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Tsushima

The End of "Admiral Ushakov"

The *Admiral Ushakov*, an armored shore defense ship, damaged the day before in a daytime engagement, dropped behind Nebogatov's squadron during the night and steamed alone to Vladivostok. The wheel was taken by a broad-shouldered, bewhiskered individual, who did his utmost not to leave the course — North-east 23 degrees. The ship passed the Island of Dazhlet, where that morning the Russian fleet had fallen into a trap. News of this had not yet reached the *Ushakov*, which was bound inevitably to encounter the Japanese. It might, however, have been foretold that it would not meet the fate of the vessels of Nebogatov's squadron. On this battleship were men with different views as to their military duty, views inspired by their commander. They were, moreover, under the influence of yet another person, himself absent, but whose great name was to the best sailors the symbol of courage and the glory of the Russian arms.

It was a clear day in the end of April. The waters of the ocean spaces surged calmly into the gleaming distance. The warship, bathed in the rays of the tropical sun, forging straight ahead, swayed rhythmically. It was a low-decked vessel, of the type of the *Senyavin* and *Apraksin*, conspicuous for its two tall funnels, emitting dense clouds of smoke. Rising into the azure heights, these puffs melted away, reminding the sailors of the light clouds of their far-off native land.

This was the battle-ship *Admiral Ushakov* of the shore defense.

A tall, broad-shouldered man puffing at a cigarette paced the bridge with firm, heavy steps. His round countenance, with its cleft chin and big ginger mustache, was calm. There was something forceful and compelling in his powerful frame, in his pose and resolute movements. Among his own people he was famous as a hero of the sea, a man of great passions. But an outsider might have seen in him merely a typical corsair, pacing up and down after a successful raid. He would have needed not the least make-up for playing this part on the stage. But this was mere outward seeming. In reality he was a splendid commander—Captain of the First Rank Vladimir Nikolayevich Miklukha-Maklai, brother of the famous Russian

explorer and the first investigator of the Micronesian Islands.

All who knew him well were astonished that this gifted and well-educated seaman should be in command of just a little battleship from the shore defense, instead of one of the best modern cruisers.

Miklukha-Maklai put his best efforts into whatever he did. He was no ordinary man. True, he had never discovered untrodden paths in unknown lands, like his brother, but he had cruised on many ships and was held in great esteem as an experienced seaman.

He was also well-informed in naval history. He made no efforts to be promoted. He did not even aspire to the rank of admiral, which he could have received had he remained in the rear. Miklukha endeavored rather to get into the war. He wanted to fight the Japanese whom he hated since the days of his youth. He knew them well, having cruised for a long time as commander on the Volunteer Fleet cruiser *Vladivostok* along the shores of Japan.

He got on to his first ship while still a schoolboy. The sea drew Miklukha and he entered the naval cadet corps. There he joined the more advanced youth and became a member of the secret "Whalers' Society," which distributed forbidden literature. The secret police got to know of this, and raided Miklukha's room, and till the end of his time in the naval corps he remained under suspicion. But he continued his contact with Lieutenant Sukhanov and other revolutionary naval men, and kept illegal literature in his room.

Miklukha was distinguished for his courage from his youth. Serving during the Turkish war on a steamer converted into a cruiser, one day, during his watch, he had noticed a Turkish battleship on the horizon. Without asking for permission from his superiors, he changed the course, steaming straight up to the enemy. Just then the commander came on the deck. He immediately placed Miklukha under arrest, and turned the ship back to its former course.

Miklukha was descended from Dnieper Cossacks. In his childhood he was very belligerent, never tolerating offences even from boys older than himself, and frequently going home with a bleeding nose and torn clothes. Even when he grew up he was noted for his hot temper. Once he had an encounter, in the coast-town of Nikolayev, with an officer who had insulted his wife. The officer was superior in rank to Miklukha. Despite this, however, the temperamental Miklukha could not endure the insult and he dealt the officer a terrible blow on the face, knowing well that he might be court-martialled for such an act. He was a powerful man: he could make the sign of the cross holding a two-pood weight in his hand, and has more than once, for the fun of it, stopped a one-horse cart by grasping the back wheel. This was one of his favorite tricks on coachmen. The coachman, not understanding what had happened, would urge on his horse, with whip and voice, with good round oaths, and still the cart would not move, held back by Miklukha. It is easy to imagine the weight of the blow on his opponent's cheek. But Miklukha escaped court-martial. He wired his mother in St. Petersburg to postdate a request for his retirement. The request was granted and he was tried before a civil court. The affair ended in an investigation by a magistrate. Miklukha got off with a fine of 25 rubles. But the officer who had insult-

ted his wife was forced, by the decision of an unofficial comrades' court, to retire.

During his retirement Miklukha served several years, first as senior officer, and later as commander of the Volunteer Fleet in the Far East. He was not tempted by a high salary. His vocation once more attracted him to the navy. In 1882 he returned to St. Petersburg and, again entering the navy, served on destroyers in the Black Sea.

Here also he very soon proved himself to be a brave sailor. One example will suffice to show this. In the Gulf of Sevastopol a vessel of special construction, designed by Admiral Popov, lay at anchor. It was as round as a wheel, and could turn rapidly, thus raising the fighting qualities of this floating battery. The battleship was called the *Admiral Popov*. But it had very low decks and moved as slowly as a turtle, and commanders were afraid of taking it to sea, fearing it would sink immediately in a storm. Each and everyone of them, on learning that an order was to be issued to take this strange vessel from Sevastopol to Nikolayev for completion, managed on some excuse or other to get signed on to shore. Miklukha-Maklai alone, on being appointed its commander, was not afraid to take it to sea.

Many years had passed since then, but years had not much changed the character of Miklukha-Maklai. He remained ever the same hot-headed and fearless creature. The only change to be noted in him was that he had become more irritable. Probably he had been affected by the haste with which the unprepared third squadron had been sent out. Sometimes he would give way to outbursts of rage and it seemed he lost all control of himself. At such moments, during the cruise of the battleship *Ushakov*, he would give it to the sailors guilty of some offence. Sometimes he would thrust the stump of his right hand in a sailor's face (the fingers had been torn off by an accident in hunting), and then immediately feel embarrassed—and the matter would come to an end. Though Miklukha would act thus in anger, he would not allow his officers to do so. He even punished those who behaved badly to the lower ratings. Miklukha enjoyed the respect of the crew and officers, who believed in him as in the best fighting commander. The battleship under his command was completely ready for an encounter with the enemy.

Pacing up and down the bridge beneath the awning, Miklukha smoked one cigarette after another, every now and then coming to a standstill, gazing thoughtfully ahead through his eyeglasses. Ships were approaching. On the flagship on which was Admiral Nebogatov the signalling flags went up and down. The slant-rayed tropical sun blazed pitilessly on the upper deck.

Slowly advancing on his fat legs, Captain of the Second Rank Musatov, plump and fair, of middle height, with a small, well-combed beard, ascended to the bridge. He waddled like a duck and whenever they saw him coming in the distance the sailors would call out: "The barge is coming!" Approaching his commander, Musatov drew himself up, touching the peak of his cap, and said:

"Vladimir Nikolayevich! The officers have learned with joy that we shall soon join up with Rozhestvensky's squadron. Moreover, some have been promoted. In honor of these events we have decided to get up a banquet with champagne, and I have been charged to invite you today to the officers' mess."

"Thanks, Alexander Alexandrovich. I will gladly dine with you.

This is just the right moment for it. By the way, we must have a talk."

On the foc'sle a group of sailors were clearing the deck. Quartermaster Vasili Prokopovich, a man of gloomy and reflective nature, was watching them in silence. A piebald hog was running in and out of the group, grunting. The sailors were in the habit of treating it to bits of sugar, and so it kept close to them, begging for more. Even now, almost dropping from the heat, it kept up with them. Prokopovich stared long at the hog with a proprietary eye and gave orders for it to be douched with water. One of the sailors picked up a hose. The cold stream came crackling out and the hog placed its side under it with delight.

"Hi! Kalgan, come here! Join the family!" shouted one of the sailors.

A gingerly mongrel, the darling of the whole crew, wagged its fluffy tail smartly curled on to its back, and ran from one to another, sniffing at each and cautiously avoiding the pools of water on the deck. The soaking hog made for the helm, but Kalgan barred its way. He stood before it in a playful pose, gazing inquisitively at the heavy, slow-moving mountain of flesh. Without the faintest ill-will, as if merely fulfilling a routine, the dog yapped a couple of times at the hog, which in its turn shook its long ears at him, and backed a step, fixing on him its small, sleepy, white-fringed eyes. In the pen, asking for food, two other pigs were squealing. They were a Chinese breed, and extremely vicious. For this reason they were not permitted on the deck. Leaving the hog in peace, Kalgan ran up to the pigs, sniffing in the air; but when the reek from the pen reached his nostrils he shook his head and scratched himself. As if making the rounds of his domain, Kalgan then trotted up to a big wooden cage of ducks. They met him with nervous quacks, while he, his head comically on one side, gazed long at them, as if waiting for them to stop their noise. But the ducks quacked still faster, and more intense, as ducks quack in the spring. Kalgan jumped up and barked once loudly at them, as if commanding them not to make so much noise, and went away from them to the deck.

Artillery supply quarter-master Ilya Vorobyev and boatswain Grigori Mitrukov were on the foc'sle, chatting quietly. Suddenly Vorobyev burst out with such a laugh that his whole powerful frame shook. He took out of his pocket a sheet of paper and, turning his swarthy heavy features towards the boatswain, said:

"You won't believe that Zvyagin has about as much brains in his head as there is money in a beggar's pocket. I can't understand how a guy like that could be made petty officer. See what my immediate chief busies himself about. I was tidying up in the arsenal this morning, and I saw a letter sticking out under the oil-cloth. Listen what Zvyagin writes to his wife!"

Prokopovich turned to the speaker, ready to listen. And Vorobyev, smiling broadly, began to read:

"Darling Marusya! My diamond of the purest water! I write to you from a far country. We are sailing past China now. I have seen much of extraordinary people and countries. You see now I've been promoted to high rank and have become something like an army colonel. And I get just as high pay. Everybody pays me respect. I've got numbers of subordinates. But one of them is Vorobyev—a beastly man. I'll soon get rid of him. And I have an

orderly too. He cleans my boots and clothes. And I keep socking him in the jaw. . . ."

The boatswain, a red-haired, compact fellow, with a high chest, laughed out loud, interrupted the reading, and said, choked with laughter:

"Oh, that braggart! Miserable coward! That's a good show he gave us, the drunkard, like a barker at a fair!"

Everyone laughed but Prokopovich, who drawled glumly:

"Colonel . . . colonel . . ."

"Now we'll have some fun with his excellency," said Vorobyev.

There was a whistle and the command rang out:

"Dinner up above."

The sailors hurried away to their dinner. Vorobyev and Mitrukov went towards the helm. On the foredeck they met petty officer Zvyagin. He was a short, timid fellow, with a nose as sharp as a bird's beak. He was strolling along, intending to slip past, but Vorobyev stopped him, extending his hand with the letter in it, and, with studied courtesy, said:

"I don't know how to address you now, but wasn't it you, by any chance, who dropped this?"

Zvyagin, taking the bit of paper, looked at Vorobyev viciously. The lips of the self-styled colonel trembled, a red spot appeared on each cheek. "Trouble-maker! Rotter," he hissed, and tripped hastily to the hatchway, accompanied by the derisive laughter of boatswain and quarter-master.

In the officer's mess, Egor Sorokin, bartender, and some orderlies were putting the finishing touches to the preparations for the banquet. The cabin, situated in the fore-part of the ship, was very light and took up the whole breadth of the vessel. The hatchway in the roof and the portholes were open: the rays of the tropical sun streamed through them, playing in light and shade on the white enameled walls and partitions. A long table, placed at right angles to the sides of the ship, was covered with a white table-cloth piled up with dishes, bottles, glasses, wine-glasses and liqueur-glasses. The sunlight was reflected in crystal and glass in multicolored spots. On the right a piano gleamed darkly, and on the left was a sofa. A small sideboard was fixed at the fore-end, its marble top covered with hors d'oeuvre, and next to it a bookcase. Nothing stood against the partition dividing the officers' mess from the commander's cabin, which was at the after-end. On it hung one large portrait. From its wide mahogany frame looked the wise eyes of an old man in the naval uniform of the times of Paul I. It was a waist-long oil portrait of the famous Admiral F. F. Ushakov, whose glorious name the battleship bore. From the admiral's right shoulder the broad watered-silk ribbon of the Order of Alexander Nevsky extended to his left side, his chest was decorated with crosses, stars and orders of the highest distinction for military services to his fatherland, and in his hand was a spy-glass. The most striking thing about the portrait was the dynamic, fearless expression of the face of the remarkable man, who in his day was an incomparable naval strategian and tactician. The sailors knew yet another remarkable feature of this splendid portrait; wherever you went, whether to right or to left, Ushakov's eyes were always directed towards the spectator.

Now, also, when the officers were gathering in the officers' mess for dinner, the admiral seemed to greet each of them on entering the door.

Obeying the unwritten laws of etiquette, everyone went to his proper place: the senior officer at the head of the table, to his right the captain, to his left the senior technical experts, and further down the junior officers. They were all in clean white tunics.

The dinner consisted of fresh meat and poultry, no frequent occurrence when afloat. Everyone was glad to think they would soon be meeting Rozhestvensky's squadron. Up to now they had supposed that the five Nebogatov ships would have to make their way to Vladivostok on their own. For the thousandth time the coming encounter with the Japanese was discussed in every aspect. But now that it was known that the squadrons would shortly be uniting, there was more spirit in their speech and confidence in victory. Some did not minimize the difficulties, pointing out that the Japanese navy would meet them at its own shores, and that it was twice as strong as the Russian squadron.

Commander Miklukha-Maklai, usually sparing of words, was today quite joily and talkative. Possessed of a splendid memory and extremely well read, he could be, when in the mood, an enchanting conversationist. Addressing all present, the commander said with warmth and enthusiasm:

"Gentlemen, I congratulate you on the news! We will not now argue as to who is stronger, and who weaker. We, naval men and soldiers, will bear in our mind only one thing. Our task is to fight, to fight for the honor of our native land and, if necessary, to die. But you all know what our squadron is like and how they equipped it. We have been sent to the help of the second squadron under pressure of public opinion. And our ship, which I have the honor to command, has never before been sent on such a long cruise. But we will fight whatever happens. That's what we're here for. And this is just what I want to remind you of today, there have been many examples in the history of naval battles in which the numerically weaker vanquished the stronger."

Miklukha gazed in silence at the portrait of F. F. Ushakov on the wall, and continued with emotion, his thick, copper-red brows twitching:

"Gentlemen, what is the secret of such victories? See how steadily Fedor Fedorovich is looking at us now! We must all follow the example of this splendid man. Each of us must be brave in battle, so as to have the honor to look straight into his eyes without shame. How often, and with what brilliant success, Fedor Fedorovich commanded Russian squadrons in battles! At every encounter of the Russian squadrons with the Turkish, the crescent fell before the flag of St. Andrew. In his day Russia was complete mistress of the Black Sea. And then international politics developed in a way that made Ushakov himself the defender of the Turks. He shattered the French to smithereens in the Mediterranean. Under his command the Russian ships took their coastal towns one after another."

Miklukha-Maklai rose, his glass lifted. Everyone at the table followed his example. Pointing to the portrait of the admiral on the wall, the commander said:

"Gentlemen, we will now give Fedor Fedorovich here our word of honor as Russian warriors that when we meet the Japanese we will fight to the last man. This encounter might end in disaster, but whatever happens, let it bring us glory and prove we are worthy of the high honor attached to the name our ship bears!"

Touching glasses, they drank and took their seats for dinner.

Throughout the meal the name of Ushakov kept cropping up. Now the captain, now an officer, would recall with enthusiasm various incidents which they had read from the life and activities of the admiral. They interrupted one another in quoting examples of the glorious feats of his squadron in the Mediterranean, in Italy, Greece, the shores of the Ionic and Adriatic Seas, where the Russian sailors acted as the emancipators of peoples from a foreign yoke.

Ushakov's military biography was indeed remarkable.

Fedor Fedorovich Ushakov was born in 1745. He inherited from his parents 19 serfs in the Temnikov district of the Tambov province. He was not much of a landlord. Loving Russia passionately and spreading her glory on the seas by his victories, he was an independent admiral, the creator of Russian naval tactics. He won a series of brilliant victories against the Turks on the Black Sea and the French on the Mediterranean. The Turks nicknamed him "Ushak-Pasha," and their women frightened naughty children with his name.

The fortress on the island of Corfu, in the Mediterranean, had always been considered impregnable. It surrendered only to the Russian sailors, on the 20th of February, 1799. This was one of the most famous victories of the Russian navy, finally confirming throughout the world the name of Ushakov as a great naval leader. At that moment another great Russian military leader, General Suvorov, was attacking the French in Northern Italy. Hearing of Ushakov's victory he said: "I regret that I was not there at the capture of Corfu, even if only as a midshipman!"

And the English Admiral Nelson wrote at that time to Ushakov: "I congratulate your Excellency from my heart on the taking of Corfu, and can assure you that the glory of the arms of a faithful ally is just as dear to me as the glory of my king . . ." It is unlikely that he sincerely rejoiced in Ushakov's victories since, though the ally of Russia in the war against France, Nelson gave not the slightest assistance to the Russian navy. In 1799 the two great admirals met at Palermo. Nelson was sure that Ushakov would grovel before him and become an obedient instrument in the hands of England. But the complacent Englishman was disappointed. With his native wit the independent Russian admiral asserted the dignity of Russia, and guarded jealously the interests of his country. The disappointed Nelson in a letter to Lady Hamilton said of Ushakov that he behaved with great dignity, but that below his courteous exterior a bear was lurking. Ushakov was Nelson's only rival in fame. But in old Russia Ushakov did not enjoy such renown as Nelson in England. There every schoolboy knows the admiral. But here, except for naval officers, very few people knew of the national hero Ushakov. One or two books, that is all that has been written about him.

The tsars did not appreciate Ushakov. They did not care for his independent spirit, and thus he never became a favorite with court. He never became a "cunning courtier." At the age of 62, in full possession of his faculties, he had to retire and go back to his home in the Tambov province, where in 1817, he died.

Undeservedly forgotten by tsarist Russia, the Russian admiral was the favorite hero of Greece. The

island of Ithaca presented him with a specially struck medal on which he was represented in the armor of an ancient Greek warrior, with the inscription: "Odyssey." Another medal received by him from the Greeks bore the inscription around his portrait: "The famous, honored Fedor Fedorovich Ushakov, the foremost Russian leader of the navy"; on the reverse side were the words: "Kephalonia of all the Ionic Islands to their Savior."

In Italy Ushakov was famous not only for his military valor, but also as a diplomat. The Italians were full of admiration for the heroism of the Russian sailors. Ushakov's landing on June 3, 1799 caused the fall of Naples, and in November of the same year his sailors took part in the occupation of Rome. This was a great triumph for Russian arms. The impressionable southerners, freed from the French, gazed with curiosity at the brave northern warriors and welcomed them with enthusiastic cheers.

The exploits of the admiral will always remain the pride of Russian sailors. Under his command the Russian fleet was unconquerable, and the casualties were unbelievably small. Suffice it to say that throughout the whole campaign of 1799, when Ushakov's squadron scored many glorious victories in the Mediterranean, only 400 men were lost. And best of all, out of 53 campaigns on the sea, in which Ushakov participated, he was in command of 43, and never lost a battle.

All this was well known to the officers of the battleship *Ushakov*. During the campaign they exchanged many a word about the famous admiral. His name was not held in as great an esteem on any other battleship. This was because of Miklukha who never lost an opportunity of inculcating his officers and the crew with the military ideas and the military traditions of the unconquerable admiral.

By the end of dinner everyone in the officers' mess was of good cheer. The bartender, Egor Sorokin, and the orderlies had already brought in the black coffee, but the talk about Ushakov was still going on. Senior officer Musatov, excited by the speeches, and flushed with wine, raised his voice above the general hum to say:

"Gentlemen, here's something about Ushakov that has always stuck in my memory: even in the heat of the battle he would lose neither courage nor humor. In 1791, sailing from Constantinople, Admiral Sait Ali had sworn to the Sultan that he would bring him Ushakov as a prisoner. Word of this reached the Russian admiral. The infuriated Fedor Fedorovich did his best in the battle at Cape Caliacri on July 31 to capture Admiral Sait Ali's ship. Cutting across the stern of the Turkish admiralty ship, Ushakov shouted loudly from the foredeck: 'Sait, you good-for-nothing, I'll teach you not to make promises!' And, indeed, gentlemen, the Turkish fleet was shattered to bits in that battle. The chief sufferer was the admiralty ship of Sait Ali. And nothing but the approach of night saved the braggart from capture."

Loud laughter and applause drowned Musatov's words. All were excited and elated. The captain, too, kept smiling. People seemed to have forgotten all the difficulties of a prolonged campaign, and separation from their native land, as if this dinner were taking place not in the open sea on a battleship going to meet the enemy, but at the Naval Assembly in Cronstadt.

Miklukha rose, thanked the officers for their hospitality, and withdrew. The others followed suit. One of the officers, pretty drunk,

stopped at the door, looked up at Ushakov's portrait and, nodding his head, said: "That's all true! But who is leading our squadron?" and went out into the corridor with a wry smile on his face.

No one remained in the officers' mess but the orderlies and Egor Sorokin, the bartender. They finished up the remains of the wine with every sign of satisfaction, and also ate up the last of the hors d'oeuvre. Sorokin soon got drunk. Staggering, he nevertheless gathered up the bottles with accustomed skill, clattering the dishes, and humming in a low voice. The bartender's legs began to give way, he felt thoroughly sick. Suddenly he stopped in front of Ushakov's portrait. He remembered what had just been said about him and, lifting his glass, addressed the portrait:

"Your excellency. . . . I, too, venture to drink to you. . . . Your excellency. . . . Don't look at me so severely! I'm only a little man! I haven't much responsibility. I have nothing but bottles under my command so far. But when the battle begins, we'll see. . . . There'll be work for me too. . . . May you rest in peace, Fedor Fedorovich, and here's health to our eagles. . . . Our Vladimir Nikolayevich is your worthy successor. A fine commander! Well, off we go. . . ."

Tilting his head, Sorokin emptied the glass. Unable to stand still, he swayed, and bumped against the orderlies who, laughing loudly, made way for him. But Sorokin, fixing his glassy eyes on them, roared in commanding accents:

"You ought to cry instead of laughing, you blockheads! Such a fighting admiral as Fedor Fedorovich, and he no more. . . ."

"And Rozhestvensky—isn't he a fighting admiral?" asked one of the orderlies.

Another orderly answered him instead of Sorokin.

"There's no denying it. . . . he's too aggressive, but not the right way. . . . He only strikes at us, the sailor-folk."

They all burst out laughing together, and then suddenly fell silent. Their faces became serious. They stood on the alert. Steps could be heard outside the door of the officers' mess. The gossips busied themselves ostentatiously about the uncleared tables.

Three weeks later, on May 14, the battleship *Admiral Ushakov*, encountering the enemy's principal forces, and going into battle, brought up the rear of Nebogatov's squadron. Officers and crew took their posts. The conning tower was crowded. In addition to the captain there were his aids—mates, artillery-officer, torpedo section chief, and of the crew, helmsman, messengers, and sailors working at telephone and speaking tubes. Miklukha peered through an embrasure in the conning tower. The squadrons drew nearer to each other. The opponent unexpectedly turned left, making a loop, but Rozhestvensky, though he did open fire, failed to make use of the enemy's mistaken maneuver for immediate attack. Miklukha waited for the admiral's signal to attack, but it did not come. Throwing himself backwards from the embrasure, Miklukha seized his head in his hands and exclaimed excitedly:

"My god, what's he doing? We ought to go straight ahead in battle formation. It'll be Vafango all over again. . . ."

The commander looked ruefully at his subordinates, as if seeking from them corroboration of his comparison.

But they kept silence. Now it was clear to all that Rozhestvensky

had missed the most advantageous moment for the attack. Miklukha turned aside and looked through his field-glasses.

Those on the *Ushakov* fulfilled their duties with self-sacrificing zeal. The ship had never before lived so tensely as in these hours. The gun turrets revolved grimly, raising high the muzzles of their 10-inch guns, seeking a living target on the horizon. Their shots were regular, powerful, deafening. The 120 mm. piece fired not so loudly, but more frequently, as if in a hurry. The whole body of the ship trembled from the volleys. Everything was in motion, the actions of men and machinery were as subtly timed as if the ship was a single, living organism.

The fight grew hotter. The battleship *Admiral Ushakov*, together with the rest of the squadron, fired incessantly at the enemy. The reports of its guns were fused in the general roar. It was as if a monstrous storm had broken out over the sea. The volleys, near and remote, rolled like thunder-claps, and the water itself vibrated and clattered like metal, gigantic steel spouts trembling tensely in the air and emitting resounding roars.

The whole attention of the officers, watching the battle from the conning tower, was directed to port side, where, overtaking the Russian squadron, the column of the enemy's ships was gradually surrounding it. On one of them a fire had broken out, enveloping it in black smoke.

"Splendid!" exclaimed Miklukha joyfully.

The Russian shells had fallen on to other ships also. This raised the fighting spirit all round. But suddenly a half-stifled exclamation, almost a groan, came from the group of signallers:

"The *Oslyabya* is sinking."

All turned to the starboard and watched a big ship first lie on its right, and then suddenly topple over and sink. Destroyers hurried up under enemy fire to the site of the catastrophe to try and save its crew. Very soon the flagship *Suvorov*, bearing the flag of Admiral Rozhestvensky, went out of commission. The squadron was deprived of its principal command. It was then led by iron-clad *Alexander III*. But under the enemy's fire the formation of the Russian ships was continually being broken. They went out of line now to starboard, now to port. Miklukha, to avoid collision with vessels ahead, rapped out his orders with a contraction of his copper-red brows: "Helm to starboard!" And a minute after: "Port your helm!"

Every now and then the engines had to be stopped.

Miklukha muttered: "We're plunging about like a herd of wild animals." And then, as if answering his own thoughts: "Napoleon was right. . . ."

The officers looked interrogatively at their commander, but did not wait for the end of his phrase. Perhaps, while following the battle, some expression of the great general had come into his head, to the effect that an army without a leader was of no use. And, truly, the position of the squadron went from bad to worse. The enemy's shells fell more and more frequently also near *Ushakov*. Officers and men glanced continually at their commander. But he was calmer in the fight than during the campaign, and gave his orders with the utmost sang-froid. Once, when the enemy showed up on to the starboard Miklukha asked:

"Why are our gun turrets silent?"

"A delay to find the range," replied senior artillery commander, Lieutenant Dmitriev.

"And the batteries?"

"They too."

"Hurry the range finders then."

From the roof of the chart room, on which the sighting-apparatus was set up, rang out a resounding voice:

"40 cablelengths."

Making the air tremble the guns blazed out from both turrets. Four columns of water shot up at some distance from one of the enemy ships. A voice from the conning tower exclaimed: "The sighting was good, but the shell fell short."

The captain betrayed no emotion, except that the knotted muscles of his red-whiskered face seemed to grow tighter.

At that time there was only one 120 mm. piece in action on starboard side of the battery deck. The other had fallen silent. No one in the conning tower knew what had happened.

The starboard battery was under the command of Midshipman Ditlov, a tall, young man with dark auburn hair. Fully realizing the importance and responsibility of his position, he hurried the gunners on, himself peering through his field-glasses, following the fall of the shells. Suddenly he looked towards one of the guns and cried: "Why aren't you shooting?"

"The shell case is warped and doesn't fit," was the reply of the gunners, who were endeavoring to put the shell in by hand.

"What's the good of that? Force it through with the breech lock."

Ilya Vorobyev, supply quartermaster, heard this just as he was ascending to the powder-deck.

"You can't do that, your honor," he said, addressing the midshipman. "The shell may jam still worse, or cause a disaster. Twelve men were killed that way on one ship."

At first Ditlov hesitated, but then he shouted:

"Silence! No arguing! Obey my orders!"

The gunners stood hesitantly beside the gun. They were bound to obey the orders of their superior, and yet they knew they were risking a senseless death. Vorobyev calmly declared:

"Your honor, we'll get hold of some nippers and have the shell free in a minute."

In the heat of the moment the midshipman rushed to the breech, but Vorobyev barred the way and, in his turn raising his voice, said: "You can have me shot on the spot, but I won't let you touch the gun!

Their eyes met. Vorobyev stood as sturdy and immovable as the armor of the ship. The midshipman seemed to have realized his error, but still he shouted:

"Remember, Vorobyev! After the battle you'll be court-martialled!"

And, retreating, turned to the other gun.

A few minutes later the shell was extracted with the help of an alliance worked by hand and the gun went into action again.

The battle of the Russians with the main forces of the Japanese lasted over two hours. The *Ushakov*, after having fired off hundreds of rounds, was uninjured. But the *Alexander III*, listing heavily, was forced out of line. The Japanese squadron concentrated intensive fire on it. The Russian ships steamed ahead of it. Just at that moment the *Ushakov* came abreast of it to the starboard and, with the Japanese squadron to port, became a chance target for the enemy. The shells aimed at the *Alexander III* did not reach it, but water spouts began to be flung up all round the *Ushakov*. In a few minutes she became the scene of destruction and casualties.

The first big-caliber shell fell into the foc'sle, tearing a three-foot hole in the fifteenth starboard bulk-

head at the waterline. Both the steam-pipe leading to the windlass and the fire-extinguishers were struck by fragments of the shell. The chief of the fore hold, his subordinate, and two sailors were killed on the spot. Four of the crew were wounded, but, after medical attention, these returned to their posts. Under the directions of the fore hold mechanic, Sergeant Djelepov, the sailors repaired the damage. The water which had entered the ship was run off into the cable boxes, and pumped out by turbines. Things were worse with regard to the second leak, the one in the foc'sle. It was impossible to mend it while the ship was moving, and in the heat of the battle. They had to batten down the door. The whole of this section was flooded. The ship was now well down by the head and though the engines went full steam ahead, the speed was reduced, as if the ship was staggering drunk. At the same time it began to disobey the wheel, as if it had refused to obey man.

The fire-hose, penetrated by a shell in two places, had not a single compartment left throughout its length. And so it was rendered useless, leaving the ship without its principal means of fighting fire. Fortunately, no fire broke out on the ship while mechanic Maximov and a machinist were repairing it.

A third shell burst and formed a deep dent in the stern turret and damaged the deck. Simultaneously, junior boatswain Grigori Mitrukov was wounded for the second time, but he refused to remain in the sick box and went on with his duties.

During the daylight battle no more shells burst in the battleship.

With the fall of dusk Admiral Nebogatov raised on the *Nikolai* the signal "Follow me, course N. E. 23°." The ships which had come unharmed out of the battle began to form single file after the flagship. The squadron put on steam, but the *Ushakov's* helm was low in the water after leaks she had sprung and she began to fall behind gradually. Just then, it was observed that out of the darkness from the left, a vessel was heading straight for *Ushakov*.

"What are you doing? Where are you steering?" exclaimed voices from the stern of the *Ushakov*.

Alarmed voices were also heard from the unknown ship.

The ships had nearly collided.

"Full steam ahead!" commanded Miklukha in a loud voice from the bridge.

The ship which had threatened a collision turned out to be the battleship *Senyavin*. It had slipped by the stern of the *Ushakov* with a mere 15 feet to spare. The ships diverged without accident.

This danger was averted, but another threatened. Torpedo attacks began. By order of the commander there was no firing, and the searchlights were dimmed. The only hope of salvation was the darkness. From the *Ushakov* they could see several destroyers, which passed it without noticing it. They were hastening towards a band of light on the horizon, attracted by the searchlights of other Russian vessels. The gunners stared from beside their loaded pieces into the darkness, broken up in the distance by the blue beams of searchlights. The sound of remote, dull shots reached them from the steamers repulsing the torpedo attacks. But the darkened *Ushakov* kept silent, even when three Japanese destroyers dived under its very stern and disappeared. These were anxious moments. Miklukha-Maklai on his bridge remembered Nebogatov's order, and said:

"Complete darkness is the best

protection against torpedos. The Admiral is right. They almost rammed us, the midnight sharks!"

Able seaman Selg, that natural optimist who had never once during the whole campaign showed signs of depression, cried out from the deck:

"So, we're still alive, brothers!"

Even Lieutenant Gezehus, a reserved fellow, who never wasted an unnecessary word, for good or ill, on the crew, could not contain himself and said to the gunners:

"The Japs got almost within revolver shot of us. They probably took our battleship for one of their own. Or perhaps, making for the ships which had their searchlights on, they overlooked us. Anyhow we are sailing under cover of the night as if we had on Fortunatus's cap."

And in other parts of the ship those who had been saved as by a miracle were exchanging impressions of the averted danger.

By midnight the torpedo attacks had stopped. The wind began to fall. The clouds grew scarcer, and in the spaces between them the stars peeped out.

On the bridge, looking towards the dark horizon, stood Captain Miklukha-Maklai. Alongside him—his officers and men. They had not slept for over a day and a night, they had been in battle, and now they were weary, fighting sleep with a prodigious effort. To them came senior officer Musatov.

"Where are we now, Vladimir Nikolayevich?" he asked his commander.

"That's what I'm wondering about myself. Our course is right, but where we are I don't know yet."

The commander turned to the dozing senior artillery commander, Lieutenant Dmitriev:

"Remember, Nikolai Nikolayevich, without an order from me no firing and no light is to be shown! You can go and sleep a bit, and I'll go into the chart-room."

"Yes, sir," replied the senior artillery officer, drawing himself up before the commander.

The shattered *Ushakov* went forward, solitary, into the unknown night. Its leading center had now become the chart room. Here proceeded tense work on the determination of the steamer's bearings. A man of middle height was bending over the map. Despite the fierce fighting and the endless night, he was, as usual, spruce-looking. His neatly combed dark hair set off the pallor of his round face.

He looked absorbed, as if he were preparing for an examination in the naval corps and, not loosing his head, was endeavoring to solve a difficult problem. This was an enlightened officer, the favorite of the crew, First Mate, Lieutenant Maximov.

The door opened and on the threshold appeared the captain. His appearance did not surprise the mates who realized that the solution of an important problem now depended upon them. Without leaving his work Maximov turned his face towards the newcomer. From beneath the drawn brows of the captain twinkled the familiar blue gleam of his keen eyes. Miklukha went up to the outspread map and bent over it. Pointing to it with the stumps of the fingers on his mutilated right hand, he said softly: "Now, how are we to find our bearings?"

"Apparently only the stars can tell us that," replied First Mate Maximov, making for the door with his subordinate.

"But remember, you star-gazers, every minute counts, don't make any mistakes in your observations," Miklukha warned them.

The captain remained in the chart room. He was dying fo

sleep. Perhaps, while fighting off his drowsiness, he remembered the stories of his elder brother, the famous Russian explorer, who had often found himself in tight places among savages. But his brother had been lucky and always managed to get out of the most difficult and hopeless situations. Would he, the captain of a shattered ship, be equally lucky? Miklukha leaned his head on his hands and closed his eyes.

In the meanwhile the fore turrets were going on with their own life. Supply quarter-master Ilya Vorobyev and the orderly Chernov went to the gunners on duty. They chatted, unworried by the presence among them of the sleeping commander of the turret, Lieutenant Tirtov. This officer, a relative of the head of the Admiralty, enjoyed general respect on the ship, as a man of justice. The sailors loved him because, more than any other officer, he would talk to them about the life and military feats of Admiral Ushakov.

Vorobyev patted Chernov on the shoulder and said: "Oh, Vanya, old man! You speak well of your senior artillery commander, but when it comes to a test everything turns out different. Do you remember when your Dmitriev relieved Gavrilov at Crete? What was he thinking about then? Gavrilov fobbed him off with useless guns. Our turrets had to be repaired en route. The commission accepted them from the Obukhov works on the way, too, and seemed to find everything in order. But someone must have lined his pockets all the same. Immediately after the acceptance of the guns, artillery lieutenant Gavrilov resigned on account of sickness. I'm no doctor, but somehow his illness seems to me suspicious. It's not known to medical science. Perhaps he had gold fever! And your Dmitriev made a slip here, and we have to pay for it with our skins. The guns haven't got the right elevation of height for long-range shooting. The conning-tower mechanism hardly lives up to the commission's 'word of honor.' But worst of all, the rings reinforcing the guns have already given way. And because of this our principal artillery came to the end of its service yesterday. The guns look dangerous enough, but you can't do much shooting with them. And they won't hurt the enemy any more than a scare-crow hurts the crows in a cabbage-patch. Kindly tell me what we're to do when we next come across the Japs?"

Chernov, unable to admit the thought that his superior could be mistaken, waved off the speaker:

"None of your nonsense! The guns are all right, and you just see how they'll shoot!"

But the gunners, interrupting Chernov, supported Vorobyev.

"Vorobyev's right," they said. "The guns fired their last yesterday."

"They make a fine noise, but what's the good of that?"

The long figure of the sleeper turned over. The conversation stopped. The speakers glanced towards Tirtov, who, opening his drowsy blue eyes for a second, slowly turned his face to the wall.

Vorobyev clenched his fists and through clenched teeth, spoke as fiercely as if the enemy were before his very eyes:

"It's a shame! Such a splendid commander, and nothing to fight with! Such a commander ought to have a good battleship. Or at least there ought to be good, long-range guns. Then we'd give the Japs a dressing down! And now we're creeping over the ocean like a hobbled horse. It's such a shame, it breaks your heart. . . ."

Not finishing his sentence, Vorobyev and his companions turned towards the door. Boatswain Mitrukov had come into the turret. He took them all in, went up in silence to the sleeping Tirtov and touched him on the shoulder:

"Your excellency, the captain is waiting in the chart room for your participation in the council."

Turning to Chernov, the boatswain said: "And you go at once and wake up Lieutenant Dmitriev. He's to go there, too."

Lieutenant Tirtov rose, straightened his tunic and, stooping, disappeared through the doorway. The boatswain Vorobyev and Chernov followed him out of the turret.

In the chart room the captain had already been informed of the position of the ship. Listening to the mates, Miklukha twitched his reddish bushy brows and gazed steadily at the senior ships-officers coming in, as if weighing the readiness of each for the coming events and trials. After finishing his talk with the mates, Miklukha straightened his stooping shoulders, set his eyeglasses straight and addressed those present:

"This is where we are now, gentlemen."

The officers moved towards the map. The thumb of the captain's stumpy hand pointed out on the map the position of the ship.

"The bow of the ship is under water," continued Miklukha. "The battleship can do no more than nine knots. Our squadron is ahead. I propose keeping the same course: N. E. 23°. One thing is important for us now—to get past the enemy before dawn. We shall not be able to overtake our squadron. This doesn't matter—we'll make our way to Vladivostok alone. That's all. Your opinion, gentlemen?"

Nobody disagreed with the commander. Opinion was unanimous. And so it was resolved at the council of war to keep to the same course till dawn.

From the chart room the commander went on to the bridge. The officers also went to their posts. Deadly fatigue from the day's battle and uninterrupted watch had prostrated the sailors: they lay where they had fallen, but their sleep was light. The greatest worry was the complete ignorance of what the next day would bring.

The 15th of May dawned. It was a quiet morning, the sea tossing lightly. The *Ushakov*, its bow in water, maintained its former course. The sun, reflected from the surface of the waves, hung over the horizon.

Off the starboard beam could be seen our vessels, emitting smoke from their funnels. Their outlines could hardly be made out in the hazy morning light. Everyone on the *Ushakov* was convinced that they were our ships and steered towards them. But the engines of the battleship in vain described the full number of revolutions, the distance to the unknown ships did not decrease. In a short time, a little ahead to the port, smoky paths could be seen along the sun-lit horizon. There were five ships crossing *Ushakov's* path. In a while, on board the *Ushakov*, they saw that these were old Japanese battleships. The captain gave the order to change the course to the east. The first and second groups of ships gradually disappeared. But the Russian sailors understood clearly that it would be impossible to pass unobserved. Their anxiety increased still further when they saw behind them the masts of two vessels—a small one and a big one. Moving nearer, they seemed to get bigger, as if growing out of the water. Then the outlines of the ships became visible. From the bridge they could already see that they were the

reconnoitering cruiser *Chitoze* and some sort of destroyer. Miklukha-Maklai, not taking his eyes off them, gave the order:

"Sound the alarm."

The incessant throbbing of the drum filled the air, accompanied by the high, broken sounds of the horn. Those on the upper deck scattered in all directions to their posts. Kalgan whined and, tail between his legs, scrambled down the stairway to the living quarters. The alarm always terrified him. But now it seemed as if he, too, had run to occupy his post according to military regulations.

The military flag of St. Andrew, lit up by the sun's rays, no longer waved from the top-mast, which had been shattered by a fragment of shell the day before, but from the right yard-arm. Under it stood sentry-guard quarter-master Vasili Prokopovich. He was completely deaf in both ears from yesterday's fight, but by the morning he was again at his post.

On the roof of the chart room, in which, as in yesterday's fight, the range finders had again been erected, were, as well as the signallers, midshipmen Sipyagin and Tranze. The former was tall and fair, with a boyish countenance. He was like a schoolboy in love with the sea, who had run away from his parents' home in search of adventures. The latter was shorter, top-heavy, brown-haired, spectacled, thoughtful. They were supposed to take shifts on the range finder. But the day before they had quarrelled for the honor of being first under the enemy's fire. Neither wanted to give way, and so they stood together at the watch. They had remained under fire till late in the night, and the next morning they were again seen together.

The sighting work of Sipyagin and Tranze had already begun. They marked the distance to the enemy at forty cables. The gunners trained their pieces on the *Chitoze*. But suddenly the Japanese cruiser, together with the destroyer, veered about sharply and, getting away, steered for the ships they had previously sighted. The retreat was sounded on the *Ushakov*. The commander, with his solitary thumb on his right hand, pushed his cap on to the back of his head and ordered loudly:

"Helm to starboard!"

The battleship headed due north. For some time the horizon was empty. But suddenly everyone on the bridge fell silent, listening in: from somewhere in the distance came the feeble sound of hollow shots. Field-glasses were directed towards the battery-deck, but the gleaming surface of the sea remained empty as before. Miklukha, turning to senior helmsman Maximov, said:

"Our ships are encountering the Japanese. We must go to their help. Take that course."

Miklukha's sharp eyes were fixed upon the ocean distance. The officers and signallers looked in the same direction. Soon everything was quiet again, but they listened in silence for long.

"I can't understand what has happened," remarked the captain, shrugging his shoulders in astonishment.

"Yes, the battle could not have ended so quickly," agreed Maximov.

This short artillery duel between the Nebogatov squadron and the Japanese forever remained a mystery for those on the *Ushakov*.

"I think the crew can go and have dinner now," said the captain, lighting a cigarette.

As usual dinner was carried to the upper deck. At the meal the sailors from the various parts of the ship hastened to share impres-

sions as to what they had gone through in the tense minutes of expectation of the fight. So far nothing had threatened the *Ushakov*. The feeling of alarm among the crew changed to general liveliness. Smelling food, Kalgan again appeared on deck. It seemed as if he understood the spirit of the men. He tripped merrily around the tables. Everyone had a bit of canned beef to share with the general favorite. Helmsman Maximov coaxed the little dog to come to him and, feeding him, said: "Don't be afraid, Kalgan! The Japs have gone. They understand, the rotters, what sounding alarm means. They don't like being fired at!"

The calm did not last long. Again everyone began to examine the horizon. And here and there the enemy's ships began to appear, as if the sea was bristling with them. The *Ushakov* began to increase its speed. Now many of those on board recalled with longing the preceding night. Nothing but the dark could save the shattered ship. And it was a long time till night.

Between three and four six big vessels could be seen off the starboard beam, forging full steam ahead. The visibility was perfect. They could all be clearly seen on the transparent horizon. The signallers called out: "Ours! The *Aurora*, the *Oleg* . . ."

The officers on the bridge tried to persuade Miklukha to overtake them, presuming that it was a flotilla of Russian cruisers.

"It can't be! If they're ours they'll catch up with us, anyhow. Turn about on our course," ordered the captain.

The *Ushakov* described a curve turning towards the south, and a vast loop of smoke hung over the waves.

The captain was right. All doubts were dispersed when two ships separated from the others, and steamed in the direction of the *Ushakov*. It was obvious that a battle was inevitable.

Miklukha was calm, as before. Not a single tremor could be detected in his voice, not the slightest fussiness in movements or gestures. His first act was to call the torpedo officer on to the bridge. With irreproachable military carriage, handsome dark-haired Lieutenant Zhdanov stepped up to him with elastic gait, neat in his naval uniform which looked as if it had only just come from the St. Petersburg shop. His deep-set brown eyes were fixed unblinking on the commander; his skin was smooth and features delicate. As usual, Miklukha did not speak immediately, but first looked at him with his inquiring gaze from beneath his beetling brows, as if he wanted to take in the graceful figure and the fine face of Zhdanov:

"Boris Konstantinovich, do you understand with whom we have to deal? Two first-class battle cruisers are coming to take us alive, to make a prize... Order the ship to be prepared for scuttling in case of emergency. That's all. Then come for a council of war."

"Yes, Vladimir Nikolayevich! Allow me to report: Wires from the powder and mine magazines are already in my cabin. Dynamite has also been laid under the stokehole."

The commander then turned to senior officer Musatov:

"And you, Alexander Alexandrovich, order the ship cleared for action. Leave nothing on board but the cork matresses, all fuel overboard."

In a short time, officers began to come to the bridge one after another from various parts of the ship. They reported to the captain that the ship was ready. Miklukha detained them and ordered that

the rest of the officers be called for a council of war. They all looked at the captain in silent astonishment, so calm and firm did he appear. His subordinates were impressed by his firmness and decision in these anxious moments. He gave his orders confidently, going into all the details of the defense of the battleship.

At the council Miklukha briefly outlined the situation and asked the officers to express their opinions. From the lowest to the highest ranks, all the officers spoke firmly for the same thing—to fight as long as their strength and ammunition lasted. Miklukha felt assured of the readiness of each to die at his post. His drawn thick brows went up in reddish curves, his wrinkles smoothed out. He was satisfied. His talks on the heroic past of Russian sailors, his system of education in the fighting traditions of Admiral Ushakov had not been in vain. His men were ready for a heroic battle.

Miklukha straightened himself and, stretching his stumpy right hand upwards, towards the fluttering military flag of St. Andrew, exclaimed:

"We will die, but we won't allow the Russian flag on a battleship to be disgraced! We will fight in Ushakov's way. To your posts, gentlemen."

Once again a short alarm was sounded on the ship.

It was about four in the afternoon. The *Ushakov* had turned due west. But the two cruisers were still following it. Now they were to its starboard. The smoke from their funnels extended low over the waves, showing high speed. The men at the range finder marked the distance to the enemy at a hundred cablelengths. But it was gradually diminishing. The enemy ships kept a parallel course, drawing near to the right of the *Ushakov*. It was already possible to make out that the first was the *Ivate*, flying the admiral's flag, and the one behind it—the *Yakumo*.

These were two splendid armored cruisers with a speed of 20 knots and a tonnage of 19,700. Their eight 8-inch and twenty-eight 6-inch guns had a range of 75 cablelengths. The *Ushakov's* tonnage was only 4,126 and her speed 10 knots. She could face the enemy with four 10-inch and four 120-mm. guns. The former with a maximum range of 63, the latter of 60, cablelengths. The enemy's fighting capacity was almost five times as strong. In official documents the *Ushakov* was registered under the heading "Armored Shore Defense Ship" but the sailors on such war-ships called them facetiously "battleships defended by the shores."

The masts of the *Ivate* were bright with signalling flags. The *Ushakov* replied with the signal: "We are deciphering." In a few minutes the helmsman Maximov reported to the captain: "Half of the signal has been decoded: 'We advise you to surrender your ship. . . .' "

The Japanese could not bring themselves to believe that such a small Russian battleship would fight them. But they were mistaken, not suspecting that this time they were up against a peculiar kind of ship. Its crew lived in the fighting traditions of the famous Admiral Ushakov. And Miklukha himself, its commander, was his disciple. Replying to Maximov's report, he said: "After that we needn't go on deciphering."

And turning towards his senior artillery commander, he added:

"Open fire on the enemy!"

Miklukha said this as calmly as if he were ordering the decks to be swilled.

A broadside from the port of the *Ushakov* was fired at the *Ivate*—the admiral's flagship. The water-spouts thrown up showed that they had

all fallen very short. The enemy replied with veritable hurricane fire. But the Japanese missed. For ten minutes not a single shell fell on the *Ushakov*. Miklukha gave the command to steer straight up to the enemy. Just then the hydraulic horizontal mechanism of the fore turret went out of order. It only managed to fire four rounds. The commander of this turret, Lieutenant Tirtov, gave the order to turn it by hand. This was very hard work, but nevertheless the turret went into action from time to time.

One after another, terrible explosions burst on the *Ushakov*, and fires broke out. Report was given to the commander that the starboard bow 120 mm. gun had been shattered by a shell, three reserve supplies of ammunition had exploded and the right side of the battery destroyed. A struggle with the fire had begun.

Then came the only moment when the shells from the *Ushakov* fell on the enemy's ship.

"The *Ivate* is on fire!" resounded from the bridge.

"Well done, gunners," drawled Miklukha, not taking his eyes from the enemy's flag-ship, which was enveloped in flames for a few minutes.

From then on the enemy remained out of range of the *Ushakov*.

The commander was continually being informed of fresh damages: the side of the ship had been struck at the water-line just under the fore turret by an 8-inch shell. There were several other minor breaches in the hull. Suddenly everyone in the conning tower staggered, and the whole ship shook from an explosion of enormous force. A shell struck the hull beneath the officers' mess, making a huge aperture in it. The *Ushakov* began to show an appreciable list to the right.

Not a single ship in the second squadron found itself in such a tragic position as the *Ushakov*. All on board remained at their posts, ready to die fighting. But no valor could save the battleship any more. The battle was reduced to this: the swift enemy cruisers, remaining out of range of the Russian guns, fired on it with absolute impunity. And the *Ushakov* could neither retreat from them nor come nearer. She was like a man lashed to a post under fire. For the solitary and shattered ship the post was space, and the rope its low speed. But just as a proud man, dying for his ideal, does not ask mercy from those who have condemned him to death, the doomed *Ushakov* was unshakable before its enemies.

Miklukha-Maklai, watching the fight, realized all this perfectly. His massive figure, stooping forward with arms bent at the elbow, assumed a fighting pose as if he was ready to fling himself at the enemy. Pushing aside his whiskers he shouted hoarsely to his subordinates, as if replying to their unspoken thoughts:

"If we only had speed, I'd ram the Japs. We would perish, but the enemy would go down to the bottom with us. . . ."

Fresh disasters were reported. The men stiffened their will and did not abandon their posts. Many had already been killed. The ship's doctors could not keep up with the wounded. In addition to big holes in the hull, the whole of the starboard had been battered. Hardly had they put out the fire in the fore-part of the vessel, when the officers' mess flamed up. In the living quarters the chests and upholstery were on fire. There were puffs of smoke everywhere, and it seemed as if the whole ship was on fire. But nothing could break the cour-

age of the sailors. They obeyed orders with such determination that it seemed as if the great admiral himself, whose name their ship bore, was amongst them. At last the fore turret fell completely silent. The stern turret continued firing, but the starboard list of the ship considerably reduced the elevation of its guns. Firing from the only starboard 120 mm. gun became pointless—its shells fell half-way to the enemy. The ship had exhausted its fighting capacity.

No one realized this as fully as its commander. He knew that the life of the shattered battleship was oozing out with every minute. Miklukha wiped his forehead with the stump of his right hand, and then made an abrupt gesture, as if throwing off something with decision. Then only a tremor of pain distorted his face. But this lasted for but a moment. As if desirous of assuring himself of the fortitude of those in the conning tower, he gazed steadily at them through his glasses and said very quietly, as if making some trifling decision:

"It's time to finish. Stop the engines. Stop the firing. Scuttle the ship."

The captain's order was transmitted to all parts of the ship. A minute later the guns fell silent, and the ship came to a standstill, listing ever more to the right, and tossing helplessly on the swell of the waves. Through the shell-holes the sea rushed with a roar into the lower parts of the ship. The engine-room mechanics began to let water into the torpedo magazines. The pumps were blown up. No power on earth could save the ship any longer.

The commander gave his last order:

"The crew to the boats."

Both enemy cruisers continued firing on the *Ushakov*.

Her upper deck was quickly filled with sailors. All the life-boats were shattered. The men hastily seized the matresses filled with chopped cork, life-belts and rings. Some jumped overboard at once, others delayed, as if unable to make the last step. Midshipmen Sipyagin and Tranze, together with the signallers, remained on the roof of the chart room next to the sighting apparatus. Though completely exposed, they had by some miracle remained untouched by enemy shells and had stood at their posts all the time. Senior artillery commander Dmitriev, catching sight of them, called out:

"You're not wanted there any more! Get down at once and save yourselves!"

They began running down the stairway one after another. Just then a shell burst at the base of the conning tower. Signaller Demyan Plaksin, descending last, fell in a bleeding heap on the bridge.

The *Ushakov*, listing to the right, slowly sank into the waves. From its yard-arm, infuriating the enemy by its obstinacy, the military flag of St. Andrew still waved. Beneath it, as on the day before, quartermaster Vasili Prokopovich had stood from the morning. Boatswain Mitrukov shouted out to him: "Vasya, save yourself!"

But he, deaf in both ears, heard nothing. Then the boatswain pointed to the side, waving his hand to him. A shell exploded like lightning. Prokopovich fell dead at his post. Mitrukov, as if lifted by the wind, plunged into the sea.

One of the Chinese porkers was killed, the other seriously wounded. It expressed its pain in a a shrill squeal. But the hog was unhurt and, grunting, trotted about the deck among those still left there. Unfed since the morning, it insistently demanded food. In the

poultry cage one corner had been broken off. The ducks were squeezing out of it, with a great quacking. And Kalgan also appeared on deck. Up till then he had kept to the living quarters. The firing had upset him considerably. He seemed to feel that there was an invisible enemy somewhere, and broke out into loud barks. And now he was fussing about among the men, looking anxiously now into their faces, now at those who were already overboard. He had never before seen his ship and crew in such an extraordinary state.

Only when the battleship could in no way threaten the Japanese cruisers any longer did they begin to approach it.

Shells were still falling around the *Ushakov*. On the bridge, his hands clasped behind his back, stood Miklukha. His red whiskers flamed in the rays of the sun. He was in no hurry to save himself and showed neither fear nor anxiety, as if the ship was not sinking, but still going ahead. An orderly brought him a life-belt and put it at his commander's feet, but Miklukha paid not the slightest attention to it. Beside him stood the helmsman Maximov and artillery commander Dmitriev. Senior officer Musatov came to him and reported:

"The ship is sinking. Almost all the crew are in the water with life-belts. The wounded have been taken aloft. Life-belts have been prepared for them. Goodbye, gentlemen!"

Musatov shook hands with everyone and went towards the stern. A minute later he was on the spar-deck at the right side. Holding on to the railing with one hand, Musatov showed with the other the best way of lashing the wounded to life-belts. Just then a burning life-boat fell from its davits. Musatov's head, forced against the railing, was crushed. Death was instantaneous.

On the quarter-deck, Supply quarter-master Ilya Vorobyev, taking off his shirt, asked Lieutenant Tirtov, also stripping himself:

"Which is the best side to dive, your honor? The side the ship's listing, or the other?"

"I don't know myself, old man. It's the first time in my life this has happened to me. Let's see!" he replied and threw himself into the water from the left side. Vorobyev followed him.

The warship *Ushakov* keeled over. But for a moment it remained on the surface. High water-spouts started up through the open valves on its keel, grown over with shells, like the scales of a fish. From within the overturned ship resounded a hollow explosion, heavy like a sigh. Then the stern of the ship, shuddering, began to sink rapidly, and nothing but the rammer remained above water. Another few seconds, and the *Ushakov* had disappeared completely beneath the water. The waves swarmed with men. Beams, broken life-boats, spars, tables, gratings, masts, boxes, anchors, boards floated among them. The screams of pain of the wounded, curses and cries could be heard all round. Every now and then they were silenced by the bursting of shells. Tossing on the waves, carried by the south wind, the sailors did not know which way to swim. The shore was too far away, no swimmer could reach it. And the two enemy cruisers visible on the horizon not only took no measures to save the men, but even now continued to fire on them. Such vindictiveness was no doubt caused by the disappointed hopes of the Japanese: the *Ushakov*, an absolutely negligible fighting force, had nevertheless not

surrendered. This was what made the Japanese wreak vengeance on the heroes facing death amidst the waves. Here and there, spouts of water arose in the midst of the swimmers. Something fell with a hollow splash next to artillery quarter-master Vorobyev. The same moment, with a deafening roar, he was thrown high up with the stream of water. At first he felt as if he had been torn in pieces. Then he no longer felt or understood anything. When he came to himself, he could not believe that he was unhurt. He only felt a violent pain in his legs, as if someone had pulled them and torn the joints. Next to him, hanging on to a life-belt, was the priest Iona. His distorted face with its shaggy black beard, and dark, starting eyes, seemed to be turned to stone. Turning in the direction of the enemy, he blessed with his great golden cross the ocean spaces, with almost unconscious gestures. It was as if he were shielding himself against the enemy shells. But they brought death just the same. Not far from Vorobyev about thirty men were hanging on to a big life-belt. A shell hit the center. Flames, smoke, blood, water, arms and legs shot upwards in one huge column. Then the surface of the sea in that place was dyed pink, and nothing floated but fragments of the shattered ring.

That was the last enemy shot. The cannonade died down. The cries of people became more audible. And, strangest of all, the voices of ducks were heard. Wearied by imprisonment in the close cage on the ship, these birds, finding themselves at liberty, quacked with a kind of fiendish joy, most unsuitable to these ghastly moments of human catastrophe. In the water, which to everyone meant suffering and torture, the ducks were in their element. Kalgan also found himself in the water among human beings. He was terrified and, apparently, could not understand what had happened. He whined piteously, dashing from one to another, not knowing where to swim or whom to follow. The men pitied the dog's sufferings, but could not help their pet. The other four-footed being which found itself in the water reduced the men to horror. From the moment of the sinking of the ship, the great hog had not left the sailors alone. In the water it sought only one thing—to lean against something. Maddened, unable to understand what was before it, it scrambled on to scraps of wood, but they sank beneath its weight. Slipping off them, it would climb on any man who chanced to be next to it, pushing him down. Releasing himself from the swinish load, the man would start away in terror, and the hog would climb on to others. It was hard to shake it off. In its last desperate efforts, it swam up to its next victim, who, however, saved himself by getting on to a floating drum. Keeping himself afloat with one hand, the sailor seized the drum from beneath himself, lifted it high and began, cursing, to bang the hog upon the nose. The hollow blows resounded. On seeing this someone shouted: "Serves him right, that black devil! He's helping the Japs drown us!"

Pyotr Barishnikov, a powerful, redhaired sailor, separated himself from the group of those trying to swim away from the hog. With rapid plunges he hastened to the help of the man, who was becoming exhausted in the struggle with the maddened animal. With his enormous hands Barishnikov pushed the hog beneath him, and sat astride it. At last the animal gave up the ghost beneath its rider.

The wounded Miklukha was held up in his life-belt by two sailors.

According to the tradition of the sea, sanctified by centuries, the captain was the last to leave his ship. As if reluctant to part with the sinking battleship, he stood on the bridge long after everyone else was in the water. Unhurriedly fastening on himself the life-belt, he still delayed the abandonment of his ship to which he was bound by so many emotions since leaving Libau. The captain, his hand on the railing, looked at the sea, sprinkled with human beings, in silence. It almost seemed he was watching his crew at their usual swim. But it may be presumed that other thoughts were stirring in him. He had taken his little battleship of the shore defense, intended for operations on inland seas, safely on an extraordinarily dangerous cruise across three oceans. With selfless devotion he had put all his energy, all his passionate soul into the service of the ship, but his superiors were criminally negligent. He had rallied his subordinates around him, had raised their discipline, mobilized their wills for a stubborn struggle against an enemy obviously superior in numbers and in the quality of the fighting units of its fleet. In a word, he had done everything possible to win. And yet, having used men and arms to the utmost, he had remained alone on a shattered sinking ship. But in this defeat it was not he who was to blame, but those who had failed to furnish him with reliable supplies for the battle. He thought over many a thing during those tragic minutes, standing on the bridge as if transfixed, his hand on the railing, and only at the very last moment, when the ship, swaying, turned over on its side, did Miklukha-Maklai remember that he must save his own life. Stepping over the railing of the bridge, he waved his hands and threw himself, as if into a friendly embrace, into the transparent waters of that sea with which, during many years of cruising, he had become so familiar. Shortly after that he was wounded in the shoulder by a fragment of shell, and his strength was gradually ebbing away. Then the sailors who supported him noticed that his head was hanging helplessly.

"Leave me," he said feebly. "Save yourselves. I'm doomed to perish."

And the captain closed his eyes. He did not utter another word. But the sailors swam long with him, leaving their commander only when his limbs became rigid in death.

And all round, their strength ebbing, shivering with cold, men were bidding each other farewell, praying to god, cursing their fate. The strong and more vigorous, keeping afloat easily, helped their comrades. Some irrepressibles preserved their presence of mind even in these ghastly moments, joking and laughing at their terrible plight. One of the sailors swam about with a cigarette stuck behind his ear.

"Brothers, hasn't anyone got a match?" he implored, as if his life depended on it.

Suddenly a pair of bare feet appeared above the surface of the water. They were bent at the knees, quivering, as if doing gymnastic exercises. Grigori Skopov, mechanic, was the first to swim up to them. He easily set their owner right-sideup. It turned out to be stoker Semyon Minyeev, who had suddenly shot head downwards because his life saver was fastened too low. The two went on swimming together.

Two Japanese cruisers came up to them only within two hours: these were the *Ivate* and the *Yakumo*. Their lifeboats began to save the men. By this time the swimmers had been carried by the waves in

all directions, far from the place of the sinking of the *Ushakov*. While they were being picked up it had grown dark. The last of the swimmers, stiff and almost lifeless, were sought for by the rays of searchlights. These unfortunates were worse off in the darkness than they had been on the battle ship during the encounter. A shell might miss them there, but here they were already gasping in the cold waves of the sea. Each longed for the rays of the searchlight to fall on himself, and a ray would slip beyond him. Many remained unnoticed. That meant death.

They finished picking up the survivors in complete darkness, at about nine o'clock. Of the 442 members of the crew of the *Ushakov*, 339 were taken aboard the two cruisers. The valiant captain was not among them. He died the death of a hero, in the sea.

The rescued helmsman Maximov noted for his own remembrance: "Japan Sea. Latitude 37° north, longitude 133° east of Greenwich."

TEMBOT KERASH

TRIAL BY ELDERS

The old men sat in solemn silence on the long benches placed against the wall.

Dark faces scorched by the sun, lined with want and care, peered out from under the shaggy sheepskin caps. The necks and cheeks of the old men were overgrown with bristling hair, streaked with yellowish grey. They sat awkwardly, leaning on their sticks, by the door; it was as if they were playing a long-forgotten role.

The imposing figure of the *hadji*, who wore a richly-ornamented turban of colorful foreign material, stood out from among the rest.

Hadji Bekhunov was the only man in the village who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He was very proud of his turban.

The other old Adygei, none of whom was less than seventy-five, guarded his peace and old age, though they had no particular affection for him.

They would not have disturbed him now, were it not that the case involved ancient traditions. The oldest men in the village were assembled to try a young woman who had openly declared her unwillingness to live with her aged husband. The husband himself, Haroun, had called upon the elders to sit in judgment on his wife.

The young Adygei who crowded in the doorway listened in respectful silence to what the elders were saying.

Bibelot, a well-built, handsome Circassian, entered the room. The young villagers noticed him first and made way for him. He was accompanied by Mhamet, who had known from childhood the family of the harsh Haroun, and his young wife, and took a lively interest in the decision of the elders.

The old men rose ceremoniously to greet the rare guest from the town.

"Do not rise, please do not rise! Sit down, my elders," Bibelot protested.

"Sit down with us!" said an old man in a caracul cap.

By his carefully-tended grey beard, old-fashioned woollen clothes, and independent, rather important bearing, Bibelot gathered that this was a former *effendi*, a person of rank. He was evidently here by special invitation, for every word uttered at the trial was valued only in accordance with the age of the speaker.

"Sit down," said the other old men, following the *effendi's* example and seating themselves with great dignity.

"No, thank you. I can stand . . . Please sit down!" Bibelot replied modestly.

"Sit down! Though young, you are our guest," the *effendi* repeated.

Bibelot knew that it was not considered the proper thing to take advantage of his position as a guest; that a young man was supposed to stand in the presence of his elders. But he had his own point of view,

Translated from the Adygeian.

his own line of behavior—that of a member of the Young Communist League. He did not see why he should stand if there was a vacant seat. There was no necessity to submit to rules which exceeded the bounds of ordinary politeness, becoming senseless submission to ancient custom. Bibelot accepted the invitation and took a seat.

An almost imperceptible shadow of disapproval flitted over the faces of the elders; they lowered their eyes as though ashamed of their guest.

Old Khaliakho came in.

"*Salaam*! Peace be with you!"

"*Salaam*, Khaliakho!" the old men half-rose and sat down again.

"We have a guest, it seems!" said Khaliakho, going up to Bibelot. "Welcome, young man."

Bibelot stood up and shook the old man's rough hand.

"Who is this young guest, Khaliakho?" Haroun asked. There was a hint of condescension in his tone for the evidently inexperienced guest.

"He is the son of the Mazokovs. He is studying in Moscow," Khaliakho answered in a loud voice, so that all could hear. Then he joined the group of young people lounging against the wall by the door.

"It is a very good thing to study," the *hadji* drawled goodhumoredly.

"Let him study, but he ought not forget his own people," said another voice.

"I have heard that the young guest has read a great number of books," Khaliakho observed in a tone of the greatest goodwill.

The others spoke up now.

"He must not lag behind others. He was born a man—he must see that he does not become unworthy of his people."

"Nor must he join those who deny the good in everything that is old," the *hadji* added.

"You can do nothing about that: when you're riding in a bullock cart, you must sing the same song as the driver."

"Let him study, if they're willing to teach him."

"As the saying goes: 'even if it's filth you've caught hold of, stick to it with all your might!'" the *effendi* remarked suddenly in a tone of careless contempt.

There was dead silence for a moment, as though the malicious old saying had caught their breath away.

"By Allah, *effendi*, whoever said that did not mince his words," said a consumptive-looking old man, giving a hoarse laugh as he looked triumphantly at the rest.

Perhaps there was a touch of malice, or it might have been of embarrassment, in the restrained laughter that rippled through the room. They all knew at whom the *effendi's* venomous saying was directed.

Bibelot's first impulse was to snub the *effendi* with a rude retort. But he remembered that any lack of restraint on his part might start a row at the wrong time. The Adygei would strongly disapprove of any loss of self-control. So Bibelot sat, outwardly calm and self-possessed, awaiting a fitter opportunity for attack.

This maneuver of the young man did not escape the *effendi* however; he resolved to draw Bibelot into an argument.

"Perhaps I have wounded the guest's feelings, unwittingly?" he asked, with an obvious sneer.

"You spoke the truth," Bibelot replied with great dignity. Then, looking around the assembly, he added: "We know very well that to certain men the world of today, where the children of the Adygei are sent to schools at the expense of the Soviet Government, seems to be a world of filth. But we also know that to the worm of the dung-

hill even the brightest world looks like filth. . . ."

The atmosphere was ominous. Only among the young people at the door there was a stir, though they did not dare to express their satisfaction at the guest's clever retort.

"By Allah, *effendi* ! I can see that young fellow won't let his bone go with the dog!" Khaliakho's cheerful voice broke the silence; he was obviously anxious to relieve the tenseness.

"I have got my deserts," the *effendi* returned serenely.

"It is a true saying: 'Have no dealings with a beardless boy, lest he pluck you by the beard,'" came in an unhealthy croak from an old man sitting a little apart from the rest.

Bibelot caught the note of animosity in the dry voice.

"That must be the husband!" he decided, examining the wasted, yellowish, clay-colored face.

The open mouth exposed the rotting teeth; it was twisted with pain and resembled a yawning black gap in a crooked fence. The scanty reddish beard hung in matted wisps. The whole of the man's rancor against the world around him seemed to be concentrated in the feverishly glittering eyes. They were fixed on Bibelot in a mistrustful, unwinking stare that held mortal fear and hatred.

Old Khaliakho leaned over to Bibelot as if by accident and whispered:

"That's Haroun—the husband!"

At that moment a young man entered the room and bent respectfully towards the *effendi's* ear.

"Good! But first let the young people leave the room," the *effendi* said.

It was an immutable law of the trial by elders. The young people knew it, but none of them moved.

The old men exchanged glances. They said nothing; they were waiting to see if perhaps their guest, at least, would rise and leave the room. But he obstinately refused to notice the expression of expectancy on the old people's faces, and sat as though the *effendi's* suggestion could not possibly concern him.

"Well, then, if Haroun does not object, we will call the woman in the presence of the young men," said the *effendi*, with a sly leer addressing the old consumptive.

"There are no secrets in the affair, of course," Haroun said through his teeth, but he could hardly keep the rage and indignation out of his voice. "Still, since it is the affair of an old man, I would have preferred that none but old men hear it."

Mhamet gave Bibelot a hopeless glance.

It seemed as though the guest's plan to avoid disclosing until the proper time the real reason for his presence at the trial would come to nothing. He had to make up his mind whether he was to submit to tradition and retire respectfully before the old men, or explain his desire to be present.

An outspoken demand to let him stay would have put the old men on their guard, and they might easily postpone the hearing of the case and try it at another time in secret. Then Bibelot would not only lose every chance of helping the woman; his interference would probably make things worse for her. And this would injure the authority of the Young Communist League Committee where the plan for the breaking-up of the system of trial by elders had been worked out in the course of many days.

So Bibelot said:

"I have come here at the woman's wish. She is a distant relative of mine and she asked me to be present at the trial. It goes without

saying that I do not think for a moment that the honorable old men, the *hadji* and the *effendi* would be unjust to her. But I have no right to refuse her trifling request. And I think it would be good for the young to listen to our elders and learn wisdom from them."

The old men were disarmed.

"Very well," the *effendi* agreed. "After all, it is better that one of the woman's relatives is present. Call her in."

The woman entered as noiselessly as a shadow. She was wrapped in a big flowered shawl. She stood with downcast eyes by the wall. Her trembling fingers played nervously with the gaily-colored fringe of the shawl.

The old men were silent. They sat staring before them, seeking a decent and seemly introduction to an affair that was already settled. The *effendi* preserved his customary pose of serene grandeur. His whole bearing seemed to say: "The most just and most merciful, the omniscient and omnipresent Allah, to whom there is no beginning and no end, hath foreordained birth, life and death. The Book of Allah is infinite. There has been none, there will be none, save the last of the prophets, Mohammed, who could fathom the depths of the Koran. Were all the seas to be turned to ink it would not suffice to write down the full meaning of the Koran. And he who thinks to translate the Koran and its truth into the simple Circassian tongue is the sworn foe of Allah. None but the *effendis*, the servants of Allah, who have studied his sacred characters, can interpret the law laid down by the Koran."

"What have you to say, *effendi*?" the low voice of the *hadji* broke in on his thoughts.

"You speak first, *hadji*," said the *effendi*, yielding precedence to him, and adding as if unintentionally: "What more is there to say, beyond what our law dictates!"

"But perhaps Haroun would like to say something?"

Haroun looked around the faces of the men on the benches. Then he stood up, leaning heavily with his sunken chest on his stick and began, in a voice that resembled the creaking of a bullock-cart:

"I have nothing to add to what you already know. I have entrusted my family affairs to you and for me your word is law. I pray you, help me to escape disgrace and a neglected and lonely old age. . . ." A fit of coughing choked him and he could hardly gasp out the last few words.

He coughed and it seemed as if his inside was being torn to pieces. Strange, shrill, whistling sounds and gurgles came from his throat. At last he spat out a clot of bloody phlegm and sat down, panting heavily.

The old men stroked their beards thoughtfully.

"And now, Amlekhan, what have you to say?" the *hadji* said to the woman. "What is your husband guilty of? Has he been unjust to you?"

Amlekhan raised her eyes and looked at the *hadji*.

"No, I have suffered no great injustice from him; he was no better and no worse than any other husband might be," she said in a clear voice. "But I cannot go on . . . I do not want to live with him any more. It was not of my own free will that I married him: I was sold to him in marriage when I was fourteen," she concluded, then lowered her gaze once more.

The *hadji* twisted the end of his beard.

"But you have lived with him for twenty years?"

"He would not let me divorce him. . . ." she returned coldly.

"And is he granting you divorce now?"

"The laws of today," said Amlekhan, with a glance at Bibelot, "as this young man can tell you—allow me to divorce my husband, even if he does not want to divorce me."

The woman's words cut the air like a blade. The *hadji* was silenced. The *effendi* glared angrily at Bibelot and said with a hastiness unusual for him.

"So far as we know, this young man left Adygei long ago. . . . He has given up our customs and he knows nothing of them. . . ."

"He has exchanged them for Russian ways," the *hadji* put in hurriedly.

"What's the harm in exchanging bad customs for good?" old Khaliakho countered, and burst out laughing.

Someone applauded by tapping on the floor with his stick.

"Khaliakho is right!"

A buzz of approval rose from the ranks of the old men. The *hadji* combed his beard with his fingers and addressed the woman with a conciliatory smile.

"Our guest spoke the truth when he said there is no one here who would bear you ill-will. . . . Though your relative is young—Allah send him more years of growth—he has more sense than many an old man. His studies have clearly not been in vain. There are wise men in Moscow, too," the *hadji* had gained the attention of the audience now. "We, Circassians, have lived until now in friendship, preserving our laws and customs, acting honorably by one another. Other peoples have looked upon us with favor. Even Pushkin, the great Russian poet, praised us in his golden writings. We, Adygei, must not forget that. . . ."

Bibelot raised his hand.

All eyes turned to him. Clutching the end of his beard, the *hadji* watched Bibelot.

"Everybody knows," said the young man, with a courteous bend of his head, "that the great Russian poet Pushkin never praised either *hadjis* or *effendis* in his poems. He praised only the Circassian people. . . ."

"But is not our dear *hadji*, and the *effendi*—who is just as dear—are they not Circassians, too?" cried old Khaliakho, staring at them with pretended astonishment.

"No, they have ceased to be Circassians for many a long day!" Bibelot declared firmly.

The old men raised their heads like storks in a marsh. Astounded by this assault, they laid their staffs aside.

"Are those who sold their own people to the Russian tsar, deserving of being called Circassians? The *hadjis* and the *effendis* sold us and with the money they got from the tsar they built themselves the best houses and bought themselves the best horses and harness. See, Adygei, the foreign turban of the *hadji* and the caracul cap on the *effendi*! Their beards are well-tended and white as snow . . . Why?—you may ask—why should rich turbans and caracul caps be worn by two or three, while the forty other respected Circassians wear ordinary sheepskin caps? They will tell you it was foreordained by Allah. But I tell you it was foreordained by the *hadjis* and *effendis* themselves."

"Old men of Adygei!" shrieked *hadji* Bekhunov, raising his staff above his head. "The evil one himself, the perverter of the world, has crept into our midst in the guise of a guest. . . ." here he

struck his stick on the floor with all his might. "Oh, Allah, the end of the good Circassians is at hand!"

"Drive him out from the assembly," the *effendi* ordered, thumping the floor with his stick. He was shaking from head to foot with fury. "This is a trial by the elders," he added resolutely, looking about the assembly. Then his eyes met those of Amlekhan.

The woman was standing by the wall; her brows were knit in a stern frown and she seemed ready to spring at him.

"We are the elders here!" shrieked the *hadji* above the tumult.

"The elders are those who can speak the truth!" came a grave voice from the back rows.

"Fear the wrath of Allah, Circassians!" the *effendi* could hardly speak for rage.

"We have never seen Allah yet," Khaliakho retorted with a smile, "but we have often seen you here in Adygei. . . ."

The crowd in the doorway laughed. The old men in shaggy sheepskin caps nodded their approval.

It was evident that youth was gaining ground, though there were only about eight young people present.

In the heat of the argument and wrangling, the old husband, Haroun, had been forgotten.

He was sitting alone, apart from the rest, his head resting on the hands that were clasped about his staff. He did not stir, nor try to join, even by one word, in the strife that raged around his family affairs.

"Haroun!" Khaliakho called. Silence fell.

The old man did not raise his head. He seemed to be crying quietly to himself. Khaliakho felt a sudden twinge of conscience. It was almost as if he were sorry for the old man. He winked comically, glanced at Bibelot, then strode up to Haroun and touched him hesitatingly on the shoulder. The old man stirred feebly.

Then Khaliakho touched the bony, withered hands that clutched the staff so tightly.

They were as hard as the bark of a tree.

"By Allah!" Khaliakho exclaimed, recoiling. "Haroun is fast asleep."

There was a sound of smothered laughter in the room.

Amlekhan staggered suddenly. The shawl slipped from her shoulders.

"Allah! . . ." burst from her lips. Then she covered her face with her hands as if ashamed.

The *hadji* looked around at the faces, completely at a loss.

There was dead silence. Then Bibelot went up to the woman.

Tears were trickling through the fingers that covered her face.

"Are you crying, Amlekhan?" he asked aloud in a rather surprised tone. "What are you crying for?"

The woman took her hands away from her eyes and said softly but distinctly:

"Bibelot, if the Soviet law permits it, I will support . . . Haroun . . . I will work on the collective-farm and earn enough—can I do that?" The words reached the alert ears of the old men and they sat dumbstruck, not daring to look at one another.

Bibelot picked up the shawl she had dropped on the floor and, throwing it around her shoulders, said decidedly:

"Yes, of course you can, Amlekhan!"

Amlehkan drew herself up. Her eyes met Mhamet's friendly, sympathetic look, and grew large and clear as if they had never known tears. She pulled her shawl close about her, covering her head, and left the room together with the guest.

Kosta Khetagurov

Last October the peoples of the Soviet Union celebrated the eightieth anniversary of the birth of Kosta Khetagurov, founder of Ossetian literature. Son of an Ossetian peasant, he was born in 1859 in the Caucasian *aul* of Nar. His mother died when he was still in his infancy, and his father entrusted him as a fosterling to relatives. As a mere child of five, he became a shepherd on the wild mountain slopes. Here, in his native country, the future poet saw the laborious life of the mountaineers, helpless before menacing elemental forces and oppressed by the yoke of tsarist officials and Ossetian chieftains.

He first attracted attention by literary essays which he wrote when a schoolboy at the Stavropol High School. He was, however, compelled to abandon his studies for lack of means, and only many years later was able to enter the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. Despite evident talent, he was unable to finish the Academy. During his school years, and then the years at the St. Petersburg Academy, he came close to the Russian revolutionary movement. He became acquainted with Russian literature and the revolutionary democratic writings of Chernyshevsky, Belinsky, Hertzen, and these works strengthened his fervid hatred of the aristocracy.

On his return to Ossetia, Kosta devoted himself to active social, political and literary work. He became the leading figure in the progressive social and cultural movement in Ossetia. The life of the Ossetian people was marked by the doubly oppressive yoke of tsarism and of the local nationalistic bourgeoisie, the *aldars* or landlords, who seized the best lands for themselves and forced the mountaineers to retreat ever further up the wild, mountain ravines where starvation awaited them on the barren land. Kosta became a fiery fighter, a citizen-poet who devoted his talent and energy to his people. They were the source of his inspiration and power. Renouncing the kind of poetry "where every sound only plumes itself in beauty," he portrayed the hard life of the Ossetian poor, the unendurable toil of the poor man; he gave expression to the working people's protest against social injustice. The drab, hopeless life of mountaineer women moved the poet profoundly, and he devoted a series of powerful poems to this theme. In one of them, *In the Storm*, he created a memorable and tragic image

Kosta Khetagurov (1895)

A Mountain Woman Goes to Fetch Water. A painting by Kosta Khetagurov

of a poor Ossetian widow who had nothing wherewith to feed her starving children.

By the end of the 'nineties Kosta became a living symbol of the struggle his people were waging for happiness and liberation. But while he fought to emancipate his people from the oppression of tsarism and the *aldars*, the poet never entertained the thought of retaining the archaic traditional life of the mountaineers. On the contrary, national restrictions were alien to him. "The universe is my Fatherland," exclaimed the poet. He called on the people to march "under the banner of brotherhood" and defined his own activities as service to the "universal brotherhood and peace." In his poem *To the New Year 1892* he called with lofty inspiration for a united struggle for liberty against the common enemy—the autocracy.

Divided we are weak, our struggle futile.
Let's pull together and the mountains will rock.
Our toast is to this faith in future,
To our fraternal union—Hurrah!

Tsarism and the *aldars* cruelly avenged the poet's fight for freedom. The tsarist government persecuted him, twice banished him from his native region and sought to make his life unendurable. The *aldars* even made an attempt to assasinate the revolutionary poet. Exile broke his health and on April 1, 1906, he died at the age of forty-seven.

Kosta Khetagurov was familiar with both Russian and world literature. In his own country he had had no predecessors. When he entered the field of poetry, he found practically a virgin soil, and naturally turned to Russian culture and literature, the best examples of which served as his guide and teacher.

His poetry was closely and intimately linked with that of the Russian revolutionary democracy and especially with Nekrasov's works. Many of his poems are dedicated to outstanding spokesmen of Russian culture. Lermontov was closest to him. The freedom-loving spirit of Lermontov's poetry, his love for the mountain people, and the lonely poet's tragic fate deeply impressed Kosta. To him Lermontov was the pledge of an undying faith in the triumph of freedom, the embodiment of a living, realistic art and great singer of liberty.

The rich and manifold Ossetian folklore was another factor in the formation of Kosta's talent. Kosta made a searching study of Ossetian folklore, which is distinguished by great wealth of content, diversity of genre, beauty of form and purity of language.

His political poetry was blended with an intimate lyricism. He loved his native mountains, felt the throb of their life and sang about them in his lyrics. Persecuted by tsarism the poet was at times seized by despair and a sense of hopelessness. With aching heart he acknowledged that "under the weight of toil, struggle and poverty, he had become exhausted." In moments of weariness, when serious illness got the better of him, Kosta's militant *motifs* would sometimes lose their cheerful ring. Neither the adversities of life, however, nor persecution, nor suffering could break Khetagurov's will. "I am ever able to oppose evil," wrote the poet.

Kosta played a great part in the creation of the Ossetian literature and the Ossetian literary language. Though primarily a lyric poet, Kosta devoted a large part of his work to epic poetry.

The range of his social interests was unusually wide. The poet organized art exhibitions; arranged theatrical performances for the people; took an ardent part in the work of folk schools and in a society for the spread of technical knowledge among the mountaineers and worked on the creation of the Ossetian alphabet and written language. Everything which would

even in the slightest degree improve the lot of the people, bring knowledge and literacy to the Ossetians, arouse them in the struggle against the *aldars* and tsarism, found in Kosta an energetic supporter. His journalistic activity in the newspaper *Severny Kavkaz (North Caucasus)* and in St. Petersburg newspapers played a great role in the life of Ossetia. In their time many of his articles impressed the Russian public by unmasking the outrageous cynicism of the tsarist colonization policy. His public-spirited articles were aggressively polemic and gave a keen analysis of facts.

Kosta was also a painter and despite the briefness of his study at the St. Petersburg Academy, he produced several notable pictures, such as *Children at the Quarry, Teberda, A Mountain Woman Goes to Fetch Water*, and others. These show that Khetagurov's talent was far beyond the average. He was the first Ossetian artist realist, and laid the foundation for Ossetian painting.

Kosta Khetagurov wrote his works both in Ossetian and in Russian. But it is the Ossetian poems in the *Iron Phandyr* (Ossetian Lyre) anthology that his poetic genius is at its best. With these immortal works he laid the solid foundation of Ossetian literature and the Ossetian literary language. Kosta was the best beloved poet of the Ossetian people, who went forth to struggle against their age-old oppressors with his songs on their lips. And at the present day, in the flourishing collective farm fields of Soviet Ossetia, one can hear the people everywhere sing the heartfelt lyrical poems of Kosta.

Modern Ossetian literature has learned much and is learning yet from Kosta. In all Ossetia there is not a single writer or poet who has not felt the influence of Khetagurov's poetry, which is distinguished by its simple language, its unbounded devotion to the people and its revolutionary passion.

★ ★
★

Believe not that forgotten my mountains dear I have,
The deep blue firmament, the cloudless heaven's vault,
Your dreamy, muzing gaze, remote but still beloved,
Our poor and low a u l, our poor and hapless folk.

Oh no, my friend, I didn't! The harsher and more bitter
The exile, and more pitiless the cruel foe,
To my impatient heart the meeting seems the sweeter
With all that dear to me is in my mountains own.

Don't worry friend, don't fear! I want no retaliation,
But against evil I shall always set my face. . . .
Don't worry, friend!—I'll never yield to fascination
Of women fair, but alien by country and by race.

I love the universe, I love its men and women,
I love aggrieved poor orphans who suffer and who pine,
But most of all I love—I won't deny it ever—
You and the old a u l, and the poor people mine.

For all of you I'll give my life, my strength and efforts,
To serving only you, I shall devote myself. . . .
So dearly do I love you, and so deeply care for,
That to express it all I have no strength, no words enough.

At Lermontov's Monument

My dear country, be happy today and rejoice,
And forget your eternal advers'ties,
All your innermost longings will up raise their voice,
Hailing freedom's long wished for precursor.

It will come, have no doubt. Here's its trustworthy pledge,
An eternal, bright, heavenly body,
A faithful companion up hill, by the edge,
A great power, strong, noble and sturdy.

With him to the temples of science and art
You will stride bold and brave and confiding;
With him you will learn to be ready to start,
For the cause great and fair, for the fighting.

In your heart never fade will his image nor die—
His image so wistful and fiery,
And for ever alive in your mountains, ravines
Will the powerful chords of his lyre be.

Hold for ever him dear, as the poet exiled,
Held dear your dark and lowering mountains,
And the greeting reverse that he sent as he died,
He—of intrigue and disfavor a martyr.

Poems translated by Helen Kagan

Jean Racine

On the eve of the present war, a critic writing for the semi-official French newspaper *Le Temps* gave a very skeptical account of the special issue of the magazine *Muse Française* published on the occasion of the tercentenary of Jean Racine's birth. "I should have liked to see below the heading," that critic wrote, "a subtitle reading: 'Why do we not love Racine?'—a study of the tastes of our century, which does not seem to me to be very much of a Racine century." The point is that the critic mentioned did not mean to say that France is now much ahead of the tastes that were characteristic of the epoch of absolutism. He confesses quite frankly that the indifference to Racine is explained by the fact that "all poetry has become foreign and incomprehensible to us."

The war has actually set aside the "Racine Year," which was proclaimed with great solemnity. It would be unreasonable to believe that the France of aggression and terror is loath to commemorate "only" the glorious revolutionary past of her people, but that she still values certain indisputable achievements of culture, great works of art, etc. No, the republic of Daladier and Blum does not foresee for herself any greatness at all. Jean Giraudoux, who once assured us that France is a country of clarity, solemnity and courage, now—in his capacity as director of official propaganda—frankly admits that the present war is just "a banking operation." Gold, he writes, lies in concrete vaults, and soldiers sit in concrete trenches. Both have to be "expanded" rationally. That is all. There is no need of greatness; there is no need of anything but gold and cannon fodder. This, at bottom, is the reply of Giraudoux to the critic's question: Why does not contemporary France love art?

As for Racine—Giraudoux today has hardly any affection for that old classic who cannot be used for chauvinistic propaganda. National hatred is not Racine's province. This much may be gathered not only from his *Esther*, but also from a number of his other tragedies, such as *Alexander*, *Mithridate*. Jews (*Esther*), "Proud Germany" (*Mithridate*) and India (*Alexander*) are all represented by Racine as nations worthy of high regard. The Indian king Porius says of Alexander (in whom Racine portrayed the king of France): "How can he dare take under his wing people who have no other enemy but him?" In contemporary France, this "great colonial empire," these words might evoke undesirable applause, such as used to greet the well-known passage in *Athalie*, which disconcerted Fouché in his time. In a private letter Racine, as we shall see later, spoke of Louis' campaign in the Netherlands as of "a horrible carnage."

It thus devolves upon us in the Soviet Union to take under our protection Racine's tragedies which—unlike the critic in the *Le Temps*—men like Voltaire, Stendhal and Anatole France loved and regarded very highly.

There is no need to change Racine into a tragedian of the people, although there is sufficient evidence of the fact that his tragedies were known to the masses; and plain people—cooks, drivers, water-carriers, etc.—who chanced to see his *Andromache* were profoundly stirred by Racine's art and discussed the tragedy with great earnestness.

Neither is there any need to regard Racine merely as an attendant of Louis XIV, although it is known that the king, when suffering from insomnia, was wont to call to his bedside the author of *Phedre* who was one of the best declamators in France.

Racine's significance can be appreciated only if we stand "on historical ground."

It is interesting in this connection to cite La Bruyère regarding the effect of the tragedy on the people: "The people often find pleasure in the tragedy: for here, on the stage of society's theater, they see the ruin of personages who are the most odious to them, who have done them the most harm . . . and whom they hate most."

In an appraisal of Racine's personality we are concerned primarily with young Racine, "trembling", as he himself described his Hippolyte when he depicted him in his youthful rage.

When Racine first appeared in literature he was closely associated with Molière and La Fontaine. He came out against the older generation of tragedians, particularly against Corneille, in defense of his own tragedies and, almost at the same time, against the religious bigots of Port-Royal, in defense of art in general, in defense of Corneille as well as of himself, and in defense of Molière and Molière's comedians.[1] At that time Nicole, a monk at Port-Royal, came out with an attack upon art in which he called men of art "public poisoners." Racine took up the cudgels against Port-Royal and levelled his scathing ridicule at the Jansenist bigots: "Aye, Messieurs," he wrote, "content yourselves with conferring ranks in the other world, and don't try to distribute awards in this one." Racine proved very ingeniously that Pascal, who supported the Port-Royal people, by no means intended his *Lettres Provinciales* to become the gospel of Jansenism, but that his work was merely a satire levelled at the Jesuits and portraying "an avaricious bourgeois, an extravagant marquis, and, in general, everything that deserves derision."

Racine himself had been educated at Port-Royal and, like so many young bourgeois out for a career, was at one time on the verge of joining the clergy. His attack therefore produced a tremendous impression.

True, he subsequently parted with Molière and made his peace with the Jansenists. But the document which embodied his first impulse remains, and it tells more of the young Racine than his first tragedy, *Thébaïde*.

Racine, a young bourgeois eager

[1] The Monastery of Port-Royal was the intellectual center of the Jansenists, a sect founded by Jansen, a Catholic monk who wrote a book about Augustine containing Five Propositions which the Catholic Church condemned as heretical. The Jansenists maintained that not every Christian can be saved, there are some whose souls are doomed and even the Church is powerless to save them. The basis of their doctrine was an ascetic renunciation of life, suppression of the human will and desires, etc.

to emerge from obscurity into the limelight, strove to gain access to the royal court. But he had occasion to find out that the despotism of the court was much worse than that of the Jansenists. Here is an instance of the treatment which Racine had to put up with at a time when he was already a recognized poet and the king's official historiographer besides:

Racine once spoke to Madame de Mentenon about the misery of the people. Madame de Mentenon, who disliked the poet, asked him to write it all down for her private use. She then arranged matters to have the king "surprise" her while she was reading Racine's notes on the subject. Louis flew into a rage and said: "Does he think that, because he is a perfect versifier, he knows everything? And does he want to become a minister because he happens to be a great poet?"

If we are to judge by these words, the notes which Racine wrote down at the suggestion of Madame de Mentenon were not distinguished for their exceptional boldness. At any rate, they were infinitely more moderate than the notes written on the same subject by the philosopher Fénélon, who presented a really terrible picture of the misery suffered by the people. Still, when Racine learned of the king's displeasure, he was haunted by the fear of falling into disfavor.

During another period of disagreement between the poet and the king, Racine happened to talk to Madame de Mentenon in the royal park at Versailles. Suddenly the sound of an approaching carriage was heard. "That is the king!" Madame de Mentenon exclaimed, and advised Racine to hide in the bushes.

Racine the courtier was never a "rebel." But the poet Racine was

Jean Racine by J. Daullé

made of firmer stuff than the courtier. This is testified, among other things, by his bold epigrams ridiculing some amateur critics among the French aristocracy. It is also testified by the fact that the courtier Racine was frequently constrained to find excuses for the poet Racine and, in reply to attacks from persons in power, to plead that his plays were well-intentioned.

One need not delve deeply into the meaning of Racine's tragedies to find much in them that could not please the court, or the king himself. The following lines from *Athalie* are a sufficient illustration:

You are ignorant of the intoxication of absolute power,
and of the enchanting voices of vile flatterers.
Soon they will tell you that the most sacred laws
rule the base people, but obey the king;
that nothing but his own will can stand in his way;

that he should immolate everything to his greatness supreme:
that tears and labor are the people's lot,
and they must be ruled with an iron rod.

To Louis all of these were self-evident truths, but by representing them as coming from the mouths of "vile flatterers" Racine showed that he had rebelled against them.

On the eve of the Revolution this, now famous, passage in *Athalie* always evoked agitated applause among the audiences, and at the time of the Empire Fouché banned this play altogether. It is even doubtful whether Louis XIV himself dismissed these dangerous lines as merely the expression of Racine's predilection for the "extremes" of Jansenism.

Once Racine naively wrote to the queen, unconscious of the boldness of his words: "Now, madame, with what conscience can I testify before posterity that this great ruler has never paid any attention to false reports even when they concerned the most inconspicuous persons, if I myself have had sad experience testifying to the contrary?"

Racine's correspondence with Boileau shows that his ideas were at times quite different from what he had written in his official panegyries. Here is what he wrote to his best friend about the military expedition which he attended in the retinue of the king in the capacity of official historiographer, the future bard of Louis' military exploits:

". . . Everything is joined (in this battle)—the grandeur of the conflict, the hostility of the two parties, the courage and numbers of the combatants . . . *a horrible carnage*. . . . Judge for yourself how agreeable it is for historians to have to write of such things . . ."

In another letter he says:

"I was so wearied, so blinded by the flashes of sabers and muskets, so deafened by the noise of drums, trumpets and cymbals, that, to tell the truth, I let myself be led to my horse without paying attention to anything, and I wished with all my heart that all the men I saw there were back in their huts or houses, with their wives and children, and that I were back in my Rue de Maçons, with my family. . . ."

These, however, were still thoughts shared with *another*, even if that other was the faithful Boileau.

But here are some lines gleaned from the notes and comments Racine jotted down *for himself* when reading the Greeks:

"One cannot help being swept along by the crowd . . . The philosopher or the saint is a man who lives among ferocious beasts . . . He must keep silent if he does not want to be torn to pieces. He hides behind his little shelter from which he watches others being pelted by rain and mud, happy to be able to end his days without having been soiled."

Or:

"Society is a big beast, which kicks and shies, unless you speak to it in its own language."

The secret thoughts of the "beast" and its menacing attitude to poets explain why Racine never became a real courtier, and, in fact, ended in disfavor, although the king was kind to him, appointed him his historiographer, took him along on his military expeditions, and although Racine knew the art of speaking to the "beast" in its own language.[1]

[1] One of his speeches at the Academy was a sugary panegyric to Louis. The latter, however, remarked haughtily: "Monsieur Racine thinks he is a courtier."

Towards the end of his life Racine did retreat behind his "little shelter"—but what a shelter and at what price!

After the production of *Phèdre* (in 1677), which met with a hostile reception on the part of Racine's enemies in high places, Racine went through a crisis, as a result of which he became finally reconciled with Jansenism. It was then also that he resolved to renounce art altogether.

La Bruyère, while remaining in the house of Prince Condé, succeeded in hiding "behind his little shelter"—not from the people who were "pelted by rain" (he always saw the sufferings of the people), but only from the "beast." Racine feared most of all that he might be kept out from the court and, in point of fact, did not sever his connections with the court to the end of his days.

After a silence of twelve years Racine wrote two tragedies, *Esther* and *Athalie*, both on religious subjects. They were written at the request of Madame de Mentenon for the inmates of Saint-Cyr, an aristocratic charity school for girls. *Athalie* was at first received rather favorably, but subsequently it was pronounced too dangerous for the morals of the girls at Saint-Cyr, of which the pious Madame de Mentenon was the patroness.

These were the last tragedies Racine wrote. His remarkable *History of Port-Royal* remained unfinished, and his notes on the military campaigns perished in a fire.

Racine tried to banish the very memory of art from his life. He married a woman who knew nothing of his tragedies except, perhaps, their names. He forbade his sons to attend theater performances.

His letters to Boileau, however, show that it must have been hard on Racine to renounce his poetry. In these letters we find many interesting ideas about poetry. In one of them, many years later, Racine refers in a spirit of nostalgia to an apt epithet he once used in *Phèdre*.

Racine's sons destroyed all of their father's papers which might have conflicted with the character he had assumed in his last years. But Racine really never revealed himself in correspondence, confessions, diaries, etc. With few exceptions, all his letters, from his early youth, are remarkable for their restraint and aloofness. Yet Racine's life was marked by struggle, love affairs, friendship, the parting of company with friends, and betrayal of friends (his betrayal of Molière). Practically no documentary material whatever has reached us of these personal dramas. François Mauriac's *La Vie de Jean Racine* shows how difficult it is to reconstruct the image of this poet if one confines himself to a biography in the form of a novel. Racine must be studied more profoundly, and this Mauriac, led astray by his religious ideas, failed to do.

The most "intimate" papers, outside of Racine's correspondence, that have been preserved are the copious notes, quotations, marginal notes and synopses which Racine made when reading. The bulky volumes of the Mesnard edition, abounding in notes and comments, show us the thoroughness and perseverance of the master who delves into the minutest details of somebody else's work, but conceals the process of his own creative work. All of Racine's own works—twelve tragedies, the comedy *Plaideurs*, epigrams and poems—make up two small volumes.

La Bruyère wrote in his book *The Characters or Morals of the Present Century*:

"If the world has existed for only one hundred million years, it may be said to be still in its infancy, practically only at its beginning: we ourselves are close to the first men and the patriarchs . . . But if we are to judge of the future by the past, think of all things that are unknown to us in the arts, sciences, nature, and, I dare say, history! What discoveries will yet be made! What different revolutions are bound to come over the entire face of the earth, in states and empires! How ignorant we are, and how slight is our experience—the experience of six-seven thousand years!"

In the 17th century only La Bruyère was able to write like that. His words still stir the reader, and they will stir him a thousand years hence. In the chapter *On Man* La Bruyère tells of gloomy fields on which, bowed down and practically undistinguishable from the soil, the serfs roam like "ferocious animals." Not a word is mentioned of the peasant revolts of the 17th century, but into the picture which La Bruyère draws of the French countryside in the 17th century is painted the blood of the peasants. And La Bruyère was not a mere recorder. Despite the obvious caution and restraint he had to exercise, he wrote that if he had to choose between the aristocracy and the people, "I want to be one of the people."

He wrote as clearly as he could not only of his faith in the future, in the hundred million happy and bright years that are bound to come, but also of his hatred for the present, for the absolute regime of France. He showed in his *Characters* that the real beasts and barbarians were to be found among the courtiers of Louis XIV, and, no matter what their miserable lustre, a time would come when in the minds of the men of a new age that brilliant court would become merged with the shades enveloping the caves of the troglodytes (*First Men* and *Patriarchs*) —and not only the court, but everything that was created by absolutism, even if it parades as great civilization.

When we read La Bruyère we recall Marx's words about the preparatory character of bourgeois progress, his remark that only after the socialist revolution "will human progress cease to resemble that disgusting heathen idol which refuses to drink nectar unless it is served in the skull of a man who has been murdered."

More than any writer of the 17th century, except perhaps Molière, La Bruyère, despite his stoical pessimism, turned towards the future. That was the very essence of his works. In the age of absolutist civilization, which prided itself on being a marvel of fullness and perfection, he was able to discern under the external seeming immobility, the really great march of history, its unmistakable advance.

La Bruyère, who was a contemporary of Racine, serves as a strict but necessary criterion for gauging Racine's greatness.

Many of the features characterizing Racine are already submerged in the past, merged with the features of "the first men and patriarchs." Many of his words, emotions and ideas which stirred his contemporaries have become threadbare; and all the tinsel in his works, everything that radiated from the "Sun-king" who glittered like an idol only evokes a smile. Much that is to be found in his works has been utilized many a time—and with good reason, too—to divert us to the past.

Who, then, was Racine—a mere supplier of nectar for the gilded idols of Louis XIV, or did a

Illustration to "Phèdre" by the Soviet folk artist B. Parilov of Palekh

stronger beverage ferment in his works?

Whom did Racine portray? Roman and Asiatic emperors, or French aristocrats only slightly disguised as Romans? The latter is the opinion expressed by Hippolyte Taine, who regards Racine as a sort of Feuchtwanger at the Court of Louis XIV.

Is it true that, unlike Corneille, Racine was a "weakling," that he described the triumph of feeling over reason, of love over duty, and that heroism, courage, etc., were foreign to him?

Is Schlegel, Racine's sworn enemy, right when he says of him that he was "the poet of kings, not the king of poets?"

To be sure, in Racine's Romans and Greeks, in their language and civilities, in the way they address each other as "Madame" and "Seigneur," etc., we recognize the manners and characteristics of French aristocrats after the Fronde. And when Achilles promises Iphigenia's mother that he will protect her daughter from Calchas' knife, he uses the same expressions as a French cavalier who assures his lady that he will protect her from the coarse villains. It is also true that Racine is too much occupied with the description of love and female passions, and that he lacks Corneille's stern straightforwardness.

That is precisely the reason why so much of what we find in Racine is so remote, merged with the dead past like the "patriarchs and first men", and many of his enchanting lines resound only to grow faint again at once.

But what is there in Racine's works that does not merge with the dead past, that does not grow dim, that was new for his own age and passed over to posterity?

As an artist, Racine took part

in that sort of study and discovery of man, which—after overcoming their own metaphysical attitude, wild prejudices and religion—was carried on by men like Descartes (in his dialectics of passions), La Bruyère, partly by Pascal, and Molière, in the 17th century.

Impelled by a desire for truth, clarity and simplicity, Racine rebelled against the abstract portrayal of man in accordance with metaphysical moral rules, and opposed to it his own realistic portrayal of human passions and real conflicts of characters. In this respect he learned from Molière and Descartes and was close to La Bruyère.

However, the moral anatomy of man, which engaged the minds of the progressive representatives of the 17th century, proceeded under particular conditions.

The moral physiognomy of absolutist France is aptly characterized by Stendhal in the following remarkable words:

"It is evident that the great business of Richelieu and Louis XIV was to stifle *civil courage.*" (Stendhal's emphasis).

Another "masterpiece of Louis XIV," in the words of Stendhal, was the "ennui of exile" which his regime engendered. In Stendhal's opinion this ennui was the most general expression of the state of the "vain and empty" souls, of their fear to break with the court's civilization, their fear of becoming conscious of all the "thorns" of this civilization and of thus being deprived of the means which help one overlook its most hideous manifestations.

It is clear that artistic souls were no exception and could not escape that state even if they were not "vain and empty."

This state of *stifled civil courage* and the fear of being exposed to the cold blasts outside the hothouse civilization of the absolutist regime, outside that sheltered island around which surged really grim passions and roamed La Bruyère's terrible peasants, manifested themselves in Racine's life and (in varying degrees) in his works.

It is not passion that triumphs over reason and emotion over duty in Racine's tragedies. These contradictions arise in the real conflicts of life; in real characters. But the tragedy of this living conflict, of these passions and characters is the tragedy of civil courage which flares up and is snuffed out. Racine's characters are full of fears and ennui, they suffer from a sense of suppressed human dignity.

Such a tragedy of courage inevitably becomes fatal, as may be seen even in *Andromache*, the most courageous of Racine's tragedies. In *Bérénice* Titus staunchly fights for his love, but his staunchness forsakes him, and Bérénice submissively and tenderly reconciles herself to this betrayal.

There is nothing tragic in the sugary end of this tragedy—Bérénice's voluntary submissiveness. The courage of passions dims and an idyl flares up with a sickly flame. And this is not the only case of an untragical end in Racine's tragedies.

As a tragedy of courage and passion, *Phèdre*, Racine's best work, deserves special attention.

Is it true, as Schlegel says, that there is not a trace of courage, dignity or purity in *Phèdre*?[1] No,

[1] In a special essay, entitled *Two Phedres*, Schlegel draws a comparison between Euripides' and Racine's tragedies, and, carried away by his own dogmatic moralizing, pounces viciously upon the French tragedian. However, some of his conclusions regarding *Phèdre's* "weakness" and particularly his characterization of Hippolyte are convincing.

Phèdre wages a struggle beyond her strength, a hopeless fight and *attains purity and freedom.* Theseus is dead! Phèdre, believing the rumor of her husband's death, cannot suppress a sigh of relief. Now she can be free, no longer a criminal! And there is really no justification for Schlegel's indignation at the version given by Racine . . . Still, on the whole, Phèdre's line is one of retreat following retreat. She retreats from her conjugal duty; she retreats from her love and permits Oenone to calumny her lover; she shrinks from punishment and commits suicide. She betrays her nurse.

As for Hippolyte, Racine himself writes (having in mind Aristotle's famous discourse on the conditions of the purification of human feelings by means of tragedy) that he presented him as being "weak" and "guilty" before his father, and for that purpose made Hippolyte fall in love with Aricia, daughter and sister of Theseus' mortal enemies. By introducing the "saccharine" (Schlegel) Aricia, who does not figure in Euripides' tragedy, Racine distorted the character of Hippolyte as well. Courage is out of place in this prince. His death is senseless. And, again, an idyllic end, with Theseus' paternal attempt to console Aricia, instead of the magnificent finale of Euripides' tragedy.

It may be noted that in Racine's tragedies, self-destruction, which the Greeks regarded as a necessary act of courage, reminds one of "modern" suicide, the last act of retreat. In this sense, Phèdre is the most "modern" of Racine's heroines.

In *Alexander* we find a splendid portrayal of the courage of Porius who offers resistance to the mighty conqueror Alexander, and the cowardice and servility of Taxiles. In his portrayal, Racine shows his utter contempt for the traitor. But the courage of Porius turns out to be fruitless in the end; it does, indeed, become dimmed and dissolves in Alexander's magnanimity.

Racine draws a terrible picture of *the suppression of the human will* by a despot. But his despots are of various classes. There are low despots, such as Nero, but they are rather few; then there are noble despots, like Alexander; suffering despots, like Mithridate, Titus, partly Agamemnon, etc.

It is not true that Racine depicts the so-called triumph of feeling over duty. That would be too simple for his heroes, whose feelings are always full of qualms, of doubts regarding their own justness, their right to attain freedom. But, apart from this, Racine, who portrayed real struggle, could not eliminate from its sphere so important a factor of human action as duty, the will to remain faithful to one's duty. For instance, he extols patriotic duty—not only because he is Louis' historiographer, but because it is a stimulus to heroism.[1]

It is noteworthy that Mithridate's son renounces his love for the former's wife, not only because he is a true son of his father, but also because he is his father's true ally in his fight against the Romans. (*Mithridate.*)

It must also be noted that, where rulers fight rulers, Racine shows his preference for those who defend their country against a ruthless conqueror. The Indian king Porius calls Alexander "a tyrant," "who

[1] Here is a remarkable formula of his, which reveals the two aspects of his tragedies: grief and heroism. In tragedy, he says, "the action must be significant, the characters heroic, the passions aroused, and all must be pervaded with the magnificent grief that constitutes the charm of the tragedy."

would like the world to become a prison," and his own allies he describes as "enemies of the tyrant."

Yet Alexander is meant to be a portrait of no less a personage than Louis XIV! Racine "got out of the difficulty" by making Alexander irresistible with the women. But Porius he endowed with courage, which evoked the attacks of critics and the necessity for Racine to explain.

The "human destiny" not only of Porius, but also of Etheocles, Titus, Mithridate, Agamemnon, cannot be comprehended outside their connection with the destiny of the nation, of the people. The character of these heroes is their national character. Their tragedies have their origin in national tragedies (Mithridate in the war against the Romans, Agamemnon in the war against Troy, etc.).

It seems to us that it is in this sense that we must understand Pushkin's remark with regard to Racine:

"What is it that is developed in the tragedy? What is its purpose? The individual and the people. The destiny of the individual and the destiny of the people. That is why Racine is great despite the narrow form of his tragedies. . . ."

Another remark of Pushkin—about the "national character" of poets like Racine—implies, in accordance with Pushkin's appraisal of Racine as a whole, the recognition on Pushkin's part of the national character of Racine's works.

How, then, is the people portrayed in Racine's tragedies? As a formidable force, as a force opposed to the corruption of the court, guarding the dignity of the monarch and rising in revolt when the monarch enters upon a fatal path.

Etheocles, quarreling with his brother who pretends to his throne, says:

Let the people and the gods be heard—
If the people consent, I shall resign my place to Polinicus.
But let Polinicus submit if the people banish him.

Titus, before he decides his personal fate, wants to hear the voice, "not of the hypocritical courtiers who have but one worry—how to please their emperor"; he wants to hear the voice of all Rome's "hearts." He wants to know: "Will Rome be stern or gracious to Bérénice?"

But in Racine's tragedies the people is great only in its role of guardian of the monarchy—although this role is historically justified. But the destiny of the people as a whole, as well as of men of the people, is not portrayed in his tragedies. The humble have no human destiny. Their tragedy is that of faithful or perfidious slaves, their courage is that of slaves, and so is their treachery, villainy, death. All this is incommensurate with the courage, villainy and treachery of the rulers—they alone embody human destiny in Racine's works.

Here is what Racine thinks of the *most courageous* of all women slaves portrayed in his tragedies:

"I considered that calumny is something too base and too black to put in the mouth of a princess who generally possesses such noble and virtuous sentiments. It seemed to me that such baseness fits more a nurse, who is capable of the most servile inclinations, but who nevertheless undertakes these false accusations only for the purpose of saving the life and honor of her mistress." (In the preface to *Phèdre*.)

Such is the measure of baseness and nobility which Racine considers natural for slaves but not fitting for rulers. This measure is quite in keeping with the idea of the role of the people as seen by the author of *Phèdre*.

In Racine's tragedies we do not find the free people or the people fighting for its freedom, even in historical perspective, as we find it in La Bruyère's works.

This, perhaps, is the reason why there is no image of the future in the works of the author of *Phèdre* and *Mithridate*. The future is banishment, it is separation, it is the "Sun-king" fixed motionless in the sky of history, or the insoluble struggle of those who want to light their own sun in their own sky. There is no issue of this struggle in evidence.

Taken in a broad aspect, Racine conveyed the sentiments and conceptions of the Third Estate at the end of the 17th and at the beginning of the 18th century. But he conveyed them as an artist in whom the sense of the future was overshadowed by the sense of the *present*, by the magnitude of "the beast." That is why Racine finds genuine greatness in the distant, unreturnable past.

Racine faces the future only as far as this future appears as an arena of insoluble contradictions of individuals and society. In this sense he anticipated the masters of bourgeois realism who did not see any way out of the social struggle outside the framework of bourgeois society.

These traits of Racine found their expression in the love theme which, as is well known, occupies a prominent place in Racine's tragedies.

Racine is an unsurpassed master of the description of the psychology of love, particularly of rejected love, of love sacrificed, of love repressed.

His characters are so detached from the world in their preoccupation with their love-sufferings as only the aristocrats of the circle of Madame de Mentenon or Madame de Sévigné, as the courtiers who studied the etiquette of love-suffering in all available books, beginning with the works of the ancients and ending with contemporary memoirs of society "lions," could be detached.

In this sense, too, Corneille was right in calling Racine and his school "sweet and toying."

But Racine's heroes are not merely occupied with their love afflictions; *they are occupied with themselves, with their own personalities—in a new way*. Theirs is not the crude pursuit of pleasures, of "easy and empty" enjoyment, which was characteristic of the cult of eroticism at the court.

Instead of transient pleasures, they are in the grip of hopeless passions which they would like to last through eternity, but which actually continue but a moment. Only the yearning of the lovers for each other remains eternal, never to find an outlet. In all of Racine's tragedies the lovers come to know a thousand refined doubts and fears, hopeless ennui, rage; they earnestly play a terrible game with their own will and emotions, trying to deceive, now their will, now their feelings; they readily indulge in self-deceit, although they always see before their mind's eye the image of a life pure and free (if only free of the sufferings of love). Thus Julia and Britannicus indulge in dreaming. Thus Phèdre would like to find herself somewhere in a forest and to discern Hippolyte's chariot through a cloud of dust [1]. Nor are these

[1] We endeavor in all cases to base our remarks on the treatment of the ancient material in Racine's works. Racine usually combines the various versions of the ancient authors in order thus to arrive at his own conception. In some instances, however, he merely reproduces the ancient authors, sometimes debasing them. Thus, the lines referring to the forest, brilliant in Euripides' tragedy, are on a lower plane in Racine's tragedy.

pastoral reveries. "The ennui of exile," the fear of being ostracised and banished from the safe little island of the idols is sometimes replaced by another emotion—the striving to carry the conflict with the outside world to the point of explosion, to break through to impossible freedom.

Racine fully mastered the quality which makes literature the art of "word painting" (Gorky). Within the rigid framework of the three unities he succeeds in presenting a picture so broad, far and vast, that one does not notice the frame. In general, the conventionality of the unities is itself conventional, since the word, the image is a medium that can convey vast space, infinitely remote future, the most complicated situations. If, to our view, Racine's works suffer from conventionalities, it is least of all the conventionality of the unities—so perfect a master is Racine of the form he selected.

In the story of Odyssey we see the sea as it surges white with foam. We see the boats that will soon leave on their long voyage for Troy, we see the sails swelling with the wind which has been wrenched from the gods. In *Alexander* we see the endless vastnesses of Asia through which Alexander passed, we see scores of peoples and on them "chains stretched too much" and ready to break.

Racine combines "painting" with "mathematical" precision. The most complicated situations—psychological, political or other are expressed in finished dialectical formulas that sound like aphorisms. The alternating of these lucid and at the same time complex logical compositions with lyrical and sometimes even elegiacal strophes constitutes one of the charms of Racine's tragedies.

In the most crucial scenes, where the tragedy reaches its climax, Racine retains his particular sobermindedness and lucidity of thought characteristic only of him.

Stendhal best expressed the argument both "for" and "against" Racine in the following words:

"He will always remain one of the greatest geniuses who ever astonished people and evoked their admiration. Is Caesar less a great general because, after his campaigns against our ancestors the Gauls, powder and cannon were invented? All we maintain is that if Caesar were to reappear in the world, his first concern would be to get cannons for his army."

BORIS PESIS

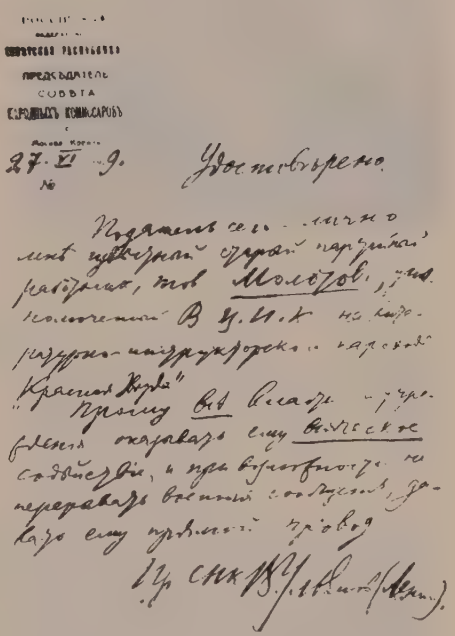
Soviet People to Molotov

"The great Russian people has produced many an outstanding fighter for the welfare of the people, men with clear minds and warm hearts, men who made it the main purpose of their lives to liberate the toiling people of Russia and the whole world from the chains of capitalist slavery.

"Vyacheslav Molotov is a son of the Russian people. In the stormy days of the First Russian Revolution, while still a lad of fifteen, he joined the revolutionary movement, devoting his life to the cause of the working masses. At the age of sixteen he joined the ranks of the Bolshevik Party and ever since has unswervingly followed the path of Lenin."

So wrote *Pravda* on the fiftieth birthday of the head of the Soviet Government, V. M. Molotov. This day was celebrated all over the Soviet Union. Lectures and talks on the life and work of the Soviet Premier were held in factories and offices, collective farms and state farms, universities and military units. Molotov exhibitions were arranged in many cities. One such exhibition has been opened by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev. It consists of historical documents, photographs and manuscripts illustrating the splendid life of this courageous Bolshevik, his thirty-five years of revolutionary activity, the arrests and imprisonment he underwent, his life in exile and his escape, and his joint work with Stalin.

One of the exhibits is a photostat of a document written in Lenin's



hand which reads as follows: "The bearer, V. Molotov, an old Party worker with whom I have long been acquainted, is the Commissar of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in charge of the literature and instruction tour on board the s.s. *Krasnaya Zvezda*."

During this propaganda tour in 1919 Molotov performed tremendous work in rallying the working masses against the Whiteguards and foreign forces of intervention.

A section of the exhibition is devoted to Molotov's activities in the Ukraine, where he worked in 1920 and 1921, first as the secretary of the Donets Provincial Party Committee, and then as Secretary

V. M. Molotov (1912)

of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine.

The fullest and most interesting of all these exhibitions was the one arranged in the Museum of the Revolution in Moscow. The Museum has recently acquired several valuable collections of unknown or little known archive records relating to Molotov's revolutionary activities over a period of thirty-five years, and these additions help to give a more complete picture of his eventful life.

In 1905 Molotov began to work intensively in secret Marxist study circles among the revolutionary youth. In 1906 he joined the underground Bolshevik organization in Kazan. The Okhranka (secret police) discovered that it was he who, under the pseudonym "Uncle," had "charge of all the affairs of the local revolutionary students' organization," and who "to judge by the results of a domiciliary search, is entrusted with maintaining contact with student organizations in other cities."

One has to remember the oppressive atmosphere of these times: the December armed insurrection in Moscow had been crushed, the tide of revolution had receded, the reaction, led by Minister Stolypin, was triumphant. The cowards and renegades were deserting the revolutionary movement, hastening to curry favor with the butchers and to pray for clemency for their part in the revolution. The Bolsheviks alone, led by Lenin and Stalin, continued inflexibly and stubbornly to carry on the struggle and to muster the masses for the last, decisive fight, never for a moment losing faith in eventual victory.

One of these staunch and unyielding fighters was the secondary school student Scriabin (Molotov).

But he never finished secondary school. In the spring of 1909, practically on the eve of the graduation examinations, the police raided Scriabin's lodgings, and after a thorough search, led him off to the Kazan prison.

Then followed sentence and exile. While in exile Molotov made a careful study of revolutionary theory: he read Marx's *Capital* and other classical works of the founders of Marxism, and he eagerly followed the articles of Lenin and Stalin in the Bolshevik *Sotsial-Demokrat*. . . .

The Museum possesses valuable reminiscences and memoirs relating to the foundation of the Bolshevik newspaper *Pravda* and the active share Molotov took in it. At that time he was a student in the St. Petersburg Polytechnic Institute.

As secretary of the *Pravda* and member of its editorial board, Molotov was in the very thick of its activities. It was through him that the editorial board communicated with Lenin. Molotov wrote regularly, informing Lenin of the work of the editorial board and of the fulfilment of his instructions, and asking advice on various matters.

In his own articles in the *Pravda*, Molotov set forth the Bolshevik

view on important political issues, in which he was guided by the instructions of Lenin and Stalin. He also wrote editorials for the paper, especially in the summer of 1912, when Stalin was in exile in Narym and the march of political events was demanding immediate response on the part of the editorial board.

Each of these articles of Molotov's laid down a plain and clear-cut line for the revolutionary workers of Russia, popularizing the slogans of the Bolshevik Party. This was by no means an easy matter, in view of the stringency of the tsarist censorship; the paper was very often banned. But Molotov himself tells us of some of the devices the paper resorted to in order to escape the vigilance of the censor: "Instead of the word 'revolutionary' we used the word 'uncurtailed'; we never spoke of 'Bolsheviks' or 'Social-Democrats,' but of 'consistent democrats,' and so on. We worked out a sort of code language, and our readers, the workers, grew accustomed to it."

The Museum contains material relating to Molotov's activities during the imperialist war. In the summer of 1915 he was again arrested and sent under convoy to the province of Irkutsk, Siberia, for a term of three years. A year later the local police authorities reported in alarm that Molotov "in the early part of June of this year escaped from police surveillance in the village of Kachug."

February 1917 found Molotov in Petrograd. Among the material relating to that period, of particular interest is a manifesto of the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party written

Lenin, Stalin and Molotov in the Editorial Office of "Pravda," in 1917
Drawing by P. Vasilyev

by him calling upon the masses to overthrow the tsarist autocracy by revolutionary means.

There are numerous documents in the Museum relating to Molotov's Party and governmental activities in the period of the Great October Socialist Revolution, as well as in the periods of Civil War and of socialist reconstruction.

The Museum has acquired a number of new works by Moscow artists. There are several charcoal and crayon drawings by B. Dekhterev illustrating episodes in Molotov's revolutionary activities in Kazan, his propaganda addresses to secret workers' circles, the printing of revolutionary leaflets and the police raid on his lodgings in 1909.

There is an interesting painting by N. Romadin. It shows a bright sunny day on the Volga, with a flotilla of rowboats on the river filled with young people returning from a secret May Day meeting which had been organized by Molotov. In one of the boats stands Molotov himself—the young revolutionary. Several episodes from his revolutionary life are illustrated in the drawings of A. Nurenberg, among them a meeting of a Bolshevik group in the Sokolniki woods outside Moscow (1915), Molotov conversing with workers and soldiers in the Tauride Palace (1917), and his address at a meeting to commemorate the laying of the foundation stone of the Molot Works.

A picture by N. Denisovsky illustrates an episode at the time Molotov was secretary of the *Pravda*. He is seen conversing with a group of worker correspondents of the paper. To evade the vigilance of the police they had come to the editorial offices disguised as paper-hangers. Correspondence from factory workers was written on the rolls of wall paper.

The Moscow Film Studio has put out an enlarged edition of the *Soyuzkino Gazette* in honor of Molotov's fiftieth birthday, featuring episodes from his revolutionary life.

It opens with a panorama of the hamlet of Kukarka in the former province of Vyatka, where Molotov was born.

This is followed by other scenes connected with his activities: Kazan, where he went to school and attended illegal meetings; Vologda, one of his places of exile, where he studied Marxist works and where he formed a Bolshevik organization; St. Petersburg, where he lived as a student and worked on the Bolshevik papers *Zvezda* and *Pravda*.

The film displays the majestic panoramas of some of the gigantic industrial works built under the Soviet government. Molotov is seen speaking to the workers, and we get an intimate picture of his work in guiding the realization of the Stalin Five-Year Plans.

The concluding episodes of the film show Molotov opening the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in 1939, and delivering his report to the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

A number of houses connected with Molotov's biography are to be converted into permanent museums.

Among them are two wooden houses in Vologda, a house in the village of Manzurka, Irkutsk Region, and a room in one of the houses in Solvychegodsk, Archangel Region, where Molotov lived while in exile.

The village of Manzurka lies some two hundred kilometers off the Yakutsk highroad. Molotov arrived there in 1915 with a party of political exiles. There they were divided into groups; some remained in Manzurka, others were sent off to more remote Siberian villages.

Molotov, exiled for a term of three years, took up his quarters in the house of one Rogalev, not very far from the River Manzurka.

V. M. Molotov in the Editorial Office of "Pravda," in 1912
Painting by N. Denisovsky

In a nearby house the Bolshevik Frunze had previously lived as an exile. The Bolshevik exiles in the locality used frequently to meet at Molotov's lodgings.

In 1916 Molotov escaped from exile and returned to St. Petersburg. The museum in Manzurka contains photostats of documents relating to his flight. There is a confidential report of the Irkutsk Chief of Gendarmes to the Tomsk Provincial Department of Gendarmerie:

"Supplementing my note of July 23, No. 12,439, I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that, according to a report of the inspector of the 1st precinct, Verkholensk District, of August 7, No. 169, exile Vyacheslav Scriabin escaped from police surveillance in the village of Kachug in the early part of June, in consequence of which the orders to effect a domiciliary search and to interrogate him cannot be carried out."

The inhabitants of Manzurka have a good recollection of Molotov's stay in the village. *Pravda* has published the reminiscences of one who knew him at this period.

"I was thirteen at the time," relates Valentina Ostapova, daughter of Rogalev, in whose house Molotov lived. "I recall Vyacheslav Mikhailovich quite well. He was always kind to me. He would often stroke my head and say:

"'Good girl, you are a fine little housewife.'

"And then, with his hands on my shoulders, he would say with an air of conviction:

"'Never mind, better times will soon come.'

"Molotov's words have come true. The old Manzurka, with its dozens of vodka shops, its church and its darkness and ignorance is a thing of the past. Today Manzurka is a rich collective farm center. We have two collective farms here, a machine and tractor station, a high school, a club, reading room, library, hospital, kindergarten and crèche. We have over a hundred schoolmasters,

doctors, agronomists, zootechnicians and the like."

"For distinguished services in the work of organizing the Bolshevik Party and in creating and consolidating the Soviet state," Molotov has been awarded the Order of Lenin by the Soviet Government. The Perm Region has been re-named the Molotov Region; the city of Perm has likewise been re-named after him, as well as a number of schools and industrial plants throughout the country. The government has instituted 300 scholarships in his name for outstanding students in the higher educational establishments of Leningrad, Kazan, Kirovsk and Perm.

Molotov's published works are widely read in the Soviet Union. Records show that from 1917 to February 15, 1940, his articles and speeches have been published in seventy-four languages of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. in a total of 74,600,000 copies, of which 65,500,000 copies were in the Russian language, 3,380,000 in the Ukrainian language and hundreds of thousands of copies each in Byelorussian, Azerbaijan, Georgian, Armenian, Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Tatar, Chuvash, Mordovian and other languages. They have been published in the languages of peoples who before the October Revolution did not even have their own alphabet.

Molotov's books have likewise been published in many foreign languages—German, English, Bulgarian, Chinese, Spanish, Lettish, Lithuanian, French, Esthonian, Japanese, etc.

The publication of some of his speeches reach gigantic figures. Thus, his report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on the "Third Five-Year Plan" was published in forty-four languages in editions totaling 10,930,000 copies; his report on "The Tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan" in thirty-nine languages in a total of 5,100,000 copies; his report on the "Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union" to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. on October 31, 1939 in thirty-one languages in a total of 5,380,000 copies, and his speech on the "Constitution of Socialism," delivered in 1936, in twenty-seven languages in a total of about 3,000,000 copies.

On the occasion of Molotov's fiftieth birthday numerous articles were printed in the press, dealing with the part he has played in organizing the economic and cultural life of the Soviet people. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* writes:

"History has known many outstanding statesmen who devoted their lives to the success and prosperity of their countries, who were builders of towns and roads. But each of their achievements always entailed suffering of other nations, whose interests were alien to them. They concluded or annulled alliances with other countries, fought shoulder to shoulder with them or against them, but they were always guided by their own narrow interests. In order to accomplish their aims they appealed to the patriotism of the people, but this patriotism naturally implied hatred of other peoples. Comrade Molotov is a statesman of a new and different type. He is a son of the Soviet people and the spokesman of its interests in all the intricacies of international politics.

"It is therefore not on the mutual antagonism and hatred of nations that the head of the Soviet Government builds its policy, but on the consciousness that the fundamental interests of all peoples are identical. Before the Socialist Revolution there has never been an instance of peoples of different countries in different continents of the world hearing the head of a government utter words

that answer to the common wishes and the common aspiration of all. But we have such an instance today; we have it in the case of Comrade Molotov."

Particular stress was laid on the guidance given by Molotov in the spheres of science and culture, in the support he gives to all men of enlightened views—Stakhanovites, academicians, film producers and inventors. The press was full of reminiscences of meetings and conversations with Molotov by prominent scientists, writers, artists and actors. The reminiscences of Soviet business leaders are likewise indicative of the great attention daily devoted by Molotov to questions of social welfare, culture and art.

"Problems of construction have always been regarded by us not merely as economic, but also as political problems. And that is only natural. The Socialism of tomorrow will largely depend on the success of the constructive work we are engaged in today."

In these few words Molotov defined the importance of constructive development.

S. Ginsburg, who quotes these words in his article, tells us there of the work done in connection with the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition, which enjoyed such immense success last year. He relates how Molotov sharply criticized the original plan of the exhibition—the lay-out of the grounds, the architectural designs and the proposed methods of display in the principal branches of agriculture.

"The early plans made no provision whatever for such an important department as 'New Features in the Countryside,' which subsequently enjoyed such immense popularity at the exhibition. The idea and outline of this department was suggested by Molotov. After examining the various proposals of the designers, he explained that the point was not so much to demonstrate what new types of houses were being built by collective farmers, but the new collective features in rural economy and life, features unknown in the old countryside, where petty peasant ownership prevailed.

"He taught the architects to make their designs expressive of a central idea. It was his remark that the Ukraine is the golden granary of the country that gave them the clue for the design of the Ukrainian Pavilion."

An interesting story was told in the *Pravda* by Prof. D. Ushakov, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. and editor of the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language*. He recalls that "in the early part of 1920 Lenin wrote to Lunacharsky saying how desirable it would be to compile a dictionary of the *current* Russian language, containing all *classics*, from Pushkin to Gorky.

"The compilation of the dictionary was begun in 1921 on Lenin's personal instructions. An editorial board was appointed and a staff assembled. Lenin kept up a constant interest in the work as long as his health permitted, but in 1923 his telephone calls from the Council of People's Commissars ceased. And towards the end of that year the People's Commissariat of Education put a stop to the work as 'unprofitable.' and the editorial board was dismissed.

"But Lenin's idea did not perish. In 1928 compilation of the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian Language* was resumed by a group of Soviet philologists under my editorship. The work is now nearing completion.

"But the dictionary has lived through many an alarming and

Molotov in the Children's Camp "Artek" *Painting by S. Drozdov*

crucial moment. One of these was in 1932, when the first volume was ready for the printers. The publishers, however, underrated the importance of the work and pushed it into the background. It became doubtful whether the first volume would come out at all . . .

"But the situation was saved by a totally unexpected stroke of fortune. V. Molotov happened to be reading the *Lenin Miscellany* and came across Lenin's letter to Lunacharsky on the dictionary. An editorial comment stated that the work had come to a standstill. He at once began to interest himself in the fate of the dictionary. He found my name mentioned in the editorial note as one of the first editors of the work and he sent one of his secretaries to me to inquire how matters stood. I related the whole history of the dictionary and described the state of affairs at the moment.

"Molotov desired to have a written statement, and I sent him a detailed memorandum on the subject. He then requested a statement explaining what was needed to bring out the dictionary. This was done, and thanks to the energetic measures he took, the first volume was soon published.

"Molotov's opinion was that the work should be completed, and it was this that has enabled us to carry it through; we are now working on the last volume."

Another feature mentioned by the press on Molotov's fiftieth birthday is his love and solicitude for children. For many years he has been the patron of the All-Union Young Pioneers' Camp "Artek" in Crimea.

From the Young Pioneer to the most venerable scientist and academician, the whole country joined in cordially wishing the head of the Soviet Government good health and a long life of useful service to the

Land of Socialism and to all progressive humanity.

In connection with the fiftieth birthday of Molotov, many representatives of Soviet art and culture printed articles describing their meetings and conversations with him. We herewith reprint some of these articles.

The well-known writer Konstantin Fedin writes:

"It was in the autumn of 1933. A group of writers had gathered at Gorky's house to meet Molotov, Voroshilov and Kaganovich.

"Sitting at the table after supper, I had an extremely interesting conversation with Molotov. I had just returned from a trip to Europe.

"One of the things that interested him most was the attitude in Europe to Soviet constructive work under the First Five-Year Plan. With a fixed and concentrated look, as though trying to gaze into the life over there in the remote West, he listened to my account of the effect the completion of the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station had had on the opinion in Europe.

"Molotov then went on to question me about European writers, about their attitude towards Soviet literature, and about Soviet literature itself, some of whose devotees were in rather lively evidence that evening around the hospitable board of that true master of literature, Gorky.

"'Very well, and what are you working on now yourself? Something about Europe again?' Molotov asked.

"I was a little vexed at the note of reproach I seemed to detect in his voice at my predilection for European themes. But I was at once carried away by the absorbed interest with which he listened to what I was saying, and I scarcely noticed how my momentary uneasiness gave way to a keen awareness that Molotov was inspired by a lively and genuine solicitude for matters literary.

"Twice I had occasion to visit Molotov in his office in the Kremlin. Here, too, I was conscious of his powerful concentration of will and the ease with which he wielded his methods of work.

"On both occasions I was one of a delegation of writers: in 1934, during the Soviet Writers' Congress, we came to see him about the affairs of the Leningrad writers, and in 1939 on the subject of authors' copyrights and writers' welfare.

"Authors as a rule are not the best of orators and are apt to hold forth in such a way as to be scarcely coherent.

"Molotov engaged us in lively conversation, and almost imperceptibly helped us to formulate our wishes concisely and accurately. Quite a number of subjects were discussed with ease, sometimes with jest and laughter, but always genially and thoroughly.

"'You have allowed your affairs to get into a bad way, comrades,' said Molotov with a smile. 'Why did you not apply to the Council of People's Commissars sooner?'

"'Our difficulties often seem too petty to trouble you with.'

"'Never mind, we shall be able to judge that ourselves. Be sure to apply to us whenever the need arises.'

"He repeated this insistently and cordially, and we left with the profound conviction that the interests of Soviet writers, in big matters and small, their triumphs, their needs, their wishes and cares were sincerely shared by this calm, unhurried man with the keen and penetrating glance and an astonishing faculty of convincing and logical persuasion."

The artist Sergei Gerasimov writes:

"In the spring of 1937 a group of artists visited Molotov. Knowing that he was keenly interested in matters of socialist culture, and of socialist art in particular, they had come to discuss with him certain of their own urgent organizational and artistic problems. The group included some of the best-known artists of our country, A. Gerasimov, I. Grabar, K. Yuon, E. Lanceray, F. Fedorovsky, and several representatives of the younger generation of Soviet painters.

"The discussion turned on certain fundamental problems relating to the development of Soviet art.

"The purpose of painting, Molotov said, should be to create works of art that the people would appreciate and treasure. All particular organizational and artistic aims should be adapted to this main purpose. Why, he asked, have we so far had so few pictures of outstanding merit that would be widely popular among the people? And why do we find so few portraits of notable men and women of our country?

"A lively conversation ensued on problems of artistic style. One of us began to explain that, virtually speaking, all our big artists, whether of the older or the younger generation, were socialist realists. Molotov cut him short, and said:

"'Why, what other art can there be in our country but socialist and realistic art? These terms, however, should not be understood too narrowly. It should not be the aim of the artist to set out to copy reality. Nor is it the function of realistic art to make a bare record of facts. It is the function of art to present a reasoned and generalized picture of reality, to disclose its inner meaning.'

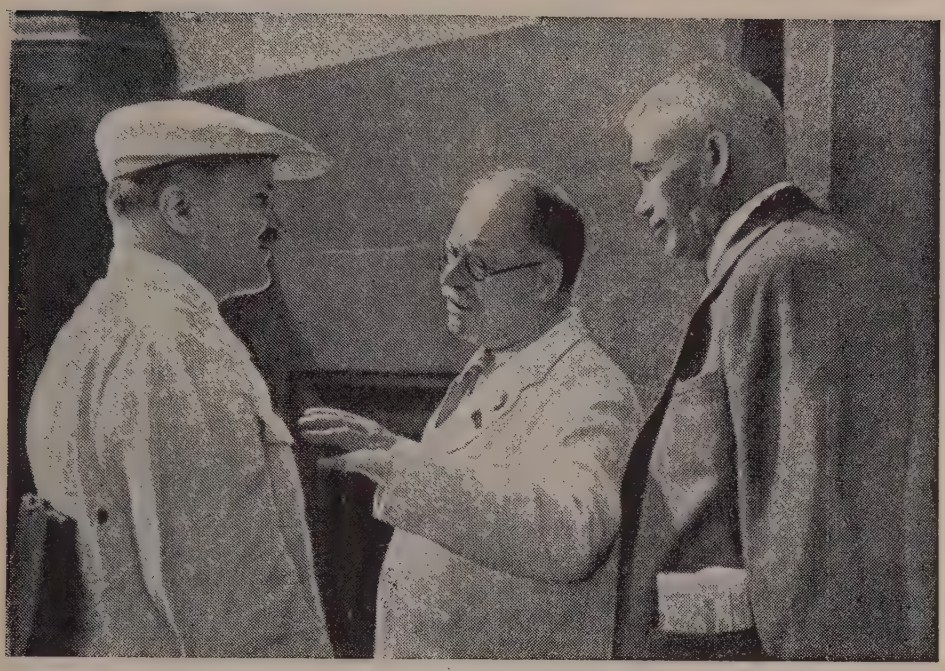
"Proceeding to develop this thought he placed before us the following question: Why can't we have socialist romanticism, and even socialist symbolism? The treatment of heroic themes might serve as the basis for really big and splendid romantic works of art. The intense, magnificent and heroic life of our country furnishes our artists with abundant themes and opportunities for romantic paintings. And even symbolical paintings are quite conceivable. Yet both romantic-heroic and symbolical paintings can and should be genuine works of realistic art.

"The discussion then turned to a number of organizational questions. The artists spoke of the houses with studios that were in process of construction. Molotov promised to give all necessary assistance in expediting the completion of these houses, but went on to say that he could see no reason why artists (and writers and musicians, for that matter) were so anxious to live together in colonies in one building. Should not the artist rather seek closer contact with people of other professions, and not always congregate with his fellow-artists? The artist should live in the very thick of the people. Why shouldn't our artists live in modern apartments furnished with proper studios scattered all over such a vast city as our Moscow?

"When the artists mentioned the contract system that was then prevalent, Molotov said that the artist should not just sit in his studio and wait for an order to come around. He himself should select the subjects for his paintings, drawings or sculptures. That was one of the fundamental conditions of creative initiative.

"When the subject of public and political work among artists was touched upon, several of us expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the artists who were members of the Communist Party were not displaying sufficient public activity.

"'Have these Party members had



V. M. Molotov with Academician A. A. Bogomoletz and Professor N. N. Burdenko

much artistic experience?' Molotov asked.

"He was told that they were mostly young artists.

"'Well then,' he said, 'let them get a little more experience in their art and win prestige among you as artists. Then they will be in a position to guide you, to carry on political educational work among the artists.'

"We left the Kremlin deeply impressed by this heart-to-heart talk. And we shall always remember what Molotov said: that we were marching towards the rich, vivid and variegated life of socialist society and should not rob ourselves by narrowing down our needs and artistic demands. 'The artist,' he said at parting 'should be a cultural leader of our country.' "

Serge Prokofieff writes:

"At one of the receptions given by the Government I had occasion to talk with Vyacheslav Molotov.

"The conversation turned on certain of my compositions which were little known to the Soviet public.

"'If that piece were performed,' I said of one of them, 'there would be a regular outcry.'

"'There would be nothing terrible even if you were abused a little,' Molotov replied. 'The important thing is how you feel about it yourself. If the composition is likely to be widely understood, it would be desirable to have it performed. If, however, it is intended for a narrow coterie of esthetes, that would be less interesting.'

"The question arose whether music ought to be written to words of Lenin and Stalin. I told him that I once had occasion to do so, but the comrades in charge of our art affairs expressed the fear that it might give rise to unpleasantness.

"'What unpleasantness could

there be?' inquired Molotov in surprise.

"'Well, after all, they are the words of Lenin and Stalin. It might give offence'.

"'No offence can possibly be given if you treat them seriously and with proper thought and find a suitable musical form to express them in,' said Molotov, and added: 'On the contrary, it is quite admissable and even desirable to write music to the words of Lenin and Stalin.'

"Our conversation was a brief one, but in the course of it I heard a number of highly interesting ideas, uttered in the form of aphorisms."

K. Alabyan, Soviet architect, writes:

"In 1937, during the First Soviet Architects' Congress in Moscow, a fairly large group of the delegates were invited to a conference with Molotov in the Kremlin.

"As we proceeded to the Kremlin many of us no doubt expected that the meeting with the head of the Government would be of a ceremonial and official character. But Molotov at once placed the interview on the basis of a friendly and businesslike exchange of opinions, during which he displayed to the full his inherent qualities of a Bolshevik statesman, a combination of high principle and businesslike efficiency.

"Molotov spoke of the tremendous responsibility that rests on every Soviet architect. Very delicately, but at the same time strictly and exactingly, he dealt with the more serious defects in our architectural and building methods.

"Our architects, he said, show little interest in buildings of a mass character, such as schools, crèches, kindergartens and dwelling houses. Yet it was just this kind of building in which the masses of the people were most interested.

"He severely condemned the tendency of many architects to load their designs with unwarranted and superfluous items.

"Molotov does not only give us guiding suggestions that stimulate creative ideas and indicate the right path for us to take; he has never ceased to give us practical assistance in our work.

"Molotov insists on high quality, on a thoughtful approach to every detail and item of our work, for these details affect the daily welfare of our Soviet citizens.

"Molotov possesses an astonishing faculty of stimulating original ideas, of inspiring us, the Soviet architects, technicians and artists, with the constructive urge to search for the most up-to-date and advanced methods.

"Molotov is rendering great assistance to the progress of our Socialist culture."

JOSEPH STALIN

How Does Social-Democracy Understand the National Question?

Published in 1904 in the Georgian newspaper *Proletariatis Brdzola* (*Proletarian Struggle*)

I

Everything changes . . . Social life changes, and with it the "national question" changes, too. At different periods different classes enter the arena of struggle, and each class understands the "national question" in its own way. It is obvious that in different periods the "national question" *serves different interests* and assumes different shades, depending on *which* class raises it, and *when*.

Thus, for instance, we had the so-called *"national question" of the noblemen*. That was when—after the "incorporation of Georgia in Russia"—the Georgian nobility came to feel the disadvantage of losing the old privileges and power it had enjoyed under the Georgian kings; the noblemen considered it below their dignity to be "plain subjects" and were anxious to *"liberate Georgia." That meant that they wanted to place Georgian kings and the Georgian nobility at the head of "Georgia" and thus to deliver into their hands the destinies of the Georgian people.* That was a *feudal-monarchist "nationalism."* This "movement" left no visible trace in the life of the Georgians. Barring a few conspiracies hatched by Georgian nobles against the Russian rulers in the Caucasus, it was not marked by anything that would earn it any glory. It needed only a slight impact of the events of social life for this inherently feeble "movement" to crumble to dust. Indeed, the development of commodity production, the abolition of serfdom, the establishment of the Nobles' Bank, the aggravation of the class antagonisms in town and country, the intensification of the movement of the poor peasantry, etc.—all this dealt a mortal blow to the Georgian nobility and, with it, to *"feudal-monarchist nationalism."* The Georgian nobility split into two groups. One renounced all "nationalism" and extended its hand to the Russian autocracy, expecting to obtain in return soft jobs, cheap credit and agricultural implements, as well as the government's protection against the rural "rebels," etc. The other, weaker section of the Georgian nobility struck up a friendship with the Georgian bishops and other church dignitaries, and thus placed the "nationalism" that was being overridden by life under the protecting wing of clericalism. This group is working zealously for the restoration of ruined Georgian churches—"the monuments of past glory" (that is the keynote of its "program"!)—and is reverently wait-

ing for a miracle that is destined to achieve for it its *feudal-monarchist* "aspirations."

Thus, towards the end of its life, feudal-monarchist nationalism has assumed a clerical form.

At the same time, modern life has brought to the fore in Georgia *the national question of the bourgeoisie. When* the *young* Georgian bourgeoisie came to feel how difficult it was for it to hold its own in free competition with "foreign" capitalists, it began, in the person of the Georgian national-democrats, to prattle about an *independent Georgia.* The Georgian bourgeoisie was anxious to fence off the Georgian market with a tariff wall, to drive out the "foreign" bourgeoisie from this market by force, artificially raise prices on goods, and pile up wealth by resorting to such "patriotic" tricks.

That was and is the aim of the nationalism of the Georgian bourgeoisie. Needless to say, it requires strength to achieve that aim, but strength is to be found in the proletariat. Only the proletariat could infuse life into the sterile "patriotism" of the bourgeoisie. It became necessary for the bourgeoisie to enlist the support of the proletariat, and, accordingly, the "National-Democrats" appeared on the scene. They spent a great deal of ammunition to refute scientific socialism, disparaged the Social-Democrats in every way, and advised the Georgian proletarians to have no traffic with them; they were lavish in their praise of the Georgian proletariat, and tried to persuade it, "in the interests of the workers themselves," to do something to lend strength to the Georgian bourgeoisie. They pleaded incessantly with the Georgian proletarians: Don't ruin "Georgia" (or the Georgian bourgeoisie?!), forget the "internal differences," make friends with the Georgian bourgeoisie, etc. But all in vain! The sugared fables of the bourgeois publicists failed to lull the Georgian proletariat to sleep! The merciless attacks of the Georgian Marxists and, particularly, the powerful class battles which welded Russian, Armenian, Georgian and other proletarians into a single Socialist force, dealt our *bourgeois nationalists* a crushing blow and sent them flying from the field.

"In order to rehabilitate their disgraced name," our runaway patriots were obliged to "change at least their coloring." Unable to assimilate socialist ideas, they at least had to don a socialist cloak. And so there emerged on the stage the illegal . . . bourgeois-nationalist *Sakartvelo*, which parades as a "socialist" organ! That is how they wanted to lure the Georgian workers! But it was too late! The Georgian workers had learned to distinguish between black and white, they easily discerned that the bourgeois nationalists had "changed only the coloring" but not the substance of their views, that the *"Sakartvelo" was socialist only in name.* Yes, they saw through these artifices, and exposed to ridicule the so-called "saviors" of Georgia! The hopes of the Don Quixotes of the *Sakartvelo* failed to materialize.

On the other hand, our economic development is gradually bridging the gulf between the advanced circles of the Georgian bourgeoisie and "Russia," and cementing these circles with "Russia" both economically and politically, thereby undermining the basis of the already shaken bourgeois nationalism. And this is the second blow that has been dealt our bourgeois nationalism.

A new class has entered the arena of the struggle—the *proletariat*—and, with it, a new kind of "national question" has arisen—

"the national question" of the proletariat. And, to the extent that the proletariat differs from the nobility and the bourgeoisie, the "national question" as conceived by the proletariat differs from the "national question" of the nobility and the bourgeoisie.

Let us now deal with this "nationalism."

How does Social-Democracy understand the *"national question"*? The proletariat of Russia has long since begun to speak of struggle. As we know, the object of every struggle is to attain victory. But if the proletariat is to attain victory, *all* the workers, *irrespective of nationality*, must be united. It is obvious that an indispensable condition for the victory of the proletariat of Russia is the demolition of national barriers and close unity of the Russian, Georgian, Armenian, Polish, Jewish and other proletarians. This is dictated by the interests of the proletariat of Russia.

But the Russian autocracy, which is the worst enemy of the proletariat of Russia, is doing everything to foil the cause of the unity of the proletarians. It murderously persecutes the national cultures, the languages, customs and institutions of the "alien" nationalities of Russia; the autocracy deprives them of their elementary civic rights, oppresses them in every way, pharisaically sows mistrust and animosity among them, incites them to bloody feuds. Thus it is evident that the sole object of the Russian autocracy is to sow discord among the nationalities inhabiting Russia, to intensify the national strife among them, to reinforce the national barriers, so as the more successfully to disunite the proletarians, the more successfully to break up the proletariat of Russia into small national groups and thus to dig a grave for the class consciousness of the workers, for their class unity.

Such are the interests of Russian reaction, such is the policy of the Russian autocracy.

It is obvious that sooner or later the interests of the proletariat of Russia inevitably had to clash with the reactionary policy of the tsarist autocracy. This is what has happened, and it is on this basis that the "national question" has arisen in the Social-Democratic movement.

How are the barriers between nations to be demolished? How is national isolation to be destroyed, so as to draw the proletarians of Russia closer together and bring about their firmer solidarity?

This is the substance of the "national question" in the Social-Democratic movement.

The answer given by the *Federalist* Social-Democrats is: break up into separate national parties and establish a "free federation" of these parties.

The same answer is given by the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers."

As you see, they advise us, not to unite into one all-Russian party headed by a single center, but to break up into several parties with several directing centers—all in order to strengthen our class unity! We want the proletarians of the various nationalities to *draw closer* to one another. What, then, are we to do? "Draw the proletarians further apart, and you will achieve your aim!" the Federalist Social-Democrats say. We want to unite the proletarians in a single party. What, then, are we to do? "Break up the proletarians of Russia into several parties, and you will achieve your aim!" the Federalist Social-Democrats answer. We want to demolish the national barriers. What measures are we to take? "Reinforce the national

barriers with organizational barriers, and you will achieve your aim!" they reply. And this is the advice they give us, the proletarians of Russia, who are waging a struggle under the same political conditions and against the same common enemy! In a word, what we are told amounts to this: "Act so as to please your enemies and bury your sacred goal with your own hands!"

But suppose we agree for a moment with the Federalist Social-Democrats—let us see whither they will lead us. As the saying has it: "Pursue the liar to the threshold of his lie."

Let us assume that we have taken the advice of our Federalists and have founded separate national parties. What would be the results?

That is not difficult to see. Whereas until now, as *centralists*, we have concentrated our attention on the *common* conditions of the proletarians, on the *unity* of their interests, and have spoken of their "national differences" only insofar as these do not contradict their *common* interests; whereas until now the prime question for us has been: wherein are the proletarians of the various nationalities of Russia similar, what have they in common—so as to use these common interests as a basis for building up a single centralized party of the workers of the whole of Russia—at present, when "we" have become federalists, our attention is engaged by another question of prime importance, namely: in what way do the proletarians of the various nationalities of Russia differ from one another, what are the distinctions between them—so as to use these "national distinctions" as a basis for building up separate national parties. Thus we see that the "national distinctions," which are of minor importance for the centralist, become for the federalist the foundation on which to build national parties.

If we follow this path we shall sooner or later be obliged to arrive at the conclusion that the "national" and, perhaps, some other "distinctions" of the Armenian proletarian, let us say, are the same as those of the Armenian bourgeoisie; that the Armenian proletarian and the Armenian bourgeois have the same customs and character; that they constitute one people, one indivisible "nation." [1] From

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[1] The "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers" has just taken this laudable step. In its "Manifesto" it declares in a resolute manner that "the proletariat (the Armenian—*J. S.*) cannot be separated from society (Armenian—*J. S.*): the united (Armenian) proletariat must be the most intelligent and the strongest organ of the Armenian people"; that "the Armenian proletariat, united in a Socialist party, must strive to shape Armenian social thought, that the Armenian proletariat will be a true son of its tribe," etc. (Cf. Article 3 of the "Manifesto" of the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers.")

In the first place, it is hard to see why "the Armenian proletariat cannot be separated from Armenian society," when actually this "separation" is taking place at every turn. Did not the united Armenian proletariat "separate" from Armenian society when in 1900 (in Tiflis) it declared war against the Armenian bourgeoisie and the bourgeois-minded Armenians?! What is the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers" itself, if not a class organization of Armenian proletarians, who have "separated" from the other classes in Armenian society? Or, is the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers," perhaps, an organization representing all classes!? And, further, can the embattled Armenian proletariat confine itself to the "shaping of Armenian social thought?" Is it not its duty to march forward, to declare war upon this "social thought" which is bourgeois to the marrow of its bones, and to infuse a revolutionary spirit into it? The facts say that that is its duty. This being the case, it is self-evident that it was incumbent upon the "Manifesto" to draw the attention of its readers not to "shaping social thought" but to a struggle against this thought, to the necessity of revolutionizing it—that would be a more correct description of the

this it is not far to "a ground for common action," on which both the bourgeois and the proletarians must stand, joining hands as members of the same "nation." The pharisaical policy of the autocratic tsar may appear as "additional" proof in support of such friendship. And all talk about class antagonisms may appear as "inappropriate pedantry." And then somebody's poetic fingers will touch "more boldly" the narrow-nationalistic strings that still exist among the proletarians of the various nationalities of Russia and play them in this key. Credit (confidence) will be given to chauvinistic humbug, friends will be taken for enemies, enemies for friends—confusion will ensue, and the class consciousness of Russian proletariat will deteriorate. Instead of *breaking down the national barriers*, we shall, thanks to the federalists, *reinforce them still more* with organizational barriers. Instead of *enhancing* the class consciousness of the proletariat, we shall *debase* it and subject it to dangerous trials. And the autocratic tsar "will rejoice in his heart," for he would never have succeeded in obtaining the gratuitous services of assistants like ourselves.

Is that really our aim?!

And, finally, at a time when we need a single, flexible, centralized party whose Central Committee should be able at a moment's notice to rouse the workers of the whole of Russia and lead them in the decisive onslaught upon the autocracy and the bourgeoisie, we are offered the monstrosity of a "Federalist League" broken up into separate parties! Instead of a sharp weapon they hand us a weapon covered with rust and assure us that it will help us wipe out our hated enemies more effectively!

That is where the Federalist Social-Democrats would lead us!

But since our aim is not to "reinforce the national barriers," but to break them down; since, in order to uproot existing injustice, we need, not a rusty, but a sharp weapon; since we want to give our enemies cause not for rejoicing but for lamentation, since we want to reduce them to dust—it is clearly our sacred duty to turn our backs on the Federalists and find a better solution of the "national question."

II

So far we have spoken of how the "national question" should not be solved. Now we shall speak of

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duties of the "Socialist proletariat." And, finally, can the Armenian proletariat be "a true son of its tribe," if one section of this tribe—the Armenian bourgeoisie—sucks its blood like a spider, and another section—the Armenian clergy—in addition to sucking the blood of the workers, is systematically engaged in corrupting their minds? All these questions are plain and inevitable, if we look at things from the standpoint of the class struggle. But the authors of the "Manifesto" do not notice these questions, because they look at things from the federalistic-nationalistic standpoint they have taken over from the Bund (the Jewish Workers' Union). In general it seems that the authors of the "Manifesto" have made it their object to ape the Bund in everything. Thus they include in their "Manifesto" Article Two of the resolution on "The Position of the Bund in the Party" adopted by the Fifth Congress of the Bund. They represent the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers" as the sole champion of the interests of the Armenian proletariat. (See Article 3 of the "Manifesto.") The authors of the "Manifesto" have forgotten that for several years now the Caucasian committees of our Party have been considered the representatives of the Armenian (and other) proletarians in the Caucasus, that they inculcate class consciousness in them by means of oral and printed propaganda and agitation in the Armenian language, guide them in their struggles, etc., whereas the "Social-Democratic Organization of Armenian Workers" dates its birth to only the day before yesterday. They have forgotten all this and, it is to be expected, will forget many other things besides for the sake of faithfully copying the Bund in all its organizational and political views.

how this question should be solved, i. e., of how it is solved by the Social-Democratic Labor Party.[1]

To begin with, we must bear in mind that the Social-Democratic Party which functions in Russia calls itself *Rossiiskaya* (*of Russia*) and not *Russkaya* (*Russian*). Obviously this is intended to convey that it will gather under its banner not only Russian proletarians but the proletarians of *all the nationalities* of Russia, and, consequently, that it will do everything to break down the *national barriers* raised to separate them.

Further, our Party has cleared the "national question" of the fog that had enveloped it and had lent it an air of mystery! It has divided this question into its separate elements, lent each element the character of a class demand, and incorporated them in its program in the form of separate articles. Thereby it has shown us clearly that, *taken by themselves*, the so-called "national interests" and "national demands" are absolutely worthless, and that these "interests," and "demands" are worthy of our attention only insofar as they enhance, or may enhance, the class consciousness of the proletariat, its class development.

The Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia has thereby clearly indicated the road it intends to travel, and the position it has taken in solving the "national question."

Of what parts is the "national question" made up—what do Messrs. the Federalist Social-Democrats demand?

1. "CIVIC EQUALITY FOR THE NATIONALITIES OF RUSSIA"?

You are agitated by the civic inequality prevailing in Russia? You want to return to the nationalities of Russia the civic rights of which they have been deprived by the government, and therefore demand civic equality for these nationalities? But are we opposed to *this* demand? We are perfectly aware of the great importance of civic rights for the proletarians. Civic rights are a weapon in the struggle; to deprive us of civic rights is to deprive us of a weapon—and it is perfectly clear that without weapons the proletarians cannot fight effectively, and for the proletariat of Russia it is of vital importance that the proletarians of all the nationalities inhabiting Russia fight effectively; for, the better these proletarians fight, the greater will be their class consciousness, and the greater their class consciousness, the closer will be the class unity of the proletariat of Russia. Yes, we know all this, and that is why we are fighting and will go on fighting with all our strength for the civic equality of the nationalities of Russia. Read Article 7 of our Program, where the Party speaks of "full equality of all citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race or *nationality*" and you will see that the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia sets to bring about the fulfilment of these demands.

What else do the Federalist Social-Democrats demand?

2. "FREEDOM OF LANGUAGE FOR THE NATIONALITIES OF RUSSIA"?

You are agitated by the fact that the proletarians of the "alien" nationalities of Russia are practically forbidden to receive instruction or to speak in public, state and other institutions in their own languages. This, indeed, is cause for agitation! Language is a weapon of development and of struggle. Different nations have different languages. The interests of the pro-

[1] It may not be amiss to point out that the following is a comment on the articles of our Party program dealing with the national question.

letariat of Russia demand that the proletarians of the various nationalities inhabiting Russia have the full right to use the language in which it is easiest for them to receive schooling, in which they can best oppose their enemies at meetings or in public, state and other institutions. *That* language is one's *native tongue*. How can we keep silent, they say, when the proletarians of the "alien" nationalities are deprived of their native language? Well, and what does our Party Program say to the proletariat of Russia on this point? Read Article 8 of our Program, in which our Party demands "the right of the population to receive schooling in their native languages, this right to be insured by the establishment of schools for this purpose at the expense of the state and of the organs of municipal government; the right of each citizen to speak at meetings in his native language; the introduction of the native language on a par with the official state language in all local public and state institutions." Read this, and you will see that the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia sets out to bring about the fulfilment of this demand as well.

What else do the Federalist Social-Democrats demand?

3. "HOME RULE FOR THE NATIONALITIES OF RUSSIA"?

You mean that the same laws cannot be applied in the same way to the various localities of the Russian state, which differ from one another by their peculiar conditions and by their population? You want these localities to have the right to adapt the *general* laws of the state to their specific conditions? If such is the case, if this is what you mean by your demand, then put it that way; cast aside the nationalistic haziness and confusion and call things by their proper names. And if you follow this advice of ours, you will see for yourselves that we have nothing against such a demand. To us it is self-evident that the various localities of the Russian state, differing as they do by their peculiar conditions and by their population, cannot all apply the general constitution of the state in the same way. that such localities must be granted the right to apply the general constitution of the state in such a form as will benefit them most and will contribute to the fullest development of the political forces of the people. This is what the class interests of the proletariat of Russia require. And if you read Article 3 of our Party Program, in which our Party demands "wide local home rule; regional home rule for those localities which are distinguished by their particular conditions and by their population," you will see that the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia has, to begin with, cleared this demand of nationalistic fog and then has set out to bring about its fulfilment.

4. You point to the tsarist autocracy, which is viciously persecuting the "national culture" of the "alien" nationalities of Russia, which is brutally interfering with their internal life and oppressing them in every way, which barbarously destroyed (and goes on destroying) the cultural institutions of the Finns, plundered Armenian national property, etc.? You demand guarantees against the predatory violence of the autocracy? But are we blind to the violence which is being perpetrated by the tsarist autocracy? Have we not always fought against this violence?! Everyone today clearly sees how the present Russian government oppresses and crushes the "alien" nationalities inhabiting Russia. It is also beyond any doubt that this policy of the government has

the effect of corrupting from day to day the class consciousness of the proletariat of Russia, and exposing it to dangerous trials. Consequently, we will always and everywhere fight against the corrupting policy of the tsarist government. Consequently, we will always and everywhere defend against the police violence of the autocracy, not only the useful, but even the useless institutions of these nationalities; for the interests of the proletariat of Russia lead us to the conviction that only the nationalities themselves have the right to abolish or develop any of the aspects of their national culture. But read Article 9 of our Program. Is not this the purport of Article 9 of our Party Program, which, incidentally, has caused much idle talk among our enemies as well as among our friends?

But here we are interrupted with the advice to cease talking about Article 9. But why? we ask. "Because," we are told, this Article of our Program "is in fundamental contradiction" with Articles 3, 7 and 8 of the same Program; because, if the nationalities are given the right to arrange all their national affairs according to their own will (see Article 9), there should be no room in this Program for Articles 3, 7 and 8; and, *vice versa*, if these Articles are left in the program, Article 9 must undoubtedly be eliminated from the Program. Something of this sort, apparently, is what the *Sakartvelo*[1] means to say when it asks with the frivolity so characteristic of it: "Where is the logic in telling a nation that it is granted regional home rule and, at the same time, reminding it that it has the right to arrange all its national affairs as it sees fit?" (See *Sakartvelo*, No. 9). "Evidently," a logical contradiction has crept into the Program; "evidently," it is necessary to eliminate from the Program one or several articles if this contradiction is to be removed. Yes, this is "absolutely" necessary; otherwise, as you see, logic itself voices its protest through the medium of the illogical *Sakartvelo*.

This brings to mind an ancient tale. Once upon a time there lived a "savant," an anatomist. He had at his disposal "everything" a "real" anatomist requires: a diploma, an operating room, instruments and inordinate pretensions. Only one minor detail was lacking—a knowledge of anatomy. Once some people asked him to explain the connection between the parts of a skeleton that were lying scattered on his anatomical table. Here was an opportunity for our "famed savant" to show off his skill. With great pomp and solemnity he set about "explaining." Unfortunately, however, the "savant" did not know a thing about anatomy and was entirely at a loss as to how the parts should be pieced together so as to get a complete skeleton. He fussed about for a long time, perspired copiously, but all in vain. Finally, when nothing had come of all his efforts and everything was in utter confusion, he seized several parts of the skeleton, flung them into a far corner and vented his philosophic ire on some "evil-minded" persons, who, he alleged, had placed on his table spurious parts of a skeleton. Naturally, the spectators could only make merry at the expense of this "savant anatomist."

A similar "misfortune" has befallen the *Sakartvelo*. It took into its head to analyze our Party

[1] We are referring here to the *Sakartvelo* for the sole purpose of better explaining the contents of Article 9. The object of the present essay is criticism of the Federalist Social-Democrats, and not of the *Sakartveloists*, who differ radically from the former (see Chapter 1).

Program; but, it turns out, the *Sakartvelo* has no conception of our program, nor of how it is to be analyzed; it has not grasped the connection that exists between the various articles of this Program and what each article signifies. And so it gives us the "philosophical" advice: "Since I cannot understand such and such articles of your Program, therefore (?!) they must be eliminated from the Program."

But I have no intention of poking fun at the *Sakartvelo*—it is an object of ridicule as it is, and, as the saying goes, you shouldn't hit a man when he is down. On the contrary, I am even prepared to help it and explain our Program to it, but on condition that 1) it confesses its crying ignorance, 2) listens to me with attention, and 3) it be on good terms with logic.[1]

The point is as follows. Articles 3, 7 and 8 of our Program have their basis in the idea of *political centralism*. When the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia included these articles in its Program, it was guided by the consideration that, generally speaking, the "final" solution of the "national question"—that is to say, the "emancipation" of the "alien" nationalities of Russia—is impossible so long as political power is in the hands of the bourgeoisie. There are two reasons for this: in the first place, present-day economic development is gradually bridging the gulf between the "alien nationalities" and "Russia," multiplying the contacts between them and thereby giving rise to sentiments of friendship among the leading circles of the bourgeoisie of these nationalities, which cuts the ground from under their "national-emancipation" aspirations; and, secondly, the proletariat will, *generally speaking*, lend no support to the so-called "national emancipation" movement, for so far every *such* movement has been conducted in the interests of the bourgeoisie, and has corrupted and crippled the class consciousness of the proletariat. This general conviction has given rise to the idea of *political centralism* on which Articles 3, 7 and 8 of our Party Program are based.

But this, as I have said above, is the *general* view.

It may happen that economic and political conditions arise under which the progressive circles of the bourgeoisie of the "alien" nationalities will be eager for "national emancipation."

It may also happen that such a movement will turn out to be favorable for the development of the class consciousness of the proletariat.

How should our Party act in such cases?

It is precisely with a view to such possible cases that Article 9 has been included in our Program; it is precisely with a view to such possible circumstances that the nationalities are accorded the right by virtue of which they will endeavor to arrange their national affairs in accordance with their own wishes (for instance, to "emancipate themselves" altogether).

Our Party, which sets itself the aim of leading the embattled proletariat of the whole of Russia, must be prepared for all such contingencies that may arise before the proletariat, and accordingly had to include in its program the article in question. A prudent, far-sight-

[1] I deem it necessary to inform the readers that, from its very first issues, the *Sakartvelo* has declared war upon logic as representing fetters, and therefore to be combated. No attention should be paid to the circumstance that the *Sakartvelo* often speaks in the name of logic—that is due only to its frivolity and forgetfulness.

ed party could not act in any other way.

It seems, however, that this purpose of Article 9 does not satisfy the "savants" of the *Sakartvelo*, as well as some of the Federalist Social-Democrats. They demand a "decisive" and "plain" answer to the question: is "national independence" advantageous or disadvantageous to the proletariat?[1]

This reminds me of the Russian metaphysicians of the middle of the last century who pestered the dialecticians of those days with the question: "Is rain good or bad for the crops?" demanding a "decisive" answer. It was not difficult for the dialecticians to prove that such a formulation of the question was completely unscientific; that such questions must be answered differently at different times; that during a drought rain is good, whereas if the season is rainy, more rain is useless or even bad; and that, consequently, to demand a "decisive" answer to such a question was obviously stupid.

But the *Sakartvelo* has learned nothing from such examples.

Bernstein's adherents also demanded of the Marxists a "decisive" answer to the question: "Are cooperatives (i. e. consumers' and producers' societies) useful or harmful for the proletariat?" It was not difficult for the Marxists to prove the pointlessness of this formulation of the question; they explained very simply that all depends on the time and the place: that, where the class consciousness of the proletariat has developed to the proper level, and the proletarians are united in a single strong political party, cooperative societies may be of great benefit to the proletariat, if the party itself undertakes to organize and direct them. On the other hand, wherever these conditions are lacking, the cooperative societies are harmful for the proletariat, for they breed huckstering tendencies and craft exclusiveness among the workers, and thereby corrupt their class consciousness.

But the *Sakartveloists* have learned nothing from this example either. They demand even more insistently: "Is national independence useful or harmful for the proletariat? Give us a decisive answer!"

But we see that the circumstances which may in future give rise to and develop a "national emancipation" movement among the bourgeoisie of the "alien" nationalities do not exist at present, nor, for that matter, are they inevitable in the future—we have only assumed them as a possibility. Furthermore, we cannot know at present what will be the level of the class consciousness of the proletariat at that particular moment, and to what extent this movement will then be useful or harmful for the proletariat! Hence we may ask, on what basis can one build[1] a "decisive" answer to this question? From what premises can it be deduced? And is it not stupid to demand a "decisive" answer under such circumstances?

It is clear that we must leave it to the "alien" nationalities to decide that question for themselves, and our task is to win for them the right to do so. Let the nationalities themselves decide, when they are faced with this question, whether "national independence" is useful or harmful for them, and, if useful—in what form to exercise it. They alone can decide this question! That is why Ar-

[1] See the article by "Old (i. e., old-fashioned!) Revolutionary" in *Sakartvelo*, No. 9.

[1] Messrs. the *Sakartveloists* always build their demands on sand and cannot conceive of people who are capable of finding a firmer basis for their demands.

ticle 9 gives the "alien" nationalities the right to arrange their national affairs in accordance with their own wishes. And our duty, by virtue of that same Article, is to see to it that the wishes of these nationalities are really social-democratic, that these wishes are rooted in the class interests of the proletariat. And for this we must educate the proletarians of these nationalities in the spirit of Social-Democracy, we must level severe Social-Democratic criticism at certain reactionary "national" habits, customs and institutions—which will not prevent us in the least from defending these habits, customs and institutions against police violence.

Such is the main idea underlying Article 9.

It is easy to see the profound logical connection between this Article of our Program and the principles of the proletarian class struggle. And since our entire program is based on these principles the logical connection between Article 9 and all the other articles of our Party Program is self-evident.

It is precisely because the thick-skulled *Sakartvelo* cannot digest such simple ideas that it is styled a "wise" organ of the press.

What else remains of the "national question"?

5. "DEFENSE OF THE NATIONAL SPIRIT AND ITS ATTRIBUTES"?

But what is this "national spirit" and what are "its attributes"? Science, in the shape of dialectical materialism, has proved long since that there is no such thing, nor can there be such a thing, as a "national spirit." Has anyone refuted this view of dialectical materialism? History tells us that no one has refuted it. Hence, we must agree with this view of science, and must uphold science in its contention that there is no such thing as a "national spirit" in existence, nor can there be any such thing. And since this is the case, since there is no such thing as a "national spirit" in existence, it is self-evident that the defense of what does not exist is logical stupidity which must inevitably lead to corresponding historical (undesirable) consequences. It behooves only the *Sakartvelo*—"organ of the Revolutionary Party of Georgian Socialist-Federalists" (see *Sakartvelo*, No. 9)[1] to give voice to such "philosophical" stupidities.

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[1] What does this "Party," bearing such a strange name, really represent? We read in the *Sakartvelo* (see *Supplement* 1 to *Sakartvelo* No. 10) that "in the spring of the current year Georgian revolutionaries—Georgian Anarchists, adherents of the *Sakartvelo*, and Georgian Socialist-Revolutionaries—held a meeting abroad and . . . combined . . . to form the Georgian Socialist-Federalist 'Party'" . . . Yes, the Anarchists, whose hearts and souls are filled with utter contempt for politics of any kind, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who worship politics, and the *Sakartveloists*, who repudiate all terrorist and anarchist measures—it is this motley and mutually-renouncing crew, it turns out, that has combined to form . . . a "party"!. . . As ideal a patchwork as anyone could imagine! There's a place where one won't find it dull! Those organizers who assert that people must have common principles in order to unite in a party are mistaken! It is not common principles, we are told by this motley crew, that serve as a basis for forming a "party," but the absence of principles! Down with "theory" and principles—they are but the fetters worn by slaves! The sooner we get rid of them the better—that is the philosophy of this motley crew. And, indeed, the moment these people got rid of principles, they immediately, at one stroke, built . . . a house of cards—I beg your pardon—the "Georgian Socialist-Federalist Party." So it seems that it needs only "seven-and-a-half persons" to assemble in one place for them to form a "party"! And how can one refrain from laughing when these ignoramuses, these "officers" without an army indulge in philosophizing along the following lines: the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia "is anti-socialist, reactionary," etc.; the Russian Social-Democrats "are chauvinists;" the Caucasian League of our Party "slavishly" submits to the

* * *

The "national question" is settled! Our Party had divided this question into its several component parts, has distilled from it its vital juices, and poured them into the veins of its program. It had thus shown how the "national question" should be solved in the Social-Democratic movement, so as to leave no trace of national barriers, and not to depart for a moment from the principles we hold dear.

The question is: where is the need for separate national parties? Or, where is the Social-Democratic "basis," on which the organizational and political views of the Federalist-Social Democrats are supposed to be built? There is no such "basis" to be seen—it does not exist. The Federalist Social-Democrats are suspended in mid-air.

They have two ways out of this uncomfortable position. Either they must entirely abandon the standpoint of the revolutionary proletariat and accept the principle of reinforcing the national barriers (opportunism in the shape of federalism); or they must renounce all federalism in the party organization, boldly raise the banner calling for the demolition of national barriers, and rally to the camp of the Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia.

Proletarian Struggle, No. 7.
September 1(14), 1904.

Central Committee of the Party*, etc. (See the Resolutions of the First Conference of the Georgian Revolutionaries.) Nothing better could be expected of the archeological remains of the times of Bakunin: like trees—like fruits, like factories—like goods. That, in brief, is the bourgeois-nationalist party of this motley crew.

* I must note that to some abnormal "individuals" the coordinated action of the various sections of our Party had appeared to be "slavish submission." This, physicians say, is just a case of weak nerves.

HOW WE SEE IT

The Spirit of the Maginot Line and the Spirit of the French People

When Flaubert visited Paris during the first days of the Franco-Prussian War, he discovered that he had a tender feeling for the Jacobins. "I forgive, in the bottom of my heart, the fiercest politicians of 1793," he wrote to George Sand. "I understand them now . . ."

The martial spirit of the speeches of the French bourgeois deputies "turned (his) stomach" and "drove (him) wild."

It is not our intention to invoke Flaubert in order to reproach the French writers of today. Not only because Flaubert is Flaubert, and Benda, let us say, is Benda, but also for the simple reason that the censors of Napoleon III seem no more than naive liberals when compared with the subordinates of Jean Giraudoux, the censor-in-chief of France today. Flaubert was under no necessity to hide his admiration for the genius of Goethe, and he could speak with affection of his Russian friends without running the danger of imprisonment in a concentration camp. This is a good deal more than may be said of French writers at present. The French press is a censored press. Even the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, a publication guided by Jean Paulhan, shows a plentiful sprinkling of bald spots marked "censuré."

It is perfectly comprehensible. The censored articles in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* afford irrefutable proof of a well-known fact, *viz.*, that the "ideological mobilization of the nation" upon which French imperialists have been working for so many years, is a failure. True, the government has been able to press into the service of the censorship the newspapers and the radio writers like Giraudoux, Duhamel and Jules Romains; but they came "traveling light," as one might put it, without any new "feelings," or "ideas" of their own. Feelings and ideas—official feelings and official ideas—were supplied them with the military uniforms. Thus, it was not a "mobilization of spirit" that took place, but a distribution of ideological ammunition among writers for whom the question of ammunition and rations is by no means unimportant.

We did not find anything from the pen of Giraudoux, Duhamel, or Jules Romains in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, the principal literary organ of the French bourgeois intellectuals. Neither did we find the names of other writers familiar to us; it is evident that they cannot or do not care to write just at present.

We were able to select, from the field of neutral literature and the frankly reactionary writings of trusted agents of French fascism like Drieu La Rochelle, a small number of articles by men who until recently were capable of formulating the thoughts and feelings of a fairly wide circle of the intelligentsia. They are attempting this now, too, but without any guarantee that what they write really expresses the convictions of the French intelligentsia. Moreover, the very nature of their productions shows that these people are abusing the "right to bewilderment" and will be found, if

not today, then tomorrow, in the ranks of the apostates.

Completely out of touch as they are with the now persecuted People's Front movement, the source from which during the last few years they drew understanding of the most important political and social problems of the day, these writers are now in a state of bewilderment, degenerating in some cases into political and ideological demoralization. It would not be worthwhile dwelling in detail on Benda, Chamson and several others writing for the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, were it not that their work reflects, from a peculiar angle, *the political and moral condition of war-time France.*

Practically all that is written in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* betrays, first and foremost, a state of profound and painful depression. Someone writing under the name of Armand declares that a period of "inexpressible sorrow" and "disillusionment" has begun with the war. "The disillusionment that was so oppressive during the first few weeks of the war, has led to torpor and utter dullness." "And so far nothing . . . neither hate nor love, has come to take the place of these."

"Those who are going to the front today," Jean Paulhan writes, "are wiser (than those who went in 1914—*B.P.*) and, I think, have wiser guidance. Wiser, yes. But it is a queer sort of wisdom. There is nothing in it, but emptiness and forgetfulness. (Forgetfulness of what had been endured in the first imperialist war.—*B.P.*) Because it was after the outbreak of the war that their leaders saw the light. Never have the soldiers been so ill-informed, so 'unenlightened' as at present."

In the first days of the Franco-Prussian War Flaubert mocked the bourgeois and their martial enthusiasm—an enthusiasm "unmotivated by any idea." But the writers of the France of today are denied even that consolation. Not only ideas are lacking, but they cannot discern any enthusiasm—even sham enthusiasm. Devoid of morals and ideas, this war of bankers and colonial slave-owners alarms even those writers who, for their own peace of mind and the justification of their own conciliatory attitude, would like to "accept" it and all its hypocritical phraseology.

The conclusion arrived at by practically all the writers in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* is that there is neither "mind" nor a "soul" in this war.

"It is said," writes Jean Paulhan, "that the actual site of the war cannot be discovered, that it is still seeking a field for action. But it is still more difficult to discover the reasons and ideas behind the war." "Complimenting the soldiers" is not sufficient. "You must see to it that everyone who is asked what he is fighting for should be able to answer: 'I am fighting that I may one day be happy and respected.'" Paulhan warns the masters of France. "Otherwise—beware! Your complacency and our mistakes may turn against you." (*N. R. F.* October 1, 1939, p. 532.)

But how can you convince the French people you have sent out to defend the colonial store-houses of the Paris bankers that they are fighting "for their happiness"? (*N. R. F.* February 1, 1940.)

Paulhan himself understands perfectly well that this is difficult, and he pleads for a little time to reflect: "We must not be prevented from becoming conscious of the war."

Armand, on the other hand, does not want to ponder long. But he also realizes that the Maginot Line is not sufficient. "*I am waiting for the spirit of the Maginot Line to be born. . . . That will be a difficult and dangerous birth. . . .*"

So we see that even those who have

themselves been deceived by imperialist demagogy, or who wish to deceive others, admit that the whole "ideological" "anti-Hitler" sham fell through as soon as the curtain was raised. Millions see that the slogans borrowed from the People's Front movement by the present masters of France for purposes of their own have nothing in common with this war.

Accordingly, some of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* writers have decided to set about creating a "spirit," a sort of ideological armament, for the Maginot Line. Benda, of course, knows perfectly well what this kind of creative work is called. He admits outright that it involves the betrayal of his former convictions, or as he expresses it, a series of "changes of front." He is putting a bold face on a dirty game (a game of "realistic politics"?) and there is a certain senile cynicism in his exclamation: "I welcome these somersaults, this desire that public opinion may forget one's former position at any price; it is dictated by fear of an ostracism which would cost too much."

It is Benda who has invented the most interesting spirit for the Maginot Line—the "Helleno-Christian spirit," as he calls it.

"The democratic governments," he writes, "have said in their declarations that, following victory, they desire to give the people Helleno-Christian morals, or to be more exact, Socrato-Christian morals." Benda admits that up to the present these governments have not been guided any too often by morals of this kind, but the fact that they have found themselves obliged to pay due respect—"even if but verbal, even if hypocritical"—to the said morals, is in itself, Benda thinks, "a great achievement of mankind." In a word, Benda sets no small value on the tribute French vice has been forced to pay to Christian-Grecian virtue. True, he reminds us, during the Dreyfus affair the French government deviated slightly from the morals of ancient Greece, but it is now returning to them. Julien Benda would like to believe that "after victory, the French and British governments will be able to establish, on more practical lines than ever before in history, Helleno-Christian morals among the commonwealths of mankind; that Great Britain in particular "will establish respect for the human person." And if this should prove impossible of complete attainment, it is no great matter for regret, since "an excess of purity causes alarm." [1]

Benda observes that with all the goodwill in the world the task of establishing the "reign" of these morals will be no easy one for the French and British governments. And not because Chamberlain does not appear over-anxious about the "establishment of respect for the human person." By no means. Other obstacles will arise.

"The Communists," Benda writes, "will oppose, as they did after the last war, the idea of punishing the German people, even though this punishment were only the application of the principle of *poenam dare*, inherent in the Socratic idea of justice. Again, the Communists will preach . . . a mystical love that should unite all peoples and make no distinction between them . . ." This is the philosophy of Benda today.

Benda does not seem to realize what a tribute he is paying to the moral grandeur of Communism. He is so blind that he actually dares to

[1] At one of the meetings of the Institute for Intellectual Collaboration of the League of Nations, Paul Valery declared that though it was necessary to introduce the force of "Spirit" into international relations, there should not be too much of it, since it was apt to be dangerous in large doses. Strictly rationed spirit on a sound basis of non-rationed cash payments!

contrast his own morals—the morals of a slayer of "Boches"—against Communistic morals, against the idea of the solidarity of the peoples . . . Yet how many high-sounding phrases about "the nation of Goethe and Bach" have been uttered by this same Julien Benda in years gone by! Or perhaps he now shares the opinion of Maurras—that "the Germany of Leibnitz, Bach, Kant and Goethe is no better than that of Bismarck." (*Nouvelle Revue Française*, February, 1940, p. 244.) Benda rails not only against Communist morals in general, but in particular against the conception of Hellenic culture that prevails in the Soviet Union. In fact, Benda is extremely displeased with the sympathy shown in the U.S.S.R. for Heraclitus and Prometheus. "I should not be surprised if a species of a cult of Prometheus were to be found there (in the U.S.S.R.—*B. P.*). (*N.R.F.* February 1, 1940, p. 154.)

Sympathy for Prometheus—what a glaring proof of "Soviet barbarity." In the eyes of Julien Benda, Prometheus—that magnificent symbol of the rebellious spirit struggling for the freedom of mankind—is merely the "patron and protector of specialists," the embodiment of "utilitarian thought."

Armand, who is younger and more temperamental, holds that the spirit of the Maginot Line should be made of a material that is not so antique.

"I am waiting," he writes, "for the spirit of the Maginot Line to be born . . . That will be a difficult and dangerous birth . . . because we are gradually getting out of touch with the rear. . . ." This is the more serious since there were very painful precedents for it in the war of 1914. The present war "provides work for the body, but leaves the spirit idle," and leads to a complete divorcement of the rear from the front. What can be done to relieve the travail of the birth of the spirit of the Maginot Line and to link it with the spirits of the rear? "Our love, our calling, our duty as citizens, find—strange though it may seem—the atmosphere of intimate warmth under fire congenial and beneficial. It is possible that this time the war will help us to mature." War, according to Armand, may be either a "monstrous blood-letting" or a "blood-transfusion." Millions have to be convinced that what is taking place at the Maginot Line is precisely large-scale blood-transfusion calculated to have extremely beneficial effects on the health of the people. . . .

André Chamson is hardly likely to agree with Armand. In his *Travel-book of a Liaison-Officer* Chamson acknowledges that though a fellow-feeling unites the men in the French trenches, "a man is more solitary here than anywhere else in the world. He is as lonely as if he were already among the dead. Lonely in his fear, in his cold and hunger . . ." Further on he makes a confession that is of particular value, since it comes from one who has, in Benda's words, made the "somersault."

"The world, our world, has reached the stage of decay where all forms of life to which we are accustomed are in danger of perishing." Terrified by the doom that is about to overtake the capitalist world, Chamson is ready to relinquish "the hopes to which we have clung too long. Two months have proved sufficient to sweep away everything, to upset the map of Europe and the moral map of each of us." *"Parlez pour vous, monsieur!"*—the French say in such cases. Speak for yourself and for those other renegades whose "moral map" (was it so fair and unspotted, after all?) was upset at the first serious test.

Chamson does not say exactly what it is that he does not like about the moral map of Europe, but some of his malicious attacks on the

U.S.S.R. lead us to suppose that he is displeased with the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union, due to which the war-zone on the map of Europe has been considerably narrowed, both physically and morally. . . .

In the quest of a "spirit" for the military venture of the Anglo-French bloc, Chamson resorts to a well-tried method that has more than once been exposed. He is now seeking for parallels between the "duty" of the Chamsons and the duty of the "believers, monks, knights, and the Jacobins of 1793." Even before this war Jules Romains attempted to make a Valmy out of Verdun, and sang the praises of a French officer—an aristocrat—who contrived to lead a hundred youths to certain death at Verdun, after first telling them a fairy-tale to the effect that the soldiers of the imperialist war of 1914 were the direct descendants of the soldiers of the French Revolution.

Having gathered the Jacobins and the clerics guillotined by the Jacobins under the same "historical" roof, Chamson, without more ado, pulls on the Phrygian cap over his brand-new steel helmet. And from under it peer the furtive eyes of the renegade and forger of historical genealogies.

Still more outspoken is Pierre Jean Jouve, the author of the appeal "To France."

France! Envoy of two eternal towers!
Christ's cross still visible upon thy breast
And on thy brow—the airy Phrygian cap.

And Armand declares quite frankly:

"Yes, France will have to carry to completion a new French revolution, the revolution that was interrupted after 1789." But "in a country where there can be no question of the division of public benefits" the "only revolution possible" is one that aims only at "forming a common fund out of the reserves of each individual."

Jean Guéhenno in tune with the press of Blums and Jouhaux, the betrayers of the French people, appeals in the yellow *Marianne* for a revival of the spirit of the French Revolution, for "this revolutionary spirit must help us win the war and attain peace."

Lenin's brilliant exposure of the "revolutionary" camouflage resorted to in imperialist wars will serve us again in the struggle with demagogy of this kind.

In his lecture on "War and Revolution" Lenin said:

"We constantly observe attempts, particularly on the part of capitalist newspapers—no matter whether they are monarchist or republican—to attribute to the present war a historical content entirely alien to it. For example, in the French Republic, there is nothing more customary than the attempts to represent the war—as far as France is concerned—as the continuation and a likeness of the wars of the Great French Revolution in 1792. There is no more widespread method of deceiving the French masses, the French workers and the workers of all countries than the adoption in our day of the 'jargon' of that epoch and of certain of its slogans, and also the attempt to represent matters in such a light as to make it appear that today, too, republican France is defending her freedom against a monarchy. One 'trifling' circumstance is overlooked—namely, that in 1792 the war in France was waged by a revolutionary class that had accomplished an unprecedented revolution, that, by an unparalleled display of the heroism of the masses, had destroyed the French monarchy root and branch, and had risen against a united, monarchist Europe

for no other purpose than that of continuing its revolutionary struggle." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. XXX, pp. 334-335. Russian Ed.)

As to the kind of "new French Revolution" that is now being prepared by the French reactionaries—we may judge of it by the following passage from an article in the *Mercure de France*. (December 1, 1939.)

"The Life of the Land.

". . . None but the man of the land can live naturally in simplicity and poverty. We must not be afraid to utter this word. Let us recall the poverty that has been driven out of the world. Those who have tried to evoke hatred and scorn of poverty, confusing it with beggary, knew very well what they were doing. Let the voice of Francis of Assisi speak in us and all around us. We must learn anew how to be poor. And nowhere does poverty-chaste and holy poverty bloom so luxuriantly as in the country under shade of trees, among the fruits of the earth and the fields of wheat. Yes, humility. Not the humility that sinks to the level of the beast, but the humility that makes man draw near to the beast."

One need not be a Francis of Assisi, who, it is said, understood the tongues of the beasts of the field, to guess at what the Christ-loving hyenas of the *Mercure de France* are trying to convey. They want to say: Do not forget, gentlemen, that Benda's Christian-Hellenic morals calling for the spoliation and destruction of German women and children, are by no means the whole of our morals. First and foremost comes the spoliation of the mass of the French people, the French peasant, upon whom, incidentally, Mr. Chamson is staking a great deal.

This is the state of things as far as the philosophic and historic "consciousness of the war" is concerned. How difficult it has been to instil this consciousness may be gauged from the fact that it has been necessary to call in an old specialist on the subject, Henri Bergson, who distinguished himself in this sphere in 1914.

The *Nouvelle Revue Française* reminds its readers of him:

"In every epoch there is a philosophic mind who rationalizes the world. Today, this philosopher is Bergson." Now, do not be in a hurry to offer objections: The *Nouvelle Revue Française* knows the type of thinker the French imperialists need in order that, to use Nietzsche's expression, a piece of meat may be offered as a piece of the spirit. Bergson is useful today because "no other thinker has so far perfected the art of destroying ideas . . ." "His thought transforms ideas: freedom ceases to be freedom, time ceases to be time."

According to latest reports, Bergson has now started out by re-publishing his old misanthropic declaration of 1914 against the "Boches," just adding a few words to it for decency's sake.

Other thinkers, who are younger than Bergson and who cannot draw on works or experience of the period of the first imperialist war, are doing their utmost to revive the most stupid and scurrilous of the old fables about the "Boches." They even dig out something from Tacitus on the ancient Germans. But since Tacitus sounds too tame—they reinforce him with the *Chronicles* of André Suarès.

Suarès does not like the German people. He particularly dislikes them because they are "obstreperous." "They arouse our disgust and loathing, one may say, by their most admirable qualities and even by their music, particularly by the abuse of the leit-motif." But Wagner is not the worst abomination that the German people have given to the world. Worse

even than Wagner are the German children. Once, when Suarès was traveling through Germany, some little boys threw stones at him. (After reading a few articles written by the injured man, we could not bring ourselves to blame his youthful persecutors) . . . So some German boys threw stones at Suarès, a writer on the staff of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. Consequently, "such a nation can never be a neighbor, but always an enemy."

So much for prose. And there are some more verses by Jean Jouve, already quoted above, in which we read that the number 666—the mark of the Beast of the Apocalypse—has been observed on the brow of the opposing side . . . Then he passes on to prayer.

Mother of god, bless these
Thy children, manly and alone.
For their fields have yielded a harvest
Weighed down by cannon.
A crop of fraternity and vengeance.
Even children are ready to fire
With their freed hands
From these dread muzzles.

There is a very characteristic tendency to "pin on" to Germany everything that for one reason or another is displeasing to French jingoism. Julien Benda, for example, attempts to show that there was an affinity between Nietzsche and Leo Tolstoy, though Tolstoy's pronouncedly negative attitude to the German philosopher is well-known.

In an article that plainly shows how little qualified the author is for any literary work with the exception, perhaps, of solving crossword puzzles, Ramon Fernandez holds forth with a wealth of detail on the "spiritual" closeness of modern Germany and—Jean Jacques Rousseau.

"Germany appeared too late in a Europe that had already divided the world. Rousseau appeared too late in Europe, and could not find his place in life."

Ramon Fernandez is prompted both by a fear for the integrity of France's colonial possessions and a secret hatred of the French Revolution as embodied in Rousseau.

This Fernandez represents a very interesting trend: his hatred of the French Revolution leads him to a repudiation of the greatest spiritual values of the French people. . . . This is what the "patriotism" of the obscurantists and falsifiers of history amounts to.

From the mouths of enemies and hostile skeptics like Benda, we hear the admission that, as before, the only defenders of the French people and French culture, the only friends of the peoples of the world, the only genuine humanists, are those inspired with the ideas of Communism. Benda was obliged to admit this with regard to morals, the *Mercure de France* with regard to social questions.

All attempts to justify the imperialist war and accept it reveal a monstrous hatred for man, a frightful anti-humanism, a lapse into savagery on the part of some of the most refined Frenchmen.

An old writer like Benda appeals to the French to "punish" the German people as severely as possible.

The poet Jean Jouve would like French children to fire guns.

André Suarès, the critic, advances the theory of an "enemy people."

To crown all, a scientist named Jean Rostand preaches, in his *Diary of a Biologist*, the latest scientific revelations produced by the second imperialist war.

"The brain of man is the monstrous tumor of the world, wherein innumerable questions and fears lurk in dreadful cells."

"When all is said and done,

what can one man say to another? Nothing."

"How can you take part in human activity, once you have grasped its insignificance?"

And, finally, an aphorism that explains much: "Claude Bernard said just before his death: 'I do not complain of suffering, but there is no purpose in suffering. These words might be repeated by all mankind."

The purposelessness of the suffering inflicted now on so many people in France cannot be hidden by the philosophers from the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, who are modeling out of "emptiness and forgetfulness" the "spirit of the Maginot Line."

Besides the philosophy that reflects the moral and political disintegration of wartime France, there is certain factual material in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* that directly reproduces actuality and is therefore of great interest. The idea of supplementing their appraisal of reality with pictures of things as they really are would appear to be an attempt on somebody's part to "correct that appraisal of reality," to let life itself speak. The value of even these outwardly, "politically-reliable" sketches is indisputable, especially when one bears in mind the present state of the French press.

Here are a few extracts from this section of the magazine, from the notes of Henri Pourrat. They relate for the most part to the first days of the war.

A peasant woman says: "I have a son of twenty-three. He is going away tomorrow. His father was killed in the last war; my son never knew his father. This war has come early enough for those who lived through the loss of their husbands now to live through the parting with their sons. . . . Yes, there can be nothing harder. Marcel is a brave lad, but you see . . . at first there was hope that it would go no further than mobilization . . ." She went on with her work, and then added in a lower tone: "We won't be waiting for letters these days, we'll only be waiting for news of those who have been killed."

A stroll in the woods. "This is a strange war," said Jean P. He is a student, he will not be called up for a while—he has been given a respite. "A war without enthusiasm and without hate?"

"A road leading to B. A woman in black with a woolen shawl over her head is returning from town. 'But your husband will soon be home on leave, won't he?' She nods without enthusiasm. 'Yes . . . and then he'll bring me some wood.'

The author of these notes, in speaking of the front, complains that the peasants are very careless about military supplies and horses.

Meager as they are, these lines allow us a peep behind the curtain of lies that hides this "strange" and actually frightful war against the people, a war hated by hundreds of thousands of women whose husbands, brothers and sons are taken away from them to serve the interests of two hundred families of French capitalists and landowners.

The writers in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* cannot disguise the "inexpressible sorrow," the despair of the toilers ruined by the war. But we know that besides the inexpressible grief and inconsolable suffering, a still more terrible hatred, a hatred of those responsible for the "invisible war," is growing up in the people. A few truthful words are all that are necessary to show how steadily the "grapes of wrath" are ripening in the fields of France.

BORIS PERSOV

Notes on Soviet Literature

Hardly any Soviet novel has enjoyed such universal success both in the U.S.S.R. and abroad as *And Quiet Flows the Don* by Sholokhov.[1] The completion of the fourth volume of this epic work, which brings the novel as a whole to an end, is therefore an event of interest not only to Soviet literature.

The Soviet reader approaches the writer with the request: "Tell me about myself," much in the same way as he asks the physician to examine his heart and ascertain his capacity for work. However, Soviet writers, "engineers of human souls," as Stalin called them, set themselves the aim not only of analyzing human consciousness, but also of shaping it. Among the greatest works of Russian classic literature is Gogol's *Dead Souls*. In this novel Gogol aspired to create "ideal souls" as well. But this proved too difficult a task at that time. The ideal remained outside of real life. But conditions have changed, and Soviet literature is called upon to perform what Gogol failed to accomplish—to create characters personifying these ideals, now become reality. This is a new and great task, and, naturally, there are bound to be serious difficulties at the beginning.

Sholokhov is actually a builder. The point is not that he has created an epic work which approaches *War and Peace* in scope and presents a broader picture than Stendhal's *The Chartreuse of Parma*. These classic models thus far are unsurpassed. But Sholokhov's novel has a significance of its own. The author has created a work in which history is blended with present actuality.

In the past a writer spent a long time observing life. Then, after noting, more or less comprehensively, the salient traits of changing psychology, he generalized and embodied them in a type of his own creation. But Soviet life runs ahead of literature. This fact must be borne in mind in any appraisal of Soviet literature. For the most part it is not a question of creating a type. The type, representing the new in life, already exists, only waiting to be embodied in literature. If Sholokhov is to be compared to Tolstoy and Stendhal, the formulation of the comparison in simple terms would amount to the following: in portraying an historical epoch and the action of masses, Tolstoy and Stendhal concentrated on the destiny and character of individuals, that being the goal towards which the reader was led. On several occasions Tolstoy shifted his emphasis from the individual to the mass, and even tried to deny the role of the individual personality, including that of Napoleon, only to return in the end to the individual personality, placing it in the center of creation. Sholokhov, while presenting clearly delineated types and never for a moment losing the thread of their individual destinies, always moves in step with history and the masses. In his portrayal, a scene of love or of death does not overshadow life as a whole, but is connected with the latter, issues from it. For this very reason the life reflected in *And Quiet Flows the Don* does not cease on the last page of the book but seems to merge with real life, dissolves in it. The characters continue their lives and live alongside of us. We know they have changed with the passing years, but we recognize them, because they have changed as we have changed. What is most important, the reader gets the impression of the continuity of time, the continuity of the historical process which inevitably leads him up to our own days. Many of the works dealing with the period of the Civil War treat the past as something self-contained and ended, thus turning it into a purely literary category; in Sholokhov's novel, however, the past is presented as something actual, bearing on our own times. This, apparently, is the secret of its unusual success.

Another historical work which has just been completed is *Hot Time in Seva-*

[1] Excerpts from the fourth volume of this work were published in the previous issue of *International Literature*. See also No. 4/5 for 1939.

stopol, a novel in three parts by Sergeyev-Tsensky.

Sergeyev-Tsensky's book deals with a definite period of history. The author not only confines himself deliberately to the particular period, but also keeps within the bounds of a strictly historical chronicle. Moreover, instead of the usual characters in romanticized biographies, he takes the epoch as a whole for his "character."

The Crimean War, or more accurately the Defense of Sevastopol, marked a turning point in the history of Russia, comparable to the rout at Sedan in the history of France. Nicholas the First, or Nikolai of the stick—as the people called him, seemed to have finally succeeded in bringing Russia to a state of lethargy. Not a murmur was heard in the country. Officially Russia was represented as prospering and stronger than ever before. But the weakness of the regime was known abroad, and England, France, Turkey and Sardinia decided to take advantage of this weakness. However, they failed to reckon with the heroism of the Russian people and the self-sacrifice of the Russian soldier when faced with foreign intervention and engaged in war against aggressors. They took Sevastopol, but only after a siege lasting many months, fierce fighting and unprecedented waste both of material resources and human life. The invaders paid dearly for their victory.

The importance of the defense of Sevastopol lay not so much in its effect on Russia's international situation as in the repercussions the war produced at home. It exposed an official lie. It proved even to the blind that the regime was rotten to the core. It revealed that the Russian soldier had been sent into battle naked, barefoot and without provisions, that the splendid army had no equipment to speak of and that the commanding officers were stupid and mercenary. All this was revealed with such relentless clearness that the successor to Nicholas I was constrained, much against his own will, to initiate some reforms.

At the same time the rottenness of the system emphasized the extraordinary qualities of the Russian soldier and the unanimity of the people in their resistance to the enemy.

Sergeyev-Tsensky describes the defense of Sevastopol day by day. (The Russian title for his book—*Strada* or "Harvest Time"—is derived from peasant speech and signifies the peasant's hard labor in summer, combining the ideas of toil, suffering and necessity.) His description is based on documents. He introduces almost no fictitious characters. He is sparing in catchphrases for his characters and never makes them say "historic" words. Nevertheless, Sergeyev-Tsensky fully conveys the atmosphere of the heroic and tragic months of 1853-1854. He chooses extremely difficult and unusual proportions: here history has been elevated to the level of an artistic work, and art strictly confined to the framework of history. It is a novel of absorbing interest. The author tells his story most convincingly. One feels that everything must have undoubtedly happened just as he relates it. His characters are depicted in action only. When, in rare cases, their thoughts and reasoning are presented, these invariably attain a wider significance than the experience of a single individual.

We are far from rating the genre found by Sergeyev-Tsensky either higher or lower than others. What is more, we feel that the author is a bit too "historic." His reluctance to deviate from the chronology and completeness of history makes the novel drawn out and leads at times to repetition. On the other hand, one would like to see certain characters more developed even if it be at the expense of the general picture. In noting the originality and success of the writer, we wish to emphasize that the appearance of this particular genre in Soviet literature is not fortuitous. Sergeyev-Tsensky's work is essentially an epic in which the main character is the people, and the content—the struggle of the people on two fronts: against the foreign enemy and against his involuntary ally, the blundering and bloody tsarist government. The struggle here, still largely beneath the surface and most often spontaneous, is expressed in the people's fight to defend their country over the heads of the tsar's henchmen. The conflict teaches the people to discern the shortcomings of the regime. The story of a popular psychological crisis is a profoundly Soviet, profoundly socialist theme.

Sergeyev-Tsensky has given intimate and human portraits of many persons who still live in the legends and songs of people. Very many simple Russian folk are introduced, people who in no way regarded themselves as heroes but who displayed genuine greatness in the performance of duty. At the same time the author has removed from many historical personalities the varnish and daubing so lavishly put on by official historians of the past. We shall dwell on one example only. In their quest for a "popular" hero loyal to the tsarist throne—a fellow who does not reason why—cheap historians, and at times even serious ones, completely distorted the character of one of the most remarkable heroes of Sevastopol. The sailor Koshka distinguished himself by

regularly stealing into the enemy trenches at night, playing havoc with the foe and taking captives. Out of this fearless man patriotic writers fashioned a kind of cut-throat, "a desperado" and devil-may-care fellow, a person who does not speak but whoops at the top of his voice, who does not deliberate but kicks against the pricks. Sergeyev-Tsensky shows Koshka to be an ordinary Russian man of the ranks who pronounces neither "historic" nor vulgar words and whose bravery is rooted not in blind devotion to the throne but in resourcefulness, in exigent need for action and in the awareness that one has to fight against the enemy and consequently one has to fight with the most effective means at one's disposal.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude from this that Soviet literature is treading the path of "simplification." On the contrary, in revealing the essence of the past and the present, it strives to delve more deeply into this essence. Soviet criticism has broken many lances in its fight against a formal approach to human psychology and the facts of life, and many writers have had to admit that this approach ended in failure for them. The Soviet reader knows that the great and the genuine is simple. The more confused an explanation, the less convincing it is. To reveal an idea does not mean, of course, to make it simple, but to make it indisputable. "Truth is the sole and the best of all conceivable heroes of this story," wrote Leo Tolstoy, referring to his Sevastopol stories, as it happens. Soviet writers seek for the truth, or to be more precise, for the synchronism of the truth in ideas, life and art. This is an arduous quest and has by far not yet been crowned with complete success.

Of interest in this connection is the partial success achieved by Cherny, the young author of the novel *The Musicians*, published in the magazine *Molodaya Gvardia*. When we read this novel about musicians we believe that the author knows not only his characters but also music. We see that he does not think for the musicians, and withal as a writer would, that is, by affinity—but only by affinity—and therefore, while seemingly close to the subject, really missing the mark. Cherny conveys the thoughts of the musicians themselves. Here we deal with an old problem, pointed out by Gorky. In our time one cannot write as the nineteenth century classics—without either mentioning the character's occupation or pointing out what place work holds in his life. Such novels are written to this day in Western Europe. In passing, the writer tells of one character that he is an office employee, of another that he writes poetry; and the reader knows that it could be the other way round with equal success. In Soviet life questions of labor, the question of one's occupation, are often of prime importance for one's place in social life as a whole. And social life in turn holds a dominant place in the individual's private life. How can a writer reveal a character without mentioning what is most important? The bourgeoisie distorted human labor, making it an object of sale and thus shameful. They inculcated in people the dream of idleness or, at least, of work for one self alone. The writer had no inclination to dwell on the influence of labor on psychology. He abstracted the "purely-human and permanent" from this influence. It had to be proved that the peasant and the worker are also people. Our era has put all people in their place. The very question of the unequal worth of people has long since passed to the realm of the bygone. To be more exact, we distinguish people not alone by the profundity of their psychological experience but also by their social usefulness. It is obvious that our criterion is labor.

In Soviet literature also, many writers were wont to think as of old that it was enough just to mention the characters' occupations; while others indulged in long and tedious descriptions of production processes which were made to substitute for everything: life, psychology and the living human being.

With all its shortcomings (needless lengthiness, superfluous disquisitions and the inadequacy of some of the character portrayals), Cherny's novel commands attention. For Cherny does not guess—he knows how his heroes live and, what is most important, how they work. He does not indulge in general discussions about art, nor does he portray music as inspiration from another world. He does not hold forth about music in general, but knows the art to perfection. That is why Cherny convinces the reader that his characters are real living people, and that they are musicians not by mere chance.

The reader appreciates most of all a character that is complete and closest to the anonymous original whom he meets in life. That is the merit of *Praskovia Maximovna*, a short story by Ovechkin, a young unknown author, published recently in the magazine *Krasnaya Nov*. The story attracted attention and was reviewed by the *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, where we read: "There are a number of good short-stories, novelettes and novels about Stakhanov workers in our literature. Some of them may, perhaps . . . be more

talented than Ovechkin's modest, unassuming short story. But not one writer has yet succeeded in bringing the Stakhanovite worker so *intimately close* to the eyes, consciousness and heart of the reader as Ovechkin in his story; and no other writer has given our literature such a splendid, natural, complete and attractive image of the collective farmer of *today.*"

Following her own desire, Praskovia Maximovna, a collective farm woman, no longer young, becomes a Stakhanovite worker in order to help create as quickly as possible a life of universal happiness in the Soviet land. "A Stakhanovite," she says, "is one whose soul burns with impatience to arrive as quickly as possible at such a life as we have not yet even dreamed of. For this he spares no effort, so that all of us might yet live under communism."

The heroine does not in the least resemble the standard type of hero. She is a weak woman. But her dream—which is, moreover, a dream realized daily—lends her immense spiritual and physical power. She has an astonishing sense of the "new" in life, and this sense enables her not only to form correct judgment of life, but also to grapple confidently with important problems and to solve them. A woman of the people, practically without education of any kind, she becomes one of the creators of the new life, applying socialist morals to life. She is inspired by the new, lives and embodies the new, and now, as a character in literature, teaches others to live in the new way.

Ovechkin's power and merit lies in that he has not tried to make the heroine a repository of every Socialist virtue. But the reader cannot fail to see that this simple woman is the embodiment of what we believe an advanced Soviet person ought to be. Praskovia Maximovna is the personification of the new Socialist culture, that culture which exists and grows only in proportion as the vast mass of the people rise to greater heights. Ovechkin was able to convey life both in its typical and in its particular features.

This same originality marks also the stories and sketches of Gennadi Gora, published in the Leningrad magazine *Literaturny Sovremennik*.

While living in Paris, the author of these notes saw in a friend's home a big school map of Europe. A fifteen-year-old boy studied this map. Boldly enscribed across the entire north of the Soviet Union was the word *Samoyedy*. Nothing else—no cities, villages, railways, rivers or mountains—only *Samoyedy*. It happens that the people so named, who are represented by the makers of that particular map as inhabiting the vast northern spaces that apparently present no other interest whatever, are now called—and they always called themselves—Nentsi. Like all other peoples in the Soviet Union, this people—backward, removed from civilization and still in a most primitive stage of culture—has been drawn into the construction of the new life. Old Russia, it was said, needed decades to catch up with Europe; but centuries separated the Nentsi from modern life. Great caution had to be displayed in the work of acquainting them with modern culture. Many peoples have become extinct as the result of too sharp an impact with modern civilization brought to them by colonizers. But the peoples of the Soviet Union come to the Nentsi not as colonizers, but as liberators, helping them to emerge from age-old ignorance. Yet conflicts are inevitable. The force of tradition still asserts itself. It is such conflicts and their solution that are described in Gora's stories. The following is a brief rendering of one of these stories, to illustrate the author's subtle manner and penetration in the handling of his themes.

"Listen," Teff says to me. "They stole my woman."

It appears that a "new man" took Teff's wife away with him. A young woman, she went away laughing. Together with the person who tells the story Teff goes after her. They arrive at a settlement. Teff's wife is in school studying. Teff knocks at the window of the school, but his wife pays no attention. The teacher comes out on the porch. Teff demands:

"Give my woman back. I come for the woman. I can no live without woman. Give me my woman."

"We shan't give you your woman," says the teacher.

"No give?" Teff is surprised. "You simply no give her?"

"No, and that's all."

"You give. How can you? No give another man his wife? You must give."

"I cannot give back," says the teacher, "that which I did not take. She came here of her own desire to study."

Teff learns that the teacher also has a wife. He goes to her.

"Look here!" he says to the teacher's wife. "Your man, he take my woman.

And I take you along. Under the window here, my dogs and sled."

"So you wish to take me away, at once?" says the teacher's wife.

"At once," says Teff. "Let your husband live without you."

"But who will cook his dinner?"

Teff becomes silent. The teacher's wife treats him to potatoes; in the north this is a delicacy. It was the "new people" who brought and planted the potato. He eats stewed fruit and has coffee. He is surprised to see how clean the room is. He sits down on the sofa.

"Soft," he says to the teacher's wife. "Like you. Good. Oh! You nearly fall through! Sit with me."

"What for, Teff?"

"Just so," says Teff. "I want you to sit with me. I feel lonesome. Your man, he take my wife."

"Do not be lonesome. In spring she'll return to you."

"Winter is long. How can I live?"

"Do not despair," says the teacher's wife, going over to the piano.

She begins to play.

"Don't be lonesome," she says tenderly.

She plays "as if weeping." After listening a while and looking out the window, Teff goes up to her.

"You lonesome too?" he asks.

"Lonesome, Teff," she says. "Not usually. But today I'm homesick. I left my mother and sisters on the mainland. I feel lonesome without them, Teff."

"Don't be lonesome," said Teff. "Why be lonesome?"

"I shall not, Teff," she says and smiles, showing white teeth.

"Yes," says Teff. "Must get ready. Winter will be hard. My winter with no woman."

"Never mind, Teff," says the teacher's wife. "The winter will pass quickly."

"Listen," says Teff. "Will my wife learn to do that? With her hands, like you?"

"I don't know if she has talent for music, Teff. We'll have to find out."

"All right," says Teff. "Have to go now. Will be hard winter."

And that is all. The author is extremely sparing in his descriptions. Teff's psychology is conveyed through words alone: the meager words of a primitive man. But in spite or, perhaps, because of this, does not the story seem to be full of surprising and simple poetic charm—something that is rarely found even in large works? It is a true and human presentation of mutual understanding between persons on different levels of culture, and of a crisis in the soul of a "savage."

Vsevolod Ivanov recently read a new play of his before a meeting in the Union of Soviet Writers. The structure of the play is rather unusual. In a motion picture studio setting, amid stage scenery reproducing Moscow of a past period, three actors in early seventeenth century costumes argue with the film director and the author of the scenario. They maintain that the scenario does not correspond to historical reality and therefore fails to provide convincing material for a proper understanding of the epoch and its people. Suddenly smoke fills the stage. Fearing a fire, the film director and the scenario writer run out. The actors have not noticed anything amiss and go on with their arguments. The pretender, Dmitri, with his retinue drive into ancient Moscow. The actors find themselves in the seventeenth century. Dmitri thinks they are actors who "impersonate the future." After this the play develops in two planes: history and phantasy. The fantastic element consists only in the fact that three of our contemporaries find themselves in the seventeenth century, where nobody believes that they belong to another age. This helps the writer to express the modern attitude to historic events. But the historic events themselves are presented in an exceptionally convincing manner. All who heard Ivanov remarked that, despite the element of phantasy, the play is true to history.

We mention this play not only for its exceptional merit. Soviet literature has many times been charged with sliding into naturalism. Socialist realism has been represented by some as a trend which excludes phantasy and artistic freedom. On the other hand, there was a tendency among some in the Soviet Union to declare every deviation from reality as formalism. Both these opinions are profoundly wrong. Socialist realism does not imply photography; nor is it "art for art's sake." It does not exclude any genre, nor does it restrict any writer's daring and imagination. V. Ivanov's play and its success fully refute all the above-mentioned accusations.

Those who believe that socialist realism

leads to an emasculation of literature would do well to ponder over the uncommon and unprecedented interest the Soviet people show for classic literature, both Russian and foreign, and of the fact that the classical heritage is widely and critically studied in the Soviet Union.

As is well known, Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyam into English has come to be counted among the treasures of English literature. It seems likely that the recently published *Anthology of Azerbaijan Poetry* will become a similar contribution to the treasure-house of Russian literature. Azerbaijan poetry is of very ancient origin. Despite Persian influence it has remained profoundly original. Azerbaijan counts among her classics such poets as Fizuli, Nizami, Vaghif. To this day Azerbaijan has her *ashugi* or folk singers. Nor do they exist as some survival of the past or as poets of a "lower order." They are poets who give genuine expression to the spirit and aspirations of the people. Finally, there are the Azerbaijan modern poets of great talent and originality. The anthology was compiled and translated by some of the outstanding Soviet Russian poets, including Antokolsky, Simonov, Lugovskoy and Derzhavin. It contains classic works, songs of the *ashugi* and contemporary poetry. A review of recent events in Soviet literature would be incomplete if no mention were made of this anthology. It is a rare collection of folk poetry and individual lyrical poetry akin to the Persian, yet wholly independent and imbued with national motifs. Moreover, the translations, while full of remarkable charm, are fairly close to the originals.

The Soviet reader shows a profound interest not only in the literary heritage of the past but in the past itself, particularly the past of his own country. Gorky once said that a story faithfully presenting the past is the best means to explain and emphasize the present. To be sure, the stream of memoirs that at one time flooded the market seemed to exceed the actual demand of the readers. This did not prevent, however, a recent book of memoirs, which tell in a simple and honest fashion about the career of an extraordinary man, and cover a great and comparatively recent period, from becoming a topic of the day not only in literary circles but also among the large Soviet public.

These are the memoirs of Brigade Commander Ignatyev entitled *Fifty Years in the Ranks*, published in the magazine *Znamya*.

Heir to the title of count, son and cousin of prime-ministers in the tsarist government, an adjutant and officer of the Guard, the author of these memoirs was by birth and education destined for a brilliant career. Like the famous anarchist Kropotkin, Ignatyev was graduated from the College of Pages, most privileged tsarist educational institution. Like Kropotkin he preferred service in the army to that at the court. His inherent honesty stood in his way to easy promotion. Although a monarchist, he was an idealist and thought not about a career but about duty. Even his father was horrified at times by the degree of corruption of the tsarist regime, by the poverty and ignorance of the people and by the divergence between words and reality. The gap between the monarchist idea and its embodiment in life became even more apparent to the son. At that time he did not understand the laws and iron necessity of historical process. But he was straightforward and honest, and his observant mind condemned individual facts that were revealed before his eyes.

In the memoirs thus far published the story is carried to the Russo-Japanese War. Of the author's subsequent life we know only from his public speeches in Moscow. However, Ignatyev's fate is so unusual, human and interesting that we take the liberty of relating it briefly without waiting for the sequel to the memoirs.

His name was a guarantee of loyalty. His honesty, persistence and self-denial in work could not pass unnoticed even under the tsarist regime. (Such work, however, often hampered one's career, since it was liable to cause suspicion and was frowned upon by functionaries who thought only about their personal interests. As a Russian saying has it, Ignatyev was "a white crow" in the tsarist service.)

Before the world war Ignatyev was sent to Paris as military attaché. He had a splendid command of languages, and knew the military and court life of Russia; but he also knew the Russian soldier and through him his people, and he felt the abyss between the real country and her rulers, an abyss that spread under his very feet. It was with this background that he entered the new world. He learned that in that world also all was not well. He found out that the gulf between the people and the rulers was wide in Western Europe as well. He observed—though in a more concealed form—familiar pictures: bribery and exploitation, plunder and contempt for human life.

He thus came to love all the stronger his own poor but, at the same time, great country. He wanted to serve his country, he saw in that a sacred duty. He served the interests of Russia, not the interests of a clique of courtiers. In the World War he first saw a pledge of the emergence of a new Russia.

Can he be reproached for this, if we recall that many of the Russian political emigrants in Paris thought the same? Several hundred of them enlisted as volunteers in the French Army, believing that they were going to fight for the freedom of mankind. They were enrolled in the Foreign Legion; the French government did not trust them. They asked to be transferred to regular units, regarding it as humiliating to serve in the ranks of criminals and colonial adventurers. This was sufficient for the French command to put them on trial before court martial. Knowing that it would also be pleasing an ally, the tsarist government, the court sentenced several deluded emigrants to be shot. This naturally caused a stir among the emigrant organizations in Paris. But all attempts to help the convicted men were unavailing. Then it occurred to some one to appeal to Ignatyev, for even the emigrants knew that the count was a man of high principles. People who never visited the Embassy, now came there to see the count. Ignatyev was sympathetic and went straightway from his office to the front in order to stay the execution. Unfortunately he did not succeed in this.

As long as the war continued, Ignatyev conscientiously worked for his country's cause as he understood it. The Kerensky government replaced the tsarist government. Ignatyev remained at his post. Kerensky promoted him to the post of general. Sometime later Kerensky himself became an emigré and called on Ignatyev. A significant conversation took place during that meeting.

"The Russian people is doomed," Kerensky said, "because it failed to understand me."

"I also fail to understand you," replied Ignatyev, "and am not ashamed to be with the people."

And Kerensky rejoined: "Well, you always were with the extremists."

Large sums were deposited on Ignatyev's bank account. The money he had at his disposal belonged to the Russian state. All the ephemeral White governments claimed these funds. Denikin, Wrangel and Admiral Kolchak sent envoys to Ignatyev, demanding and beseeching that the money be turned over to them. The tsarist gold would have served to buy arms to be used against the Russian people and to line the pockets of the ill-starred rulers. The foreign friends of the Whiteguards, among them old acquaintances of Ignatyev, did their utmost to bring pressure to bear upon him. At last they simply tried to tempt him, proposing that he keep part of the money himself and live securely to the end of his days. But his invariable answer was: "I shall give the money only to a legal government elected by the will of the people and exercising its power throughout the territory of the country." He had a hard time of it, both in a material and moral sense. But he waited, true to his resolution, and when the first Soviet Embassy was set up in a mansion on Grenell Street in Paris, Ignatyev was one of the first to appear there. He brought an itemized account and letters of credit.

Count Ignatyev asked for a Soviet passport, explaining that he had always been and wanted to remain a citizen of his own country. Just as he had been at one with the people in failing to understand Kerensky, so now he was at one with the people in accepting Soviet power. He expressed his desire to take part in building the new life. His former friends began to shun him. Frenchmen looked at him with suspicion. The White emigrants hated him. He occupied a modest post in the Soviet Trade Delegation. He once described in the magazine *Vu* his first trip to the U.S.S.R. and his visit to his former estate, where an old peasant said: "Our *barin* (lord of the manor) was a good man to be sure, we saw little of him—but we have come to know life only under Soviet power." To which the former landlord replied: "Your *barin* also came to know life only under Soviet power."

Several years ago Ignatyev settled in the U.S.S.R. He was enrolled in the personnel of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, given the rank of Brigade Commander, and at present is director of the department supervising the teaching of foreign languages in the military colleges of the Soviet Union. He says in a somewhat old-fashioned way: "To me the highest honor of my life is that I wear the uniform of the Red Army, and the most honorable prefix to my name is the word 'comrade'!"

In the part of his memoirs thus far published Ignatyev gives a very masterly portrayal of his army environment and the setting in his own home. He gives a very expressive description of a military parade with the troops in varicolored uniforms, and cavalry in shakos,

on well-groomed horses, passing in review before the tsar. This picture, however, ends in a small detail that at one glance reveals all the sham splendor of the parade and the weakness of the tsarist army: when a soldier leans on his lance it breaks on the spot—the weapon was made of rotten wood.

Ignatyev has met many prominent people. Readers are awaiting with impatience the continuation of his memoirs in which he tells of his meetings with such statesmen as Clemenceau and Lloyd George, not to mention lesser lights.

In the light of recent political events our cursory review would be incomplete if we failed to mention a social and literary development which is assuming ever larger proportions. We are referring to the widespread participation of writers in operations of the Red Army. This began during the fighting against the Japanese in Mongolia. The writers Stavsky, Lapin, Khatsrevin and Slavin wrote daily for the Red Army papers. Scores of writers accompanied the Red Army on its march in Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia, contributing both to the Red Army and the Moscow newspapers. Many writers were attached to the Red Army during the fighting in Finland.

There are two unusual aspects in this form of the writers' activity. The first is that the writers accompany the Red Army not in the capacity of correspondents or observers, they hold a position of their own in the army. They directly cooperate with the Army. They are, in a way, commissars working with their pens. The second is the mass character of this phenomenon, the general desire of writers to take part in the great emancipating mission of the Red Army. At the demand of writers special training courses have been organized for writers who desire to work in the ranks of the Red Army. The writer studies military tactics in preparation for the fulfilment of the most difficult task of using his pen to lead people in battle and to inspire them. But he must also be able at a moment's notice to pass from words to action. Many writers have already demonstrated such ability. Their example, the love they have won in the ranks of the Red Army and the appreciation of their work in the Red Army are evidence that in our day we see the fulfilment of the words of Mayakovsky, who once dreamed of "pens listed with bayonets"

OVADI SAVICH

CORRESPONDENCE

A Letter From Estonia

The past winter season in Estonia has been remarkable for the interest in cultural life of the Soviet Union. We should like first of all to note the special December issue of *Theater*, almost entirely devoted to the theater in the Soviet Union. This issue of the magazine contained many interesting articles on theatrical life in the U.S.S.R. It included, in addition to a historical survey of the development of the art of the theater in the Soviet Union and V. Meskhetli's article on the principal theaters in the U.S.S.R., articles on the theaters of the various nationalities of the Soviet Union, the Theater of the Young Spectator, the training of actors in the U.S.S.R., and the more important productions shown in the Moscow and Leningrad theaters. There was also an interesting article by Vadim Rindin, on stage settings of Soviet productions, with excellent photos.

This special issue of the *Theater* evoked great interest among Estonian readers and in the press. The papers emphasized the achievements of the Soviet theater and the importance of close cultural relations with the U.S.S.R. Arthur Adson, a well-known writer and dramatic critic, wrote in *Varamu*, the most important Estonian literary and art magazine: "All these articles provide a wealth of material for familiarizing the reader with the many-sided and vivid art of the theater in the Soviet Union."

The formation of a "Society for Estonian-Soviet Cultural Relations" is of special importance for the development of cultural relations with the U.S.S.R.

The opening ceremony of the Society took place on January 3. The Estonian minister of Foreign Affairs, Professor Ants Piip, delivered a congratulatory speech. "The pact of mutual assistance recently concluded in Moscow," said the Minister, "furnishes a solid foundation for the relations between Estonia and the U.S.S.R. . . . The task of the new Society," he continued, "is to familiarize Estonia with the cultural achievements of the multi-national Soviet Union, which includes the great Russian nation, nations with an ancient culture, such as the Georgian, the Armenian, the Ukrainian, and nations that owe their cultural blossoming to the national policy of Stalin. The other task of the Society is to give the peoples of the U.S.S.R. an idea of the cultural achievements of Estonia."

Persons prominent in Estonian political and cultural life were elected to the Board of the Society. Among these are M. Pung, member of the State Council (President of the Society); G. Ney, director of the State Library; Professor Y. Nuut; the well-known writer A. Adson; A. Oinas, member of the State Council; Professor J. Aavik, director of the State Conservatory, and others.

The counsellor to the Soviet Embassy in Estonia, V. Bochkarev, and A. Isakov, attaché, were elected to the board as Soviet representatives.

I. Reintam, from the Estonian Opera, then gave renderings of the works of Soviet composers, and I read in Russian some passages from my translation of the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg*, and of poems by the Estonian poets, G. Suits, M. Under, J. Barbarus and others.

The Society for Estonian-Soviet Cultural Relations organized an exhibition of Soviet books, simultaneously with an exhibition of the work of the artist Kravchenko.

The exhibition was officially opened on January 13 in Tallinn, at the House of Art, by Professor P. Kogerman, Estonian Minister of Education. The opening ceremony was attended by Professor A. Piip, Minister of Foreign Affairs, A. Jürimaa, Minister of the Interior, A. Oidermaa, Minister for Propaganda, as well as the diplomatic representatives of Germany, Latvia and Lithuania. Among those present were also many prominent representatives of the Estonian intelligentsia. K. N. Nikitin, Soviet ambassador to Estonia, delivered an excellent speech about cultural life in the Soviet Union.

The exhibition remained open twelve days, during which its halls were filled to overflowing. Like the rest of Europe Estonia was hit by an unprecedented cold wave during this time, with the temperature down to forty degrees below zero centigrade. The severe cold, however, did not stem the tide of visitors to the exhibition.

The exhibition owed much of its success to its well-planned artistic arrangement. A fine bust of Pushkin, and portraits of Lenin and Stalin greeted the visitor on the landing of the grand staircase.

The walls of the big hall were adorned with portraits of the writers whose works were on display. Incidentally, for many of the visitors this was the first chance to "get acquainted" with the features of the Soviet writers, whose works they have read.

There were further many diagrams which gave a graphic picture of the enormous development of book publishing in the U.S.S.R., and of the vast progress made as compared with the situation in tsarist Russia. . . .

As for the Kravchenko exhibition, it was the second shown in Tallinn in the course of a few years. This time, however, the artist was much more fully represented. The visitors could not tear themselves away from the work of this splendid artist. His compositions, technical methods, subtle conceptions and intricate detail were the object of general admiration. His portrait of Pushkin attracted particular attention. Experts and connoisseurs argued as to the legitimacy of the methods used by the artist, and the mixing of genres in this portrait, but nonetheless they could not but express enthusiastic admiration of Kravchenko's masterpiece.

Black-and-white drawings are popular in Estonia, and we have plenty of experts and masters in this art, among them that excellent artist, Eduard Viiralt, whose illustrations to the French edition of Pushkin's *Gavriliada* are known in the Soviet Union. The genuine admiration shown here for Kravchenko's works is therefore a high tribute to his art.

At the book exhibition it was probably the fiction section that attracted the greatest attention. The section showing books in the languages of the numerous nationalities in the Soviet Union was also extremely popular. Usually there was a big crowd of visitors in this section, endeavoring to determine in which languages the various books were written. It is regrettable that, along with books in the languages of remotest peoples of the U.S.S.R., there were few (only two!) books in the Estonian language.

Visitors subjected the *Soviet Atlas of the World* to searching scrutiny and expressed enthusiastic admiration for the excellent edition of a monograph on Lenin in English, a book drawing universal praise for the excellency of its typography.

"Fatal" though it might be for the bindings of the books, the principle according to which each visitor had a right to pick up any book and acquaint himself with its contents, was extremely favorable for establishing closer cultural contact. While at the highly-respectable exhibition of German books, each exhibit was held in its proper place by wire, the exhibition of Soviet books became a sort of reading-room. True, sometimes medical works got mixed up with children's books, and a book on fungus got into the section of political literature, and so on, but no one bothered about little details of this sort.

It was very interesting to watch the children who filled the exhibition every day the moment of its opening and stayed there until closing time. There were two tots—one obviously a fellow who had not yet plumbed the "depths of literacy," the other—a person of "learning." They would often be seen sitting down in a secluded nook, the "literate" reading to his friend the tales of Chukovsky.

Many visitors copied out poems (Soviet poetry, by the way, was represented only by the works of Lebedev-Kumach and Prokofyev), mostly from Soviet editions of the classics. People were pleased to see the verses of Polezhayev and others, in splendid editions, unabridged by the censorship. The musical section was extremely popular. Visitors were often seen hastily jotting down the words of familiar Soviet songs; many even copied the music too.

On January 18 an Estonian-Soviet literary soirée was organized on the premises of the exhibition. The well-known Estonian writer Eduard Hubel (Mait Metsanurk) delivered an opening speech on Soviet literature. On this occasion the works of Soviet poets were for the first time recited in Estonian. Lizl Lindau, an actress from the Workers' Theater, recited poems by Zharov, Utkin, Zabolotsky, and others, in my translations (the only existing translations of Soviet poetry into Estonian).

The Soviet book-exhibition was filmed, so that the whole of Estonia, will get some idea of it.

The exhibition was subsequently transferred to another cultural center—to the university town of Tartu.

The interest with which the special Soviet issue of *Theater* was received, the large membership of the Society for Estonian-Soviet Cultural Relations the unprecedented attendance at the book exhibition, the great success of the Estonian-Soviet literary soirée—all these facts testify to the genuine interest of Estonia in Soviet life, and to the strengthening of the cultural ties between Estonia and the Soviet Union.

YURI SHUMAKOV

1940.

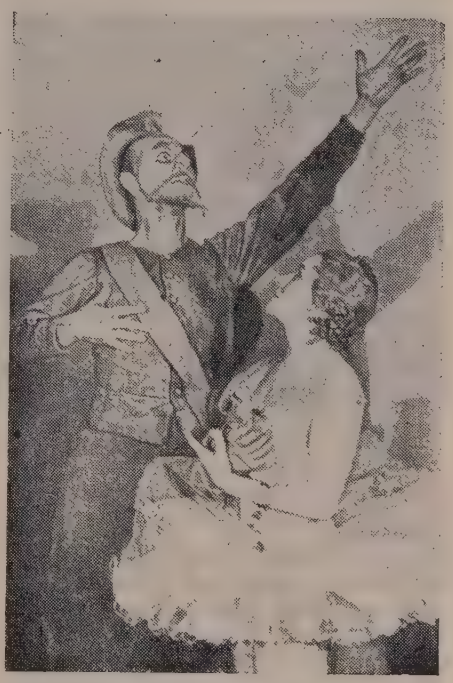
Don Quixote Ballet

The ballet, accessible only to the few in the past, is today one of the most popular of the arts in the Soviet Union. The present season at the Moscow Bolshoi Theater has been marked by a number of ballet productions, including a revival of *Sleeping Beauty* by Chaikovsky, the new Soviet ballet *Svetlana* by L. Klebanov, and a revival of that old favorite, *Don Quixote*.

Don Quixote, which had not been seen on the Bolshoi Theater stage for some time, has always been a favorite. Its popularity is to a large extent due to the music of Ludwig Minkus, one of the most prolific ballet composers in Russia during the middle of last century. His music, if not particularly brilliant, is light, simple, easily remembered, and lends itself extremely well to the dance. Dances from *Don Quixote* are frequently performed at recitals; in fact, there is hardly a ballerina whose repertory does not include dances or variations from this ballet. The final *pas de deux* ending in a veritable fireworks is particularly popular.

Minkus' ballet is seventy years old, but Cervantes' immortal novel was adapted in ballet form still earlier. On the 25th of January, 1835, in the very same theater, the Moscow Bolshoi, Felisat Gullen-Sorr, one of the founders of the romantic school on the Moscow stage, presented the ballet *Don Quixote*, or the *Marriage of Gamash*, by Millosh. (The same theme had been utilized in earlier ballets both in St. Petersburg and in Paris.) Tsar Nicholas I remarked about the Gullen-Sorr production to one of the gentlemen of his court that "in the ballet Moscow has excelled St. Petersburg."

The Minkus version of *Don Quixote* was first produced in Moscow on the 14th of December, 1869, by the famous Marius Petitpas, who has presented the same ballet at the Marinsky Theater in St. Petersburg two years later. Petitpas, who knew Spain well, gave a brilliant portrayal of a Spanish national holiday. This scene was retained in Gorsky's later version of the ballet. But the principal emphasis was placed nonetheless on scenes that dealt with the realm of fantasy. *Don Quixote* was warmly greeted and had a prolonged success.



O. Lepeshinskaya as Kitri and V. Smoltsov as Don Quixote

On the 6th of December, 1900, *Don Quixote* had another premiere in Moscow, this time in the new version of A. Gorsky, recognized as one of the finest works of this master of the ballet. A pupil of Petitpas and Gerdt Gorsky had come from Petersburg to Moscow in 1899. Here he directed a ballet troupe. He was a true reformer of the ballet and contributed greatly to its success in Moscow. Gorsky's place in the history of the Russian ballet is no less important, if not more so, than that of Mikhail Fokin. The Gorsky school is still, in the main, the one followed at the Bolshoi Theater.

Movement is beautiful only when it has purpose and meaning. That was the basic principle which guided Gorsky and Fokin. They were exponents of rational

motivation in the dance, of the dramatization of the ballet. But, unlike Fokin whose work was based mainly on pantomime, Gorsky always endeavored to give meaning to the dance itself. The Moscow *corps de ballet*, in the apt words of the critic A. Volinsky, is "a dramatic group accompanying an individual dance, but at the same time has all the independent value of a Wagner accompaniment." Gorsky's purpose was to create constant mass movement in the ballet, and original grouping without symmetry. As he himself said, without this he would have had a picture without background. The book on Gorsky and his method is still to be written, but we have touched upon his basic principles inasmuch as they are most fully expressed in his production of *Don Quixote*.

Six years later, in 1906, Gorsky revived *Don Quixote* using the exquisite new settings painted by K. Korovin. A brilliant troupe of dancers contributed to the ballet's great success; it was shown 250 times, a substantial figure for a ballet. The parts of Kitri and Basil were played by E. Geltser and V. Tikhomirov, both of them still living, that of Sancho Panza by V. Ryabtsev, who still dances the same part, and who has given an unsurpassed impersonation of the melancholy squire of the Knight of the Rueful Countenance.

Rostislav Zakharov has at present revived this brilliant production, giving all due regard to the remarkable classical heritage and for the most part retaining Gorsky's version. Were he still alive, Gorsky, that great artist and genuine reformer in the best sense of the word, would undoubtedly himself have taken into consideration the achievements of modern choreography and the new possibilities offered on the Soviet stage. The technique of the classical dance has made tremendous progress, the art of the performers has improved, and the demands of the public are most exacting.

The scenario of *Don Quixote* (libretto by Marius Petitpas) bears only a faint resemblance to Cervantes' novel; it would be more correct to say that the ballet is built up on motifs from *Don Quixote*. The characters of Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, Gamash and others merely appear on the stage, hardly playing any part at all. It is not they who are the central figures of the ballet. Don Quixote's Dulcinea Kitri, daughter of the innkeeper, and the barber Basil are the chief characters; and their love, with the adventures attending it, the main plot of the ballet.

The ballet opens with a prologue in which Don Quixote determines to set out on his wanderings in defense of the oppressed, with Sancho Panza as his squire.

They happen upon a festival on one of the squares of Barcelona. Here the audience is introduced to Kitri, daughter of the innkeeper Lorenzo, and her lover, the barber Basil. Lorenzo opposes the match; he would prefer to give his daughter in marriage to Gamash, a wealthy grandee. Toreadors appear on the scene. They play a joke on Don Quixote, who takes Lorenzo for a propertied knight, greets him in knightly fashion and accepts the invitation of the innkeeper. In the meanwhile the young people on the square are playing a game of "hide and seek" into which they have drawn Sancho Panza. His eyes tightly bound, he is being tossed high up into the air on a large sheet. Hurrying to the assistance of his squire, Don Quixote meets Kitri, whom he chooses as the lady of his heart, but she prefers her Basil and runs off with him.

Basil and Kitri hide in the tavern but are discovered by Lorenzo together with Gamash and Don Quixote. The innkeeper announces his daughter's betrothal to Gamash, whereupon Basil feigns suicide and falls "mortally wounded." Don Quixote induces the stern parent to agree to the marriage of the young lovers, and Basil, abandoning the pretense, takes part in the merry dance which follows.

Continuing his wanderings, Don Quixote comes upon a clearing with windmills, where the peasants are making merry. Gypsies with a puppet theater are showing a play in which a villain plots to prevent the marriage of young lovers. Unable to distinguish fantasy from reality, Don Quixote rushes upon the stage and demolishes it. At this moment the windmills begin to turn and Don Quixote, regarding them as monsters, throws himself on one of the windmills, is carried high up into the air, and then dropped heavily to the ground.

Sancho Panza has a hard time supporting his wounded knight. They get to a forest, where they decide to rest. It appears to Don Quixote that the woods are filled with monsters, fairies and giants. He sees his Dulcinea surrounded by dancing dryads and cupids. A duke and duchess, who have been hunting in the woods, appear on the scene. Sancho Panza begs them to assist Don Quixote, and they invite the sick knight to their castle.

Here Don Quixote is engaged in a duel for the honor of the lady of his heart. He fights against an unknown knight, who in reality is Basil. Don Quixote is the loser, and must now renounce all further wanderings. A festival follows, with Kitri and Basil, the heroes of the day.

So much for the libretto of the ballet. Zakharov has wisely avoided the temptation of having the ballet follow Cervantes' novel, which neither the music nor the nature of the dances would have permitted.

A scene from "Don Quixote"

Based on Spanish national themes, *Don Quixote* offers many possibilities for developing action and, more particularly, the dance. It is a genuine festival of dancing, and to this may be attributed the enthusiasm with which the revival of the ballet has been greeted. Brilliant classical dances full of color and character, and reminiscent of Spanish national dances, follow one another on the stage, interspersed by short *pas d'action*. These few "silent" moments, without dancing, are taken up by pantomime, which is here used as a means of expression not only for purely pantomime actors. Kitri, Basil and many of the secondary characters play in these pantomimic interludes, and they play magnificently.

With the exception of the prologue, which is pure pantomime, every scene of the ballet is replete with dances, extremely varied both as to form and style.

The opening scene's festival in Barcelona offers an excellent background for dancing. Kitri and Basil dance their love duets, the chief toreador flirts with a street dancer, and stupid Gamash declares his love for Kitri in a stately, old-fashioned minuet. The second scene, in a Spanish tavern, features dancing girls with guitars, the colorful and passionate Mercedes, and a jig danced by English sailors. The itinerant troupe of Gypsy players and the peasants who watch their performance give an opening for Gypsy dances and the dance with ribbons. In the fourth scene Don Quixote, exhausted after his battle with the windmill, dreams of the spirits in the forest, who do a serpentine dance, one of Gorsky's brilliant innovations, and then the knight beholds Kitri surrounded by dryads and cupids who appear in strict classical variations. The last scene features the bolero and fandango dances, as well as a *grand pas de deux* unsurpassed for variety and brilliance.

Zakharov has carefully retained nearly all the dances created by Gorsky, making only minor changes. In the tavern scene he has created a new and extremely effective version of the dance of the Spanish girls with guitars. He would have gained a still more desirable effect had he limited the dancers in space instead of having them perform over the entire stage. Zakharov has replaced the dance of the Moors, seen in earlier productions of the ballet, by the sailors' jig, a great deal more justified than the somewhat lifeless Moorish dance. Then, too, the windmill scene has been altered by Zakharov. In the puppet theater scene, dolls have been replaced by children, far easier seen by the audience in such a large theater as the Bolshoi. But

the new version of the Gypsy scene cannot be called successful. Zakharov has based his Gypsy dance on the movements of the Russian Gypsies, whereas Gypsy dances invariably bear the imprint of the national dances characteristic of the country in which they live, just as is the case with music. The dances of the Spanish Gypsies for the most part differ little from Spanish national dances. These are about all the changes introduced by Zakharov in Gorsky's version of the ballet. In addition Zakharov has greatly improved the mass and pantomime scenes.

Several generations of the Moscow ballet are to be seen in the production, from the venerable V. Ryabtsev and A. Bulgakov, all the way to the youthful T. Tuchnina, still a student at the Bolshoi Theater choreographic school. And what mastery they all display, both in the solo dances and in the mass scenes!

This is true first of all of Olga Lepeshinskaya's Kitri. Possessing brilliant technique, Lepeshinskaya is a happy combination of fine performance, delicate acting and restraint. No sooner does she appear on the stage than she immediately holds the attention of the audience, maintaining it even during the "silent" moments. Her Kitri is youthfully vigorous, capricious and altogether charming. Her pirouettes with the cavalier, the leaps into the air, the pizzicato numbers are all executed with amazing ease. In the final *grand pas de deux* she performs an endless number of fouettés, combining simple ones with double, and dancing with such preciseness and exactness, with such brilliant tempo, that the spectator holds his breath in admiration.

Basil is played by Asaf Messerer, one of the outstanding Soviet dancers. Despite his small stature he is a splendid cavalier, contributing a great deal of support to his partner. His turns are faultless, his jumps light and elegant; his ability to sustain himself in mid-air is something rarely to be met with. But Messerer is more than a dancer and cavalier, he is a clever and talented actor in whose every movement may be read an underlying meaning. Not for nothing was he a pupil of Gorsky. Special mention must be made of the scene in the tavern when Basil feigns suicide; this is danced by Messerer with youthful energy and true humor.

Victor Smoltsov gives a vivid portrayal of Don Quixote's enthusiasm and his obsession with an idea. Vladimir Ryabtsev, as always, plays Sancho Panza in an extremely light, jolly and humorous vein.

Of the remainder of the cast, mention should be made of V. Galetskaya, whose Mercedes is excellent, Victorina Kriger in the hornpipe dance, and the youthful T. Tuchnina who is a confident Cupid.

The part of Cupid, by the way, is a difficult one, entailing a number of dances and all of them varied. But the role demands more than the ability to dance well, it requires perfect ease and self-possession on the stage. Tiny Tuchnina fully possesses all these qualities. A fine figure, strong toes, natural charm and unfeigned humor give promise that this young dancer will become a first-class ballerina, as so many of her predecessors in the role of Cupid at the Bolshoi Theater have done.

Colorful sets by Vadim Ryndin serve as a splendid background for this veritable riot of dance and movement. The costumes contribute greatly to the atmosphere of fantasy, more so than was the case in previous productions—particularly in the forest scene.

The music for the new dances produced by Zakharov is by the composer V. Solovyev-Sedoy, and it merges organically with the remainder of the music. All that is best in Minkus' music for the ballet, its lightness, simplicity and "dancibility," is excellently conveyed by the orchestra, conducted by J. Faier, a true lover of ballet music. Continuing the Moscow tradition initiated by his predecessor F. Arends, Faier has been able to make something impressive and original even out of ballet music that is occasionally cheap.

The revival of *Don Quixote*, despite certain shortcomings, was highly successful both among theater goers and newspaper critics. Practically all the Moscow papers published lengthy comments on the ballet.

Pravda describes *Don Quixote* as "a superb choreographic spectacle, a great and rich festival of dancing . . . Don Quixote, unquestionably proves the artistic growth of the Bolshoi Theater's ballet troupe."

Sovietskoye Iskusstvo carries a long article on the production, dwelling on the changes introduced by Zakharov, and pointing out his successful innovations and certain failings. The critic V. Iving ends his article as follows: "On the whole, notwithstanding certain shortcomings, the premiere of *Don Quixote* is an important and joyous event for all those who love and appreciate our wonderful ballet."

NIKOLAI KOVARSKY

Rebirth

A sentence stuck in my mind from a review in the London *Daily Worker* of the film version of Clifford Odets' *Golden Boy:* "When it finished there wasn't a wet eye in the audience." I recalled these words at the preview of the new Soviet film: *A Member of the Government.* When the lights went up many of the audience were furtively wiping their eyes, while the eyes of many others shone suspiciously. There was not a single person in the audience who was not moved and touched by the new remarkable creation of the young masters of the Soviet cinema. The names of Alexander Zarkhi and Joseph Heifetz are famous beyond the borders of the Soviet Union. The authors of the *Baltic Deputy* are known, appreciated and loved wherever the film about that remarkable Russian scientist has been shown. This time, in collaboration with the scenario-writer Ekaterina Vinogradskaya, they have produced a film devoted to the collective farms and the new type of people who have broken up the age-long foundations of village life, with its deadening monotony and the hard lot of the enslaved peasant woman.

"We often see in the theater and cinema figures of new Soviet heroes: Stakhanovites, fliers, and others," wrote a fourteen-year-old schoolgirl in a letter published in the Soviet press. "But this does not satisfy us, it's not enough for us to see a hero matured, we want to know his past, the history of how he achieved his success." This somewhat naively expressed demand reflects the natural craving for a veritable, perfect work of art. "A novel," says Gorky in one of his works, "is the history of the development of the character of its central hero." Few possess the skill to show character development. But he who possesses the key to this secret creates a work of art capable of surviving the severest test for any artist—the test of time.

The new film, *A Member of the Government*, centers round the figure of a simple Russian peasant woman, Alexandra Sokolova. The film is the story of her life, how the October Revolution aroused in her soul the slumbering talents of a statesman and organizer, how collective farm development supplied an outlet for these talents, and how the Soviet people promoted her to leadership and made her a member of the government.

The heroine's figure appears at the very beginning of the film. We see her trudging through the slush of a country road, scarcely able to lift her feet. It is the spring of 1930. And though the actual date is not so much as mentioned on the screen, every Soviet spectator realizes that the picture begins on the 2nd of March, 1930, the day on which Stalin's article "Dizzy With Success," which played such a historic role in the collective farm movement in the U.S.S.R., was published in *Pravda.* The figure of Sokolova first appears against a dreary rural background: in the distance can be seen the village, enveloped in thick clouds of smoke, arising from the wheat fields which the kulaks have set fire to. From the very beginning we see in the heroine's character the stubborn determination to achieve the purpose she has set herself. It is this feature which subsequently aids her to achieve definite success in the construction of the new life and to justify the confidence of the people in her. Arrested by order of Stashkov, head of the district agricultural department and secret foe of the Soviet regime, who was forcing the peasants to join the collective farms at the point of a revolver, Alexandra Sokolova is instinctively attracted towards the Bolshevik Party. Here, she feels, she will find justice, support, and aid. And she is not wrong. The secretary of the district committee of the Party, a sensitive and thoughtful Bolshevik, divines in the woman before him a person of no ordinary abilities. He encourages Sokolova; but he does not stop there. Having discerned in her a woman of strong will and no mean abilities as an organizer, he suggests that she be elected chairman of her collective farm.

All characters in the film have their own names and surnames; only the secretary of the district committee appears

every time as merely "the secretary." This is but a detail, but it is a significant detail. By this means the authors of the film emphasize the fact that the secretary of the district committee, as we see him in the picture, embodies the type of the true Bolshevik leader of the masses, an organizer of the Lenin-Stalin type.

The development and advancement of Alexandra Sokolova proceeds along complicated and devious paths. She has to run the gauntlet of the ridicule of the collective farmers who are very sarcastic about state work being entrusted to a mere woman. She has to overcome in her own soul the emotions of love for her husband, who threatens to desert her if she does not agree to give up social work in the collective farm. Sokolova has to get the upper hand in an open struggle with idlers and laggards, who want to live off the labor of others. Sokolova has to defeat also the cunning of the secret foes of the collective farm system and the Soviet government. And, step by step, despite all difficulties, Sokolova strides ahead, overcoming all obstacles. She is actuated by her ardent love for the people, the Soviet government and the Party, she believes in her cause and is ready to fight for it to the last drop of blood, and therefore she is unconquerable.

At a difficult moment, when the collective farm is on the verge of ruin, Sokolova appears as the moving spirit in the decision of the collective farmers to distribute the income of the farm according to the work done by each member. An old agronomist, a secret foe who has wormed his way into the collective farm, endeavors to shake her resolution: "You haven't got sense enough to write laws," he scoffs. "Not enough sense?" she replies, and, after a moment's thought, parries with: "Then I'll do it with my heart!" "What you suggest is impossible to carry out," continues the agronomist. "There's no such Soviet law." "Isn't there? Then there soon will be!" replies the heroine with passionate conviction. And she turns out to be right, for the wisdom of the people is the well on which all true popular leaders have ever drawn and ever will draw—leaders of the working masses such as Lenin was, leaders such as Stalin is.

Late that night in her hut Sokolova

Sokolova trudging through the slush of a country road

Sokolova parts with her husband

transfers herself in spirit to the Kremlin, to the place in which, as Gorky so aptly said, "the iron will of Joseph Stalin works untiringly and with miraculous results." With what skill and artistic tact do the authors of the film present this scene! Night. The semi-literate Sokolova is laboring over the compilation of some document. Beside her sleeps her little daughter. "Daughter," says the mother, waking the sleeping child. "How do you spell Vissarionovich—with two 's's', or with one?" And the audience at once understands what document Sokolova is compiling and to whom it is addressed.

"We worked five years to produce this character," relates Vinogradskaya, the scenario-writer, in an article in *Pravda*. "The scenario was based on the story of a real woman, but in order to generalize the characteristics of the heroine and raise it to the level of a veritable national type, features from the biographies of many of the women of our country were introduced." It is indisputable that to a great extent the film is indebted to the scenario for its success, but at the same time the film would not be what it now is, if not for the actress playing the heroine. As was justly remarked in the Soviet press, Heifetz and Zarkhi have that gift so important for a film-producer, of discovering fresh and remarkable artistic talent. After the *Baltic Deputy* the name of Cherkassov took its place with those of the best Soviet film actors, and in conferring upon him the title of People's Artist the Government gave expression to the appreciation of the millions who had seen the film and had come to identify the actor with the hero he impersonated. Something analogous is happening with the film *A Member of the Government*; the figure of its heroine—Alexandra Sokolova—seems to have become identified in our minds with the figure of the actress, Vera Maretskaya, who plays the part.

The American screen is rich with splendid interpreters of women's parts, but it may be said without any risk of exaggeration, that none of them has so profoundly felt, and subtly acted, her part, as Maretskaya. Perhaps this is because American actresses have never had occasion to play parts so profoundly conceived, and so moving and real. Indeed, only the part of the mother in the film-version of Stein-

beck's *Grapes of Wrath* produced by John Ford may be said to have certain affinities with that of Alexandra Sokolova in *A Member of the Government*. Unfortunately, at the moment of going to press I am able to judge of this picture only by press-reviews, but Steinbeck's novel definitely suggests a comparison of Mother Joad with the heroine of *A Member of the Government*. When we place side by side these two courageous natures, with such different backgrounds of social conditions, it is hard not to see how the capitalist order stifles and cripples the most talented people of the masses. What a broad road would have stretched before Mother Joad in a Socialist society! And how the talents of Alexandra Sokolova would have been ruined and trampled upon, if the great principles of Leninism had not triumphed in our country!

It would be impossible to recount all the scenes in the film so skilfully acted by Maretskaya. But we may dwell upon one. It is late at night. Sokolova goes to the district center to protest against the order of Stashkov forbidding the best Stakhanovite tractor-driver, who has ploughed a record number of acres, to train others. Quite unexpectedly, Sokolova meets, in Stashkov's office, the agronomist of her collective farm and discovers that they are both agreed upon this point. Sokolova remembers Stashkov's treacherous manipulations in 1930, and the agronomist's tirades against the distribution of grain according to labor. "One is against one thing; the other against another thing. And somehow they've got together," she ponders, and the audience gets the physical sensation, as it were, of the thought-processes maturing in her brain and so vividly reflected on the actress' face. And when Sokolova, after painful thinking, reaches the point of realizing that she is confronted with secret foes, the audience accept this conclusion as their own, so strongly are they under the impression of the acting that they seem to have been taking part in the birth of this idea.

We are fascinated by the character of Sokolova, because she represents a living, full-blooded human being to whom nothing human is foreign. How often, in books, plays and films, we are presented with made-to-measure heroes, literary "knights without fear or reproach." Sokolova, as Maretskaya conceives her, is not merely a public figure, but an affectionate mother and loving wife as well. The meeting between Sokolova and her husband, after years of separation, is given by Maretskaya with remarkable sincerity and human warmth. In this as in all other scenes Maretskaya shows herself to be an actress capable of playing on the whole scale of human emotions and showing their rapid changes in the soul of the heroine.

There are no bad actors in this film. We witness the smooth playing of a closely-knit ensemble. And yet Maretskaya is head and shoulders above the rest in the skill she displays in this picture. She has managed to create an unforgettable image of a Russian woman, such as is conveyed to our minds through the best lines of the great Russian poets.

The picture ends with an unforgettable scene. Sokolova is already a member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. She is on the rostrum. For the first time in her life she has to speak before the whole world. Her nervousness is comprehensible, and, to crown all, a surprising incident occurs. Her appearance on the rostrum is greeted with applause, which unexpectedly swells into an ever-increasing ovation. Sokolova is embarrassed, she glances from side to side, unable to make out what has happened, when she suddenly sees that Stalin has entered the hall. There is a violent upheaval of emotion. Sokolova, with the rest of the deputies, overcome by affection for the man who has led our people on to the high road of Communism, and is leading them from victory to victory, begins clapping vigorously. The notebook with her prepared speech falls from her hands. At last the clapping ceases. She has to begin her speech, and cannot find the notebook. And so an impromptu speech flows from her, from the very depths of her heart:

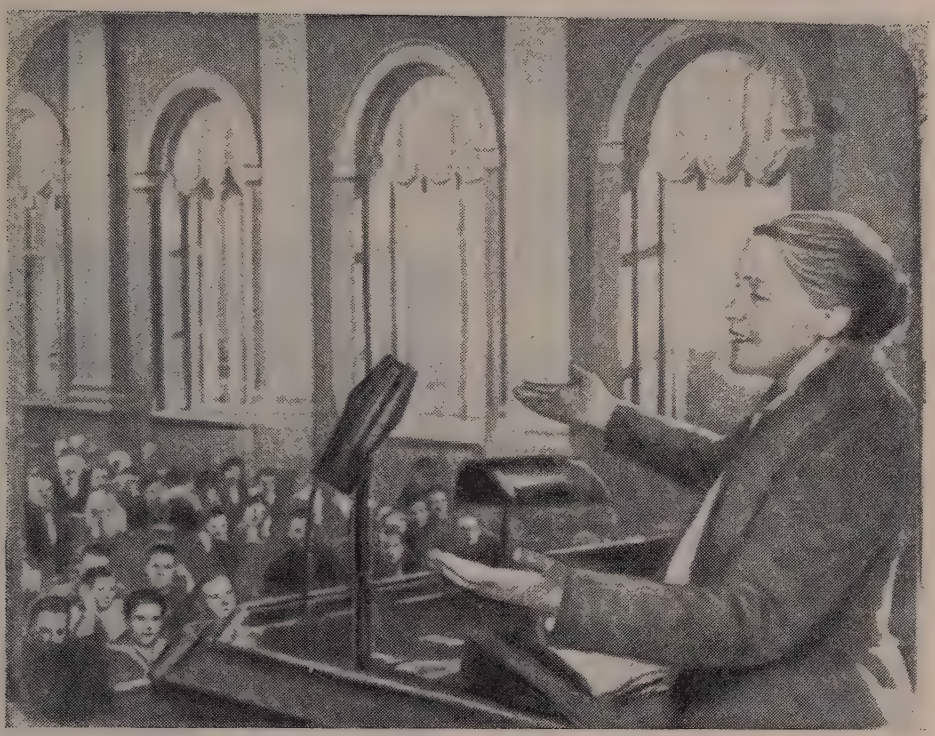
"Comrade deputies! Here I stand before you, a simple Russian woman, beaten by her husband, intimidated by the priest, shot at by the foe, but living through it all. And as I stand here I think: what am I here for? To enact the greatest laws in the world. It takes some understanding. Oh, how sorry I am that my youth was passed in the fields of a stranger, over the pots and pans of a boss. But what's the good of talking about it! I am now looking at my happiness, and I believe—perhaps a word of mine too will get into the law . . .

"Whether we build a house, fell timber, eat or drink, that's all the second part of the job.

"The first part has been done for us by Lenin and Stalin.

"We will fight for them and for this life to our last breath!"

The last words of the speech are drowned in applause, mingling from the screen with the applause in the audience. The people greet their heroine and at the same time express their gratitude to the talented creators of the film. For Kapler, the author of the scenarios of such world-famous films as *Lenin in October* and *Lenin in*



Speaking before the session in the Kremlin

1918, is profoundly right when, in an article in *Pravda*, he says:

"Lofty articles about the norms of human behavior may be written, moralizing novels as to the right or wrong of this or that action may be created; scores of didactic films may be produced. But not one of these works can be compared in strength of influence with the art in which the logic of life is shown in action—the most convincing and irresistible of all."

One work of art cannot be compared with another, especially when we are confronted with true models of artistic skill. And yet it is hard not to agree with the producer Trauberg, when he asserts that *A Member of the Government* "is probably the best film shown in the U.S.S.R. in 1940." This is a sort of jubilee-film, its release coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the Soviet Cinema and the 10th of the work of Heifetz and Zarkhi. In these producers the older world-famous masters of Soviet cinematography have found worthy successors."

TIMOFEI ROKOTOV

NEWS AND VIEWS

U.S.S.R.

DEVELOPMENT OF GYPSY LITERATURE

A nomad people who but fifteen years ago had no written language, the Gypsies in the U.S.S.R. have developed a fine literature of their own in Soviet times. The progress in this field was outlined in an extensive report delivered in Moscow recently by A. Germano, a Gypsy poet.

The principles for a Gypsy alphabet, based on Russian characters, were worked out by Professor M. Sergiyevsky in 1926. Together with a written language came the development of Gypsy literature. A year later, in 1927, the first issue of the first Gypsy magazine in the world, *Gypsy Dawn*, was published. A monthly magazine, *New Road*, began publication in 1930.

A literary group, *Gypsy Word*, formed around this magazine. These were young writers and poets who enthusiastically took to developing their national culture. A Gypsy theater was established at their initiative. They traveled to Gypsy camps and the newly formed Gypsy collective farms. They published two almanacs of verse and prose, and also translated many works of Russian and other classics into their native language.

Outstanding among Gypsy writers is Leksya Svetlova, authoress, whose novel *Khvasia the Gypsy* is distinguished by fine language, imagery and realism. A book of interesting and well-written short stories has been published by M. Bezlyudny. The poetess Olga Pankova has published her first collection of verse.

The progress made in the Soviet Union by the Gypsies, who now lead a settled life, dispels the various theories advanced by bourgeois sociologists who explained their nomad life and the tendency to seek "easy" occupations by biological reasons such as "special characteristics of Gypsy blood."

LITERATURE ON CHUKOTKA PENINSULA

The development of literature on Chukotka Peninsula is described in the *Literaturnaya Gazeta* by Tikhon Semushkin, who, as our reader will recall, is the author of *Chukotka*, a book of true stories, some of which were published in our magazine last year (issues Nos. 6 and 8-9).

Scene from "Makar Chudra," a play based on Gorky's short story. Performed at the Moscow Gypsy Theater

"In our Soviet era, when life in the North has changed miraculously and intellectual forces have been developed in these remote parts," Semushkin writes, "the local population is showing an ever keener interest in literature. . . . In Chukotka one can frequently observe how an entire settlement listens to stories read from a textbook in their native language.

"'This is a very good idea, to keep words on paper,' Eviento, an elderly Chukcha, who is fond of telling fairy tales, said to me once, as he pointed to a book that a boy was reading aloud. 'The words are kept just like in a bag. When you want them, you take them out. It's difficult to keep them in your mind; you might lose them. And there are words that are precious. Very precious!'

"My friend Petushkov once saw a volume of Lermontov's verse in my place. He asked me to lend him the

book to read. The poetry impressed him so much that for two years he wouldn't part with it for a day. Whether he retired for the night, or traveled in a reindeer sled, he read and re-read the verses. He literally read the volume to tatters. But by this time he memorized its entire contents. 'Lermontov's words roll like waves,' he told me once. Soon Petushkov took to writing verse himself.

"Ankakemen, a Chukcha from Wellen, who studied at the Leningrad Institute for the Peoples of the North, on returning to his native North, decided to write a play on a local theme. He worked persistently at it, and the resulting play was so interesting that it was staged in the regional theater. The production in the Chukcha language, replete with 'selected Chukcha idioms,' as the author says, was a real triumph.

"Chukchi and Eskimos are taking to writing stories, plays and verse. A. N. Trunovich, a schoolteacher, told me that the Chukchi have a strong sense of the artistic, and many of their stories and plays are highly interesting.

"At the Leningrad Institute of the Peoples of the North there is a whole group of budding authors whose works have already been published."

Semushkin points out that economic security brought with it a swift development of culture, and talented persons are rapidly coming to the fore from among the peoples of the Far North.

SOVIET SCIENTISTS STUDY CHINA

The Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has prepared for publication a collection of papers on the past and present of China. Included are articles and essays on the geography, economy and culture of China, biographies of outstanding public figures of contemporary China, chronological tables and a detailed bibliography.

The volume is profusely illustrated with photographs of works of Chinese art and culture.

MAYAKOVSKY IN GERMAN

Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga Publishers are issuing two volumes of selected works by V. Mayakovsky in a German translation, by H. Huppert and F. Leshnitzer. The first volume contains the poems *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin* and *Good;* the second, selected verse.

SLAVONIC STUDIES

Works on the history of the Western Slavs up to the tenth century have been prepared for the press by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. Academician Derzhavin has compiled a history of the Bulgarian people from ancient times to the nineteenth century. Professor Kabachkiev is writing a history of Bulgaria, while Academician Gautier is working on the history of medieval Serbia.

Another collection to be published soon is a volume on the history and culture of the Slavs and the first Slav states.

"STAGE PORTRAITS"

Stage Portraits by P. A. Markov, a book dedicated to Soviet actors, has been issued by the Art Publishers. It presents literary portraits and describes the stage activity of such renowned masters as Yermolova, Moskvin, Kachalov, Leonidov, Shchukin, Birman and others.

Discussing this book, *Izvestia* points out that the author succeeded in presenting each individuality and at the same time the traits that are typical of the times. The actor is portrayed in motion, revealing his strivings and aspirations. Markov depicts the social background of the actor and its influence on his art.

Izvestia commends the author for the brilliance of some of the portraits and for his tendency to probe to the "very roots" and to find the apt word for describing the methods, style and type of each actor.

WOMAN GAINS LAW TITLE

The title of Doctor of Jurisprudence was recently awarded to Professor E. A. Fleishits, the first woman in the Soviet Union to defend a thesis in this field. Fleishits presented her thesis on personal rights in civil law in the Soviet Union and in capitalist countries to the Learned Council of the All-Union Institute of Jurisprudence.

The life of Fleishits is in itself an eloquent example of the state of personal rights of citizens, particularly women, in tsarist Russia. She could not receive a law education in old Russia, and graduated law school at the Paris University. She returned to Russia where she passed a special examination and finally obtained her diploma. She was then enrolled as assistant barrister in St. Petersburg. With trepidation Fleishits prepared for her first appearance in court. But Procurator Nenarokomov, indignant at the fact that his opponent was to be a woman, refused to appear in court.

Thereupon, Shcheglovitov, then Minister of Justice, inquired at the Senate whether a woman could be admitted to the bar.

Buryat-Mongolian ensemble of national instruments

The Senate explained that "under persons who graduate jurisprudence departments and have the right to appear at the bar, the law includes only persons of the male sex."

After that Fleishits was disbarred. She became a teacher in workers' clubs at the Obukhov and Putilov works. The Revolution gave Fleishits her opportunity, and now she is one of the outstanding authorities on Soviet civil law.

CULTURE AND ART FLOURISH IN BURYAT-MONGOLIA

A festival of Buryat-Mongolian art will be held in Moscow this year with the participation of the Buryat-Mongolian State Music and Drama Theater, Philarmonic Society, House of Folk Art, the Folk Dance Ensemble, Symphony Ensemble, Evenki Dance Ensemble, folk musicians, bards and story tellers.

The Buryat-Mongolian State Theater will present the opera *Enkhe Bular Bator* (libretto by Boldaser, music by Frolov, Ayusheyev and Beloglasov), and two musical dramas. The company includes a choir of 110 and a ballet group of 100.

An exhibition of folk art and handicraft will be opened in Moscow for the festival, which will demonstrate the development of Buryat-Mongolian art in Soviet times.

No theater existed in Buryat-Mongolia prior to the Revolution; today it has a state music and drama theater, a Russian dramatic theater, two state farm and collective farm theaters, children's theaters and many amateur art circles. The repertories of the theaters include Shakespeare's *Othello* and Schiller's *Love and Intrigue*, as well as Soviet plays—*The Man With the Gun, Pavel Grekov*, etc. Buryat-Mongolia has developed its own Soviet artists, musicians, composers, writers and poets.

Buryat-Mongolia recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of its liberation from the yoke of the Whiteguards and foreign interventionists. In this connection the newspapers cited interesting data showing the great strides made by Buryat-Mongolia in the cultural field. Prior to the Revolution but four per cent of the population was able to read and write. Today universal education is in force throughout Buryat-Mongolia, and the number of literates reaches 98 per cent of the population. The number of schools has grown from a few dozen with an attendance of 15,000 in 1923 to 485 with an attendance of over 85,000 in 1939. During the same period the number of teachers has grown from 544 to 2,708. Allotments for education make up 43.1 per cent of the republic's budget. Buryat-Mongolia has 350 village clubs and about 300 reading

rooms. Newspapers in local languages and in Russian are published in all district centers.

Health service has also been extended. The number of physicians has grown almost seventeenfold in the last twenty years. Buryat-Mongolia has a large network of medical institutions, appropriations for health services having grown from 278,000 rubles in 1923 to 28,984,000 in the current year.

Before the Revolution the Buryat-Mongolian people suffered under the triple yoke of the tsar's government, the Russian and local nobility and the monasteries and lamas. They lived in ignorance and poverty and were approaching extinction. Today Buryat-Mongolia is a thriving Soviet Republic rapidly developing.

IN WESTERN UKRAINE AND WESTERN BYELORUSSIA

Documents of great value have been discovered in the Ossolineum Museum at Lwow (which was described in our issue No. 3).

When fleeing from Lwow at the approach of the Red Army some Polish magnates decided to use the museum as a place for safekeeping their valuables.

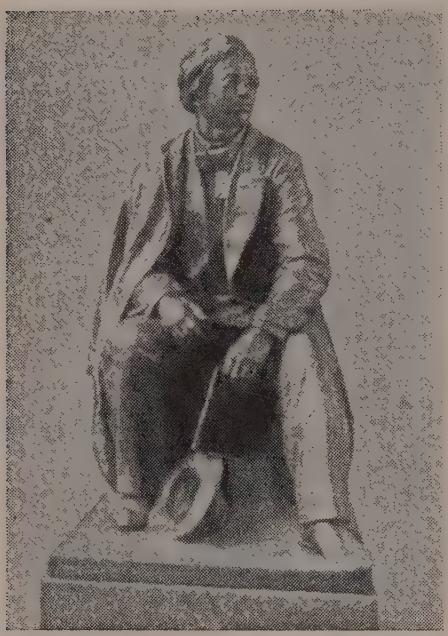
In one of the boxes left by a runaway count, the committee in charge of the museum discovered the original of Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz*. A letter from Mickiewicz's son found together with the manuscript states that he had sold it to Count Stanislaw Tarnowski in 1871.

The same box contained an original of Rembrandt's *The Portrait of a Stranger*, and a document testifying to its authenticity.

The first Olympiad of amateur art was held in Grodno, West Byelorussia, with the participation of 507 performers selected at elimination reviews in twenty-two districts. Great interest was evinced by the population in the review of amateur talent, the first ever held in this region. As many as eighty-seven numbers were presented in the course of the Olympiad by groups and solo performers. Thirty groups and individual performers were awarded prizes. First prize was awarded to a choir organized by Red Army man Belov, a tank operator in the town of Krinki. The choir featured Russian songs and some opera arias. A fine rendition of Byelorussian songs and ditties was given by a choir of peasants from the village of Dubny.

A teachers' post graduate institute has been opened in Lwow. It is attended by 500 pedagogues who study in their leisure time. Twenty-eight short-term training

Ensemble of national instruments of Hutzuls (Western Ukraine)



Chernyshevsky. A sculpture by V. Lishev and V. Yakovlev

courses for teachers have been set up in the region. History of the U.S.S.R., Soviet Constitution, Russian and Ukrainian languages, History of the C.P.S.U(B.) and other subjects are taught to 400 teachers.

Courses for training principals, inspectors and other school personnel have also been organized.

The Shevchenko Exhibition in Kiev, capital of the Ukrainian S.S.R., has on view two previously unknown drawings by the great Ukrainian poet, who was also an artist. They were kept at the Ossolineum Museum in Lwow. The drawings *Death of Bogdan Khmelnitsky* and *A Cossack Wedding* shed light on one of the least known periods in Shevchenko's life, his work at the studio of Shiryaev, just before he started his apprenticeship with the famous Russian painter Bryulow.

Done in sepia, the *Death of Bogdan Khmelnitsky* is a finished composition on a historic theme, done at a time when young Shevchenko, still a serf, was expected to work only on "academic subjects."

A Cossack Wedding is a pencil drawing and is dated Dec. 25, 1838, seven months after Shevchenko's freedom was purchased from his master. It represents one of his first works in Bryulow's studio.

CONTEST FOR MONUMENT TO CHERNYSHEVSKY

The noble figure of Chernyshevsky, leader of Russian progressive thought in the sixties of last century, the ardent fighter against autocracy, is to grace the Leningrad square bearing his name. Many projects were submitted in a contest sponsored by the Leningrad Soviet, the Leningrad Union of Soviet Artists and the Union of Soviet Architects.

The entrants in the contest had to contend with two problems: to immortalize in stone or metal the image of Chernyshevsky, and to create a monument that would blend with Rossi's marvellous architecture of the buildings facing the square.

First prize was awarded to a project by the sculptor V. Lishev and architect V. Yakovlev.

Lishev's sculpture portrays Chernyshevsky in his youth. The figure lives; it is simple, plastic and gives an excellent portrait of Chernyshevsky.

Second prize was adjudged to sculptor B. Shalutin whose project possesses fine proportion and well-defined contours. A massive prism is the base for the towering figure of Chernyshevsky who is shown with his hands folded on his chest.

A different Chernyshevsky is shown by the winner of the third prize, the sculptor Suvorov. The base is a low prism. Chernyshevsky sits leaning back, clasping his knee with both hands. The figure is charged with such tension and dramatic force that the spectator involuntarily comes under its sway. This is undoubtedly the most expressive and probably the most profound work of all the submitted projects. But these qualities which bespeak real talent and passion, do not compensate for the inherent shortcomings of the sculpture. The impression gained by the spectator is that of hopeless despair. The likeness to Chernyshevsky does not save the situation. The sculptor has not succeeded in depicting the revolutionary fighter, staunch and unyielding, that Chernyshevsky actually was.

THEATRICAL YOUTH SHOWS ACHIEVEMENTS

A review of the achievements of its young performers was held by the Bolshoi Opera Theater, Moscow, in March. The ballet *Raimonda* inaugurated the review which also included the presentation of the operas *Abesalom and Etheri*, *Ivan Susanin*, *Soil Upturned*, and others.

V. Gagarin as Vanya, and K. Zin as Antonida in "Ivan Susanin"

N. Chubenko as Lushka and Y. Korotkov as Timofei in "Soil Upturned"

N. Shpiller as Etheri, and A. Ivanov as Murman in "Abesalom and Etheri"

"Our young actors have no need to pass through the thorny road filled with humiliation and sorrow that was the lot of the actor before the Revolution," *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, organ of the Young Communist League, wrote discussing the review. "A million tortures were in store for the actor until his talent found admirers, until he was given a real part and the hard years of apprenticeship were over."

The newspaper cites reminiscences of famous Russian actors on the hardships they had to endure before they gained recognition, and points to the particular solicitude shown in the Soviet Union for young people entering upon an art career.

"The Party and the Government do everything so that our young forces in art may develop freely and without restraint. Although occupied with important affairs of state, Stalin finds time to guide the training of Busya Goldstein, learn about the plans of the pianist Emil Hilels, and become acquainted with young actors who first appear in important roles," the newspaper notes.

This care and concern have borne their fruit, as is evidenced by the attainments of the fine young musicians who won first places in international contests, and the success of many young dancers, singers, cinema directors who are well known throughout the Soviet Union.

T. Fedosova as Tanya, and V. Krimov as Liosha in "The Last Judgment" at Serpukhov Theater (Moscow District)

L. Krivtsova and V. Bely performing the Chinese dance in the ballet "The Nutcracker Suite" at the Bolshoi Theater

A. Komolova as Tytyl, and M. Piatezkaya as Mytyl in Maeterlinck's "Blue Bird" at the Moscow Art Theater

A still from "Defense of Petrograd"

The newspaper recalls the words of K. S. Stanislavsky, the founder of the Moscow Art Theater, addressed to the youth: "The younger generation must be passionate in their work and manifest unbending persistence in mastering the principles of histrionic art. Let our young actors develop the quality of patience in work, if need be, in most insignificant and common work, and let our young actors know and bear in mind that they are really darlings of fortune for they belong to a happy generation and are provided with exceptional opportunities for work."

Citing these words of Stanislavsky, the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, as well as other papers, calls upon the youth to study. "Study remains the major task for young actors," *Pravda* wrote. "A Soviet actor must be a person with a wide range of knowledge, one who keeps in step with the cultural progress of the country."

NEW FILM DEPICTS DEFENSE OF PETROGRAD

A new historic film *Defense of Petrograd* has been released by the Leningrad Film Studios. It portrays the struggle of the Petrograd proletariat against the Whiteguard hordes under General Yudenich in the autumn of 1919.

Yudenich is marching on Petrograd. The traitor Zinovyev, who at that time was in the Petrograd Soviet, assures the workers that Yudenich's forces are negligible, that he will be defeated at the approaches to the city, and that, as a last resort, the enemy should even be admitted into the city in order to destroy him there. Yudenich's secret agents operate in the Council of Defense. But the Petrograd workers are not to be deceived, and they send their own delegation to Lenin in Moscow, to seek his advice and to ask him to send Stalin to Petrograd.

"You, proletarians of Petrograd, can cope with the situation yourselves," Lenin tells them after explaining to them the difficult situation of the republic surrounded on all sides by enemies and informing them that Stalin has been placed in charge of the southern front.

"Defeat the enemy in the field, don't let him get into the city," such is Lenin's advice, and this view is shared by Stalin, who happens to come into the room during the conversation.

The workers take up the defense of their city. They mobilize all resources, organize regiments, start the production of armored cars. The workers and commissars expose the traitors who wormed their way into the Red headquarters.

Reinforcements arrive from Bashkiria, the Ukraine, Moscow, Voronezh and other sections. Lenin frequently phones Petrograd to be informed about the situation. In the battle at Pulkovo the Whiteguards are defeated and flee together with their English advisers.

The enemy has been repulsed; Petrograd, the cradle of the Revolution, is out of danger. The workers have saved their city.

The scenario by N. Brykin and V. Nedobrov reveals the patriotism of the workers and their devotion to the cause of the Revolution.

FILM ABOUT YOUNG PILOTS

Pursuit Pilots, one of the latest products of the Kiev Film Studios, deals with the life of young Soviet fliers. Sergey Kozhukharov takes off on an important training flight in which every second counts. Suddenly he notices that part of the railway track beyond a bend is torn up. A train is speeding fast towards it. Warning the locomotive crew means loss of valuable time, but personal ambition is instantaneously cast aside, and Kozhukharov, flying low, circles over the engineer's cabin warning him of the danger. The flight is a failure, but hundreds of lives have been saved.

The next time Kozhukharov plunges into a fire to save a boy. He does not pay any attention to his scorched eyes. Only when in the air does he realize that his eyes smart and that things begin to grow dim. He rubs his eyes time and again, but gradually it dawns upon him that he is losing his sight. M. Bernes, the actor, portrays this episode with stirring mastery.

But the flyer did not remain blind. His friends come to his aid and inspire him with hope of recovery. The skill of a professor restores the pilot's sight. Such are the main points of the plot.

Film reviewers commended the fine playing of the actors, the shooting of the flight scenes and the expressive music by N. Bogoslovsky. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* notes, however, that the film has its serious shortcomings—the scenario is loose and lacks a single dramatic line that would hold the interest of the spectator throughout the film. The scenario is also top heavy with dialogue.

STEREOSCOPIC CINEMA

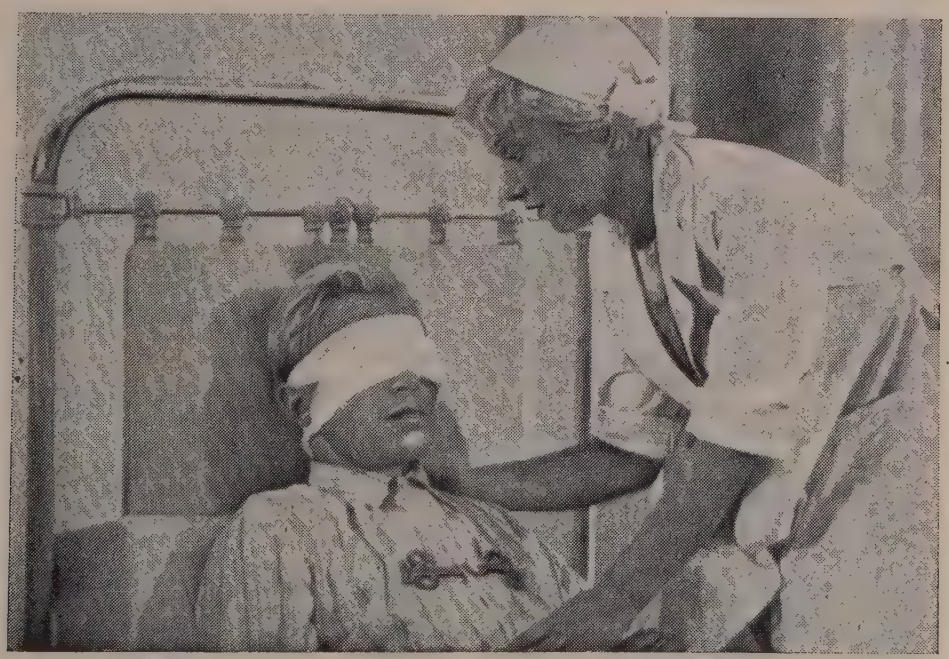
Izvestia reports successful demonstration of a new Soviet invention, a stereoscopic cinema.

"The film is demonstrated just as an ordinary film and with the same apparatus," the newspaper writes. "The only difference is that two double mirrors are mounted in the window of the projection room and that the white screen is replaced by a different one.

"The illusion of space is remarkable. The spectator does not feel that he is in front of a flat screen. He gains the impression of being in front of a window with space beyond it.

"A boy swings on a swing. You actually feel how he cuts the air, you see the rows of trees receding in the distance and the spaces between them.

"Particularly striking are the effects of shots which give a sense of space not only behind but also in front of the screen: A girl looses pigeons. They fly for-



A still from "Pursuit Pilots"

ward and the impression is that they have flown out from the window into the hall and have landed somewhere in the first rows. When the actor A. Fait lets out smoke ringlets the sensation is so real that it seems as though tobacco smoke fills the entire hall. You begin to sniff wondering why there is no smell of tobacco after all."

The new invention has been developed by a young designer, S. P. Ivanov, after several years of research. His solution of the third dimension for the cinema is ingenious and simple, which assures its adoption on an extensive scale.

CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

V.O.K.S., the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations With Foreign Countries, has sent to Berlin an exhibition of Folk Art in the U.S.S.R., consisting of four hundred various articles which represent the work of nearly fifty Soviet nationalities.

Art lacquer work is well represented by the masterpieces of the Palekh, Mstera, Fedoskino, Kholui and Khokhloma village craftsmen. Among the exhibits are compositions *Stalin Among Batum Workers*, by Fomichev, *Protection of Mother and Child* by Starkov, *The Right to Rest* by Ovchinnikov.

The exhibition includes ivory carvings by Kholmogor and Tobolsk masters distinguished by their fine technique.

There is a representative selection of the works of rug weavers from Turkmenia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Ukraine. A Ukrainian gobelin depicts *The Heroics of the Donbas*. An Armenian rug shows the Papanin group on the ice floe. Ukrainian ceramics, fine lacework, embroideries, wood carvings and articles from precious stones are included in the exhibits.

V.O.K.S. has also sent four exhibitions to China. One of them, *Books and Drawings for Children*, consists of three hundred forty-seven books and fifty drawings by children, in addition to illustrations for children's books by the artists Lebedev, Kukryniksy, Kuznetzov, etc.

The second exhibition consists of three hundred photographs and reproductions of paintings and gravures by A. Gerasimov, M. Saryan, I. Brodsky, I. Toidze and other Soviet artists.

Agriculture in the U.S.S.R. is composed of photographs and data of the Soviet Agricultural Exhibition. The three exhibitions were dispatched to Chunking, present capital of the Chinese Republic.

The fourth exhibit consisting of artistic photos dealing with all phases of Soviet life has been sent to Urumchi, Western China.

According to information received by V.O.K.S., preparations are on foot to mark in a number of countries the centenary of Chaikovsky.

Chaikovsky's opera *The Enchantress* is to be staged in Berlin. The London Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. has made arrangements for a concert of the great composer's works with E. Clark, well-known musician, in charge.

The State Theater in Kaunas, capital of Lithuania, dedicates its programs on May 7, 8, and 9 to Chaikovsky. The theater has organized an exhibition dealing with Chaikovsky's life and creative work.

A jubilee concert is to be held in the Latvian National Opera.

Two Chaikovsky concerts were broadcast in Bulgaria under the auspices of the Sofia and the Plovdiv Bulgarian-Soviet societies. The Slovak National Theater in Bratislau presented *Silver Slippers*.

IVAN SUSANIN BROADCAST FOR GERMANY

A broadcast of *Ivan Susanin*, Glinka's famed opera, to Germany has been arranged by the All-Union Radio Committee. The revival of this opera by the Bolshoi Theater was reported in our issue No. 4-5 of last year. The Bolshoi Theater staged the opera to the new libretto by S. Gorodetsky, which restores the true spirit of the composer. As is known, the libretto written by Baron Rosen presented the main theme of the opera as saving the monarch instead of the theme of a popular movement against foreign invaders as conceived by Glinka. Tsar Nicholas I even ordered that the title of the opera be changed from *Ivan Susanin* to *Life for the Tsar*.

The best singers of the Bolshoi Theater took part in the broadcast for Germany.

GOETHE TRANSLATED INTO BURYAT MONGOLIAN

Goethe's selected verse have been translated into the Buryat-Mongolian by the poets Danri Khiltukhin and Chimit Tsydendambayev. The translation is being issued by the Buryat-Mongolian State Publishing House. A broadcast of Goethe's poetry was arranged by the radio station in Ulan-Ude, capital of the republic.

NOTES

A Union of Composers has been formed in the Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic; among those elected to its board are Honored Art Worker of Turkmenia Ivanov, People's *bard* of the Republic Sakhi Japarov and the young composer Dangotar Avesov.

A translation of *Hamlet* in verse has been completed by the well-known poet B. Pasternak. This is the twenty-seventh translation of *Hamlet* into Russian, and the new text is to be used by the Moscow Art Theater in its forthcoming production of the tragedy.

A number of new Shakespeare productions were featured by Moscow theaters in recent months. The Yermolova Theater presented *As You Like it*, the Bauman Theater, *The Comedy of Errors* and the Operetta Theater, *Twelfth Night*. Among productions now being rehearsed are: The *Tragedy of King Richard the III*, by the Jewish State Theater with Michoels in the title role; *Measure for Measure*, by the Vakhtangov Theater and *Hamlet*, by the Moscow Art Theater.

The Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has begun work on the compilation of a history of Moscow to comprise many volumes. More than fifty historians, archeologists, geologists, architects and art experts are taking part in this work.

Moscow was first mentioned in the annals of the year 1147. The history of Moscow is to be completed in time for the 800th anniversary of that date.

GERMANY

INSPECTOR-GENERAL STAGED AT HAMBURG THEATER

Inspector-General, Gogol's classical play, has been staged by the Hamburg Drama Theater. The German press commented favorably on the new production.

SWEDEN

SELMA LAGERLÖF DIES AT AGE OF 82

The well-known Swedish authoress, Selma Lagerlöf, died at the age of 82 on March 15th. A representative of the "neo-romantic" trend in Swedish literature, Lagerlöf's books preached humility and philanthropy. The writer frequently emphasized that she was remote from politics. During the first imperialist war she held pacifist views. Her works contain many folk tales, songs and sagas.

Most of Lagerlöf's works have been translated into Russian.

ESTONIA

ESTONIAN WRITER TAMMSAARE DIES

Heart-failure cut short the life of Anton Tammsaare, outstanding Estonian writer. Public circles in Estonia marked the death of the author as a national day of sorrow. Numerous obituary articles devoted to the life and activity of Tammsaare were published by the Estonian press.

"The death of Tammsaare," *Uus Eesti* wrote, "is a heavy blow for the Estonian people and for Estonian literature."

The writer was born into a peasant family on January 30, 1878. He graduated the Tartu University and went to work as a newspaperman. His first collection of short stories and tales appeared in 1907. His novel *Truth and Justice* brought Tammsaare fame. The author devoted ten years of his life to this work, which consists of five volumes.

Important events in the history of the Estonian people are depicted in the works of Tammsaare. Some of his works have been translated into many languages.

LITHUANIA

LITHUANIAN WRITERS ON SOVIET FILMS

Letters of Lithuanian writers discussing Soviet films have been published by the newspaper *Kino* on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Soviet cinema.

"Episodes from such masterpieces of the world cinema as *Chapayev*, *The Road to Life*, *Childhood of Maxim Gorky*, *We Are From Kronstadt*, or *Lenin in 1918*, stand before my eyes as chunks of real life," wrote Petras Zvirka, whose story *The Frontier* was published in our issue No. 2, 1940.

"Profundity of content, truthful portrayal of events, talented playing of the actors, excellent direction—all this makes the Soviet films dominant in world cinema art."

Sending his "ardent gratitude" to the people of the Soviet cinema the writer Liudas Gira states:

"The Soviet films, in particular productions of the Moscow and Leningrad studios, hold today first place among the best products of the world cinema. This is indisputable. Soviet cinema actors and directors have learned the innermost secrets of this splendid art, the art which more than any other breathes of life in all its vast scope and depth. The Soviet cinema owes its achievements to the modern Soviet approach to all problems

of life; through study of the subject, a penetrating insight into life, and the best of all methods of creative work—Socialist realism, coupled with the Soviet film makers' great love for their country and for their people.

"That is why in my country, in Lithuania, almost every Soviet film causes a sensation. That is why Soviet films are preferred to all others and are highly appreciated."

"Such films as *The Road to Life, Chapayev, Childhood of Maxim Gorky, Peter the Great* and many others are regarded by all as masterpieces of the world cinema and cannot be compared to the trash of the bourgeois cinema which floods the screens of Lithuania," Antonas Venclava writes. "There are thousands of moviegoers in our country who never miss a single Soviet film. Every new Soviet film is a holiday to them."

"I consider such films as *Lenin in 1918, We Are From Kronstadt* and *Alexander Nevsky* as the greatest achievements of Soviet cinematography."

LITHUANIAN JOURNAL ON SOVIET CULTURE

A series of articles and notes on Russian classics and Soviet writers and art has been published in recent issues of *Knygu Lentyna*, popular Lithuanian literary magazine.

An article on Lermontov was published on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the poet's birth. "The force and depth of portrayal of his characters, the polish and expressiveness of his poetry, the music and artistic simplicity of his prose—all these place Lermontov in the ranks of the geniuses of world literature." The magazine also printed Lermontov's poem *On the Death of the Poet*, translated by Liudas Gira.

In an article devoted to N. G. Chernyshevsky we read: "He (Chernyshevsky) paved the way for a new literary style, the style of revolutionary democracy. Chernyshevsky is a son of the great Russian people, one of the outstanding champions of culture."

The Lithuanian critic Naroutas contributed an article on the works of the great Russian satirist Saltykov-Shchedrin "whose ideas, creative efforts and deeds championed the cause of the oppressed and persecuted masses."

Another article in the magazine is devoted to *David of Sasun*, the Armenian epic. "This great epic," says the article, "which was created by the Armenian people in the course of centuries, appeals to the modern reader almost in the same way as a contemporary work would. For this epic embodies the finest ideals and aspirations of humanity."

The work of Nikolai Ostrovsky, the late Soviet author, is warmly appreciated in a special article. Ostrovsky is described as "the Soviet writer most loved in the Soviet Union" and the writer who "gave his whole short heroic life to the struggle for the cause of his class."

Other articles deal with the popular songs of Lebedev-Kumach and the work of the late people's *bard* Suleiman Stalsky.

The death of B. Shchukin, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R., elicited an article containing a high appreciation of the great actor's work in the role of Lenin in the films *Lenin in October* and *Lenin in 1918*, as well as in the stage play *The Man With the Gun*.

BULGARIA

EXHIBITION OF SOVIET AMATEUR ARTISTS IN SOFIA

The exhibition of paintings of Soviet amateur artists enjoyed extraordinary success in the Bulgarian capital, as may be judged from the numerous expressions of appreciation registered in the book for visitors' opinions. Over five hundred visitors, most of them workers, students and state officials, expressed their views in the book. Among the others who registered their opinion were many writers, lawyers, engineers, as well as twenty six artists.

Some of the visitors note the fact that the artists who have created many fine pictures are workingmen, who could develop their gifts only in the Soviet country "where no talent is lost," as one of the visitors remarked. The canvases breathe with the "joy of labor," wrote another one.

Particular favorites were the canvases portraying the life and work of the masses—of workers, collective farmers, Red Army men—such as *Grain Reapers, Harvest, Picking Cotton, The Moscow-Volga Canal*, and others.

"More Soviet exhibitions for Bulgaria," is the demand of the visitors. Many state that they would like to become acquainted with the works of professional Soviet artists.

"I admire it," a young artist writes, "It is a relief from the pressing routine which stifles every effort. This exhibition has infused me with new life and I feel boundless joy."

Some of the other entries read:

"A healthy ambition, a will to labor has been aroused in me." "The paintings inspire one, brace one's heart and mind." "Here are the fruits of the long-awaited freedom."

CHILE

"FOR PEACE, FOR THE SOVIET UNION!"

Writing in the newspaper *Hoy*, Juan Arcos, member of the Chilean Association of Writers, exposes "the horrible and monstrous plans of the traitors to democracy, the ruling circles of Britain and France who have unleashed war in order to redivide the sources of raw materials and to preserve the financial domination of their countries, to enslave still more the colonial and semi-colonial countries."

Addressing himself to writers and artists, Juan Arcos says: "Today, when the fate of the world is in the balance, we writers, who help in molding the mind of people, who strive to create for the people, must be with the people, must take our stand with the adherents of peace, with those who support the Soviet Union, who defend democracy, who fight against Anglo-French and North-American imperialism. At this moment we must fight in all honesty, shoulder to shoulder with the masses, against war, against those who could destroy culture and civilization, against the governments of certain Latin-American republics who have agreed to become catspaws in the hands of the imperialists, who seek to convert the present imperialist war into a war against the U.S.S.R. and thus into a war against the sacred interests of the peoples of the entire world.

"Comrades, friends — writers, artists, scientists — leave your study rooms, studios, laboratories. The hour has struck when we must defend peace, honesty, justice."

COLLECTION OF VERSE BY WINETT DE ROKHA

International Literature has received a collection of verses, *Cantoral*, from the poetess Winett de Rokha. These are impressionist pictures with a lyric note ringing through them at times. The collection includes the poems: *1936*, in which the poetess speaks of Lenin, Stalin and Gorky as the men who sway the minds of the present generation, *Lenin* and *Children of the U.S.S.R.*

PERU

THREE JUBILEES

The people of Peru marked three jubilees last year, according to the magazine *Atenea*. These were: 400th anniversary of the birth of Garcialaso De La Vega, great Spanish poet of the XVI century; the centenary of the founding of the newspaper *El Commercio* and the centenary of the birth of Pedro Paz Soldan y Unanue who wrote under the pen name of Juan Arona. He was a writer, journalist, teacher of literature, linguist and translator of Latin classics. He traveled a great deal in Europe and America. A patriot of his country, Unanue strove for her advancement and criticised her obsolete customs, ways and usages in his books, essays and plays. He lived in great poverty and died forgotten by all, without gaining recognition. Only after many years did Peruvian public opinion recall this national writer. The centenary of the editor of the satirical magazines *Arrow* and *Spark* and the author of the famous *Pictures of Peruvian Life*, *Dictionary of Peruvianisms* and the novel *Ruins* is a belated mark of his country's recognition.

ECUADOR

ECUADOR ARTISTS ARRANGE EXHIBITION

The Association of Writers and Artists of Ecuador has arranged an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by members of the Association. This exhibition proved a major event in the cultural life of the country, according to the opinion of critics.

"Thanks to its national spirit this exhibition leaves a much better impression than the exhibition sponsored by the art school in the city of Quito," Jorge Icaza, well-known Ecuadorian author, wrote in the Argentine magazine *Itinerario de America*. "The landscapes are our coasts and our mountains, the people are our Indians and the Cholo.

"This tendency in Ecuadorian painting is best expressed in the works of Camilo Egas, E. Kingman and Y. Mena. In bas-reliefs and frescoes adorning the pavilion they have depicted the life of Ecuadorian Indians, their tragic past and present and their hopes for the future. Indians working, protesting, hoping and perishing—those are the main themes of the creative efforts of these artists. They are striving to reflect in painting and sculpture the life of the people, i. e., to do what is being done by progressive Ecuadorian writers.

"The so-called 'patriotic' critics are indignant at the 'lowly' themes and are now debating the problem as to whether there are Indians in Ecuador in general, and whether it is proper to acquaint foreigners with the hard lot of the Indian; wouldn't it be nicer to paint two or three skyscrapers towering in the central square of the city, with auto traffic in the streets and planes floating in the sky—North American, German and Italian planes. A country where 75 per cent of the population are pure-blooded Indians waits for the honest critics to solve these 'puzzling' questions once and for all," Jorge Icaza concludes.

About Our Contributors

ALEXEI NOVIKOV-PRIBOY. The author of the well-known novel *Tsushima* translated into many languages. In this issue we are offering our readers an excerpt from the second part of *Tsushima* on which the writer is working now.

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