his skull. Fever! This was what he feared most of all.

It was growing dark rapidly, but not a single light showed in the barrack windows; the workers were all out on the canal.

Gabunia was on his way to the workshop when he heard his name called. He glanced round. The dusk had thickened. A wind was rising in the upper air, driving grey clouds and dry leaves before it.

Gabunia clutched his forehead to still the shivering, glanced round and gave a sigh of relief, as he recognized Nevskaya. Her boots had been badly scratched by the lianas, her cloak was torn.

"I was afraid I wouldn't get here from the station in time," she panted. "I can't bear to look over there," with a jerk of her head towards the cloud, "my heart sinks when I see it."

Gabunia gave a painful smile.

"Come over to my place. It's in that barrack, where you see the antenna."

"You've got fever," said Nevskaya. "And how is it there's not a soul about?"

"They're all out on the canal. The dykes are in danger of being washed away. Sioma went to town for spare parts and hasn't turned up yet. I'll be back in a minute. Pity you came just now—at such a bad time."

Gabunia noticed that a tremor passed over Nevskaya's face, and understood that he had offended her. How silly! Just at the wrong moment, too.

"Go into the barrack," he almost shouted, "and wait for me there. I won't be a minute."

Nevskaya walked quickly away to the barrack. Her brows were knit, her lips quivered. Was it possible that this long legged boy thought she was incapable of working in an emergency as well as the rest? This Caucasian chivalry was quite out of place here!

She stood still for a moment outside the barrack, looking at the canal. It divided the virgin forest like a broad river stretching for fifty kilometres. A smoky sky and heavy piled-up clouds were reflected in its waters.

A bird flew low over the ground with a mournful cry and brushed Nevskaya with its wings. It was flying to the mountains for safety from the thunder.

Nevskaya entered the barrack. A spirit-lamp was burning in Gabunia's room; it shed a blue radiance all around. Nevskaya looked about her. There were books, barometers, heavy swamp boots, maps and a small bust of Lenin on the rough, wooden shelf.

The casement windows banged. The forest swayed and uttered a hollow murmur. The wind swept through the tops of the trees and bent them to the earth.

Gabunia entered the room. His complexion looked pale and muddy; his features twitched nervously, and his eyes burned feverishly.

"Listen to me," he began in a rapid indistinct tone. "We've only got a hundred workers, Mingrelians—yes, only a hundred. So you and I have got to save this part of Colchis from the flood that's coming. There's not a living soul for scores of kilometres around—no, for even more—. The excavator is standing useless. We'll have to work with our bare hands. There's no bronze. The sailor won't get back here in time; the downpour will commence in ten minutes. Can you stand it?"

"You wouldn't ask me that if you hadn't malaria," Nevskaya replied gently. "There's nothing so very terrible going to happen. Everything will turn out alright, somehow or other."

Gabunia gave an angry chuckle. "Nothing so very terrible?" he repeated. "I like your aplomb. Honestly, I admire it. Well, alright then, come on!"

There was a flash of lightning at that moment, and Gabunia caught sight of the bust of Lenin on the shelf. In Lenin's screwed-up eyes there was the ghost of a smile and he seemed to look challengingly at Gabunia.

The young man gripped the table hard. Everything swam before his eyes.

"Bronze!" he said, but so huskily that Nevskaya could only catch a faint croak. "There's the bronze I've been wanting. What a fool I was!"

He picked up the bust and laughed. Nevskaya looked at him in alarm; he seemed to be going crazy.

Outside the windows in the thickening twilight sparse raindrops were falling but the downpour was still holding off.

"To melt it down, to cast it in the shape of the hub of a wheel and turn it—that'll take more than three hours, but there's nothing else to be done," Gabunia said slowly, examining the bust. "He'd have done the same in my place, I bet."

"Who?" asked Nevskaya.

"Lenin," said Gabunia and left the room quickly. He went to the workshop and flung the bronze bust cautiously into the furnace.

Two Mingrelian workers watched Gabunia moodily and turned away. They had noticed but they said nothing. The glow from the furnace illumined their gloomy countenances.

Gabunia gave brief orders to cast a hub and to replace the missing part of the excavator no matter what happened.

"Right!" replied an old foundryman, nodding to Gabunia. "We'll fix it, comrade... You can safely leave it to us."

At that moment, as though it had been waiting for the words, the rain came down in torrents from the sky. There was nothing visible twenty paces ahead.

Gasping with the warm, sickening water lashing in his face, Gabunia hurried back to the barrack for Nevskaya. Once he slipped, and swore desperately. It seemed to him that the whole of the Black Sea had got into the sky and would go pouring down from it for forty days and forty nights.

Nevskaya was waiting for Gabunia. The torrent pelted on the roof and ran down the windows in shining inky streams.

Nevskaya lit the kerosene lamp in the room. The telephone rang and an excited voice shouted into it:

"We're speaking from Kvaloni! The water's coming from the mountains. It's terrifying to see! Have you any men on Section Five?"

"Yes!" Nevskaya called back. Not another word could she hear.

As she hung up the receiver she realized that from this moment Gabunia, she herself and the workers—an insignificant little bunch of people lost in the woods and swamps—were completely cut off from the rest of the world. No assistance could reach them now.

The downpour was fiercer than ever. It had sounded a lower note now and was growing perceptibly heavier. From time to time the lightning flashed evilly and the thunder came in great uneven bursts as it seemed to stumble over the mountains.

Half an hour later Nevskaya and Gabunia reached Section Five.

Through the thick gloom nothing could be heard but the lashing of the rain and the guttural shouts of the workers. There were no lights. The only signal-lamp was on the excavator, but the excavator was not working.

The men digging had to grope with their spades. They panted hoarsely, spat out and flung up the earth as furiously as if they were digging under heavy fire.

There was neither earth, nor forest, nor sky, nor air around them, it seemed; only a slippery primeval chaos.

The canal was roaring. Gabunia pulled out his electric torch and directed it on the stake driven into the bed of the canal. The water was racing through the canal as if through a pipe in a muddy torrent dragging with it tree-stumps and broken trees.

"Mikha!" Gabunia called out. "How's the water?"

"Rising at the rate of two centimetres a minute," came Mikha's reply

out of the darkness and a lantern gleamed faintly at the edge of the canal. The water was now two metres away from the top of the dyke.

Gabunia made a rapid calculation. An hour and a half and the water would be over the dykes, would wash them down, rush into the woods and drown the whole of that part of Colchis known as Khorga, in a muddy lake.

Gabunia was shivering with cold. The water poured off his cloak in streams, and squelched in his boots. He snatched off his cap and flung it down in the dirt; it was wet through and felt like a leaden weight on his head.

How much time passed before that strange booming and hissing in the canal started, Nevskaya did not notice. She was flinging up spadefuls of earth with as much fury as the Mingrelians. Her wet hair fell about her face and hindered her breathing. She passed her hand, sticky with liquid mud, over her hair, and for a few moments it was easier.

She could hear the strange, whistling breathing of the people around her, the clanking of their spades, the heavy "splash" of the wet earth, Mikha's shouts, and Gabunia's quick gutteral speech. Sometimes the rain and wind struck her full force in the back. She slipped and sprawled in the liquid mud.

The dykes were being slowly eaten away and their labor appeared to be in vain.

All of a sudden the canal hissed. Gabunia directed his torch on the stake. The water around was foaming and visibly rising.

"It's dammed up with trees!" shouted Gabunia. "There's an obstruction!"

He rushed to the boat, and standing upright in her, slid her along the mud as boys in the North slide their toboggans down the ice-covered slopes. Mikha and several of the workers slid down after him.

"Axes!" shouted Gabunia.

The Mingrelians never left off working. The boat was wrenched away, spun round and vanished into the darkness.

"If they've only time to clear away the thing that's damming the canal!" Nevskaya muttered as she went on flinging up the earth.

The canal was filling; enormous bubbles rose on its surface: In a belated flash of lightning, Nevskaya caught a glimpse of grey oceans of water pouring steadily down from the sky on muddy people standing up to the ankles in water, of furious streams licking at the ridges of the dyke. In some places it seemed to her, the water had already forced its way through.

A long-drawn out rumble from the sea to the mountains shook the heaven, and fresh torrents were let loose. The shouts of the workers sounded far away. A black shadow ran across the mud, dragging its feet after it with deafening squelches. A young boy standing by Nevskaya suddenly flung down his spade and burst into loud weeping.

"Gone! No help for it now!" came a hollow voice.

Down below on the canal the axes were going to work briskly. Gabunia and the workers were getting rid of the obstruction.

"What's happened?" Nevskaya called out.

"A man's fallen into the water. Swept away to the devil already," a voice explained hastily in Russian. "You get on with the work, girl, and quit talking!"

The people sounded as if they were at their last gasp. The earth clung to the spades like glue. Nevskaya's head was going round. She heard Gabunia's voice, returning. He quieted the workers and even attempted a joke. The obstruction had been removed but the water still continued rising.

Gabunia clambered up on the dyke. The water was now twenty centi-

metres—no more—from the top. Gabunia listened. He wanted to find out if the rain was lessening a little. But no: it was booming with the same persistence as ever.

He went slowly along the dyke until he stumbled into a hollow through which the water was dripping. Gabunia realized in a flash that it was just in this very spot that the dyke would be broken down.

"Khabarda! Mikha!" he shouted. "Send the workers over here, quick!"

Mikha hurried to him and fired a shot into the air—it was the alarm signal agreed upon. As the men ran up to Gabunia, they beat down the lianas with their spades as if the things were dumb dogs that held them back.

Gabunia turned towards the invisible sea, from whence the torrents came, ground his teeth and shook his fist threateningly at the gloom.

"You'll stop for me yet, damn you!" he said softly, and laughed. The malaria was making him confused and he was almost delirious.

The workers speedily filled in the hollow. Then Mikha fired once more, a few paces away from Gabunia; he had discovered another gap through which the water was soaking even quicker.

"It's useless!" Gabunia muttered, dragging his feet out of the mud with a mighty struggle. He could not walk now. He tottered and then sat down in the liquid dirt, pressing both hands into the earth. Then with a last violent effort of will, he tore himself from the earth, but his legs refused to obey him. He lay down and cursed. The fever battered him, tossed him about as the water in the canal tossed the rotten tree-stumps.

"Those malaria chaps are heroes," Gabunia whispered, closing his eyes. "Mikha didn't let us down, after all."

Green spots darted about in the darkness. Gabunia heard a third shot. Someone stumbled over him and uttered a startled cry. He imagined it was Nevskaya. He panted hoarsely and spat out mouthfuls of dirty water and mud. Someone raised him to a sitting position.

After that he heard desperate shouts and the heavy champing of running feet, and thought indifferently that very likely the dykes had broken down and at any moment he would be sucked in by the liquid mud and drowned.

He opened his eyes and recoiled: a white star like a piercing eye was creeping towards him from the woods with a rumble as of iron.

The signal-light.

Gabunia got to his feet. He did not notice that someone was carefully supporting him under his shoulders. He stared at the star and wept, was not ashamed. The malaria and that wild night had enfeebled him. And besides, who could see the tears on his muddy face?

The excavator turned up mountains of earth, clanked its chains, and rattled like a battery of heavy artillery as it crept at a good speed towards Section Five. And on top it bore a dazzling signal-light. The steam issued with a whistle and the excavator boomed with the tremendous effort.

The workers stepped back. The excavator swung over their heads a colossal scoop full of wet clay, which it flung heavily into the breach, filling it at once.

The people gave a shout of triumph that seemed to arrest even the downpour.

Gabunia saw their uplifted hands, their pale, wan faces, their torn clothes. He saw an old Mingrelian stretch out his trembling arms to the machine.

He saw Sioma, stripped to the waist, his jaw set.

The three dark spots on Sioma's chest were slashed by a bleeding wound. He was turning the handle with the greatest difficulty and his face was un-

recognizable; the cheek bones looked like bumps twitching under the pale, drawn skin and his eyes were mere slits in his face.

Just for a moment he released the handles, raised his calloused hand and shouted in English—without the ghost of a smile:

"Hello! Here we are again, ladies and gentlemen!"

The workers clanked their spades and work was resumed with new energy.

The old Mingrelian from the foundry jumped down from the excavator and went over to Gabunia.

"The Englishman got in ahead of us, see! He came tearing out of the wood like a jackal and started the machine. How he got here from the station nobody knows. He was half-naked and covered with blood!"

Gabunia smiled. Then, all of a sudden, he became aware of the silence. He felt it even before he grasped what had happened.

The downpour had ceased. The profound silence of the rain-washed woods spread all around.

Gabunia staggered and lost consciousness.

The Last Flood

In the cabin of the port wireless station milky lamps burned. The wireless chirped like a cricket. The wireless operator, frowning and jerking his shoulders angrily, was transmitting a telegram from the port superintendent:

"Rivers Rion and Kaparcha overflowing their banks. Waters united and threatening to flood the town. Port only place outside the flood zone. Water rising. Streets flooded to depth of one metre. Send steamers, boats and rafts to the aid of the population."

Captain Chop shrugged his shoulders. The storm was raging outside. Black waves dashed over the jetty and struck against the sides of the Greek steamer that was tossing about at anchor in the port. The rain rattled like machine-gun fire against the corrugated iron of the warehouses.

What steamers would venture out from Batum to Poti and of what kind of boats and rafts was the port superintendent thinking! Even an ocean boat would scarcely risk putting out to sea in such a storm.

Chop frowned. What a topsy-turvy day it had been. Christoforidi had disappeared early that morning, leaving Ellochka alone. Chop had given her a storybook, but he knew perfectly well that Ellochka was probably not reading anything; she must be frightened and crying from time to time. The captain winced at the idea. Anyone would be frightened to hear a racket like that going on outside the windows—why, the waves were well-nigh beating at the walls of the houses.

"You wait, you little swine, till I lay my hands on you!" the captain was thinking with reference to Christoforidi. He grunted angrily. "A very devil of a day!" He had twice come across snakes on the way to the wireless station. They had slithered into the port for safety and hidden in a pile of manganese.

Chop loathed all reptiles, especially snakes and toads. He could not even bear to look at the tasty pickled lampreys sold in jars. Now, he wouldn't be a bit surprised if even the wild boars from the swamps came running into the port for shelter!

The wireless operator ceased transmitting the telegram and asked:

"Well, how's the port superintendent? Shivering in his skin, I suppose?"

"He's alright," Chop replied. "He's on his high horse."

A third unpleasant thing had happened to Chop that day. A felucca with

tangerines had been dashed to pieces on the rocky headland. There had only been one old Turk in the boat; and he had been rescued.

Now, this annoying old fellow, driven almost crazy by his alarming experience, had demanded that Chop should send out a launch at once to pick up the tangerines, which were bobbing merrily about on the waves in port. The Turk had sworn that Chop would have to answer in court for the wilful destruction of precious tangerines. Chop told him to go to hell.

The sailors from the Greek steamer—which resembled a low eating house, so dirty was she and so strongly did she smell of stale mutton and coffee—attempted to catch the tangerines by means of buckets let down on ropes. The steamer heaved violently, so that every now and again she showed her squalid decks, yellowed and dingy from the sailor's boots.

Chop disliked Greek steamers on account of their dirt and the fondness of the Greek sailors for quite unsuitable and flippant decoration. On a pale blue funnel they would paint a huge red rose or even a whole garland of roses. In general, the funnels of Greek ships, which were at any time liable to blossom out in all manner of festoons (and they might even run to Cupids, people like that) drove Chop crazy. Sailors, indeed! They should be peddling lemons, those chaps!

The telephone rang. Chop took up the receiver. The manganese wharf complained that the flash-lamp had gone out at the end of the jetty where the waves were dashing over the headland with the lightness of a furious cat.

Captain Chop put on his black uniform coat and went out. Something else had to happen now—it would be just his luck! Supposing some crazy steamer should take it into her head to ride into port for shelter from the storm! If the jetty-light wasn't burning she would run straight on the rocks.

To mend the lamp would be almost impossible; it would be impossible to get anywhere near the jetty for the waves. They would fling five or six tons of water into the launch in a second.

Chop went down to the end of the mole. The lamp was burning again now. He watched it for some time. Then it went out again. It gave light for no more than five minutes at a time, whereas the flashes were supposed to follow each other at intervals of ten seconds. It was clear something had gone wrong with the mechanism.

Suddenly the lamp started to flash again at regular intervals; then it went out altogether. What the devil was up!

Chop raised his binoculars to his eyes and through them espied someone sheltering from the waves on the balcony of the flash-light tower. Chop lost his temper. This was the very limit! The port was going to the devil! Why should anyone be up there on the light-tower! There could be only one explanation of it. The person had evidently gone down to the end of the jetty, become engrossed in something ("I wonder what anyone could get engrossed in on a jetty during a storm like this," thought Chop), and never noticed the increasing fury of the waves. When he had looked round the waves were already over the jetty and his retreat was cut off. To save himself he had climbed up on to the balcony of the light-tower, which could be reached by an iron ladder. The waves did not rise as high as the balcony. The person appeared to be very small, almost a dwarf.

"I wonder who the devil it can be?" Chop muttered to himself. "Imagine —a steamer might easily be dashed to pieces against the rocks all because of a dirty little swine like that!"

Well, the fellow would have to be taken off the light-tower no matter what.

There were only two launches left in port. All the rest had been sent in to the flooded town on rescue work. Taking a couple of sailors with him, Chop set out on one of the launches for the light-tower.

This "thrice accursed Caucasus" and his own troublesome employment came in for a selection of the choicest epithets in his vocabulary.

The sailors had some difficulty in landing the launch at the foot of the stone steps, but eventually Chop, reviling everything in the world, managed to rescue from the light-tower—the frozen and weeping Christoforidi!

"You lousy son of a bitch!" said Chop. "Killing's too good for you! How d'you get up here? Fishing again, were you?"

But Christoforidi only shivered and cried. The captain took him home, made him change into dry clothes and poured a glass of vodka down his throat. Then he ordered Christoforidi to put on the kettle and went out again.

Christoforidi could not stop whimpering. He had spent eight hours on the light-tower. It had been the most harrowing experience of his life. That morning he had gone out fishing. The stauride was as ready to bite as if it was being paid for it. The jetty, on the port side, was quiet, though the sea was roaring at Christoforidi's back. Then he found that he was getting splashed with foam very often. He got up to go, but discovered that at the very spot where the jetty made a sharp turn towards the shore, the waves were dashing over it in a regular waterfall. There was no help for him. He was completely cut off from the rest of the world.

His courage deserted him. The roar and fury of the waves struck terror to his heart. It seemed to him that they could easily sweep away the jetty and grind him to powder.

He climbed up the flashlight tower; the lamp shielded him from the splashes. The noise of the storm stunned him. He had never imagined that the sea could make such a stupendous, deafening noise.

Captain Chop returned to the port and a few minutes later left for the town in a motor-launch.

The flood was rising. The power-station had ceased working and the town was plunged in darkness. Only in the port green lights twinkled, illumining deserted wharves, overgrown with grass and flooded with briny pools.

With some difficulty the motor-launch cut through the main fairwater of the Rion—where the water formed miniature mounds, as if a great snake was writhing under its entire length—and, creaking and panting heavily, tore into the flooded streets of the town.

In spite of the catastrophe the town was quiet. Almost all the houses were built on piles. From some of them, however, the people had fled to the cathedral—the only ferro-concrete cathedral in Europe, built by German engineers just before the War. It was a copy of Santa Sophia at Constantinople.

The cattle gave most trouble. Cows and horses had to be dragged to the upper stories of the houses. This awkward task was carried out to the accompaniment of women's weeping and sailors' cursing.

The downpour lessened. Carts floated about the streets. The water stood motionless now, its surface sprinkled with leaves and flower-petals. Frogs croaked from the window sills of the houses and the tops of the fences. They scattered like peas into the water when the motor-launch cut at full speed through the broad rivers that once were streets.

Near the eating house known as "You'll always find a snack here" a huge fat carp leapt out of the water. The captain regretted that Christoforidi had

been left behind in the port—how he would have enjoyed being here! One might fish in comfort right out of one's bedroom window.

The town was unrecognizable. It was an incredible sight. The head-lights of the motor-launch lit up streets where water bubbled and spouted; where fish were clearly in their element and roses nodded above waves that lapped gently at the window panes.

Kakhiani called to Chop from a window, and asked him to find Pakhomov. As soon as the flood had risen, the old man had rushed off to the section where colematage was going on.

It was getting light by the time Chop reached the place. The section stood like a fortress—surrounded on all sides by water. The sluices had been opened. No more than a few centimetres of the dyke tops showed above the water, but they were still whole and sound.

Pakhomov was standing with some workers by the first of the sluices. He was gazing out over the vast, muddy lake that stretched to the horizon, at the country flooded by the rain—and he was smiling. In the light of the dawn Pakhomov's face looked grey.

"What are you looking so pleased about?" asked the captain, thinking to himself—"What a time to stand grinning; he must be cracked!"

"The dykes held," Pakhomov replied eagerly. "The section has got off without any damage. But where Gabunia is—down in Chaladid there must be terrible goings-on. The current was frightful there."

"Yes, it must be no joke," muttered the captain and suddenly felt anxious, thinking of the children left at home.

Pakhomov refused to go home with Chop. He pointed to the misty sun rising slowly. The next instant their surroundings were touched with an evanescent white flame; the country was transformed into a lagoon.

"Pity to destroy all this, isn't it?" said Pakhomov. "What a sight! In another month's time we'll cut a canal through the dunes and floods will be things of the past. This is the last flood you'll ever see. Mark my words!"

"Well, that'll be something to be thankful for," muttered Chop. "Push off, lads."

Ellochka did not go to sleep for a long time. She sat on the bed and read the story-book Chop had left her. Christoforidi was asleep in the kitchen. He had piled all the captain's old coats and blankets on top of himself for warmth and was now emitting frightful snores.

Ellochka was reading of how a young girl entered the workroom of a grey-haired toy maker. His room was so small that it could not accomodate the train of the girl's splendid gown. The old toy maker was blind; he carved out little wooden figures of children by touch.

"I can feel you smiling," he said to the visitor, "and I know that happiness is in store for you. It is a pity that I am blind and cannot rejoice looking into your happy eyes."

The siren of the Greek steamer shrieked in the port. Ellochka gave a start and burst out crying. Mamma had gone away and left her alone since yesterday evening, and Chop had not come home, either. Besides that she could not help feeling sorry for the blind toy maker. Why should he go blind?

Ellochka hid her face in the pillow and cried for a long time until she fell asleep. She dreamt that the sun was coming into her room, and then it turned out that it was not the sun at all, but a young girl in a shining dress, the train of which was too long for the room. It rustled its silken folds outside the open door, while the girl said in Mamma's familiar voice:

"You don't know how grateful I am to you, Chop, for taking care of Ellochka. You're no ordinary man, that's plain."

The sea rustled outside the open door of the house—like a silken train—now blue, now green, changeable as a peacock's feather.

Chats About Insurance Societies

Gabunia got well very slowly. The first few days he lay unconscious in the hospital. Of this period he retained a vague memory of the doctor's prickly moustache tickling his chest, and of a cold hand upon his brow; of the captain's hoarse whisper and garlands of stars that flew interminably past the windows towards the mountains.

In his delirium Gabunia endeavored to collect his rambling thoughts and understand what was happening. Evidently the stars were a downpour of rain falling on the mountains; probably unheard of floods started every night in Colchis. The country was flooded with white flame instead of water. And the flame reached as high as his chest so that the heart was burning up in it with unbearable pain.

"Khabarda!" shouted Gabunia. "All hands out on Section Five!"

The doctor came round of a night and shook his head reproachfully. He did not like this delirium at all.

Then it seemed to Gabunia that he and Chop were tramping through the jungle at daybreak towards a strip of blue in the sky. The down-wind cooled his face and lifted his hair. They tramped on together, he and Chop—looking for Sioma but he was not to be found.

Then Chop took out a Gillette razor blade from his pocket and said:

"We shan't find him in these parts, we'll have to change the landscape a bit." As he said this he drove the blade into the strip of blue daylight between earth and sky, turning it as if he was turning a key in a lock; the sky slid back with a click and a new earth appeared. And now they were no longer going through the jungle, but along the banks of the Neva. It was summer—the time of the White Nights—and the white night was reflected in the black waters. The wild cherry blossom drooping over the cast-iron railings trembled with cold.

Chop made the sky click once more, and now they were sailing on a steamer through waters dotted with a myriad lights. A town lay piled upon the shore in the distance. It looked like a heap of old broken glass. It glittered and sparkled. Chop whispered to Gabunia that it was Venice and that here one might buy contraband—the seeds of oranges as big as melons, to take home to Lapshin.

"To hell with Lapshin!"

He knew that these ravings came on several times a night. His delirium tormented him. He attempted to escape from it by jumping out of bed; the nurse would have the greatest difficulty in settling him back again.

There was a roaring and a booming as of a storm in his head. It was only the effect of the quinine but Gabunia thought it was an endless storm at sea. He gazed vacantly at the almost violet sky outside the windows and tried to think what kind of a storm could be raging while the sun was shining in so brightly that his eyes ached.

After the crisis had passed difficult days came when the only sensation Gabunia felt was intense weariness. A profound incredible weariness, when his faintest whisper and the slightest movement of his hand exhausted him.

Then he slept for several days without waking.

Heavy footsteps roused him. While his eyes were still closed, Gabunia guessed that the footsteps belonged to a person who was walking on tip-toes for what must be the first time in his life. Every time he took a step, the sole of his boot would give a warning creak, the man would freeze with horror for a second, then snuffle nervously and take another cautious step.

Gabunia opened his eyes and caught sight of Sioma's broad back in the doorway. Sioma was just going out, balancing himself so carefully on the floor that his neck was red with the strain.

On the table by the bedside stood a blue tin of tobacco, the only valuable thing Sioma possessed. Gabunia remembered how Sioma had treasured it and only indulged in one pipeful a day; the rest of the time he filled his pipe with ordinary common shag.

Gabunia did not call Sioma back. A lump had risen in his throat and he could not utter a word.

The next day, towards evening, Nevskaya came to see him. She brought him a new kind of fruit grown in the Experimental Station. It was called feihoa, an oval fruit with a dull palegreen skin.

Gabunia tried one; it tasted both of pineapple and wild strawberries.

"It smells of the tropics," Gabunia whispered. "Lovely!"

The feihoa exhaled the light, summery odor of mornings at sea and gardens after cooling rains.

"It's a very rare fruit," said Nevskaya. "It contains a lot of iodine. People can be cured of sclerosis with feihoa."

She commented absently on the properties of the fruit while looking attentively at Gabunia. Overhead—it must have been in the doctor's flat, someone was playing on the piano. Nevskaya listened a moment and then exclaimed:

"How apt that is just now!"

"What is apt?" Gabunia thought, closing his eyes. Then he recognized the melody. It was Lisa's song from *The Queen of Spades,*—

The storm came, bring thunder—

Nevskaya jumped up impulsively, stroked Gabunia's damp hair and left him. On the threshold she turned and nodded to him without speaking.

The next day something like a scene occurred in the hospital. Chop and Sioma came to see Gabunia. Sioma looked aggrieved; in fact, the great lout seemed ready to cry. He blinked and snuffled violently. He was obviously confused.

Gabunia knew very little English, but from the sentences Sioma barked at him gathered that it was something about an insurance society. At any rate Sioma was talking some nonsense and cursing Mikha in the filthiest terms.

Chop interpreted. It appeared that a few days after the flood Sioma had been unable to work. The night he had rushed back through Chaladid to the canal the lianas had torn his chest and arms. The scratches had swollen and became septic, and for five days Sioma had stayed in town and gone to the clinic to have them dressed.

When he returned to work on the canal, Mikha told him that for the five days he had missed he would receive money from the State Insurance Society, since he was now insured. Thereupon Sioma cursed Mikha for a bandit, and started to fight him, shouting that this wasn't England and that whoever

tried to introduce rotten English customs here would get his face beaten to a beef-steak by him, Sioma.

Mikha was terrified and cleared out. Sioma bawled after him that no one had any right to insure Jim Birling against his wishes and that every kind of insurance was just downright fraud.

"The fellow's three sheets to the wind, very likely," added Chop. "He's put away half a litre of vodka, I daresay."

Sioma understood. His life at sea had taught him what the word "vodka" meant. He reddened, shouted "No, no," and shook his head emphatically. Then he pulled down the open neck of his vest, pointed to the three blue marks on his chest and said to Chop:

"This is what I got out of your insurance societies. That's enough for me. I don't want to have anything to do with any insurance society in the world."

And Sioma told them the story of the three blue marks.

Before the War he had worked as a helmsman on the *Klondyke,* plying between Liverpool and Newfoundland. In the latter country, as is well known, storms, fogs and icebergs are the order of the day. Off the coast of Newfoundland there is a lighthouse known as Lightwest, which from a distance looks like a sailing vessel. It is a broad-bottomed boat with a squat white tower.

"This lighthouse was a grand place for wrecks. The captains would go straight for it, strike the rocks under the water and afterwards write down in their lying logbooks: 'The disaster occurred as the result of a mistake, the lookout having taken the Lightwest, in the fog, for a sailing vessel approaching in the opposite direction.'

"As a matter of fact, this was all a fraud. All the captains knew the Lightwest perfectly well and took advantage of its appearance to stage a wreck without being sent up for trial. For what purpose, you may ask? Because in those countries it's the custom to insure vessels no longer seaworthy, load them with all sorts of rubbish, sink them and claim the insurance money.

"The captain of the *Klondyke* was nicknamed 'Dungbeetle' because his clothes were always dirty. He never dreamed of cleaning them and whenever his friends passed a remark on them he would say: 'What am I, a nigger, to start cleaning my own pants?' This fellow piloted the *Klondyke* on the rocks at Lightwest and thought he'd managed the wreck like a god.

"He called out to the wireless operator to signal an S.O.S.—but then the fun started. Something had gone wrong with the wireless, it appeared, and no matter how much the operator sweated over it, he could do nothing.

"And just then, as if on purpose, a storm was blowing up from the ocean. The second day, well—it wasn't only in the shrouds the wind whistled, but even in the saucepans in the galley. Dungbeetle knew then that he had got into a fine mess.

"On the third day the wireless operator had a bright idea; he mended the radio and sent out the S.O.S. The fourth day the water was over our heads and a frost set in. By evening we turned into an iceberg. The storm was gaining strength.

"The rescue ship arrived at daybreak. We all went up on the deck and tied ourselves with rope to something or other, so the waves wouldn't wash us overboard.

"The rescue ship fussed about awhile, then decided she wouldn't be able to manage the job and went away. Dungbeetle, like the God-fearing chap he was, admitted that he had run the ship on the rocks on purpose, cursed

the ship owner for all he was worth and asked our forgiveness. We hadn't even the strength, by that time, to knock his head off.

"I tied myself to the steering wheel in the helmsman's cabin, and was only dragged out three days later when the *Klondyke* was sunk to her upper deck in water. Three of the handles of the wheel had frozen into my chest. They were torn away from me together with my skin.

"I must tell you that was the first case of a wreck on the Lightwest that the shipowner couldn't get hold of a penny of the insurance. At the trial Dungbeetle repeated everything he had told us. He couldn't very well do anything else.

"Now he's changed his job. He's a ratcatcher in the port of London; goes around with a basket and throws bits of bread with poison on them into the rat-holes.

"So there you are! And if you think after that I'm going to believe anything I hear about the honesty of insurance societies, you're mistaken. I said to myself that time in the hospital: 'Well, Jim Birling, if you ever insure your life—even if it's for a thousand pounds—you'll be the biggest fool in either the Old World or the New.' That's all!"

Sioma gave the table a tremendous slap with his palm. Chop's eyes bulged in astonishment and he broke into a hearty laugh. Gabunia laughed, too, for the first time since he had been ill.

It took Chop a long time to explain to Sioma the difference between insurance in England and in the Soviet Union. Sioma understood at last but would not give in. He growled out a few remarks about the foolishness of calling different things by the same names—that there was bound to be a muddle, and so on.

Sioma evidently felt embarrassed about the insurance business and went out very soon. Chop remained.

His desire for knowledge acquired fresh stimulus through Gabunia's illness. He had a long talk with the doctor about malaria, and now he poured forth his knowledge for Gabunia's benefit.

"In tsarist times the whole garrison at Poti would die out of fever every three years. Not bad, eh? That was how the soldier's song *The Fatal Caucasus* originated. Old Carrots (this was Chop's nickname for the doctor), Old Carrots says that there's a special kind of fever here, called swamp malarial attrition. Half of our Mingrelian workers suffer from it. I remember how Mikha used to wonder about them: 'They don't seem to have a trace of fever,' he'd say, 'but they can hardly drag a leg after them.' The temperature's always below normal in this disease, it seems. It isn't swamp malaria you've got though but the real fever. It's understandable in a place like this, where there's nothing but water and heat and everything rots just like in West Africa."

"Have you ever been there?"

"Yes, I did happen to go there," replied the captain. "The Negroes, by the way, never get malaria. Malays get it, and so do all the other nationalities in the tropics, but Negroes—never! It's astonishing. I asked Old Carrots why it was. It seems that this same malarial plasmodium develops in our bodies under the influence of ultra violet rays. But Negroes have black skins and the rays don't penetrate."

"You're inventing again, Chop," said Gabunia. "I like to hear you talk."

Chop gave Gabunia a sly glance.

"Inventing, am I? Ask Old Carrots then, if you don't believe me! Since you're sick, I'll excuse your rudeness and not take offence."

"Well, go on."

"Well—and now comes the interesting part. During the war in Mexico, white troops laid siege to some town or other—I forget the name of it—and held it until they all died of fever. Then the siege was transferred to Negro troops to carry on, and the town was taken. Old Carrots told me of dozens of examples like this. It appears that quinine forms a fine film over the walls of the blood vessels and isn't absorbed for quite a long time. This coating of quinine doesn't admit the ultra violet rays, but cuts them off. They can't enter the system then and so the malaria plasmodium is destroyed. That's where the benefit of the quinine comes in. I've had yellow fever too, you know."

"Where d'you get it?"

"On some islands in the Pacific. And, if you understand me, those islands left a bitter sort of impression, like quinine on me. I swallowed quinine by the teaspoon that time. It fairly stunned me, deafened me—I staggered about as if I was drunk. If I ate bananas—they tasted bitter; if I took a drink of water that tasted bitter, too. My hands turned blue. To get up from my chair and walk over to my bed was a whole business. Even the heat there seemed unreal to me. My reason told me the air was hot, yet it seemed icy cold to me. Miasmas, smells, and luxuriant vegetation.... Terrible places, those. People stagger about with glassy eyes, shaking all over with ague, and bellowing. It's grand to think you're clearing out this damned malarial hole for good and creating an entirely new and healthy country of it. Do you know what it was like before? The silliest things were done here. At the malarial station they'd lay a whole lot of glass smeared with gum around outside the house, and watch where the most mosquitoes stuck. If there were most on the side facing north, it meant the mosquitoes came from the north, if on the east side, it meant they came from the east. Then the folk would take a few cans of kerosene and set out in the direction from which the mosquitoes came and sprinkle the swamp with kerosene. That's all. Childish, wasn't it? Well, it's time for me to be going," said the captain suddenly. "Here I'm sitting talking for all I'm worth—and what you need is rest."

Gabunia was reluctant to part with him. He could have listened to the sailor for hours; he was eager to know what was going on in the world outside the hospital walls while he was sick.

Nevskaya knew that fifteen thousand different tropical and sub-tropical plants could be grown in Colchis. All the specimens gathered together for the exhibition seemed to her but a pale shadow of the country's future.

She was dozing. The wind aroused her. It blew in at the open windows, played with the leaves and chased little sunbeams across the ceiling; it tossed Nevskaya's hair, tickled her eyes and rustled the fallen geranium petals on the floor.

She went out into the street. The wet pavement smelt of the sea. Buffaloes were dragging a two-wheeled cart full of radishes. They turned their mournful blue-black eyes on Nevskaya. The driver was fast asleep. A few sparkling drops of water were shaken from the radishes from time to time.

The streets were deserted. Only Grisha, the solitary militia-man, was standing smoking at the cross roads. He smiled and saluted when he saw Nevskaya.

The sun came up slowly.

Nevskaya went along to the port to bathe. Occasionally the doleful sound of a drowsy wave breaking against the rocks rolled from end to end of the jetty. The water was very cold and drove away Nevskaya's tiredness at once.

By the time she was dressed, the oblique rays of the sun were flooding the port and the still waters of the haven and beautifying the rusty sides of a Greek ship that rejoiced in the curious name of *Zambezos*.

A little curl of smoke rose from the deck. The sailors were washing themselves over the ship's side, laughing and pushing and pouring water down each other's necks.

A shoal of stauride approached a clump of seaweed cautiously, swayed about in the transparent water near it for a while then with silvery splashes made off to one side. Out of the sea-weed sprang a great angry crab with rolling eyes and waddled off sideways along the rocks.

Nevskaya returned home and roused Ellochka and Chop; they must all get ready for the opening of the exhibition.

The opening was fixed for mid-day. Many of the folk from the collective farms at Khorga, Soupsa, Senaka and Anakiia had come down. Gabunia and Mikha came together. Pakhomov turned up, too.

Kakhiani opened the exhibition with a speech.

"Comrades," he began, looking sternly around the room. "I have a question to ask you. Which of you has had malaria? I want everyone who has suffered from it to raise his hand. So. Everyone has had this unpleasant illness except that little boy in the red tie.

"What is malaria? It is poverty, comrades. It is on account of that our country is so poverty stricken. You know yourselves how many dead and deserted villages are to be met with in the swamps.

"At the same time Colchis is the richest, the warmest, sunniest and most fertile part of the Soviet Union—to quote poets like Shota Rustavelli and Alexander Pushkin.

"The country is covered with swamps at present. We are draining them and are going to make a regular tropical region out of the place. At this exhibition we can see the plants that will grow in the Colchis of the future.

"It would be a crime to waste this precious—this golden land—you'll excuse my making such comparisons, on raising coarse plants like maize and millet. You've been sowing these things all your lives, but now you're going to plant tea and tangerine oranges, lemons and rami-grass. The seashore from Anaklia to Kobuleti will be turned into a zone of health resorts.

"The valuable part of our work will not lie in this alone—that is, in the draining of the swamps, the creation of a new country, the uprooting of the old swamp vegetation—alders and so on—and the cultivation of the new. That's not the only purpose of our work, comrades. The thing is that we are going to found a healthy new generation.

"Formerly you could never work more than four hours a day. The malaria squeezed you out like a rag and you lay about in your wooden houses, unable to stir hand or foot. This has gone on for ages, comrades. But it's all over now. We're going to kill off this malaria and your children will be as fresh and rosy as apples."

Kakhiani caught himself making a poetic comparison again and colored. "We shall found a country like the moist sub-tropics. We shall found a new nature—worthy of a socialistic epoch. But remember, comrades, that Nature cannot flourish without the constant care and unremitting attention of a sensible gardener. Take the utmost care of Nature, otherwise she will run wild.

"The history of land affords us hundreds of examples of the degeneration of Nature when man has left off caring for her. Take, for instance, the fig-tree. It can produce large, juicy fruit—but leave it to itself and in ten

years' time, it will degenerate. Its fruits will shrink to the size of a nut and lose their flavor. You will know the difference between wild and cultivated grapes, between wild and cultivated apples. It's an elementary truth, but there were some people," Kakhiani's glance rested on Vano Akhmetelli a moment, "there were some people who didn't want to believe it for a long time."

The musicians struck their instruments. Korkia gave little Sesso a dig in the back. The little boy, as red as a tomato, said a few words in Georgian—to the effect that the children of Mingrelia would take the greatest care of the new woods and trees and would help the engineers to create a happy country.

There was loud applause. The orchestra struck up once more and Christoforidi, who was hiding behind the collective farmers, felt a pang of envy.

Then Pakhomov and Nevskaya spoke, but Christoforidi could not understand anything. At last old Artem Korkia came out on the platform. The crowd stirred.

Korkia bowed to Kakhiani, thought a moment, opened his mouth and said: "Thanks, Katso!"

He opened his mouth once more, but no words came. Then he gave a grunt and held out to Kahkiani his boxwood stick.

He was very proud of it. He had cut it when he was a lad of twenty. It was harder than iron, and Kakhiani was now to walk with it to the end of his life and might he live a hundred years longer.

Kakhiani accepted the stick and embraced the old man. The orchestra struck up a march and they all set off to look around the exhibition.

That evening in the restaurant known as "You'll always find a snack here," Artem Korkia gave Becho and Goulia an account of the brilliant speech he had made that morning at the opening of the exhibition.

"I went out before all the people and I said: 'I've lived all my life in Khorga and every year the floods washed away my fields. Twice I was caught in the swamp and had nothing but *chadi* and cheese to eat. The fever dried my body till the skin was stretched over my bones. My three sons died of the fever.' And so I told them—I said, 'Thanks,' says I, 'the old men are grateful to you. Thanks for our grandsons and great-grandsons. The Soviet Government and our own dear leader have spent so much money on making life better for us.' The money that's been spent! What those machines and engineers and workers must have cost! And then the brains of the people—they cost something too, don't they? So I told them at the exhibition. 'Here's my grandson, a Pioneer,' says I, 'he's cleverer than his grandfather. The new times gallop along like a rider on a mettlesome horse and we old folks, although we lag behind a bit, still we hurry after him. Because the rider is taking the right road, and we can't go astray.' That's what I told them. And they all clapped their hands and even the music played a bit of noise."

"A flourish," Becho prompted. He knew that Artem had not uttered a word at the opening of the exhibition, but he did not mention it out of consideration for the old man's feelings.

"Well, a flourish, if you like," Korkia agreed. "Now there are neither rich men nor Mensheviks—those that started the rebellion in Senaki, you know, and men should be kind to one another. That's what I said to them all, Katso."

Goulia listened to him in astonishment and believed him. He had been too shy to go to the opening of the exhibition and now regretted having stayed away.

"In five days' time," he said, "Gabunia is going to open the main canal and the water from the mountains and the woods will run into the river Khopi, and from there to the sea. Gabunia told me to find you, Becho, and to tell you that you must come to the canal.

"What for?"

"You're to paint the houses and write words in gold on the arch."

"Alright!" Becho smiled. "We'll make such a celebration as not one of the Princes Dadiani ever saw."

"And I've got a secret to tell you, old nuisance," and Goulia slapped Artem Korkia on the shoulder. "A very tricky little secret. Today you and me are going to the canal, but tomorrow we're going to the swamps and you're going to help me to do a very big job for Gabunia."

"What job is that, Katso?"

"Hush! It's politics. It's got to be done in silence!"

Korkia nodded. He might be old, but for the last time he would go to the swamps. For the sake of Gabunia, the son of the engine-driver from Samtredi, and for the sake of politics, it was even worth while going into the swamps once more.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Lydia Seifulina

Tanya

A Soviet Short Story of the New Youth

Tanya's step-father had offended her. The little girl was fond of him. Every time they quarrelled she suffered with a poignant, unchildish grief. They had met as usual this morning at early breakfast. Alexander Andreyevich had come to the table in a bad mood. This had escaped Tanya's attention, for she was in a good mood herself. She ate, moved about and talked hurriedly, recounting in snatches the events of the previous day and her own thoughts on rising.

"Lenin was the founder of Marxism."

Alexander Andreyevich interrupted her at this point with:

"It's usual for people to think before they speak, I believe. Why don't you do it?"

Of course, there had been occasions when he had been even snappier than this, but today she sensed a very definite scorn of herself—just as if she had turned out to be neither sufficiently grown-up nor sufficiently independent. The insult quite took her breath away. Then she said arrogantly, though her voice was a little uncertain:

"I always speak of things what I believe in."

Alexander Andreyevich pushed away his glass of tea angrily and rose, knocking over the chair as he did so. "Of things I believe—not things what I believe in. And don't believe in anything at all because you don't know anything. I really don't know what sort of language it is you speak."

He went out without even saying goodbye. There was no one else besides herself in the room, but Tanya threw back her head to prevent the tears from rolling down her cheeks. What did he mean by saying she didn't believe in anything at all, when she was a Pioneer? If anybody had said a thing like that to him, a Party member, wouldn't he have flared up?

On her way to school Tanya saw nothing of the streets or the people in them. Her feet trotted along mechanically, her eyes glanced about her, her body made the usual necessary movements in order to avoid trams, cabs, and cars, but her thoughts were intent on her grievances. She was thinking to herself—and her heart contracted as she thought it:

"If grown-ups are like that, one might as well die. Just take some kind of poison and make up one's mind about it and die. No, not make up one's mind—but just simply die. If you make up your mind then that's suicide and they would say you'd no convictions, of course. They'd say it was too Yessenin-ish—*I'm not such a hopeless drunkard yet, As to die without seeing you,* Tanya sang to herself.

A lump rose in her throat and she could not gulp back the tears. They ran down her cheeks. She snuffled and wiped them away with her glove, but they rolled down faster and faster.

"Oh, well, of course Yessenin's 'Letter to My Mother' *is* decadent, generally speaking—I'm against it myself and all that. But still it's awfully touching. How does it go?—*And through the glo-o-om, Ever the same vision appears.* Yes, if I was to die, then they'd be sorry. Supposing I died, just in the ordinary way, say—of scarlatina? Dad would stand by the grave and . . .

No, if it was just in the ordinary way, they wouldn't all be sorry. But if I was to die at my post . . . Supposing that, say, Moscow was attacked by the enemy . . ."

Tanya's eyes were dry now, and her cheeks glowed. She was busy inventing and living through various plans for dying a glorious death in defence of the USSR and the Revolution. Details of the funerals of famous people rose before her eyes. She could see it all clearly now.

" . . . and even the leaders would form a guard of honor round the coffin. And everybody from our school would be proud to say: 'She went to school with us!' "

But when the urn containing her, Tanya's remains, arose before her imagination, when the moment came for all living creatures to depart and leave her quite alone, Tanya longed to live.

"One must be prepared to suffer for one's ideas, but to die, why die, after all? It wouldn't matter if one even got badly wounded (only not fatally). Let's suppose I'm in prison in a capitalist country—Yes, I'm doing propaganda in America . . . And then, I make a most daring escape."

By the time Tanya reached school, she had lived through more than one marvellously heroic life. Each of these lives resembled the other in the main. Each of them was spent in victorious suffering for the establishment of Tanya's own world. It was a very definite world, sharply divided into two camps and two only: one's own sort and outsiders. One's own sort were the people among whom Tanya had grown up. Outsiders were people who had never yet come within Tanya's ken, but were well known to be the enemies of "one's own sort"—that is to say, they were drawn from the ranks of the capitalists of Europe and America and the wreckers discovered in the USSR.

Just as in the delightful tragedies of a bygone day, "one's own sort" seemed to Tanya to be right in everything and, in fact, faultless, while the enemy was a villain of the deepest dye, without a single redeeming feature. The love and hatred that the child felt in her day-dreams were very real emotions. The victory of love filled her soul with a rapture that shed a glow over the world of everyday, made it better and happier. Even Kim. He wasn't such a downright rude and nasty boy as he seemed after all. He appeared in Tanya's day-dreams suffering and repentant, while she was being tortured in he American prison, and in the true spirit of Bolshevik self-criticism he acknowledged his mistakes:

"Comrades, I know now that I didn't appreciate Tanya Russanova properly."

With this picture in her mind, Tanya went up to him of her own accord that day and started talking in such a winning, delicate little voice that Kim turned away with:

"Aw, don't try to make me fall in love with you for ever. I can find somebody better looking, thanks."

Tanya blushed a deep crimson, but refrained from any retort. To herself, however, she thought spitefully:

"You'll be sorry yet. Just you wait."

For the whole of that day the little girl was gentle and accomodating to her playmates, and diligent at her lessons. Towards the end of the day another unpleasant thing happened. There wasn't really anything specially wrong about it; everybody understood that Tanya had replied in the proper way, but still—Nadejda Constantinovna Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, visited the school that day. It so happened that she stopped to speak to Tanya as she

was going in, and held out her hand at parting. But the child said, as she thought she was supposed to:

"In our organization we don't shake hands."

Nadejda Constantinovna gave a good-natured laugh, but it seemed as if a shade of embarassment appeared in her eyes, or maybe Tanya only imagined it. At any rate it upset her.

"I should have shaken her hand, perhaps?" she mused. "Not for the sake of toadying to her, but just to show respect. No, I shouldn't though. Surely she'll understand that our organization doesn't do these things without reason."

But the more she tried to convince herself that she had done right, the more embarrassed she felt. On the way home with Igor Serebryakov she said languidly:

"I'm twelve already, and I haven't even decided what I'm going to be. What do you think I'll be?"

"How do I know? I'm going to be an aviator myself, or else a sailor. The sea or the sky for me, and I won't hear of anything else."

"And I haven't fixed on anything yet. Last year I wanted to be a film actress. It attracted me awfully at first. Well, and then I thought that after all—it isn't a really serious occupation. It's all scenes and behind-the-scenes and—well—a lot of intrigue goes on and that sort of thing. And then I don't know yet if I've got any talent for acting. As a matter of fact there are quite a lot of professions that I wouldn't care for. For instance, I wouldn't be a dentist for anything. Imagine having to look into other people's old smelly mouths all your life."

"Y-yes, that's not much fun, to be sure. And then people howl so when you hurt them. I let out such a screech once that the woman who was pulling my tooth out ran away."

"Of course, both dentists and doctors are awful necessary sort of people, but still one must consider one's self a little. You know what, Igor, I think I'll be a mining engineer, after all."

"A mining engineer? Go ahead. You've got my approval."

"I'm a bit doubtful about it still, though."

"I thought you intended to be a composer at one time?"

"Oh, no, I've gone off that. My mother's a composer, you know."

"Well, what about it? She's quite sound, isn't she?"

"What if she is? She's alright, of course. She's one of us, even if she isn't in the Party. But she's always so gloomy. She never laughs, at least not with her own folk. No, I'm very fond of Mother, but as for living with her,—no, thanks! It's a good thing she got married for the third time, I think."

"What, she's got a third husband now, has she?"

"Of course. Her first was my father, you see. Well, she got rid of him somehow or other and had me registered in her own name, and I've never seen him at all. The second—Alexander Andreyevich—is my present father. You know he's awfully glad I chose him myself. When Mother was leaving him I screamed and cried and said I wouldn't go. So he and Sonya adopted me, that's why I'm called Russanova, though Mother's name is Balk. The only thing is that we don't always agree . . ."

Tanya gave a deep sigh and, without having intended to do so, began to describe the morning's scene to Igor. When she had finished, she was vexed with herself for telling him about it. She reddened and frowned. But Igor showed a lively sympathy:

"It's really astonishing the way one's ancestors like to pick one up at a

word. You say something in a hurry and it's not quite clear to them and they come down on you like a ton of bricks. My father got at me as soon as we came back from camp. I'd done a bit of good organization work in the village there and I was telling Father and Mother all about it—'I organized three collective farms'—I was saying, and he cut in with a sarcastic tone, 'What, you organized them—you?' and started to take me down."

"Igor, have you ever read a book called *Fathers and Children?*"

"Who's it by? Oh, yes, I know, what-do-you-call-him. No, I haven't read it yet."

"I haven't yet, either. But Sonya advises me to study it, for some reason or other."

"She's probably just been reading it herself. As soon as they take a fancy to anything, they want to palm it off on us, too."

"The idea in this book seems to be that Bazarov is a Marxist and his parents are just the opposite. And afterwards they cry over his grave."

"Oh, they manage to upset themselves without graves sometimes. Especially mothers. Listen, you know what you should read—*War and Peace*. That's real stuff. I read it this summer. Only it's a bit long. You keep wanting to find out what's next and you read and read till you're tired. I got absolutely fagged out with it but I read it through. It's very interesting."

"You know, Igor, I sometimes skip a page or two."

Igor straightened his cap, gave a rapid glance round and said:

"I skipped a few unimportant bits myself, as a matter of fact, but on the whole—it isn't advisable. I wouldn't skip, if I were you. Well, so long."

"You promised to help me with my sums."

"Alright, I'll call round this evening. And don't go upsetting yourself over anything."

Igor turned into a side street. The lights were just appearing here and there. They came out smartly one by one, as if to watch the departure of the day, now going off duty. Neither light nor dark was supreme in the air, which seemed vibrant with a strange combination of the two. The loud breathing of cars and lorries carrying people or material for their multifarious needs, the hysterical, always startling, ringing of the tramcars, the far-away, stentorian gasping of steam-engines, the sirens of the factories, and the unintermittent, universal comparison with the other sounds—all the unified, complex noise of a big city spread far and wide and echoed hollowly like the terrified roar of some powerful monster. In the womb of the city at twilight the only self-sufficient folk were small children and lovers, as yet unmarried. People of the generations subject to memories experienced an anguished sense of complete dissociation from the world. The limits of their own isolated human fates lay clearly before them. And Tanya felt herself utterly weary and neglected. The little girl trailed home, shuffling her feet drearily. The roofs of the houses were covered with ugly duncolored snow. And she did not like the looks of the people she met.

2

Alexander Andreyevich opened the door to Tanya. He looked exhausted. It was a very tired smile he gave her but still it was a smile. He must have forgotten the "founder of Marxism," then, and all her other mistakes. Dear Dad! Tanya sprang at him and gave him a generous hug.

"Alright, that'll do. Why are you so late?"

"Nadejda Constantinovna came, and according to our Soviet custom, we all had our photos taken together."

Sonya appeared in the doorway of the dining room.

"Come along! I want my dinner badly, let's start."

"What, are we going to have it all together today? How grand!"

It was not very often that the whole family ate their meals together. Each of them had his or her own work, meetings, friends and appointments. Sonya went out to work earlier than the others. Some days Tanya did not see her at all. Perhaps that was why the girl found her young step-mother so easy to get on with. Her love for her step-mother was of quite a different quality to that she felt for her step-father. If this slender Sonya with her sweet face, her plain, unbrilliant humor, her utter inability either to suffer or to be angry for long, was to suddenly disappear from Tanya's life, it would certainly grieve the child sorely. She would find it much more difficult to bear the loss of Sonya than she had found the disappearance of her own mother from her life. Still, her sorrow would not be so deep, nor would she feel the same sense of irreparable loss all her life, as if Alexander Andreyevich disappeared. Not that Tanya herself ever thought of this. It was Alexander Andreyevich who understood it all of a sudden when he met the radiant, trustful glance of his daughter's eyes.

"Dad, what's sin?"

"Sin," he repeated mechanically. "Don't you know?" And then realized the full significance of this ignorance. Tanya had grown up without religion, just as she had grown up without parents of her own flesh and blood. She was in fact an entirely new person in a new country.

"Didn't you ever come across the word in books?"

"I don't seem to have noticed it. Only today Ninka said to me: 'It's a sin for you to do so-and-so.' "

Groping for suitable expressions, Alexander Andreyevich ventured on a none-too-clear explanation:

"Sin—is a religious conception. According to our moral conceptions a sin would be, say a crime committed against the Revolution or against your class."

"That Ninka is simply a nasty little hussy. May I be a miserable wretch if ever anybody can say to me—'it's a sin for you.' "

Sonya wrinkled her clear, low brow.

"Tanya, couldn't you choose expressions better—?"

Alexander Andreyevich ceased to listen to their conversation. He was thinking:

"We've brought about not only a physical and economic revolution. We've made a psychological revolution now. It would be difficult to restore these children to the world of capitalist conceptions." He thought, too, that his affection for this child contained a modicum of self approval, a very high estimate of his power to love another person's child as his own. It was exactly this conception of "own" that had never existed for the child. Not only had she never known what it was to have one's own house, she had never even known what it was to live in any flat for any great length of time. She had never known a period when she might have regarded her own family, her own tribe as something distinct from the rest of the world. She did not know what ties of blood were. There was a great deal that she did not know, in fact, that had until quite recently been regarded as natural or unnatural. But she felt quite naturally and completely—This man has taken care of me during my childhood, he is bringing me up, sending me to school, we are

living together. I love him, he is my father—. It would be all the more difficult to explain, then, that if he did make a mistake, he was not her enemy. A huge part of the old existence that had weighed him down with its fascinating and evil burden, was incomprehensible to her. Like every new creature, her way of thinking was direct. And generally speaking, how devilish difficult it was to deal with children nowadays! The egotism inherent in everything young was just as active in them as it had been in Alexander Andreyevich in his adolescence and youth. But they somehow contrived to combine it with the irrefutable authority of parents and teachers. Yes, if those parents and teachers happened to think in the same way that they did. In some ways Tanya was as childish as a girl of twelve of the past generation. But fundamentally she was way beyond her years. These children had a great sense of their responsibility to the collective. Formerly children had been different, there was no doubt about it. It was hard for him to wound her affection—and not merely because he was accustomed to this affection. It was the new creature in her that he found it so hard to wound. Alexander Andreyevich pushed away his plate and began to smoke. Sonya plucked at his sleeve and asked reproachfully:

"What's the matter with you? Why don't you eat your dinner properly?"

"I don't want to. Let's have some tea, will you. I've got a headache."

His wife looked at him with a pleading smile:

"Couldn't you ring up and ask for the office car and let's go for an hour's ride, out of town. It would freshen you up a bit—you need it."

Alexander Andreyevich frowned and a faint flush crept over his cheekbones. With a peculiar feeling of bitter triumph he was thinking:

"You'll get the office car alright tomorrow. Just wait and see."

But aloud he only said:

"I can't. I've got to work. And don't let Sychev in to disturb me if he should come."

"Oho, I'd like to see anyone keep him out!" cried Tanya, with a shake of her head. "He's as stubborn as our Kimka Schmidt. Dad, wasn't the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers Party held in London in 1903? And imagine, Kimka made a mistake and said it was 1902 and he sticks to it just out of sheer conceit."

"And out of sheer conceit you show off with bits of information you've cribbed from somewhere. Why, you don't know any history at all. Come on, now tell us, do you know anything about serfdom?"

"Yes, I do. It was introduced by Peter the Great. . . ."

Alexander Andreyevich burst out laughing. "Peter the Great seems to be the only person you've heard of out of all history."

Tanya shook her head reproachfully. "You can't say that. . . . What about Nicholas that we overthrew. And then there were others—those who gave the peasants their freedom—but without the land. No, Dad, I don't learn my lessons so badly on the whole. But of course you get tired of reading about all those Nicholases and Louises. What we need is a new system of reading. That's what they told us."

Sonya laughed. Alexander Andreyevich playfully rubbed Tanya's face with his hand.

"You're a silly little thing still, my girl—with your new system of reading."

And, as if he had found some relief in Tanya's confused notions of history, his face cleared as he looked at her. He rose to leave the room, but lingered, involuntarily. He was afraid of loneliness today. The servant, Elena Mikheyevna, brought in the tea. Sonya obligingly cleared one end of the table. She

was always a litte shy of this spare, light-haired woman with the burning dark eyes. Tanya did not like her, either. She merely tolerated Elena Mikheyevna's presence as a necessary and inevitable evil, and hoped she would go after she had grumbled a bit. Elena Micheyevna and Tanya were sworn foes. The former could not bring herself to accept the fact that this "stranger's child" should occupy such an important place in the family. The enmity had begun to make itself felt a little while back, after the two had had a heated argument about God. On that occasion Alexander Andreyevich had advised his daughter in a displeased tone:

"Now, look here, it's one thing to be a militant little atheist, but you'd better learn how to behave to people."

Their food, cleanliness and even the fact that their clothes were kept whole and sound, all depended on the untiring efforts of Elena Mikheyevna. Alexander Andreyevich used to say that if she deserted them, they would have no course left but one: to go and live on the bounty of the street waifs around the great asphalt boiler in the street. Elena Mikheyevna valued the consideration he showed her. She noticed that today he was upset about something, that he looked tired and ill. As she handed him a glass of strong hot tea, the sort he liked, she said kindly:

"Sychev called but I wouldn't allow him into the room. You ought to have a rest. I told him: 'The master and mistress are out so I can't allow you in.' "

To this Tanya remarked in a hostile tone, though trying not to speak too clearly:

"Wouldn't 'allow' him, indeed. 'My master and mistress.' It'll soon be like the joke in *Krokodil*—'My gentleman has gone to the Party nucleus'!"

Elena Mikheyevna's cheeks flamed. "It's rather late in the day now for me to learn new ways, Tanechka. I'm too old. And it's not very nice of you to say such things, either."

Tanya tried to hold her tongue, but meeting the cold rebuke in the eyes she disliked so much, she could not resist saying:

"You don't think yourself old, anyhow. Whenever you're going out anywhere, you spend ages before the looking glass.... And besides, there are people older than you who can do without God."

"Tanya, what's all this? asked Sonya reproachfully. And Alexander Andreyevich shouted angrily:

"Hold your tongue this minute!"

Elena Mikheyevna began noisily to collect the dirty plates. Tears came into her eyes and her voice broke.

"She doesn't know what life is yet. Casting it up to me that I can't give up my faith in God! If I can't, I can't and that's all about it! Before ever she was born I was left without a soul in the world to complain to, no one but God to hear me. I'd die for the Soviet Government, God knows I would, but I can't deny my God for all that. She thinks because I'm a cook...."

"Was I talking about that? I was not! I was talking about your God. And as to cooks, Lenin himself said...."

"Lenin respected everyone who worked, and you came when everything had been done, and it was all comfortable for you and you treat a servant as if she was dirt...."

"It's not true! There's not a single word of truth in what you say!"

"Tanya!"

Alexander Andreyevich said wearily:

"Don't upset yourself, Elena Mikheyevna about trifles like these."

"They're not trifles to me. And although God himself is no trifle to me I

can tell you the Soviet Government isn't a trifle to me, either! I'm finishing the second class at night school and getting an education under this government, whereas in old times. . . ."

"Well, and what was I talking about? Maybe you've got further on than me now at school, and still you go praying to your God. . . ."

"I don't know how far you've got on at school, but I know this—that at home you just look down on working folks. I asked you not to sharpen your pencils on the floor and throw bits of paper about. . . ."

"I'm going to pick them up myself, I'll sweep up myself! I ought to do everything for myself, I know it—Elena Mikheyevna! Oh, well I suppose if I run after her now, she'll go on worse than ever."

Alexander Andreyevich laid his hand on her shoulder and held her back.

"Never mind, sit still. Where did you get this way of speaking to her, anyhow? Eh?"

Sonya smiled unexpectedly.

"She was awfully offended by what you said about the looking glass. You shouldn't have done it. She isn't a bit vain. Not long ago she had the chance of getting married, but she didn't want to. She can't stand men!"

Tanya shook her head obstinately. "It would be better if she couldn't stand God, and got herself five husbands. She'd have plenty of worries then, and now she has nothing but prejudices."

Sonya could not restrain her laughter.

"Five husbands! Tanya!"

Alexander Andreyevich gave a moody chuckle. The child, trying to choke back her tears, lost her breath and coughed. Then she raised her eyes, full of tears to her step-father's face, and her glance was steady as she said:

"Maybe I've caught the flu. My eyes keep watering. And it's been such a rotten day, somehow!"

She ran quickly out of the room. Sonya followed her. Alexander Andreyevich drummed impatiently on the table. How many rotten days like this were awaiting the poor child! He remembered the first time he had seen her. She was hardly three then. He had gone with her mother, Natalia Sergeyevna —then his wife—to see them at her flat. Something had gone wrong with the electricity. The room was lit by the feeble light of a candle stuck in a bottle. The child's nurse was getting tea in the kitchen. The little girl was sitting alone in a great armchair, watching with big, fearless eyes the dark shadows that shifted in the depths of the room. She had often been left alone, and so she had grown accustomed to darkness and silence and was not afraid of it. Her mother picked her up in her arms, and, conscience-stricken, showered hot kisses on the little face as she carried her over to Alexander Andreyevich.

"This is your father, darling."

But the child shook her unkempt locks and said solemnly:

"I have no fader."

Natalia Sergeyevna laughed and sobbed and took to kissing her again.

"You hadn't any! But now you have one. We're going to live together—all three of us—we're going to be very, very happy!"

Someone knocked at the door. It was the electrician. The mother put the child down while she talked to the man. Suddenly she felt Tanya tugging at her dress and stooped down to her:

"What is it, dear?"

Then very clearly and calmly the child inquired, pointing to the electrician:

"Mamma, is this a fader, too?"

She evidently regarded it as quite natural for unknown fathers to appear out of the unusual darkness of the room today. Alexander Andreyevich took her on his knee. She watched his lips attentively for a long time while he chattered to her, then touched them with her finger and asked:

"But where were you when you weren't here?"

Alexander Andreyevich's heart contracted with tenderness and yearning as he recalled this scene. Sonya entered at that moment and spoke to him, but he had no idea of what he said to her in reply.

3

A week went by. The Pioneers were writing a letter to Maxim Gorki. Igor Serebriakov was managing the affair as he generally did when important correspondence had to be carried on by the organization. He was practically lying on the table with his arms widespread. The right side of his face was smeared with ink. With his left hand he stroked his moist wrinkled forehead. A long argument about the mode of addressing Alexei Maximovich Gorki was in full swing. Should they say "thou" or "you" to him. Igor's argument was:

"For us he's just the same as a Party member. And after all even that bourgeois poet, what's-his-name, said that 'you' was a cold, empty world and 'thou' was cordial and . . ."

From just behind him the thin, judicious tones of Leontina Kochergina came reprovingly:

"But that's from a ballad. It might offend him."

Igor gave her a venomous dig with his elbow.

"Don't breathe in my ear! Ballad! And what did you curl your hair for yesterday evening?"

A dark-haired girl, so well built that she seemed taller than she really was, took him sternly by the elbow.

"What's all this rudeness among Pioneers, Igor?"

"It isn't rudeness at all, we're just consulting each other! If we write 'you'—then it'll come out like this: 'We love you because we trust you.' But it sounds much firmer if we say: 'We love thee because we trust thee fully and completely.' "

Here Tanya called out:

"No, no! It sounds too much in the style of the intelligentsia—this love and trust business. Better if we put: 'We are listening eagerly to every word of thine.' "

Igor mumbled angrily:

"Why should we bother to say we listen for every word, surely every word he says counts!"

Kim asked Tanya spitefully:

"So you don't care for Gorki?"

An angry blush spread over Tanya's face. She got up from her place and went over to the boys. That she should be accused of not caring for their greatest proletarian writer!

"How dare you insult me like that?"

Kim was not spiteful by nature, but he could not resist teasing Tanya. She was so sincere about everything and got so excited. He did not think of the pain he was inflicting on her. He pulled her now by her dress and remarked in a loud, jeering tone:

"There's nothing surprising about your not liking him, is there? You and your dad have different tastes to ours, it seems."

Sensing that some dreadful misfortune was hanging over her, this unexpected mention of her dad startled Tanya. For perhaps the first time in her life, or at least since she had been capable of demanding an explanation, she now hesitated to do so. She remained standing where she was by Igor. Her face paled, she did not know what to do. Lisa, the tall dark-haired girl who had forbidden Igor to be rude to Leontina, now came up close to Tanya, and stood before her as if trying to screen her from the eyes of the children.

"Comrades, Tanya Russanova is our comrade and has always had a perfectly clean record. She'll know how to act. She'll tell us herself about this affair of her father's. And Kim, to persecute her on account of her father is not only premature, but in general, it's . . ."

Tanya's lips uttered an almost soundless question:

"Persecute me on account of my father?"

The other girl turned her round by her shoulders and whispered angrily:

"Haven't you read today's *Pravda?"*

A faint, sweet hope lightened Tanya's heart for a moment. "They're just bluffing, so as to get me to read the paper every day." And as she went past Kim, she even remarked in an insolent, but slightly uncertain tone:

"You know what? You're a bit of a fool Kim."

"What do you mean?"

"In general."

When she remembered this afterwards, she hung her head. Igor handed her the paper gloomily. They shut themselves up in the little room where the editors of the school newspaper usually worked. There were five of them. The Pioneer leader, Lisa, Igor, Tanya, and the Kritski twins, who were as like as two peas and very active social workers. Igor noticed that Tanya was too agitated to read properly, so he gave her an account of the affair, lowering his voice for some reason or other as he did so.

"At the expense of the government's interests he tried to do the best for his own business. Well, not his own personal business, of course, that's understood! But for the Soviet farm attached to the trust he works for. My opinion is that these trust fellows should be kept an eye on and checked up much oftener. It's administrative work, you know. Well, it's understood, of course, that he hasn't misused government funds or anything! The decree doesn't mention personal profit. But you see he kept back part of the grain on his Soviet farm. Fodder for the cattle on the trust's Soviet farm, he said. And what about the government? You understand, there may be all sorts of motives behind this! Well, it seems a clear case of opportunism."

Outwardly, Tanya appeared quite calm. Her hands ceased trembling. Her stern grey eyes gazed straight at her comrades. But not a trace of color showed trough the delicate skin of the face; even the lips were white. It seemed to her that she trembled—the blood throbbed so in her heart. And all the various emotions agitating the little girl merged into one idea:

"Will he survive it?"

Not for an instant, not in the remotest way was this thought connected with anything like fear for her father's position, or with dread of material insecurity. Tanya regarded it as perfectly natural that, since she was not yet grown-up, she should be fed and clothed. She was convinced that she would always be fed and clothed. Whether he held the rank of director or not was all the same to her. From her earliest years Alexander Andreyevich had never allowed her to take advantage of his social privileges. He was

positively petty over this. He never took out his wife and child in the office car, except perhaps when he was very tired and had to go somewhere out of town for an hour or so; then he would take them with him. Once Tanya asked him to bring her some plywood from the trust for something that was needed in the school. He was extremely angry.

"Don't you start playing the daughter of an important man, if you please! Your school will never get anything out of me that way."

Of course, this severity was a trifle ostentatious. But these sort of rules were very good for Tanya. She knew that not everyone was in prosperous circumstances, but since she had never known want herself, she did not think about it and was not even afraid of it. The word "survive" related to only one thing: "Would her father be allowed to stay in the Party or not?" A great many hours of the child's life were spent with the "collective." And the family was not enclosed in the small world of personal associations. A person outside the Communist Party was, to her mind, just a sickly individual in the midst of social life. What, would her father become one of those? Impossible! Things weren't like that, surely! No, no, it wouldn't be like that! How could it? Everything went on as if in a dream. The houses, the streets, and even her own door seemed unreal to her. The fresh young heart refused to believe its sorrow. Elena Mikheyevna, as she opened the door to the little girl, said in a scolding tone:

"Look at your stockings falling down about your ankles like an old woman's. Pull them up!"

Elena Mikheyevna's gruff rebuke, its very ordinary everydayness, called out in Tanya for the first time in her life a yearning for the past. Even the unpleasant things in the past seemed desirable to her. Oh, if only everything would go on as it had always gone on! With the universal feminine movement she pulled up her stockings tightly and, holding herself very straight, marched into the room. Alexander Andreyevich, with a grey face and uneasy eyes, jumped up for some reason or other, when she entered, and then sat down hurriedly and unnecessarily on another chair. Sonya was weeping by the window. Usually her tears dried very quickly, but today her nose was swollen. She had evidently been crying a long time. Tanya's mother, Natalia Sergeyevna, was pacing the room, bearing her long body lightly as usual. It always happened that her visits to Russanov coincided with trouble, or that she brought trouble with her. Neither her personal life nor her art satisfied her. For that reason she often suffered very sincerely and this was unpleasant for those around her. An odor of sad perfumes and wine like that of faded flowers clung about her always. She halted for a moment in her pacing to kiss her daughter. As soon as Tanya caught a whiff of that familiar scent, she felt quite downhearted. White-faced and weary, she leaned against the jamb of the door. Alexander Andreyevich asked in a rather husky tone:

"Well?"

She cast down her eyes and was silent. Sonya with her good, simple heart understood what was going on inside the little girl's soul—the ruin of all her trust, her hopes and conceptions of things. What sight could be more bitter than a child's face with all its brightness dimmed. Sonya went over to her quickly; she wanted to take her in her arms and lead her away, but Tanya only clung convulsively to the jamb of the door. Alexander Andreyevich lit a cigarette rather awkwardly and then said reluctantly, in an irritable tone:

"She's going to play the baby now. If you have anything to say or to ask me, Tanya, ask it and be done with it."

Natalia Sergeyevna flared up.

"What do you mean? Really! What should you want to talk to her about? She's only little yet. Tanya, go and wash yourself, child, and go to bed. It's not your business to judge your father."

Tanya turned on her mother sharply:

"Isn't it, then? I've never told him a lie in my life! And all the children at our school know I'd make a mess of it straight off if I started to lie. And why did he lie to me all the time?"

Alexander Andreyevich cleared his throat angrily. Then he tried to speak as evenly and drily as possible.

"I taught you to speak the truth always! And I didn't lie to you, nor am I a liar by nature. But you'll only come to understand me when you're faced with complications yourself."

Then the tears she had held back so long welled up and poured down her face in rivers. She hastily wiped them away using her shoulders and both hands.

"Do you think I haven't any complications to face? Look here, Lisa Borshchenkova challenged her father to socialist competition in the name of the Pioneers. He's a fitter and didn't do much work. And he swore at her —dirty swears—and wouldn't sign the paper and tore it up. And he even hit her. She came and asked what to do. 'How can I go on living with him, comrades?' she said. And if—it would have been better if you'd have hit me instead of going and getting yourself into opportunism."

Natalia Sergeyevna clasped her hands in horror.

"But this is monstrous! It's grown-up people who are answerable for you, not you for them! How dare you speak like that?"

Tanya gave a loud snuffle and retorted in a calmer tone:

"We're all answerable for each other. We aren't capitalists—working at cross purposes."

4

Those two months were difficult ones for Tanya. Her father was not deprived of his Party membership card. He was given leave of absence for an indefinite period, without permission to leave the town. His behavior was discussed at all the meetings, in all the various offices and trade unions. There was a reproachful mention of Russanov's name almost daily in the newspapers. He grew thinner. His hair turned perceptibly grey. But on hearing that he was not to be turned out of the Party, he calmed down. To while away the dreary hours of enforced leisure, he studied English and mathematics assiduously and read a great deal of fiction. He thought many things over too. Particularly after a conversation with Tanya, when he tried to explain to her the theory common to people of his age, that it is only the indifferent who never makes mistakes. The little girl did not understand him. He wondered why she did not. And, being an honest fellow, saw that the root of his mistake lay deeper than he had allowed for in his explanations. Tanya sensed this. The child felt that he still regarded himself as being in the right. And her law was a straight and unbending one: If you have been proved to be in the wrong and still, in spite of this regard yourself as being in the right, then it means you are an enemy. In what did it lie—his wrongness? He searched and found in himself a great deal that was unnecessary and even harmful to this new world of Tanya's. Sometimes it was hidden in little things; in scarcely perceptible shades of Slavophilism;

in the love of the wild, anguished, contrapuntal Russian songs, that filled one with a limp and hopeless sorrow; in the fact that he liked a peasant of the type of Tolstoi's Platon Karatayev, and sometimes pined for the great uncultivated stretches of old Russia, that sometimes his eye was gladdened when it lighted on a crooked old windmill at the fringe of a neglected wood. All these accusations, when expressed in words, sounded dull and stupid. It seemed as if they even lowered the beauty of the world and life itself. At the same time he understood that to these Pioneers, the products of a new mode of living, even a simple, peaceful landscape and the love of all mankind in its original inspiration sometimes seemed inimical. He did not speak of this to Tanya. Emotions like these were too complicated, of course, for her to understand yet. The mutual relations between the man and the child gradually became smoother, but it seemed as if a barrier—transparent, but none the less a barrier—had grown up between them. It was evident from the fact that Tanya told him very little nowadays of the affairs of the Pioneers, whereas formerly she was always bothering him with them. She had grown up all at once. The world for her was no longer sharply delimited, but had become a complex interweaving of light and shade. This affair of her father had taught her to see a great deal that she had simply never noticed before.

At last, after two months Alexander Andreyevich received a new appointment. He was sent abroad to work on a trade representation. The Moscow Committee of the Party would not let Sonya go, so Alexander Andreyevich went alone. Natalia Sergeyevna came to see him off, waving some kind of a paper in her hand.

"It's awfully lucky—your appointment coming like this. My opera is being played there just now. You can be of help to me. I'm a Soviet composer you know. There'll have to be speeches made and that sort of thing."

Tanya waved her away.

"Oh, no, mother! You'll only say something petty-bourgeois. You'd better speak here where we can correct you if necessary."

They all laughed at that and Alexander Andreyevich said:

"Well, you'll have to come over and correct her. You'll come, won't you? You won't forget me?"

Tanya raised her sincere gaze to his face and said very softly:

"I wouldn't have forgotten you even *then,* Dad. Only my life would have been dreadfully unhappy, *then."*

He understood what she meant by "then," and the horror it held for her still. His eyes glistened with tears as he kissed her. When she left the room for a moment, he appealed to the older women:

"Take care of the child. You know, Natalia Sergeyevna, you often make mistakes in the way you treat her. You're quite wrong—they have the right to judge us, they have to live the life we cut out for them. It's the scaffolding of their lives we're setting up—" Catching sight of the returning Tanya, he concluded gaily:

"And sometimes they reward us with the red tie of an honorary Pioneer and sometimes with the sack-cloth banner of dishonor."

In the summer Tanya went abroad to join her father. The evening before her departure she roamed about Moscow with Igor.

"Don't do anything unnecessary, of course," he exhorted her. "The Pioneers are terribly kept down over there. But still, don't forget the organiza-

tion—But you women are all for hats and rags and 'oh, what cheap crepe-de-chine!' and so on."

Tanya shook her head reprovingly.

"Oh, Igor, I'm not like that, am I?"

Igor cast a sidelong look at the clean, smooth line of brow and nose, took in at once the light, easy bearing and bright grey eyes. His heart beat faster. The little girl stood still. They had arrived at the door of her house. Igor shook her hand and said, frowning and obviously agitated:

"No, you're not like that. You're fine. And as far as I'm concerned—the best of women. And you always will be the best—"

Tanya reddened and cautiously drew away her hand. Igor turned on his heel and left her. Without looking round, he called out:

"Well, I'll see you tomorrow at the station. Be sure and write to me on the journey!" Then he vanished round the corner. The girl stood a while looking after him and then went into the house. Just as she disappeared through the door, Igor appeared round the corner again. He stood staring at the deserted pavement with a sensation of delicious pain, a feeling only experienced in adolescence, and never again felt in its first fine purity.

Igor received a letter from Tanya, written on the journey. A small sheet of paper scrawled with many a crooked, pencilled line. Its contents were just as disorderly. Among other things she wrote:

"Igor, you must learn languages, and learn them well and make the rest of our school learn them! Such an awkward thing happened to me. The diplomatic courier I'm traveling with didn't want to have breakfast one day, so I took my ticket and went into the restaurant-car by myself. Well, I sat down, you know, and a foreign waiter in uniform came up to me and didn't serve me anything to eat, but just kept talk, talk, talking. I sat there with everybody looking at me—I was ready to sink into the ground. I went redder and redder and didn't know what to do. At last a foreigner who knew a little Russian came up and explained to me that my ticket was for lunch and not for breakfast. Now I sit over by books and my heart's fit to break when I try to remember: *der Ofen, das Fenster, die Diele*—it makes my back ache. Do learn, Igor, please! Why should we give the foreign bourgeoisie a chance to laugh at us?"

And along the margin in a very small hand, she wrote: "I think, you're fine, too."

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Louis Aragon

Lovers of 1904

From the New French Novel The Bells of Bâle

Catharine Simonidze, daughter of an owner of oil wells in Baku, lives in Paris with her mother, who is separated from her husband. Anarchic in spirit, she doesn't want to follow the example of her sister Helen, who is going to marry Captain Mercurot. She makes up her mind to take on a lover, and chooses an officer, Captain Jean Thiebault, up to now a mere friend; she thinks, however, that he will not refuse the part.

That was very simple to do in July 1904. Catherine had persuaded Captain Jean Thiebault to take his furlough in the mountains and to let her go along. Like it or not, a little guile was necessary, more because of Helen and Mercurot than for Madame Simonidze. Even though this was agreed upon as a comradely trip. So a fiction was invented: a letter of invitation from a friend in Brigitte, made a party to the scheme.

Catherine and Jean met at the Care de Lyon and they fled away to Savoy. They had planned a walking trip. The itinerary was not mapped out, in all it took a good part of the night on the train, discussing the paths and valleys, with the guide Joanne, and an old English Baedecker supplied by Madame Simonidze.

When Jean had curled up in his corner to sleep, with his cheek against the buffer over which his handkerchief was spread, Catherine, while pretending to drowse, studied him in detail through her long lashes, there in semi-darkness, under the blue lamp of the compartment. She was seeing him for the first time as an animal for whom breathing is important; she sensed that she would never feel for him that tenderness which was perhaps love. His even breath in sleep, of a sudden filled her with an awful fear. She pictured the weight of that body on top of her. She went to sleep with shivers.

They got off at Bellegarde. From the time when he had taken part in the maneuvres along the Swiss border, Thiebault had retained the desire to explore a region little known to tourists at the time. That July was unusually hot and there were more flowers in the fields than Catherine had ever seen before in her life, not to mention the lavander which was a revelation to her. Red and blue butterflies circled over the fields and went to sleep together in pairs on the flowers. The mountains lent to their trip a fantastic setting where Jean, in Catherine's eyes, was born to a new life. How strong he was! He would run ahead to fetch her a drink from the springs, when she was exhausted from the sun. The cool stops in stables where cattle were sheltered at night made those trivial evenings at the Jonghense, where they had met, seem like a bad dream.

The first evening they slept at Vulbens in an inn where they received queer looks when they asked for separate rooms. Then they contiuned to coast along the border. Everyone they ran into looked like a smuggler. At Saint Julien en Genevois, where they lunched the second day, the customs guards spoke to them suspiciously. When they learned that Jean was a captain they became talkative and familiar. They had coffee together under the trees, by a fountain. There were ticklish stories of lace smuggled through

the customs by women, concealing it you'd never guess where. One in particular, my dear young lady, who had been in this for years, without our being able to catch her. She had been pointed out to us, yet she fooled us every time. There was an inspectress who regularly had her stripped to the skin, begging your pardon. We should tell you that Brigadier Crevaz was quite a handsome fellow. Well, it was he who solved the mystery, for he had her in a corner and he wanted to make the most of it. This wasn't so easy, though; she put up a stiff resistance. He isn't used to being resisted, and besides he's a good husky fellow. Jean was a bit flustered. Catherine kept her eyes averted.

At Efrenbieres, they reached the valley of the Avre which they wanted to follow up as far as Chamonix. They went to spend the night Annemasse. Here it was that, as Jean was getting into bed, the door opened and Catherine entered. He tried to collect himself, unable to imagine what was happening. It was one of those overnight rooms where cart-drivers sleep. The red eiderdown quilt, the very sight of which was unbearable in such a temperature, had been flung on the floor, the window was open to the stars and near the candle shimmered the water jug, adorned with pink birds and Chinese fishermen.

The young man's belongings, pulled out of his knapsack and scattered about the room, a service revolver on the night stand, unfolded linen, ready for the morrow, bespoke privacy taken by surprise.

Catherine went over towards Jean as fast as she could and flung her arms about him. The bed was very high, and the dressing stand was low. As the candle burned lower, the shadows climbed the ceiling, grotesque and frightening. She awoke in the night alongside him. His presence seemed strange to her. Waking up, he spoke to her on familiar terms. They talked on till dawn.

Vacation days followed. Later, in the colonies, or in the worst moments of the war, amid the shrieks of the dying, in the fearful noise of aeroplane bombs, which burst like a fit of coughing, Jean Thiebault will always hark back to these hours of hot sunshine, when an adventure, which will remain without parallel in the life of this leader of men, unfolds among the flowers of Savoy, above a torrent, with all the whims of youth and nature.

They spent three days in Bonneville, which is a subprefecture. Three days of hotel, with lazy evenings just outside the town. They no longer paid any attention to the itinerary which they had mapped out in the beginning, arranging the days. At the end of a few kilometres, an inn would stop them. They spent forty-eight hours in one village without much knowing why. The goal of their expedition had been forgotten. Mont Blanc no longer interested them. They would climb up a mountainside merely for the sake of finding a few trees and some solitude. A brook. Then evening would overtake them and they would return to the primitive room chosen in the morning. A chromo on the wall transfigured it. One occasion the portrait of Victor Hugo.

At Marignier, where they lunched, having crossed the Giffre which flows into the Avre, they followed its left bank as far as the Avre, leaving the road. The sun had become so scorching hot that it almost made Catherine ill. Jean bathed her forehead with the cool water, which has a reputation of being deadly. It was because they were at the moment so sure of life, so little haunted by funereal shapes, young; merely to look at each other gave them a thrill. Their hands sought each other like their smiles. They never asked themselves when this pastoral interlude would end. Did they prefer

the nights or the days? They would laugh over nothing. They ran in the grass. They plunged deep into Savoy. All that their life had before, all their worries were as nothing. Only of an evening, during long chats would they rediscover scattered in their memories the elements of a sweet legend told alternately in two voices, where he and she drank of another cool water and perhaps deadly as the Avre, to satisfy their thirst for poetry and the will of each to cast on the existence of the other the shadow of his own being.

It took them forever to cover the five kilometres which separate the junction of the Avre and the Giffre from the village of Cluses. Every stone of the torrent had its reasons for detaining them. Every drop of water was a wonder, and they discovered on the way dozens of ways of leaning against each other which both made walking easier and was a reason for not hurrying.

Cluses, where they arrived around four o'clock, is quite a place, which with its watch-making industry boasts of close on to two thousand inhabitants. They had been told that the watch-making school was worth seeing, and Catherine recalled her childhood memories of the artisans of the Black Forest, and the cuckoos which they made.

To their whole way of living in these last days, impelled as it was by strong primitive emotions where in newfound pleasure, virginity shed like a garment, merged with the extraordinary calm of this July in the mountains, in their whole new life of strolling lovers, the idyllic vicinity of an industry itself unusual, minute, tidy and somehow archaic, had added an undefinable something to the setting of the valley and of their love something of the spirit of Jean Jaques Rousseau whom they both, so they told each other, had preferred, at the age of fifteen, to any other writer of the past. The tick-tock of the clocks suggested all manner of ideas to them. The fact that there are men who make little beating hearts which you stick in your vest pocket, seemed the very proof that man is good by nature. The two lovers gratified themselves with this topic.

Jean himself had explored all the mysteries of these industries in Bensacon. He had already launched on a technical exposition, when, reaching the first houses of Cluses, they saw a strange procession approaching.

A crowd was coming on, about three hundred people, in a sort of disordered order. There was a sprinkling of women and children among the men, and yet it wasn't a celebration, though there was singing and laughter, and though the march of this human mass, roughly arranged in ranks of four, had something determined about it.

In the first ranks marched those who were evidently the cause of the procession and the center of attention. Just as the bridal couple at a wedding. They were apparently workers, watch makers of Cluses, largely of peasant origin. They had that vigorous look which one encounters everywhere in the countryside of Savoy, but refined by one or two generations spent in the patient adjustment of wheels and springs. The young ones, under the strong July sun, were in their shirt-sleeves, tanned, black-haired, walking arm in arm, some of them with their sweethearts, wild poppies stuck in the button-holes of their vests. The old ones wore their leather aprons and caps, some with their eye-shades from work. Others with canes for the march. And around this group, joined by an elemental connivance, surged an entire population, more or less haphazard, workers from other factories, friends, people who had happened on to the path of the procession, laughing girls and serious girls, small bourgeois from the town, peasants.

Seeing this cohort, Catherine and Jean quickened their step, a trifle weary, perhaps, of solitude, dusty despite the water of the Avre, with their two packs, which Thiebault carried over one shoulder, while Catherine, bare-headed, hat in hand, clung to her lover's arm, gazing straight before her at the girls who were also hanging on to their beaus.

A cat was purring on a barrel in front of a shed from where came the sound of hammering. A small yellow dog, utterly ridiculous, yelped before the procession, and ran back and forth at one side. The crowd approached a house which was flanked by a brick lodge, with a large courtyard enclosed by a wall which bore the inscription *WATCH-MAKING FACTORY.*

At that moment someone, whom neither Jean nor Catherine saw, must have appeared at one of the windows of the lodge, for many heads among the crowd turned in that direction, and as the marchers milled about, they asked each other questions and one or two voices were raised in derision, some shook their fists at the buildings, but the crowd continued in its course.

The little yellow dog had just discovered Catherine and Jean; it frisked across the ten metres between them and the crowd and came to bark at their feet. With the gentleness of happy people, they were both absorbed in bending over, trying to pet the dog, which with a wary coyness avoided their hands, when the first volley rang out. They raised their eyes in astonishment.

The crowd, which was still some twelve metres from the factory, after first recoiling, congealed, and there were two men lying on the ground in front of it, whom everyone eyed aghast. From up above, new shots were fired from a second story window of the lodge, gun barrels were visible, propped on the sills and coming out as though in search of victims. A sort of tumult arose in which the cries of the wounded and the shrieks of the numerous women could be distinguished, and the voice of someone who shouted, *Don't shoot!* But that was entirely futile, these who fired, how many were there? must have had reserve pieces, or someone to reload their guns for them. It was a crazy volley, and those who shot lost their heads completely when the unarmed crowd, where one saw an old woman with a black bonnet supporting on her shoulders her huge hulk of a son, who was still on his feet, but wounded in the head, blinded with blood, and who fell suddenly, like an avalanche, dragging the old woman down to her knees with his weight . . . when the unarmed crowd, with black-robed women kneeling in the dust by the dead and wounded, heedless of the bullets, which ricocheted against the walls . . . when the disordered crowd, rallying from dismay, dumb with rage and fury, after hurling a volley of stones against the wall, flung itself on the gate, demolished it and streamed into the courtyard. They found some axes, the doors were shattered.

From the shed where he was fixing a wheel, a big gawky boy, who couldn't have been twenty yet, had run out to see what was happening and he was staring wide-eyed at death, when a bullet from a window struck him full in the chest before he had made head or tail of it. And he fell forward. He was still clutching his hammer.

The little yellow dog was barking hysterically, hidden behind Jean's trouser leg. Jean suddenly became concerned over Catherine's safety, he pulled her over to the road-side which was out of the range of the bullets; but she, white, her lips open, refused to follow him. It was this moment that it suddenly dawned on Jean what the crowd under the bullets, was planning. Fire! The idea surged up from no one knew where and the incendiary material, some hay, a heap of wheel barrows, was being piled up in the

courtyard. Fire! The popular fury, of which the tumult had abated, was being fully exerted towards this objective, towards this justice, towards this expiation. The dead and wounded lay in the road, from the window the people who fired remained at their deadly business, but what possessed all those panting breaths, what united the forces and the actions of those men, who had just made a terrific and sudden decision, was the idea of fire, of a conflagration, the immediate necessity of which no one contested, as though after a long debate, a vote had linked their determination. "They want to burn the house down! Stop them!"

It was Jean who had said this, making a move towards the crowd. Some primitive urge in the young man impelled him forward. Catherine's hand held his wrist in a steel vice. Astonished he tried to free himself. Their eyes met. He no longer understood the language of her eyes. But all the same he saw the open chasm. He had a confused presentiment that he had just lost her. He repeated: "They want to burn the house down!" "They are right," she said, and released his wrist.

The authorities had made their way through the crowd. Some gendarmes. A detachment of the 30th of the line led by an officer. "What madness!" he exclaimed as though in a dream. Thiebault came up to him, introducing himself. The other made a rush for the lodge from where the shots were being fired. Having broken down the door, by a narrow stairway he quickly reached the floor they were shooting from. With his soldiers he disarmed four men, whom Jean saw come out on the landing. Four big, hale fellows with the air of young squires. Dressed as though for the hunt. Gaiters, ties. They were pale and trembling. The oldest might have been thirty. With them was an older man, with greying hair who apparently had not taken part in the shooting.

The lieutenant issued brief commands to his men. It was necessary to keep the crowd from entering. He turned to Jean, having apparently heard his explanations in the midst of it all: "How are we going to save the lives of these murderers?"

One of the young men tried to take exception. "Idiot," the lieutenant interrupted, "if they see you you're as good as dead!" They turned away, trembling. The older man, whose teeth were chattering, only said, "The cellar!" There was a sort of policeman in plain clothes present, the special commissioner of Annemasse.

"Yes, that's an idea," he said. "Captain, will you lead the way, without my presuming to give you orders?"

Jean went down first, at the foot of the stairs there was a door, it was unlocked. They shouldered their way into a little passage with winding stone stairs. Matches either went out too quickly or burned one's fingers. The troopers pushed their prisoners along cursing them. From without came the cry of *Kill them!*

The captain left a few men to watch the prisoners, who were deterred from attempting to escape by fear, more than by any guards. Through the shaftsways they could see the scurrying feet of the incendiaries. One could already hear the fire crackling. The lieutenant and Jean were back in the courtyard. The main building was already a mass of flames. A destructive fury possessed everyone; anything which could serve to hasten the ruin became a battering-ram in the hands of the assailants, who found the flames too slow in razing the walls.

Yet the fire burned fast; on this dry July day, the wood-work caught eagerly. A pungent smoke issued from one of the factory windows. The

residence, set apart, had not been touched. Were there people inside? No one knew. About forty enfuriated workers headed for it. The bulk of the soldiers, about a hundred, together with some thirty gendarmes stopped them. They massed there, forsaking the factory to save the house of the proprietors. "But what's it all about?" Jean asked the captain.

"I'll tell you about it later, a strike."

Ah, a strike! Jean couldn't quite understand the officer's apparent indulgence for the workers.

"There won't be one stone left on top of another."

"What do you want to do? In the time needed to bring up a pump and some water, it will all be over. The main thing is the life of those swine in the cellar."

The troops were trying to disperse the crowd. It was quite obvious that the soldiers' sympathies were with it. The men of the line watched the brutalities of the gendarmes with indignation. To tell the truth the outburst would no longer save the factory. What was burning would have to burn, and meanwhile the crowd was drawing back on itself, it refound its sorrow, its wounded, its corpses. There were cries of anguish and horror. The hatred had subsided.

A roof collapsed with a sound of crashing beams.

Jean looked for Catherine. Where had she gone?

All the remaining population of Cluses had come running up. The approaching streets were packed. The gendarmes yelled and shoved people. The comings and goings of the troops opened wedges which were quickly closed. Where in the world had Catherine disappeared to?

He found her by a dead man.

The strike had been going on for more than two months. It was a political strike. Before the municipal election the factory owner had forbidden his workers to run a workers' ticket. One of the candidates, when threatened with dismissal, had backed out. In the evening, at a meeting, he gave his reasons. He was on in years and had a wife and children. But the others had stood their ground. And after the elections, the winning ticket included one of the owner's sons, the owner dismissed the refractory workers, there were seven of them.

Thus began the strike, the strikers demanded the reinstatement of dismissed workers and thereby not the recognition of political rights which the workers already possessed, but the elementary respect of these rights. On May tenth the strike was extended to all the factories at Cluses.

The owner, a florid man, dictatorial and given to fits of rage, a regular tyrant even with his family, refused to give in or even to compromise. He held out for the strikers to return to work for him completely beaten. He asked for soldiers and obtained them. He judged them inadequate. He put in a request. Reenforcements were sent. Two hundred men of the line and a squadron of dragoons.

Nevertheless the officers were unable to prevent the parades in Cluses, the demonstrations and meetings. From Bonneville and from Scionquier other watch factory workers came to join those of Cluses. A case of solidarity had been built up. These workers, who are forever complaining of their wages, now find ways of economizing in order to support a hundred of their number in idleness for months on end! All this was the work of the trade union.

The owner felt perfectly secure. First, even with his factory closed he had means to live on, money invested. But even so business was endangered, for he had enough stock on hand to keep going till October. He suspected the

hand of his competitors behind the resistance of the workers. That worried him. He turned to the police, in a confidential manner. Individuals were sent to him who planted themselves discreetly in the village and in the neighborhood, who took part in the meetings and struck up acquaintanceships among the strikers. To tell the truth they didn't find out much, except for the black list that they drew up.

The radical deputy, a former cabinet minister, had intervened. He made an extremely polite call on the owner; he talked to the strikers. He found the whole business most distressing, wasn't there some way of making a compromise? When he was met with mockery he beat a retreat. He explained to the workers that there was nothing he could do. A man is master in his own house, and if the owner preferred to close shop, what would it mean for them? Unemployment, hunger, misery. He urged them to be calm, to go back to work. Of course if they still weren't willing to. . . . The strike continued, led by the union. They wouldn't give in. To tell the truth it began to be rather hard for the men, despite the time of year, the sympathy of the neighboring villages, the bit of work they could do in the fields, even though behind many of the strikers were small peasants, relations of theirs, who brought them vegetables.

The owner had a tenant who was a retired head of railway construction on a main division of the P.L.M. He had rented lodgings for himself and his wife. This man hated the workers. His wife, who retained a worldly veneer from the provincial salons where she was received, would sigh as she peered through the blinds at the protest demonstrations. In the evening, the eldest son, the one who was municipal councillor, his father, and the tenant played whist at the owner's house. Once her small daughter of twelve was in bed, the mother would gossip with the tenant's wife. An atmosphere like the last days of Versailles pervaded these gatherings. Bloody recitals, memories of the terror, of the Commune were the main topics of conversations, even though up to then there had been no violence in Cluses. Fear increased.

The four grown sons of the owner were ready enough to make terms with the workers. They didn't in the least like this suspension of business. They could not be content with their father's income and he had cut their pocket money. And then there was the future to be thought of, the inheritance, to be divided by five, what with the brat and their mother in the bargain, for she didn't have those cardiac attacks to which her husband was subject. The passing days which apparently brought no nearer the end of the growing conflict added to the nervousness of the four young men, cooped up with their dictatorial father in an atmosphere of civil war. At night mysterious characters would come in through the back door to report, they would tell of insignificant incidents.

The soldiers camped outside, inactive.

The officers were explicit: the workers could not be compelled to work. For their intervention some action which violated the law was required.

They barely missed having such an incident when one day, May 18, the crowd had demonstrated before the house, and some stones were thrown, breaking a few window panes. But one of those idiots who had been sent over from Annecy had let himself be seen throwing the stones. So they refused to hold the strikers responsible.

And the brutalities of the gendarmes disgusted the regular officers.

It was really a bit too much. An exchange of letters with the Prefect led to nothing. The resumed parleys got nowhere because the strikers had the unheard-of audacity to refuse to pay for the broken panes. It was not only the

money which the owner was interested in, he wanted them thus to acknowledle responsibility for the violence. They were sufficiently smart to see through the trick.

Just the same, was this going to keep up for a lifetime? The evenings at the owner's house grew gloomier and gloomier. Whist was given up as it made Eugenie nervous. Relations with the other industrialists of Cluses were rather strained. Grudges, competition. And besides it seemed rather outrageous to them that that old fool, for a private matter of his own should involve all of them in an endless strike. One of them even proposed to pay for the broken panes, but the other refused, he wanted the workers to be the ones to pay, out of their solidarity funds. All the same the other owners would not have objected to the government stepping in, a display of force, peaceful, of course, but to show the workers what could be done. Scare them a bit.

To tell the truth this little strike movement remained local, fairly calm. It showed no tendency to spread, nothing threatening. Why should the authorities put themselves in bad? The obstinate owner was a man of the right, his wife was continually calling on the priest. The dragoons and one of the infantry detachments were withdrawn. Some maneuvres of the 14th Army Corps provided the pretext. Those soldiers who remained on after July 10, a hundred regulars, by this time knew everyone in the population, even had their officers been more conscientious, one couldn't expect much from these idlers who could be seen at dusk carousing with the town girls.

Anxiety increased in the owner's family. The sons had arguments with their father. They no longer felt safe when they went on the street, and they couldn't stay cooped up forever! One of them, the youngest, was on intimate terms with a peasant girl, on the way to Marignier. An ill-fated incident occurred. "You're big enough to defend yourselves!" shouted the exasperated father. "But what if the strikers have knives?" "Arm yourselves, and leave me in peace!"

This idea made headway in the course of three long days. Then it was the father himself who gave the sons an address at Saint Etienne to which the municipal councillor wrote, ordering four hunting rifles. There must have been some mix-up inside the parental head for this factory did not make guns. But they nevertheless answered with a very polite letter enclosing address and catalogue of a house which would surely be able to serve the Gentlemen.

The Gentlemen spent a whole evening discussing the model of weapon which they should order. Whist was called off and the mayor of Cluses who had come to pay a call that evening was asked for his advice. He was a great hunter. He pointed out a model which was just the thing for big game. In Savoy they hunt the wild boar.

The sub-prefecture of Bonneville did nothing. The limit of endurance had clearly been reached. Monsieur le Cure, who complained of the growing disaffection of his parisioners said that the government was in collusion with the trade union. The black shadow of little Father Combes in the conversation added fuel to the feeling of panic. Next time the rioters would no longer confine themselves to stone throwing. "And now that the armed forces have been reduced our very lives are in danger."

On July 13, the mother of the strike leader met His Honor the Mayor near the watch-making school. It was very hot. His Honor stopped to get his breath. It was noon, and besides, the good woman had often done the washing at his house, when his cousins from Lyons came on their vacation.

"Well, mother, is that good-for-nothing son of yours still as pig-headed

as ever?" She answered without answering: one couldn't betray the others, and did His Honor know how hard it was for the poor people? Nevertheless, in his, the mayor's opinion, it was the women who would have to make the strike end. Especially the mothers. For nowadays the younger ones are all hairbrained, they think of nothing but their personal appearance.

The mother gave her interlocutor the look of someone who doesn't quite understand and then said: "But aren't those people willing to take back their workers? They'll have to." Whereupon the other burst out laughing, then suddenly becoming very serious he told her that those gentlemen couldn't stand it any longer, that they had bought guns "and that if they're provoked, watch out! I'm telling you this, pass it on to your son!"

The evening of the sixteenth, at whist, the story of Madame de Lamballe, with her head on the end of a pike, gave everyone nightmares.

The seventeenth, at nine o'clock in the evening, there was again a gathering of the strikers, a meeting, a procession. And the gendarmes, since there was some singing, again rushed the crowd, striking out, riding down women with their horses. The owners followed the scene from behind the windows. An argument occurred between the mayor, who said that in the end they would have to resort to the use of force, and a captain of the line, still indignant over what he had seen. "I can't understand," this officer was saying. "Is that what the gendarmes are paid for?"

Clearly the effect of these brutalities was to consolidate the bloc of strikers more firmly. It was either too much or not enough. It had to end . . .

When on July 18 a procession formed, and when it became evident that it was marching towards the factory, as it had turned left at the town hall on the road to Siconzier, the mother, in the dining room, clasped her small daughter tragically, and began to weep. The tenants were there: the wife dragged the mother and her child into a room and made them drink orange blossom water. The husband and his five hosts held a council of war behind the hastily barricaded shutters. It was necessary to act quickly. The noise of the crowd was audible, their singing.

At this point the four sons got out their guns, and the tenant followed them into the little lodge overlooking the road.

The huge corpse which Catherine knelt by was that of a mere child, a child of her own age, perhaps a year older, nineteen. A small head, its hair almost shaven off topped the great prostrate body. A straw hat, like those the fishermen wear, and which cost a few sous had come off in his fall. The enormous broad shoulders seemed plunged in sleep surrendering all their strength. The bare arms, with the sleeves rolled up above the elbows were contracted in a belated gesture of defense, bent, with the palms towards the murderers, and the upturned face completed the gesture with an expression of haggard protest against death, the mouth and eyes were open.

Two bullets had hit him, one in the chest, drenching his shirt in blood, and one in the neck making a horrible gaping wound.

Catherine could not take her eyes from this wound. The only dead whom she had even seen had been old people in the funeral chapels fixed up by family piety in the room of middle class apartments. Here, in the sunlight, the suffering painted for eternity on that young face, with its baby skin, the fearful contrast of strength and death gave her the shivers and curdled her blood. There was a tremendous roaring in her head, which drowned out the surrounding clamor, the comings and goings around her.

All her recollections of the past days were steeped in the spilt blood. The

whole revelation of love, the carefree happiness of the summer, Jean. A man had just been killed. The freckles near the nostrils were the most distressing touch of all. Yet she had never seen this boy in any other state but that of death. It wasn't Jean. But it was worse than Jean, a bit more than Jean. She heard herself answering Jean: *They are right!* Something was borne within her, something which overshadowed her newly attained womanhood and presaged the mother: she gazed on that forehead in the dust, with an infinite desire to wash it tenderly, like that of a delirious child in a fever.

At this point the real mother arrived.

Had some one called her or was it the noise of the shooting which had brought her from her house? She wasn't yet forty, this thin woman, her skin was tanned and wrinkled, sapless, shrunken so that her deep black eyes seemed imbedded in her skull. Six pregnancies and hard work had emaciated her. Black skirted, bare-headed, already knowing the drama, she pushed aside all assistance, with powerful strides went straight to where her little one lay dead.

The onlookers watched to see the woman transformed into an outcry, and she arrived before the body and she regarded it at length and the outcry stuck in her throat.

She knelt and placed her fingers on the face of her sleeping son. Suddenly she withdrew them in horror, having felt the sticky wetness of blood. She leaned on Catherine quite as a matter of course accepting her presence without question.

The doctor had already looked at the dead man, shaken his head and rushed off to those most in need of attention. There were around fifty wounded and several dead. Two men sidled over to the mother and suggested they move the body. She recognized them as friends of her child. One of them was Baptiste. She lifted a countenance where a single tear trickled as in a desert. All the hardships of life were written in the wrinkles of her face. She thanked them with her eyes. They carried the corpse, one by the feet, the other under the shoulders. The arms remained contracted in fear. In getting up, the mother picked up the straw hat. Catherine also arose and together with her she reached the wretched lodgings where the body was deposited. The men left, leaving the body on a bed. Catherine hesitated, the mother detained her. She had a hunted look, perhaps she feared being left alone.

A poor village dwelling, with mud walls and more room for the animals than the human beings. Where were the other children? For some reason or other the mother was alone. Dead, or working elsewhere, perhaps? The husband, an Italian mason, settled in Cluses, had fallen from a scaffold five years earlier. Killed on the spot. She, daughter of peasants, had never ceased cultivating a bit of sour, unproductive earth from which she dug those reddish watery Savoy potatoes, which turn the stranger's stomach.

The bare room, with the bed, which was the only thing of any value, a chest for the earthern ware, the wardrobe, and in a corner a small bench where of an evening the son continued his trade of watchmaker right up to this strike. On the wall hung an image of the Virgin of Salette.

It was then that the mother started talking.

She told Catherine of her family when she was a child in the mountains. Twelve brothers and sisters who slept in a room where in winter the sheep were taken in. Her father was a shepherd, her mother tilled the soil like herself. She was the youngest. The only one left of her family was a sister whom she hadn't seen in ten years, who lived above Servoz. The others were

all dead. Accidents, consumption. She had worked in her life! Cooking and sewing for a man and six urchins, keeping them looking proper. Weeding the fields, plowing, sowing, digging potatoes. Her hands always had work, whatever the season. Joseph was growing up, a fine boy. When he was admitted to the watchmaking school she had hoped that someday she would have no other duties but sewing, and the wash perhaps. He was engaged to a girl from Bonneville, who also worked at watchmaking. She knew nothing of what had happened, she had gone to Annency and wouldn't be back before tomorrow. She had gone to see about some papers in connection with their marriage.

She poured forth her recital, without crying, without outbursts, as though the narrative enabled her to spare her tears. Hard mountaineer even to herself, her hands crumpled the hem of her black apron a little.

There was a sudden knock on the door. The two women looked at each other. Both were afraid lest by chance it be the fiancee. Catherine went away from the bed and opened the door. It was Jean. The neighbors had told him where to find Catherine, he had come to fetch her . . . he didn't dare tell her in order to get some food, and removed his hat, seeing the dead man for the first time. "I'll come later," said Catherine sweetly, and she unceremoniously thrust him out of the door.

By now the mother was weeping silently and copiously, as though this interlude had at length allowed the tears to find their course. Her face was like the dry oft-plowed field which she had cultivated all her life. The water ran over it without sinking in, appeasing nothing.

She asked Catherine to help her, and together, the two of them undertook the task of fixing the dead. No neighbor volunteered. They were all still at the scene of the shooting, around the factory in flames. The eyes stubbornly refused to be shut.

Jean came to get her. She went out a minute with him to ask if he had taken a room at the hotel. Two rooms, he had taken two rooms because one couldn't avoid seeing the lieutenant who was someone one would be sure to run into again sooner or later in life. Catherine sent him off, and returned to resume the vigil with the mother.

This strange duty she was performing gave her, first and foremost, she declared to herself, the opportunity to be away from Jean, a chance to reflect, to place between life as it still was that morning and life as it now unfolded itself, the barrier of this death, whose presence she felt.

Spectres haunted her. Brigitte, Josse . . . Paris . . . the evenings at the catholic circle . . . Regis. Those were the real nightmares, and not this, despite the horror. Life. What will become of her ten years hence? Between the dead young worker and the woman old before her time she calculated her future. Instinctively she contrasted the apartment on the rue Blaise-Desgoffe which she and her mother regarded as a sort of make-shift, a come-down, with this dwelling in Cluses where little tearful sobs reverberated. She could picture nothing of her future life, nothing. Another apartment, perhaps? Jean was by now completely obliterated from this perspective. Conversations with men who were more or less intelligent, concerts. Let's see, ten years will bring us to July, 1914 . . . what will have happened in the meantime? What upheavals. A little more, a little less money, depending on whether M. Simonidze down there in Baku had a mistress who is a bit more or a bit less exacting, depending on whether the oil wells are generous or dry . . .

And the people hereabouts will have ended their strike ever so long ago by then. They will still make watches for employers, perhaps with a new

stock of tools and new social legislation which won't accomplish anything. In ten years will they be killing them as they did today?

Again there was a knock at the door, and again Catherine opened it. She found herself face to face with a priest, decked out in his trappings and flanked by a sneaky-looking brat clad in a surplice and ringing a small bell. She turned towards the room, her throat dry, disgusted by the sight, far more ready to flee in the face of religion than in the face of death. "The priest!" she said.

Then the sobs ceased coursing down the lean shoulders of the mother. Catherine saw her stand up, turn towards the image of the Virgin of Salette and then slowly around towards the door. The priest was already on his way in and the choir boy was standing on tip-toe to get a glimpse of the dead man's face. A few words of Latin escaped in the stillness of the room, as a luxury due to the departed.

Suddenly the mother seized a twig-broom, which was leaning against the wall, and black in the face, her mouth open in fury, dry-eyed, she brandished it in the direction of the priest, who held in his hands a patton full of consecrated hosts, and with her other hand pointing to the door she shouted: "Go back to the murderers! Clear out scum! Or I'll send your wafers sky-high."

Surely the priest was a man of a built capable of fighting with a woman, but before the dead common decency forbade it. And if he had no fear on his own account it was otherwise with the sacred objects which he carried. Could he allow this shrew, whose brain had been utterly twisted by recent events, to profane the divine majesty incarnate in the precious bread? So he beat a retreat along with his urchin who in his fright was ringing his bell frantically, not without first trying to make an ally of this young miss, who had an air of good society about her, by mumbling something about the sacraments of the church, last ministrations to the dying, etc., and the nature of his calling. The door slammed behind his back.

The two women found themselves facing each other. The mother thought some explanation was necessary.

"You see, this old hypocrite comes here, miss, when my little one is dead . . . You know he was all the time at the house of those accursed people. I am sure it was he who advised them to fire on the workers, he was forever saying that heaven would punish Cluses for its impiety. Those at the factory were hand and glove with him! And Joseph didn't believe in religion, he never went to church. Except sometimes on the fifteenth of August to sing . . ." She made the sign of the cross. "I, do have some faith. But all the same, the priest and the owners, they're one and the same, and when one of us dies, we who break our backs for them our whole life, they can't leave us in peace. Holy Virgin! Anyway they have no power over the dead!"

Thereupon she returned towards the bed, and cried. She caressed the sleeping child. It was uncomfortably hot. The ill ventilated dwelling had been built for the wintertime. People began to arrive, gliding through the door, neighbors, friends, strangers, workers. The mother did not chase them out. She simply seemed not to see them. They came close, shaking their heads. Some of them went out. Others remained, awkwardly. Catherine felt herself the object of curiosity. A fearful sickening odor began to rise from the bed.

A man came in. It was one of the leaders of the trade union. They made way for him. He took the mother's hands and said simply: "Nothing remains of the factory, their house has not been touched. Four of the scoundrels are in prison. No one knows what's become of the others."

The mother regarded him with incredible intensity. He then did the appropriate thing, he leaned over and embraced her like a son.

Catherine glided out, saying in an undertone, for her own benefit: "I'll come back . . ."

Where would she go at random in the night. She didn't know this town, where, save in those places where death walked, all had at last gone to bed, through habit stronger than any upheaval. She walked among the houses, without fear of getting lost, she wasn't looking for the unknown hotel where Jean was doubtlessly waiting.

She headed towards the country, towards solitude, hoping to recapture the calm which would never be the same former carefreeness.

In this fashion she reached a railway track which she followed. The glow of lights, the station, here there were still some people awake. Some travelers were chatting with some soldiers. A bayonet gleamed in the ray of a searchlight. A train was due. Some freight cars were parked on a siding near a red shed. Here stood another group of soldiers. "Hi there, miss, you can't go through here!"

The soldier recognized Catherine, having seen her in front of the factory at the time of the shooting. He began talking to her. Yes, the proprietors are over there, in a lime car. The mother and daughter fled just as they were, in dressing gowns. The madam is in slippers, hatless. And the father? Look.

A man of fifty-odd, haggard and bare-headed, came towards the soldiers. A forceful man, but broken by terror. In the lamplight the apoplectic crimson patches under his eyes seemed like cracks in pottery. The soldiers didn't talk to him. They peered into the distance to see if the train for Annemasse was coming. They were getting sleepy.

The man darted hunted glances around him. He wasn't reassured by the bayonets. He stared at Catherine in terror. He seated himself on the edge of the right of way, and the words issued from his throat to the accompaniment of a crackling of his collar: "I can't stand any more. I'm going to die here."

One of the soldiers glanced around saying: "Better to croak that way than in another way," and his hand made the gesture of a guillotine. The man was taken back to his car. The sobs of his wife were audible.

Catherine could stand the craven sight no longer. A whistle in the distance announced the train which drew near, belching smoke. She crossed the tracks going towards the country.

Strange, strange night. It was impossible to make head or tail of anything in this lovely moonless countryside where the fir trees made the gestures of sorcérers, in the breeze which still held the heat of the day. And the ideas in Catherine's head were like the Alpine boughs, dark, clamourous and tangled.

The apartment on the rue Plaise-Desgoffe, Jean, love, solitude. What was Catherine afraid of, she who just now had laughed contemptuously at the conduct of that old coward. Because she was afraid when she thought of the future, which for her this evening inescapably bore the bloody stain of endless slaughter. It wasn't disgust alone which made her run off just now. But those young soldiers, she couldn't look at them without horror, she saw them already dead, their mouths open for eternity in mortal agony, their eyes glazed . . . it seemed to her she never again could look at a *living* man.

She was dead-tired. She sat down in a field where there were some rocks, with the strange feeling of compulsion which only those experience who are about to be overwhelmed by sleep, who feel guilty over going to sleep, who

struggle and then suddenly succumb beneath the weight of a night which rises like a tide within them.

Catherine slept on the ground. The apartment on the rue Plaise-Desgoffe, Jean . . .

. . . How long had she been sleeping when the persistent sound of voices wrenched her from her dreams? Perhaps a short instant, perhaps a century. A couple, a strong good-looking boy and a tall dark girl of around eighteen who was troubled. She had a whole world of love in her eyes. She wore an apron and a round black straw hat. Obviously a rich peasant girl. Her hands ran over the length of her lover. She didn't say a word, she was satisfying herself of his living presence. He was explaining.

"Yes, when they took us out of the cellar, we had to be quick because of the crowd, which would have torn us limb from limb. I rightaway saw how to get away. In the darkness of the building they hadn't even counted their prisoners. Four or five, it was all the same to them. I hid in the shadow of the passage, and when all had passed, I made off."

"If the workers had recognized you!" murmured the feminine voice from the shadows.

So it was one of the murderers, who had escaped. Catherine, drowsing, only partly awake, heard the sound of sighs and kisses. The girl lying in the arms of her lover was talking now, wild with fright.

"But why did you fire?"

Catherine reviewed the scene.

". . . and they threw stones. I got one on the cheek."

Lies! Lies! But the woman had placed her finger on the stoned cheek. "Oh, how brave you are, Marcel, how brave!"

It was as though Marcel were answering a question of Catherine's:

"What shall I do now? I wanted to see you, talk to you, my love." This killer said *my love* with incredible tenderness. "And supposing they catch me, shall I hide myself? Do you think one could stay in hiding for long? The two of us together, for instance. We would go to bed and not think about it any more."

"Dearest!"

"My three brothers, and the old fool in jail. You understand, there's something impossible about this flight. It's against them, against my own kin . . ."

"You aren't going to go and give yourself up?"

"Not tonight. But tomorrow? The day after? Anyway, why should I hide myself? What have I done that's wrong?"

Catherine, on the hard ground, had a feeling of dizziness: in fact what has Jean done that was wrong? It's because of him all that suffering, and he has taken two rooms, the idiot.

The lovers had passed on.

Because one never knows, the captain, if one ran into him later in life . . .

Catherine returned to the town, to the hotel, to the room reserved, which was shown to her by a kind of a little monster.

Morning found her on waking, ashamed of having forgotten that vision of death which she thought never again would leave her, of that huge limp young body, with blood on the shirt, blood which no longer flowed.

When she went down a servant told her that monsieur was awaiting madame in the cafe. And she went there, as though it were the most natural thing in the world.

She immediately saw that Jean had not slept. There was a whole crowd of people at his table, talking.

"Allow me, Catherine, to introduce to you the lieutenant. . . . My fiancee, Mademoiselle Simonidze."

Catherine looked Jean in the eyes. He paled. He wanted her with all his strength. He felt like a terrible slap in the face, that irreparable and disdainful *no* which he read in her eyes. There was the correspondent of a socialist paper present. All that there was of the reddest. And the officer of the 30th of the line, whom Catherine had barely noticed the day before. And personages of Cluses. The owner of one of the other watch factories, a man who was very advanced for his world, a rather generous spirit, to all appearances.

Catherine asked him what had happened with regard to the strike.

"Why it's finished!" he exclaimed. 'The only dispute was between those gentlemen and their workers. No more proprietors, no more factory! It's a case of the fight ending for lack of combatants. The fifty-odd workers who worked in their factory won't be idle any longer, I believe. I could take on the personnel of my colleague whose customers were entirely merchants of Besnacon whom he supplied with watch movements. I can make a contract with the merchants and as soon as the contract has been signed, the work will be resumed. There's no reason for my not serving these merchants, that's the most desirable solution!"

Universal approbation greeted this brief disquisition. Catherine wanted a drink. "What will you have?" They were all drinking absinthe. It was a bit fussy, with all that messing about with the spoon and the lump of sugar. Well, why not? "Waiter, an absinthe!" She wouldn't mind being a little drunk.

She sensed the approbation given to this industrialist, so pleased with himself. Jean's approbation. She might have argued. But what was the good of it? So long as he didn't feel instinctively, like her, the frightfulness, the intolerability of the story. The absinthe and the talk of the company permeated her pleasantly. One of the murderers, the youngest, had escaped, no one quite knew how. The parents had fled to Geneva or to Annency, they weren't quite such which. The tenant would probably be released, despite the testimony of the trade union secretary, to the effect that he had seen him reload the guns.

"Now I protest against this point. I can't be suspected of tender feelings for these people, but after all, we should be fair . . ."

The absinthe colored everything. Jean moved a leg mechanically, it had gone to sleep. The prosecutor from Bonneville, and an inquiring magistrate had arrived in Cluses. That very morning there had been a small fire in the premises where the soldiers were quartered. Was it deliberate? The woman who owned the barracks said that it was caused by carelessness, but could one believe her? At length three indictments were issued: one against the killers, two against parties unknown, for this little fire and for the firing and pillaging of the factory.

How were they going to track down the workers?

A kind of dizzy spell seized Catherine, the noonday heat was surging in from the street. All these men around her, their cheeks flushed by the aperitif. She no longer distinguished Jean from the others . . . of his own feather.

At present the whole life of Cluses was passing through the stages of intoxication. The panic of the inhabitants for the last two months had been eased, the red spectre. The justice of peace had shipped his money to Switzerland. He wasn't the only one, either. One had to admit that the previous day's events were horrible. But just as with all things which are unavoidable.

so it was necessary to see the good side, one had to admit that those shots cleared a very charged atmosphere. With those responsible in jail, the excitement, like the strike, had no further reason for existing. Normal life was returning to Cluses. The soldiers would remain a bit undoubtedly, for the sake of appearances... People made fun of the mayor who had also left Cluses in the evening of the previous day. Disappeared!

Catherine no longer listened. And then there was dinner. The lieutenant remained with Jean and her for dinner. It was Jean who insisted on it. He had taken two rooms in the hotel...

When they were alone towards evening, when they had learned the details of the autopsy, the inquiry suspended for the funeral rites on the morrow, Catherine, rather weary, tried nevertheless to speak of what had been haunting her since the aperitif. This story of the customers taken over by a competitor... Well? Jean didn't see the point. Well, wasn't it rather awful? Awful? I don't follow you.

So then he accepted it all, that the strike, the struggle, the heroism, and finally, the dead, all this served to centralize the customers, that it worked out to the profit of one proprietor...

Jean found Catherine a bit too excited. And then, it was necessary that those people should resume work, that they eat. Life had to go on. What course did they think things could take? No, decidedly he didn't see it.

Catherine, only too evidently, more than anything else suffered from feeling herself absolutely incapable of objectivising her thoughts and sentiments. She couldn't find the words.

Jean was drawn away from her by just this. He belonged entirely to another world, an enemy.

When he asked if she wanted to stay over for the funerals, she refused. That evening they took the train for Paris.

Translated from the French by Edmund Stevens

Gustav Regler

Cross Fire

A German Short Story of the Saar Basin

Two days later as Werner was sitting with his mother, someone knocked at the window. He had his feet in a wash-basin and was brushing his toes. "Go see who's there," he called to the old woman. She came back with a Neunkirchen Communist and a stranger. "Rot Front," said the man from Neunkirchen. "Rot Front," said the man with him. "Can this fellow sleep here?" asked the Neunkirchener. Werner looked at the stranger. "He comes from the Reich," explained the other. "He's all right."

Werner reached for a towel and looked at his mother.

They understood each other at once. Didn't the damp wall-paper grow more dismal than ever the moment one was asked if one could take in a guest? Didn't one smell more keenly the smell of onion soup, always without meat? Didn't the mother's glance, as if led by a hard hand, turn to the egg-cup in the kitchen cupboard where the weekly forty francs had again shrunk to a few centimes?

I won't say no, said Werner's glance.

Don't be afraid, his mother's eyes assured him. I'll take care of your comrade.

Werner mumbled contentedly. "We'll manage somehow," he thought. "Well then, Rot Front!"

"Rot Front, Fritz." The latch clicked. The three faced each other, speechless. The mother examined the clothes of the unknown guest. Werner had put one bare foot on the chair and was fingering his toes. He could feel his heart thumping. Now he would learn the truth. Here was someone from over there, who had been through it all, who knew everything and could tell everything. The painfully stemmed flood of his hopes and his fears burst forth as through a breaking dam. "Sit down," he said. The strange comrade took the chair near him, sat down, and put his hat on the floor. Suddenly he groaned; it seemed to hurt him terribly to bend to the side. Werner turned round, frightened. The comrade turned dead-white. His eyes were closed and he was breathing rapidly.

"Bring him a glass of milk," Werner ordered his mother. But she had already turned on the faucet, filled the cup with water, and offered it to the suffering man. He greedily gulped the water and opened his eyes again.

Werner quite forgot that he had planned to cross-examine the guest. Something different had come into the room. Out of the night in which the city slept, over the misty frontier, through the forests, a lashed and bruised Germany had stolen into a still safe area. Comrades came, witnesses of persecution, messengers from the land of horror. Truth knocked at the door, and Truth groaned.

Werner put on his socks. "Have you anything left to eat, mother?" he asked. Without answering the mother went to the stove and fetched a pot from the oven. The stranger tried to smile: "It'll pass over," he said apologetically. "I'd like to wash myself a bit."

Werner lifted the basin from the floor and went to empty it. They could

hear how carefully he was rinsing it. His mother lifted the kettle from the stove. "Here, you can have some warm water."

He held the basin near her and with his finger over the rim, felt the water's temperature. "Come now, take your shirt off," he said setting the basin on the chair. My old lady is used to that."

His mother was stirring something in a pot. She lifted a lid to poke the fire. The stranger had thrown off his coat. He thrust his hands behind his belt, but hesitated to take off his shirt. Werner looked at him out of the corner of his eyes and made believe he was busy at the table. They both turned their backs to him and could hear how he slipped out of his shirt, reached for the soap, and splashed in the water.

When Werner turned round to hand his mother a cup, he saw the old woman standing at the stove, her eyes opened wide with horror. He followed her gaze. It led to the stranger's back, bent over the wash-basin. The entire skin was criss-crossed with black and blue welts. But between the shoulders and the small of his back, in blackish points, a large swastika was branded. Werner felt he must turn away quickly, but instead, stared more intently at the tortured body. All his former doubts he drove off in anger. So this is what they've done with the Proletariat! This is how defenseless they've made them and mocked them to boot. Now that he saw one of their victims, he knew the enemy. The wounds cried out and woke him. This—he looked at the horrible wound—this one answers with vengeance only.

Quick as lightning all this flashed through Werner's mind as he kept staring down at the terrible mark. Then the guest lifted his wet head. He looked at the two people as if he had quite forgotten them. Water was dripping from his chin. There was still lather round his eyes. He felt the water trickling from the nape of his neck down to the wounds. It quieted the pain and then burned sharper. He wanted to reach out for his shirt to dry himself, but his hand would not obey him. Suddenly he began to speak as if he had to account for himself, as if the two here had taken him by surprise. He held his body rigid. His back burned like fire. The pain zig-zagged up and down his spine.

"Darmstadt," he said, "on the 10th of March; they came at night." They took him to the police-station cellar. They stripped him and beat him with steel rods. They wanted him to sing *Die Fahne hoch.* But he would rather lose consciousness. They poured water over him and as soon as he opened his eyes he was thrown on the table again. Pressing his forehead against the stone walls, they struck his head against them three times. He had no idea of what was happening any more. And behind him they were saying, "Now we'll shoot." Someone was standing near him, a sort of intellectual. He had bitten into the stone wall. He had gotten a facial cramp. Unable to look at him longer, he turned the other way. Just then the other began to sing. But it was an altogether different song: *Arise ye prisoners of starvation!*

The stranger stopped now and tried to sing, but the notes stuck in his throat. With a pained smile he added: "And then I sang alone, even louder than he. And then he collapsed. But they tore me away from him and stretched me across the table again. They let me lie there a while and then one of them came with a rope."

He bit his lip. The memory tortured him. He stopped short. Then regaining control of himself, he continued. He had had no idea of what they had in store for him; he had expected the steel rods. They all lit cigarettes. He could hear the sputter of the match. He could hear them inhale deeply.

And then there was a stinging pain in his shoulder so violent that he tensed. But the rope was drawn tight around the table. Then came one thrust after another. One quite near the spine bored the deepest. Then he lost consciousness again and again woke up. All this time they had been at him. "Let me do it again," one was saying, taking a deep pull on his cigarette. And he didn't stop pressing his cigarette into the flesh until it smelled burnt. And that was the end. "A beautiful swastika," he heard them say, and one of them spat out his cigarette and said "*Pfui Teufel,* it smells of Marxist flesh." Three days later there was inspection. In the office he signed a statement that he had suffered no mistreatment whatsoever and one of them took him aside and showed him a revolver: if he showed anyone his wounds or let himself be photographed, he would find himself getting additional treatment in another place within twenty-four hours.

Werner had not stirred. The whole story seemed to flow from the mouth of a person under hypnosis. All three stood in the room as if paralysis had come over them. Werner held a towel in his hand, his mother, a steaming pot, and the guest was clutching a chair with his fist and looking past them. Now he had finished. He slowly reached for his shirt, wiped his face with it, and pulled it over his head. Werner nodded to his mother to put the food on the table. He wanted to go up to the man, touch him, shake his hand. But first he must say something to him. Embarrassed, he stood there waving the towel in his hand. How should one begin?

"Comrade," he said, his correct German ringing solemn, his voice trembling. "We didn't know so accurately, and if we had, even so . . . we wouldn't have boasted. But now that we know, I can only tell you that as far as I'm concerned, this has helped me a lot. That I can guarantee you. You know what I mean. But you first take a good rest here, there are no two ways about it. And we—we begin now. We still have a little time. We still have about two years, you know. And that's why," Werner hesitated as if he wanted to express something very big and couldn't express it so quickly, "that's why I tell you: here—they won't come in! Here there'll be barricades! And here you'll be able to avenge yourself as sure as I'm a Saar proletarian."

The comrade stuck his shirt into his trousers and drew his belt tight. "Eat your food now," said the mother, pointing to the plate, "before it gets cold again."

Translated from the German by Anne Bromberger

This poem, the first comprehensive American poem on the subject, has won the Avery Hopwood prize, a yearly literary award at the University of Michigan. The poet has won this award for the third successive year—the two previous times with a play, and an essay. Arthur Clifford, despite physical disabilities which keep him confined to a wheel chair, is an active member of the National Students League.

Arthur Clifford

Comrade Lenin

I A BALL AT THE TSAR'S HOUSE

From a landlocked ocean
Of slow rolling drifts
Frozen in motion,
A white castle lifts
Gargantuan pencils
(High rocket-shaped bars)
And dramatically stencils
Itself on the stars.

The sharp turrets, checkered
By blazing candles,
Trace the unlovely record
Of blue-blooded vandals:
A record of lies,
Theft, and butchery,
Scrawled on the skies
Indelibly.

Here—far from the stench
That blows off the poor,
From the covered parkbench
And the uncovered whore—
Where laughter and luscious
Pulchritude tarry,
The Tsar of the Russias
Is making merry.

Millionrubles with pride
Takes his place at the feast:
Majesty on one side,
On the other, a priest.
The lesser gods flatter
Them, herald the three
A truer, and fatter,
Trinity.

"Oh, my dear!" to a princess
Gushes Dame Millionrubles.
The royal wench winces.
But she swallows her scruples
When the Tsar of the Russias
Drops a word in her ear;
Then she also gushes
A coy, "Oh—my dear!"

Having glutted their paunches
As much as they dare,
The guests lift their haunches,
Embrace, and prepare,
Like spirited steeds,
To prance to the measures
Of a dance that precedes
More lascivious pleasures.

With thigh pressed to thigh,
And belly to belly,
They stamp till the high
Turrets shiver like jelly.
Like pistons their feet,
Tripping faster and faster,
Hysterically beat
As if fleeing disaster.

Drunken feet stamp
Harder, quicker,
A deafening tramp.
The candles flicker.
Autocracy crumbles,
Smashed by the pistons:
Dark Russia mumbles.
Nobody listens.

The rafters bend,
The castle clamors,
Mad feet descend
Like riveting hammers.
Mad men, herded
In sweating squads,
Stamp with inverted
Piston rods.

Wild feet drum
Like tambourines:
Men have become
Merely machines.
Lot's wife again
A sly glance steals:
Who once were men
Are whirling wheels.

Dancing fools,
Courting destruction,
Dance on as tools
Of mass production.
Shorn of command,
They are seen to be
Pawns in the hand
Of destiny . . .

So, building anew
What the vandals broke,
While the turrets spew
Out the old in smoke,
The machine dance throbs,
Jolts the firmest rafter,
And the factory sobs
With mechanical laughter.

Beholding this vision,
Lenin knew
A deep incision
Could make it true.
It was his task
To advance the hour
Of working class
Seizure of power,

To advance the day
When bankers and kings
Should pass away.
These were the things
That Lenin saw
As meant to be
The immutable law
Of history.

II. SIBERIA

Bastilles dotted all Russia in those days,
Even as now a dot for each bastille
Inked on a map of five-sixths of the world
Would leave it scarcely grayer than a blot,
Frugal of highlight as a Rembrandt etching.

There were low squat bastilles, thick-walled and stained with
A scaffold's shadow. There were other squat
Bastilles, these with smokestacks for turrets, rocking
To the slow pulse of a red iron heart.
Cloistered bastilles as well, with slated spires,
Faced on four sides by clocks; bastilles with windows,
And rooms with walls sandwiched by black, wherein
Bewhiskered men with more bewhiskered minds
Harangued their young bewildered prisoners
In strophes of an even more bewhiskered
Scholasticism.
One of these savants,
On a particular night, gathered around him
For a nice quiet game, three of his friends:
A hangman, an economist, a jailer—
All, like himself, devoted servants to
One or another of the grim bastilles.
The talk revolved on shop. One asked the hangman,
"How do you take a life?" The hangman stretched
His hand out to the deck of cards and turned
The topmost half. "I simply cut," he said.
"What!" cried the jailer, "do you mean to tell me
That after centuries you haven't yet
Improved on that old trick? Here, look at me!"
He held the cards in one hand. With the other
Thumb and forefinger he expertly slid
A segment from the center.
"You, my friend,
Invariably take a life by chopping
Off the tail end. How much you get or what
The fragment may be worth you cannot tell;
And he, whose life you take, is even less
Able, before or after, honestly
To realize the measure of his loss.
I cut a new way. I scoop out the middle,
And fill the space between two stunted lifetimes
With dates, with numbers up to thirty-one,
With pages from a monotone calendar
Whose Sundays even are not printed red."
The jailer saw convoys of shaven heads
And fettered feet, gray lines of plodders, slow
Gray worms with iron bellies wallowing
In road mud. He saw men with sullen faces
Drinking stale sunlight sieved through iron gratings,
Telling the days like beads, thousands of days,
Letting the days slide loosely through their fingers
To mark the time (where there had ceased to be
Anything else but time) between the first
And final clankings of the bastille gates.
"I take the middle of life, the finest years,
And give back just enough for consciousness
Of what is lost. I leave the middle of life
A membrane, a stretched membrane washed and wrung

Of all color; washed in Siberian snows."
"Oh, we do that!" said the economist.
"We cut the cards your way. But then we do
A neater less expensive job. We scorn
Your hocus-pocus of gray uniforms,
Shaved heads, and fettered ankles. As for cells,
We let our prisoners construct their own
And, meanwhile, for the doubtful privilege
Pay half their wages. If they cannot pay,
The streets are free, so long as they move on
When prodded by a nightstick. You describe
Plodding convoys. We also have our convoys,
Lines of dejected walkers, waiting dumbly
Before a sign, Help Wanted, *waiting still*
After the sign is changed to No Help Wanted,
And shouts and chopping blows remind them to
Move on. Keep moving.
"Strange; your formal prison
Forbids what we enforce. But either method
Is good, I guess."
When he had finished talking,
The three turned to their host who for a while
Chose to ignore the challenge in their eyes;
Played with the cards, making first the hangman's
And then the jailer's cut. "I have no tools,
Scaffold, nightstick, or cell. And yet I boast
That without me not one of you again
Should take a human life!" The others smiled.
"You doubt it?" questioned the philosopher.
Again he cut the cards, and squinted through
The gap left by the cut. "Something is needed
To fill this gap. Calendar pages? Yes;
And pages of rewritten history,
Blueprints of heaven, lying economics,
False ethics, and meaningless poetry.
From these I brew the poison of defeat
To fill the gap and swell the itching veins
Of the unreconciled, taming rebellious souls,
And making even paper insurrections
Tragedies in their outcome. It was I
Who fathered the complaint, 'What can we do?'
I sketched a pile of ruins as the only
Possible goal of western culture. I
First coined the phrase, 'We have only our hands.'
Only their hands! when shouts would be enough
If they should shout together
"Yes, I know
That jails are strong; that constant threat of layoff
Is an efficient whip; that doles and breadlines,
Making a science out of slow starvation,
Have so advanced the technique of mass-murder
Beyond the older, crude pogroms and plagues,
That taking human lives, whole or in part,

Is just like cutting cards. But what if they
Whose lives you take so coolly should decide
To cease to let you cut the cards this way
Or that? Their chains, you know, are tied with string
Standing erect would free them. Merely clenching
Their fists would crush the handful of oppressors
Whose work we do. Siberia itself
Should be the first to push a ploughshare through
Its Dead-House courtyards. Factory-bastilles—
Bastilles no more—would open wide their windows
And let the sun's warm chemistry reduce
Machine masters to servants.

"They are strong,
So strong that if they should together cry
'Arise!' the noise would drive their enemies
Like crows before a flapping rag, and leave them
Possessors of the field without a struggle,
Possessors also of their lives again!"

The hangman, jailer, and economist
Jumped to their feet, but the philosopher
Motioned them to be seated. "Have no fear.
They will not rise. They do not know how fragile
Your shackles are; and if they should discard
Their chains by accident, well—they will wait
Passively, while you tie them on for them.
They will not shout together. They are silenced
By something inside themselves, that polluted
Their blood when they were children, and is nourished
By every book and paper that they read,
By every sermon, wages check, and handout.
Call it defeat, despair, or what you will.
A better name would be Siberia:
The true *Siberia.*

"No one escapes it.
The strongest men, the bravest thinkers, suffer
Exile to this intellectual wasteland.
Only the strongest ever get away;
Only the strongest few. The million-masses,
Who should be strong, are scarcely born when they
Receive their sentences—always the same:
'Life, at hard labor,' in Siberia,
In helpless resignation."

Here he laughed,
The others with him. Peal on peal arose
And danced the cards so fiercely that they sprawled
Over the table. The philosopher
Pulled at his beard and muttered indistinctly:
"The strongest men . . . Siberia . . . Defeat."

III. NINETEEN-FIVE

Behind the desk the Master sat,
Swathed to the eyes in slabs of fat,
Sleek and content as a well-fed cat.
A lackey entered breathlessly,
Beaded with sweat. "The men," said he,
"The men. . . ."
The Master growled. "What men?"
Speak up!"
"The men in the factory;
The workers!"
"Well, what about them, then?"
"They've struck!"
"Struck!"
"Yes; laid down their tools."
The Boss jerked up his head. "What for?"
"A living wage, they say."
"The fools!
With thousands waiting outside the door
To take their jobs? Put up a sign.
In half an hour we'll have a line,
Begging to scab."
"No, that won't do.
The unemployed are marching too."
"Marching! Who's marching? Marching where?"
"Why, here, of course," said the lackey. "There;
You can see the rabble in the street."
The Boss got slowly to his feet,
And stared down at the solid throng
That crawled hesitantly along,
That moved, slowly and voicelessly,
Up to the gates of the factory.
Ten-thousand men in silence stood:
Ten-thousand who, together, could
Crush, if they willed it, their oppressors,
And dispossess their dispossessors,
Stood mute, hoping their wretchedness
Might have effect on the pitiless
Heart of the Boss, and make him fall
In with the spirit of their demands:
"A living wage and jobs for all!"
Their hopes were empty as their hands.
The Boss, his face turned ghostly white,
Screamed in a voice made shrill with fright,
"What's this? a riot? revolution?
Eh, so the bastards want to fight!"
"Fight?" cried the lackey, in confusion.
"No man can fight who merely stands
Holding a placard in his hands."
But the Boss, already out the door,
Spreads the alarm from floor to floor.
As if pursued, he wildly runs,

Shouting, "Load up the riot guns!
'A living wage!' Bah! 'Jobs or bread!'
What they need is a dose of lead!
Give them the works!" Machine guns mow,
Like scythes, the helpless men below,
As, slanting down, the hot lead rains.
Too stunned to move, the crowd remains
Shoulder to shoulder, so closely pressed,
The dead are held up by the rest:
So closely packed down the street,
The dead still stand upon their feet.
The Boss in wonder rubs his eyes.
"Why don't they fall?" he fearfully cries.
"Give them another volley, men!"
His automatic spurts again.
This time the victory is undoubted.
The beggars flee, dismally routed
Before the fire, leaving behind
Placards and dead. The Master, blind
From rage, leads bravely the attack,
With "Shoot the cowards in the back!"
Meanwhile, through sights, his avid eye
Searches the fallen for those who try
To rise.
At last, when no one stirs,
The Boss calls off his murderers.
"We have replied to their petition.
Let's not waste any ammunition."
Pleased with himself, he rubs his hands,
Opens his cash-book, turns a page.
"Let's see, now, what were their demands?
Oh yes, ha. ha, a living *wage!"*

2

The men returned the following day
To work again at the same low pay.
"Comrades!" said one, "have we forgotten
What cause our class brothers were shot in?"
The line pushed on. "Comrades!" he cried,
"Was it for this our brothers died?"
Things went on in the same old way:
The same grim speed-up, the same vain hopes
Of making thin pay envelopes
Provide sufficient nourishment;
The same old way, yet different,
And different in a way that mattered.
Many illusions had been shattered.
Their boss, all bosses, were seen as crass
Exploiters of the working class;
Ready to go to any ends
To grab still fatter dividends;
Ready to drown the streets and flood

The sewer mains with workers' blood,
To cram more profits in bulging banks.
To this the murdered testified.

But in the workers' unforgiving
Hearts, their comrades had not died
That day, when leaden knives were cleaving
Ruthlessly through their close-packed ranks,—
But worked and marched beside the living,
Giving them counsel, keeping their
Memories sharp; saying, "Prepare!
At the decisive moment, strike!
Strike hard. Strike at the very roots
Of your wage-slavery, and spike
Its squirming body with your boots!"

Things were the same, but different.
The workers lost all confidence
In master class benevolence;
And while the Boss, thoroughly hated,
Counted increasing increment,
The workers watched, and planned, and waited.

IV. EXILE

In the first Russian revolution the proletariat taught the masses of the people to fight for liberty; in the second revolution it must lead them to victory.

Lenin wrote this in 1910, during his second period of exile to western Europe. He was forty years old.

He had been in prison and in Siberia; had passed through earlier years of exile, and returned to Russia to lead the rising workers and peasants in the wave of strikes, demonstrations, and struggles against the Tsar, that filled the months of the 1905 revolution.

The last three years had been years of reaction. The Russian jails were crowded; the Russian roads were thronged with manacled convoys, plodding eastward. Defeat and pessimism broke the fighting spirit of numbers of valiant revolutionists.

Even the Party, the Party which Lenin and his comrades had so patiently labored the build, was threatened with disintegration. And Lenin knew that the Party was like a cold chisel in the hands of the workers, to be kept clean and sharp until they were ready to cut away their chains. It must be kept sharp, protected against the rust of Liberalism and the fire of Adventurism; against the rust of easy compromise and the fire of "leftist" isolation from the masses.

This was Lenin's task.

Through all these years of crisis Lenin never faltered. He knew that 1905 would come again; but a newer, a victorious 1905! He believed in the revolutionary courage of the workers. He had implicit confidence in the revolutionary instincts of the workers. He fought, sometimes almost alone, to preserve the Party—*their* Party—so that it should be ready for them, to give them leadership when they should rise again.

V. WAR

While Andrew J. P. Moneybags
Sat one day drinking tea,
His stocks and bonds began to fall,
And a grim vow vowed he
That foreign competition
Should pay most cruelly.

He called on Randolph Yellowpress
And told him of his plight,
And begged for his assistance. Randolph
Promptly said, "All right,
I'll fix you up a war. Just tell me
Who you want to fight."

A duke was in the Balkans.
By an odd coincidence
He caught acute lead poisoning
And died. In consequence,
The states of half the world declared
A war of self-defence.

Flags were up-hoisted, trumpets blared,
And drums began to rattle.
Moneybags and Yellowpress
Issued a call to battle,
Addressed to "all good patriots,"
To round them up like cattle:

"You stevedores and miners,
Children of fire and song,
Sailors and sewer-diggers,
You farmers, come along!
We want your fists and thick red blood
In the army of the strong.

"Lay down your working tools;
Take a musket in your hand;
Get out and limber up your legs
Behind the army band.
It's only right that you should fight
For home and native land.

"It's only fair that you should share
Our heavy burden. Sling
A knapsack over your back and march,
For it's a glorious thing
To die for God and country,
For capitalist and king.

"The boss who smashed your strikes
Is not your enemy.

Just see! he slaps you on the back,
And with large philanthropy,
Swears that he'll give your wife and child
Your job in the factory.

"Forget your wasted life.
Forget the stinking slum.
Replace that sullen look
With a cheery smile and come!
Put on a brand new uniform,
And follow the beating drum.

"Follow the rolling drum!
Keep time with its martial beat.
We'll stand and cheer as you go by,
Marching down the street,
And beautiful chorus girls will fling
Roses under your feet."

So Johnny went marching off to war,
In a rather dazed condition.
Andy and Randy did their bit
By selling ammunition
For Johnny to use in beating down
Foreign competition.

But Johnny in the trenches
Saw not a single rose.
No rolling drum but shrapnel hum
Kept him on his toes,
And heads popped off about him like
Paraded dominoes.

And Johnny's bullets too had severed
Many heads when he
Began at first to notice
That all the enemy
He killed were workers like himself.
He frowned perplexedly.

Why should he slaughter workers?
He knew that workers could
Not really want to kill each other.
Johnny understood
That the toilers of the world belong
To one great brotherhood.

He knew that workers had no cause
To go to war. Their place
Was side by side in solid ranks,
Showing a single face,
No matter what their language,
Their color, creed, or race.

And then, for the first time since he'd
Enlisted in the war,
Johnny began to ask himself
What he was fighting for.
Finding no answer, he determined
He would fight no more.

And other Johnnies on both sides
Came to the same conclusion,
Ceased firing, held up handkerchiefs,
And with sudden resolution,
Deserted their trenches and fraternized
In wondering confusion.

When Andrew J. P. Moneybags
And Randolph Yellowpress
Learned what had happened at the front
They voiced their loud distress,
And rapidly dispatched themselves
To straighten out the mess.

They found the trenches empty,
And out on No Man's land
The soldiers of both armies
Were clasping hand to hand
In comradely affection. This
Was more than they could stand.

Then loudly Randy shouted
And wildly Andy raved
Of country, flag, and deity.
The better might have saved
Their breath. Their former wage-slaves
No longer were enslaved.

"You traitors!" Andy bellowed.
"You're yellow!" Randy hissed.
"Oh, why am I not young enough,"
Moaned Randy, "to enlist?
I'd show these cowards how to fight!"
He shook a pink nailed fist.

"We'll get you!" Andy threatened.
"We'll have you shot for treason!
We'll teach you what it means to strike
Right at our busy season!"
Both fellows spluttered, foamed, and danced
As if they'd lost their reason.

'Twas at this juncture Johnny found
His rifle really handy.
He lifted it with careless ease
And neatly rubbed out Andy.

A second bullet, scarcely aimed,
Silenced broad-bellied Randy.

IV. REVOLUTION

In the midst of vassal
Acres of wheat,
The landlord's castle
Plants arrogant feet.
The landlord rattles
His pockets, and keeps
An eye on his chattels
Even while he sleeps.

From forest to bog;
He owns the whole plain,
And squats like a dog
On a manger of grain,
While the peasants toil
From dawn to dusk
To squeeze from the soil
An occasional husk.

But the landlord's pleasant
Times are no more.
A red-bearded peasant
Hammers the door;
Hammers and hammers,
Till the castle rocks,
And his lordship stammers,
At last: "Who knocks?"

"Old fellow, the peasants
Are thoroughly tired
Of enduring your presence.
Your lease has expired.
This very night
You've got to go."
"Who gives you the right
To address me so?"

"We're the masters now.
You must either get
Out—or bow
To the soviet!
This castle, this land
Must be promptly vacated.
Wake up, old man!
You're liquidated!"

2

Swiftly the Revolution runs
Its glorious course. The Moscow guns
Reply to those of Petrograd,
Saluting the victory. The glad
Workers assemble in the streets
To sweep the mighty from their seats,
To storm the factories and throng
The jails, shouting their battle-song,
Singing theri fierce and beautiful,
Their gallant International.
The Boss is gone. He could not hire,
With all his wealth, workers to fire
On fellow workers. The Boss is gone,
But the factory grinds calmly on.
The Boss was not, apparently,
As important as he claimed to be.
The Priest, Tsar, Landlord, all are fled,
But the Revolution strides ahead,
Arousing Russia from border to border
To build a classless social order;
Tumbling back time so men may see
Signs of a richer destiny,
Spires of a new world where, in the high
Distance, a flag licks at the sky—
A scarlet flag, inscribed with these
Historic words:
"From each," *it reads,*
"According to his abilities;
To each according to his needs!"

It is no mean thing to dedicate ourselves,
Our lives and talents to a task like this;
To be world-changers; to be, like Comrade Lenin,
Physicians in attendance at the birth
Of a new society; to be physician
And mother both, as Comrade Lenin was.
It is no mean thing for us to give our lives,
As Comrade Lenin's Party comrades did,
To the slow, difficult work of agitating
And organizing (not a syllable
Leaving our lips unless it be, directly
Or indirectly, a call to revolution),
Talking with our own class brothers, learning
And teaching, until at last we understand
That the only road to freedom is the road
Of revolution.
It was a glorious thing
For Comrade Lenin, for all Communists,
To see the spiders, slavers, silk-hatted pimps,
And titled prostitutes utterly gone,
Gone with their flute-like voices and festered souls,

Gone; and in their places the Common People.
Good people, honest people thronged the streets
Of Russia's towns, and cried: "The Revolution
Is won! The Revolution is accomplished!"
No, not accomplished, comrades, but begun:
Not accomplished until it shall be carried
Into the remotest corners of the world,
And not a single worker shall be exploited,
And not a single slave but shall be free!

4

Then Yellowpress and Moneybags,
And all the rich despoilers
Of human kind, will stand before
The judgment of the toilers
Who plow the fields, and pour the steel,
And stoke the world's boilers.

Many are the grievances
The workers must redress,
And many are the crimes that
Moneybags and Yellowpress
Must answer. But their greatest crime
Is social uselessness.

They gorge themselves on workers' flesh
And stand, with arms akimbo,
Digging their heels in workers' backs,
Fretting their little, nimble
Brains with plans to keep from skidding
Back to a decent limbo.

Bellowing "Planned Economy!"
They gradually strip
Away their democratic masks
And gluttonously dip
Their hands in the brutal terror of
Fascist dictatorship.

With a buffoon for their leader—
A grinning toy on strings—
They lynch, smash strikes, kill pickets, butcher
Peaceful gatherings.
(Butchery is appropriate
Beneath a buzzard's wings.)

Mere butchery, however, fails
To peg their profits. Broader
Schemes are broached. Workers again
Are called upon to slaughter
Their fellows, so that dividends
And blood may flow like water.

But Johnny, when he fights again,
Won't hurl his hand grenades
At other workers, but at them,
And scabs, and renegades:
For Johnny will be battling
Behind the barricades!

Fighting until above him
The red flag flies unfurled;
Fighting till into eternity
He and his comrades have hurled
The chains that, since eternity,
Have shackled the working world.

5

From a landlord ocean
Of slow rolling drifts
Frozen in motion,
A white castle lifts
Gargentuan pencils
(High rocket-shaped bars)
And dramatically stencils
Itself on the stars . . .

Beholding this vision
Lenin knew
A deep incision
Could make it true.
It was his task
To advance the hour
Of working class
Seizure of power.

It is our task
To advance the hour
Of working class
Seizure of power,
To advance the day
When slave and master
Will pass away.
Comrades! work faster!

Scarlet pennons
Strain to greet us;
Other Lenins
Will rise to lead us;
But we must be
Quick to begin.
Up! comrades! we
Have the world to win!

TWO BRITISH ARTISTS

FOUR DRAWINGS BY JAMES BOSWELL

Hunger Marchers

Communist Meeting: Bill Shepherd at Pratt St., London

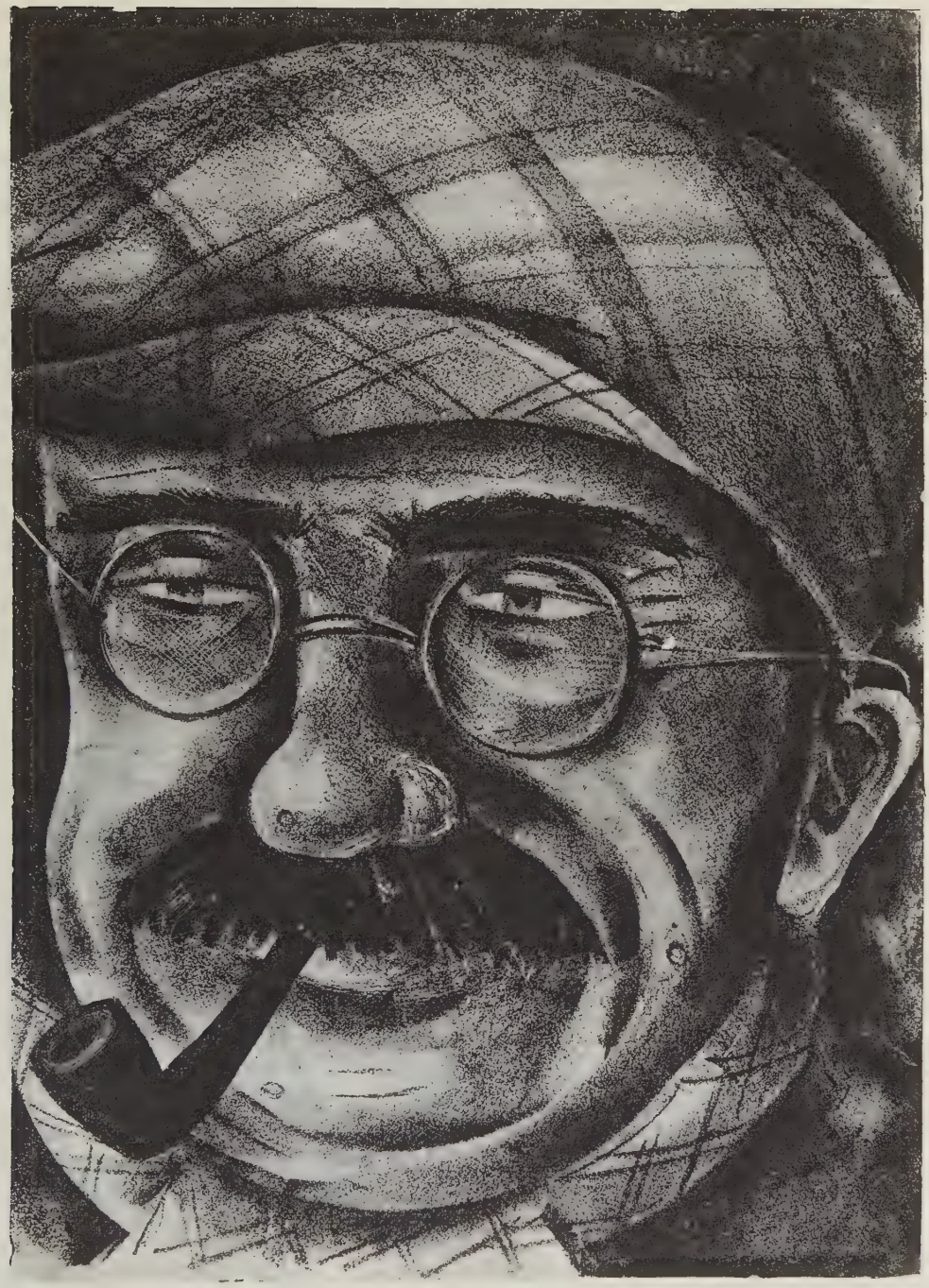
Business Men

Means Test

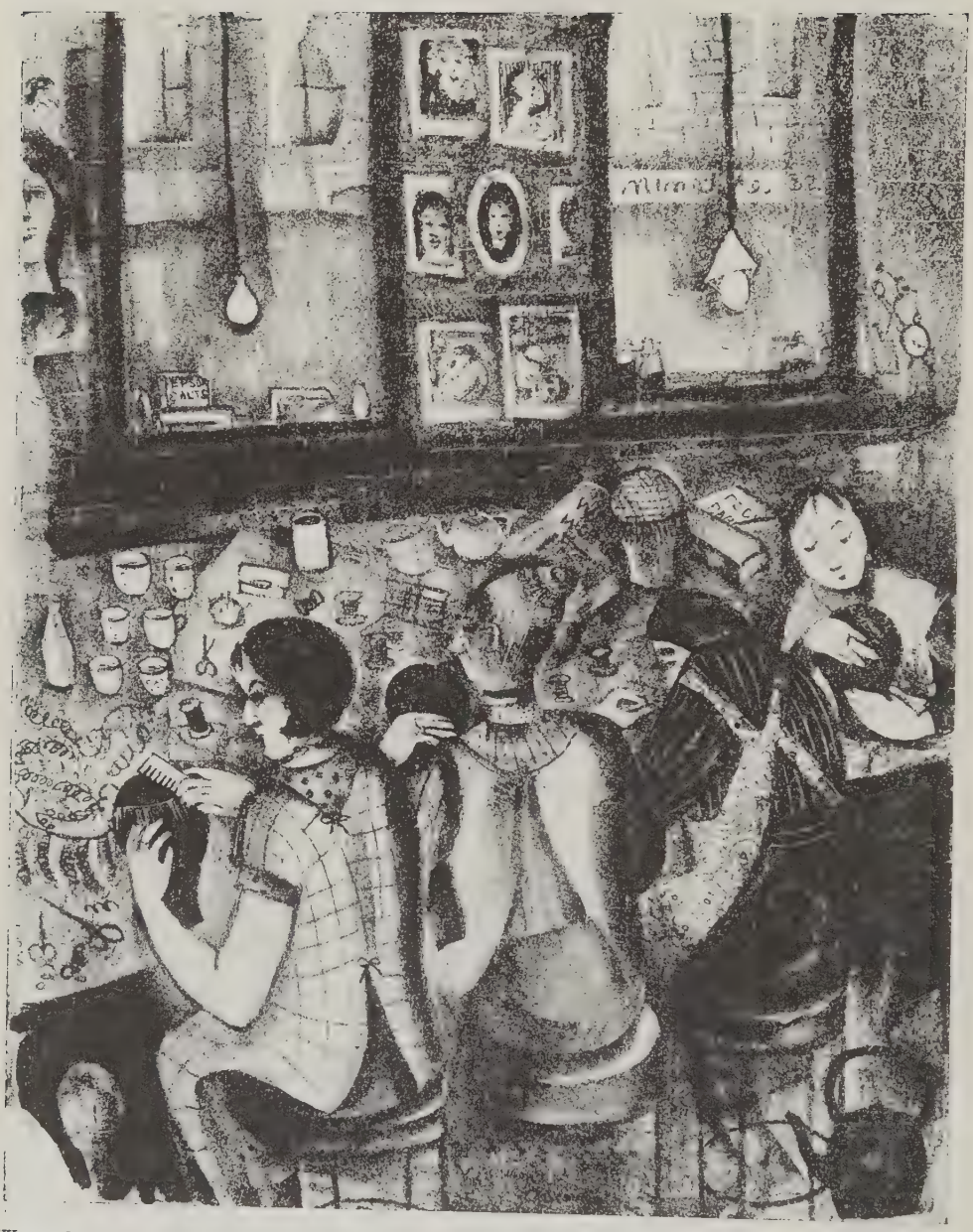
FOUR LITHOGRAPHS BY PEARL BINDER

Foundry

Theatrical Agency



Ostler



Wigmaking at Clarksons, London

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

Lenin on Tolstoi

Three Articles in a Classical Literary Analysis

Tolstoi, Mirror of the Russian Revolution

The coupling of the name of the great artist with the revolution which he clearly failed to understand, from which he so clearly kept aloof, may at first seem strange and artificial. Is one to call a mirror that which evidently gives a wrong reflection of things? But our revolution is a very complex phenomenon: among the mass of those who directly participated in effecting it, there are many social elements who, also, clearly failed to understand its real historical tasks which were put before us by the course of events. And if we are dealing with a really great artist, then at least some of the more essential phases of the revolution had to be reflected in his works.

The Russian legal press, replete with articles, letters and notes on the 80th anniversary of Tolstoi, is very little interested in an analysis of his work from the point of view of the nature of the Russian revolution and its moving forces. This entire press is filled to distraction with hypocrisy. hypocrisy of two sorts: official and liberal. The first is the crude hypocrisy of venal scribblers who yesterday had their orders to persecute Tolstoi and today—to find patriotism in him and try to maintain a semblance of good manners for the sake of Europe. That this sort of scribbler is paid for his stuff is well known; and he fools no one. Liberal hypocrisy is considerably more subtle and, therefore, much more harmful and dangerous. If one were to believe the Cadet balalaika players of the "Retch"—their sympathy to Tolstoi is of the fullest and the warmest. Actually, however, the studied declamations and pompous phrases about the "great God-seeker" are completely false because the Russian liberal neither believes in Tolstoi's God nor sympathizes with Tolstoi's criticism of the existing order. He edges up to the popular name in order to add a little to his own political capital, to assume the role of a leader of the all-national opposition. With thundering and crackling phrases he tries to *drown* the necessity of a clear and direct answer to the question: what is the cause of the clamorous contradictions in "Tolstoianism," what failings and weaknesses of our revolution do they express?

The contradictions in the works, views, doctrines and school of Tolstoi are really clamorous. On the one hand an artist of genius who has given not only incomparable pictures of Russian life, but also great works in a world's literature. On the other—a landlord, playing a fool in Christ. On the one hand an extraordinarily powerful, direct and sincere protest against social lies and falseness; on the other—a "Tolstoian," i.e., a wornout hysterical mud-wallower called the Russian intellectual who, publicly beating his breast, wails: "I am bad, I am rotten, but I am engaged in moral self-perfection; I no longer eat meat and live only on rice cutlets." On the one hand, relentless criticism of capitalist exploitation, exposure of governmental violence, the comedy of the courts and government administration, the uncovering

of the full depth of contradiction between the growth of wealth and the achievements of civilization, and the growth of poverty, barbarism and suffering among the masses of workers; on the other hand—weakminded preachings of "non-resistance to evil" by force. On the one hand, the most sober realism, tearing down any and all masks; on the other—advocacy of one of the most odious things in the world, namely: religion—the attempt to replace the official clergy with a clergy of honest conviction, i.e., to cultivate the subtlest and consequently the basest kind of sky-pilotry. Verily:

You are as squalid as you are opulent,
You are as powerful as you are impotent,
—Mother Russia!

It is self evident that with such contradictions it was absolutely impossible for Tolstoi to understand either the labor movement and its role in the struggle for socialism, or the Russian revolution. But the contradictions in the views and doctrines of Tolstoi are not accidental—they are an expression of those contradictory conditions in which Russian life found itself in the last third of the 19th century. The patriarchal village, only yesterday freed from serfdom, was literally handed over to capital and fiscal agencies for pillage and draining. The old foundations of the peasant economy and peasant life, foundations which had really existed for ages, went crashing with extreme rapidity. And the contradictions in Tolstoi's views should be taken not so much from the point of view of the modern labor movement and modern socialism (such an evaluation is, of course, necessary, but it is inadequate), as from the point of view of that resentment against the advancing wave of capitalism, ruin and land poverty of the masses which had to come from the patriarchal Russian village. As a prophet, discovering new recipes for the salvation of humanity, Tolstoi is ludicrous—and that is why the foreign and Russian "Tolstoians" who wanted to turn into a dogma the very weakest side of his doctrines, are particularly pitiful. Tolstoi is great as the one who expressed the ideas and frame of mind of the millions of the Russian peasantry at the time of the appearance of the bourgeois revolution in Russia. Tolstoi is original because his cumulative viewpoints, harmful as a whole, express precisely the peculiarities of our revolution as a *peasant*-bourgeois revolution. From this point of view, the contradictions in Tolstoi's views are really the mirror of those contradictory conditions in which the historical activity of the peasantry in our revolution found itself. On the one hand: ages of feudalism and decades of accelerated ruin during the reform period accumulated mountains of hatred, bitterness and desperate decision. The tendency to sweep to its very foundations the state church, the landlords and the landlords' government, to destroy all the old forms and regulations of landownership, clear the land, to erect, in place of the police-class-government, a commonwealth of free and equal petty farmers,—this tendency is, like a red thread, traced through every historical step of the peasants in our revolution, and it is beyond all doubt that the ideological content of Tolstoi's writings corresponds more closely to this peasant tendency than to abstract "Christian anarchism" as his "system" of views is sometimes evaluated.

On the other hand, the peasantry, tending towards new forms of commonweal, regarded very unconsciously, patriarchally, religiously, the question of what this commonweal should be like, with what struggle the freedom is to be won for themselves, what leaders they can find for such a struggle, what is the attitude of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois-intelligentsia towards

the interests of the peasantry, why the forcible overthrow of the tsarist power is necessary in order to do away with the landlord proprietorship of land. All the peasant's past life had taught him to hate the gentleman and the official, but had not taught him and could not teach him where to look for an answer to all these questions. During our revolution only a minority of the peasantry really fought, even organizing itself somewhat for this purpose; and only a very small number rose in arms to wipe out its enemies, destroy the tsarist servants and defenders of the landlords. The greater part of the peasantry wept and prayed, soliloquized and dreamt, wrote petitions and sent "interceders"—altogether in the spirit of L. Tolstoi. And, as always happens in such cases, the Tolstoian abstention from politics, the Tolstoian renunciation of politics, the absence of interest and understanding of it, resulted in the fact that only a minority followed the conscious and revolutionary proletariat, while the majority fell a victim to unprincipled, venal, bourgeois intellectuals, who, under the title of Cadets, ran into gatherings of workers, to the waiting room of Stolypin, begged, bargained, pacified, promised to pacify,—until they were driven out at the points of soldiers' boots. Tolstoian ideas are a mirror of the weakness, the failings of our peasant revolt, a reflection of the softness of the patriarchal village and the homespun cowardice of the "mujik-husbandman."

Take the soldiers' revolt of 1905-1906. The social composition of these fighters of our revolution was intermediate between the peasantry and the proletariat. The latter is in a minority, hence, the movement among the troops does not show even an approximation of that all-Russian solidarity, Party consciousness, shown by the proletariat which became social-democratic almost at the wave of a hand. On the other hand, there is nothing more erroneous than the opinion that the reason for the failure of the soldiers' revolts was the lack of leaders from among the officers. On the contrary, the gigantic progress of the revolution since the "Will of the People" days, was the result of just the fact that the ones who took up arms against the officials were those very "grey cattle," whose independence threw such a scare into liberal landlords and liberal officers. The soldier was fully sympathetic to the peasants' cause; his eyes burned at the mere mention of land. Many times, control of the troops fell into the hands of the mass of soldiers, but there was almost no determined utilization of this power; the soldiers vacillated; in a few hours, after killing one or another of the most hated officers, they let the others out, entered into parleys with the official powers—and then stood up before the firing squad, lay down to get lashings, took up the yoke again,—altogether in the spirit of L. Tolstoi.

Tolstoi showed the accumulated hatred, the matured tendency to a better life, the desire to get rid of the past—and the immaturity of dreaminess, lack of political training, revolutionary softness. The historico-economic conditions explain also the necessity of the rise of a revolutionary struggle of the masses and the lack of their preparedness for the struggle, the Tolstoian non-resistance to evil, which were the most serious reasons for the defeat of the first revolutionary campaign.

It is said that defeated armies study well. Of course, the comparison of the revolutionary classes with armies, is true only in a very limited sense. The development of capitalism changes and sharpens hourly the conditions which urged the millions of peasants, consolidated in their hatred of the landlord feudalists and their government, towards a revolutionary-democratic struggle. Among the peasantry itself the growth of exchange, the dominance of the market and the power of money kept crowding out more and more patri-

archal antiquity and patriarchal philosophic ideology. One achievement, however, of the first years of the revolution and the first defeats of the mass revolutionary struggle is beyond doubt: this is the mortal blow given to the previous looseness and limpness of the masses. Lines of demarcation became more sharply defined. Classes and parties began to delimit themselves. Under the hammer of the Stolypin lessons, with an unbending, sustained agitation of the revolutionary social-democrats, not only the socialist proletariat, but also the democratic masses of the peasantry will inevitably put forward more and more hardened fighters, ever less capable of falling victim to our historical sin of Tolstoism!

V. I. LENIN, Collected Works, Vol. XII, p. 330—334, Russian Edition

On the Death of L. Tolstoi

L. Tolstoi is dead. His world significance as an artist, his world fame as a thinker and preacher, both reflect, each in its own way, the world significance of the Russian revolution.

L. Tolstoi came forward as a great artist while serfdom still prevailed. In a number of books of great genius, which he wrote during more than half a century of literary activity, he depicted principally the old pre-revolutionary Russia, which remained in semi-serfdom even after 1861, the Russia of the village, the Russia of landlord and peasant. Painting this section of the historical life of Russia, L. Tolstoi had the genius to pose so many great questions in his works, to rise to such heights of artistic power, that his books occupy a leading position in the world's fine literature. The period of preparation for the revolution in one of the countries oppresed by feudalism, was shown, thanks to the light thrown on it by Tolstoi's genius, as a step forward in the artistic evolution of mankind as a whole.

Tolstoi, the artist, is known to an insignificant minority even in Russia. In order to make his great work really available *to all,* it is necessary to struggle and struggle against the social system which has condemned millions and tens of millions to darkness, oppression, drudgery and poverty; a social revolution is necessary.

And Tolstoi not only produced artistic books which will always be valued and read by the masses, when they will create for themselves human conditions of life, overthrowing the yoke of landlords and capitalists,—he has also shown with remarkable power, the frame of mind of the broad masses oppressed by the modern order, painted their situation and expressed their elemental feelings of protest and indignation. Belonging mainly to the period of 1861-1904, Tolstoi, as artist, thinker and preacher, has embodied in his books, with amazing fidelity, the features of the historical peculiarity of the entire first Russian revolution, its strength and its weakness.

One of the main distinguishing features of our revolution consists of its having been a *peasant*-bourgeois revolution at a period of very great development of capitalism all over the world, and a comparatively high one in Russia. It was a bourgeois revolution because its direct task was the overthrow of tsarist autocracy, the tsarist monarchy, and the abolition of landlord proprietorship of land, and not the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. The peasantry particularly, was not conscious of this last problem, was not conscious of its difference from the more immediate and direct problems of the struggle. And it was a peasant-bourgeois revolution because objective conditions put into first place the problem of altering the basic conditions of

peasant life, of breaking up the old feudal system of land proprietorship, of "clearing the land" for capitalism; objective conditions forced the masses of the peasantry on to the arena of more or less independent historical activity.

In Tolstoi's works, both the strength and weakness, the power and limitations, of exactly this mass peasant movement was expressed. His hot, passionate, often relentlessly-sharp protest against the state and official-police church conveys the frame of mind of primitive peasant democracy in which ages of serfdom, arbitrariness of officials and robbery, church Jesuitism, deceit and swindle had amassed mountains of bitterness and hatred. His unwavering denial of private ownership of land, conveys the psychology of the peasant masses at the historical moment when the old feudal system of land proprietorship, as well as the landlord and government "alloted" lands, became a finally intolerable hindrance to the further development of the country, and when this old system of land ownership was inevitably due for sharp, relentless abolition. His ceaseless indictment of capitalism, full of the deepest feeling and the hottest indignation, conveys the full horror of the patriarchal peasant against whom a new, incomprehensible, invisible enemy began to move, coming from the city somewhere, or from beyond the border, destroying all "foundations" of village life, carrying with him unheard of ruin, poverty, death from starvation, savagery, prostitution, syphilis —all the afflictions of the era of "primitive accumulation" sharpened a hundred fold by the transposition to Russian soil of the latest methods of robbery worked out by Mr. Coupon.

The hot protester, passionate accuser and great critic revealed in his works, however, at the same time, such a lack of understanding of the causes of the crisis which was moving on Russia, and the means of overcoming it, as was natural to only a naive peasant, not to a writer of European education. The struggle against the feudal and police government, against the monarchy, turned in him to a denial of politics, led to the preachment of "non-resistance to evil," led to a total estrangement from the revolutionary struggle of the masses of 1905-1907. The struggle against the official church coincided with the advocacy of a new, purified religion, i.e., a new, purified, refined poison for the oppressed masses. The denial of private ownership of land, led not to a concentration of the entire struggle against the real enemy, against landlord proprietorship and its political tool of power, i.e., the monarchy, but to dreamy, vague, powerless sighs. The indictment of capitalism and the afflictions it brought to the masses, coincided with a totally apathetic attitude to that world-wide struggle for emancipation which is led by the international socialist proletariat.

The contradictions in Tolstoi's views—are not contradictions of only his personal thoughts, but a reflection of those highly complicated, contradictory conditions, which determined the psychology of different classes and different sections of Russian society in the post-reform but pre-revolutionary era.

Consequently a correct evaluation of Tolstoi is only possible from the point of view of that class which, with its political role and its struggle at the time of the first denoument of these contradictions during the revolution, proved itself destined to be the leader in the struggle for the freedom of the people and the emancipation of the masses from exploitation—proved its supreme devotion to the cause of democracy and its ability to struggle against the limitations and inconsistencies of bourgeois (including peasant) democracy,—is possible only from the point of view of the social-democrat proletariat.

Look at the estimate of Tolstoi in the government newspapers. They shed crocodile tears, declaring their respect for "the great writer," at the same time defending the "most holy" synod. And the most holy fathers have just completed a particularly odious abomination by sending some priests to the dying man in order to fool the people and be able to say that Tolstoi "repented." The most holy synod had excommunicated Tolstoi. So much the better. This exploit will be remembered when the people settle accounts with the officials wearing the cloth, with the gendarmerie of Christ, with the dark inquisition that supported pogroms on Jews and other exploits of the Tsar's black hundreds.

Look at the estimate of Tolstoi in the liberal newspapers. They get rid of the matter with empty, officially-liberal, trite, professorial phrases about the "voice of civilized mankind," about "the unanimous response of the world," about "ideas of truth, goodness," etc. for which Tolstoi lashed—and lashed justly—bourgeois science. They *cannot* say frankly and clearly what they think of Tolstoi's views on the state, on the church, on private ownership of land, on capitalism—not because the censorship is in their way; on the contrary, the censorship helps them get out of a difficulty!—but because every principle of Tolstoi's criticism is a slap in the face of bourgeois liberalism; —because the very fact of Tolstoi's fearless, open, relentlessly sharp *posing* of the sorest, the most accursed questions of our time is a slap in the face of the trite phrases, the hackneyed makeshifts, the evasive, "civilized" lies of our liberal (and liberal-narodnik) publicism. The liberals stand like a mountain for Tolstoi, like a mountain against the synod, and at the same time they are for . . . the vekhovtsy, with whom one "may argue," but with whom it is "necessary" to make peace in one party, "necessary" to work with in literature and politics. And the vekhovtsy are the creatures of Antonius Volynski.

The liberals emphasize that Tolstoi was—"the great conscience." Is not this an empty phrase repeated in a thousand variations by the *Novoye Vremya* and all such like? Is not this an evasion of the *concrete* questions of democracy and socialism *propounded* by Tolstoi? Does this not put foremost that which expresses Tolstoi's prejudice rather than his reason, that in him, which belongs to the past rather than to the future, to his negation of politics and advocacy of moral perfection rather than his stormy protest against class domination?

Tolstoi is dead, and pre-revolutionary Russia, whose weakness and impotence were expressed in the philosophy and depicted in the works of the genius, has receded to the past. In the heritage, however, there is that which has not receded to the past, which belongs to the future. This heritage is taken up and worked over by the Russian proletariat. It will explain to the toiling and exploited masses the meaning of Tolstoi's criticism of the state, the church, private ownership of land—not for the purpose of having the masses engage in self perfection and lamentations about a godly life, but for the purpose that they may rise to deliver a fresh blow to the tsarist monarchy and landlord landownership which only suffered a slight breach in 1905 and which must be destroyed. It will explain to the masses Tolstoi's criticism of capitalism—not so that the masses will confine themselves to anathemas addressed to capital and the power of money, but that they may learn to depend at every step of their life and their struggle upon the technical and social achievements of capitalism, learn to consolidate into a single army of millions of socialist fighters who will overthrow capitalism and

create a new society where there will be no poverty for the people, no exploitation of man by man.

V. I. LENIN, Collected Works, vol. XIV, pp. 400—403, Russian edition

Tolstoi and the Modern Labor Movement

The Russian workers in almost all large cities of Russia have already responded to the death of L. Tolstoi and have expressed, in one way or another, their attitude to the writer who has produced a number of the most remarkable artistic works which put him in the ranks of the greatest writers of the world—to the thinker who, with tremendous power, sureness and sincerity *raised* a whole host of questions relating to the fundamental features of the modern political and social structure. On the whole this attitude is expressed in the telegram sent by the worker deputies to the Third Duma and published in the newspapers.

L. Tolstoi began his literary activity while serfdom still prevailed but at a time when it was quite evidently in its last days. Tolstoi's principal activity falls to that period of Russian history which came between two turning points—that of 1861 and that of 1905. During this period traces of serfdom, direct experiences of it, permeated all the economic (particularly village) and all the political life of the country. And at the same time it was this very period which saw the increased growth of capitalism below and its propagation from above.

In what was the survial of serfdom evidenced? Mostly and most clearly in the fact that in Russia, a country primarily agricultural, farming was, during this period, in the hands of a ruined, impoverished peasantry which conducted an antiquated primitive husbandry on old serf allotments curtailed in favor of the landlords in 1861. While on the other hand, the land was owned by landlords who, in central Russia, worked the land by peasant labor, with the peasant's wooden plough, the peasant's horse, in payment for "strips of land," meadow, water-rights, etc. In essence, this is the old serf system of economy. The political system of Russia during this period was permeated throughout with serfdom. This is seen in the governmental system up to the first beginnings of change in 1905, in the predominating influence of landlord-nobles in state affairs, and by the great power of officials who were also—particularly in the higher ranks—from among the landed nobility.

This old patriarchal Russia began, after 1861, to crumble rapidly under the influence of world capitalism. The peasantry starved, died out, was ruined as never before, and ran to the cities, abandoning the land. Railroad, factory and plant building were intensified due to the "cheap labor" of ruined peasants. Large finance capital and large trade and industry developed in Russia.

This rapid, hard, sharp breaking up of the old "foundations" of old Russia was reflected in the works of Tolstoi, the artist; in the views of Tolstoi, the thinker.

Tolstoi knew well the Russia of the village, the life of landlord and peasant. In his artistic novels he gave such pictures of this life as belong to the best works in world literature. The sharp crumbling of all "old foundations" of the Russian village sharpened his attention, deepened his interest in what was taking place about him, brought about a crisis in his entire philosophy. By birth and education Tolstoi belonged to the highest circles of landed proprietors in Russia,—he broke with all the customary views of

these circles and, in his later works, attacked with passionate criticism all modern church, social and economic usages based on the enslavement of the masses, on their poverty, on the ruin of peasants and petty husbandmen generally, on violence and hypocrisy, which permeates all modern life from top to bottom.

Tolstoi's criticism is not new. He has said nothing new, nothing which has not long ago been said in both European and Russian literature by those who were on the side of the toilers. But the peculiarity of Tolstoi's criticism and its historical significance consist in that he expressed with a power, of which only genius is capable, the fracture in the views of the widest masses of the people of Russia of the period mentioned, and of village, peasant Russia particularly. Tolstoi's criticism of modern customs differs from the criticism of these customs by the representatives of the modern labor movement in just the fact that Tolstoi adopted the point of view of the patriarchal, naive peasant; that Tolstoi transfers the latter's psychology into his criticism, his doctrine. The reason Tolstoi's criticism is charged with such feeling, passion, conviction, freshness, sincerity, fearlessness in the attempt "to get at the roots," find the real reason for the state of the masses, is that this criticism really expresses the crisis in the views of millions of peasants who had only been emancipated from serfdom to find that this new freedom means only new horrors of ruin, starvation, a homeless life among city "sharps," etc. Tolstoi reflects their mood so accurately, that he himself brings into his doctrine their naivete, their estrangement from politics, their mysticism, desire to escape from the world, "non-resistance to evil," impotent anathemas towards capitalism and the "power of money." The protest of millions of peasants and their despair—that is what was fused into Tolstoi's doctrine.

The representatives of the modern labor movement find that they have much to protest against but nothing to despair of. Despair is native to those classes that perish, but the class of hired workers is growing, develops, and is strengthened in every capitalist society including also that of Russia. Despair is native to those who do not understand the reasons for evil, see no way out, are incapable of struggling. The modern industrial proletariat does not belong to such classes.

V. I. LENIN, Collected Works, Vol. XIV, pp. 404—407, Russian edition

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

E. W. Kelyin

Literary Spain

Death of the Old—and Birth of Revolutionary Forces

"The fall of fascism in Spain only proves that the revolutionary crisis is maturing and that fascism is not everlasting by far," said Comrade Stalin in his Report to the 17th Party Congress.

Stalin's highly gifted interpretation of the events in Spain is shown more than ever correct if we turn to the course the class struggle has taken in Spain among the intelligentsia and particularly to the battles that are taking place in the literary field. The sharpening of the class contradictions in the process of the revolutionary struggle could not but be immediately reflected here also. What, for instance, can explain those wailings which are now heard from the bourgeois front if not by the ideologic defeat of the Spanish fascists and social-fascists in literature? There is no "fine literature" in Spain, dozens of voices repeat in diverse tones. There are no books, no writers, no readers. There is no novel, no drama, no poetry. In their denials some bourgeois critics and lecturers go so far as to doubt the creative potentialities of the nation altogether. The rapid growth of revolutionary literature,—novels, poetry, the theatre, does not reach their consciousness. According to them one cannot expect people who come from the factory, the village, the trades, to create a really fine literature. But there nevertheless *is* a revolutionary fine literature! Yes, of course, the bourgeois critic agrees, but for this the working class can thank, not itself, but such apostates from the bourgeoisie as Rafael Alberti, Ramon Sender, Cesar M. Arconada, etc.; by themselves the working class, the broad toiling masses, are incapable of artistic creation. This last is the prerogative of the chosen few, who have absorbed the culture of preceding generations, who carefully nurture their heritage and "do not destroy monasteries." Such is the line of thought of the managers of the Spanish writing industry.

But whatever their pretensions to monopoly rights in the field of artistic creation, the contemporary condition of bourgeois (fascist and social-democratic) Spanish literature is more than pitiable.

"Desolation, lack of time"—these are the main expressions we continually meet in reviews in the bourgeois press. It is, of course, early yet to speak of the literary picture of 1934 as a whole. But here we have before us the yearly review for 1933 in the more prominent newspapers *(La Libertad, Heraldo de Madrid, El Sol,* etc.). With the exception of two or three books which register to the credit of Spanish literature, the authors of the reviews are unable to record a single consoling event on the bourgeois literary front. The wretched condition and complete collapse observable in the fascist and social-fascist literary sector do not, however, mean that the bourgeois writers have desisted from the class struggle. Completely bankrupt in the field of art, the "cultural leaders of Spain" (to leave the Spanish terminology intact) transfer the weight of their counter-revolutionary work to the field of abstract ideology,

putting the question of the future of the Spanish people, of the essence of its philosophy, etc., etc. In a general way there is a repetition of what had already happened once in the history of Spanish social thought—in the nineties of the past century and the beginning of the present one, when the loss of the Spanish colonial possessions after the extremely unsuccessful war with the United States (1898) called out an increase of opposition tendencies in Spanish society, especially among the young literary generation brought up on the ideas of Bakunin. The growth of dissatisfaction with the little gifted political leadership of the government of the Queen-Regent Maria-Christina then led to the formation of a special generation in the Spanish literary world which called itself "the generation of the catastrophe of 1898." The main slogan of the young writers' opposition (J. Benavente, Pio Baroja, Miguel de Unamuno, D. Roman del Valle-Inclan, etc.), which made up this group famous in the history of Spanish literature, was the refusal to collaborate with the "bankrupt government." The generation of the catastrophe sought a solution to the question of the "future of the Spanish people" in the return to true Spain which it hoped to find in the debris of the "Middle Ages and the secret recesses of the national spirit."

The anarchistic petty bourgeois essence of the "generation of catastrophe," expressed in its renunciation of active struggle against the clerico-feudal government which helped the consolidation of the latter, led it in time (true, after long years of vacillation and even attempts at resistance to the military regime of Primo de Rivera) to the position of official Spain. At present the "generation of 1898" has already completed its historical circle.

As at the end of the 19th, in the beginning of the 20th century there is among the Spanish bourgeoisie a strong wave of recipe concocting to "save the country" from the "approaching horrors of barbarism," by which the Spanish "cultural leaders" had in mind the dictatorship of the proletariat, of course. While at the end of the 19th century Macias Picavea proposed, in his book *The National Problem, Facts, Causes and Methods of Cure,* which made such a noise at the time, no more and no less than a hundred methods of curing the national ills, and the greatest political mind of the period, Joaquin Costa, in his *Message on the Program of Work of the Chamber of High Aragon* (dated November 13, 1898) demanded a regent for Spain who would unite in himself the qualities of "Bismarck and St. Francis of Assisi," the present bourgeois lights of Spain go even further. Their Bismarck—Gil Robles—promised to drown the country in blood to save the bourgeois landlord system ("blood we do not fear") and St. Francis of Assisi in the person of Miguel de Unamuno explained in print the philological composition of the word "revolution" as follows: the particle "re" in Latin always indicates a reverse motion or action. In other words: a true revolution should be a movement not forward but backward, i.e., a return to the past. But the historical past of Spain shows that its best rulers have always been "kings, magi, thaumaturgists" like Alphonse X, the Wise, *ergo.* . . . That's where Spain's historical path leads! to the period of feudal relations—that's the ideal of the modern Saints Francis Assisi of Spanish fascism and social-fascism, whatever the liberal and republican labels they may attach to themselves.

About Miguel Unamuno

Rearming themselves according to the demands of the political situation, covering their counter-revolutionary nakedness with demagogic phrases and widely utilizing their former reputation of revolutionists, the "cultural lead-

ers" of Spain did everything in their power to propagate anti-proletarian ideas among that part of the Spanish intelligentsia (and—more widely—the petty bourgeoisie, generally) which was still vacillating, undecided to which side to go. And here the place of honor was occupied by that same Miguel de Unamuno who has lately become the sinister personage in the bourgeois literary world. About Unamuno the opinion prevails that, while of great personal honesty and spiritual culture, which makes him one of the main leaders of public opinion in 20th century Spain, he is distinguished for his total political myopia, almost blindness. But there are limits to all blindness. At present Unamuno has completely established his class adherence. On August 28, 1933 the government newspaper *El Sol* published prominently on the first page an article entitled "Unamuno Against Marx," in which a number of his expressions are quoted. Let us repeat some of them (from *El Sol* No. 4980). "What does the conception 'proletarian' stand for and in what does it differ from 'bourgeois'?" Unamuno asks, and answers: "Hardly anyone now knows this definitely. The conception 'proletarian' is one of those general phrases used to cover spiritual and intellectual emptiness. (!) Of a similar nature is the concept 'class'. (!) Who defines, and principally 'classifies' class? And this," ironically exclaims Unamuno, "is called 'thinking in realities'! But this is only chewing words without extracting any juice from them."

Unamuno violently attacks the slogan "Workers of all countries unite!" "Against whom?" he asks. "Against the bourgeoisie and the capitalists. But for what purpose? The ideas of 'the iron law of wages,' 'reserve powers of the proletariat,' and 'the gradual concentration of property into fewer hands' like all other ideas of a like nature belong to the region of Marxian mythology. (!) And this mythology (like any other religious, political, esthetic, scientific) has entered, thanks to the activities of critics, its critical period."(!)

As a result of all his political lucubrations Unamuno reaches the conclusion that: "A time is approaching when all must feel—and this much more than understand!—that it is necessary to organize not so-called class organizations, but the nation as a whole, and that it is the greatest absurdity, born of political ignorance, to entertain the ideas of the proletariat serving the bourgeoisie for the purpose of destroying it in the future. If we should become adherents of this doctrine (if it deserves such a name at all, being only the result of Marxian pedantry) we should only come to the creation of a new bourgeoisie—a bourgeoisie of governmental socialist officialdom."

So where, we ask the reader, is the "political blindness" of "honest Unamuno" so much talked about? We are faced here by a very precise and thoroughly finished theory of the class enemy however republican he may claim to be. Once, long ago, in his youth, Unamuno considered himself a Marxian. The government newspaper *El Sol* understood perfectly the true value of his present views and hastened to utilize them in their editorial. "To 'de-proletarianize' our consciousness and the whole trend of the republic's life generally"—this is Unamuno's main idea and the Spanish government leaders have rightly understood it. And so have also the workers of Spain understood it. That's why there have lately appeared a number of sharp criticisms of Unamuno in the Spanish communist press. The revolutionary students of Salamanca who have organized a number of condemnatory demonstrations against Unamuno, rector of the famous Salamanca University, have also understood this. And, by the way, Unamuno himself does not deny this. As chairman of the government's scientific council, he is an ardent advocate of the ideas of Spanish chauvinism and mystic reaction on the Spanish scien-

Rafael Alberti, Spanish poet, and Maria Teresa Leon, writer, preparing a puppet show with young Spanish Pioneers

tific front. Like a great artist, Unamuno has finished this portrait of himself by his candidacy to the Cortez (Unamuno was elected on the republican ticket of Madrid) and his latest activities. There is nothing to be added to it.

While Unamuno thus occupies on the socio-political front a position of renouncing all struggle and advocates non-resistance (i.e. practical non-resistance) to the evils of the government, a position most favorable to Spanish reaction and permitting himself to form a bloc with it, he presents a no less finished picture of himself in the field of art. True, he writes almost nothing of late. But his earlier work is sufficient to give a perfectly accurate picture of him. In all his books he always propounds the same problem of the human "I," the "personal" and its tragic fate. The ideas of death and immortality fill all his books. Hence their exclusively somber background, their "tragedy." The present, to him, does not exist. It seems to dissolve in the past, to merge with it most completely. The collective principle and its expression—the masses—are altogether absent in Unamuno's works. All his work seems governed by the intention to estrange people from life, instil disgust of the latter, show people the perfect futility of earthly endeavors in the face of eternity. It is difficult to imagine any more anti-social, more anti-revolutionary writing. In his poetry, the poet Unamuno invites us to turn to the past *(turn time inside out, like a glove an one's hand),* sings the praises of old Latin Castille and its "grammatical roots," etc. Life seems to him *a white vase formed by the eternal potter . . . And formed of the same clay, the new vessels of suffering and love break too against the earth,* he exclaims in one of the poems of his better known collection *Velasquez's Christ.* Unamuno's *Novelas* (a special sort of philosophical short story—*Athelle·Sanchez,* etc., are also full of tense alarm, horror and tragedy. His later collection of prose *Saint Manuel the Good and Three Other Short Stories* repeating all

Unamuno's favorite themes—the problem of "personality," etc., showed the direction of his creative growth. The last published philosophical drama *El Otro* (*The Other*) bears eloquent witness of the same thing.

Unamuno is a serious menace at the present stage of the revolutionary movement among the Spanish intelligentsia. True, he writes almost nothing just now, but his previous work instils disgust with life, hatred of it, advocates non-resistance, leads away from revolutionary activity. Among many portraits of Unamuno there is one representing him on a background of a setting sun. Unamuno, in a black, doctor's gown and cap sits in a thoughtful pose with his hands on his knees. Behind him spreads the crimson sky with the spires of a Gothic cathedral sharply defined on it. As such a black figure on the crimson sky of the Spanish revolution Unamuno will undoubtedly enter into the history of Europe of the 20th century.

From the Spanish puppet play, October

Other Servants of the Ruling Class

The interests of the ruling class of Spain are no less fruitfully served by its other "cultural leader"—Jose Ortega y Gasset. While Unamuno sows the seed of horror and disgust with life, Ortega y Gasset is the representative of the skeptical principle. The "great Westerner," "great European," as Ortega is dubbed by his Spanish venerators, has of late, it would seem, become completely disillusioned with the blessings of European civilization. We shall not speak of that old book of his about which there was so much noise at the time when Spanish critics compared it with Spengler's *Twilight of Europe.* We find more interest in his lectures read at the end of May and the beginning of June, 1933, at the "Teatro Espagnol" on the subject: "What is happening in the world? Some regrets with respect to our times." [1]

Remarking that Europe is, of late years, experiencing a series of subterranean shocks to which we involutarily must give heed, the lecturer set himself the task of first "dwelling on those facts whose sudden appearance compels us to think that something is going on in Europe," and secondly "analyse the organic circumstances from which they spring and the relation to them of man who brought them about." As his starting point Ortega y Gasset chose the year 1919. Characteristic of this period he considers: first, the rise of a youth-art; second, the passion for sport and physical culture; and third,

[1] These lectures were organized by the Madrid School of Philosophy and Fine Arts to collect funds for the excursion of professors and students in Mediterranean countries and were given on May 31 and June 2.

the rise of revolutionary movements among the youth. Here the lecturer expressed an extraordinarily "profound" thought on Communism and Socialism —"movements seemingly opposite upon first view, but which flatter each other and flirt as if they understood that they have one subterranean source, a common origin and in the end the same style, manner and situation."(!)[2]

In the end Ortega y Gasset comes to the following hopeless conclusion: "Will-power in our days is put higher than reason. And is it not that which is destined to become the new 'god'? Direct action, violence—these are the diverse forms of the cult of freedom. Only one thing is undoubted: mankind all over the world has ceased believing in culture (exceptions are, perhaps, only France and England). The descendent of Descartes, the idealist of the past thought that the process of thinking is valuable by itself. Intellect has turned into will-power in our days. Idealism, feeling its imminent doom, still attempts some sort of resistance, adapting new forms. Future generations will no longer have to create, discover, invent: they will feed on the agonizing past and its traditions."

That's all the "great Westerner," Ortega y Gasset could extract from the picture of the revolutionary struggle unfolding before him. Ortega y Gasset's "skepticism" is at the present moment no less a menace than Unamuno's tragedy, and, like this latter, a serious weapon in the hands of the ruling classes in its struggle with the growing revolutionary trends among the Spanish intelligentsia.

The third great writer of the "generation of 1898" was D. Ramon del Valle-Inclan. With this name are usually associated great independence of thought, a rebellious temperament, warm sympathy to the Soviet Union and participation in the work of the international committee for struggle against the threat of new wars. D. Ramon's recent utterances, however, have called out a certain perplexity and alarm among his many revolutionary friends and followers. His fascination for the "historical role of Rome" deserved the rather severe criticism it got in *Octubre.* Let us hope Valle-Inclan will come out with honors from this temptation and remain the D. Ramon whom the laboring masses of Spain and Latin America know and love so much.

But if the social-fascists and older writers of the petty bourgeois wing who have become unstable in a revolutionary sense and spread alarm (Valle-Inclan) or consciously implant distaste for life (Unamuno) or disillusionment with it (Ortega y Gasset), the fascist intelligentsia has long ago solved all problems connected with the Spanish revolution. Spanish fascism, which the communist press has aptly dubbed "axe and halter" fascism, in this respect proves a worthy brother of the German brand and the Gil-Roblists can very well compete with the Hitlerites in the amount of blood spilled by them and their methods of struggle. Is it any wonder then that fascist literature openly advocates policies of inquisitional pyres, torture chambers, etc.? The place of honor among fascist publicists belongs to the ex-editor of the Madrid *Literary Gazette,* Ernesto Jimenez-Caballero. A writer of uncommon talent he has altogether devoted himself to the service of militant fascism. "With fire and sword" he spreads havoc in modern and past Spanish literature. Even the writers of the "generation of 1898" and their "successors" (Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset, Valle-Inclan, Maeztu, Baroja, Azorin, Perez de Ayala, Juan Ramon Jimenez, Antonio Machado and Ramon Gomez de la Serna)—most of them reliable allies of the Spanish ruling class—seem insufficiently "pure blooded," that is, nationalistic, to E. Jimenez-Caballero. They are all contaminated by the poison of unbelief

in genuine, i.e., Catholic Spain. Similarly "illegitimate," in the opinion of Jimenez-Caballero, were all the most remarkable representatives of Spanish thought during a number of centuries (Fiejoo, Larra, Angel Ganivet, Joaquin Costa). But the principal enemies of Spain according to Jimenez-Caballero, are the writers of the "Golden Age" of Spain—the 17th century—Cervantes and Quevedo. "Subtle irony," "devilish inner doubt"—these are the features peculiar to Cervantes according to him. "Since the time of Cervantes," we read in his *Spanish Genius,* "strange symptoms of restlessness, confusion and strain begin to appear in the philosophies of Spaniards. Listen carefully, look, take the pulse. What is *Don Quixote* if not the first symptom of the beginning disease? What do the comparison of Sancho and Quixote, the ridicule and the seriousness, the roguery and the heroism, the irony and the respect, signify? And what world is this that has two slopes?" "The reading of Don Quixote," he says elsewhere in the same book, "has ruined the nerves of modern humanity, and the latter *now coming to an end in Russian Bolshevism* (our italics—F. K.) finds itself in contact with it in its inner trepidations, in its spiritual spasms." Genuine ("legitimate") Spain fought against the "bacillus of Quixotism" "by means of the inoculation of the feeling of faith, by the aid of St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Theresa." "Ignatius and Theresa," writes Jimenez-Caballero, "fought to the very end that the irony of Cervantes should not degenerate to 'sarcasm.' One can only commiserate with the unfortunate author of *Don Quixote.* While he lived, he was continually pursued by creditors and the agents of the then ruling clique of Spain, who correctly guessed in him their class enemy." [1] In this respect the modern Spanish fascists really do continue the worst traditions of feudal clerical Spain. "Let us exile Don Quixote" is the slogan coined by E. Jimenez-Caballero. And there is nothing to wonder at, in this. It was Cervantes' *Don Quixote* that was one of Marx's favorite books according to Paul Lafargue.

With respect to Quevedo, E. Jimenez-Caballero speaks in somewhat gentler terms than those used with regard to Cervantes, reproaching Quevedo for his pessimistic mind. A large number of minor fascist writers (Montes, Ledesma, Ramos, Sanchez-Maza, etc.) helped E. Jimenez-Caballero in his work.

New Methods of Deception

However the Spanish fascist and social-fascist writers might rearm, whatever ideological superstructures they may use to hide their reactionary squalor, their attempts to stop the drift to the left (the "bolshevization" as the bourgeois press calls it) of the Spanish petty bourgeoisie, they are still incapable of creating a new artistic fascist and social-fascist literature. There are, of course, dozens of writers producing books, and publishers that publish them, but the readers stubbornly refuse to circulate them, and by no means can be brought to agree with Unamuno and Ortega y Gasset, i. e., to believe in the "horrors of life," or to adopt a skeptical attitude to it,—instead they look eagerly for the answer to questions of the day that agitate them, the question of today's revolutionary reality.

Ignoring these demands of the Spanish reader, a considerable group of writers continue to turn away from life and enclose themselves in "ivory towers," live for "pure art"—that is continue their old apolitical positions and hold to the so-called "aristocracy of the spirit." There are some ten names that fall into this group, including two of the more prominent writers, Ramon

[1] An interesting attempt of Jimenez-Caballero to declare Cervantes a semi-proletarian.

Gomez de la Serna and Benjamin Jarnez. The activity of this group is in no way menacing, as the writers that enter into it are determined not to have anything to do with the mass reader and have thus doomed themselves to virtual suicide. But there is another tendency. A tremendous interest in the Soviet Union is now observable in Spain. One can say simply that the hearts of the Spanish proletariat and working peasantry and intelligentsia beat in unison with the Soviet Union. The entire proletarian press (until it was suppressed) was full of articles, correspondence, etc. about the Soviet Union.

Under these circumstances the agents of the ruling clique find it advantageous "to make believe they are great admirers of the Soviet Union"—proletarians. Many of them are ready to demonstratively carry about volumes of Lenin and Stalin—only the workers of Spain must not themselves look into these volumes. Government agents of all sorts—most frequently, writers —try to penetrate into the revolutionary literary organizations. Their aim is —to distort the class aspect of the latter, sow confusion in the ranks of proletarian writers, smuggle their own false interpretations of the Spanish revolution, of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism into the working masses, in a word—to break down the work already accomplished. An interesting example, in this respect, is presented by the trilogy of the acknowledged king of the Spanish bourgeois theatre, Jacinto Benavente, also one of the spiritual leaders of the "generation of 1898," who has flooded the Spanish theatre for three and a half decades with plays on the subject of the struggle of moral principles in the Spanish petty bourgeois family, etc. In this trilogy, the first part of which bears the characteristic title of *Santa Rusia (Holy Russia),* Benavente, who was most impressed by the tolling of the Moscow church bells during his three day visit to that city, has set himself the task of giving an artistic picture of the revolution viewed from a mystic angle, that is, a la Dostoyevski. In the trilogy, by the way, the figure of Lenin is prominent. This attack of the class enemy on the literary front, was at first accompanied by a modicum of success. The play was received favorably by even the working class public. The theatre-goer was impressed to find Benavente suddenly gone "Marxist-Leninist." But it is not so easy to deceive the Spanish worker who quickly deciphered the real intent of Benavente's "adaptation."

Alongside the attempts of the class enemy to appear in a proletarian mask, there is also this other method—the simulation of being objective. Fascist or social-fascist writers who all their lives kept repeating nothing but subjective ideas, all of a sudden feel impelled to great "objectivity"—to open the eyes of the Spanish reader (principally, the working class reader, of course) to the true meaning of the revolutionary events developing in Spain. Such is, for instance, Pio Baroja, ex-anarchist and also one of the leaders of the "generation of catastrophe."[1] a world known writer. Coming out in the Spanish press with his regrets as to the excessive isolation of the Spanish language and its literature generally, after the revolution of April 1931, Baroja rapidly concocted a prose trilogy called *Dark Forest.* In a short preface, he characterizes his new series in this manner: "Such books as mine do not occupy themselves with great men, great in the vast majority of cases by virtue of some lucky chance or accident; they do not speak of the leaders of political or social movements, but of the people under their sway, belonging

[1] Of the other leaders of the "generation of 1898," Azorin has abandoned politics and Ramiro de Maeztu heads the Catholic reaction on the literary front.

to the mass generally, creatures of their surroundings and very often the victims of circumstances."

In his attempts to "depict the revolutionary events in Spain of late years, which, according to him, is the main task of his trilogy, Pio Baroja wants to give a synthesis (the "quintessence") of his time. The first part of *Dark Forest* tells of the unsuccessful conspiracy of the anarchists to blow up the royal train in Vera de Bidasoa. In the second part the action develops on the background of revolutionary Barcelona with its "Pistolerism" and other obnoxious phenomena. The third part (*Phantom-Seers*) should, according to the author, give a "synthesis" of all his observations. Pio Baroja, the "objective onlooker" of the social-fascist camp, saw nothing in the revolutionary events of his time except blood and filth, treachery and egoism of the leaders and the fruitless sacrifices of the masses. This is emphasized particularly in the concluding portion of *Dark Forest* where he puts the sign of equality between fascism and communism (!), curses the Jews and so forth. What is most amusing is that Baroja got to believe in the strength of his argument to such an extent that he agreed to speak on the first "evening of mass creative criticism" organized in Spain by the Association of Spanish Proletarian Writers in the Madrid "Atheneo" on February 7, 1933. Baroja built his argument there on a principle similar to his summary in *Dark Forest* and was exceedingly put out when his audience, consisting mainly of proletarian elements, met these arguments hotly. He could do nothing more than withdraw. He may have found some consolation in the unanimous praise his boring trilogy called out on the social-fascist literary front. And that was the end of the only effort to create an anti-revolutionary novel in Spain having new aims and clothed in a new artistic form.

Spanish Revolutionary Literature

Spanish revolutionary proletarian literature presents an entirely different picture. While nothing but dejection rules on the bourgeois fascist and social-fascist literary front, voices full of cheerful optimism and sureness of final victory come from the revolutionary front. And this, in spite of the fact that the Spanish revolutionary writers have to struggle under extremely difficult circumstances, under the constant threat of persecution and prison, under conditions of a chronic lack of funds, as the editors of even the petty bourgeois radical magazines have closed their doors to them. In spite of all this the Spanish revolutionary writers continue to struggle spiritedly. True, the extreme sharpening of the class struggle in the country has led to a reorganization of the forces in the process of which there are some cases of desertion, renegades going over to the camp of the enemy, etc. This in March, 1934, the Spanish working class publications carried the announcement of the decision of the Central Committee of the CPS to exclude from its ranks the writer Jose Antonio Balbontin who had represented the interests of the Party in the Cortes. Balbontin was exposed as "an agent of social democracy who, in the name of the latter, approached the Communist Party demanding an honest alliance with the Socialists and the entering into a pact with them." Balbontin's defection should cause no particular surprise. In his work Balbontin has always been subject to petty bourgeois defeatist tendencies. In his best novel, *Suicide of Duke Ariel* (1929) he has produced a hero who is heir of a mythical country, "Sun Island," (read "Spain") who breaks with the court, and goes away to the people, a typical pre-revolutionary figure of a godly

man perishing. In his collection of poems *People's Romancero* Balbontin appears in a similar light.

The Spanish revolutionary literary movement, however, has been able to register a number of major victories during the past year. For a long time it was groping about for an organizational form, a result, principally, of the political immaturity of the Spanish writers of the left radical wing, their addiction to bourgeois methods of work, and mainly—their complete aloofness from the masses. After several failures, this movement at last crystallized in May, 1933, in the Madrid "Union of Spanish Revolutionary Writers and Art Workers" (AEAR) which declared itself a section of the IURW. It was organized with the active participation of a number of the most prominent revolutionary writers (Rafael Alberti, Ramon J. Sender, Cesar Maria Arconada, Maria Teresa Leon, Joaquin Arderius, etc.). The magazine of this organization is *Octubre. (October)*

Here, we must note especially, four aspects in the development of the Spanish revolutionary movement. First, the participation of the Spanish revolutionary writers in mass activities; second, the appearance of a number of new talents from among the workers and peasants; third, the further qualitative and quantitative growth of artistic work; and fourth, the crystallization (though still in rather vague form) of Spanish revolutionary literary theory. It is necessary to consider each of these four points separately.

There were attempts of Spanish revolutionary writers to come out onto the street, to establish contact with the broad working masses at the earliest stages in the development of the Spanish revolutionary movement. But this first happened, actually, in October-November of 1933, when Spanish revolutionary writers took an active part in the pre-election campaign to the Cortes. In this event the role of three revolutionary writers, Rafael Alberti, Maria Teresa Leon and Ramon J. Sender, was especially prominent. The first two are the guiding spirits behind the magazine *Octubre,* which they practically published at their own expense. Up to November, 1933, five numbers were published containing Spanish and foreign (mostly Soviet) literature of a high artistic order. Of special value in this respect were: (number 1) Arconada's article "Fifty Years of Spanish Literature"; (number 2) a translation of S. Dinamov's article "The Literary Preparations for War"; (number 3) A. Lunacharsky's article "Individualism and Revolution." The combined fourth and fifth number was devoted to the October Revolution and the success of Socialist construction in the USSR. This was practically the last number. Seeing the growing influence of the magazine, the reactionary government hastened to suppress it, confiscating all the copies it could lay its hands on in Madrid and the provinces. New permission to publish the magazine in February, 1934, led only to a new suppression in March, when the police succeeded in confiscating 4,000 copies. The publishers, Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon were placed under arrest at their homes for a short period and their rooms were searched. Such are the conditions under which revolutionary Spanish writers have to live and work. One involuntarily recalls the words of that remarkable Spanish writer of the first half of the 19th century, Larra Figaro:—"In Spain, to write, is to weep."

But the revolutionary activities of Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon were not limited to the publication of *Octubre.* They both took a prominent part in the pre-election campaign of 1933, entering into the Special Committee, speaking at numberless mass meetings, etc. Rafael Alberti, particularly, wrote several agitational playlets performed on the streets of Madrid during pre-election days by a group of unemployed actors. He wrote the

verse texts for several Party posters, in which work he was assisted by some of the artists of the AEAR. The revolutionary activities of the editorial staff of *Octubre* was jointly appreciated by the laboring masses of Madrid when they greeted the Spanish revolutionary writers during the pre-election demonstrations in Madrid (particularly Rafael Alberti and Maria Teresa Leon) with shouts of: "Long live the editors of *Octubre!*"

Ramon J. Sender and Others

A no less brave and consistently revolutionary position is occupied by another friend of the Soviet Union—the revolutionary writer Ramon J. Sender. In his letter to the *Literary Gazette* (Moscow) which has become famous, he promised to "think of your victories" upon returning to Madrid and announced himself a soldier on the "front of Socialist struggle and construction." He has kept his word. He published a severe reprimand to the Spanish Anarcho-Syndicalists for their refusal to participate in the election campaign thus aiding the class enemy, in the organ of the Communist Party *Mundo Obrero,* during the November elections of 1933. His article: "Elections and the Mass Struggle" ends with the following words: "You say: we shall vote on the streets. So vote! We are thinking of the same thing only with a slight difference in shade. You understand by the term street the same as the bourgeoisie—"nobody's land" where the responsibility for what occurs is minimized. . . . To us the "the street" is—a congress, a convention, the city hall, the barracks, and, of course, primarily, the barricades!"

When, with the growth of the revolutionary crisis in the country, the Communist press was subjected to new repressions and *Mundo Obrero* was suppressed, in its place the organ of the United Front, *La Lucha* (*The Struggle*) appeared. Ramon J. Sender became its editor. The entire history of this newspaper which existed for such a short time (it first appeared on February 9 and was suppressed by the government in the middle of March) was one continuous story of numbers confiscated, judgements against the editor, etc. This ended in the orders to prosecute and the arrest for a short term of Sender, who was thus compelled to give up editorial work and begin an illegal existence. The anger of the government against *La Lucha* is perfectly intelligible. Conducted by an experienced writer, the paper succeeded in winning the warmest sympathies of the laboring masses of Madrid in a few days and became a very dangerous weapon in the class struggle. More literary than the *Mundo Obrero,* with much correspondence from the interior, *La Lucha* answered the innermost requirements of the mass reader and aptly threw light on the class interpretation of revolutionary events in Spain. One must particularly note the literary portraits of Spanish bourgeois politicians and the caricatures and sketches of them which appeared in *La Lucha.*

Besides editing *La Lucha,* Sender had a number of bold articles in it. Of these, special attention is deserved by the article "Organs of Power." (No. 35, February 17, 1934). In this Sender appears as the warm advocate of the establishment of a Soviet system in Spain. "Broadened committees of the united front," he writes there, "are nothing but those same Soviets in embryo which brought victory to the Russian proletariat and found expression in all the organs of democratic power in the Soviet Union during 17 years of Socialist construction. From them, and only from them, can the organ of power come which is capable of uniting the heroic efforts of the masses in their struggle for emancipation and maintain them in continuous progressive movement."

In another article, published in *La Lucha* ("New Prospects in the Work

of the United Front") Sender calls upon the comrades to devote more and more attention to the "committees," introducing among them representatives of plants, shops, etc.

Another important and promising proof of the growth of Spanish revolutionary literature is the constant inflow of fresh forces from among workers and peasants. Lately we observe the springing up of a number of revolutionary literary organizations at a number of points in Spain, the appearance of young individual writers, etc. Thus, besides the Association in Madrid, there are literary circles in Barcelona and Valencia. This is due to the educational role played by *Octubre* in discovering young writers by opening its pages to them.

While working with the young poets and writers, the editors of *Octubre* have not stopped their work of "chipping off" the honest elements from the bourgeois literary front. Thus a number of prominent poets from among the bourgeoisie have joined the revolutionary literary movement during the past few months (Luis Cernuda among them). But the biggest event in this respect was the winning over by the revolutionary writers of one of the real founders of modern Spanish poetry—Antonio Machado. The famous singer of "Castilian grief" submitted to the editors of *Octubre* a sympathetic review of the young revolutionary poets. This is a very great event on the Spanish literary front and the review would have appeared in the confiscated No. 6 of *Octubre*.

Revolutionary Spanish literature is growing not only in quantity but also in quality. One has only to mention the novels *Poor Against Rich* by Cesar M. Arconada and *Seven Red Sundays* (an excerpt from this novel appeared in the last issue, No. 5, of *International Literature*) by Ramon J. Sender. Both set themselves the problem of synthesizing the Spanish revolution at different stages of its development. Both writers are continuing the creative work begun. Thus Arconada is now writing a novel on the history of the revolutionary struggle in the village *Land Division Without Agronomists*, and Sender, after just publishing his notes on Casas Viejas, first published in 1933, in the Madrid radical newspaper *La Libertad* ("In the Village Where a Crime Was Committed") is already working on a number of new things ("Tramp" and others). In the field of poetry the qualitative growth is expressed in the new volume by Rafael Alberti, *A Phantom Haunts Europe*, and Pla y Beltran's *Bloody Epos*.

Especially indicative is the movement taking place lately in the revolutionary theatrical field. Here the leading role belongs to the association "Proletarian Theatre." The group "We" (*Nosotros*) is led by the dramatist and novelist Cesar Falcon. The "Proletarian Theatre" which has always given its performances (mostly one act sketches) at workers meetings and assemblies, has recently undertaken a number of trips to the provinces. It enjoyed special success in its tours of Asturia and Biscaye. Together with the Madrid "Proletarian Theatre" there are a number of larger and smaller theatrical associations in other cities and a larger number of clubs which conduct active work in crystallizing the Spanish revolutionary theatre movement on the basis of the decision of the International Union of Revolutionary Theatres, of which they have announced themselves the Spanish section. Finally, a number of prominent writers have recently begun active work in the organization of the revolutionary theatre movement and have written a number of plays for it. Among them are Joaquin Arderius' play *Crime*, the comedy of the young poet Manuel Altollaguire *Two Publics*, Rafael Alberti's anti-religious plays (*Farce of the Kings* and *Providence Bazaar*), sketches by Maria Teresa

Leon, and so forth. The activity on the theatrical front is indicative of the role the Spanish revolutionary theatre is destined to play in the development of Spanish revolutionary literature generally.

The theoretical education of the Spanish revolutionary writers goes on together with their organizational and creative work. Their answers to the IURW symposium (*International Literature* No. 5) indicates the direction of their ideology. The leading role in theoretical work incontestably belongs to Rafael Alberti, Ramon J. Sender and Cesar M. Arconada. Of course, there is much work still ahead of them in this respect. But one can already speak of a number of achievements in the field of theory by the writers of the revolutionary wing who, through Sender and others, have declared their determination to conduct a systematic struggle against the baneful influence of the "generation of 1898" and the French school, and have taken a firm stand on the question of the literary heritage of the past, explaining to the masses the revolutionary significance of Cervantes, Quevedo, Lope de Vega, Calderon and the other old masters of Spanish literature.

If we should now, on the basis of the data brought forward above, make a comparison between the results achieved by the social fascists and the revolutionary writers, it will be evident to which side victory leans in the fierce class war. Unemployment reigns supreme in bourgeois circles. Spanish writers are starving. No one reads their books or articles, or is interested in the questions they raise in their work. On the contrary, Spanish revolutionary literature is growing rapidly and has a perfect right to take pride in its achievements. This does not mean that it is free from defects. It still has many. Spanish revolutionary writers, for instance, generalize too much, and their creative work, as a result, is not always as concrete as could be desired; in poetry there is either a lack of imagery, or the latter suffers from relics of petty bourgeois symbolism, etc. Spanish revolutionary literature, however, is on the right road. It is proceeding to new triumphs through the fire of ceaseless class struggles, in concerted work with the revolutionary masses of the Spanish proletariat, peasantry and intelligentsia, showing in practice the correctness of the estimate of the situation in Spain made by the great leader of world revolution, Comrade Stalin.

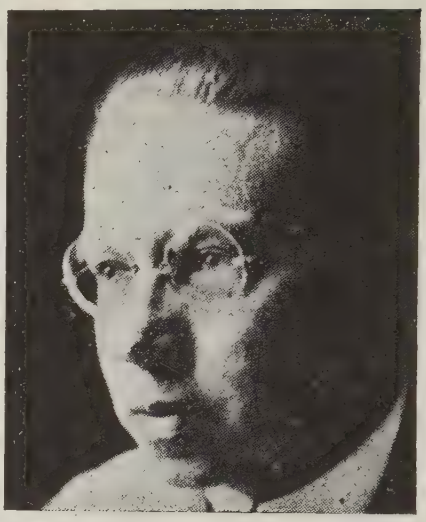
Spanish revolutionary literature has a great future before it.

Translated from the Russian by S. D. Kogan

M. Levidov

About Leon Feuchtwanger

A Soviet Estimate of a Noted German Writer



Leon Feuchtwanger, noted German author of Power, The Oppermans *and other novels*

It is hard to write, easy to live. It is hard to build bridges, simple to live. It is hard to be a violin virtuoso, easy to live. To be a great professional, a master of one's art, whether writer, violinist or engineer — it makes very little difference which—is an aim difficult to reach, but once reached and mastery won, one's fate is sealed and one's philosophy is born. What does it consist of? But this is very simple: the philosophy of the engineer is to build bridges well, the philosophy of the violinist, to be a virtuoso; the philosophy of the writer, to be a master. Why be a violinist, engineer or writer — that is a metaphysical question, almost a senseless one.

Such, in its last analysis, is the idea of the bourgeois professional with his very over-emphasized, even bragging apoliticalness, asocialness. In the fields of science, engineering or such arts as music, painting, the idea of professionalism, crystallized about the end of the 19th century. It was somewhat different in the case of literature. Here the idea of apolitical, asocial professionalism sounded intentional and like a morbid reaction to the militant party nature of bourgeois literature of the period of maturing capitalism, and it was to a certain extent the result of the first disillusionment in the wisdom and justice of the capitalist system. Psychological readjustments became necessary. And they came in the form of a militant, emphasized flagrant "non-partisanship" of writers, occupants of the famous ivory tower erected over the world. The formula of contemplational, somewhat sceptical "objectivity" sprang up.

The post-war crisis and the crash of capitalist morals at first only encouraged the studied non-partisanship of those who had no desire and could not "cure" capitalism. The world is even worse than we thought: so much the worse for it, all the more reason for us to seclude ourselves in the ivory tower and cultivate our art—the only objective value in this world. Hail mere craftsmanship! which, even if it takes broad social problems as its material, it is not because they are important in themselves, not because I want to solve them in any way, but only because they are convenient raw material from the point of view of my art . . .

2

Such, unconscious, of course, is the mood which permeates Leon Feuchtwanger's first considerable work, *Power*.

This is an unusually talented production. Taking a relatively unimportant historical episode as a basis (the story unfolds in one of the German principalities in the middle of the 18th century), Feuchtwanger, with superb, mature mastery, recreates the period not by means of dead historical ornament, not by a skillful selection of odd museum details, not on the plane of an exotic description of his own times presented in a conventional historical make-up for stylistic effect, as Feuchtwanger's compatriots have done—for, to Feuchtwanger the period in which the action of his novel is laid, is not a stylistic dodge or an abstract psychological problem but a social reality.

Feuchtwanger throws the reader of his novel into the whirlpool of social conflicts of the period and with a persistance unnoticed in a first reading, but all the more irresistible on that account, draws the reader along in the realization of the basic subject of the novel, in fact the fundamental theme of all Feuchtwanger's work: the theme of violence, social violence.

We must keep in mind, however, that—the theme of violence, his general theme, Feuchtwanger treats on the basis of Jewish subjects. This is by no means a matter of chance. Himself a Jew, and evidently having made a thorough study of Jewish history, Feuchtwanger cannot but feel how organically the theme of violence merges, in the period he selected, with the Jewish theme, and what seductive material this fused theme presents to the novelist. Here, however, the tyranny of the material over the novelist, evidently unrealized by Feuchtwanger, also begins to show itself. The theme of the Jew in European, and especially in German literature, has its traditions. And these traditions are very cheap and false, requiring the introduction into the novel of a sugary symbolism and a banal metaphysics for purposes of "philosophic" profundity. These elements are strong in Feuchtwanger's novel, spoiling the marvellously realistic picture with their regrettable blatancy. But the thing is not that Feuchtwanger became an involuntary victim of tradition. The question is much more complex.

Power is a sad book. The author wished it to be so. This corresponded to his, perhaps, unconscious mood of the occupant of the ivory tower. Evil dominates the world, all struggle against evil only increases the quantity and the quality of evil; this Schopenhauerian formula, this confession of faith of a wounded, lone intellectual cannot go on without a mystic metaphysical principle. It is upon having "tasted" of this wisdom, so specific for the petty bourgeois poisoned by super-consciousness, that the writer retires to the seclusion of the ivory tower armed with proud illusions: inasmuch as the world is evil, the only right attitude to it is to make it the material of my free, objective work.

Thus arises the professionalism of the craft. This is the first stage, or rather the starting point of Feuchtwanger's course.

3

Feuchtwanger's novel *Success* appeared in 1930 and was written, it appears, along with the occurrences described. The events are near and well known to every German. Bavaria. Second in size and importance of the component units of the German State. A seething cauldron of passionate social conflicts. Inflation. Occupation of the Ruhr. The separatist movement. The

beginnings of fascism. The crusade against the intelligentsia. White terror. "Revolution from the beer-cellar": the Hitler-Ludendorff unsuccessful putch of November 1923. Bavarian peasants. Munchen bourgeoisie. The Herren club. The Catholic church. The intelligentsia—non-partisan, left-radical, communistic. Under transparent pseudonyms—Ludendorff, the Bavarian dictator, von Karr, Adolf Hitler. Coal-barons. Automobile-kings. Intrigues of the French intelligence service. Forceful interference of American capital. Violence—blood—death.

Such is the material of this tremendous novel—two volumes, almost a thousand pages, an unusual social document. Is it possible that the author is still sitting in his ivory tower, a Hamlet without Hamletism, a professional virtuoso? Is it possible that writing page after page where the serene flow of epic story is suddenly interrupted by explosions of white-hot passionate sarcasm, and wise, quiet irony gradually, with unnoticeable nuances, goes over into stormy passages of militant wrath—is it possible that writing these pages it was only hard to write but easy to live, and that this blood-soaked material was only the raw material for skill?

There is no doubt that Feuchtwanger experienced an inner mobilization, the author of *Success* lived through a mobilization discovering new themes not only for his work, but also in his life. The fundamental theme of *Success* is still that of violence, in this case, the concrete violence of the capitalist state, the reactionary violence of the capitalist class.

The plot of the novel is strongly and skilfully knit: the crying violence done by the state apparatus to the lone intellectual, Martin Kruger, the hero of the novel, an apolitical esthete, an art lover, who, in the course of events, became the focus of the social conflicts of the country and the period; the fight for him, of a group of people incensed by the injustice, by "evil as such"; his tragic fate—death in prison, and the victory, in principle, in this struggle of the humanistic ideas over the forces of violence.

Feuchtwanger utilizes all the strength of his talent to win the reader's interest and stir him in favor of Martin Kruger, and the scene of his death in prison is rending in the power of its tragic pathos. Nevertheless Kruger and his fate recede to the background. The foreground is occupied by the colossal social picture drawn by the novelist with extreme skill. And the most stirring pages are those where the novelist shows with mathematical precision and clearness how one or another nuance in the fate of Kruger was the direct consequence of the rising cost of living, the logical result of a new stage in the social conflicts, the result of the unconscious state of mind of the Bavarian kulak and Munchen storekeeper.

Competing with these pages are those in which Feuchtwanger, not satisfied with the role of epic narrator, interferes in the course of the story and wishes to be a social thinker evaluating and explaining the world he is describing. With this in view, Feuchtwanger, willingly, nay lovingly, lets his ambassador in the novel, Jacque Tuverlin, as a writer who has come out of his ivory tower, take the floor in defence of Kruger in a struggle for justice. But with Tuverlin, skeptic and lone wizard, his friend, the engineer Kaspar Procle, a convinced and militant communist—a very interestingly and keenly conceived character—polemizes bitingly and passionately at every step. Feuchtwanger tries to be neutral in Tuverlin's and Procle's disputes, but he cannot hide from the reader the fact that if the figure of the engineer is artistically more perfect, more vivid and effective, Tuverlin is closer to the author, more his own man. An exceptionally prominent place in the novel is occupied by the powerful social satire on the episode of the fascist putch

of November, 1923, and the figure of the "leader" Rupert Kutzner, in whom one cannot fail to recognize Hitler, is drawn with passionate ridicule in a merciless analysis. It is an exceptionally vivid literary portrait.

It is to be regretted that Feuchtwanger was not equal to the task that was set before him as a thinker, an ideologist of his period. This has to be said aloud. He does want to be a thinker in this novel. The central idea of the novel is poor and squalid in comparison with the remarkable plentitude, the social value of the material handled by Feuchtwanger. The old Schopenhauer formula is somewhat altered: the world is evil, violence triumphs, but separate attempts to struggle against evil are possible; true, as a matter of private initiative, as an evidence of the "eternal idea" of justice, as a demonstration of the "fundamental laws of right and justice." From Schopenhauer Feuchtwanger thus goes back to Kant—to him a certain amount of progress, to us —a brilliant demonstration of the lost wandering of the West-European intelligentsia gropingly descending from their ivory tower.

4

So he came down. "The gods lead those who walk, the resisting are dragged." It was not necessary, by the way, to drag Feuchtwanger, but it would have been impossible to resist: the fascist upheaval in Germany was such an explosion, such an orgy of blood and filth, meanness and dullness, one could not fail to notice it even while in the seclusion of a Königsberg philosopher. To Feuchtwanger this upheaval came like some monstrous fire in which "eternal ideas" and "fundamental laws" perished and diffused in pale smoke, having turned into phantoms of a forgotten dream; like a rubber club that broke the spine of the categorical imperative. Feuchtwanger emigrated from Germany, joined the struggle against fascism. And he wrote an unusual book, *The Oppermanns*[1]; for one seeking the road for his creative personality, the most important book. Not a novel, inasmuch as the book has almost no plot; although it would seem that to Feuchtwanger, brilliant master of plot, it should have been easy to give the basis of a plot here also on the background of the Hitler upheaval. But it is perfectly evident that he simply did not choose to do so, he did not want to "make literature," he ran from formal craftsmanship as if afraid lest the customary methods of fiction might lessen the force of this indictment of fascism. And at the same time Feuchtwanger remained himself in this book: here again is the theme of violence intertwined with the theme of Judaism, only the structure is erected on an entirely different foundation. Now Feuchtwanger sees not only as an artist, as a thinker and man of politics, he sees the social origin of violence and realizes that the violence of the dying, receding class must be opposed. The hero of the novel—a combination of both Kruger and Tuverlin, the esthete and sybarite who found it so easy to live—sharply changes his life, decides to live hard, in struggle, and, dying after being tortured in a concentration camp—thinks only of one thing: was his life a useful one, and will his death prove useful also. When Feuchtwanger, throughout the book, polemizes with his hero, slightly laughing at him, compares his beautiful soulful humanism, his Kantian ideas, his frame of mind as the dweller of the ivory tower with the reality that came in the storm of social conflicts, we see that Feuchtwanger polemizes with what he himself once was, with one who thought that to him, as a professional craftsman, there are no problems of

[1] Published in America by the Viking Press, publishers also of his earlier novels.

life insofar as they are not creative problems. It proved there were such. It developed that Feuchtwanger himself was suddenly faced forcibly with the basic problem of being useful. And he wrote this book in order to be useful, wrote it as an indictment of a witness against fascism, wrote it without bothering about its formal perfection.

Thus Feuchtwanger came down from his tower, thus he came to understand that whoever wants to be a genuine writer of our times—it is not at all easy to live, because not only in one's creative work but in one's life one must choose, in the sense of being conscious of one's place in the period. This unusual writer has taken another course.

It is a long and difficult course. Judging by his latest book, Feuchtwanger is still at sea about a good many things. The forces that are struggling against fascism in Germany today, he calls anonymously—the counter-movement. Fascism's anti-semitic, anti-intellectual aspect overshadows for him its anti-proletarian, counter-revolutionary features. The social origin of fascism as a tool of big capital, is shown much more clearly by him in *Success* than in *The Oppermanns* where almost all his creative attention is concentrated on the purely psychological features of fascism. And a certain weariness, a certain passivity is felt in the pages of his latest book. Feuchtwanger now finds it genuinely hard to live.

Only after he shall have overcome these hardships and found his real place in life will he become what he had the right to become: a writer who by force of his tremendous talent recreates life . . .

D. Moor

As a Soviet Artist

A Noted Artist Reviews 25 Years of His Creative Life

My career as an artist began at the time of the first revolution in 1905. The students (I was at that time a student at Moscow University), at least the more radical of them, took the most active part in the organization of fighting columns and in the street encounters. When in December the Moscow rising had been quelled, a period of the blackest reaction set in. Nevertheless the newspapers and magazines sowing unrest and discontent still continued to be published. The radical petty-bourgeoisie continued to be ardent revolutionaries and delegated "representatives of amateur art" to take part in publication work. I was one of these representatives. I had no idea of how to use pencil or brush, but I was filled with a youthful hatred, and I began to "draw" caricatures in papers which changed their name daily. The cartoons were badly drawn and badly printed. The paper was bad, but temperament and ideas forced their way through all artistic weakness and as a result, they were assured a very large circulation, so that they succeeded in reaching the masses.

The stormy days passed and I continued to study at the university, forgetting all about pencil and brush. It was only in 1909 that I began to take up art professionally. Contributing regularly to papers and magazines, I hardly let my pencil out of my hand day and night for seven years. This was a sort of educational drinking bout for me. I received systematic education in the studio of that able draughtsman Kelin. I showed my work at the exhibitions of the younger artists who were in revolt against academicism, arty fads and estheticism, and in working for a great number of publications set myself the following task: 1) to make everything subordinate to the idea; 2) to make purposeful art the new form of art for the masses.

My whole artistic life was colored by these aims. From the outbreak of the October Revolution they began to widen and take more definite shape.

The Art of a Soviet Citizen.

The October revolution solved my personal problems, the most important problems for an artist, that is to say, problems connected with the concept of the universe, emotion and form.

Questions touching my concept of the universe were solved by coming to a real understanding of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

My emotions were educated during the dark and splendid days of October and the civil war, and were consolidated during the marvellous period of socialist construction, a period that can only be understood when one has become a new human being belonging to the new humanity, in the new world; one who has risen up from the half animal creature on four legs to the two legged, socialist-minded man.

My sense of form arose from the need to be understood by the masses, from the desire to speak as a citizen through the medium of my pictures, from close contact with a public that can understand, can criticize, and can point to new methods.

It was only after October that these three components of art became in-

telligible to me, and now there is no conflict between them. Each member of this triad in coming to full growth, involves the growth of the other two.

This is clearly the most profound and the most wonderful thing about art and is at the same time its greatest difficulty.

My firm conviction that works of art should reach the public of their own accord, that the public should be given works of a mass character and of high quality, made me come to the following conclusions: the production rather than the reproduction of illustrations for the press is what is required in the present day. That means, that the artist should think and work in terms of typographical appliances, colors, and the people who are going to turn his artistic ideas into the finished article; just as he used to think in terms of canvas, brushes and oil paints.

That is to say, we are abandoning the single work of art (painting or sketch) and the multiple works of art (etching, etc.) for artistic mass production.

The unprecedented thirst for art which is only possible when the intellect and emotions of the masses have been aroused, I mean, in the land of the Soviets, present the artists of our country with the task of providing the masses with something which will quench this extraordinary thirst.

New ideas, new styles, new feelings, all demand new media and new relationships. The task which we are set and which we are carrying out is that of establishing a kind of conveyer belt between the artist and the public by way of the workers.

This art has its limitations.

In it the mixing of tones is carried out optically. Color must play the all-important role. Color must be as purposive and expressive as the drawing and the depiction of distance and space.

It is essential that the paper should be perfectly smooth, as the presentation of ideas and objects on an uneven surface would be a falsehood, having regard to the two dimensional space of the picture.

Creative Freedom

How tremendously our opportunities have been widened by the formula for art "national in form and socialist in content." The artistic treasures that have been stored up during the ages by different nationalities are becoming an international inheritance—that is a thing that we must bear in mind if we are to understand the tremendous problem of assimilating the culture of the past and clothe it in such a form as to make it available for all the nations. What freedom, what breadth, and what responsibility!

As artists of the land of Soviets our feeling of personal responsibility is growing, not by the day, but by the hour. This is no doubt due to the feeling of creative freedom.

As a result of the huge demand for both quantity and quality of artistic production, more and more young artists are required to carry on our work.

It was the problem of training young artists that brought me to Vkhutein to become a "professor" in the Typographical Institute (Higher Art School). I held there the Chair of Lithography. The same problem of training young artists caused me to take up the theory of pen and ink drawing and poster work.

The mass character of art and the tremendous interest shown towards it by the people requires of the Soviet artist that he shall fulfill all sorts of different functions, and this is a very great strain on his creative powers.

But the Soviet public is willing to reward and support people who have given themselves up to its service. My modest contributions and activities have been more than amply rewarded by the country.

At the moment, in preparation for a twenty-fifth jubilee exhibition of my work, I am working on some large posters (2 metres by 3) some of which are already finished. At the same time, I am working on illustrations for Comrade Stalin's speech at the Seventeenth Congress, and I am also illustrating one of our most brilliant satirists, Saltykov-Schedrin.

I am up to my neck in work but I have the strength to tackle it all. The only pity is that so many years of my life are already past. However, for the Soviet life I have already seen, I am willing to give up the few remaining years still left to me.

Norman Macleod

Proletarian Visit

Enter the toney tenement district
And visit us casually in our homes.
We will have tea for you or coffee
(If any remains). Beautiful
Curtains over the cupboards—
For we are not poor. Stacked
On economical shelves
Are boxes of rice and oatmeal.
Whatever heat is conserved
Of an early morning in bed,
Overcoats about us—frayed
And frazzled, the tapestries
Of the workers. Cosmopolitan we are,
Educated in the languages
Of the world. Pick us out:
Italian, Polish, Russian,
Portuguese—speaking English.
Our homes are condemned
By the Fire Commission, but
No one can condemn the fire
In hearts constructed of hunger!
Our fever is scarlet (a semaphore
From body to brain). And we think
Of barricades in some red dawn
On the East Side of New York City.
Get in touch with our block
Committee or, better yet,
Test the quality of our speech
In councils of the Unemployed.

SOVIET DRAWINGS by D. MOOR

D. Moor, self-portrait

Red Partisans

The Peasantry Before 1917

USSR On Guard

LITERARY PORTRAITS

S. Tretyakov

Comrade Martin

Pen-Portrait of the Danish Writer, Martin Andersen Nexo

I remember one exceedingly busy day of mine in the respectable and, like old comfortable furniture, smoky Copenhagen, where I had arrived to deliver a talk on kolkhozes and writers.

The finger of some newspaper demon had already pointed me out. Reporters and photographers were ardently and diligently working out the, to them, utterly meaningless letter combination T-r-e-t-y-a-k-o-v.

This took place during the day in the embassy. The Ambassador, Comrade Kobetsky, for the n'th time called attention to the hour, trying to get me out of the clutches of four interviewers. We were late for our meeting with the writers. Putting away their pens, without any hope of getting an answer, on the way the reporters continued their questions:

What do the writers in the USSR eat?

What is the attitude of Soviet literature to the GPU?

What was the most sensational incident in your life?

When we arrived, unfamiliar faces and the noise of coffee cups. People looked at me with disapproval for being late.

My palm passed a chain of writers' hand-clasps. These were various. One shook my hand as if it were a medicine bottle. Another jerked his hand away swiftly. Other hands let themselves be held, coldly and weakly.

And then came a hand,—large, comfortable; it remained clasped without any jerking or passivity. Back of it stood a small figure; broad and open. Broad the large chest, broad the bulging forehead under the transparent halo of greyish hair that the hand of time had moved back. Most prominent, the seemingly ever amazed eyes. A smile sculptured in the corners of the lips which looked like firm blades chiselled at one stroke on the large face.

"Martin Andersen Nexo," he said, and I no longer felt myself in Copenhagen; I was at home, as if I were in Moscow.

Denmark is clearly too narrow for his broad shoulders. Denmark is clearly too small for his persistently forward pressing chest and very strong elbows with which he, the son of a somber stone-mason, made his way among the crowds of the city market-place and the street, when from herd-boy he became a shoemaker's apprentice.

There is an ox-like strength and an ox-like persistence in that gait with which he ascended slowly but surely to the heights of fame.

He was two years old when Thiers shot down the Paris Commune. At that time, Denmark was the energetic and youngest detachment of Socialist beginning. In the days when General Galliffet was on the rampage, the Danish social-democracy and the newspaper *Sozial-Demokraten* were born and exist to this day. Then, the newspaper was poor. Now this newspaper has one of

the best rotary presses on the continent which can print multicolored pictures and posters. It is used to print sunsets, fishing boats and bouquets in vases.

The object, of course, is—the working man must live quietly.

The old craftsman, the poverty-stricken Danish artisan, had during these years become a proletarian. The workers learned their first lessons in solidarity from the first blind and naive skirmishes with their masters.

Martin Andersen Nexo grew with the growth of the proletariat. There was not the imprint of one step taken by his class on which his own sole did not tread. There was no bruise on the body of his class which did not turn red also under his own skin.

He did not at once appreciate the power of solidarity. He was long fascinated by unusual individuals who could flare up with protest, who lived in extremes and passed through life alone, fearlessly and contemptuously. He despised life petrified into middle class dullness.

There is much in common between the first steps of Andersen Nexo and those of Maxim Gorki. Both of them started at the very bottom, in the very holds of human society. They were both fascinated at that time by the romanticism of the bold and cynical lumpen-proletariat. Both know the people intimately. Both are relentless witnesses of horrors which they told about to generations of avengers and builders.

Nexo's latest book is an autobiographical story similar to Gorki's childhood.

Life rounds out a man like the river does a pebble. Andersen Nexo tells about this process. He tells about the horrors of childhood that leave their marks for life:

—about the executioner's place and the stinking hole near it where, it is said, the bodies of those executed were rolled, but which proved to be nothing but an old soldiers' latrine;

—of fights of working men with the police from which fathers came home in blood;

—of children that were lost and never came back.

The school which only held "real boys" in esteem.

"If a passer-by asked the way he was tangled up so that he went the wrong way. If a painter left a pail of paint on the sidewalk it was our sacred duty to kick it over in passing; and a baby carriage left alone just had to be sent rolling down the street with the danger of toppling over and the baby falling out."

His main work, *Pelle the Conqueror*,[1] is a story of a farmer lad who becomes an artisan; the artisan grows into a proletarian, and not one of the rank and file of the class battles, but into a commander who leads unorganized masses.

Three-quarters of Pelle's way is the way of Nexo himself. This is the tremendous literary happiness of a writer who can tell about his times in terms of his own biography.

And again that remarkable clear-sightedness, all the more astounding for the subtlety of detail:

". . . Yes, it smells of mice here," Pelle confirmed, "the blades of grass bend outward, the old mice must be away."

". . . The mothers came home from work and fed the children. From the basement a monotonous song was heard. That was Greta putting her ragdoll to sleep. Real mothers had no songs."

[1] All of Nexo's work, formerly out of print in the United States, has been re-issued by Richard R. Smith, Publishers, New York.

Martin Andersen Nexo, Danish writer, speaking at a factory meeting in Moscow

"... Bread is cheapest of all and yet they cannot have as much as they need. Today I gave some old woman a roll, she kissed it and wept for joy."

"... I met God, he wore a cossack uniform, a nagaika hanging from his side.... 'You do not belong to my chosen ones, get out!' God said and struck my back with the nagaika."

In details he is most keen. But the further away from detail to the general outline of people and events, the softer the contours. Much is left unseen on the horizons of the novel. *Pellé the Conqueror* ends with a vague vision.

—Social-Democracy! Reformism!—the critics exclaimed, laying an indelible label on it.

In Nexos's youth, the socialists were the force that forged the lone, tippling ruffian of yesterday into an organized proletarian.

In the language of little Martin, "social democrat" meant, that the workingman father, who used to spend his Sundays at the tavern and end the day in debauch, stayed home with his children, took them out for a walk, read books to them.

But with the years young Nexo's attitude to social democracy became more strained and complex.

Once in a while they would get closer and it seemed that Nexo was completely tamed, even bought over by his own Danish, or the much more powerful German Social Democracy which assured a steady demand for his books in their publishing houses. But history made a new step forward and Comrade Martin's way took a sudden turn, calling out dissatisfaction, sometimes a semi-boycott, oftener an attempt to put the money screws on him. He had a hard time of it, had to find a way out. He nevertheless preferred to find a way out suggested to him by the right instinct of the revolutionist.

He really never was a reformist. He does not believe in the painless birth of the classless society. He is an experienced wolf and an incredulous old tussler, he knows life first hand.

Lenin, that most keensighted of the keen, who was able to note every blade of grass that might be of use in proletarian battles, said very distinctly of Nexo's novel that it is a necessary book and must be translated.

When Nexo was honored at a writers' banquet in Moscow in 1932, I remember the solemnity with which he drew a folded sheet of paper out of his pocket to show it to me. It was a copy of Lenin's remarks on *Pelle.*

Is Anderson loved in his home country?

"No," a Dane answers. "The respectable bourgeois men of letters do not like him."

They do not like the full blooded proletarian who crashed the gates of literature with his rolling gait. Raised in a super-refined symbolism, with their enfeebled teeth, they find it hard to chew his heavy, bloody literary dishes.

Nexo's language is turbid like a river in spring flood—fruitfully turbid. And the woof of his tale is replete with words and expressions of the populace.

But not only respectable literary notables take the attitude that Andersen Nexo destroys the comfortable symmetry of their literary work.

I asked representatives of the so-called radical literary Danish youth if they liked Nexo's work. They also answered: "No." To some he is old-fashioned, to others, perhaps, not radical enough.

There is not the literary acclaim for him in Denmark that we might expect. What of it? Large radio towers that are heard the world over are often not heard at their own base.

What of it?

He is not angry. Only his step, designed for long distances, is heavy, he can step on corns, is unceremonious, bristling, sharp of tongue, his remarks accompanied by gestures, hit the nail on the head, hit painfully, and his proletarian frankness and sombre irony may strike delicate ears as lack of tact.

When King Christian died Nexo was a reporter on one of the newspapers.

Here is what he saw when given the assignment of describing the frame of mind of the people after the death of the "dearly loved" king:

He saw a butcher decorate the pig's head in the show-window with a crown of black bloodwurst. Gentlemen in top-hats who led elegant pups decorated with mourning ribbons. Suddenly one of these pups started flirting with a big ordinary dog and getting frisky, clearly damaged the respectability of mourning.

These stories irritated the bourgeois. But they confirmed Nexo's fame as an excellent and biting narrator.

They are afraid of him. At the same time they are attracted. This tactless sharpness of his attracts workers especially.

A young Danish journalist told me about Elsinore Castle where, according to tradition, Hamlet lived and where tourists are even shown Hamlet's grave—in reality the grave of a favorite cat of one of the owners of the castle—and how the flower of Danish literature came there for a Shakespeare celebration.

The writers grouped themselves on the upper deck of a boat around a silver-tongued critic of world fame. That was George Brandes. But about that time a man in a plain broad-brimmed hat and a shabby, baggy suit appeared on the third class deck. And there began at once a migration from the upper

deck to the lower one to hear the man whose eloquence was more crude, like the work of a stone-mason.

How biting he is, this young old man. By the way, the term old man must be rejected with respect to this man of flourishing vigor. He is sixty-five and his youngest child is two years old. He is proud of the large number of his children. He laughs: that's the privilege of the proletariat.

He has grandchildren older than his youngest son. And his ever amazed sixty-year old eyes look like those of a youngster at the sun, at children, at women.

After *Pelle the Conqueror* came *Ditte: Child of Man.* A story of a hired girl that died without having lived.

The new novel will be about the children of Pelle and Ditte.

They are destined to enter the gates of Socialism. The action of this book will be laid in the Soviet Union.

Andersen Nexo talks about this often, persistently and profoundly.

In 1922 Nexo went to Moscow. At one of the German border towns he was arrested. He was saved by a customs officer who recognized the name Andersen.

"Why, of course, of course," he said, "not to know Mr. Andersen! I read your stories with great delight as a child."

The customs officer was about fifteen years older than Nexo.

Comrade Kobetsky who met him at the Third Congress of the Comintern told me about his visit in Moscow.

Nexo felt like a fish in its own waters. The threatening sound of *Chrezvichaika* which estranged a good many people well disposed towards the Soviet Union, Nexo found a completely natural institution of proletarian dictatorship.

The children's commune of the GPU in Samara elected him an honorary patron. He decided to go there. There was no one to accompany him. He went alone not knowing a word of Russian. In Moscow, at the railroad station, he said "Samara." In Samara, he told the cabby "Vecheka." The cab brought him to the provincial GPU. Everyone was asleep there. Nexo kept knocking for a long time but no one answered, so he got angry, started out by himself and found the Children's Home. The children climbed all over him. An incredible conversation started. The children showed their torn shoes to him. Nexo understood. He went to the market and bought sixty pair of *valenki* (felt boots) for the children (and he is not a wealthy man).

On his return to Moscow he proposed to his publishers that all money due him for his publications in the Soviet Union be paid to this Children's Home. Time passed, the Children's Home was disbanded, but Comrade Martin to this day loves to think of his trip to Samara.

On his return to Denmark he wrote a sympathetic article about the Soviet Union. He explained that yes,—the country is having a hard time of it, but it is the fault of the enemies. But there it is—the Party that raises up and consolidates us, poor folk,—he proudly said about the Bolsheviks. Perhaps the poverty of those times made him, who knew so well the bitterness of poverty, feel more kinship with Soviet life.

The Danes who visited the RSFSR jumped on him: "You have been duped! Those were all decorations."

"What do you mean duped?" Nexo answered wrathfully. "You write—starvation, terror, shootings, despair. And I went on my own to Leningrad, Moscow, Samara. I saw millions of people. They were gay and cheerful. Do

you imagine they acted that way just for my benefit? But if those Bolshevik bandits could organize, just for me alone, such a comedy at all railroad stations of the country, then they must be organizers of great genuis. Then they will surely achieve what they are after."

He remained faithful to the impressions of his visit to the Soviet Union. And later, even when he came closer to social democracy, he never once by a single word altered his stand on the Soviet Union.

Hitlerism swept all Nexo's books off the German market. He came to the Soviet Union again, for the third time. He visited the White Sea-Baltic Canal.

On his return he said:

"I once wrote that Soviet workers were in a better position than the unemployed in capitalist countries. But now I can say that no worker in the Western world lives as well and as fully as the Soviet worker."

This does not mean that Nexo "sings Hallelujahs." His irony did not leave him while traveling about in the Soviet Union. About the first trip he wrote: "In all Moscow I could not find a fresh egg. Absolute counter-revolution. Evidently even the hens are sabotaging and lay bad eggs in political protest."

But Comrade Martin has a special, careful respect for Lenin.

Perhaps, what impresses him most in Lenin is that exceedingly clear logic, that transparence of thought which the keensighted, but emotionally stirred Andersen Nexo often lacked.

He saw Lenin at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern.

At this congress Lenin spoke for the next to the last time before his illness. His entire appearance spoke of something being wrong. Usually he spoke dressed in a coat, wearing a tie, and this time he was dressed in a Norfolk jacket. Usually Lenin shone with a harmony of will and action, but this time he appeared twitching, nervous, looking about. It could be seen it was costing him a tremendous effort to speak. When he finished speaking an expression of deathly weariness settled on his face.

At that moment Nexo grabbed the hand of a comrade in alarm and said:

"Did you see? He is marked. It is the hand of death."

Nexo is a newspaperman. Nexo knows the strength of elbows. A little persistence and he could have been received by Lenin for a talk during the congress. He didn't do so, probably to spare Lenin.

Many years later, when on Nexo's sixtieth birthday the Danish radicals decided to honor him with a jubilee, Nexo made a speech about Lenin—a passionate, sharp speech on Lenin as a genuine leader of the working class. And this exactly at the time when there was most shouting about Nexo's having grown cool to the Soviet Union.

In order to cover up the speech on Lenin the journalists of the *Sozial Demokraten* resorted to a trick.

"... the guest of honor," they wrote, "spoke with great admiration for Levin."

A change of just one letter and the name of Lenin became the name of a minor Danish writer.

But can petty spitework smirch great names?

No matter how they scurry and backbite about the feet of a great man—his voice carries far to the first ranks of the anti-fascist struggle.

Anyway the doubts, mistakes, wavering, trivialities of Martin Andersen Nexo, the difficult Dane, fall away like a nutshell. The features of one of the founders of proletarian art, Comrade Martin, stand out more clear, more kin to the proletarian world.

Franz Leschnitzer

Erich Weinert

About a Noted German Revolutionary Satirical Poet

Erich Weinert, German revolutionary poet

Erich Weinert is one of the most popular German revolutionary writers. He is known and loved by thousands of workers.

There are two reasons for this: first the fact that Weinert is a satirist of genius; second, the fact that he himself is the most effective interpreter of his work imaginable.

If the effect of satire is due to the "direct contrast of appearance and actuality," then Erich Weinert's peculiar effectiveness is due to his genius for showing the contrast with special keenness and on the most timely themes. One of his principal methods of obtaining satirical contrasting effects is by use of word-play which, according to the great Vienese satirist, Karl Kraus, "can be most valuable because it brings contrasts together into the smallest possible space." For example: The — socalled "Reichsbanner Black-Red-Gold," former guard of the Weimar republic which recruited its members almost exclusively from among democrats and social-democrats, used as its salutation the call *Frei Heil! (Free Hurrah!);* so Weinert called this guard the *Frei-Heilsarmee (the freely hurrahing army).*

The peculiarity of his reading art is of a purely agitational nature. Weinert is neither a reader of his work as the sole and only Karl Kraus; nor a reciter, like Ludwig Hardt, but simply a speaker. A speaker of his poems! What this means only one who has experienced a Weinert evening can appreciate.

A vast hall is filled to capacity long before the opening hour. There is an atmosphere of abandon, a positively holiday spirit in the hall. As soon as Weinert is noticed there is a storm of applause; to describe it, the usual "stormy ovation" or "unceasing ovation" are totally inadequate. Weinert comes forward on the stage and raises his hand, in a completely untheatrical gesture: he asks for silence. And then he begins to speak. Without haste, without excitement, without the least trace of that "stage-fever" to which even the most hardened orators and reciters occasionally fall victims. He speaks too slowly rather than too fast. But, as soon develops, he does not speak *too* slowly, but with just the speed required to bring home the needle point of his wit and the elemental strength of his pathos. And he drives his point home. It is almost unbelievable with what keen art appreciation the really broadest masses (workers whom the monopoly of the owning class on education had so far excluded from all art enjoyment) get his point and with what truly revolutionary passion they follow the flag of this sincere pathos. A boundless sincerity that finds expression to some extent in the modulations of his powerful voice, but principally in the demeanor of his

tall, broad, blond body, in the directness of the look in his great bright eyes, in the good natured acting. This sincerity is his greatest virtue and makes him more successful than all his more than average art of acting. And the masses that hear him for the first time sense and love this sincerity, recognize it from the first glance, the first tone. And we who have heard him inumerable times love this virtue of his more and more. That is why he enjoys contact with his hearers by no means less and perhaps a great deal closer than Mayakovsky used to obtain.

From the Political Cabaret

The word as a weapon in the class war is the strength of Erich Weinert's every verse and every line of prose, of which there is, unfortunately, little. What there is of it, is masterly. There are not very many artists of such craftsmanship in German revolutionary literature. Weinert had therefore to suffer occasionally from the envy of colleagues of even his own convictions. But his saddest experiences of this sort could never draw him into spheres of clap-trap intrigue, so prevalent in political cabaret circles.

As a matter of fact Erich Weinert's literary and oratorical career began in the political cabaret. He was originally a teacher of art. His talent for drawing came in good stead to him later: not only to make it possible for him to supply the illustrations for his own poems, but also to enhance his natural powers of observation. His first triumph after giving up his teaching, came as "speaker" of his own satirical verses in the Leipzig cabaret "Die Rotunde" conducted by the then (1923-24) still "left-republican" entertainer, Hans Reimann. In Berlin, where he moved soon after, he put the mighty power of his poetry and delivery at the service of the labor movement. But not, which is decisive, in the service of social-democratic reformism (which might have appeared to him, being a son of a social-democrat of many years' standing) but at the service of the revolutionary, communist cause. His extraordinarily keen eye for social criticism undoubtedly made it easier for him to completely abandon the barren soil of mere "kultur" criticism as practiced by Walter Mehring and Kurt Tucholsky. As a bona-fide member of the Communist Party of Germany he devoted himself to anticapitalistic social criticism in grand style. His participation in the mass affairs of the Communist Party and non-Party mass organizations like the International Labor Defense, International Red Aid, etc., his appearance in such gigantic halls as the Berlin Palace of Sport, became just as much a necessary part of every revolutionary propaganda campaign as the famous photomontage of John Hartfield, also gifted with a surprising quality of timeliness. (Weinert did not produce at equal speed: some of his most popular poems were written in a quarter hour, others—shorter ones—he had to struggle with for days.) Very soon the radius of his propaganda activity extended over the entire country. His reading tours, which took him for weeks, for months, to Southern Germany, Eastern Prussia, to the Rhein and Ruhr regions, the seashore and Shleswig, were a chain of enthusiastic victory messages of the Communist Party to the oppressed workers who, regardless of what part of Germany, showed a remarkable understanding of the finest nuances of the extraordinary word play of this great critic of bourgeois class society. His fame spread not only beyond the borders of Germany, so that the foreign brother parties found it desirable, even necessary, to organize Weinert evenings in Switzerland, Austria and so on; but even bourgeois editors wished to have Erich Weinert among their contributors. The time came when Weinert could

show daily his incorruptibility in the most concrete way—by means of juicy letters of refusal to bourgeois editors—like, for instance, to the *Green Post* published by Ullstein—which had the nerve to make him offers. Some bourgeois publications, therefore, simply reprinted his poems, without his permission, from proletarian newspapers and periodicals. In these cases he made them pay "royalty" into the coffers of International Red Aid on the basis of author's rights!

Police "Protection"

The significance of Weinert's agitational and propaganda work did not, of course, remain a secret to the police of the so-called German Republic. What got on their nerves mostly were his pro-Soviet propaganda offerings which he included in his programs after a month's trip to the Soviet Union in 1930. The brutal and senseless persecution he was a victim of, even before Hitler's accession to power, can be seen from the following "Chronicle of Persecution" Weinert published in November, 1931, in the *Linkskurve,* organ of the Association of German Revolutionary Writers:

June 20: A report in Berlin on my trip to the Soviet Union was prohibited at the last minute by the police inasmuch as the owner of the hall was compelled to refuse the place on the pretext that an "unreported" meeting of the Communist Party was to be held.

June 22: The policeman on duty forbids me to recite a poem before I had begun to read it.

July 13: A series of Weinert evenings in Hessen (Maintz, Giessen, etc.) which had been advertised for months are prohibited at the last minute. Reason: the Hessian police is too busy (!).

July 14: The social-democratic chief of police in Frankfurt threatens that he will drag me down from the stage if I attempt to read my prohibited poems, regardless of the fact that so far no poem of mine has been "prohibited."

July 16: In Friedberg the police permit my report on Russia and recitations only on condition that there will be nothing political (!) in them.

September 1: The governor of Upper Silesia at the last minute prohibits five Weinert evenings in Hindenburg, Gleiwitz, Beuthen, Neisse and Oppeln. Reason: I am prohibited from speaking in Prussia. (Note, that on the previous day I spoke at two meetings in Berlin, and under police auspices.) The chief of police in Gleiwitz explains the prohibition by the statement that "Weinert's political poems and his personal appearances are a menace to the public peace on account of the satirical note in them." After an appeal, the Gleiwitz chief of police permits the recitations but not a word more. The chief of police of Gleiwitz wants to censor the poems before I read them. This I refuse. I ask for freedom to make comments on the poems. After much argument I succeeded in this, without previous censorship.

September 30: In Neisse recitation is permitted but the police forbid any comment.

October 1: The same in Oppeln.

October 3: Arrested at 6 a.m. Compelled to appear in court. Reason: I failed to appear on time. But had been excused. Chicanery! I am then accused of having spoken some nine months ago at a meeting calling for a prohibited demonstration. That is a complete fabrication! Evidently an attempt to get me anyway.

October 7: My long advertised lecture on Russia in Magdeburg is pro-

hibited. Basis: I am prohibited from speaking in Prussia. And only on October 3rd and 4th I had appeared unhindered at public meetings in Berlin.

October 8: The Leipzig police allows for two Weinert evenings if I submit my poems to previous censorship. I refuse on the grounds that such a procedure is not called for by any existing law. Evenings are then permitted without previous censorship. An attempt to frighten!

October 22: The Berlin police prohibited me from appearing at a Woman's Meeting at the Sports Palace. The actor, V. Wangenheim, who was to recite my poems instead of me is prohibited from reading my poems by the policeman on duty. And there is no prohibition of my poems!

October 23: Two of my evenings that had been advertised for weeks are prohibited at the last minute in Königsberg.

October 24: The same in Elbing.

October 27: The public prosecutor demands I be given four months imprisonment for two poems I had read through a loud speaker. The judge dismissed the case only on the formal ground of the expiration of the time for prosecution.

Any commentary to this chronicle would be superfluous, though it is by no means to be hoped it is final.

It was not final. In 1932 Weinert was prohibited from making any appearances for six months. This was overcome by Ly Holms, Erich Weinert's wife, reading his poems in the interval. She did this masterfully, although in a somewhat different style, rather cabaret-ironic than politically-pathetic. In addition there was some compensation in the publication of collections of his most popular polemic verse like the anthologies *Ape-Theatre* and *Erich Weinert Says*. When, after the six months, Weinert appeared again at a Thaelman affair in the Sports Palace, the joy of the 20,000 workers assembled was, if possible, greater than ever before.

A lucky circumstance brought about the fact that Weinert was on a tour of Switzerland at the time of the outbreak of the Third Empire. His home in Berlin was demolished by the Nazis. His wife succeeded in escaping with their child to a foreign country. Weinert continued his agitational-propaganda work without a break. Now, not as a speaker, but only as author of magnificent satirical pamphlets against imperialist war and against fascism.

The Swiss government expelled Weinert beyond its borders for previous recitals there. He is continuing his work, however, in another country. During the past few months he has had the opportunity to hold more than 30 recitals in cities and villages close to the German border.

In his recent poetry a burning hope comes up again and again to return to activity into a Soviet Germany. He will live to realize his hope.

LETTERS FROM WRITERS

USA

The Capitalist World As I See It

After my departure from the Soviet Union, early in 1934, in the direction of Western Europe and eventually America, I had the sensation of one who descends from a mountain to the thicker, dustier air of the plains and the cities. Even during a stay of a month or so in Russia one may become more adjusted than one realizes to the socialist climate.

I looked at the big cities of Poland, Germany, Holland, Italy, France and Spain, through which I passed in succession, with a different eye; familiar though most of them were, they seemed to belong to the past, and one puzzled impatiently over their queer, illogical ways. Here were the same smug, well-clad bourgeois still at large in the central and fashionable quarters of town; on the other side of town, in the slums, was the same unutterable, windowless poverty. Unchanging as ever were the pimps, prostitutes and stock brokers in the cafes, their pockets bulging with money. In the streets, signs, posters and placards advertised all those slogans of lethargy and defeat which one meets everywhere in the Western nations: everything was "for sale" or on the bargain counter: houses and dress-gloves and railroads were offered cheap. Yet few bought anything. There was plenty of merchandise everywhere, handsomely presented in shop-windows; there was said to be a "glut" of everything. But in every case the overwhelming majority of the populace which fills up the faubourgs and the provincial hinterland of these brilliant commercial capitals, refrained successfully from buying anything, though they might be hungry and wretchedly clad. Looking at these people who worked with their hands I concluded that they showed all the signs of a sad and terrible *famine*—such a famine as propaganda claimed existed in Russia. Moreover I encountered beggars everywhere who clutched at my arms, many of them officially appointed agents of government and churchly mendicancy. These agents—in London they wore the uniform of the Salvation Army, in Berlin of the *Sturm Abteilung*—enforced my impression of a widespread famine in these parts, though no one else had heard about it and the press never alluded to it. Its cause, I know, was no natural disaster, no descent of locusts, but a wholly artificial blight the germs of which are bred voluminously and periodically on the floors of Bourses, in the counting rooms of banks, in the directors' rooms of factories.

But there was another arresting phenomenon which affected disagreeably a traveler returned from a socialist land. I am by nature (so I believe) a hopeful and energetic fellow; prolonged inactivity exasperates me like a disease. Now in the Western countries and even in my native U.S.A., nations dedicated to Private Enterprise, I felt a spirit of fatigue among the people and a quite appalling want of *initiative,* whereas I had just become inured to what we call "boom conditions" and incessant, daring enterprise in Russia. This enforced (partial) inactivity seemed to take its toll of human beings. In Paris, for instance, young people whom I had known some years before seemed to have grown preternaturally old; they shook hands with me joylessly, for the most part, until as it seemed—I am perhaps exaggerating subjectively—I came to dread the very touch of their nerveless, clammy hands.

II

In Western Europe the only social ideas a traveler might learn of came from the mouths of uniformed adventurers in autocracy who, in one country, were telling their people to "live dangerously," that is to say, without food, a dangerous way of living indeed; and in another, were advising them to "draw in their belts" and prepare body and soul for a glorious war, which would no doubt make food even scarcer. Now I as a simple, ingenuous American felt that the ideas emanating from these ancient centers of culture, Germany and Italy, were too deep and too complicated for my poor head to grasp and make any sense out of, and so in the spring of 1934 I gladly hastened back to the United States, whence also came reports of big doings in the way of social idealism.

From the moment one landed on the dock in New York one heard about how the Forgotten Man was being rescued by the new President. The retreating movement of industry was to be turned into an advance on the double-quick toward recovery. The jobless in the cities were to be given work, at higher wages and shorter hours. The farmers were to be given profits on their crops. The manufacturers and merchants larger gains than before on their goods. In short, wherever the supposedly self-regulating system of private capitalism had broken down under the anarchy of the market, a

Matthew Josephson, American author of Zola, Robber Barrons *and other books*

benevolent president would step in with his magic wand and restore not only order but fortune. Never before, at least since Woodrow Wilson, had an American statesman expressed finer intentions in finer words.

What was more the Roosevelt government meant to carry on economic planning on a national scale. They had heard of *Pyatiletka,* the Five Year Industrial Plan of the U S S R., and so they were going to have a national plan of their own. There were to be public works, a few new real estate "developments," some power dams, and even picturesque parades for the populace in American style. Instead of the Hammer and Sickle the Blue Eagle was taken and set up as the symbol for the Roosevelt Revolution. (Some Wall Street people were so unkind as to call it a "Soviet Duck.")

The thunderous boom in Russia, the unending enterprise, producing, constructing and expanding, this is what the capitalist governments would like to take over without copying Russia's social reorganization for collective ownership of property. They are not ready to admit that the new tempo of Soviet Russia results from the new and vaster dimensions of producing and consuming capacity which socialism inaugurates. They would like to have the booming tempo of Russia without paying the price in Bolshevik redistribution of wealth, justice, security. They would like to "have their cake and eat it too." And no government, it appears, is trying harder to steal the Bolshevik thunder than Washington.

III

The season of 1933-1934 in America was one of perpetual wonders and miracles. Pigs, cows and steers were being slaughtered by the millions under the AAA, or agricultural recovery plan devised by liberal university professors. By this plan milk was spilled into sewers, grain crops were obliterated and cotton plants were ploughed under—we heard of faithful, well-trained old mules whose feet stubbornly refused to do this dirty work of recreating capitalist scarcity in the face of nature's will to plenty. (So the very mules were shocked and brayed out loud in protest.) Then by an emergency hospital operation the sturdy American dollar had 41 per cent of its gold teeth extracted; henceforth neither its bite nor its buying power would ever be the same. In the meantime laborers—some of them at least—were called back to work at the factories at from 12 to 16 dollars a week in the new paper money. Hundreds of thousands of idle young men were sent to work in concentration camps in the forests, though they had done no wrong, while hundreds more of idle "experts," quacks, college professors and journalists were put on jobs in administrative bureaux which were known alphabetically (in pseudo-Russian style) as NRA, AAA, PWA, CWA, RFC, etc. The new bureaucrats were filled with enthusiasm at their new power: it was rumored that the mightiest industrial barons in the country sometimes had occasion to come and stand, hat in hand, before their desks. And these bureaucrats, formerly skeptics, liberals and even "radicals," spread their hope and enthusiasm throughout the nation. At this task of propaganda no one succeeded better, for a time, than the picturesque General Hugh Johnson, the one-time officer of the War College in the World War whom Roosevelt had called in from his job in Wall Street under Mr. Bernard Baruch.

Johnson was the grand director of the NRA, the administration for national industrial recovery. In the war he had helped write and carry out the conscription law, and now he vowed that he would draft the whole country for a march to recovery. He tried to make a staggering impression upon the public at large. He glared with his protuberant eyes, he blustered and bellowed in the tones of an old-fashioned American Indian-fighting trooper. He threatened loudly to "crack down on" and "sock in the nose" all individuals (such as Mr. Henry Ford) who refused to join his bandwagon. He promised the big industrialists fixed cartel prices so that with government sanction of the new "codes" they might exploit a shrunken market more profitably than before; he promised to the workers millions of jobs, always "at higher wages

and shorter hours." The President had been given dictatorial powers for the economic emergency by a frightened Congress; and the General, with his bulbous nose and heavy maxillaries offered himself as Assistant-Dictator No. 1. His radio orations, in the manner of our finest high-pressure salesmanship, made a hit with our numerous middle classes and intrigued even the shrewd big capitalists. In one Blue Eagle holiday in New York over which Johnson presided, a million and a half people looked on, 250,000 paraded before him, forty-six women were trampled and one man died.

IV

Hearing so much of Roosevelt's New Deal, and much of it reported as having been administered already during my absence, made me beside myself with curiosity. Moreover I was informed repeatedly that owing to the absorption of so many technical experts and "intellectuals" into the so-called Brain Trust of the President, the whole tone of government had been remarkably elevated and, to believe some of the more glowing reports, tended even to the utopian! Therefore in the early summer of this year I hastened to Washington to take a few peeks with my own eyes at the millenium which had been so briefly assembled. The surprises awaiting me, however, were of a totally different nature from those I anticipated.

The honeymoon was over—in a brief twelve months. The national harmony effected by the smiling political wizard of the White House was ruined, there was no doubt of that. Everything showed me that the Roosevelt regime in its second year was an affair of cross-purposes, ill-humored discord and glaring contradictions. Not only did Congress engage in alarming quarrels before it was subdued and made to adjourn, but the counsellors of the President, his intimate advisors, clashed with each other continually over their opposing policies, their varying states of fear or optimism. The doctors called each other names and fought on behalf of their favorite prescription for the sick patient, capitalism. And the "intellectuals," they who had sought political fortune as "commissars" for the Democratic Party, suffered under a pall of gloom; they spoke in private as if they had been deceived and betrayed.

A high personage among the Brain Trust, whom I had known in former years, admitted to me that the recovery program as then conducted was "preparing the way for a debacle." The cartels system of fixed industrial prices and codes of operation, under NRA, was tottering as surely as a similar cartel system had collapsed in Germany in 1931. A distinguished Senator from a Western state declared to me that, under the surface the country was seething with unrest, and that if things went on at this rate there would be civil anarchy. In truth a wave of strikes gripped the country; the securities markets declined; credit was scarce; eleven million workers were still jobless; sixteen million persons were on government relief lists; the national deficit mounted to calamitous figures. What had happened to the New Deal?

V

To form a picture of the working of the New Deal we must go back to the events of the winter of 1932-1933, on the eve of Franklin Roosevelt's inauguration. The financial panic, at the time, was taking ever new and more dangerous turns, and even the big capitalists were themselves hysterical and no longer agreed upon how to overcome the deadly stoppage of economic circulation. To use the figure of speech favored by capitalist economists, the "pump" which fed the heart of their system had ceased working. Hence they turned to the government, asking that the government itself "prime the pump" so that the whole system would be enabled to work once more.

Under American traditions of middle class democracy, politics is a trade, a profession by itself, as Marx and Engels keenly observed long ago. The two leading parties cut across the economic divisions of the population and seldom ever express vital social differences. Another American tradition indicates that the people are less often moved by abstract political ideals of "justice," etc., when confronted by great difficulties, than by mechanical schemes or devices such as inflation of currency, tariffs and such things. As usual in America, the Roosevelt party won by appealing to and combining different classes and factions, from high capitalists to farmers and even labor, especially the "respectable," Babbitt-like element of labor who regard themselves as petty bourgeois. The plans adopted by Roosevelt early in 1933 therefore sought to appease the demands of social groups or classes which, at bottom, opposed each other. The farmers wanted as usual currency inflation and higher grain prices; union labor, officially represented by what would correspond to social-democratic leadership in Europe, wanted minimum wages and shorter working hours in order to spread jobs; the industrialists, naturally the most powerful group in the Roosevelt party wanted above all a system of *cartelization* which would permit them to exploit a shrunken market more successfully, and to

this end they demanded revision or suspension of Anti-Trust Laws, which ostensibly prohibit monopoly. They, the industrialists, said they would grant minimum wages and shorter hours to labor if they were permitted to fix minimum profit margins according to their own ideas of such things. (Such in essence was the horse-trading which took place between the Roosevelt party and the big industrialists, although it is seldom explained in this way.)

Without the usual military mysticism, but in all other respects much like fascist statesmanship, the New Deal party attempted to conciliate and unify the most conflicting class interests, and this at a stage of our history when their opposition to each other was deeper and more irreconcilable than ever before.

The "experimental" President began his experiments. By decreeing currency inflation the farmers found the price of wheat raised to about one dollar a bushel, although this dollar actually represented only fifty-nine cents in gold which was the price of their wheat before the magical operations. Furthermore a crop reduction program proposed to limit the new harvest in the future, and the unexpected drought of 1934 limited this even more than anyone wanted, destroying most of the profits from crop reduction. To protect even the minimum wages established under the NRA, trade unionism and the right of collective bargaining was apparently sanctioned by the government. The markets boomed as commodity prices rose everywhere; the banks, insurance companies and Industrial Trusts were rescued. The Monopolists were in the saddle.

The net result of so much "national planning" was that for the most part money and credit was poured in "from the top"—that which the Hoover government had tried too timidly. It was poured first into banks which were about to fail, railroads which were given government credits and industrial monopolies which received government sanction for raising the value of their inventories overnight and "pegging" their cartel profits. But all hope that this money would circulate downward toward the masses of people was soon dashed. Under the Roosevelt "revolution" the rich grow richer....

By the end of 1933 the farmers found that their dollar brought them only half as much as before in overalls and rubber boots. The small business man and merchant saw himself strangled by monopolistic conditions imposed from above and found himself driven toward a proletarian status. But the city laborers, who had been keyed up by their A.F.L. leaders to faith in the new program were seen most embittered of all. Their wages were back to the levels of 1890, under government orders; by speed-up and stretch-out methods their output was increased despite shorter hours. At the most optimistic official estimates less than 20 percent of the unemployed were put back to work; and those who were at work, in view of higher living costs, wondered if they would not be better off on the poor relief rolls. From underneath its reactionary leadership the rank and file of labor began to rebel in earnest, producing the greatest strike movements ever seen here. The big capitalists blamed Roosevelt for this unfortunate turn of events. The spokesmen of the farmers and small business men protested bitterly. All groups and classes seemed at loggerheads with each other. The country was in an uproar. If 1933 was a year of "miracles," then 1934 was a year of passionate dissension and disillusionment.

VI

A word about NRA, the so-called National Industrial Recovery Administration, which, under the leadership of General Johnson, has worked to complete the cartel system here. The brief history of this ambitious new institution shows us how difficult it is to repair the capitalist machinery once this has broken down; it shows us also where the difficulty chiefly lies.

The officers of NRA were supposed to hold hearings, "open and aboveboard," for hundreds of industries at which the new "codes" fixing "fair prices" for goods and new labor agreements were to be introduced. (A formidable task of conciliating the competitive force of thousands of capitalists; probably more costly and laborious than it would have been, if such a thing were conceivable, to introduce the cooperative commonwealth by decree!) Many assumed that the capitalists themselves, with an eye to their own survival, would readily grant most of the "reforms" promised; that they would consent to a "partial redistribution of wealth" by way of higher wages, while restraining price-raising, in order to increase mass buying power. Some five years ago we had heard much about the benevolence of the "dynamic American capitalism" which proposed to make a prosperous bourgeois out of each workingman. Here in 1933 was its great chance to turn humanitarian for its own self-preservation. But what followed, under the auspices of Roosevelt and his lieutenant, "Crack-Down" Johnson, was a piece of free education to the credulous—though they need only have read the history of the earlier Roosevelt and of Woodrow Wilson, both fine talkers too.

In short the "codes" which promised to be of such far-reaching social consequence were arranged in a long series of "horse-trades" between the government officials and the leading industrialists in each field. Al-

most invariably the big industrialists used the occasion to liquidate their smaller competitors and centralize operations further in their own hands. (Such was the report of an investigation commission appointed by the President himself and headed by the famous lawyer, Darrow.) Never for a moment did the over-reaching greed of the great bourgeois permit a true increase in the share of labor. The representation of labor, even through its reactionary trade union leaders was scarcely ever tolerated at the "code" conference which allotted costs, wages, even hours of machinery. The capitalists were resolved to abide faithfully by their cartel agreements with regard to profit margins, but showed themselves equally firm and infinitely ingenious in circumventing the new labor contracts, miserable as their provisions were. The minimum wages became the maximum; speed-up and more intensive rationalization completed the process whereby any advance in labor cost was to be offset. Thus, in refusing to "plan" or to reform itself, as was promised, capital followed its fatal bent—toward an economy of scarcity and private monopoly—intensifying the social problem in all directions.

At the present stage of the American evolution one may see clearly how numerous members of the lower middle-class (which has always been most numerous in America) the small manufacturers, the shopkeepers, the farmers fight for their lives against the big bourgeoisie "to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class." But the process goes forward pitilessly. The basic purpose of the strong men who stand behind Roosevelt is to create economic scarcity, the only solution capitalism understands; and this in a country which literally overflows with the milk and honey of natural resources and technology.

The crisis in America resulted in greatest measure from the anti-social nature of capitalism itself. The solution attempted by the ruling class brings measures more anti-social still.

Meanwhile General Johnson, our most prominent strike-breaker, broadcasts his patriotism over the radio,[1] while the President with his radiant smile disseminates optimism. But once more the famous "pump" works badly, the circulation of economic life-blood in America dies down.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON

Gaylordsville, Connecticut

(Author of *Robber Barrons, Zola,* and other books)

[1] *Since this was written, in September, 1934, General Johnson has "resigned" in the face of widespread protest.*

The Myth and Reality of Hollywood

More than anything else, Hollywood is a name. It has become a tradition, almost a legend: it represents a mentality, a state of mind, which has in a way outlived its actual reality. Hollywood is not a city made up entirely of motion picture studios, it is not a place that lives and breathes movies. Tens of thousands of people live in Hollywood who have no connection with the motion picture industry, who are almost blissfully unaware of its existence close by. Hollywood does not answer the popular image of it: it is not a city of studios, in which you can't spit without hitting a glamorous movie-star.

The advent of the talkies, six years ago, as well as the building up of the city in the preceding period of prosperity, forced the film producers to look for less-crowded areas for their studios. The majority of the "lots" are today outside of Hollywood proper. Culver City, Burbank, Universal City, Westwood—so many names which mean movie-studios just as much as Hollywood does. Still the name of Hollywood remains. It remains as the symbol of the American motion picture industry. And the American motion picture industry, although radio is bidding fair to surpass it, remains today the most formidable of all "cultural" agencies in the world.

We use the word "cultural" advisedly, simply because the cinema is an art-form (or may at times be one), and appeals to the masses on intellectual, cultural grounds. But the use of the cinema in America as a cultural agency has up to the present been nil. What has the social significance of American movies amounted to? Capitalism has used them as an opium for the people. This has been so very true, that the Church in America has felt itself threatened in its traditional role of opiate, and within the last few months has begun waging a war-to-the-end on Hollywood.

Obviously, with its 450 or 500 full-length films per year, each one of which is seen by some 60 to 70 million people the world over, Hollywood has given stiff competition to Rome and its colleagues. The Church saw the day coming in the near future when capitalism would be able to do without its help in keeping the masses asleep. The cinema would be sufficient, without the aid of the Church. But the coffers of religion are always hungry, and the high potentates decided the moment had come to stave off Hollywood competition. The Legion of Decency was launched, calling on all the high ideals of the church-minded to boycott any films which displayed beautiful creatures (tools of Satan), which had any suggestion of sex, of freedom of thought, or any other such mortal sins.

With its highly moralistic front, the Legion of Decency took on like wildfire. Out of its cradle in Philadelphia, it spread overnight to Ohio; before the week was up it had engulfed California. The producers were quaking at the possibility of the new anti-vice campaign's success. Did they fight back? No. People fight for ideals. But when the hundreds of millions of dollars invested in motion pictures are at stake, one does not fight. Every compromise, no matter how costly, no matter how humiliating, is better than putting up a fight. With a compromise one will surely lose part of the stake, but one does not risk losing it all. So the producers capitulated. One Jewish producer is said to have gone on bended knee to the Bishop of Los Angeles and said to him: "I, as a Jew, would not have you, as a Catholic, think that I have voluntarily been giving my wife (a very famous star) the roles she has played of immoral women, with the intention of demoralizing the public. We producers, you see, do not realize that the public actually assimilates stars in their private lives to the parts they play on the screen . . ." (This statement in the face of the fact that these very producers, with their exaggerated sponsoring of fan-magazines and other "intimate" publicity, have done all in their power to sell types, personalities to the public, and to avoid any idea that cinema-stars are actors.) (This question of types on the screen is one which will bear a thorough Marxist analysis, in its relationship with the role of the cinema as a tool of indirect bourgeois propaganda. It will form the subject of a subsequent study which we are now writing.)

The "Victory" of the Church

So, the producers capitulated. Joe Breen, vice-president of the Hays Organization (producers' union), was made censor-in-chief for films. It is important that Joe Breen was named for this post in preference to his "boss," Will Hays. Breen is Catholic and a Democrat; Hays Protestant and a Republican. Every film in production or not yet released in July-August (the time of the producers' magnificent surrender without a fight) had to be submitted to Breen. He cut right and left; of some completed pictures, there remained only about a third of the original footage, after the Breen deletions. Without a murmur, the producers accepted every restriction: they had themselves named Breen to make their films acceptable to the church-going public. It is impossible to say how many millions went into the task of once again finishing these truncated filmplays. Scripts had to be read as well, before going into production. RKO-Radio Pictures had to throw out 17 scripts, representing an investment of over 250,000 dollars, because they were objectionable and could not be salvaged even by wholesale changes. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer had to abandon all hope of filming the cheap literary sensation, *The Postman Always Rings Twice,* although the rights to it had been acquired for 25,000 dollars . . . The producers, who are not Marxists, could not understand why morality had swarmed down on them like a flock of red ants. They submitted—because the Church is a mighty power, and they did not know that Hollywood had replaced every other religion in the minds of the American people, and almost in those of the peoples of Europe.

Then the first new, "clean" films appeared on the market. The producers tore their hair, and went to Palm Springs to rest in the desert, amid the sun-bathing beauties that they would no longer be allowed to exhibit on the screens of the world. Every time the phone rang, they answered in trepidation. How soon would they be advised that "clean" films were not wanted by the public, that every one of their new efforts had turned out to be a colossal flop? . . . They waited in vain for this sad news. On Tuesday, when they got the accounts of every theatre in the U.S. up to the preceding Saturday night, they discovered to their amazement that clean films were doing just as good business as the so-called "risqué" ones had done before.

The producers had not known their own strength. They had not known that Hollywood was stronger than Rome, and stronger than all the Protestant sects of America combined. September 1934 shall go down in the history of religions as the Epoch of the New Revelation. At that time it was given to the world that Hollywood, a new myth, a new religion, had supplanted the established faiths of the world. The Soldiers of Jesus had waged a bitter war against Hollywood. Armed with those indomitable weapons, virtue, morality, godliness and cleanliness, they had been successful in every skirmish. Hollywood had surrendered; the Church had in appearance won. Yes, it had won every battle; but battles in this war as in every other capitalist war were only a front. What counted was the economic prize they were fighting for—the patronage of the American masses—and this the Church had lost. Hollywood chastened, castrated, emasculated by the Church, still had its 70,000,000 spectators for every one of its films.

The New Aphrodisiac

Why? Why was Hollywood victorious? And why especially can we say that it has replaced the Church in the role of opiate of the people? It is obvious that Hollywood films, year in year out, have put the public to sleep and kept the public asleep, in much

the same manner as every other Church has always served the ruling class. But films are more aphrodisiac, more exciting than sermons. Jean Harlow, Mae West, even if they speak no naughty lines, even if they make no suggestive gestures, are ten times more titillating than the most eloquent of preachers describing the tortures of Hell, or dwelling on the forbidden pleasures of the mortal sins. The Hollywood religion had gotten under the skin of the masses much better than any form of God had ever been able to. And since the movies are a more powerful opiate than the godhead, there had devel oped such a thing as the "movie-habit." Cinemaddicts, as our smart magazine *Time* has dubbed them, suffer from something very much akin to drug-addiction. Close the churches, and the faithful may pray at home; close the cinemas, and you will have hordes of maddened people in the streets, completely lost without that daily habit which for the last twenty years has been rocking them in a thoughtless slumber.

Hollywood, the city which is not a city but merely a neighborhood of Los Angeles, the film center which is not a film center but merely a name that designates a state of mind, a certain type of drug, this almost mythical Hollywood has revealed itself a power to be reckoned with. There are three important bourgeois news-centers in the United States: Washington, the seat of the government; New York, the seat of finance-capital; and Hollywood... The Seat of the movies? No. The seat of the new Church.

Such a power, though it may have no physical being, though it may to all intents and purposes be the legend, the state of mind which Hollywood is, such a power inevitably has its reality. The myth is made flesh by its importance. There is an unspoken code of Hollywood, quite intangible, which guarantees liberty (there is no overt political censorship on the American screen) in the bourgeois sense of the term: Hollywood, the people who make its films, and the films they make, have complete liberty of expression as granted by the Constitution of the United States—which means liberty, so long as they touch on no sensitive political subject, as they do not campaign for social changes or reforms, and now, so long as they remain morally clean,—in short, so long as they do not disturb the slumber of the masses.

But the Church of Rome tried to buck Hollywood—and lost. What, then, can individuals do against Hollywood? That is the problem that poses itself before such awakened writers and intellectuals as earn their livelihood in the cinema industry.

The reality of Hollywood is intangible, just as its myth is real. The myth of Hollywood flashes every minute on thousands of movie-screens the world over; it is blazoned incessantly in fan-magazines, newspapers, on billboards; it has become a part, a very vital part, of the life of several hundred millions of people in America and Europe: it offers them the wish-fulfillments, the examples of class-collaboration, and the empty diversion of nonsense, which are necessary for them to endure the reign of the capitalist system. For Hollywood is a system; just as the capitalist system of which it is a part. And like the capitalist system, Hollywood, its reality, is very intangible. How easy it would be, if we could put our finger on a man or a group of men, and say, he or they represent Hollywood. But no one in Hollywood is indispensable. Films are produced by a completely collective effort of tens, sometimes hundreds, of people. In the very heart of capitalism, in the very choice capitalist industry of the films, there has developed a real collectivism —and one which the capitalists never stop denying. They speak of individual geniuses, yet every student of the cinema knows that what qualities are in Hollywood films have been produced by the sum total of the collectivity, which is greater than the sum of its parts. Take the "geniuses" and put them in Europe, or even only in New York: they no longer turn out films up to Hollywood standards.

Hollywood and the Cinema Workers

The reality of Hollywood is something that cannot, then, be circumscribed, set apart, touched and defined, yet, it is sensed the very first day a worker sets foot within one of the studios. He is there, alone, whether writer, director, actor, technician or unskilled laborer, and in face of him is that power: Hollywood. He cannot buck it, if the Church of Rome could not. Struggle though he may, he is forced to become a cog in the collective effort of Hollywood, an effort expressing a class which is not his. If he refuses to enter into the combine, he is crushed, thrust aside. The terrible intangible reality of Hollywood has conquered again.

The empty, hollow words of Hollywood's mythos have become its evanescent reality. You can't shoot at a ghost and hope to hit him.

And this brings us to the problem of individual workers and groups of workers, sufficiently awakened to try to fight Hollywood. First of all, there are those on the fringe of the industry, its publicity-valets, the innumerable newspaper correspondents, American and foreign, who disseminate the glory of Hollywood through the world. Many of these are not quite as unawakened as the written-to-order articles that they turn out would make one believe. But their contact with the studios is held in a firm

grip by the Hays Organization. Of course, no direct censorship is exercised. But let one of them tell the truth about Hollywood, some of its stars with their egomania, some of its producers with their self-indulgences, or its unbelievably sordid intrigues. He is hauled before the Hays Organization. He is not directly reproved. But such terms as "good-will," "fair breaks," and other such deceptive fronts will form the body of the sermon. "Is he giving Hollywood a fair break?" they ask. "Is he showing the world the side of it that the world really wants to see?" And so on. If he answers yes, his entrée to the studios may be suspended when the next trimestrial cards are issued. If he answers no, if he does not stand by his guns, he will get another chance. But now he has to watch his step. Hollywood has encroached upon his mental integrity. And writing about Hollywood means his livelihood. So the economic determinism leaves him only one way out: if he revolts, he is crushed; he must remain mum. Yet, you will answer, there is strength in united action of the workers. Let him organize.

This is a complex problem also in Hollywood. The unskilled workers and the technicians receive much higher weekly wages than in most other industries. The fact that these wages are not regular, that work comes in two-, three- or four-week assignments, and then stops for equally long periods, still escapes the workers. The fact that, despite the huge salaries of the stars, labor in the cinema receives a smaller proportion of the wealth it creates than in any other industry except the tobacco-industry (the lowest paid, in this light, in the U.S.), is also not perceived by them. Bourgeois trade-unions have thus far kept the lower strata of Hollywood workers in check.

What about the upper strata, then? What about the writers, directors, producers and stars, with huge salaries, and not all of them altogether lacking in intelligence? Many of them are awakened. To the extent of what they feel they can afford, and still retain their jobs, many of them have contributed money and even their personal efforts to the cause of the proletariat. But this has not grown to great proportions, and at present threatens to diminish even more. Why?

Hollywood, after all, is in California, a state which for many years has been an open-shop realm, and has known a police terror almost unparalleled elsewhere in the U.S.A. Now many writers, actors and directors, who in New York or elsewhere openly express their understanding of and sympathy with the proletarian cause, come to Hollywood at first with the intention of staying only a short time and gathering up as much of the freely-flowing Hollywood money as possible. Then they intend to return to the East, and resume their own work, both artistic and political. So, while in California, they prefer not to antagonize the studio that employs them, by any political action. But once inside the studios, and intent on closing one's eyes politically and socially, the hugeness, the terribleness of the organization, of the system crushes one. Radical writers soon forget that they intended to return East. They remain in Hollywood. But they have also forgotten that their class-alignment is on the side of the proletariat. They are engulfed by the capitalist system of Hollywood. Occasionally, perhaps, they will still contribute a few dollars for some strike or some particularly pitiful political prisoner—but this is out of human kindness, not out of understanding of the class struggle.

The Struggle Against Hollywood

Let us not end on this defeatist note. One or two exceptions, a small handful of writers, and at least one world-renowned star, have resisted Hollywood; and while continuing to work within the framework of the studios, have dared to speak their minds and show their sympathies. The writers are one and all known to the police, hounded, tracked down, and some of them, today unemployed, may well have failed to have their contracts renewed purely or partly for political reasons. James Cagney, the very talented player of hard-boiled rebellious characters on the screen, was linked with the agricultural strike that followed the San Francisco general strike. When the leaders of the agricultural strike were indicted for criminal syndicalism, letters were found among their papers, from Ella Winter and Lincoln Steffens, transmitting sums of money purportedly coming from Cagney. As an indictment for criminal syndicalism was asked against him also on the strength of these letters, Cagney could only deny having made the contributions. The Prosecutor thereupon got a judge to issue an injunction against Cagney, restricting him from lending "moral or financial support" to the Communist Party or any other "subversive" organization in the future. Should Cagney be found to lend such support, he will be in contempt of court, and the prejudiced anti-working class judge who issued the injunction will be empowered to pass against him a sentence entirely at his discretion, and a summary sentence against which there is no appeal.

These and other cases of police terrorism and intimidation have up to the present kept overt work on the part of well-known cinema personalities down to a minimum. But, as every other injustice, these have awakened strong reactions in many otherwise

dorment people. Liberty is denied, they feel; something must be wrong with the system.

What is wrong with Hollywood is wrong because of the system. Hollywood, in its organizations as well as in the films it turns out, expresses perfectly the capitalist class which has created and sponsored it. Hollywood should be the strongest weapon in the hands of the capitalist class, if they knew how to use it. Until now, lacking in a Marxist understanding of the world around them, the American capitalists have ignored to a great extent the use they might make of Hollywood. Whether or not the defeat of the Church at the hands of Hollywood will mean anything to them, the near future will tell. It is possible the American ruling-class may not take advantage of Hollywood for they see only the surface: and in surface the Church defeated Hollywood, whereas, as we have seen, Hollywood was the real victor, on the economic plane. Just as it has supplanted the Church as opiate for the American people, so Hollywood can and in part does do the work previously required by capitalism of the press and the schools. Can it down these also? Who can tell?

If fascism, in an overt form, should come to America, it could not help making use of Hollywood: and Hollywood in that case would become not the opiate of the people that it is at present but the deadly vicious poison Hitler has attempted to make out of the once well known German cinema. And Hollywood's overt propaganda films would doubtless be far more successful than those of the German studios have been thus far.

The mythical Hollywood, the city that does not exist, thus finds its reality in its class aspect. Hollywood is a class reality, part and parcel of the capitalist system; someday, perhaps, it may become the backbone of fascism. This is no myth, but reality, no longer intangible, but deadly real, definite, an enemy which only very great strength will be able to overcome.

The Hollywood system, we have seen, is terrible, too huge for any one individual to buck, or even any group so powerful as the Church of Rome. Useful though the petty skirmishes of Hollywood workers against the Hollywood system may be, they are not an end in themselves. The general class effort is much more important; for Hollywood will fall only with the class it represents. Already more Hollywood workers, and more California workers, are becoming aware of class issues. Leo Gallagher, famous Los Angeles International Labor Defense lawyer, running for judge last year received 70,000 votes; this year he received over 200,000. The battle against Hollywood and its system on the social plane will be won when these workers and their brothers unite to crush the ruling class.

The battle against the Hollywood myth is on another plane, a cultural one. That is one for the Soviet cinema, for every independent cinema worker, and for every creative artist and consumer of culture in the world, to undertake. Hollywood as a system may fall in a future not too far removed. But as a mentality, as that stifling empty laughter lulling the masses to sleep, cutting them off from thought, from culture, from enlightenment, there is another phase of Hollywood that must be fought. Fighting this is the task that the John Reed Club of Hollywood, the rest of the John Reed Clubs of America, and all the sections of the revolutionary writers and artists the world over must set themselves. For every new moment of the existence of the Hollywood myth, the Hollywood state of mind, makes the final result, complete power for the proletariat, just so much harder to achieve.

JOHN R. CHAPLIN

Hollywood, California

(Editor, journalist, contributing editor to the American *New Theatre*.)

CUBA

Revolutionary Poetry in Cuba

The year 1933 marks one of the important moments in the history of Cuba. The agrarian and anti-imperialist revolution was taking its first firm steps. Repeated strike movements, particularly aggressive in the central sugar plantations from January to May, culminated later in the famous general strike which hurled Machado from power. The workers and peasants seized many central sugar plantations, factories and even small towns.

From this movement and from its lessons, which have already been carefully studied by the worker and peasant class in the Trade Union Unity Conference of the National Workers' Confederation of Cuba (Section of the Red Trade Union International), the agrarian, anti-imperialist movement later developed.

During these same first months of 1933 there was recorded an event of unusual importance in the poetry and in the culture of Cuba: the publication of *Nosotros* (*We*), first book of poems of the first genuine proletarian poet of Cuba, Regino Pedroso.

Regino Pedroso was born in 1903, half Negro and half Chinese. He wrote his first poems on social themes as far back as 1927 and belongs to the group called "The New" (see J. A. F. de Castro and Felix Lizaso, *Modern Poetry in Cuba*). This group began to publish their works in periodicals and reviews in 1920-21.

Pedroso's book is a milestone in the history of Cuban poetry because his poems have not only a strong revolutionary content but also a high artistic quality.

From 1920 to 1930, "The New" poets, essayists, and story writers were divided into two principal groups. There were those who with Pedroso and others ascribed to art a class content, insisted that it be functional, affirmatively realistic and consequently dialectic and revolutionary. Among these were Jose Tallet, Maria and Aurora Villar Buceta, Juan Marinello, Raul Ros, Manuel Marsal, Pablo de la Torriente Brau, Luis Felipe Rodriguez, Ofelia Rodriguez Acosta, Gustavo Aldereguia, Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, Jose Manuel Acosta, Horacio, Vincente Martinez Gonzalez, Ramon Guirao and many others.

The other group developed in *Revista de Avance* which existed from 1927 to 1930, which in the literary movement of Cuba, represents "art for art's sake," the ivory tower, the refinement of the decadent spirit of post-war France.

Of its members, the only really honest one, Juan Marinello, has come to the ranks of the revolutionaries.

Jorge Manach and Francisco Ichaso are among the leaders of the ABC, that neucleus of tropical fascism, no less violent and criminal than the Italian and German. Weighted with an idealistic philosophy, their social outlook is essentially counter-revolutionary.

The Economic Basis

Both groups represent the conflict between materialism and idealism which holds the same significance in the history of Cuban thought and literature—discounting specific characteristics—as in other countries. Throughout the 19th century, idealism, embodied in the autonomists, defended the metropolis, the ruling classes, Spain, and denied the necessity and the possibility of revolution. The rationalists and materialists supported the struggle against Spain. Today the idealist group is very close to imperialism and the native bourgeoisie and landowners.

But neither the one group nor the other, however different their artistic, political and literary manifestations, was generated spontaneously. They are rooted in the social process and have a class basis. Judgement and characterization of these men and these facts must wait until we have a Marxian interpretation of the history of Cuba, and especially of the 30 years of pseudo republic. This is a work which needs to be undertaken immediately. To begin with, Jose Carlos Mariategui's book, *Siete Ensayos de la Realidad Peruana,* once its errors are corrected, may serve as a pattern.

The Cuban social process pivots around certain events which I need not take up in detail here: the war of 1895, called The War of Independence, which ended with the Spanish-Yankee War in 1898, the Treaty of Versailles, the Platt Amendment and the Permanent Treaty between Cuba and Spain. This treaty gave concrete form to the politico-economic aspirations of the North American statesmen for the whole of the 19th century and laid a basis for the actiivty of Yankee finance capital which immediately started operations. Yankee investments in Cuba in 1896 were 50 millions; in 1907-08 they had jumped to 300 millions. The European war with the consequent rise in the price of sugar and the transfer of the land to the Yankees following the crash of 1920 finished the process: American investments soared to 1,500 millions and the whole economy was left in foreign hands. Since then the intensification of the economic crisis has continued without interruption.

The present decade is marked by events of an extraordinary importance. There were two strong student movements (1923, 1927), uniting purely academic ends with public and political proposals. The Communist Party of Cuba was founded in 1926. In the same year the Anti-Imperialist League and the Jose Marti Popular University were organized. Into the struggle were drawn such men as Julio Antonio Mella, and Ruben Martinez Villena, student and intellectual, and poet of the proletariat.

There has been a rapid and profound radicalization of the proletarian class, which has grown in number with the 100 per cent increase in the production of sugar (1914, 2,700 thousand tons; 1923-24, 5,200 thousand tons) and the rationalization of production processes. The peasantry has been led—especially during 1931-32—toward a revolutionary way out of the crisis. The petty bourgeoisie, following the example of a small group of intellectuals and artists called "The Minority," which meets regularly on Saturdays, continues to agitate and protest.

All this corresponds in Cuba to the Russian revolution of 1917, to the suppressed revolutions of Germany, Austria and Hungary, to the revolutionary ferment in Mexico and India.

Without these and other factors, the Cuban revolution would never have reached the state of maturity it has now attained. Nor would we have the group of revolutionary writers and artists gathered around the *Masas,* organ of the Anti-Imperialist League; nor Regino Pedroso and *Nosotros.*

The Path of Pedroso

Pedroso's book contains some poems reflecting his former attitude, and in showing

the biological and ideological orbit traversed by the poet, also shows that of the class to which he belongs. This is one of its greatest merits from the social and political point of view. Some years ago, from 1920 to 1926, when the earlier and second part of the book were written, he was a manual laborer, expressing the pain whose real origin he did not know, sporadic revolt without direction, attacks of pessimism, scepticism. All that in sonorous Parnassian verse, pure and exquisite. These, are his first poems, of old far-off routes, *beautiful constellations of words,* to use the poet's own expression. He makes no allusion whatever to his condition as an exploited member of a given social group. He speaks of humanity in general. He does not think of himself—possible influence of the democratic-liberal myth—that he, like his class brothers, is,—a mere producer of surplus value.

The Cuban proletariat did not have a clearly defined class consciousness. The struggle against the bourgeoisie and finance capital, against native and foreign exploiters, was confused. "Bourgeoisie," "Proletariat," "finance capital," "imperialism," were obscure, indefinite concepts.

In his later poems, beginning with 1927 and found in the first part of the book, the man who speaks, the poet who sings has a dialectic materialist conception—perhaps still a little confused, of the social process and life. He possesses a clear class consciousness, understands the origin of his own sufferings and those of his class. What is more important still, since it shows collective affirmation as opposed to the individualism of the earlier poems, he understands the sole purpose of his rebellions and the sole channel through which they must be motivated and guided.

Pedroso's book had immediate consequences. Counter-revolutionary criticism hastened to the attack, signaling out particularly the Marxian conception of art, or rather what certain individuals imagined it was. It gave an opportunity to clear up this question and the occasion was used to advantage.

On the other hand, the publication of *Nosotros* encouraged a group of young poets to publish their own poems of a social character. Some of them, such as the "Prayer to Comrade Basurero," by Vincente Martinez Gonzalez, were of real value.

Pedroso in his verses of a social character has not achieved any new form. That he is working, striving for it, is shown by the fact that the form of his poetry has changed as fundamentally as its content. But in *Nosotros* he is still far from achieving it. He approaches his objective in his latest poems, "September" and "1934 Grind," the first dealing with the September 29 massacre and published for the interment of Mella's ashes;

Cover of Nosotros *latest book of the Cuban poet Regino Pedroso*

and the second, inspired by the events which followed the fall of Grau and the bloody sugar season of 1934. Both have much of cinematography and vibrant reporting. They are moving because of the graphic quality of certain images. The form of the poem is in strict accord with the motif. It is as if such events could be sung only in the form which Pedroso uses.

In our judgement, Pedroso approaches the new form to which, moreover, all modern art aspires and which it has undoubtedly been farther from achieving in poetry than in other arts.[1]

New Forces

Shortly after the appearance of *Nosotros,* Vicente Martinez Gonzalez published his first proletarian poem, the "Prayer to Comrade Basurero," which is outstanding in the flood of poems on social themes because of the strength of some of its images. The idea, sincerely and cleanly expressed, will reach the depths of intellectual comprehension of worker and peasant.

A year later, in the first part of 1934, *Bongo,* a volume of Negro poems by Ramon Guirao appeared. *Bongo* brings to the proletarian revolutionary lyric the pain, the re-

[1] *The first poems by Regino Pedroso published in the United States appeared in the monthly* New Masses *in 1931. They were translated by Langston Hughes, who met the poet in Havana at that time.*—Editor.

volt and the hope of the social group that has suffered most—the Negro. Guirao gives to the typical, which at times degenerates into picturesqueness and adjectives, a political class content. In this quality of Guirao's book lies its greatest merit.

Bongo has other qualities which make it worthy of careful criticism. Despite the white blood of the author it is an important contribution to Afro-Cuban art, which is after all, a Cuban contribution to universal art. In *Bongo* there are lines of a superb poetic feeling.

There is also the most recent addition to the ranks of the proletarian poets, one who occupies a high and well deserved position in Cuban lyricism, the young primary school teacher, Emilio Ballegas.

His transition from pure poetry to proletarian verse, his entrance into the Anti-Imperialist League, to whose review he has been contributing for months, has been awaited with impatience for several years. In a letter I wrote to him in 1931 regarding the publication of his last book, I asked him to study, to make a social, economic and political analysis, in order to understand the reason for many of the questions which I knew were tormenting him.

Ballegas has a great heart and feels in the depths of his bowels the pain and injustice under which the masses of Cuba live, but his idealistic conception of life and of art prevented him from seeing clearly. His friendship and his exaggerated opinion of some of the people connected with the *Revista de Avance* which I have mentioned, had much to do with his indecision and confusion.

When Pedroso's book was published and I replied to the counter-revolutionary critics, I remember that Ballegas did not agree with me. He did not yet understand the Marxian conception of art, or perhaps it would be better to say, he was not fully convinced of it.

Finally he has come over to our side. Now he figures among the contributors of *Masas*. His poems have won the attention and enthusiastic comment of Rafael Alberti, leading Spanish revolutionary poet.

Ballegas is a most valuable addition to revolutionary ranks. Others are sure to follow in his footsteps.

These brief notes are by no means a comprehensive review of Cuban poetry. They may serve, however, to point to the growing revolutionary cultural movement of Cuba.

J. M. VALDES RODRIGUEZ

Havana, Cuba

(Cuban editor, journalist, who has long been closely associated with the Cuban literary movement.)

T. Motylova

Brown Shirt Literature

Notes on Some Fascist Writers

The fascists like to claim that national-socialism is not only a political trend but also a world philosophy. To the degree to which this is true, this so-called world philosophy completely precludes all possibility of creating artistic work of any value. The philosophic basis of fascism—an extreme idealism, frank mysticism, distrust of the cognitive faculties of reason—is the expression of a profound intellectual crisis of the bourgeoisie, its distrust of its own ability to know the world. The fascist idea of society—denying the existence of classes, explaining historical events racially—is the expression of the fear of the bourgeoisie of its inevitable doom, fear of the concrete historical truth which relentlessly proclaims it. In their deadly fear of the concept of "class," the fascists substitute for the real content of social relations, biologic abstractions—the concept of the nation united by common blood, the concept of race. "Population—is an abstraction if I, for instance, leave out the classes of which it consists." *(Marx.)*

On such a basis, representing escape from living reality, how can live, full-bloded, artistic images arise? On such a basis, how can we have a literature worthy of the memory of the great writers who, with artistic intuition, have penetrated to the core of social relations—men like Shakespeare, Goethe, Balzac?

The greatness of the artists of the period of ascending capitalism was based on the progressive role of their class, which came out not only in its own name, but in the name of all the oppressed. The greatness of the artists of the period of flourishing capitalism was based on the self criticism of a healthy class which still dared to admit differences in its own ranks. The literature, however, of a decaying and terroristically-aggressive capitalism, fears a profound or truthful depiction of reality. While the artists of the bourgeoisie's earlier days provided intellectual depth, the artists of decaying capitalism who have not the courage to break with their class, tend more and more sharply in two directions. One type of bourgeois artist of the period of the general crisis of capitalism becomes the creator of a literature for the few, irrational, immersed in mystic contemplation or form seeking; the other—is a hired writer of the imperialist bourgeoisie, excelling in producing primitive and crude lies, delivering cheap fascist agitational pieces for the market. It is not by mere chance that the national-socialists have raised high the poet of the parasitic bourgeoisie—the mystic George; or that their annual premium for the best literary work was awarded to Euringer's mystic oratory. It is not mere chance, on the other hand, that the fascist press praises primitive agitational pieces to the skies, as works in the "new style."

It must be noted that the official national socialist literature is even poorer than German fascist literature as a whole. The few war novels which bear the stamp of artistic quality (the books of Salomon, Dwinger, Schauwecker), are spoken of by the fascists themselves, as outside the Hitler camp. Hitler fascism—an unnatural combination of capitalist servitude, and an anti-capitalist, demagogic phraseology—is an especially unproductive soil for creative work.

2

A *Literature Which Takes One Away From Life:* Let us take a closer look at some of the "leading" books of national-socialist literature (in all of them the action is laid previous to Hitler's usurpation of power).

If one were to read a few national-socialist novels he could without difficulty write a new novel of the same sort along the following lines:

A worker (variant: an unemployed) Meyer or Schultz, has a poor time of it. He is dissatisfied with life. He is poverty-stricken. In want, he succumbs to despair for a time and becomes a communist—but he soon becomes disillusioned with the Communist Party and joins a national-socialist detachment of storm troopers (variant: a detachment of Hitlerite youth). After becoming an active and disciplined storm trooper he takes part in some agitational crusades, street skirmishes with communists and police, and in some fights during national-socialist meetings. At last the happy day—January 30, 1933—arrives and our hero, together with his comrades, joyfully greet the "leader" who has become the Reichs-Chancellor (variant: our hero dies at his post killed by the "commune," his comrades bewail the loss and only then joyfully greet the "leader").

"Literature should not take one away from life but attract one to it," fascist literary critics repeat in various keys.

For official national-socialist men of letters, however, life is confined to the regiments of storm-troopers. It is to this life that they want to "attract" the reader. The heroes of most of their books are "workers" that one never sees at work, or "unemployed" never seen at the employment agencies. That is exactly why their heroes are not living people, but lifeless, abstract ghosts. The reader, for instance, has a hard job trying to imagine "Comrade" Tonne alive—it is hard because he is shown by the author not as a live son of his class, with all the concrete peculiarities characteristic of a young proletarian—but like an abstract biological unit, as an Aryan "man generally." And this is exactly what makes it hard to believe in Tonne's proletarian origin—just as one would find it hard to believe in the proletarian descent of a Manniquin dressed in working clothes.

"They come from the shops and they come from the fields . . ." the well known fascist poet Anakker sings about the storm-troopers. But, how do the workers, peasants, artisans united into detachments of storm-troopers live and work? This we can not find out from the national-socialist novels.

True the customary starting point of the novels is the poverty of the hero. But all, Schentzinger, Hagern, Bade, etc., evade the question of the reasons for this poverty (except some vague hints of the "international Jew" and "the November criminals"). Poverty, want, starvation—these, to them, are abstract biological concepts. They avoid the question for whom the hero is working. The enemy against whom the wrath of author and hero are directed is—not the capitalist master and not even the mythical "international Jew," but—his next door neighbor or his neighbor in the shop—the proletarian with a Communist Party card in his pocket.

Trying to win the reader's confidence by pictures of poverty the fascist authors carefully draw his attention away from the real causes of poverty.

3

National Unity and Fascist Hierarchy:

"We know no classes. There are only people who do things and parasites who must be thrown out . . . And what must you do? Be a good comrade, a strong lad, a decent person under all circumstances! And what you do besides—whether you are making furniture or browsing over court cases —makes no difference to us!" the young Hitlerite instructs the recruit Quex, hero of the novel of Schenzinger.

The idea of national unity and the denial of the existence of classes is persistently repeated throughout all national-socialist literature. It is designed to blur the contradictions and even the differences between the worker and exploiter.

"Wise peasants and bourgeois know themselves that they will be well off only when the German worker will have decent living conditions. And it is these people that Adolf Hitler has united about himself," says the hero of one of the novels—Storm-trooper, Comrade Tonne. This sophism proves enough to dissolve all doubts of the young communist Tonne and change him into an ardent storm-trooper. If Tonne were a live person he would come across instances every day that prove the exact opposite; but the schematic Tonne has been invented by Hagern for the very purpose of changing instantaneously, before the readers eyes, and realize his common interests with the "wise" kulaks and bourgeois.

After this there is nothing amazing in the fact that in Ewer's novel the dying Horst Wessel pleads before Hitler to accept Prince August Wilhelm von Hohenzollern into the ranks of the national-socialists, using the same incontrovertible argument: "There is really no difference between a Prince and a workman!"

In spite of the fact that national-socialist writers show the storm-troopers in their party "activity," (keeping silence on their position in industry) they do not succeed in creating the illusion of equality supposed to exist inside the storm-troop detachments.

Denying all class contradictions, they emphasize the strictest party hierarchy in the ranks of the national-socialists. The fundamental virtue of a rank and file storm-trooper or young Hitlerite is—blind, unreasoning, unchanging submissiveness.

One slogan have we.
That in our hearts ever sings,
One slogan have we
That in our ears ever rings:
Submission and Faith!

(Anacker.)

In *Young Hitlerite Quex* there is a curious description of how Quex, assigned to the personal service of a district leader of the Hitlerite youth gets his first task: he must bring the district leader a stein of beer:

"Heinie pulled his hat down and rushed out of the room like a shot. He almost fell headlong on the sidewalk when he slipped on the wet asphalt. Too bad the saloon was so close! He would have liked to run on this errand all the way to Charlottenburg. It was his first errand!"

Schentzinger covers many pages with infatuated descriptions of how the young Hitlerite Heinie, who is given the name of Quex for his speed and promptness *(Quecksilber*

—mercury in German) runs about Berlin joyfully obeying his superior and enthusiastically serving half as a messenger boy, half as a valet. It would be interesting to have a Soviet apprentice in whose consciousness socialist discipline is inseparably bound up with a sense of personal dignity read those pages!

But not all storm-troopers are submissive. There are a few chosen ones who are born to command. Such a type of leader, one of the chosen ones, is Horst Wessel, son of a priest, a student who left the university to go to the people, to the storm-troop detachment. In the person of a Horst Wessel, Bade and Ewers glorify Nietzsche's "blond beast" —man gifted with the magic power of subjugating others to their own will and influence. Ewers particularly, insistently emphasizes that the difference between the scion of a "good family," and the plebeian storm-troopers whom he commands is a difference inborn and immutable.

Thus the phantom of all-national equality is in reality amplified by a very real fascist hierarchy of castes, and the ideal of the submissive storm-trooper is the image of a leader born to command.

4

Methods of "Persuasion": Horst Wessel was, of course, born a fascist. The rank and file storm-troopers, however, are made—and made before the reader's eyes.

The "re-education" of fascist heroes proceeds as follows: First the authors bring up communist arguments against fascism. Then the hero looks closer at the communists and "his eyes are opened."

The fascist scribes do not disdain the most boldfaced calumnies of the Communist Party. They represent the Karl Liebknecht House as some criminal organizing center for all Germany. The young communists are identified with gangs of thieves *(Young Hitlerite Quex).* The prostitute Erna, Horst Wessel's love-mate was, of course, before getting acquainted with Horst Wessel, a member of the "Union of Red Women and Girls." The Communists use thieves and robbers on their secret missions.

The identification of the communists with criminals is strangely enough combined . . . with the assertion of the similarity between the communists and national-socialists!

"He came to the nazis consciously. He realized clearly that the future belongs to them or the communists. Both were equally imbued with revolutionary spirit, anti-bourgeois feeling and the spirit of fight for a great idea . . ." (Horst Wessel.)

Schentzinger goes in for even subtler demagogy: he shows how a peculiar sort of united front between communist workers and national-socialists is established in combatting the police while there is a fight against the dispossession of an unemployed worker. A young Hitlerite philosophizes on this occasion as follows: "Politics is politics —but human is human . . . In my opinion it is very characteristic about this business that those who took the part of the poor fellow were just the nazis and the communists . . . I mean by this that with both parties the main feeling is—pity for the crushed creatures."

Meaning: we, nazis, are a party of workers, a party of the poor, and the communists are—tramps, adventurers, connected with the criminal elements. Since there is no difference in principle between them, but only a moral difference—why should not the communist worker join the storm-troopers?

As can be seen, the authors of fascist novels do not particularly try to justify intellectually the change of their heroes from communism to fascism: they are unable to do this. Their heroes do not all become storm troopers because they are consciously convinced of the correctness of the national-socialist views. According to the principles of agitation and propaganda promulgated by Goebbels, this is not at all necessary: quite the contrary, "small people" should be taught not to try to penetrate the meaning of complex phenomena:

"We had to simplify complex phenomena so that the small man of the street could understand them. Primitiveness was to us a means of achieving this end . . ." *(Angriff,* March 20, 1934.)

One of the leaders of the Hitlerite youth expresses this even more simply in *Quex:*

"I do not want you to occupy yourselves much with politics. You do not understand anything about it anyway!"

And really why should the young Hitlerite storm-troopers occupy themselves with politics? Politics is the business of the chosen ones, the business of the leaders. For the grey masses, for those who need not understand but need only submit, it is enough to substitute faith for conviction.

Nevertheless the fascist masters of "artistic" propaganda, in addition to calumnies of the communists, in addition to blind faith and mysticism, have recourse to another argument in order to catch the worker reader: demagogic promises. But the promises are not of what Hitler will do for the workers, or what the happy life prophesied by Hitler will look like in the Third Empire. While the fascist orators and journalists, at least prior to the usurpation of power, were lavish in promises of this "happy life," the fascist writers are unable to concoct even an "artistic" scheme which would illustrate those promises. They usually wind up their story with the triumphal scene of the "national triumph" of January 30, tactfully leaving Hitler on the threshold of the Imperial chan-

cellery. They do give, however, perfectly concrete promises as to the direct material advantages for workers and unemployed joining the storm-troop detachments. So long as the unemployed Tonne or Schultz kept aloof from the nazis—they starved, were miserable, had a pretty hard time of it generally. But as soon as they join the storm-troopers all their material cares and misery disappear as if by some magic wand. Even more demonstrative is the destiny of young Quex. On the first pages of the novel he is shown as a restless adolescent, dissatisfied with life, vaguely seeking something. On joining the young Hitlerites he not only gets work and a place to sleep, and a uniform, and eats—his spiritual needs also are satisfied: in submission to his superiors he finds meaning in life. In addition a beautiful fascist young lady gives him her love. What more does one want?

Such are the crude, primitive methods of "persuasion" the fascists use in seeking converts.

5

Steel or Glass Romantics? It is, however, not enough to get the workers to join the storm-troop detachments: it is necessary also to justify the activities of the storm-troopers in their own eyes, to show them as heroes.

The storm-trooper of the pen—Bade, Hagern and others—remember Goebbels' commandment: "If we want to keep the party together we must... appeal to the most primitive instinct of the masses." (Goebbels: *From Kaiserhof to Imperial Chancellery.)* They try to glorify the crudest violence in the eyes of the masses. To them violence is not a means of a revolutionary alteration of the world, not a means helping the birth of the new, as it is to the proletariat; to the fascist violence is a means of struggle in defense of moribund capitalism, it is necessary for them to strangle the growth of the new. The fascists find it advantageous to hide from the masses the end to which they need violence; they find it advantageous to stir up in the masses the meanest, the most bestial instincts, in order to justify before them the use of violence against the revolutionary movement by means of the idealization of violence per se.

Here is, for instance, one of many descriptions of the "peaceful and disciplined" behavior of the fascists at a meeting (from Bade's book):

"The Nazis began to storm. Their fists work fast, their arms like flails. They have nothing in their hands, no chair-legs, no beer-bottles, no knives, no jugs. They clear the hall with their bare hands...

"The storm-troopers work like a select, well trained team. Schultz and Schindler have long come up on the dais. From there they throw one beer-jug after another. Then storm-trooper Schultz, to his great joy, discovers several dozen bottles—and now we have no longer the storm-trooper Schultz, but Sergeant Schultz from the Third Regiment, expert in hand grenade throwing. One bottle after another comes flying from his experts hands. And the mysterious enthusiasm of battle got such hold of him that Karl, who stood near him hears in amazement how Schultz before each pitch shouts some strange numbers:

" 'Twenty-one,
twenty-two,
twenty-three,'

and then throws the bottle in an arc into the hall. Karl who was an infant yet during the war does not know that this is the fighting formula when throwing explosive hand-grenades. On counting twenty-one one must let go at once so that it will not hit the thrower himself in the face...

"Pools of blood. Heaps of bodies. Broken tables.
The first Communists run out of the hall.
The first wounded are carried outside...."
No comments are required.

But even here the fascists act according to the rule: whoever will not be convinced by this argument will be convinced by one diametrically opposite. You may think that to be the victim of violence is not as disgusting as to be the one to employ violence,—that it is better to weep than spill other's blood. Fine, the fascists have provided for this also.

While Bade and Hagern specialize on descriptions of skirmishes and beatings in which, the "heroes" in brown shirts turn out the victors—Schentzinger and Ewers on the contrary, try to represent the storm-troopers as oppressed innocents, compelled to defend themselves. They surround Wessel and Quex with an aureole of martyrdom having them shot from behind a corner—by communist villains, of course. The picture of Horst Wessel slowly dying in the arms of his sister and of his old mother fabricated by Ewers for the benefit of the souls of flabby burghers, could very well compete in weepy sentimentality with the soul-wracking novels over which our grandmothers wept in their youth. In just such a tearful spirit is a whole cycle of poems by Anacker *Once I Had a Comrade,* dedicated to the victims of the "commune."

Still it is not advantageous to the fascists to represent things as if their only consistent enemy were the Communist Party. Up to their usurpation of power they—one way or another—declared themselves "in opposition" to the bourgeois-democratic govern-

ment apparatus—one can speculate a little on this also for the sake of demagogy.

In Ewer's novel Horst Wessel meditates in a moment of leisure:

"In the movement which he served there was something not altogether decent and, of course, anti-bourgeois. And just this romanticism, this stirring revolutionary quality urged the movement ahead. To renovate Germany, awaken national thought,—this had been tried before by many, my God, tried by various leaders in the most various ways . . ."

Horst Wessel formulates fairly accurately the specific peculiarities of the national-socialist movement: it is not in the ideas of national renovation (i.e. of the renascence of German imperialism) which other ideologists of monopolistic capital had also tried to put forward, but in that scum of romantic pseudo-revolution which misled so many workers, Hagern, Bade, Ewers, the originators of a falsely revolutionary romanticism, tell in great detail of even minor conflicts of the storm-troopers with the police, of every arrest for a day,—or short suspension of the *Angriff*. About one such suspension Goebbels wrote in his diary: "Our newspaper will suffer a great material loss from this, but politically this is very advantageous. This is one more weapon in our hands against Brüning."

Goebbels' literary disciples utilize this weapon widely, expand on every fact that might serve as proof of the fact that the storm-troopers are anti-bourgeois. This is "politically very advantageous" to them.

It is perfectly evident that such a demagogically false, simplified and distorted reality as is contained in the fascist novels and poems can be only of an extremely poor artistic quality. The style of fascist literature is not that of the true romance of struggle, not the heroic romance of great ideas and sentiments but—a romanticism of beastly violence and bourgeois sentimentality. This style is a caricature of the "steely romance" of which Goebbels dreams: it is rather a glassy romance corresponding to the type of weapon so beloved by storm-trooper Schultz. The fascists want to pass glass off as precious stones.

Together with artificial pathos and sugary tearfulness the fascists favor another "artistic" subterfuge: purposeful vulgarization of language and imagery as a counterfeit folk-likeness, a purposeful befouling of the language with "genuine" Berlin dialect and a patois intelligible only to the frequenters of third-rate saloons. It is evident that the submissive storm-trooper whose praises are sung by the fascist writers, the ideal storm-trooper who submits blindly without the least idea why—must be ignorant, must be illiterate, so that the half-educated Horst Wessel or the unsuccessful litterateur Goebbels may seem to him ideals of erudition and wisdom. It is understood that fascist literature must cultivate the ideal of ignorance. Bade, for instance, as proof of the closeness of the fascist leaders to the masses, reproduces the letter of greeting of the storm-troopers on Goebbel's birthday, a letter written "a la Berlin" and full of grammatical errors. Even in this matter, what a difference from Soviet literature fighting for purity and precision of language!

6

The Next Problem—The Idealization of Forced Labor: We repeat: all the books considered here date their action back to the days prior to Hitler's accession to power. Not a single important fascist book which would show the Germany of today, Hitlerite Germany, has yet appeared. This is not surprising: if before their usurpation of power the national-socialists could pass off a false romance of struggle, represent themselves as unfortunate victims, speculate on their opposition to the government, and mainly—criticize capitalist reality to some exent—now all these methods of fooling the masses have fallen apart. Now the storm-troopers themselves have become a delicate subject for fascist writers.

So what is left for the troubadours of the storm-troopers to do? Recently Rosenberg, on opening the exhibition of German graphic arts at the Siemens plants, put a new problem before the fascist art workers: "It is our inmost duty to present before the soul and before the eye the meaning of German labor." In other words—Siemens, Thyssen, Krupp, through Rosenberg's mouth instruct the writers and artists: show the labor on capitalist enterprises—hard, compulsive labor—as attractive for the worker.

Submitting to the orders of their masters, Peter Hagern, Hans Jürgen Nierenz and some other storm-troopers of the pen have lately tried, in the pages of *Angriff* and *Der Deutsche* to sing of concrete, iron and steel, —sing of the abstract conception of labor, torn from its living reality.

National-socialist literature, poor both quantitatively and qualitatively, is of positive significance in only one respect: it exposes the inner contradictions of national-socialism very clearly: it proves conclusively that on the basis of fascist philosophy it is impossible to either understand or depict reality properly.

The fascists will not succeed in creating any genuine artistic works any more than they will succeed in doing away with class contradictions, or to crush the revolutionary movement of the German proletariat. Only the victorious proletariat of a Soviet Germany will be able to create a new, powerful, free and genuinely national art.

NEW PAINTINGS FROM UZBEKISTAN

The Red Army, a mural by Podkovirov

Women worker-udarniks, a painting by Karakhan

CHRONICLE

USA

The John Reed Clubs Meet

Orrick Johns, newly elected national secretary of the American John Reed Clubs, writes of the recent congress held in Chicago.

What the author considers important is the fact that those in attendance were:

"Young writers from the industrial Lake region, the northern wheat belt and Missouri valley where farmers are starving and battling, from New York and the Eastern Textile strike fields, spoke to an overflowing audience of Chicago intellectuals. They brought something new, vital, revolutionary. They crystallized the struggles of their territories. They were carriers of a fresh culture, young but bursting for outlets. And here they had an outlet; here they fraternized with others who shared their assurance of a proletarian world coming to birth. The audience, half standing, listened to the end. Some of the questions they too had been asking were being answered. This was the great significance of the Second National Conference of the John Reed Clubs; that it represented a high level of revolutionary consciousness; that it was made up of new writers and artists just beginning to be heard; and these writers and artists had created—since the last conference—their own periodicals and mediums through which they could be heard. The conference was important in *quality.*"

The writer brings forward the shortcomings of the Clubs, born primarily of rapid growth: "narrowness, leftism; lack of clarity on the role of the John Reed Clubs; the presence in them of heterogeneous elements; the neglect of the economic demands of cultural workers on the one hand, and on the other the complete absorption of creative workers in Artists' Unions, Artists' Equities and trade union work; the degeneration of meetings into business meetings and factional arguments; the lack of broad national leadership. Steps were taken by the conference to clarify these problems, and to meet them, not by rigid methods, but by opening new outlets for expansion."

The concrete accomplishments to which the 1934 conference could point to were, first of all, "the appearance of sturdy and promising publications" (all of which were reported in successive issues of *International Literature).*

"Wallace Phelps, one of the editors of *Partisan Review* ably analyzed the leftwing periodicals of the conference. He pointed out that the capitalist magazines were attempting to enter their field and imitate them for purposes of popular distortion."

'The most vital contributions to the discussion," the report continues, "came from the Middle West. In this respect the conference showed that the John Reed Club had gained vigorous new personalities, men and women who were writing, painting, drawing, and reporting the labor war, who were not afraid of downrightness in criticism."

Among these were Meridel Le Sueur of Minneapolis who "perfectly represented the younger generation of a line of pioneers." Jack Conroy, of Moberly, Missouri, editor of *The Anvil,* "who gave a critical discussion of proletarian novels.... Here was the new man, the agrarian-industrial Ulysses of brutalized road-life in America... who wrote for years in obscurity." Joe Jones, son of a one-armed house painter of St. Louis,... "big, rangy, swift and swift-thinking...." Balch, once a professional boxer, now "publishing powerful and individual stories..." Dick Wright, Negro poet, "impressive for his quiet gravity...," and many more.

Among other speakers were A. B. Magil, who was a delegate to the Kharkov Conference in 1930; Paul Romaine of Milwaukee, Alfred Hayes, gifted poet of New York; the Chicago artists Gilbert Rocke and Maurice Merlin, and Boris Gorelik of New York.

"Alexander Trachtenberg greeted the conference in the name of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and summarized the discussion with Bolshevist incisiveness and humor. His talk heartened and stirred the delegates...

"The conference initiated a primary task which aroused widespread enthusiasm. It was proposed by Trachtenberg, and unanimously endorsed by the conference, that the John Reed Clubs should bend every effort to hold a National Writers' Congress at some time within the next eight months."

The John Reed Club Artists

Meanwhile Walter Quirt, secretary of the New York John Reed Club artists group (whose murals and paintings appeared in a recent issue) writes to *International Literature:*

"Locally we are attempting something interesting and revolutionary. The artists are dividing up into groups formed on craft

Jacket of the American edition of Agnes Smedley's latest book, issued by the Van-Guard Press

Jacket of the English edition issued in Moscow by the Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR

lines: painters, sculptors, graphic, poster and art shop. We think this will solve the problem of interesting members in the Club on the basis of their craft...

"I am now secretary of the Art Group, once more succeeding William Siegel who presided for two years with honor...

"Our Artists Union, in which Club members are active is coming ahead in grand style. It has 750 members to date and promises 1,000 by December. It is definitely going into the trade union field and fights for minimum wages on government projects, organizes commercial artists, issues a paper, conducts lectures and exhibitions, fights for relief for unemployed artists and is a real factor.... In this work we have the cooperation of professor John Dewey, the noted artist Stieglitz and others who take part even in our demonstrations, etc.

"Our John Reed Club School of Art is another real accomplishment. It is now on full-time, seven days a week, and is getting too crowded for our quarters. It is a real threat to other art schools and this year over should see it firmly established as the dominating School of Art in New York."

Newspaper Guild Art Show

The Newspaper Guild also had arranged an art exhibit at the Ehrich-Newhouse Galleries in New York. "Artists from the *Times,* the *World-Telegram,* and *Associated Press* paint and hang their products on the grey drapes, a little dull, rather unimaginative and sometimes competent. Then you stand arrested by the work of a man who sees and you don't have to look into the catalogue to know that this is Burck or Del of *The Daily Worker.*

"Burck's painting *The New Deal* hangs without a title. It is a terrifying canvas of a militiaman bayoneting a striker and it is a bold design, full of movement and a bold conception, full of relentless hate. Burck has all the sweep of a major artist...

"Working in black and white, he has attained a pictorial mastery proportionate to the remarkable conceptions afforded by his revolutionary training."

John J. Spivak—Reporter

John L. Spivak, noted reporter, is attracting nation-wide attention as a result of his articles in the weekly *New Masses, The American Mercury* and other publications on conditions in America (following his cross-country tour); the activities of the Nazis in America; and the facts about the American Red Cross.

In a combination of daring investigation, courageous exposure and brilliant writing—

with a dash of keen humor—he has written articles which have caused a flurry among reactionary circles and has drawn the comment of leading journals.

Michael Gold writes in the American *Daily Worker:* "John L. Spivak seems to me about the best reporter now at work in the United States.

"Reporting is one of the great arts, and was once recognized as such in America.

"Spivak was for years a high-powered, brazen moving picture type of reporter for Bernard Mcfadden's tabloid newspaper. The crimes he committed in his bourgeois past have been confessed amusingly by him in several articles in *The American Mercury.*

"But something happened to him a few years ago; probably his healthy stomach revolted at so much garbage. He went into the deep South to write an exposure of the chain-gang system. It resulted in *Georgia Nigger,* the first pioneering in this field.

"The officialdom of Georgia practically outlawed Spivak from their savage domain because of this book. For this daredevil had made a joke of them, in addition to having turned up some of their beastly crimes, he had got the goods on the Georgian inquisitors. He had copies of state records which told of whippings and murders of the unfortunate prisoners. With a little Brownie camera he had had the nerve to take actual photographs of the most terrific torture scenes, something worse than fascist China.

"He had the facts, he always makes sure that he has the iron-bound, irrefutable truth. This the capitalists cannot forgive, for today truth is revolutionary.

"Spivak's writing is simple and unornamented. He has no tricks, nor any of those graceful subtleties which are the powder and rouge of many of the anemic intellectuals, their substitute for rugged health.

"All his effects are gained by the skillful dramatization of the bare facts. Sometimes there is a real magic in the way these simple facts will pile up into a heart-breaking sequence, as in his article, "A Letter to the President," which he wrote for *The New Masses* on his trip last year around the country . . .

"Spivak is now on the trail of the Nazis, and their secret spy and propaganda system in this country . . .

"He is showing, and naming the names concerned, that quite a few Americans who occupy high governmental posts under Roosevelt are in direct league with the Nazis. Some of them are high officials in the State Department. He is also going to show how wealthy Jews are actually helping finance some of the anti-semitic propaganda of these organizations, the same kind of 'self-preservation' at the cost of their Jewish brothers that one has seen in Germany, where many rich Jews are still immune because of this bribery.

"It is a joy to watch this exuberant and fearless reporter Spivak in action. He himself is a story worth somebody's narrative skill . . ."

Adam Scharrer, German revolutionary writer, author of a number of novels of peasant life, whose story will appear in a forthcoming issue of International Literature

Both liberal weeklies, *The Nation* and *The New Republic* have commented editorially on these articles by Spivak. .

Meanwhile *The Federated Press* reports a rapidly increasing circulation of *The New Masses* as a result of these articles on Nazi activities in America. This news agency has checked up on the facts revealed and finds them accurate in all details.

John L. Spivak is author of *The Devil's Brigade,* a study of Kentucky mountaineer feuds, ending in a dramatic labor struggle; and *Georgia Nigger,* an exposure of Negro peonage in the United States, which has appeared in both English and Russian in the Soviet Union.

His record of life in America today, and of Nazi activities there, will soon be issued in book form.

His latest venture is an exposé of the American Red Cross. It is the leading article in *The American Mercury* (November, 1934) entitled "Shady Business in the Red Cross." The publishers advertise it widely and preface the article in their own journal with this editorial note:

Cover of the American publication of the Associated Workers Clubs

"This, to the best of our knowledge, is the first realistic and comprehensive appraisal of the Red Cross activities ever printed. The facts unearthed by the author are of such a nature as to bring surprise and even consternation to the American people who contribute millions annually to the organization. Their money, it seems, has been collected under false pretenses, and they have a right to know why. The Congress of the United States also has a right to know why, for the Red Cross is chartered by it. Congress owes it to the American people to make a thorough investigation of the Red Cross."

Other Publications

A comradely visitor among the many publications coming to the editors of *International Literature* is the *Workers Club Review* official organ of The Associated Workers Club of New York.

Even in mimeographed form (a clean, efficiently mimeographed example rivalling printing) *Workers Club Review* is alive, informative and as readable as a verbal report from your own neighbor. This is only its healthy appearance.

In content, Workers Club Review adds substance to its readability. With all its minor faults it is a healthy proletarian model. Here are articles not only on the major problems of fascism, war and parliamentary action. Here are all the intimate reports on organization, neighborhood work, worker-correspondence and other problems. Here is a record of achievements and a frank, healthy estimate of shortcomings. Added to this are pieces on the revolutionary theatre (by Margaret Larkin of the Theatre Union); and a poets corner (with verse by M. Millet and Ralph Hayes).

There is something modest but vibrant about this publication. A hearty welcome from *International Literature!*

(As we go to press, we receive the good news that *Workers Club Review* will now appear in enlarged, printed form.)

The Students

The Student Review begins its fourth year in a new—and somewhat unusual format. However the format may please the individual reader, the contents are sure to impress him with a consistently high standard.

With Theodore Draper as editor, *The Student Review* begins a new year with editorials on the war danger; the Youth Congress; and problems arising out of the current struggle.

There is a particularly interesting article by Merrill C. Work on the problems of American Negro students in "Fisk's Fighting Heritage." There is an account of past activities in the article "We Gather Strength." A record of present struggles in the articles "One Front in Minnesota;" "California's Higher Learning;" "A Communication On Phi Betta Kappa from Howard" and others. The titles speak for their healthy revolutionary content. There are other articles, verse and book reviews.

The Student Review begins another year in more vigorous health.

Number Fifteen?

American journals of the Left are growing so rapidly it is becoming a problem to even take note of them. The latest is *Scope*, edited by Harold Lambert and Nathan B. Levine. Ben Hecht, successful writer of novels and scenarios leads the issue with a story of police brutality.

The first number also includes prose by the American peasant bard H. H. Lewis; and prose and verse by Alfred Morang, George Salvatore, Fred R. Miller (editor of *Blast)* and others.

In America, revolutionary literature grows . . .

Always Leftward

Meanwhile *Leftward,* organ of the John Reed Club of Boston, formerly mimeographed, now appears in attractive printed form. Typographically it is the editor's dream. It is a pleasure to look at its clean make-up and sparing use of two colors. In content it wisely aims its big guns at local conditions. Eugene Gordon (who has contributed

to *International Literature* in the past year) writes "As Eggs With Ham," an amusing but basically penetrating analysis of so-called Boston intellectual life. There are other interesting contributions. The only criticism that could be levelled is that for a small journal of only eight pages, shorter contributions should be made. With these (and where are the artists?) that genius printer can surely make *Leftward* a pleasure for the eyes as well as forehead.

New Books

In *The New Republic,* a liberal weekly, Malcolm Cowley, literary editor (and author of *Exile's Return)* devotes a full page to a review of Agnes Smedley's new book on Soviet China, *The Chinese Red Army Marches* (Published by the Vanguard Press, New York.)

Cowley says the author has not written the book "in any superlative fashion." "But," he adds, "she has an extraordinary subject here, and . . . an attitude of reverence towards it . . ." This story of the Chinese Red Army, the critic points out, "incident by incident is the most exciting story that has been told since the middle ages."

Robert Morse Lovett, novelist, critic, has written a preface to the book in which he tells about the author. Agnes Smedley grew up in a mining camp, taught school, took part in the Hindu revolutionary movement, was imprisoned for it during the war, went to Germany later, and from there to China as the correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung.* She is the author of an autobiographical novel *Daughter of Earth* and *Chinese Destinies* published last year.

In addition to Cowley's review in *The New Republic,* all the leading American journals devoted serious consideration to this book of stories and sketches.

Maxwell Stewart, who had also spent some years in China, writes in the New York *Herald-Tribune Books:*

"The stories are stark and brutal in their realism, and uncompromising in their revolutionary fervor. Yet it is a book which cannot be ignored. It is exciting, powerful in its sweep and challenging in its implications. In its content it bears a striking kinship to the ancient ballad, extolling the sacrifices and the almost incredible heroism of the soldiers, workers and peasants who have risen in revolt against the landlords and militarists of the Nanking regime."

Agnes Smedley's *China's Red Army Marches* (from which an excerpt appeared in *International Literature* early this year) was published almost at the same time as Tretyakov's popular *Den Shi-hua* (which was issued in America and England as *A Chinese Testament)* and Victor A. Yakhontov's *The Chinese Soviets,* issued by Coward-McCann, publishers. (A new monthly devoted to Soviet China has also appeared. It is called *China Today,* includes most able contributors, and is published by The Friends of the Chinese People, with Hansu Chan as editor.)

Meanwhile the International Publishers of New York have brought out *China's Red Army Marches* in a popular edition.

New cover of the American Student Review, *now beginning its fourth year of publication*

China's Red Army Marches *On*

In the Soviet Union *China's Red Army Marches* has been published in an attractive edition, in English, by the Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, under the title *Red Flood Over China.* This edition is a larger volume, includes more stories and opens with the memorable "Revolt of the Miners," which had already appeared in the American edition of the earlier *Chinese Destinies.* (Also issued by the Vanguard Press of New York.)

Book of Verse by Norman Macleod

Norman Macleod's first book of verse *Horizons of Death* has been criticized sharply in both the American *Daily Worker* and *The New Masses* for errors of commission and omission. About the poems of this most prolific of the younger American poets, *The New Masses* critic points out:

"Macleod was for several years a contributing editor to the monthly *New Masses* and is now among the permanent listed contributors to *International Literature.* Some of his poems in such magazines have been clear in notation, firm in direction, and

Malcolm Cowley, American poet and critic, whose new book Exile's Return *has been published recently*

simple in their eloquence. We remember "Cotton Pickers from Alabama" (*Left*, No. 2, 1931) which, after a quiet threat to expropriate the absentee masters, ends on the explanation: *Their cotton has been no feather bed for our toil.* We recall his four "Communications from the Revolution" (*New Masses*, Dec. 1931). But for some non-apparent reason Macleod chose not to include these and similar poems in his first book *Horizons of Death.*

Both critics point out his seeming lack of contact with the workers, his weak generalization of working class life and experience; his vagueness of imagery.

The New Masses critic concludes: "Were it not for his known work outside of this book, one would say that he is merely ignorant of causes and implications. Since this cannot be true, however, one can merely regret that Macleod chose to give permanent form to a shoddy work he published in a score of little magazines and neglected the poems, superior both technically and intellectually, that constitute his only claim to attention."

The fact that the manuscript of this book was given to the publishers fully three years ago, no doubt accounts for some of the shortcomings for which the poet is criticized. Meanwhile, we are advised, Macleod is preparing a second book of verse for publication, composed of only his best revolutionary work.

Cinema

Nazi films are not doing so well in New York. Cinema theatres are even cutting out from all news-reels scenes of Hitler and other Nazi material. "Too much audience disturbance" they say. The Rialto theatre, large cinema theatre at 42nd street and Broadway, heart of the New York theatrical district, was one of the theatres forced to adopt this policy after several battles in front of it between pro and anti-Nazis.

Variety, a leading theatrical journal, also reports financial difficulties. This theatre is owned by a Joseph Scheinman, a Jew, and was picketed for a long time by the revolutionary Film and Photo League.

Meanwhile Herman Blander was discharged from his work in a New York cinema theatre because he was a Jew. This caused a bitter protest against the manager, a certain Frank Weisser. Many organizations joined in the protest, leaflets were distributed and street meetings held. The anti-Nazis raised the slogan "Fire the Nazi that Fired the Jew!"

Theatre

While in the most successful theatrical season in New York, 1927-28, over 65 per cent of the productions were failures, the number has now risen to 80 per cent. As a result of this, and the situation in the cinema, actors are in a sorry situation.

Billboard and *Theatre Arts Monthly*, theatrical publications, estimate that 35,000 actors of the theatre and cinema are unemployed at the present time. Many of them are in need.

In Hollywood alone there are 17,000 unemployed who are maintained on pitiful gov-

Cover of the first issue of a new American literary bi-monthly

ernment relief. Now 15,400 have been dropped from even this starvation support.

Meanwhile membership in the Actors Equity, theatrical workers union, has dropped from 12,000 to 2,127.

It is also pointed out that while white actors are suffering greatly, the situation among Negro actors is worse. One journal points out that "it is modestly estimated that there are 2,000 unemployed Negro actors in New York city who are in dire need."

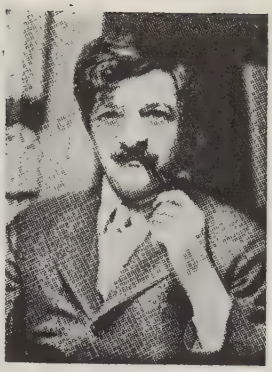
Sinclair Lewis About Albert Halper

Sinclair Lewis, noted American author and Nobel Prize winner, in a full page review in the New York *Herald-Tribune Books*, praises highly *The Foundry*, a new novel by Albert Halper, young American writer who is now a contributor to *The New Masses* and *The Daily Worker*. Lewis writes:

"There are few pleasures in the somewhat dusty and dreary business of writing warmer than the chance to shout over the rising ability of a younger colleague."

He continues: "The country had been so fortunate, in the last two or three years, as to have several novels dealing authoritatively with industrial workers—call them 'proletarian literature' if you like. But most of them have been either too tearful, presenting the lives of workers as one long alternation between back-aches and belly-aching, or too artfully filled with bright, nonsensical propaganda. *The Shadow Before* by William Rollins was not thus; it had juice and high

Cover of the new issue of The Anvil, *American bimonthly edited by Jack Conroy*



Isidor Schneider, American poet and novelist whose latest book of verse Comrade Mister *has just appeared*

spirits along with the hungers and fears of a long-continued strike. Nor is *The Foundry* of this worthy but slightly boresome genre. The workers here—and their wives, daughters, sons . . . they live, they are as exciting as real people always are when you know them—it is a 'story about people,' not types, that Halper has made, and it is a grand story."

Sinclair Lewis adds: "*The Foundry* . . . is earthy, solid, human, and decidedly significant—and what is far less to have been expected, it is, along with these grave qualities, also humorous and dramatic."

Lewis tells some of the history of the author: "In his novel *Union Square*, a couple years ago, and in stories in such magazines as *The American Mercury*, Halper has at thirty—he was born in Chicago in 1904—given warning that he is a novelist to be taken seriously along with such men as Hemingway, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Rollins. " . . . *The Foundry* steps up that warning enormously. I wish to blow loud bugles for him."

That he not be accused of partiality, Lewis says: "Let me add that I have never met him, never seen him and most certainly, belonging to a much older and more Tory clique, never had a kind word from him."

The book has also received high praise in a review by Louis Kronenberger in the New York *Times Books*. He writes:

"Halper's conscious interest is in life itself, in the large variety of man's relationships and experiences. People are his passion, not words; people and things, not words, occupy his conscious mind, and in a very powerful and special way."

The book deals with "the men in an electrotype foundry in Chicago during the twelve months that ended in the stock-market crash of 1929. The reviewer writes, that in *The Foundry*, "Person after person, object

Demonstration — *a painting by Jacob Burck, staff artist of the American* Daily Worker *and member of the New York John Reed Club*

after object comes upon the stage . . . in masterly fashion. Each is instantly vivid and identifiable. You see the foundry. It is not any foundry but a particular one. It is not any day in the foundry's existence, but a particular Monday during October, 1928. In making everything so specific Halper gives you, right at the start, an authentic experience: instead of accepting a lot of atmosphere and detail for the sake of what is to come, you live at once through a day in the foundry."

"The book proceeds," the critic writes, "and you live through other days, each with its own rhythm and color. At the end you could find your way about that foundry in the dark."

In both liberal weeklies, *The Nation* and *The New Republic,* critics add praise to the book. In *The Nation* James Burnham also criticizes the book for a "lack of depth" and for "wooden characterization." He writes:

"So many good things will be written about Halper's new novel that it is best for me to concentrate on its faults. Its vigor, its earthy breeziness, its accurate observations, its detailed re-creation of the milieu of the foundry, all these will be sufficiently, and rightly, praised. It may not, however, be frequently enough noted that what these amount to in the end is little more than skilled reporting, a sense of humor, and clever manipulation of conventional material"

This critic adds: "If proletarian novelists want to learn how to make classes and the class struggle the subject matter of their novels, let them go not to *The New Masses* and the John Reed Club magazines but to Balzac and James and Proust."

Not that any of the American revolutionary writers have objections to learning more about their craft from the classics. There is a slight suspicion however, that what prompts these observations is the fact that such an outstanding young writer as Albert Halper had openly aligned himself with the revolutionary forces.

American Miscellany

Two leading American John Reed Club journals are planning enlarged publications: *The Partisan Review,* organ of the New York John Reed Club, plans to increase to 96 pages, enlarge the format, etc. to allow for the growing wealth of revolutionary creative material; the same reasons prompt the plans of *The Left Front,* organ of the John Reed Club of Chicago to a quarterly of the 64 pages, taking place of the former smaller bi-monthly. In both publications a greater attention will be paid to theoretical material, criticism and book reviews.

The first number of a new magazine *The New Tide* has just appeared. With Carl Bulosan as editor, this journal advises "The editorial policy . . . is not limited by society forms, class, or sectionalism. It picks out from all sides, when of literary merit, but it generally prefers contributions from revolutionary and experimental schools. It therefore gives special attention to stories, articles and poems of radical cast and character. The magazine's definite aim is to interpret the struggles and aspirations of the workers, the fight of sincere intellectuals against fascism and racial oppression in concrete national terms."

Among the contributors to the first issue are Fred R. Miller, Alfred Morang, J. G. Villa and others, in stories, sketches, and verse.

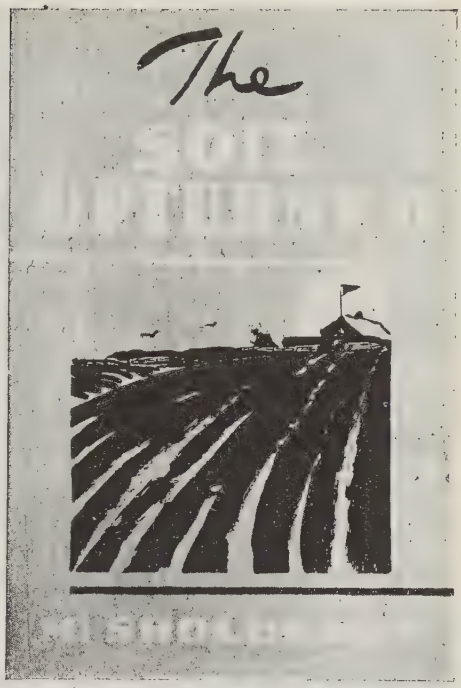
H. H. Lewis' fourth book of verse *The Road to Utterly* will be published this fall by the Hinterland Press of Cedar Rapids.

B. C. Hagglund, publisher of the Rebel Poets Series will soon issue *Lenin Lives,* first book of verse by Henry George Weiss, whose work has appeared in *International Literature* in the past year.

USSR

Dressing Moscow for November 7

Over 400 artists, architects and sculptors took part in decorating the streets and buildings of Moscow for the November 7 celebrations. Among them were such well known figures in the Soviet world of art as Stenberg, Lukyanov, Romas, Vilenski, Aslanov, Borov, Zamski, Pain and Ivanov.



Jacket by the American artist Fred Ellis for the latest book by Sholokhov, issued in English in Moscow by the Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR

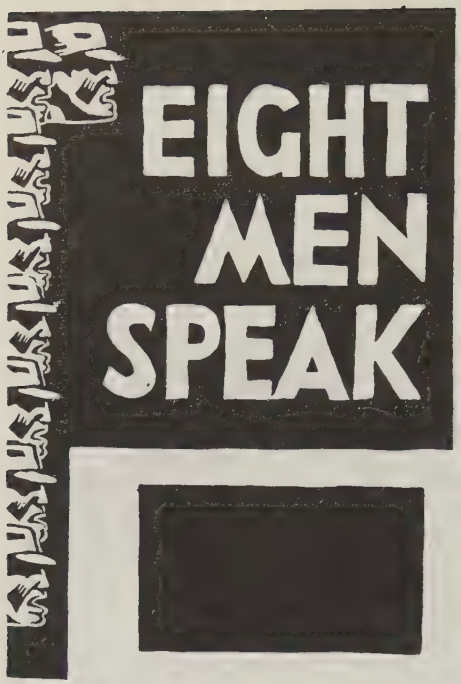
They took part in decorating Red Square and the other centers, including Soviet, Pushkin, Komsomolskaya, Arbat and Nogin squares; as well as the buildings of the Moscow Soviet among others.

This year a great deal of attention was paid to the artistic decoration of the houses of the capital.

The decorations included exhibitions in the main Moscow streets. Exhibits on "The Results of the Congress of Soviet Writers," "The Activities of the All-Union Academy of Sciences," "The Moscow Schools," "New Architecture," and others were displayed in the shop windows on Gorki, Stoleshnikov Pereulok, Kuznetski Most, Arbat and other streets.

This year, on Petrovka, there was displayed a theatrical exhibit showing the achievements of the Moscow theatres during 1933-34.

Attention was also paid to the decorations for the various groups taking part in the celebrations. The artist and theatrical producer Sudakov, for instance, prepared models carried by the builders of the subway. Other artists prepared decorations for



Cover of a Canadian political play in six acts, written by Oscar Ryan, E. Cecil-Smith, H. Francis and Mildred Goldberg. The cover design is by Ric and the play is published by The Progressive Arts Club of Toronto. This play was banned from production by both federal and provincial governments

the collective farmers of the Moscow region.

In this work, amateur artists assisted leading professionals.

16 Years of Soviet Literature

The development of Soviet literature was shown in an exhibit held at the Moscow Park of Rest and Culture. It covers the period of 1922-28, from the beginning of reconstruction, through the first Five-Year Plan, and to the present day. The exhibit became such a great success that it will probably be turned into a permanent literary museum. It has been visited by more than 52,000 people in less than two months. More than 850 visitors have been registered on working days, and as many as 6,000 workers have come to the exhibition on Rest Days.

There are three divisions in the exhibit: Soviet literature as a whole; its development among national minorities; and Soviet literature in the international field.

One thing obvious in the exhibit, is the great popularity of poetry. The books of Demyan Byedni, for instance, have run over three million copies.

The development of new writers is also in evidence. The magazine *Smena,* devoted to new writers, received over 2,300 manuscripts in nine months—twice the number submitted in the previous year.

Included in the exhibit are the literatures of various national minorities, some of which before the revolution did not even have their own alphabet. The Kirghiz, Ossetians and Kalmuks displayed literature in their own language. The Kalmuks, who in 1913 were 0.5 per cent literate, are 100 per cent literate today.

A part of the exhibit indicated the influence of Communism on world literature—its influence on such American writers as Michael Gold, Sherwood Anderson, John Dos Passos and Theodore Dreiser.

Books of Soviet writers translated into English were also shown. These included the works of Gorki, Sholokhov, Ilf and Petrov, Ognyov, Tretyakov, Matveyev, Pilnyak, Ivanov, Leonov, Gladkov, Ilyin, Romanov, Yakovlev, Ilyankov and Lebedinski.

New Translations of the Classics

New translations of Shakespeare's plays, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* are scheduled for release by the Academia Publishers next year. The publishing plan also includes novels by Smollet, Fielding, Walter Scott and Dickens.

In all, 130 books, representative of all ages and well nigh all countries, will be released in 1935. More than two-thirds of the books are either with the printers or in the final stages of revision. The bulk of the translations have been made anew.

The literature of ancient Greece will be represented by 11 books including Homer's *Iliad,* the tragedies of Sophocles, and a selection of lyrics by various writers.

Next year will see the publication of the last volume of *Arabian Nights,* after which "Academia" will issue the first volume of *Literature of the Orient,* a series designed to give a comprehensive picture of the development of eastern culture. It will include translations from Persian, Chinese and Japanese.

Medieval and modern literature is represented in the plan by Voltaire, Balzac, Heine, Schiller, de Maupassant and Anatole France, to mention only a few names. There is to be a wide selection of Italian and Spanish literary classics as well.

Much attention will also be paid to Russian literature. There will be complete editions of many 19th century poets, and a large selection of novels by Tolstoi, Turgenyev, Dostoyevski and Saltikov-Shchedrin.

Literature in the Ukraine

A remarkable growth of activity in the Ukrainian publishing world is indicated in

Alexei D. Diki, director of the Moscow Trade Union Theater at work on his production of John Dos Passos' Fortune Heights. *With him are the American, Marguerite Blackburn and the Soviet directors Vinyar and Meyerov,*

a dispatch from Kharkov. Recent and forthcoming publications include popular and deluxe editions of Ukrainian, Russian and European classics.

The services of the best Ukrainian translators have been mobilized for another popular series which is to include books by Panferov, Sholokhov and Avdeyenko. The volumes will be published in editions of 50,000 each. It is proposed to publish several selections from the short stories of Chekhov and Tolstoi in the same series.

This publishing house is also preparing definitive editions of the works of Maxim Gorki and Saltikov-Shchedrin, famous Russian satirist.

Work has begun on a series of poetry classics, the volumes to include selections from Goethe, Heine and Walt Whitman. Well-known Ukrainian poets are making the translations in collaboration with the Kharkov Institute of Language Studies.

Karelian Writers and Artists

In literature and art, like in all fields of Soviet Karelian life, Finnish-Americans are playing a leading role.

At the recent Soviet Writers Congress one of the Karelian delegates was Amiel Parras, for 30 years a lumberjack, copper-miner and editor of Finnish labor newspapers in the United States. Parras, now a resident of Petroskoi, arrived in the Soviet Union three years ago and is at present literary editor of the "Kirja" Publishing House.

Parras says of himself: "I have written a number of plays in Finnish, dealing with my experiences in the United States. One of them is based on the Colorado coal strike, in which I was a participant. These plays have been well received by the Finnish public.

"I am now at work on a novel which will cover 50 years of Finnish labor history. I am glad to be counted among the creators of the New Karelian literature."

Among the other Karelian delegates to the Congress were Jalmir Tsvitanen, a leading Karelian poet. Maxim Gorki wrote the introduction to his collected works when they appeared in Russian. Gribakov, a younger poet, and Norden a prose writer, also attended.

As in the case of workers and specialists, the English language *Moscow Daily News* has paid a great deal of attention to the

Erwin Piscator, noted German revolutionary theatrical and motion picture director, who has just completed The Revolt of the Fishermen *in Moscow, a picture based on the novel of the same title by Anna Seghers*

development of Karelian art and literature. Eino Seeke, himself a talented artist, writes in this journal that an exhibition shown in Leningrad last year, pointed to the great strides made. He writes:

"The Leningrad exhibit proved that Karelia was no different from other flourishing national republics of the Soviet Union. Art inevitably grows along with the development of socialist culture."

The artist says of Finnish-Americans:

"The initiating force in Karelian art must be attributed to the American artists who are at present the leading force, because of the surprising speed with which their young organization was able correctly to orientate itself in the life of socialist construction. Concretely this expresses itself in work like Paul Seeke's painting "The Udarniks," showing in a powerful realistic style two Karelian lumberjacks as masters of the American crosscut saw. Paul Seeke is a great hunter, which without doubt accounts for his skill in depicting the snow covered virgin timberlands of Soviet Karelia. Seeke's graphic work mirrors the same realism.

"In his review of the Leningrad Exhibit, Brodski, the chairman of the Academy of Art, stated that Paul Seeke's work had the marks of a brilliant and promising young painter, ranking with the best Karelian artists."

There are others in the Karelian art field deserving attention, according to this account:

"The work of the American-Finnish sculptor George Rantanen was highly praised by Mani (well known Soviet sculptor). Rantanen's wood relief of a shock brigade, his bust of Marx and Kalinin, reveal the talent of a master.

Among other American-Finnish artists to participate in coming exhibitions are George Hiltemen, a young graphic artist, Laisto Raatikainen (woodcuts) Inta Suvanto and Karison (stage decorations). Edward Juovonen, T. Kantala, Viola Sandroos, Irma Haataja and Ikka Ahko."

Soviet Cinema—and Chapayev

Recently the Soviet cinema has risen to new heights. *The Song of Happiness, Three Songs of Lenin* and other films have been drawing enthusiastic comment. The arrival of *Chapayev,* however, was the greatest event. In the *Moscow Daily News,* which devoted a full page to the picture, Lars Moen, an American film specialist working in Moscow writes:

"Not since *The Path to Life* has a film aroused such enthusiasm among Soviet audiences as *Chapayev* is evoking in the 17 Moscow cinemas where it is now on view. Despite the number of simultaneous showings, it is impossible to obtain tickets unless you go well in advance.

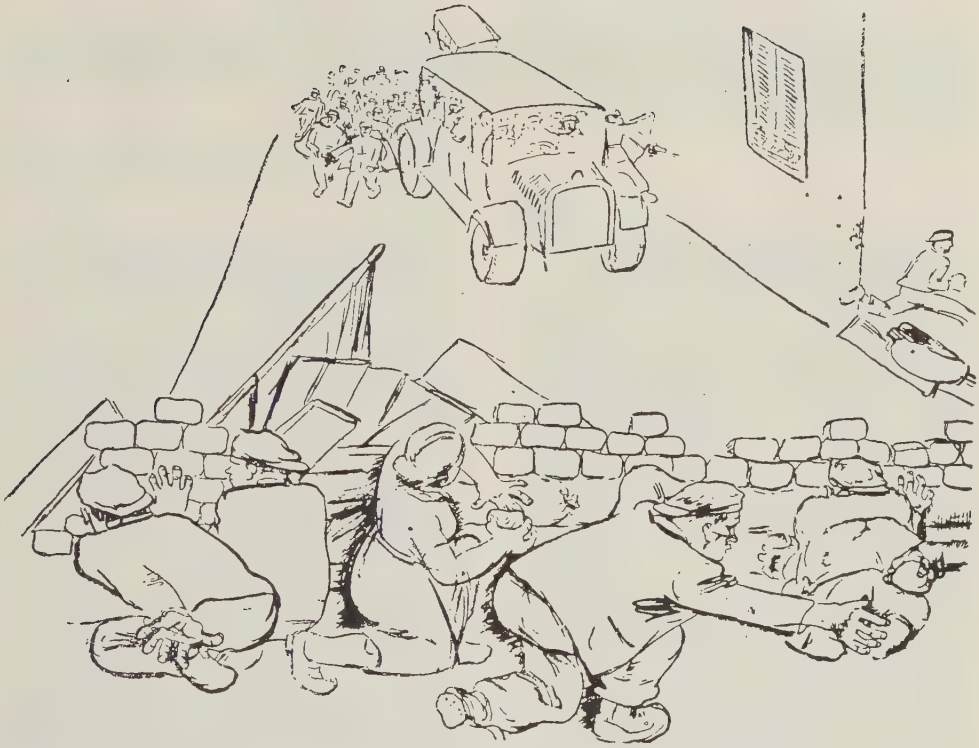
"The two brothers who made it have each been premiumed with 10,000 rubles; another 25,000 rubles goes to their staff; the two leading newspapers of the Soviet Union have been engaged in a violent debate as to whether one of them praised the picture adequately or not; the association of revolutionary film directors has sent a warm letter of congratulation to the directors of *Chapayev* (the brothers Sergei and Georgi Vasilyev) and the head of the cinema trust; and in the first seven days of its showing in Moscow the film has been seen by considerably over half a million spectators.

"These facts are cited in passing to bear out the contention that *Chapayev* is not merely a very good film but a definite milestone in the history of the Soviet cinema. From many points of view it is the best dramatic film ever made in the Soviet Union—not excepting the films that were the glory of the silent days. Moving, sincere, simple, it is worthy of a place beside *Mother, Potemkin* and *Earth,* and possesses a mature, professional touch which those films lacked.

"The portrayal of the central figure, Chapayev (by Babochkin) is certainly the equal of any acting I have seen on the screen in 25 years of picture-going—an opinion confirmed by a second visit to the film.

"The release of *Chapayev* comes, not unintentionally, on the 15th anniversary of the disaster which overtook Chapayev and cut short the brilliant career of one of the most popular and colorful of the early Red Army commanders."

Meanwhile the interest in the Soviet cinema is certain to be increased in the cinema festival which is to be held in December of this year to celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Soviet cinema indus-



Barricades—*a drawing by the French artist Antek, member of the AEAR*

try. During the festival a series of new pictures, demonstrating the advances made by Soviet directors and actors, will be shown. In addition to films already finished, the following pictures, now in the final stages of completion, will be shown: *Peasants*—director Ermler, *The Youth of Maxim*—directors Kozintsev and Trauberg; the animated cartoon film *The Tale of the Priest and His Worker Balde* by Tsekhanski, and *The New Gulliver* by Ptushko. An experimental film revue, entitled *Happy Children* by Alexandrov, will also be shown.

A feature of the festival will be the showing of the best foreign films, including two-thirds of the pictures shown at the International Cinema Exhibit in Venice.

ENGLAND

First Issues of The Left Review

The first two issues of *The Left Review*, British revolutionary journal of art and literature, have come up to brightest expectations. This publication begins life with surprising maturity. It is edited by Montagu Slater, Amabel Williams-Ellis and T. H. Wintringham. The typography and format are pleasing, the contributions are of high standard.

In the first issue are items by Louis Aragon (translation from the French by Nancy Cunard), William Holt, J. B. Priestley, George Bernard Shaw, Stefan Zweig, Siegfried Sassoon and many others. There is a well chosen balance between articles, fiction, verse, book reviews and comment. And the younger writers are not slighted for those already well known.

In the second number Amabel Williams-Ellis writes on the Soviet Writers' Congress. Storm Jameson, popular novelist, writes effectively "To a Labor Party Official." James Hanley contributes from his new novel. There are other, and very good contributions.

The artists, who organized before the writers, are not as well represented. There are drawings by Pearl Binder, Rowe, James Boswell and others. In these drawings there is more technical virtuosity than content. But with what is already known of their work, there need be no fears. This is a particularly gifted group. (Drawings by Binder and Boswell appear in this issue of *International Literature*.)

All told the first two issues of *The Left Review* are worth cheering about. There are

faults, no doubt. There is also no doubt that a magazine starting off so auspiciously is sure to become a force in the development of a revolutionary cultural movement in England. *International Literature* bids it a warm welcome.

HAITI

Jacques Romain Imprisoned

Langston Hughes, noted American poet and novelist, has sent the following protest to the press:

"Jacques Romain, poet and novelist of color, and the finest living Haitian writer, has just been sentenced at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, to two years in jail for circulating there a French magazine of Negro liberation called the *Cri des Negres*. Jacques Romain is a young man of excellent European education, formerly occupying a high post in the Haitian government, and greatly respected by intellectuals as an outstanding man of letters. He is one of the very few educated Haitians who understands and sympathizes with the plight of the oppressed peasants of his island home, and who has attempted to write about and to remedy the pitiful conditions of ninety percent of the Haitian people exploited by the big coffee monopolies, and the manipulations of foreign finance in the hands of the National City Bank of New York.

As a fellow writer of color, I call upon all writers and artists of whatever race who believe in the freedom of words and of the human spirit, to immediately protest to the President of Haiti and to the nearest Haitian Consulate the uncalled for and unmerited sentence to prison of Jacques Romain, one of the few, and by far the most talented of the literary men of Haiti."

LANGSTON HUGHES

Carmel, California, Nov. 15, 1934.

IN THIS ISSUE

Constantine Paustovski—is author of a number of volumes of novels and short stories who has risen steadily in Soviet literature in the past few years. An excerpt from his latest novel appears in this issue.

Lydia Seifulina—Soviet novelist and short story writer is author of *Breakers of the Law* and other books.

Louis Aragon—noted French poet and novelist has again spent some months in the Soviet Union, during which he attended the Soviet Writers' Congress. In the past year he has published a volume of verse *Hurrah, Urals!* and a novel *The Bells of Bâle*, just off the press, from which a section is included in this issue.

Gustav Regler—German revolutionary writer is author of *Water, Bread and Beans,* and *The Lost Son.* He is forced to live outside of Germany.

Arthur Clifford—young American poet, is attending the University of Michigan. A note about him accompanies his poem "Comrade Lenin" in this issue.

Pearl Binder—is a British artist and writer. She has exhibited drawings and lithographs in English and Soviet galleries, and contributes to publications in various countries. She has illustrated a number of books. *Odd Jobs,* her own book of stories and drawings of proletarian London is to be issued soon

James Boswell—active member of the British Artists International, is also a contributor to *The Left Review* (British) and other publications.

F. W. Kelyin—a Soviet critic specializing in Spanish literature, has been an active member of the Latin Commission of the IURW.

M. Levidov—is a Soviet critic and journalist.

Norman Macleod—frequent contributor of prose and verse to many American journals, is author of the new book of poetry *Horizons of Death.*

D. Moor—Prominent Soviet artist who writes an autobiographical sketch of himself in this issue, is a frequent contributor to the leading Moscow newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestia.* His posters can be seen on all occasions throughout the Soviet Union. He is a frequent exhibitor in Soviet galleries.

S. Tretyakov—Soviet author of the literary success *A Chinese Testament* (*Den Shi-hua*) published in England and America as well as in other countries. He is also author of other books and pamphlets, and is best known abroad for his play *Roar China!*

Franz Leschnitzer—is a German revolutionary critic and writer now working in the Soviet Union.

T. Motylova—is a young Soviet critic. She contributes to *Pravda* and other leading journals.

Matthew Josephson and *John R. Chaplin* (American writers) as well as *J. M. Valdes-Rodriguez* (of Cuba) are noted at the conclusion of their contributions to this issue in the section "Letters from Writers."

Editor-in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV

INDEX

Six Issues — Nos. 1 to 6 — 1934

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

PAINTINGS and DRAWINGS

LETTERS FROM WRITERS

SYMPOSIUM: